

PLACE IN RETURN BOX to remove this checkout from your record.
TO AVOID FINES return on or before date due.
MAY BE RECALLED with earlier due date if requested.

DATE DUE	DATE DUE	DATE DUE

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES IN MICHIGAN:
THE EXPERIENCES OF FOUR WOMEN

BY

Denise Dawn Newman

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to
Michigan State University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Higher, Adult, and Lifelong Education

2010

ABSTRACT

COMMUNITY COLLEGE TRUSTEES IN MICHIGAN: THE EXPERIENCES OF FOUR WOMEN

By

Denise Dawn Newman

Community colleges continue to employ more women and provide education to more women than men, and although women are becoming more prevalent than they used to be in many executive roles at these institutions, there are still fewer women who are board of trustee members than men. Trustees at community colleges in leadership positions in these institutions are unique because they are elected or selected from the community which they serve. This study provides the experiences of four women who are trustees at community colleges in the State of Michigan, and their perception of their role as trustees. Each of the four women share how they were approached to either run for an open position, or apply to a term that was not fulfilled by someone else; share how they were oriented and trained for the trustee position; explain how they view their role on the board; describe their relationships with the other trustees and the president that serves them; and how the trustee role affects their personal and community relationships. Leadership and feminist theories are discussed, as are ways of knowing described by Belenky, et al. (2007) to interpret how these women view their role as a trustee.

Copyright by
DENISE DAWN NEWMAN
2010

Tree

Ward

Review

Ward

Ward

Dent

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

Ward

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

There are many people to acknowledge who supported me during this journey. Many coworkers were persistent in their encouragement and support of me over the years, and I would not have been able to complete this degree without their constant confirmation of faith in my abilities. Dr. Kay Keck, Dr. Marshall Washington, Dr. Sheila Matthews, Dr. Gene McKay, Dr. G. Edward Haring, Dr. Dennis Bona, Timothy Sleevi, Colleen Wright, Barbara Sudeikis, and many others at Kellogg Community College have been relentless in their devotion to making sure that I completed this degree. I appreciate all of their kind words, motivational talks, and constant reminders of the benefits to finish this degree.

I am forever grateful to my cohort members in the program, and the faculty and staff at Michigan State University. Without Dr. Melissa McDaniels, I would not have completed the third year of the program, and I am grateful that she pushed me to continue on. To the members of my committee, Dr. Kris Renn, Dr. MaryLee Davis, and Dr. Frank Fear, I appreciate your willingness to be patient and kind with me during this process. There are no words that can explain my gratitude to Dr. Marilyn Amey, my committee chair, advisor, mentor, and friend. Everything that you have done for me, starting with my application to the program, has enriched my life and helped me to grow as a person. I will forever be grateful for all of the things that you have done over the last seven years. Your ability to make sure that my voice was heard is irreplaceable, and your

constant support, kindness, and flexibility have shown me over and over that MSU really does care about its' students and their education.

Of course the attainment of this degree would not have been possible without the support of my family and friends. To all of my friends, I thank you for forcing me to leave the studies behind when I needed to, and your willingness to let me do the work when I needed to. Now that I am done, we can go shopping, golfing, see a play, and go out to dinner anytime we want to...and I am looking forward to that freedom again. To my family, your support has meant more to me than anything else. To Matt and Scott, my sons, I appreciate your support as adults of my endeavors. Although your lives were not touched by the disruptions and chaos that comes with graduate work, I felt your love and support (even from thousands of miles away) throughout the entire journey. I love you as children, respect you as adults, and consider you both as dear friends who have had nothing but love and support for me. A big thank you to my parents for everything they have done for me during my entire life. I appreciate your help throughout this process and I know that you are as proud of me as I am. The books report is finally done! Finally, to my husband Dave, you are not only my husband, but my best friend, and I could not have done this without you by my side. I appreciate your love and support throughout, and can never explain how much your support has meant to me over the years. I love you.

50

CHPT

CHPT

CHPT

CHPT

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES	viii
CHAPTER I	
INTRODUCTION.	1
Purpose of the Study.....	5
Research Questions.....	7
CHAPTER II	
LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
Overview of Governing Boards	10
Function of Boards	17
Board Structure	17
Female Candidates.....	20
Community College Board Composition	21
Gender Equity and Leadership	25
Summary of the Literature.....	29
Theoretical Framework.....	30
CHAPTER III	
METHODOLOGY	36
Rationale.....	37
Population Survey Data Collection	38
Demographic Information.....	40
The Interview Sample	43
Sample Data Collection.....	45
Interviews	45
Board Meeting Observation and Document Data	47
Pilot Study.....	48
Role of the Researcher	48
Validity	49
Limitations.....	50
Summary.....	51
CHAPTER IV	
PRESENTATION OF THE DATA.....	53
Background of Trustees and Institutional Data.....	54
Ms. Rebecca Jones, Trustee of Washington County Community College.....	55
Ms. Josie Stanford, Trustee of Sunset County Community College.....	57
Ms. Jane Dells, Trustee of Fruit Ridge County Community College.....	59

Ms. Kathy Patton, Trustee of Burns County Community College	60
Generating Interest.....	63
The Campaign	68
Orientation and Training.....	73
Relationships	80
Board Members and Presidents.....	81
Family and Community Relationships	89
Overall Experience as a Trustee	96
Gendered Differences.....	97
Matting and Framing the Pictures.....	101
Ms. Rebecca Jones.....	103
Ms. Josie Stanford.....	104
Ms. Kathy Patton.....	106
Ms. Jane Dells.....	108
Summary.....	110
CHAPTER V	
DISCUSSION AND INTERPRETATION	111
Generating Interest.....	112
The Campaign	114
Orientation	117
Board Members and Presidents.....	118
Gendered Differences.....	119
Summary.....	121
EPILOGUE.....	124
APPENDICIES.....	128
REFERENCES.....	131

2
2
2
2
2

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: Self-identified Race of Respondents	40
Table 2: Age of Respondents	41
Table 3: Marital Status of Respondents	41
Table 4: Children of Respondents	42
Table 5: Educational attainment of Respondents.....	42

contrib

ered

over

comm

the's

acted

truster

Given

mat. ul

the tr

board

these

descri

essen

respec

benef

memo

becom

intervi

Chapter 1: Introduction

Today, community colleges are in the spotlight a lot with respect to their contributions to local, state, and federal economies. Workforce development, remedial education, and the preparation of students to move to a college or university to complete a four-year degree are but some of the responsibilities of community colleges in the educational system in the United States. In part, their role is determined by the trustees of their governing boards, who are either elected or selected to lead them, and yet, there is not a lot of information about trustees of this sector and even less when it comes to women board members. Given their increased visibility and role in the higher education system, it seems that understanding many aspects of community colleges, their governance, and the trustees that serve on these boards would be beneficial at this point in time.

This study explored the experiences of women serving on the governing board at community colleges in the State of Michigan. Listening to the voices of these women was important for various reasons. There is scant literature that describes the experiences of male governing board members, and there is essentially no literature that surveys women governing board members with respect to their experiences and obtaining this type of knowledge could be beneficial. This study described the experiences of four female governing board members in order to provide information to women who may want to attempt to become a board member. These experiences detailed how the women interviewed came to seek a seat on a governing board, how they relate with the

wer

gru

eder

und

mit o

mpac

ward

cont

ave

hac

rusta

esper

comm

First,

Unite

publ

Sanno

for a

comm

beca

other board members and the president of the college, how their personal and family relationships were affected by this experience, and their overall understanding of how being a governing board member affected their lives.

Adding to the literature with the experiences of women board members could be useful in understanding differences in leadership styles, relationships with other board members and the president that serves them, their perceived impact on the community they serve, and the personal impact of being on a board. I have worked to understand how the experiences of these women will contribute to the literature of higher education, leadership, and gender studies. I have also explored how women and their experiences are situated in these historically hierarchical institutions (higher education) and groups (boards of trustees). The end-result shed some light on how women are impacted by their experience on these boards, and how they view their impact on the board, the community, and the college that they serve.

This particular population of women is unique because of several factors. First, higher education in Michigan has a different structure than any other in the United States in that the state government is not involved in policy making of public postsecondary institutions (McGuinness, 1997; Richardson & de los Santos, 2001). This autonomy results in many different governance structures for the various colleges and universities, including the community colleges. Public community colleges are unlike most four-year higher education institutions because they have a different mission and purpose (Alemán & Renn, 2002;

Coner

the mi

am'ss

about

Comm

edical

paten

in the

Pres d

Houle

to be p

board

the bo

Educa

institu

unique

as me

beacu

the pa

differe

Cohen, 2001). Community colleges were created to serve an influx of students in the mid-1900's in the United States with little or no criteria attached to the admission requirements. These institutions promote education with little concern about educational preparedness, monetary resources, or age, gender, or race. Community colleges provide educational opportunities to all who seek an education and typically (in the State of Michigan) have open admission policies.

Board structures of public community colleges are distinctive in the placement of its members in that all trustees are elected from the general public in the service area of each college, and they work in conjunction with the President of the college to manage fiscal and operational policies of the college (Houle, 1989). Public elections provide an opportunity for community members to help shape policy for a college in the area in which they live. Other governing board members in four-year colleges and universities are typically appointed by the board or someone from the state government (Governor, state Boards of Education, etc.), or elected from a distinct population associated with the institution such as from among alumni or faith-based group members.

Finally, studying women community college governing board members is unique because of the assumption that women experience things differently than do men (Amey, 1992; Kezar, 2000; Valian, 2004). Part of this difference could be because many institutions of higher education were created by men for men, and the patriarchal structure of higher education has provided women with a different experience than men. There could be some experiential differences

because

There

re DO

as a D

and C

comm

terat

Susa

temin

in the

work

with b

(p. 8)

study

see i

to ch

their

persp

because women are newer participants at the higher levels of these institutions. There could also be some differences based on the ratio of men to women on the board. There may be many reasons why women understand their experience as a board member differently from men, but this study will not be comparing and contrasting these experiences with that of men.

So what are the lived experiences of women governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan? The need for women's voice in the literature is apparent by the lack of voice given to women and written by women. Susan Twombly suggests that "alternative images" have been offered by feminists and are typically written by women, but they "occupy a marginal place in the literature" (1995, p. 71). The lack of literature about and written by women and their impact on higher education leaves a gaping hole that this study will begin to fill. Because women are "well represented in the community college" (p. 8), Townsend (2008) argues that there are still some gender inequities. This study will look at the specific numbers of women as governing board members to see if there are inequities at this level here in the State of Michigan and compare to the United States community colleges. Listening to these women and hearing their experiences in higher education will assist in bringing to light another perspective in the leadership development of men and women alike.

Leaders are key to how organizations function, and there is little doubt that the leaders who are needed to guide postsecondary institutions in tomorrow's complex environments have to think about their work differently than did their predecessors.

Amey, 2006

Purp

A700

W. 10

inter

add

and

2021

W. 10

and

add

to

2021

W. 10

200

Eye

this

boa

add

in 1

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate the experiences of women who currently serve on a governing board at community colleges in the state of Michigan. The lived experiences of these women may contribute to the literature in terms of the costs and benefits for women who choose to occupy these leadership positions in higher education. It also provided useful information from an insider's perspective of what it means to serve on the community college board, how leadership can (or cannot) be exercised in these settings, and how women construct their roles as leaders in these complex and often highly political environments.

There is a lack of literature on governing board members in higher education, especially on women members, so the intent of this study was to add to the literature in terms of women's voices. Organizations are typically patriarchal structures that are male-centered and much of the power is in the upper levels of leaders (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997; Hart, 2006; Mitchell & Eddy, 2007; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998). These upper levels include board members. Even with periodicals geared toward gender equity and literature regarding how this has improved over the years, there is little to no discussion about governing board members and how women shape the community colleges. This study will add to the gender-focused literature about women governing board members.

Vaughan and Weisman (1997) did a survey on community college trustees in 1995 that returned data from community colleges across the nation. The

ests

fine

report

and no

Comm

to eg

with hi

but w

comp

board

to be

to be

Thess

makin

and c

men

gove

to be

true

run

cont

adv

results, from 39 percent of the then-current trustees, were clear that two-thirds of the trustees that responded were male. Vaughan and Weisman (1997) reported that the percentage of women trustees in 1987 was at 29%. This was an increase of less than 5% over that ten-year period. The Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT) created an up-to-date report on community college trustees (Polonio, 2008). When released, the results of the AACT study will highlight what the change in gender has been over the last ten-year period but will reveal less about the specific experiences of women on boards. By comparison, this dissertation focused on the lived experiences of this group of board members.

Studies on corporate boards show that women make distinct contributions to boards that men are "less likely to make" (Konrad & Kramer, 2006, p. 22). These include: a) a broader inclusion of stakeholders into their discussions when making decisions; b) being more intent on getting answers to difficult questions; and c) bringing a more collaborative approach to leadership to the table than men. Lawless and Fox concur that "women tend to adopt an approach to governing that emphasizes congeniality and cooperation" (2005, pg. 6). It was hoped that this study would affirm whether these corporate observations are true for women on community college boards, and also uncover information on running for board positions, living in the community as a board member, the contributions that women make while sitting on boards, and the topics women advocate for while sitting on boards.

Research

Th

experien

governin

question

W

college b

within, br

more dis

1

2

3

All wom

basic de

children

respon

whose b

funding

institut

their ex

importa

Research Questions

This study used a qualitative design to explore and understand the experiences of women who were elected to represent their community on a governing board for their local community college. The primary research question for this study was:

What are the lived experiences of women elected to serve on community college boards of trustees?

Within this broad research question, I had particular interest in the following more discrete research questions:

1. What factors influenced the decision to seek a seat on the board?
2. How do women feel they influence the governing board on which they serve?
3. In what ways has board membership impacted women members?

All women trustees were originally surveyed using a short instrument to gather basic demographic information relevant to age, race, marital status, number of children, educational attainment, and employment information. From those who responded, the women were sorted into categories based on the institution on whose board they serve, using a classification scheme employed by the state for funding purposes. A purposive sample of women trustees that cut across the institutional categories was selected for participation in on-site interviews about their experiences as board members. Key themes in the data emphasized the importance of visibility and connecting to constituents and community,

developing and sustaining relationships, and perceptions of gendered experiences for the women leaders. Although there was no intention to generalize from the small interview sample, an analysis of the interview data from the four participants did provide interesting understandings of the experience of being a trustee and lessons learned for other current and future governing board members and others interested in community college governance and supporting women leaders.

under

comm

tion

Monte

literat

under

some

our liv

privat

organ

The d

financ

conten

upper

2003)

struct

found

exper

Chapter II: Literature Review

The literature review for this study was wide-ranging in that some basic understanding of many areas is necessary to develop the picture of women on community college boards of trustees in the state of Michigan. I will outline the history of governing boards in general and community colleges in the state of Michigan, discuss the structure and function of the boards, and review the literature of women and leadership. These areas provide a good foundation of understanding the complexity of the organizations that these women serve, and some of the necessary knowledge that has been done on women leaders.

In the history of the United States, governing boards have been a part of our lives through government, public and non-profit organizations, and even in private business (Houle, 1989). These boards are a collective of constituents in organizations that lend their voice to making decisions about that organization. The decisions that boards make affect the organization in many ways, from financial to functional (McCauley, 2002). In higher education, governing boards control policy and financial decisions, and in working with the President and upper administration, effectively operate the institution (Vaughan & Weisman, 2003). In this literature review, I looked at the history of governing boards, the structure, function, and the composition of the board members in order to lay a foundation for the study of women in these positions to better understand their experience.

The function of a governing board in the community colleges in the State of Michigan is not unlike other boards in that it “exists to provide public accountability, public oversight, and public support for the institution (Rhodes, 2001, p. 13).” This public responsibility provides an argument to strive for equal representation of the public that the board serves. Diversity adds to richness in wisdom for the board (Carver, 1997). To that end, scholars argue that public boards of trustees should have members who are diverse along traditional characteristics such as gender, race, and ethnicity but also who are diverse in their perspectives so as best to capture the range of needs of their constituents (Carver, 1997; Rhodes, 2001). Although Carver argues for this richness in diversity of board membership, there is still a need for the board to be able to present itself and the decisions that it makes in a unified voice in order to be effective. Boards need to bring diverse perspectives and ideas to the discussion and then be able to present the outcomes of these discussions as decisions made by consensus. This leads me to question whether women who sit on boards that have historically been dominated by men have an opportunity to voice their opinions and still participate in unified decision making without having their values compromised.

Overview of Governing Boards

Although boards of governance have been around for many hundreds of years (Houle, 1989), the focus here is on higher education in the United States, specifically community college boards in the State of Michigan. Community

all

Mc

re

30

27

4

28

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

22

colleges are relatively young in the state and the country, with the first one in Michigan opening in the 1950's. The first governing board of higher education in the United States was at Harvard University in the mid-1600's (Houle, 1989). Governing boards were created to serve a purpose: to control and monitor the affairs of an organization or institution (Houle, 1989). This purpose, in constant flux, can include topics such as "institutional mission, strategy, organizational performance, and accountability" (Wood, p. 5). Vaughan describes the boards' purpose as "legal responsibility for the college's well-being" (2000, p. 21). Most colleges and universities adopted similar governance bodies to that designed at Harvard, and when community colleges came into existence in the early 20th century, they too found that this structure was conducive to their particular sector of higher education. However, unlike many university governing boards, including the Harvard model, community colleges have more locally-based boards that are publically elected from the area constituents, or service district (Cohen & Brawer, 1989).

Statewide higher education governance structures have been defined in the past in many different ways. For an extensive look at different taxonomies for structure, see Lovell and Truth (2002). Tollefson specifically identifies structural taxonomies for community colleges and puts Michigan in the Statewide Community College Coordinating Board (Tollefson, 2000). He describes Michigan as falling under this structure due to the fact that the Coordinating Board for Community Colleges is part of the Department of Energy, Labor, and Economic

growth

statute

govern

(To left)

member

(Dunye

terms

1989)

interest

after w

for exa

govern

they se

political

Growth, but has little control over the financial and academic issues with each institution. The Center for Community College Policy describes Michigan's governance of community colleges as follows:

Limited state post-secondary coordinating functions are assumed by the State Board of Education. The State board coordinates services for public two- and four-year colleges and universities. The State board for Public Community and Junior colleges, created by the legislature, serves as a constitutional advisory board to the State Board of Education. The State superintendent of public education supervises the Michigan Department of Education which includes a Bureau of Post-secondary Education and a staff for Community College services. Each Community College district has a Regionally elected governing board with local taxing authority. (ECS, 2006)

The local (community college) governing board is "relatively autonomous" (Tollefson, p. 4). Community college boards are typically lay boards in that the members are nonacademic and are responsible for governance of the institution (Duryea, 2000). Usually boards consist of members who are elected to four-year terms and there are typically five to nine board members (Cohen & Brawer, 1989). These members are typically "volunteer and have no direct economic interest in the success of the organization" (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002, p. 2), the latter which might be true for board members who are stockholders in industry, for example. Given that there are no direct financial rewards for members of the governing board, how do these trustees benefit from being members of a board?

Community college board members are elected from the communities that they serve, and campaign "much as they would if they were running for any political office" (Vaughan, 2000, p. 21). This includes the possibility of running on

spec

col d

mass

care

ss. 5

-97

state

beer

287

12 6

edu

ing

eth

con

the

and

(Pe

bo

19)

specific issues or with a purpose in mind. Vaughan warns that board members could have potentially hidden agendas, even though they are responsible to those who elected them. Many authors agree that there are 'feminine' (i.e., child care, education, health care) and 'masculine' (i.e., crime, financial concerns) issues on which potential elected officials run (Burrell, 2004; Fox & Lawless, 2004; Hermson, Lay, & Stokes, 2003). Although applicable to city, county, regional, state, and national elections, are gendered issues something that current female board members used as a platform in their election to the board?

In casting the net wider to look at literature regarding women board participants, I examined work on corporations, non-profit organizations, and K-12 education boards. This broader look at boards from sectors other than education was necessary because of the limited information on board members in general, and women governing board members specifically. Boards from these other types of organizations may be comparative in some ways, and may contrast in other ways.

Most corporation board members are appointed and chosen, typically by the current board members (Houle, 1989). In corporate boards, the members and the board as a whole are responsible to the stakeholders of the organization (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002). These stakeholders are focused on profit, and the board members are compensated for their service to the organization (Houle, 1989). Because of these factors, compensation and the focus on profit of the

organize

study.

N

assoc ha

the dea

compar

oversee

and de

to that

possibl

will not

in that

in that

their m

organiz

boards

closely

boards

are dif

there i

except

organization, corporation boards were not believed to be very valuable to this study.

Non-profit organizations, such as hospital and health care organizations, **also have** appointed board members. In non-profit boards, the main focus for **the board** members is service to the public (Carver, 1997). These boards are **comparable** to community college boards only in that they serve to control and **oversee** the organization, and that success of the board is difficult to determine and **define** (Carver, 1997). Although the mission of the non-profit board is similar to **that** of community colleges, the fact that board members are appointed might **possibly** be an area for future comparison with community college boards, but **will not** be done in this study.

Both corporate and non-profit boards differ from higher education boards in **that** their focus is different, the board members are chosen differently, and **their** mission is somewhat different. However, the literature is clear; all of these **organizations** struggle with trying to improve female representation on their **boards** (Flynn & Adams, 2004; Sellers, 2007). The board structure that more **closely** resembles Michigan community college boards is that of K-12 school **boards** in Michigan.

There are as many different K-12 structures in the United States as there **are** different post-secondary structures for governance. In the state of Michigan, **there** is a state board of education, of which all members are elected with the exception of the superintendent, who is appointed by the governor or the

egislature

which all

six mem

appointe

istricts

college b

from the

and run

the sam

ed me t

represen

the exp

T

systems

on board

informa

you bec

future c

superin

the Nat

percent

the den

legislature. There are also regional intermediate school boards and districts, of which all members are elected (the exception is the Detroit public schools, where six members are appointed by the Mayor of Detroit and one member is appointed by the Governor of the state). Locally elected boards of intermediate districts could be viewed as similar to most post-secondary and community college boards in Michigan. These similarities include members who are elected from their local community, have the need to respond to the local community, and run on a platform of issues in order to be elected that may or may not be the same as other sitting members of the board (ECS, 2007). This comparison led me to a search of the literature for information regarding female representation on K-12 school boards that will be beneficial to this research on the experiences of women community college board members.

There is a plethora of literature regarding female representation in K-12 systems, much of which is focused on superintendents and teachers, with little on board members. Similarly to the higher education research, there is information about the function of school boards (Poston, 1994), what to do when you become a school board member (Bolman, 1995), some predictions for the future of boards (Sewall, 1996), conflict resolution (Castallo, 2003), and board-superintendent relationships (Castallo, 2003; Eadie, 2003). With the exception of the National School Boards Association (NSBA) website that lists general percentages of gender and race among board members, there is information on the demographics of women board members, but scant literature regarding

wome

condi

Gave

men.

mere

wome

are m

are d

over

n 20

fema

the l

Hess

posi

smal

t is

com

67%

boar

have

women's experiences on boards (Hess, 2002). There was, however, a study conducted in 1974 that examined the "Role of Women in Educational Governance" conducted by the NSBA. This report looked at the characteristics of men and women board members across the nation. The report concluded that there was an imbalance of men and women; the school board, students, and women are not well served by this imbalance; and women who serve on boards are more than qualified, and bring perspectives and capabilities to the board that are different from their male peers (NSBA, 1974). The numbers have increased over the years of female representation on boards, but Hess' report for the NSBA in 2002 still indicated that 61% of school board members are male and 39% are female.

The size of the school district makes a difference in representation, with the larger districts having more women on their boards than the smaller districts. Hess (2002) proposes that when there are more members on a board, those positions are less desirable to men. Lawless and Fox (2005) agree that the smaller the board, the more 'prestige' that is attached to the board position, and it is more attractive to males. Other similarities between school boards and community college boards found in Hess' 2002 study include that more than 67% of board members receive no compensation for their service on the K-12 boards, which is similar to community college board members. K-12 boards also have similar term lengths for board members, typically 2 or 3 years long.

Function of Boards

Governance can be described as the “decision-making authority for an organization” (Lovell & Trough, 2002, p. 91). In community colleges, governance is done through a locally elected board, and funding is provided by three sources: property taxes, state aid, and tuition and fees (Michigan in Brief, 2004). In 1963, the Constitution of the State of Michigan provided for locally elected boards to “supervise and control the college” (Michigan State Board for Public Community Colleges, 1997). According to Houle (1989) and Carver (1997), control means setting policy for the organization. The purpose of electing board members from the community is to ensure that there are checks and balances in place that allow the delegation of authority (American Governing Boards [AGB], 2007). Governing boards serve and represent society in all kinds of businesses, industries, non-profit organizations, and governmental entities (Carver, 1997). “While every board has its distinctive purpose and pattern of work, all boards share a common form and have basic similarities in how they operate” (Houle, 1989, p. 2).

Board Structure

The structure of the board is dependent upon the type of institution that it governs and the mission of that organization. There are typically two types of governance structures for higher education boards: centralized and decentralized (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002). The structure of Michigan Community College boards of trustees is decentralized. This means that each community college has a board

not g

the co

ment

in Ma

board

The t

each.

estab

be do

empl

supp

inclu

adm.

upoe

the v

are in

unde

guide

colle

quali

custo

that governs the institution without a higher level (state-level) board to which the college governing board reports. There are typically three ways that board members are enjoined: election, selection, and appointment (Hammond, 2004). In Michigan, all community college trustees are elected to their positions on the boards. All governing boards follow a standard tripartite structure (Houle, 1989). The three arms of the structure describe the nature of the work that is done by each: "the work to be done; the administration of that work; and the establishment of policies to guide it" (Houle, 1989 p. 2-3). In the area of work to be done, the employees of the community college perform this work. These employees are hired to teach students, maintain the physical institution, and support the faculty in the instruction of students. The administration of the work includes those who administer the employees doing the work. These administrators are typically the president, deans, directors, and other mid- and upper-level managers. It is the third group, those who establish policies to guide the work that this study focuses on.

In the case of higher education and community colleges in particular, we are interested in the activities of the governing board as a group. This group falls under the third arm of the tripartite structure, those who establish the policies to guide the work. Houle defines a board as "an group of people with the authority collectively to control and foster an institution that usually is administered by a qualified executive and staff" (1989, p. 6). Rhodes calls board members "the custodian[s] of that social compact...which exercises both a fiduciary and an

overs

impact

of the

mission

of the

electe

becau

of the

the bo

comp

Po on

const

once

envin

7). T

comm

their

their

Peter

oversight role on behalf of the public” (2001, p. 215). These two definitions impart a key point of the board: they have control over an organization on behalf of the public that they serve with a specific mission in mind. This sense of mission, to provide education to the community that they serve, is the objective of the members of the board (Houle, 1989).

In community colleges in the State of Michigan, board members are elected from the community that I will call the service district (McCauley, 2002). Because part of the operational funding comes from taxes paid by the members of the service district, holding local elections allows taxpayers to have a voice on the board. The inclusion of community members on these boards offers some complications however, for the board members themselves (Polonio, 2005). Polonio cites possible impediments as personal interest and undue influence from constituent groups within the community. Bastedo suggests, “trustees who were once assigned the task of protecting public colleges from the political environment are now expected to actively engage that environment” (2008, p. 7). This raises the question of how board members function within their community with a dual-role of board members (with the community college as their focus) and community members (with the community, their family, and their own business as their focus), and how the board member reconciles these potential political conflicts.

Fem

ter

ter

De

In

has

am

ele

com

spe

200

te

the

Bas

to

du

big

ex

the

Female candidates

Because trustees are elected positions, it is important to include the literature about females running for elected positions. In understanding female representation on the community college boards in the state of Michigan, it may be useful to comprehend the events that led up to the election of these women. It was interesting to find out how women decided to run for a board seat, who was influential to that decision-making process and how, the financing of the campaign, and the issues they ran on. The other areas of interest are how the election affected not only the women personally, but their family members, too.

When women run for elected positions, such as a seat on the local community college governing board, researchers have found that they run on specific platforms and support specific issues (Burrell, 2004; Fox & Lawless, 2004). Recognition of these platforms could possibly help us to understand the relationships that women board members have with peers on the board and with their community members. This may also be important if Polonio's (2005) and Bastedo's (2008) concerns about undue influence from constituents and needing to engage the political environment with constituents affect women trustees during or after their election to the board.

Because local, community elected positions are the pre-cursors to other higher elected positions (Deckman, 2007), these educational board positions are excellent starter positions for women who have higher political aspirations (Hermson, Lay, & Stokes, 2003). There is limited research that speaks to the

to

rel

to

net

fa

Sto

ho

& F

Pe

Tru

Co

frs

cre

ps

ev

col

for

ad

cre

political aspirations of women community college board members as a factor in their pursuit of these positions, whether they see the trustee position as a launch to higher political aspirations, or is this service on the community college board meeting some other need of these women.

Local political campaigns can be costly, and at the local level there are few (if any) candidate support groups for women (Conway, 2001; Hermson, Lay, & Stokes, 2003). Pandering to special interest groups in order to raise money has typically been a deterrent to men and women alike in running for office (Lawless & Fox, 2005); doing so may also lead to claims of undue special interest (Polonio, 2005). How these forces play out for women community college trustees is unknown but could be explored in this study.

Community College Board Composition

Community colleges have been in existence for over 100 years with the first founded in Illinois in 1902 (Lovell & Trough, 2002). These institutions were created to provide "general education, job training, and career and technical instruction" (Michigan in Brief, 2004) to the masses at a reasonable cost. Several events in the United States contributed to the creation of many community colleges including "the GI Bill, the baby boom, business and industry's demand for trained workers, the civil rights movement of the 1960's, and federal student aid" (Vaughan, 2000, p.1).

These events (and others) increased enrollments in higher education, created the institution that is community colleges, and introduced education to

home

to eg

to eg

On

per

2004

these

supp

acro

inde

mili

(Am

adm

Off

co

of fi

rep

To

sup

(19

det

women and minorities in numbers that had never been seen before. Community college in particular are perceived to be more female-friendly than most other colleges and universities (Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998), employ more females (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Almanac, 2004), and have more female students than typical four-year institutions (*The Chronicle of Higher Education*, Almanac, 2004). Tedrow and Rhoads suggest that this might lead us to conclude that these particular institutions are “quite open to diversity and are particularly supportive of women” (1998, p. 4). The total number of community colleges across the nation number 1,173 with 987 of these being public, 155 independent, and 31 tribal colleges. These institutions enroll more than 11.8 million students with a gender breakdown of 56% women and 44% men (American Association of Community College, [AACC], 2010). Full-time administrator percentages are 58% women and 42% men, with Chief Executive Officers (CEO’s) numbering 72% male and 28% female. While community colleges enroll more female than male students and employ greater percentages of female than male staff, there still appears to be great disparity in gender representation in senior leadership roles. Because of this inconsistency, Townsend (1995) suggests that community colleges appear to be more supportive of women but in fact are not for this very reason. Tedrow and Rhoads (1998) conclude that organizational culture should be evaluated in order to determine if women leaders are able to be fully developed.

As a comparison at the state level, the 28 public Michigan community colleges enroll over 220,000 students with a gender breakdown of 58% women and 42% men (AACC, 2007). Full-time faculty and staff numbers look approximately the same as the national data; more than one-half are women, with the exception of upper administration, executive positions, and full-time tenured faculty. It is here that the number of women falls below the 50th percentile and the men take over. The areas that remain above the 50th percentile are part-time faculty, untenured full-time faculty, technical paraprofessionals, and clerical and secretarial support (www.michigancc.net, 2007).

In 2007, the composition of boards across the United States for public institutions was made up of 71% men and 29% women, and the distribution of race was 79% white and 22% non-white (AGB, 2007). Currently in the State of Michigan, women have 41%, or 82 of the 200 board seats in the 28 public community colleges with exact numbers regularly changing as a result of different election schedules. While this number is higher than the national average, the number of women working at community colleges in various areas of these institutions is much higher than the representation of women on the boards of trustees. All but two of these community colleges have a seven-member board; the two exceptions have nine member boards. Board members at all of the community colleges are usually elected to two- or four-year terms.

The composition of boards may be manipulated for boards that are chosen or appointed, but for publically elected boards, manipulation of board members may be more difficult. The composition of the board is the “most foundational aspect of governance” (Pointer & Orlikoff, p. 97), and so these board members, what their characteristics are, and what experience they bring to the table are imperative to the functioning of the board. Not only is it imperative that many areas of specialization be represented such as financial, legal, non-profit, for profit, and others (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002), voices representing gender and race/ethnicity (other than white males) need to be present on a board, as well (Carver, 1997; Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002). Pointer and Orlikoff (2002) warn that true representation of the community that is served by the board is “problematic” (p. 111). One potential problem could be a lack of knowledge or interest in being a trustee by those populations that are underrepresented (Pointer & Orlikoff, 2002). Yet, there are still those who feel that greater representation on boards by women and underrepresented ethnic groups is still needed (e.g., Lovell & Trouth, 2002; Vaughan & Weisman, 2003), which may require more investment in recruiting underrepresented persons to run for board office. Understanding what factors contributed to a set of women’s decision to seek a seat on the board could be useful in helping to encourage greater participation from diverse groups in the community.

Other aspects of board composition and member diversity are important to understanding women board members’ experiences, which is the focus of this

study. A board that is diverse in composition is still charged with having a single voice (Carver, 1997). Trying to accomplish this without “squelching dissent or feigning unanimity” (Carver, 1997, p. 18) may be difficult, but the board must “elicit as much divergence as possible and resolve it into a single position” (Carver, 1997, p. 189). Pointer and Orlikoff reiterate the idea well when saying, “divisiveness depreciates the quality and clarity of your board’s voice” (2002, p. 75). Lovell and Trough (2002) surmise that a broadly diverse board composition may not affect “policy decisions...student’s choosing to enroll...or taxpayer’s willingness to support the institution” (p. 94), but still advocate diverse trustee representation as one important factor in college success over time.

Gender Equity and Leadership

Historically, men have led higher education institutions and their traits have been touted as the thumbprint of what ‘good and effective’ leadership should look like (Hart, 2006), resulting in a patriarchal structure and heirarchy. Because higher education is ensconced in the power of patriarchy, and power is most-typically male-centered in this sector, women are oppressed in these systems (Bensimon & Neumann, 1993; Garcia, 1995; Hart, 2006; Park, 2000; Rich, 2000). Adding more women to positions of power, in and of itself will not change the institutions into fair and equitable organizations, but Tidball et al. point to the “critical mass of women” (2000, p. 20) as being essential. They argue this critical mass includes “trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, graduates, guests, and friends” (2000, p. 21).

Besides fairness, equity on governing boards can contribute much to the board itself, the community, and to the institution (Konrad & Kramer, 2006). However, there are other motives for having a diverse representation on these boards. Valian gives us many reasons to 'justify' wanting gender equity in all areas of higher education (2004). Equality demonstrates to others that they too can have a good future in higher education, which shows everyone that there is room for them somewhere in academia which is particularly important given the access mission of community colleges (Cohen & Brawer, 1989; Townsend, 1995). In terms of gender equality, this includes increasing women's voices in knowledge and knowledge production, augmenting access to power and resources, and an overall enhancement of the viability of the institution (Bensimon & Marshall, 2000; Valian, 2004).

In *Priorities, Patterns, and Principles*, Tidball, et al. (1999) stress the need for wholeness of an institution and the need for "a critical mass of women as trustees, administrators, faculty, staff, students, graduates, guests, and friends" (p. 20-21). This critical mass at all areas and levels of a higher education institution provide a community where women have a sense "of ownership...they matter...that they truly belong...and that they make a difference" (Tidball, et al., 1999, p. 20-21). Finally, Amey posits, "seeing oneself represented in a text can be critical to embracing a role and identity" (2006, p. 56). Representation throughout the institution, at all levels, including governing board members, is

important

in these

M

organiza

This cou

style (he

everyday

women

women

typically

elected

Adrienn

structur

"serve t

accept c

change

C

colleges

manage

services

's calling

states t

important for not only the institution but also for the women who work and learn in these institutions.

Mitchell and Eddy (2007) posit that community colleges are gendered organizations even though they are perceived as being more open to women. This coupled with Belenky, et al.'s (1997) assertion that "women's talk in both style (hesitant, qualified, question-posing) and content (concern for the everyday, the practical, and the interpersonal) is typically devalued by men and women alike" (p. 17) leads us to try and understand the relationship between women trustees and the organization that they are trying to serve. Does this typically gendered organizational structure attract or repel women to run for an elected seat on the governing board? In *Toward a Woman-Centered University*, Adrienne Rich (2000) asks several questions that apply to this organizational structure: Will a "male-centered, male-dominated" institution change in order to "serve the humanism and freedom that it professes" (p. 4); what will women accept of the already structured patriarchy; and, is it possible for an institution to change when the world around it remains male-centered (p. 4)?

Geraldine A. Evans (2001) argues "it is up to women leaders in community colleges to dare to make drastic changes in organization, leadership and management styles, instructional delivery, use of technology, and student services needed to move us to new and more effective institutions" (p. 181). She is calling for new leadership skills, and new leaders. Similarly, Glazer-Raymo states that "until women are perceived as power brokers who can influence

public policy at the local and state levels, they will continue to be underrepresented on college and university boards" (p. 151). She suggests that the "conventional images of leadership" need to be altered (p. 150). What will we find from these women trustees, do they see themselves as leaders in positions of power, with the potential resources to affect change?

Kezar (2000) states women "enact, think about, and interpret leadership" differently than men (p. 723). Will we find from women in this study that they too view and experience leadership in a manner that is not 'conventional'? Will the women in this study use individual traits and characteristics to describe leadership, or will they use group or collective verbiage? Ford suggests that "women do not constitute a homogeneous population", "do not act politically on the basis of shared interests with other women", and "gender does not bind women as a group any more than it binds men to one another in constructing and enacting a political agenda" (2006, p. 63). Will we find that each of the women in this study view their individual experiences so different from the other women in the study that we will not be able to infer any commonalities?

Women who are politically elected officials operate differently than their male counterparts in their approach to governance. They tend to "emphasize congeniality and cooperation" and "act as facilitators" whereby men "emphasize hierarchy" and "use their power to control [the] direction" (Lawless & fox, 2005, p. 6). Women able to govern this way could benefit community colleges as the opening statement from Amey (2006) suggests. This study tried to understand if

women governing board members see gender issues as a way to influence policy at the community colleges that they serve. It was hopeful that there would be some definite ways in which these women leaders were trying to change the patriarchy that is higher education through their work on community college boards.

Summary of the Literature

In the literature outlined above, I provided a summary of governing boards and the history of their significance in higher education. The impact of these boards, in terms of governing higher education and the issues boards deem important, help shape the communities that we live in and the education provided to our citizens. The structure of these boards is important so that we understand that we are analyzing a form that was created as a hierarchy, began as, and is evolving from, a patriarchal institution.

The community college as an institution is unique in its mission to the community, and it serves a slightly different population than do other institutions of higher education. I illuminated the history of community colleges and how the governance structures of these institutions in the state of Michigan operate and are populated. The reality is that these boards continue to operate community colleges with less than equitable representation from their constituents. The lack of literature on this unbalanced representation is in part the purpose of this study. Revealing at least one segment that is not fully represented on these

boards – women – may add to the literature in terms of leadership on these boards.

In trying to understand a woman's point of view as a member of these boards, it was important to look at like institutions (K-12 boards) to try and construe similarities or differences in these women's ways of knowing. Because the women on both K-12 boards and community college boards are elected from, and live in the communities that they serve, it is necessary to recognize the struggles that are connected with public elections and what that might mean to these women.

Theoretical Framework

There was not a specific theory or series of theories used deductively to guide this study, but rather a phenomenological approach was used to "develop a picture rather than study cause-effect relationships" (Creswell, 1994, p. 98). This helped to prevent preconceived notions about how a theory would apply, and allowed me to draw on various theories to help understand common themes that arose during the interview process and the compilation of the interview texts. Some of the theories that emerged as being relevant to understanding the themes in the data were positionality theory, ways of knowing, gender based theories, and leadership theories.

Positionality theory is useful in describing these women and their experiences because it depicts identities that have intersecting roles and responsibilities in society such as personal, professional, community, and

re

A

to

re

co

h

L

C

W

b

D

a

P

a

(

:

C

r

1

C

religious (Kezar, 2000). The fact that positionality theory is “fluid and dynamic” (Kezar, p. 726) makes this a ‘good-fit’ for describing women because they tend to be relational, not instrumental leaders (Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998).

In *Women’s Ways of Knowing*, Belenky et al. (1997) studied women that resulted in a scheme for describing cognitive development as separate, connected, or constructed. These concepts were based on the extent to which women framed their understanding of their world. These ways of knowing were useful in this dissertation by allowing this researcher to define the stages of cognitive development in which the subjects were, and if the subjects leaned toward separate, connected, or constructed knowing. Separate knowing involves thinking that is autonomous, impersonal, comes from others, and is steeped in procedures and conformity. Stereotypically, this way of knowing has been attributed often to men, and much of the governance literature speaks to the presence of separate knowing in rational decision-making, political negotiations, and other aspects of operating that might be part of being on a governing board (Fox & Lawless, 2004; Lawless & Fox, 2005). Connected knowing is geared more toward relationships, responses to others, empathy, trust (based on care to others), and personal experiences (Belenky et al., 1997). Women tend to utilize relational ways of knowing more so than men (Amey, 1992; Glazer-Raymo, 1999; Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998). It will be interesting to see if the women who sit on boards in stereotypically male-dominated colleges have relationships with the

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

000

others on the board and the president that resemble connected-knowing (i.e. empathetic, trusting, caring)?

Gender-based, or standpoint theory, suggests that a person's experience is based on a trait or one aspect of that person as the basis for all of their knowing – in the case their gender (Kezar, 2000). The notion that "women share a common experience has been challenged since it was articulated" (McCann & Kim, 2003, p. 17) and there is no single feminist theory (Blackmore, 2007). If McCann and Kim and Blackmore are correct, then each woman should provide unique experiences that are not like the other women in this study. It is also feasible that gender is at the crux of these women's knowing, but their standpoint on feminism might result in completely different understandings of what that means. Ford (2006) lays out distinctive feminist standpoints that might return unlike ways of knowing all based on gender. "There are many strands of feminism" (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997, p. 135), and the threads that Ford (2006) includes are Liberal, Radical, Socialist, and Cultural/Gendered Feminism. Mary Hawkesworth (1999) couples feminist standpoint theory with some of the major vantage points of feminism. The nesting of these two theories could provide some insight into the ways in which women on boards make decisions.

Liberal feminism is based on women and men working "within the existing political system and structures" (p. 19) to eliminate discrimination (Ford, 2006). Increasing the numbers of women in areas that men control is a start to the change necessary to improve equality (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997). Although an

increase in the amount of women in positions of power might strengthen the numbers, the true outcome of liberal feminism is autonomy and the ability of everyone to make their own choices (Ford, 2006). Hawkesworth (1999) suggests that liberal feminists not only see underrepresentation as an issue, but underutilization as well. Underutilization "is defined as having fewer women/minorities in a job category actually employed than would reasonably be expected from their availability in the labor pool" (Hawkesworth, 1999, p. 153). Unlike liberal feminists, radical feminists see the dichotomy of men/women at the heart of discrimination and oppression. The goal of a radical feminist is to dismantle and revolutionize social structures and societal values that restrain and enslave women (Ford, 2006).

Socialist feminism sees the oppression of women as a product of capitalism. Society does not value the work of women (both in and out of the home) and therefore does not pay for, or pays poorly for the work that women historically have done (Ford, 2006). Hawkesworth (1999) suggests that from a socialist standpoint perspective, increasing the numbers of women and minorities would not necessarily benefit them, but using power to change the institution is what is necessary for equality.

Cultural feminism addresses the differences of women and men in terms of how we are socialized from birth, and seeks to increase the value of 'feminine' traits in the workplace (Bensimon & Marshall, 1997). Ford argues that gender feminists believe this coupled with biological and psychological differences makes

women superior to men, and that both sexes “should strive to develop relational webs” (2006, p. 25).

These are but a few of the feminist theories that may possibly assist with analyzing the experiences of the women in this study. Because standpoint or gender-based theories are likely in conjunction with a possible feminist theory, it *is* necessary to include these in this review.

Leadership theories abound in the literature and are too great to mention **all** of them here. However, some may be helpful in understanding the women **that** were interviewed in terms of how they see leadership, and if there are leadership theories with which they might identify. These few are trait and power theories.

Trait theories apply characteristics that define what a leader looks like (Jablonski, 1996; Nidiffer, 2001). Many of these descriptors of leaders include words that are typically considered male or masculine (Nidiffer, 2001), and as **such** keep women from seeing themselves, and being seen by others as ‘natural’ leaders (Amey & Twombly, 1992; Twombly, 1995).

Power theories help define what the relationship is between leaders and **followers**, and what that relationship is based on in terms of the type of influence **the** leaders has (official, informal, or formal) on the follower, and what type of **power** the leader has over the follower (Nidiffer, 2001).

The theories of positionality, ways of knowing, gender-based, and **lead**ership listed here have been chosen to interpret the picture of the

21

22

23

24

25

26

27

28

29

30

31

32

33

experiences of the women in this study. Laying out the positionality of each woman interviewed in terms of her relationship with her institution, community, and the 'world' that she lives in will give us the foundation of her experiences as a board member. Understanding her ways of knowing will help me appreciate the stage of cognitive development that she is in and how that affects her relationships within the institution and the board. Recognition of the participant's standpoint on feminism will give me some background on the ways in which gender has affected this person throughout their experience on the board. Although not discussed specifically with each, an interpretation on feminist theories will be made. Finally, their leadership characteristics will round out the knowledge about how they lead on the board. All of these theories will give us a multi-dimensional picture of the women who are governing board members at community colleges in the state of Michigan.

Chapter III: Methodology

This study was done to gather information on the experiences of women who are governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan. The central research question was:

What are the lived experiences of women elected to serve on community college boards of trustees?

Within this research question are three more specific questions that allowed me to examine the understanding these women have of their experiences and their ways of knowing. The three questions were:

1. What factors influenced the decision to seek a seat on the board?
2. How do women feel they influence the governing board on which they serve?
3. In what ways has board membership impacted women members?

Responses to these three questions, using data collected from on-site interviews helped develop a better understanding of how women came to run for a seat on the board in a public election, how they view their role on the board, and their perception of the overall experience of being a trustee.

The study included personal interviews with four board members, observation of each of these four women at a board meeting in which they participated, and the analysis of meeting minutes from two additional board meetings for each of the participants. Gathering information from more than one method assisted in the consistency and dependability of the data (Lincoln &

Guba, 1985). The triangulation of these different forms of data collection supports each other in a deeper understanding of the subjects and their experiences (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

This chapter will describe the research sample and give an overview of the demographic data of the entire population. A summary of the data collection and overview of the design will follow. Finally, a discussion of ethical considerations, trustworthiness of the research, and limitations of the study will be addressed.

Rationale

Qualitative inquiry and a phenomenological strategy were chosen for this study design in order to gather data that would describe the experiences of women who are governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan. To understand a person's lived experience in a specific role and in a precise setting, collecting qualitative data in a "natural setting" is necessary to develop an accurate picture (Patton, 1990). Involving the participants in writing their own story by providing the opportunity for them to review written interview transcripts helps us to grasp ideas and feelings that articulate their experiences with more clarity than can be provided with quantitative data (Creswell, 2003). This study relied most heavily on data collected from personal interviews and observations from board meetings in which the subjects participated. Additional board meeting minutes were analyzed as were responses from a survey, all of which combined to paint a picture of each participant and their experience as a

board member. Interpretations of the data allowed for a broad understanding of each woman's experience as trustees.

Population Survey Data Collection

In order to address the research questions in this study, a purposeful sample of women trustees was chosen in order to obtain a rich and specific understanding of each of the participants and their experiences as a governing board member. Research was done on the internet, using the worldwide web to search each community college in the state, and obtain the names of each female board member; each community college has all current board members listed on their web site. A list was created of the college, the names of each woman serving on the board, and contact information for either that board member or the college. The total number of women board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan, 81, became the total population for this research.

After determining that the entire population would be contacted, I then developed a brief survey to send. The letter and the survey (Appendix B) were intended to solicit participants for the interview process and to collect basic demographic information about the participants. These data will be presented first in the analysis, giving an overview of the demographic data of the total population across the community colleges in this state. The questionnaire that was sent to each woman trustee member included an option to choose a pseudonym for themselves and for their institution. The letter that was sent

included information about the purpose of the questionnaire and interview, how they could contact Michigan State University, and how the information collected would be used.

Although an e-survey was the original intended method of dissemination of the letter and questionnaire, another approach had to be found when it was determined that not all female board members in the state had a published email address. It was determined that it would not be possible to obtain the home addresses for all 81 women board members in the state. After speaking with the board secretaries for three of the community colleges in the state, the resolution to this dilemma was to send to the college an envelope containing the questionnaire and request for an interview for each woman trustee. Each secretary for all 28 community colleges was called to determine if it would be acceptable to distribute the survey in this manner. All agreed that this would be an acceptable approach for distributing the surveys.

The letter and survey was mailed in an envelope that contained a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Of the 81 envelopes sent to the total population, 34 were returned with surveys completed, but only 28 agreed to participate in the interview process. Although the survey was used as a method to collect information about interested interview participants, the data collected from the survey provided some quantitative data about the entire population of respondents with regard to age, years of education, ethnicity, marital status, and other data.

Demographic Information.

The information regarding all the respondents of the survey gives an idea of the possible similarities and differences of all of the women that filled out the survey (Appendix X). Of the 34 women who responded, 27 self-declared their race to be White or Caucasian. As shown in Table 1, three declared their race to be African-American, one Arab-American, one Biracial (described by the participant as black and white), one self-described as White/Native American, and one person replied that she was of the human race.

Table 1

Self-identified race of respondents

RACE	n
White	27
African American	3
Bi-Racial	3†
Other	1*

*Self-described as being of the human race

†Self-described as Black and White(1); Arab-American (1); and White/Native American (1).

The average age of the group of respondents was 61.9 years old, and the median age was 62. All but two of the respondents gave their age, which is shown in Table 2. Of those that answered the age question, the oldest was 81 years old and the youngest was 40 years old.

Table 2

Age of Respondents

AGE	n
40-44	3
45-49	0
50-54	4
55-59	6
60-64	6
65-69	6
70-74	5
75-79	0
80-84	2
No response	2

Table 3 shows that twenty-two of the women respondents were married. Of the remaining 12 women, four of them were divorced, four were single, and four were widows. Nine of the participants that replied had no children and the remainder of the women had anywhere between one and six children. The average among the respondents was 1.83 children. (See Table 4).

Table 3

Marital status of respondents

MARITAL STATUS	n
Single	4
Married	22
Divorced	4
Widowed	4

Table 4

Children of respondents

CHILDREN	n
1	3
2	13
3	5
4	3
6	1
None	9

Table 5 shows the educational attainment of each of the respondents that extends from High School diplomas to Doctorate degrees. Two women replied that they have a high school diploma, while five have some college and no degree. Seven of the women have Bachelor's degrees and 14 have Master's degrees. Of the 14 women who have Master's degrees, three have multiple Master's degrees. Two hold Ph.D.'s and three have Juris Doctorate degrees.

Table 5

Educational attainment of respondents

EDUCATION	n
High School Diploma	2
Some college	2
2 years college	2
3 years college	1
Bachelor's Degree	7
Master's Degree	11
Master's Plus	3
Doctorate	2
Juris Doctorate	3
No response	1

The current profession for these 34 women varied widely and included homemakers, attorneys, college professors, teachers, realtors, artists, among others. There were seven women who declared they were retired. All but six of the women who responded named several other organizations in which they were involved either as members or serving on boards for these organizations.

Table 6

Current employment status of respondents

EMPLOYMENT	n
Unemployed	2
Employed	25
Retired	7

The Interview Sample

In order to gather information from a diversity of perspectives, a method to sort the respondents was necessary. Although a representative from each of the colleges would have been a good way to perform this research, 28 participants would have been too large of a sample. Therefore, it was useful to group like institutions, or use an already established categorical reference. The state of Michigan breaks down the public community colleges into four categories based on statistical information regarding the institutions such as head count, square footage, etc. (www.michigancc.net, 2007). The state uses these statistics to group like institutions by size. The groupings were created to determine state appropriations, and could possibly provide a link to similar issues to examine, within each category. One woman from each of the four tiers was purposely

chosen to interview in order to get a representation from each of the groupings already in use by the state with the thought that this would provide reasonable contextual diversity that might influence aspects of serving as a board trustee.

Using the institutional categories described above, I separated the women who responded to the invitation letter into the four categories based on the community college that they serve, and I selected one from each category. Because I was specifically looking for variety in age, experience, and race, I used purposeful selection to determine the individuals to invite to participate using the demographic data they provided on their written surveys.

In order to start somewhere, I chose the institutional category with the least number of respondents who fell into that group and started contacting the women who indicated interest in participating in the interview process. Of the three women in this category, I was able to speak to only one on the first attempt, and she agreed to meet for an interview. I then moved to one of the other institutional categories and looked for a woman who was demographically different to the first one chosen (e.g., age, years of service on the board, race, and education). I then moved to the third and fourth institutional categories, following the same approach to participant selection and striving to identify women different from those who had already agreed to participate. This continued until I had four women who agreed to an interview.

This method of participant selection was intended to represent trustee members from Michigan community colleges that were both large and small, and

urban, suburban and rural areas, which they do. The women also represent a good cross-section of the characteristics that were reported from the survey results. They cover the spectrum of the ages, race, and educational attainment. Two are married, one is single, and one is a widow. One of the women has a high school diploma, one has a Bachelor's degree, one has a Master's degree, and one holds a terminal degree. One of the women interviewed was one of the five youngest and one was in the five oldest of the survey participants. Two of these women self-declared as White, and two self-declared that they were non-white. This was a good representation of the survey respondents.

I contacted potential interviewees to make appointments with the four candidates. There were two candidates chosen who were interested in participating, but after trying to schedule the interview for a couple of weeks, I moved on to choose other candidates.

Sample Data Collection

Interviews.

Once the identified women were contacted, they chose a location and a date and time for the interview to take place. The discussions with each interviewee introduced other factors of the uniqueness of each institution such as location (rural, urban, or suburban); the composition of the student body, faculty, and community that each serves; and other factors that were distinctive to each institution. Although the focus of this study was not on the institutions themselves, or the communities that the participants reside in and serve, it was

assumed that institutional and community characteristics influenced the experience of board members, at least to some extent (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008).

Interviews were conducted with the board members in person at a location of their choosing. The interview process was approximately 90 minutes in length, and I used semi-structured, open-ended questions (Creswell, 1994; Patton, 1990) to gather information about the women's experiences on the board using the protocol found in Attachment X. This phenomenological strategy (Creswell, 2003) helped the researcher "identify the 'essence' of human experience" (p. 15). All of the interviews were conducted in July and August of 2009. The open-ended interviews allowed for a flexible examination of each woman's viewpoint by hearing their experiences in their own voices (Patton, 1990). This interview protocol allowed for the women's stories to unfold as directed by each participant. The questions were placed on a spreadsheet with a column representing each of the four women. The responses from each woman to all of the protocol questions were then populated into the chart. This allowed for data analysis of each question by the four participants to see the themes that emerged from the analysis, both by question across the participants and themes through the participants. The accounts that each shared of their individual experiences added a richness that could only be gathered by allowing them to speak from their own point of view.

Board Meeting Observation and Document Data.

I attended one board meeting for each of the interview participants to try and gather more data through observations. Observation techniques bring to this study a personal observation of the setting in which each of these women operates as a board member (Patton, 1990). Each interviewee was informed that I would be conducting an observation and we discussed which board meeting that I should attend. Each of the interviewees gave me two choices for meetings to attend and I chose the one that fit best with my schedule. They were aware of which meeting I was to attend, and I was not an active participant in the meetings. I observed the subject in her role on the board and her interactions with the other board members and president at the meeting. The intent was to see if there was anything from the observed meetings that I may have missed during the interview in terms of my perception of the subject and their interactions with others (Patton, 1990).

Two board meeting minute packets, from meetings where I was not present, were also requested and obtained so that I would have a written transcript of two other board meetings. This information provided written interactions between the interview subject and others on the board without a possible bias from the participants because of my attendance. I did not have any preconceived notion of what I would find or that it would be any different from attending a board meeting, yet, it did provide information without bias from the subject.

Pilot Study.

Pilot data collection was done with two women who were previously governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan. I chose two women who had previously served two separate community colleges and sent them the questionnaire. Because these women were going to be used for the pilot, their approval to do a personal interview was sought before both of them agreed to be interviewed at their home. This pilot allowed me to modify both the survey document and the interview protocol questions where necessary. There were two protocol questions that were modified prior to the study.

Role of the Reseacher

The biases of this research are based around my background and upbringing. As a woman who grew up in the 70's during the 2nd wave of feminism, there may have been a tendency to expect a certain outcome from some of the questions. These biases were acknowledged up front and every effort was made to keep my opinion and attitude out of the interviews and interpretation of data. Although my personal experience and assumptions were that women in positions of power were either there because of some financial benefit that they could provide the college, or they were merely token women on the board, I realize that these are merely biases and do not reflect the actual experiences of the women that were interviewed. I also had an expectation that governing boards were groups that were drama-filled and contentious most of the time. Although this did not seem to be the case with the four women and the

boards that they belong to, it does not mean that it does not happen with other boards.

Because I am employed by a community college in the State of Michigan, I purposely did not choose any of the women who sit on the board for the college where I work. Creswell (1994) quotes Glesne & Peshkin who caution on "backyard research" and I chose to not use these women for the interviews (p. 184). If they responded to the questionnaire, the information is included in the data gathered from the survey.

These data could have other interpretations from other researchers. Because I am a white female who grew up during the 2nd wave of feminism in the 1960's and 1970's, someone who is of color or younger who did not live through bias and discrimination based on gender may have a different perspective. Male researchers may have a different interpretation of the findings of this study also.

Validity

Triangulation of data was used to help with the validity of the data (Patton, 1990). Not only were there surveys for the participants to fill out, and interviews to provide, I also attended one board meeting for each of the subjects, and requested copies of other board meeting minutes to assist with the interpretation of the women and their data. Theme justification can be built and supported using these different data sources (Bloomberg & Volpe, 2008; Creswell, 2003.)

res

dat

nes

the

of p

acc

wo

role

tha

Lin

par

par

the

the

resp

resp

mee

Creswell (2003) also suggests that using descriptions to “transport researchers to the setting” and sharing experiences provides accuracy for the data (p. 196). The pictures that I have attempted to paint of each of the interview subjects are not only intended to entice the readers to understand them as people, but to provide examples of shared experiences by these women.

My description of the biases that I bring to this study, and the discussion of points that are discrepant between the four women also strengthen the accuracy of the findings of the research. These discussions highlight the four women as individuals who are not exactly alike, and who did not experience their role as trustee exactly like the others in the study provide a human dimension that adds to the credibility of this research.

Limitations

The limitations of the data collection for this study revolve around the participant’s perception of the study. During the interview phase the study participants could have filtered or presented a bias in their responses based on their interpretation of who will be reading the dissertation, how they want themselves to be seen, and other factors that may have changed their responses. Each participant may not have been as articulate or precise in their responses to questions as the other respondents.

The interview participants may have modified their behavior in the board meetings that I observed simply because I was present. There could also have

been private non-verbal messages between participants of the board meeting that I would not have been able to discern.

My interpretation of the participants' responses and the written board meeting minutes could be biased based on my experiences or my expectations for the study. Other researchers could have different interpretations of the interview data, their perceptions of the observations could be different, and construction of relationships using all of the collected data could be different. A male might interpret these data differently and someone who is older or younger, or of a different race might also interpret the data differently than I.

Another limitation of this study involves the participants. Because the total sample size was relatively small, 81 women for the survey and four interview participants, a more complete study would have included many more (or all) of those who are in the sample. Because only one woman was chosen from each of the pre-determined categories, a larger sample from each category may have provided more comparable data.

Summary

This chapter has provided information regarding the methodology used in this dissertation. Details were given about the total sample, how each potential participant was contacted, and the final four chosen to contribute. A discussion of the personal information gathered by the survey was done. This was followed by an explanation of how the data were collected. Finally, the validity and limitations of the methods used were discussed. This chapter provides

information to the reader to set the stage for the stories of each of the four women.

curr

chapt

wom

colle

inter

elect

affec

relat

othe

Fina

boar

inst

exp

bas

me

inte

fam

a w

Chapter IV: Presentation of Data

This purpose of this study was to learn about the experiences of four current female community college trustees in the State of Michigan. In this chapter, findings from the study are presented. Following a description of the women, the institution that each woman serves and the community in which the college is located, I present data related to how and why the women became interested in running for a trustee position and aspects of running for a publically elected board seat. I discuss running for (or being appointed to) a board position affected the women, their families, and their community relationships. Other relationships are also examined and include those that each woman had with the other board members and with the president of the college that she serves. Finally, an appraisal of each woman's perception of their overall experience as a board member is examined.

Once the background of each woman is laid over the top of the institutional and community attributes, themes are explored that provide an explanation of the experiences of these women. These themes were created based on the transcripts of the interviews, observational data, and the board meeting minute transcripts after all four of the participants had been interviewed.

In order to comprehend these themes, it is necessary to become more familiar with each of the women that were studied. This study attempted to paint a written picture of each of the women by providing background information on

each, and sharing their stories. The foundational information includes some demographic and familial data that will assist in painting the picture. This demographic and familial information, along with facts about the colleges and communities that each one serves, provides the reader with a depiction of the experiences for each of the women. Providing this information assists the reader in a more holistic view of the women, the community they live and work in, and of the institution they serve. All of these things helps the reader understand the lived experiences of each of these women.

Background of Trustees and Institutional Data

I provide some information about the institution and describe the community that is served by the college at which each of these women is a trustee, so that in the end, it is possible to posit whether the specific characteristics of each institution have an impact on the experiences of the women. It was assumed that the community and the institution itself could have some effect on these women and their experiences as board members, although it was never discussed by the participants. None of the women in this study talked about the institution having an effect on their experiences as a trustee per se, although aspects of the community in which it is located were mentioned in connection with their experiences. A categorical reference created by the State of Michigan was used to break down the 28 public community colleges into four groups in order to sort the colleges logically that was discussed more fully in chapter 3.

Although not an intentional part of the data collection, the location of choice for the interview speaks to the women in this study and their way of relating with me as a researcher. Each woman was given the option of where to hold the interview and each chose a different venue. These choices ranged from a home, a place of business, the college, and a public location (a restaurant). The content of the protocol questions was the same for all of the women, but my perception of each interviewee was different, partly because of where we met, and is detailed below.

Ms. Rebecca Jones, Trustee of Washington County Community College.

In category A, Washington County Community College is situated in Washington County (WCCC), which has over 800 square miles of land, with a population of over one million. Comprised of over 50 communities, Washington County houses one of the largest community colleges in the state on multiple campus locations, all situated in urban areas. The college began in the mid-1960's with record enrollments in reply to the educational needs in the community. The board consists of 2 males and 5 females. The board member who agreed to be interviewed from WCCC was Rebecca Jones who happens to be one of the youngest board members in the State of Michigan. She has served on the board for 3 years. She is a single African-American woman whose employment experience has been in health care. She is an alumnus of WCCC

where she obtained an Associate in Applied Science, and also holds a master's degree.

Ms. Rebecca Jones met me in the board room at Washington County Community College at their main campus. When I arrived, she was already there in the board room on her cell phone. I was escorted in by the receptionist and she ended her call. Like Ms. Patton, Ms. Jones seemed very professional and focused on the task at hand. We went through the protocol questions in a very linear, structured way. Because the location of the interview was in her college's board room, the way she was dressed (business suit), and the fact that she was focused on the questions at hand, with little personal conversation or getting 'off-track,' led me to believe that she was also a separate knower (Belenky et al., 1997). The feeling of the board room lends itself to very serious, impersonal conversation. This is a room where very important, serious things happen, so the conversation felt that way to me.

Belenky et al. speak about students who receive good grades but "lack a personality" (1997, p. 108), and are so "highly polished...that it is hard to catch a human voice" (1997, p. 109). This is a feeling that I got when I met Rebecca, and then again when I saw her at the WCCC board meeting. Every word seemed to be carefully calculated, and there was little or no personal expression with anyone on the board.

Ms. Josie Stanford, Trustee of Sunset County Community College.

In category B, Sunset County Community College (SCCC) is situated in the community of Ashton, which is considered a metropolitan area in the state.

Ashton is located in a county that has total population of over 400,000 residents and is over 600 square miles in size. SCCC serves the entire county and serves almost 12,000 students. The college held its first classes in the early 1920's so that county residents could seek an education without leaving the area. The seven-member board of SCCC is comprised of 4 males and 3 females. The campus is completely housed in the Ashton community. Ms. Josie Stanford is the trustee who agreed to be interviewed from this college. She happens to be one of the older female trustees in the state and is in her first 6-year term at the college. She is a widow with four grown children, holds a Juris Doctorate degree, and is currently semi-retired.

Ms. Josie Stanford asked me to come to her home to conduct the interview. She is semi-retired, and her office is in her home. My expectation was that we would meet in her office in her home and that the interview would take place there. Just the fact that I was invited to her home, her personal space, added a personal touch that was unlike the other interviews. When I arrived, she was dressed for an event that she was to attend in the early evening, and was in her kitchen making salsa. She invited me into her kitchen and we drank tea and talked while she watched the salsa on the stove. Because of the location, this was an opportunity to see her in a way that was unlike the other interviewees. A

in con

in the

relative

settled

that

hustle

of n

other

tea

con

stri

Jos

tha

re

th

an

n

co

a

widow, with grown children and grandchildren, Josie is one of the older trustees in the State of Michigan. Although the protocol questions were the same, the delivery of those questions was different because of the casual warmth of the setting. It felt more like a conversation between old friends than the interview that it was. Her philosophy about broader subjects was shared in detail.

Being in her home gave Josie an opportunity to discuss her deceased husband, her children and grandchildren, and she was able to show me pictures of her entire family. This personal touch made this interview different from the others in that I felt as though we were friends, and that we were simply having tea and visiting. This feeling of friendliness from Josie reminded me of the connected knowing that Belenky et al. (1997) described in that it was open, not structured, and safe (trust). There was more there however, and I realize that Josie is a constructivist knower (Belenky, et al., 1997). She has the knowledge that every situation is different for each one of us based on our frame of reference and our perception. She has the answers to questions, but prefaces these answers with the statement that it is her answer, potentially not mine or anyone else's. She understands that her point of view, the way she sees and interprets her life, is based solely on her perception and her experience. This constructed knowledge fits Josie because every question is answered with another question (Belenky, et al., 1997, p. 139).

in the

C. Th

More

ocati

locati

FRCC

repre

the l

com

seco

for

she

sm

thr

her

fee

otr

pro

Ms. Jane Dells, Trustee of Fruit Ridge County Community College.

Fruit Ridge County Community College (FRCCC) has four campus locations in three urban areas of the county, and is the represented college from category C. The county is over 500 square miles and has more than 150,000 residents. More than 7,000 of these residents are students at FRCCC. The first of the four locations began holding classes in the early 1960's with three new campus locations built in the 1980's and 1990's. The seven-member board that serves FRCCC consists of three males and four females. Ms. Jane Dells is the representative from FRCCC who participated in the interview and has been on the board for 13 years. She and her husband are business owners in the community, and she has one grown daughter. She holds a Bachelor's degree in secondary education.

Ms. Dells asked me to meet at a restaurant in the heart of Lewis. We met for lunch on a beautiful, sunny summer day. I arrived first and was seated when she came in. Being familiar with the staff at the restaurant, Jane participated in small talk with them prior to joining me. She was very outgoing and exuberant throughout the interview. She seemed warm, animated, and unafraid of sharing her ideas and thought processes.

The fact that we were meeting in a public place may have given me the feeling that this interview with Jane Dells was going to be different from the other two. It may have been because sitting at a table eating food with someone provides its own intimacy that is difficult to replicate. Either way, this interview

had a warm, personal feel that the other two interviews did not. The protocol questions did not get lost in this interview, but they were not delivered in a linear fashion, and I did not feel like a robot reciting them.

Belenky et al. indicate women who are connected knowers converse in an “intimate, relatively informal” way (1997, p. 114). This meeting with Jane felt very informal and intimate. She spoke about her entire life, with personal people and anecdotes mentioned without fear of repercussion. Belenky et al. (1997) describe connected knowers as those who have a sense of trust of others, and I felt in this interview that I could be trusted with what she said, and that she could be trusted with what I said. I am not saying that she was speaking without thinking, just that it felt as though she could trust me and was talking not just about the answers to the questions, but opening up herself as a person and speaking from the heart.

Ms. Kathy Patton, Trustee of Burns County Community College.

Ms. Kathy Patton is a board member that represents a college from the final category D. I chose Burns County Community College (BCCC), located in the heart of Michigan. Burns County covers over 700 square miles, and has a population of over 60,000 residents. BCCC began in the mid 1980’s with a need for local access to higher education, and the rise in specialization of the workforce. The college sits in a very rural location, approximately 2-10 miles away from the nearest towns. There are currently 5 locations in the county where classes are held. The seven-member board consists of three males and

four females. Kathy is a semi-retired business owner in her community and has served this board for almost 30 years. She is married with two grown children and has some college credits beyond her high school diploma.

I was asked to meet Ms. Kathy Patton at her place of business. Although she is semi-retired, she was working on a sunny, summer day in July. I was greeted by the receptionist and asked to have a seat while I waited. Ms. Patton, dressed in a suit, greeted me and asked me to join her in an office. It was not her office, but an unoccupied office with beautiful wood furniture. She sat behind the desk in an office with no pictures or paperwork or life, and the feel of the meeting was very impersonal. I went through the protocol questions in a very methodical, linear way and she responded to the questions in a professional, polite manner. I felt as though I had to be very business-like in the interview, and there was very little conversation about personal feelings or interpretations beyond what I would describe as the 'public voice' with which she may have felt she should speak. Because she was the first interview that I conducted for this project beyond my pilot interviews, I did not have any expectations or previous experience to compare it to. This interview struck me as what Belenky, et al. (1997) describe as separate knowing:

Separate knowers speak a public language. They exhibit their knowledge in a series of public performances...and they see the listener not as an ally in conversation but as a potentially hostile judge. (p. 108)

Towards the end of the conversation, the atmosphere changed a bit when Ms. Patton chose to speak to the way that community colleges are measured at the

state level. It was at that time that I felt she was giving me a personal point of view as a member of the community, but it was also something that she could (and probably would) have said at a board meeting. She expressed concern that the way the state measures the success of students in higher education is not a good model for community colleges. Many of the students of community colleges are not degree seeking, or are planning on transferring to a four-year college without obtaining an Associate Degree. This puts community colleges at a disadvantage because the State of Michigan (and the Federal Government) measure schools based on degree completers. When she spoke about this issue, I actually felt her passion. Prior to that point in the interview, the discussion was almost antiseptic.

Observing Ms. Patton as the chair of the board of BCCC at a public board meeting confirmed my perception of her from the interview. She was very professional and a leader in the sense that she was directing the board meeting. She was matter of fact, direct and polite, with very little in the way of what I would consider intimacy with people that she has worked with for many years. Belenky et al. describe the separate knower as playing the game of "impersonal reason" (1997, p. 104). This impersonal feel from Kathy came from both her image and expressions in the interview and at the board meeting.

These women all made a conscious choice of where to hold the interview for this study. I believe that each of them showed a little bit about who they are and how they experience the world by the choice that they made. I would

assume that there are multi-faceted reasons that each of one of them made the choice that they did.

Each of the four women chosen to participate in this study selected a pseudonym for their institution and themselves to protect their confidentiality. Their journey to obtain the board seat, and their introduction and orientation to the board provide an awareness of where the women started and how they understand their function on the board. Then a look at their individual experiences serving as a board member over the years is explored. Keeping in mind the research questions, a picture will be painted of these women's experiences not only on the board, but with members of the community, their families, and their friends.

Generating Interest

The four women interviewed each came to their board seats in unique ways. A look at each route to the board seat gives more information on the journey to where they are now and help in understanding their individual relationships and ways of knowing. Two of the women in this study came to their first experience as a community college trustee through appointment to an open seat that vacated prior to the end of the board member's term. The other two women began their experience as a board member through an election to a vacant seat. The experiences of the women participants regarding these placements follows.

Ms. Patton was the owner of her own real estate business and an active member of her community when she was approached by the then-sitting president at BCCC. Both Ms. Patton and the President of BCCC at the time were members of the same church, and there was a college trustee position that was going to be vacated in the middle of a term. The college president thought Kathy might be interested in the vacated seat.

My husband and I talked about it, and we decided that it would be of value to me to do this, with little risk. I let the President of BCCC know that I would be interested, and the board interviewed four or five people, and selected me.

When asked about factors contributing to why she might have been approached by the president of the college, Kathy replied:

[The president] had gotten to know me at church, and knew that I was actively involved in the community, and that I owned my own business. I think probably all those things contributed to him asking me.

When she decided to interview for the vacant board seat, Ms. Patton recalls that her husband was the only other person that helped influence her decision.

Although her children were already out of the house, she felt the need to include her husband in the decision making process, "because obviously a decision like this affects the family."

Ms. Jane Dells' experience becoming interested in a community college governing board seat was somewhat similar to Kathy's in that a seat was being vacated prior to the end of a term. The vacated seat at FRCCC was to be filled by selection for the one and one-half years remaining in the term. Jane was

approached by the college president, the new chairman of the board of the college, and one of the deans to take the vacated seat. She recalls the dean saying:

Jane, you just have to run for the board. You would provide something to it that is missing. I hope you will consider.

This interest of college personnel in Jane as a potential board member was not random. Jane had cultivated several relationships with people from the college over time. The business that Jane and her husband owned was growing and they needed space to expand. They found out that the local business incubator had the necessary space they needed and FRCCC also had a presence there. The college offered non-credit classes and seminars for business owners in this location that she and her husband regularly attended. It was at this business incubator that she became familiar with the college and members of the faculty and staff.

Prior to being asked to serve on the FRCCC board, Jane was approached by the local bank president to participate in a charrette to determine if there was interest and need for a branch college campus in Lewis, the town in which Jane and her husband live. Jane not only participated in the charrette, but was instrumental in getting the millage passed in Lewis for the college campus by attending town hall meetings, speaking with community organizations, and talking with residents about the potential benefit of having a college in Lewis.

The branch campus was built in Lewis for the college, and prior to the opening of the building, the trustee position was vacated. Jane recalls:

It occurred to people that they needed representation from Lewis because the bulk of the membership on the board was from the 'original campus community.' The new chairman of the board, the President of the college, and the Dean were the three that approached me to seek the open trustee seat because of my involvement with the charrette, in the community, and as a business owner.

Jane was pleased to fill the vacant trustee position and felt that she was contributing to the welfare of the community that she calls home.

Ms. Josie Stanford was "courted for three years" to run for a seat on the SCCC governing board before she conceded. As a prominent attorney in the area with very strong ties to the political community in Sunset County, she had extensive leadership and political experience. As a member of numerous organizations she sits on several boards, participates on many advisory committees, volunteers for various organizations, and has won countless awards for her service to the community. After Josie left her position as a county commissioner, she traveled for awhile and found, "there was a world out there." She was then approached by several different people to run for a board seat, and decided it was time. She knew if she ran and was elected to the open seat, she would not be able to travel much anymore. Still, Josie felt that it was time for her to run for the seat, and was the top vote getter.

Although Josie never mentioned specifically who it was that asked her to run for the board of SCCC, she had previously run for public offices. She

mentioned on more than one occasion that she is politically connected, so my assumption is that she was approached by someone in her political circle of acquaintances.

Ms. Rebecca Jones was first recruited to run for a seat on the WCCC governing board by a board member at the time who decided not to run again for his seat. She had developed a relationship with this board member and his wife while she was a work-study student in one of the academic departments at the college. She developed several relationships with senior level faculty and staff while a student at the college, and assisted many trustees with their campaigns for board seats over the years. When the board member approached her to recruit her to run for his seat, Rebecca thought "why don't I campaign for myself?"

It seems there are a couple of ways the women in this study came to realize that being a community college trustee was an option for them. They all seemed to be encouraged by someone to participate as a trustee. As a result of relationships they had with someone(s) associated with the college (i.e., the President, staff or faculty member, or another trustee), they were recruited to consider running for a seat. This is not to say that the women did not think about being a potential candidate, but taking the step to run or be considered came after each of them was approached by someone else. This begs the question of whether these women, and other women, recognize the potential that they could be elected officials? Or does this come only after they are

approached by others to contemplate the possibility? With these four women, it was their relationships with others that led them to consider getting a seat on the board. The study participants believe their existing relationships and the visibility that they have in their communities assisted them with their campaigns to be elected.

The campaign

Typically, the ability to raise money for election campaigns and identifying key issues or platforms on which to run for election are important aspects in who decides to pursue government and agency positions, including community college boards of trustee positions. Finances were not a factor per se for the women in this study, as none of the four spent very much money.

All four of the women in this study spent very little money on campaigns for their first election to a board seat. Although these are elected positions, the women agreed that there is much less cost to campaigning when running unopposed. For all of the participants, there was at least one run for office when they were unopposed, which required less in terms of money and effort. Because two of the four women were appointed to the board prior to running a campaign for election, they had the opportunity to familiarize themselves with the issues of the college, and may have had an advantage in their subsequent run for the trustee position in that they were then incumbents, and possibly running unopposed, or running knowing the current issues. All four of the women agree

that there is a time commitment, even when running unopposed, with increasing their visibility in the community, organizing and executing a campaign.

Ms. Rebecca Jones described her campaign for the trustee position as “grass-roots” with volunteers putting together a flyer with her picture on it. The “bare bones” campaign consisted of Rebecca attending events and passing out these flyers with her volunteers. Because she was running for the first time and did not have the advantage of being appointed to a vacant seat like two of the other interviewees, Rebecca operated under the model she had participated in when assisting other trustees in their campaigns. Although she did not provide details on what that model was, Rebecca did describe that she was committed to attending as many community functions as possible to help increase her visibility, and began attending all of the board meetings prior to the election so that she would be able to understand the current issues of the college and the board. She even spoke with board members she knew to discuss strategies to use in her campaign.

When running for office, Mrs. Kathy Patton did some advertising in the local newspaper, but felt that she was well known in the community and did not need to spend a lot of time and energy running for a seat that she acquired before the election. She ran four times for this board seat, and ran unopposed all but one of those times. The one time that she had an opponent, she did not change her campaign, and still got the most votes.

bef

dd

me

unc

sa

ap

na

wo

fr

fo

m

re

p

s

in

w

v

s

s

s

Because Ms. Jane Dells had the advantage of acquiring a board seat before having to be elected to the board, and because she ran unopposed, she did not do any advertising or campaigning the first time she served as a board member. The second time she ran for the board seat, she was once again unopposed, so she felt there was little advertising or campaigning needed. Jane said "I obtained the necessary signatures for the petition, filled out the application, and drove the paperwork to the office to turn it in. It just happened."

Ms. Josie Stanford had a completely different experience than the other women in this study because she ran against an incumbent board member the first time she sought the seat. She felt it necessary to hold fund raising events for the election to assist with the financial burden of running a campaign, but the majority of the money that was needed for the campaign was from her personal resources. She did a lot of advertising in the newspapers in the area, used flyers, posters, and billboards, and was successful in her campaign. She is not quite sure why she ran for the board and spent all of that money, "maybe my ego got in the way. I don't know." Her financial and emotional efforts paid off, and she was successful in ousting the incumbent, which she claims "speaks to my visibility in the community." She is now in her second term on the board and spent quite a bit of her own money on her second campaign, also.

Although the money expended on these four women's campaigns seems small, the study participants agree that circumstances in the community, at the

college, and economic times contribute to the nature of the elections. If there is no opponent, there is little need to spend much money as there is only one choice on the ballot. If there is little controversy at the college, people seem to be detached from its operation and unaware of the need to hear specific political agendas from those running for board seats. The participants acknowledge the fact that public participation in the activities of the community college board is limited. Attendance by community members at the board meetings for the college is very limited. Although the public pays a portion of the operating budget for the college in their area through tax dollars, unless there is controversy that is publically discussed via the media, there is little concern regarding the election of board members including any concerted attention to particular ideological stances of individual candidates. All of the women interviewed agreed that it seems there is a motto held by the community members regarding their college of "no news is good news." For those women that have run for their seat more than once, they agree that their success hinges on this climate of the college and the community. When times are tough and there is controversy with the college, the need to be more diligent in campaigning on issues is necessary.

Jane Dells gives an example of how she and one of her political campaigns were affected by decisions made about the college's operation. She believes that during the difficult economic times that higher education is enduring now, the effect on trustees and their political aspirations can be directly

tied to their actions as a board member. Jane was approached to run for a State Representative seat and was in the middle of her campaign when the trustees of the college decided that it was necessary to raise tuition. "When the college board decided that the only thing they could do to continue to stay fiscally sound was to raise tuition, the opposition for the Representative seat used the fact that I sit on the board against me in the election, and quite frankly, it was probably the reason I lost that election."

During the election process, all of the women agreed that they met a lot of new people and usually won their races by overwhelming numbers. They feel that when running unopposed, people only have one choice on the ballot and everyone that votes checks that box. When running in opposition with someone else, all agreed that it is difficult to determine whether people choose one candidate over another because they know that candidate, flip a coin, or pick based on gender or something else. All of the interviewees agreed that visibility in the community is critical in being elected, but there is no proof, apart from their perceptions, whether this is true or not.

Still, the women in this study are convinced that name recognition is how they got elected rather than their stance on political issues, their campaign platforms or the money they spent on their campaigns, especially because they spent comparatively little. Once elected or chosen to fill an empty seat, each woman experienced an introduction and orientation to their respective boards differently.

Orientation and Training for the Trustee Position

Each of the women interviewed was introduced and oriented to their respective governing board in different ways. Although orientation is a function of the college and the board, the interpretation of orientation is relevant in creating a picture of each of these women's relationships with the president and other board members. Although there is not a defined, common orientation to trustee positions either at the state level, or through the Association of Governing Boards (AGB) as a national professional organization, there are guidelines through the Association of Community College Trustees (ACCT). The ACCT is a non-profit educational organization that provides support and resources for trustees across the country regarding board operations and issues that are specific to community, technical, and junior colleges (www.acct.org). Membership in the ACCT is voluntary and is meant to be used as a resource to "enhance boards to be effective; support board members in their efforts to govern; build boards capacities; and assist boards to recruit, select, and retain CEO's" (www.acct.org/services). Orientation guidelines for new trustees and a checklist for orientation for CEO's (Presidents) and board chairs to follow from ACCT are listed below. These are suggestions for colleges and boards to follow, but they are best practices only. There is no accountability to ACCT for these things to be done, and it is vague as to who in (or outside) the organization is to perform the training. Although ACCT suggests that, "New trustees, chief executive officers, board chairs and other trustees play important roles in this

orientation process," it is unclear who of those listed is to carry out each of the items on the orientation guidelines.

- 1) Learn about Trustee roles and responsibilities
- 2) Learn about the College's Programs, History and Culture
- 3) Learn about External Trends and Issues
- 4) Learn about College Planning Processes and Budgets
- 5) Learn about Board Meetings and Board operations
- 6) Practice good human relations skills
- 7) Rely on the other resources such as the CEO of the organization, the Board Chair, and State and Federal professional organizations

The checklist that ACCT provides for CEO's and board chairs to use in the introduction and orientation of new trustees consists of:

- 1) Contact and orient new candidates
 - a. Send information regarding roles and responsibilities of board members
 - b. General information about the college
 - c. Policy statements about board operation (conduct, meetings, privileges, etc.)
 - d. Invite new trustee to meet with CEO and Board chair, tour the campus(as), meet with other experienced board members
- 2) Schedule and participate in orientation
 - a. Meet with CEO, board chair, other board members
 - b. Meet with Vice Presidents, Department Chairs, faculty, staff and student leaders
 - c. Discuss guidelines and protocols for communicating with staff
 - d. Provide documents such as college catalog, student handbook, strategic planning documents, annual reports, accreditation reports, organizational charts, etc.
 - e. Assign a mentor
 - f. Strengthen new trustee's community ties
- 3) Be flexible
 - a. Allow for different learning styles
 - b. Allow for different schedules

Since

com

use

from

che

wen

that

one

the

had

a g

ope

exp

thin

com

One

sta

poli

Reci

Since ACCT is the leading professional organization in the nation specifically for community college trustees, one might assume that these guidelines would be used and followed by community colleges across the nation. What was found from the interviewees from the is study is that there was no discussion about a checklist or a list of orientation guidelines that were followed when these women were elected or selected to fill a trustee seat for the first time. This is not to say that the board chairs or CEO's did not use these guidelines or checklists when orienting these women to the board, simply none of the participants mentioned them. One thing about all four of the board members interviewed was that they had all participated in or were members of other organizations where there was a governing board. Therefore, these women were not novices to board operations, even if they were to community college board operations, but each explained their orientation to and training for the trustee position differently.

For the purpose of this study, training is considered the mechanics of how things are done at the board meetings and instruction on how to act, chain of communication and command, and logistical matters concerning the board. Orientation is the familiarization with the operation of the college for students, staff, faculty, and community members. Becoming acquainted with people and policies already in place that affect the board members and are affected by decisions that the board members make are part of the orientation process.

the S

woul

and t

diffe

resp

orien

Rebe

prior

ther

com

new

rep

wor

She

tra

ho

me

de

co

to

If ACCT guidelines and checklists were used at all community colleges in the state, then there would be an expectation that each of our interviewees would experience a somewhat similarly structured experience in their orientation and training. However, each of the participants in this study not only had different experiences with their individual training and orientation to their respective board, but had different expectations of what that training and orientation should include. Three of the women interviewed (Josie Stanford, Rebecca Jones, and Kathy Patton) had previous experiences on governing boards prior to becoming a trustee at a community college. These experiences gave them a unique frame of reference to their orientation and training at the community college.

Ms. Josie Stanford remembers that most of the training she received as a new trustee was done by males, and feels there should be more female representation during the training. She already had quite a bit of experience working with boards (both public and private) so she understood how they work. She was training on what the board does and how they do it, but felt that the trainers were “condescending” and acted like she did not know “anything about how boards operate,” which she felt spoke to how little the rest of the board members knew about her. She gave me the impression that women would have delivered the training in a different way that would not have been so condescending. Although Josie was approached first by the board chair, she had to initiate a search for the college documents necessary to orient herself to the

college and their policies. She was not provided with a mentor but still felt she had enough board experience and knew how things ran. It was clear to me that Josie felt as though the board members should have gotten to know her better. This could have occurred through individual meetings with her, or by the board chair or college president giving the other board members information about her and her experiences with other organizations. An understanding of Josie and her previous experiences by the rest of the board members and the president may have given her a different experience during the training and orientation.

Ms. Rebecca Jones was active in her church board so she had an understanding of the structure and function of a governing board. When she was first elected to the community college board, she "contacted the President's office and the Chairperson at that time to get oriented." She was provided with the college policy manual, and got information about the logistical items that she needed to know concerning the operation of the board from the president's secretary. It was important to Rebecca to "understand what projects were currently going on and getting abreast of everything," so she obtained and read previous board meeting minutes. She also initiated a meeting and spent time with the President and the board chair to talk about current agenda items.

It seemed that Rebecca took charge of obtaining the information that was necessary for her to feel comfortable to begin being a trustee. She did not have access to the list from the ACCT, nor did she mention a checklist or guidelines used by her college president or board chair. Rebecca basically oriented herself

to the college by seeking out and gathering information about the college, the other board members, and the student population.

Ms. Kathy Patton's orientation to the board was "very informal in that there was not training per se." She was originally approached by the President of the college because she knew him from church. She initiated several conversations with the President and other board members that she knew about information necessary "to participate in the board." Because Kathy had experience sitting on other boards in the community, she was aware of "parliamentary protocols" of board membership. Although her experience was on private boards that were closed to public scrutiny, she felt that boards were run basically the same and her initial concern for the public being present at the board meetings were quickly dismissed.

Jane Dells was the only one of the interviewees that had not had experience on a governing board for other organizations. Because of this, and partly because she was appointed to fill a vacant seat, her experience with orientation and training as a new board member is unique and what I might consider critical to her performance as a board member. "Baptism by fire" is how Ms. Dells explains her orientation and training to the board at FRCCC. Keeping in mind that Jane was selected to fill a seat on the board that was vacated prior to the end of a term, her orientation and training had to happen quickly. Although she does not speak about anyone contacting her in the beginning, she was quick to say that "there was really no formal orientation to the board" for her. Jane

focused on what she could do to “get up to speed.” She “read everything I could get my hands on and I became a very good listener,” and she also asked a lot of questions. Jane spent her time as a “replacement” board member gathering information about the college, the relationship that the college has with the State of Michigan, and information about higher education in general. The mechanics of learning how the board operates were not discussed, nor did Jane shed any light on how she came to understand these things beyond what I have already noted. Another thing that Jane spent that first one and one-half years doing was getting an understanding her role, other board members and their roles so that she could make a decision about what she would want to accomplish if she were to run and be elected for the next 6-year term.

Even though each woman experienced her individual orientation to her respective board differently, some commonalities arose. Three of the women had previous experiences participating in various boards and they understood the protocols followed during a board meeting. Even so, what their expectations were for introduction and orientation to the community college board were quite different from each other. Ms. Jane Dells perceived her orientation to the board as a process that takes some time, and included personal research of the operation of higher education in the state, along with a comprehensive understanding of the way that each of her other board members operate. Ms. Kathy Patton was in need of orientation to the operation of a board that was held to public scrutiny. Ms. Rebecca Jones needed the logistical and historical

inform

seem

Presi

mem

beca

com

were

train

Perth

indi

of th

from

ben

Rel

mo

& R

wit

exp

the

Pre

information to be comfortable with her role as a trustee. Ms. Josie Stanford seemed to want more relational information about the other trustees and the President. She seemed to clearly want more interaction with the other board members and the president in terms of understanding each other as they became a group that was expected to work and make decisions together.

Although the ACCT's guidelines and checklist did not seem to be a common manual for these women and the organizations that they serve, there were some things from the ACCT guidelines and checklists that were part of the training and orientation of these new trustees and some things that were not. Perhaps these guidelines from ACCT are just that, because the needs of each individual trustee are different. Although there is no evidence whether or not any of these colleges used these guidelines, there seems to be some justification from the experiences of these women that using the guidelines would be beneficial for incoming, new trustees.

Relationships

Traditionally, women and men lead differently, and relationships are often more significant to women than men (Amey, 1992; Glazer-Raymo, 1999, Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998). Getting to know and understand these women in this study with regard to their relationships helps add to the picture of each woman's lived experience. The interviews brought to light two major relational areas for each of these women. The relationship that each of these women has with the presidents of the colleges they serve, and the other board members, makes a

significant impact on their experience as a governing board member. There was also considerable discussion about the relationships that these women have with their family members, and other community residents. The creation and maintenance of these relationships seemed to be important in their view of themselves as a board member, and contributed to their success as a board member.

Board Members and Presidents.

Critical to the operation of the community college board is the relationship between members of the board (Carver, 1997), and each trustee's relationship with the college president (Vaughan & Weisman, 1997). Because these relationships are significant in how the board operates as a group, and could potentially be a source of how each woman feels about her experiences on the board, excluding this information might not provide a clear picture of the experience of these women. Each of the participants was asked about their relationship with the president and other board members, and their perception of the relationships among board members.

Ms. Rebecca Jones is involved with a board that, since she was elected, has been going through change. She was fairly new to the WCCC board when she was elected chair; she had recently been elected chair at the time of our interview. Not only was she a new trustee, then she was learning chair responsibilities, then the president of the institution left. There was an interim leader chosen as the presidential search began. Because she was the new board

cha

pre

su

the

go

to

the

As

ot

W

th

ca

to

de

chair, and because there was a presidential search going on, she and the interim president worked very closely together. They met on a regular basis to make sure those things ran smoothly, and that the search was progressing. Because of these meetings, Rebecca felt her relationship with the interim president was very good.

When the new president was hired, Rebecca worked very closely with him to help with the new leadership transition. She feels that her relationship with the new president is "unique" because she was board chair when he was hired. As chair, she felt she had a different relationship with the new president than the other trustees might have.

I can talk with him and be very honest with him about issues that might be bothering me. We work very closely together. I work much more closely with him than [do] the other trustees. I think that his relationship with the other board members is a work in progress. It is a matter of the getting to know each other because there are fairly new board members and a fairly new president.

When describing her relationship with the other board members, Rebecca uses the term "cordial." She has known most of them for a while; she helped campaign for quite a few of them. "Am I best friends with them, no, but we work together." She has a "professional, business" relationship with them. In describing the group, Rebecca says:

I know that we, as a board, we have the responsibility to move this organization forward. We are supposed to be the leaders.

Currently, Rebecca works very closely with the Vice-Chair of the board, who is also a woman, and she describes their relationship this way: "We speak in one voice." Rebecca and the Vice-Chair recently attended the state trustee conference in a town 3 or 4 hours away from the college. They rode together to the conference and spent these hours discussing issues and ideas about the college, and getting to know each other better.

We spent the time discussing things, not necessarily agreeing on everything. We would discuss each point of view and try to convince the other to change their mind. We stopped for ice cream, and got back in the car and started discussing the same issues that we disagreed on in terms of what needed to be done for the good of the college. It was then that we found common ground and areas where we could compromise. It was a great way for us to get to know each other better.

Jane Dells describes her relationship as a board member with the three presidents with whom she has worked as good. She has a tendency to go directly to the president with questions and concerns. She realizes that this is frowned upon, and her understanding is that each trustee should run everything through the board chair. As a board chair in the past, she knows that she did not like it when the other trustees would go directly to the president. However, she feels that her relationship with the presidents has been such that she could do that.

The first president that she worked with was someone with whom she felt she had an extremely good working relationship. They had a lot in common, and they "just clicked." Jane feels that she never "had the same feeling with the second president." They were professional and cordial, but Jane just did not feel

the same way about him; she did not elaborate on why. This indifference did not keep her from approaching him as she has the other presidents with whom she has worked, and Jane feels that they had a good working relationship. The third, and current, president is someone she has known for quite a few years through his work in the community. Jane “just loves him,” and they have a great working relationship.

Jane believes she has a good, working relationship with all the other trustees on the board. She has concerns about some of the board members and what she perceives to be their narrow focus on the “main campus” with a lack of interest in the off-campus sites. Because Jane is from one of the off-campus locations, she constantly has to make sure that the board members remember to service the entire region, and not just make decisions that are beneficial to the main campus location. Jane also has some concerns about two of the trustees, and feels that they are not bringing any value to the board. She feels that maybe 6-year terms are too long, and that maybe some people lose interest in their role on the board.

Jane also expressed frustration with the other board members because all of them do not take advantage of the professional development opportunities that are available to them. The Michigan Community College Association (MCCA) offers retreats and conferences to all Michigan Community College governing board members. She believes that the retreats should be mandatory, and that the conferences that are sponsored by MCCA should be better attended.

She

exp

In

the

co

be

th

bo

at

bo

p

d

h

t

t

These conferences are stimulating. They provide opportunities for networking with other board members across the state, and keep us up to date on state community college issues.

She cannot believe that all members do not go to the conferences as all expenses are paid for by the college.

Jane is also concerned that some of the board members do not participate in college events that she thinks they should. She purposely attends every event that she can at all campus locations. She feels that some of the board members do not attend any, or as many as they should. As a more political person, Jane believes that attendance at these events increases a board member's visibility in the college and broader community, which in turn helps build relationships.

While Jane did express frustration about several aspects of her fellow board members' behaviors in these ways, during the board meeting that I attended, there did not seem to be any animosity between Jane and the other board members. From my perspective, it does not seem to hinder her professional relationship with the other board members especially when she describes the board this way:

Everyone has a tremendous amount of respect for one another. The reputation of the FRCCC board around the state is that we are a good, professional board.

Ms. Josie Stanford describes her relationship with the other trustees on her board as good. She says there is not one of them that she does not like, and because she likes to entertain, she would like to have them all over dinner, but that would violate the open meetings act that regulates board meetings in

Michigan. She describes the board members as “very good people with good intentions.”

Josie feels that her relationship with the president is very good. She considers him a good president, doing the best he can with what he has to work with, and “he always answers questions from the board members.” She tends to communicate directly with the President instead of going through the board chair because Josie does everything via the internet, and “the chair does not have the internet.” She typically sends the president information so that he is up to date, asks him questions, and shares her opinions with him. Although unspoken, I think that Josie feels one of her roles as a trustee is to share everything about higher education and college with the president.

Although she does not believe in micromanaging the president, she is cautious about everything that the administration brings to the board.

If everything that administration brought to the board was the right thing, what would be the purpose of a governing board? I don’t want to be controversial or adversarial, but I do expect to be treated with respect if I am asking a question or gathering information.

There is currently a new president at BCCC. Because Kathy Patton is the current Board Chair, she has a very close working relationship with the president. She feels he is a “wonderful president.” The previous president was a friend of Kathy and her husband. They socialized and attended the same church. She feels that she will eventually have the same relationship with the new president. It

seemed important for her to have a close professional relationship with the president of the college.

Kathy has respect for all of the board members and feels that her relationships with them are professional. The board members and the president have dinner prior to the board meeting each month. This allows them to have personal conversations and share information about their families and other personal things with each other. The idea to get together and have dinner prior to the board meeting was Kathy's years ago, and speaks to her commitment to building relationships among the board members. She feels that this addition to the dynamics of the board members and president is crucial to the smooth operation of the board.

Kathy feels that she works well with the other board members, and although she has some concerns about one or two of them and how they represent the college, they seem to "find common ground when problem-solving for the good of the institution." Her concerns about some of the board members have more to do with time commitments to the college and attending college events than with their actual performance on the board. Kathy is always eager to attend as many events as possible, and thinks that some members spend very little time outside of the actual board meetings in service to the college.

Each of the women interviewed seemed to have a pretty good working relationship with each of their respective presidents (current and past), and were a bit more verbal about some of their concerns with their fellow board members.

However, they all felt as though they were professional with each of the other members of their respective boards. From the board meetings that I attended for each of these women, they were nothing but completely professional and respectful in their behavior towards both the president and the other board members.

Two examples from the data illustrate the extent to which the women worked to maintain professional relationships with other board members even under what seemed to be more confrontational situations. There was one board meeting where another board member (male) verbally attacked one of the interviewees publically, but she chose to not reciprocate during the board meeting. I did see them in discussion after the board meeting was complete, but was not privy to their conversation. I am uncertain as to her choice to not reciprocate during the board meeting and if that had anything to do with my being present.

The second example came during one of the interviews when there was a concern raised about an issue with another board member, but the participant made it clear that raising the concern in public to the president, chair, and the other board members would do no good, and would only cause hard feelings. She felt that letting it go was the best solution to the problem. Although this was not a fight that she was willing to do in public, she made the point to let me know that the group functions fairly well together, but there are underlying issues that she has concerning other board members. She was not clear if this

situation was a conflict that she did not want to address, or if she was simply doing her best to maintain a professional relationship with another board member.

Both of these examples give us a brief insight into how women present themselves at public meetings and how they approach conflict among board members. All of the behaviors of these women with respect to how they handle themselves in relationship with their presidents and other board members is beyond the scope of this study. Two of the four women had no problem sharing thoughts with me about concerns that they have with the other board members, but none of them were willing to approach these issues head on with the others. Is it because everything they do together is fodder for public scrutiny? Is it because they want to play the correct role in public and “be the good girl”? Is their public voice different than their private voice? Although group dynamics per se were never discussed during the interview, each of the women in this study seem to have a handle on what they perceive to be appropriate behavior to exhibit in their respective groups both in public and private.

Family and Community relationships.

Women tend to be relational leaders (Tedrow & Rhoads, 1998) and a look at each of the participants’ relationships can help us understand their experiences as leaders, specifically how being a leader affects their family and community relationships. Publically elected officials have the responsibility of being accountable to the community they serve (constituents, tax payers,

community members), and to their own families. During the interview process with the four board members, they spoke about how their personal/family relationships were affected by their public position, and how they were influenced by the community members that they serve. I also asked how their responsibilities around the house had been affected by the time commitment of serving (without pay) the community college.

Ms. Jane Dells has a long history of serving her community in many different ways. Besides owning a business with her husband, she has been involved in community organizations since she and her husband moved back to the area several years ago. She is a member of Welcome Wagon, the local Historical Society, and the Service League. She admits that sitting on the traditional male-led organizations, i.e., Toastmasters, Optimists, and Rotary, were not on her radar as she “was savvy enough to know that they would not serve her well.” She admitted that when she was asked to speak to those organizations, she was happy to oblige, but was not to become a member. Although she did not elaborate on her choice to be part of some organizations and not of others including those led by men, with her political aspirations I imagine she made deliberate choices. When she was asked to specifically address the potential effect on her personal and community relationships, Jane said:

People are busy and not paying attention to the community college. My personal relationships have not been impacted. My position on the board has had a positive impact on my professional relationship with other organizations. School superintendents in the area come to me with

questions [and] foundation boards want to know what is going on. These other organizations are interested in the community college and what is going on.

Although Jane's husband saw her as a different person after she took the board position, she does not feel that being a board member has affected her relationships with her family members. She does not believe her responsibilities in the home have not changed since she was elected, either. For example, because she and her husband have always owned their own businesses, she has always had a person come in and clean once a week and this has not changed with her added trustee responsibilities. She feels that she has grown from the experience as a board member, as does her husband:

At some point in time during my second 6-year term, my husband said to me, "Who are you, and what have you done with my wife?" He explained that I had grown in so many different ways that I was a different person than the one that he married, in a positive sense.

In one respect, Jane has been changed not just as a person, but in her aspirations for public office. She ran for a state legislative position, and was not elected. She blames her unsuccessful run on the fact that during the campaign, the community college board had to raise tuition, and this was used against her in the campaign. This has not stopped her from doing other things to improve the community in which she lives. One example Jane offered was that she is currently working with other educators in the community to start a non-profit foundation to assist with growing the community.

As a widow with grown children, Ms. Josie Stanford did not think that her personal life was affected by her election to the board. Her responsibilities at home have not changed because she lives alone. Before she decided to run for the seat at SCCC, she travelled quite a bit and knew that continuing to travel extensively would be out of the question if she were elected to this seat.

In terms of her relationship with community members since becoming an elected official, Josie spoke only to how she can assist community members through education. Josie talked frequently about mentoring and assisting women with improving their lives. She spoke fondly of many women who she helped go back to school to better themselves and be strong and independent. Josie reflected that she "lost more than one good assistant and secretary" because she encouraged them to get an education and pursue loftier goals. Because she feels that women's work is devalued, and working in the home has no monetary value, Josie is a true believer of women having the skills, education, and experience necessary to be independent if that is what they want to do.

Josie's desire for affordable, accessible education for everyone that wants it comes from, in part, her upbringing in a home where "we didn't educate our women back then." She was raised in an environment where women and men ate in different rooms, worshiped separately, and females were expected to be seen and not heard. Her devotion to education rang clear:

Look at me, who is going to take me without even a high school education? How many more people are out there like me, who don't have the opportunity, or never had the opportunity to go to college? If it

weren't for the community colleges, they never will because the universities are never going to take them.

When asked directly about the impact of board membership on her family, Rebecca's response was "there has been no impact." Rebecca shared very little concerning her family life, and when she talked of family, she spoke of her church family. Rebecca did not speak to her responsibilities at home as being more or less than prior to being elected to the board. She did mention the effect on her as a person that board membership has had.

I have not been changed by this position. I am still who I was before, with a focus on what I am doing on the board and where I am going in my professional life. My ability to critically think has increased, and my work load has increased.

She goes on to speak about how the position has affected her:

There is a lot of responsibility in being a board member. People look at you differently, I mean in the college community. You hold a lot of power in that position.

Rebecca tries to keep conversations with community members about the operation of the college to a minimum. If the conversations go down a road that has to do with the day to day operations of the organization, she refers people to the President. If the conversation is regarding policy items about the college, she thanks the community member for their input, and then terminates the conversation (or changes the subject). As a board member, she "needs to focus on serving the public and moving the college forward." Ms. Jones' perception of

the impact on community relationships led her to introduce the term "servant leadership".

The power lies within our owners; we are servants to them, to help their business ventures, or whatever is going on, to help push that forward through educating the public.

Ms. Kathy Patton spoke of the "responsibility that I [have] as a board member is to do the right thing." She feels it is an honor to serve her community by participating as a trustee for the college, and that community college people are special:

Working with community college students is a calling. Assisting people to better themselves, change their lives, and improve their communities through that change is a very important task in life.

Kathy is very committed to the community and she and her husband are very active in it. She did not speak to any issues with her community relationships as a result of serving as a trustee. I asked specifically if she could describe a relationship that may have been damaged because of decisions that the board made. She only replied that "I have gained more relationships than have been lost."

As a married woman with grown children, Kathy also did not see that being a board member interrupted her personal and family relationships. She said that her responsibilities at home were the same now as they were before she became a trustee.

Each of these women shared a little of what they thought was the impact on their families of them being elected to a trustee position, as well as any ways in which this role affected relationships within the family and community.

Although the amount of information shared on this topic varied for each participant, it seems that the women felt there was little impact on their families as a result of their decision to seek and assume the trustee position.

The impact on relationships with community members of serving as a trustee was viewed by each of the women in different ways. Jane spoke specifically to her relationship with other community organizations and how she was affected politically. Josie talked of her responsibility to encourage and assist community members with educational attainment. Rebecca highlighted a desire to be a servant to the community, but drew specific boundaries around the issues that she would discuss with community members, and Kathy described the desire to assist community members with improving their lives through education. With the exception of Jane it did not appear that there were negative effects of serving as a trustee felt by these women in their community relationships. At the same time, all of the women expressed ways in which they were able to work differently in their communities as a result of their position, and in some cases, felt compelled to act in certain ways because of their role with the community college board.

Overall Experience as a Trustee

To summarize their experience as trustees, each participant was asked if serving as an unpaid trustee for the community college had met their expectations. Each of their responses gives insight into the women and what they thought the experience was going to be. Although each of them shared that the experience of being a governing board member at a community college was positive, they all have a question in their mind as to whether they will run again in the future. There is a time commitment that each one of them feels might hamper their decision to seek election again. As well for some of them, there are other public positions that they might be interested in that would take time away from the college board.

Kathy Patton has enjoyed her experience as a trustee of BCCC, it has "exceeded her expectations." She feels like the community college is probably one of the most important things going on in the county. She has learned a great deal from being a trustee, and the knowledge she has acquired during her experience has helped in her business as well.

Rebecca Jones feels that the experience of being elected to this position was "amazing." Because she is an alumnus of the college, she has a passion for the institution and making it better.

I know I am in a very important position. I am honored to serve on the board. The first year I was on the board was a 'gimmie.' You spend time learning about the board, going to seminars and professional development opportunities for board members. Then in the second year, you start examining things differently.

Rebecca really feels that after the first year, she began seeing her impact on the board and the college. That is where she finds satisfaction, making a difference.

Jane Dells has had a “wonderful, pleasant, broadening experience” on the board. Although she ran twice for state office and lost both times, she feels that her potential to “make a difference” can be done on the board of FRCCC just as well as in a state office. She has many ways that she can be fulfilled by contributing to her community, and she is proud to be able to do that.

Josie Stanford is pleased with her experience as a governing board member. She is not certain yet if she will run again, but she will make that decision when the time comes. Josie is one that may be running for other public offices as she has in the past.

All four of the participants have had positive experiences as governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan. Each of them feel a sense of accomplishment and fulfillment from the experience, that they are able to make a difference as a trustee, and their expectations of this part of their lives have been met.

Gendered differences

The literature has shown that men and women experience things differently (Amey, 1992; Kezar, 2000; Valian, 2004) and lead differently (Amey, 2006; Kezar, 2000). I began the study therefore, wondering whether or not the women trustees would perceive that they had different experiences than their male counterparts, so I pursued this topic with the participants. There were

varied responses to this topic ranging from a perceived level of commitment to the board, a different approach to making decisions, and diverse opinions on what experience meant to each participant.

Ms. Kathy Patton feels that some men are not as committed as she is. She feels the need to attend all of the college activities that she can and believes that this is part of her service to the electorate. Some men, in her eyes, do not necessarily have the same level of commitment, and are only willing to do so much. Kathy did not speak to the commitment level of the other women on her board.

Females want to do more, or try and do more. Adding one more thing to their plate could be a gender thing.

Ms. Rebecca Jones feels that her experience is very different from that of the male members of the board. She feels that women take things more seriously, and do more critical thinking. Rebecca feels that women need to make sure that "they do the best job possible."

[Men] just want it done. We (women) want it done, but we want more detail. We want it done but we want to know how we are going to get there, what the implications are going to be, etc. Women take everything that they are involved in to heart. Men don't necessarily do that. They placate to this one, or smooth things over. Men want to check things off the list. Women in powerful positions are very direct, they know where they want to go, and how to get there. They don't take no for an answer. Women in positions of power are leaders.

Rebecca thinks that men and women see things differently partly because of ego. She feels that men who do not have a lead position or are not in leadership positions in either their professional or personal lives exert more power on the board to satisfy their ego. Although the men on the board do not dismiss women's ideas, they just want to "plow through" the agenda item. She feels that women are more process oriented and sequential. Rebecca's collaborative process shows when talking about working with the board to resolve issues:

When dealing with a group of people, in any setting, there are always challenges in working with the group. There are some things that take more effort than others, you work at it. I am stubborn, I don't give up easy. I am going to figure out another way to come at an issue. If I see a slight opportunity, I will take advantage of that, and change some minds.

Although Jane Dells claims a neutral position on the National Organization for women (NOW) and the Equal Rights Amendment (ERA), her choice to not publicize her stance on feminism issues is directly related to her political aspirations. Jane feels as though declaring a feminist approach would alienate voters, so she claims a middle of the road tactic.

I have a real problem going on either side of the fence. I am slowly, quietly making a difference. I am not a rabble-rouser.

Ms. Dells did have an example of a situation that she feels happened because she was a woman, and is certain that if she were a man, this would have never happened.

Fairly early on in my year and one-half as a selected trustee, there was an issue about the Lewis campus. I went to use the restroom, and when I returned, I realized that they had voted on the agenda item while I was

gone. I believe that would not have happened if I was a man, and I have never forgiven them for that.

Jane felt at that time that she was taken advantage of because she is female and the other members of the board were all male. However, other than this one incident, Jane does not feel that her gender has hampered her experience as a trustee. There are now four women on the board, so Jane does not feel that a gendered issue would happen. Does she use the fact that there are more women than men for behind the scenes leverage? Her answer was a resounding "yes."

Jane does feel that men and women experience things differently, and used the example above as a way to share with me that she and her other women board members would "have never acted that way" to another board member, male or female. She believes that "we are all equal, and I treat each member with respect". She feels that the incident above showed that she was not respected by the male members of that board at that time, and things have improved for her over the years.

Josie Stanford does think that women and men perceive things differently, and are different in their approach to being leaders. She does not feel that issues on the board are initiated because of gender. For example, there is one board member that does not know how to speak to people in public. Josie feels that he shows very little respect for others, but also says that he does not discriminate between men and women when behaving this way.

Josie shared a couple of stories that happened throughout the years (prior to becoming a board member) that spoke to her perception of gender issues more broadly. She retold a story about "bigoted and sexist" men in a social club in which she and her husband were members. Josie's husband wanted to run for the board of the social club and she told him that he should not be a part of that. "He told me that it is easier to change things from within than from outside." She felt that having her husband on that board would cause others to think that he was also bigoted and sexist while her husband wanted her to understand that his mission as a board member was to make changes to the organization from within.

I believe that of the four women that were interviewed for this dissertation, Josie was probably the most aware of gendered differences in the public and political arenas. She was more verbal about the roles of men and women and how those roles are changing. However, overall, there were fewer examples of gendered differences than what I would have imagined going into this study, based on the literature. Although the women interviewed think that men and women experience things differently, there were very few ways in which the women differed from their perceptions of their male counterparts' experience.

Matting and Framing the Pictures

The intent of this study was to explore the experiences of four women who occupy governing board positions at community colleges in the State of

Michigan. Trustee positions in higher education are presumed to be leadership positions so it is important to understand how these women view their experiences in a publically elected position and how (or whether) they approach the role as a leader. Kezar (2000) suggest that a woman's understanding of leadership comes partially from fundamental aspects of her identity (p. 723). Following this line of thinking, because I studied women trustees, there is value in understanding whether the women construct their experiences with gender or feminist frameworks, if they perceive that they have different experiences than men do, and if these perceptions and perspectives affect how they operate as a trustee. Attempting to understand these women and their ways of knowing (Belenky, et al., 1997) may help other women who desire to obtain a governing board position. Although none of the participants spoke specifically to their leadership style(s) or their specific ways of knowing (Belenky, et al., 1997), they did provide insight into these areas and their feminist standpoints. None of the four women interviewed has what seems to be a pure, singular leadership style and not each of the four had a clear, concise way of knowing as described by Belenky, et al. (1997), still, some observations of leadership styles and discussions of ways of knowing for the interviewees provides information to the reader, colleges, presidents of colleges, and professional organizations to better the experience for women who are trustees, or desire to become trustees.

The conversations with each of the four women took somewhat different paths in terms of emphasis. I believe that each of the participants talked about

their own unique way of understanding their experience as a trustee, and so, various aspects emerge for each of them. Because of this, there will be different areas of discussion for each of the participants.

Ms. Rebecca Jones

During the interview with Rebecca, she spoke about servant leadership several times, using that very term. She constantly talked about the need to serve the people that elected her, finding out what their needs are, and trying to figure out ways to meet those needs as a trustee at WCCC. Rebecca's references to servant leadership coupled with her questions during the board meetings that I reviewed and attended leads me to believe that she really believes that her leadership style is that of servant leadership. Servant leadership is defined as the need to "identify and meet the needs of others" (Keith, 1994, p. 6). Although servant leaders are not concerned about the accumulation of power, they are able to garner power simply by serving others (Greenleaf, 1977). By putting others' needs first, by striving to assist others in becoming better people, the servant leader feels a sense of accomplishment and self-fulfillment (Greenleaf, 1977). There are many references to service in religious writings, and it seems that Rebecca sees her service to church much in the same way that she sees her service to the board of WCCC.

Some of the traits that I would use to describe Rebecca Jones are professional, rigid, congenial, service-oriented, and collaborative. She seems to have a bit of the 'public face' or the 'political speak' that does not let us see her

personal opinions and thoughts. She seems intent on serving the public with the good of the institution as her focus, but does not share with us what her personal opinion about things might be.

These traits seem to be conflicting in discussion of leadership styles that are male oriented (rigid) or female oriented (collaborative). Rebecca is also conflicting when we look at her in terms of women's ways of knowing (Belenky, et al., 1997) in that she is a separate knower in that she seems impersonal and autonomous, but is also a connected knower in that she responds to others and looks for truth based on care, and her morality is based in service. These contradictions lead us to see Rebecca as having an experience as a trustee that is unique.

Ms. Josie Stanford

The best way to describe Ms. Stanford's ways of knowing would be gender-based (Kezar, 2000), or standpoint theory (Kezar, 2000). Ms. Stanford relates many of her life's experiences and relationships in terms of what it means to be a woman, or how being female has affected her life. Her experiences begin with her relationships as a child and growing up in a home that she describes as "not valuing women," through to her recognition that there are some men in organizations that she is involved with that still speak to women as if they are second class citizens. Josie seems to have a clear gender-based way of knowing (Kezar, 2000) because her experiences seem to be based on the fact that she is female, but her theoretical take on feminism is not as clear. Her stories of

working within a system to eliminate discrimination and her recollection of helping other women with whom she was associated better themselves through education suggest a liberal feminist point of view (Blackmore, 2007). Liberal feminists work within existing systems to eliminate discrimination, and Josie's continuous search for power positions e.g., on boards, running for political office, suggests that either liberal feminist or socialist feminism (Blackmore, 2007) – changing the institutions that we operate in – is her way of knowing how to improve the opportunities for women. Acknowledging how she was socialized speaks to cultural feminism (Blackmore, 2007) in that she seeks to increase the value of women and their traits in society (Blackmore, 2007). Listening to Josie talk about her life, what she has done and how she has come to “know” the world around her leads me to believe that she operates under what Belenky, et.al. ((1997) describe as constructed knowledge. She “aspire[s] to work that contributes to the empowerment and improvement in the quality of life of others” (p. 152).

I believe that Josie uses her power in the community in the form of her name recognition to entice change and lead people and organizations. She is active in specific communities and sits on several profit and non-profit boards that give her opportunities to make those changes.

I have to wonder if Josie has a more developed sense of self and more complicated way of knowing because she is more mature than most of the other trustees in the state. Although her years of experience on the board are less

than most of the other women in this study, as one of the older trustees her life experiences may have provided her with a more mature way of looking at and evaluating life. With a wide variety of experiences, going from a woman who did not even obtain a high school diploma to a well respected attorney, does this alone explain her evolution of development?

Ms. Kathy Patton

Ms. Patton seemed to be more guarded in her responses throughout the interview, and very stoic during the board meeting that I attended. This leads me to believe that she is a separate-knower as "...[they] bring to their group propositions that they have developed as fully as possible" (Belenky, 1997, p. 108). Unlike Ms. Jane Dells who is "nosey, and asks a lot of questions" and Ms. Josie Stanford who "is the inquisitor" in comparison, Ms. Patton seems to measure her words and responses carefully. Her interview seemed very impersonal, and although she was friendly, I did not get the same feeling of warmth or intimacy that I got with two of the other three. Belenky, et al. (1997) describe this as "impersonal reason" (p. 104).

Kathy Patton has quite a bit of experience on governing boards in her community and has the longest tenure on the community college board of the women that were interviewed. Her knowledge of behavior that works well in these situations must be beneficial to her. It may be that her concern about the community college board meetings being public has something to do with her guarded posture in them. With her husband as a reporter for the local paper, she

was concerned about the perception of his writing about the board meetings. She was even asked by board members when she interviewed for the open seat her first go around with this board if her husband's occupation would be harmful to the college and the board. So her sensitivity and reserve may be warranted.

Kathy seems to function as a separate knower in that she seems to "play a game that has belonged traditionally to boys" (Belenky, et.al., 1997, p.104). This actually contradicts some of the things that I found about her such as a traditional marriage with children, no formal education beyond high school, and what seems to me as a "conventional female role" (Belenky, et al., 1997, p. 104). Kathy spoke several times during the interview and at board meetings about "doing the right thing," almost as if these decisions were not personal, but that she was making decisions based on what she thought to be the right thing to do...not because that is what she wanted. It was like she was doing what she thought others expected her to do. This is what Belenky, et. al (1997) describes as "public language" that "aims to please" (p. 108-109). It seems to be Kathy's intent to provide purely non-emotional, fact-based decisions, lacking a personal voice to all of her decision making as a board member.

This seemingly separate way of knowing for Kathy affects her leadership style in many ways. Characteristics that could describe her leadership style would be collaboration and congeniality. Collaboration does not fall under the separate way of knowing according to Belenky, et al., so again, there is a contradiction in comparison to the authors ways of knowing. During board meetings, she

deferred to the appropriate people when necessary, but pushed on to complete tasks and check-off items from the agenda. She was pleasant and cordial to all in attendance, and seemed to have a very political face on her interactions with the board members, president, and members of the public. Her words, at times, seemed scripted, like when Belenky, et al. describe as speaking "a public language" (1997, p. 104).

Ms. Jane Dells

Jane calls herself a "natural born leader." She enjoys participating in organizations and is a strong believer in doing what she thinks needs to be done for the good of the community, the college, and her constituents. The fact that she ran for public office in different settings (the community college and a state-level position) leads me to believe that she is politically motivated and concerned with her public persona. She said that she has a "real problem going on either side of the fence," which leads me to believe that she is very politically motivated to reach out and serve as many people as possible. She is very charismatic, warm and personable. She is a seeker of knowledge, learning as much about everything that she comes in contact with so that she can speak intelligently on every subject. For example, Jane and a man in the community are working to create a foundation and they are currently in the process of putting together the governing board. Their discussions and research have led them to the conclusion that the board needs to be evenly divided between men and women, but if necessary, there should be more women. When asked why, Jane said that she

and her partner in this venture did research and found out that “boards are more effective and valuable if there are more women than men”.

Interestingly, although a political speaker, there were times in our conversation when the personal and passion came through in her tone. She seemed to feel safe with me in that she shared some of her passions. This is not typical of separate knowers, but more of what Belenky, et al. (1997) call constructed knowledge. This integrates the self with the knowledge that is learned from others. It seems as though Jane is able to take a political point of view that is pleasing to others and integrate her personal self into this language. This is where I think her charisma and charm comes into play. She chooses the point of view and speaks to the least harmful position to retain her image and sustain her reputation, but is able to assimilate a personal viewpoint into this for her maximum benefit. It seems very clever, but very genuine and real.

I think that positionality theory best describes Jane Dells leadership because it seems that her experiences are all wrapped up together (Kezar, 2000). Her personal and professional identities are what they are because of, in part, her community relationships and her political aspirations. Jane’s professional experiences and her personal attributes of charisma and charm have made her who she is in the community, and have contributed to her political ties throughout the state. To reiterate what was said earlier about positionality theory, Jane’s power is definitely a force that permeates every one of her relationships.

Summary

In summary, each of the women in this study have different ways of understanding their experiences in life and as governing board members at community colleges, and they each have a different way of communicating that information. Each of them has unique, separate journeys that brought them to where they are now. They each deal with their role as a trustee member differently and have gotten distinctive value from being a board member. The analysis and interpretation of the findings will follow with implications for further study.

Chapter V: Discussion and Interpretation

The purpose of this study was to understand the experiences of women who became members on community college boards in the State of Michigan. The need for an appreciation of these women and their lived experiences is lacking in the current literature and may be helpful to different sectors in higher education. There are three groups that could potentially benefit from the findings in this study. The first group that may benefit from this study is women who aspire to contribute to higher education through participating at the board level in order to donate their knowledge and wisdom to the citizens of the state. Women could benefit as they may be able to use the information to become stronger leaders. The second group that could gain from information in this dissertation is institutions of higher education, specifically community colleges, in the way that they solicit women to run for vacant board seats and in their orientation and training of women who have been elected to the board seat. Higher education institutions could become more robust by purposely encouraging women to run for board seats. The third group that would benefit from this dissertation is the professional organizations that support both board members and institutions that are governed by boards. These organizations could provide more information and services that would assist new board members as they transition to the board. All of these factions can take advantage of the data from this study to promote the institution and provide a positive experience for both the board member and the organization.

In this qualitative study, I used survey data, personal interviews, observation techniques, and written transcripts of board meetings to examine the experiences of four women who are currently governing board members for community colleges in the State of Michigan. These data were collected, coded, and analyzed in order to write descriptions of the women's experiences based around the three research questions, which were:

1. What factors influenced the decision to seek a seat on the board?
2. How do women feel they influence the governing board on which they serve?
3. In what ways has board membership impacted women members?

These questions were answered for the most part in chapter 4. There were themes that arose that were outside of the scope of each of the questions, and that added to the understanding of the women's experiences as a governing board member. This chapter will discuss and interpret these themes as they may impact future research, and as implications for practice in higher education, women's studies, and leadership.

Generating interest

This study has shown that women who have an interest in running for a seat on a community college governing board need to create and maintain relationships. The women from this study felt that relationships were critical to their becoming interested in running for a board seat, or being asked to fill a vacant board seat. In each of the four cases, participants were approached by

Someone inside the organization that felt these women were capable of being a trustee and would be a valuable asset to the board. They were encouraged, asked, or prompted to run for a seat because of a relationship that they had with someone who was aware that there was a vacancy. Although these relationships ranged from personal to professional, the women in this study spoke of the importance of all relationships to their success in obtaining and maintaining a board position.

Based on the experiences of the women interviewed, it would seem that women who may be interested in trustee positions at community colleges would seek to create relationships with people inside the college, and those people outside the college that have ties to that college. These relationships could be focused in several different areas, including, within the community college district, with employees of the community college, and with political factions in the community. Because community colleges in the state of Michigan are funded in part by the residents of the district, a visibility within that district is necessary to be successful in a run for a seat on the board. It was found in this study that visibility can be cultivated in many different ways. There are political, religious, and service oriented community groups that can promote women to be successful in their campaign for board seats. As was documented in this study, this collection of organizations can benefit the women considering running for office in many different ways. Some of the women in this study came to be interested in running for a seat through people that they knew from their church,

through their local service organizations, or through dealings that they had with people they encountered with their personal business. Creating and building relationships with people in the community is a common factor for all of these women.

For the leaders of institutions looking for potential new governing board members, a look around at community members who are active in these religious, service, and community organizations are a good place to start to persuade people to run for seats. In some cases, there may be a need to look for specific attributes such as women who are attorneys, women who are associated with the specific fields of study, or even church leaders and business owners. Women who have some of these attributes would have experiences to contribute to their service on the board. Because boards are responsible for the operation of the community college from a fiscal and policy perspective, women who have experience as CPA's, attorneys, or who have owned their own business may have skills that would be of value for the board. Women who have experience being leaders in other organizations (church or service) may be able to provide knowledge and wisdom from their experiences from other organizations.

The campaign

For the women in this study, the money necessary to run a successful campaign was determined based on the opponent. If there was not an opponent, it was not necessary to spend a lot of money campaigning. If there was another person running for the seat, or if that opponent were an incumbent

in the race, they stated there was much more money and campaigning necessary to be elected. A course of action for the campaign, and the funding necessary, therefore, was affected by the nature of the opponent. The women from this study used all of their relational assets to assist in their campaigns for board seats. More generally, if there is an opponent for the vacant seat on the board, women might use relationships within the community to create a supportive network to assist with campaigning and garnering funds to assist with the promotion. Typically, the literature suggests that for publically elected positions, women and men run on different campaign issues (Burrell, 2004; Fox & Lawless, 2005). It was found in this study of four women who ran several times for publically elected positions that in community college elections, this may not necessarily be true. Although there are certainly topics that could be used as campaign issues, these women did not have that experience, at least not that they shared. That is not to say that there are never specific issues for women to run on for community college governing board seats, just that it did not happen with these four women. There were, however, topics of concern that the women in this study did advocate during their tenure as board members. Unlike political positions such as legislative positions at the state and federal levels, the issues of community college elected officials are more typically about accessibility and affordability of a community college education. Therefore, it would seem that a potential candidate needs to be cognizant of certain topics,

but running on a specific platform may not be necessary when running for a governing board position at a community college in the State of Michigan.

For organizations in the community that would like to see a specific candidate chosen, there are ways that they can assist the candidate to be successful in a run for office. This support could come in the way of funding, campaigning, or just word of mouth promotion of a specific candidate. Community college leaders could also use this information, if a trustee position were vacant, to seek out women in the community who are visible and well-known to other members of the college community.

In summary, the answer to the first research question, what influenced the decision to seek a board seat, the women in this study spoke to the value of relationships with others in the community. The additional influencers were family members, more specifically a spouse. The actual campaign was supported by the family and community members, and financing typically came from the women, themselves. Implications for practice may be that women who seek these positions could create relationships with college administrators, faculty, and staff. They could also increase their visibility in the community in order to create a well-known name.

Future research may include interviews with men who became interested in open governing board seats at community colleges to determine if their experiences differ from the women in this study. In-depth interviews with board members, both male and female, to understand how trustees specifically

determine with whom to create relationships, if some are deliberate and some are accidental, and how they determine value from these relationships might be helpful in understanding this process.

The second research question, how do women feel they influence the board that they serve, was a more complicated one to answer. Although I am not sure the data led to this question being answered completely, some inferences can be made by listening to the stories of how the women were oriented to the board experience, how they view their relationships with other board members and with the president of the college, and how they view the gender differences of the board.

Orientation

Once a candidate is elected to the board, the orientation and training can be overwhelming. The results of the study showed that there are many things that a newly elected board member needs to know and do to become acclimated to the new position, in order to be an active, productive participant on the board. The women who were elected (or appointed) needed to get up to speed on the workings of the board and the information specific to the board that would assist them in becoming an intentional influence on the board. It seems that the women in this study needed different things from the other board members, the President of the institution, and from professional organizations that support board members. Conversations with new board members can be key to understanding exactly what kind of orientation they need. Because the women in

this study found their own path to gathering the necessary orientation information, whether conversations should be initiated by the board chair, the president of the college, or some other member is unclear. What is evident is that a conversation needs to happen with the new member to determine who can best assist this person and in what ways. A good place to start would be to use a set of guidelines that professional organizations such as the ACCT and AGB can (and do) provide to colleges, board chairs and presidents to assist with orienting new trustees and providing trustee professional development.

Board Members and Presidents

Critical to the membership of boards is the relationship between and amongst the board members themselves, and the members' individual relationship with the college president. It is critical that relationships are generated and nurtured to be a successful board member, and to have the board run smoothly. Although all relationships are not perfect, there seems to be a need to grow these relationships in order build and create consensus. There was also a common thread with each of the women interviewed regarding the professionalism of the board members. There is an expectation that the board as a whole, and the members individually, will act professionally when working together. From this study, professionalism is described as respect for one another and behavior of the board members in public meetings that is non-confrontational.

There also needs to be a good working relationship among at least a few of the other board members that contributes to the cohesion of the board. One of the functions of the board is to make decisions on policy issues, so having a good relationship with others on the board helps members come to compromise and collaboration. Because women have a tendency to be more collaborative than men (Twombly, 1995), this should be something for which to strive.

It would seem from talking with these women that creating consensus, having good working relationships, and a professional demeanor with and among the board members helps with the influence that each of the trustees has with each other and with the president. These professional relationships seem to be valuable in how each of the women influence others on the board in the decision making process.

Gendered Differences

One of the findings of this study was that there was an expectation by the women in terms of their commitment to the college and college activities that seems like it was different than what they thought was true of their male trustee counterparts. For example, the women felt that it was important for trustees to be present at as many college activities as possible. This perceived difference in expectations was a concern expressed by the women interviewed, so it seems important that responsibilities for board members should be made clear from the beginning of their tenure including participation in college activities. The women in this study also seemed to have some expectation of attendance at public

activities, which may be because community colleges are servants to their communities. Again, setting clear expectations for all board members is important so that there is a shared responsibility with all members of the board for attendance at college events and community activities.

The college president, and possibly the professional board organizations should provide information to board members in terms of expectations for trustees, ways to manage time and juggle events, and other ways to meet the expectations of the college, the other board members, and themselves. It could be beneficial to understand the level of participation of board members at college sponsored activities. This might provide a comparison to expectation that the women in this study had in terms of their fellow trustees.

A study that compares and contrasts board members from public institutions to those members from private/corporate, not-for-profit, and K-12 boards would be beneficial to the study of governing boards. It would be interesting to see if women on these boards have the same issues with participation in activities, and if men on these boards experience any of the same issues as women and/or men on locally-elected boards. Future studies of how board members are influenced, volunteer, or are recruited to seek board seats could be beneficial in comparison to the small group in this study. It would be interesting to know if private and non-profit board members are influenced similarly to this group of women.

Research question number three sought to understand how these women had been impacted by their role as a community college trustee. It was clear that all four of the women in this study felt that their experience as a governing board member at a Michigan community college was a positive one. In each case, the women seemed to have grown from the experience, both on a personal and a professional level. They all spoke of the people that they met, the challenges that they faced, and the knowledge that they obtained, all because of their role as a governing board member.

It would be important to conduct further research with a larger sample of women board members to see if these positive experiences are more generalizable among a larger group of women. It would also be worth determining whether or not there are common factors in larger samples of women that contribute to their satisfaction with the experience. With a larger sample, it may be that there would be women participants who have not felt that their board experience was valuable nor have they been positively impacted by serving in this role. Having a greater understanding of how women trustees are impacted by their role might lead to both a better ability to recruit women to the position and to support them once they assume the role.

Summary

The stories of the women in this study are interesting and provide a glimpse into their experiences as governing board members at community colleges in the State of Michigan. There are many things that were learned from

their

many

gove

boa

pos

sur

the

th

re

w

v

e

their stories, and many questions left unanswered. Future research can take many paths from this study in order to contribute to the literature on women, governing boards, leadership, and relationships, among others.

The intent of this study was to understand a woman's experience as a board member, and I believe that was accomplished. The research questions as posed were simple, but the answers are complex. Although the themes that surfaced in the data analysis chapter were not exactly what was expected when the project started, there are some compelling ideas about women leaders throughout this dissertation.

The research sample in this study was small, which warrants more research on a larger sample. Studies in the future could also include men, women from other types of boards (corporate, not-for-profit, K-12, universities), women from other states (where the governing structure is different for higher education), and women who have been elected to other political seats (municipal, state, federal).

It was interesting that three of the four women who were chosen for this study happened to be trustees on governing boards that had more women than men. A larger sample of women might return different results if the women were in the minority on the governing board that they serve. Although this was not intentional from the beginning of the research, it is not the norm that there are more women than men on the governing boards at community colleges in the State of Michigan.

It is my belief that the women in this study had a strong commitment to the college and the community that the college serves. If the women did not live in the same community and location of their respective colleges, as is often true for women who serve on governing boards of four-year institutions of higher education, would the commitment to the college be the same? Would the trustees see the same connection between commitment to their college and their community? This idea may pose more questions for future researchers with regard to the college's role in building community and how it might go about doing that. An important factor here is the connection that each of these women have with their respective communities. It would be valuable to determine if women are more dedicated to community caretaking than are men.

The implications in this study are specific to the experiences of these women and the subjective nature of the claims made by the researcher regarding the meaning of these data is specific to this group of women. It also includes my experiences and biases, and therefore, is a reflection of my perceptions of the women and their experiences.

EPILOGUE

Although this dissertation explored the experiences of four unique women trustees who serve four different community colleges in the State of Michigan, there are some very valuable key points that were extrapolated from these interviews regarding policy making and governance. These women are very dedicated and well known to the members of the communities that their colleges serve. Because of this, and the fact that they all have other ties with the community and its' members, they are not only looking out for the success of the students who attend these colleges, but how student success will impact the community. Although this study has shown that there may be other political implications for the women besides their role on the governing board, the intent of these women is to improve their communities. Different from four-year institutions in the State of Michigan where trustees do not necessarily live in the communities that the college serves, community college governing board members have a commitment to these communities. These governing board members do run these organizations and are intent on making them successful. This brings us to issues that were not part of the study, but that could be addressed at the state and national level that would improve the way community colleges are seen and measured. I will attempt to bring light to some of these issues in this epilogue.

Because community colleges have a different vision and mission from four-year institutions of higher education across the United States, the way that

th

g

n

r

a

f

a

n

these institutions are measured and how they are held accountable to governments at both the state and federal level should not be the same. Right now, government initiatives provide funding (and accolades) for high graduation rates as a measure of success. Because community college students are typically attending part-time, honing job skills, or becoming prepared academically for the four-year institutional settings, they may not be seeking a degree. Therefore, accounting for these students as degree-seeking is a misnomer. There needs to be a structure developed that measures the success of community colleges, and their students, in a different way than what is already in place.

The second area of government control and/or policy that needs to be restructured is the definition of types of students. The way the government (both state and federal) uses to follow college students is based on a designation about what kind of student they are. There are several categories from guest students, transfer students, high school students who are dual-enrolled or early entry students, and students called First Time in Any College (FTIAC). FTIAC students are those who supposedly have never attending any college. Designating themselves as a FTIAC is not the issue these students have in being recognized by the government researchers. It is when the FTIAC's change their course of study, or move from one college to another, they are measured by the government as a 'failure' because they did not obtain a degree at the first institution that they attended, in the first degree-seeking area that they declared. Unfortunately, at community colleges, there are many students who change their

program of study, do not complete the program that they first declared, or move to another institution without obtaining a degree. Therefore, the community college that they started with does not have the luxury of claiming that they were successful with those students because they cannot count them as earning a degree.

Another area of concern in this state, and perhaps others, is the ability of community colleges to educate the entire population of the state. In Michigan, one third of the money that funds community colleges comes from local tax dollars. The other two thirds come from state appropriations and tuition. Because each community college district have distinct borders based on the service area, not every community in the state is eligible for education at the lower, in district rate. Residents do not pay a millage to the community college therefore they are charged a higher tuition rate. The structure in Michigan for the four-year institution provides two major tuition brackets; in state residency and out of state residency. At the community colleges there are three; in district, out of district, and out of state. If the state would restructure the funding options for community colleges and allow all residents of the state to attend a community college, there may be opportunity for residents to attend a community college with less financial burden.

The final area of discussion for this epilogue is about the community services that are provided by community college. There are many service oriented programs, including non-credit classes that are provided to the residents

of the college service area. These services give the residents the sense of community that helps strengthen the community as a whole. Many times these community colleges provide forums for political conversations, social services to residents to attend college that might not have the opportunity to do so if they were residents of other communities, and with various valuable opportunities to experience the college campus environment for young people in the community. These services put the community in community college, and help explain why these women trustees are so dedicated to their role as a member of the governing board for these institutions.

APPENDIX A
Survey Questions

Name:

Age:

Race/Ethnicity:

Institution:

1st year elected:

Current profession:

Previous profession:

Marital Status:

Children: Yes No

Numbers and Ages

Highest Educational Level:

Date of degree:

Field of degree:

Number of terms served:

Years of service on board:

APPENDIX B

Protocol Questions

Thank you for your participation in this study and your time today. As I mentioned before our time together should take about 90 minutes. As we discussed, I will be audio taping our session for compilation of data. Shall we start?

1. Tell me how you came to run for a seat on the board? Who influenced you or suggested that you run?
2. How did the election process affect you and your family? Who or what organization contributed to the expenses related to the election?
3. Describe a typical board meeting.
4. Please talk with me about your relationship to others on the board. How have these relationships changed over the time that you have spent on the board?
5. Please explain the power relationships on the board? What factors affect these relationships?
6. Please tell me about your relationship with the President. How is that different from the relationship that the president has with the board as a whole? How is it different from the relationship that the president has with other board members?

7. How does the experience of being on the board meet the expectations that you had prior to becoming a board member? How is it different?
8. Tell me how you feel you are impacting the community and the college as a board member?
9. What benefits does board membership provide you that you did not or would not have had if you were not a member?
10. What are some of the challenges you face as a member of this board?
11. How does this membership affect your social/community relationships?
12. Do you think that your experience is different from your male colleagues on the board? Can you explain?

REFERENCES

- Activities Classification Structure (ACS) 2006-2007 Data Book and Companion. Michigan Department of Labor and Economic Growth, February, 2008. Downloaded from <http://www.michigancc.net/data> on 6/11/2008.
- Aquirre, A. and Martinez, R. (2002). Leadership practices and diversity in Higher Education: Transitional and Transformational Frameworks. *The Journal of Leadership Studies*. 8, 3, 53-62.
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2004). Community Colleges Past to Present. Downloaded from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/content/navigationmenu/aboutcommunitycolleges/historical> on 9/16/2004.
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2007). Statistics, State-By-State Profile. downloaded from <http://www2.aacc.nche.edu/research/home.htm> on 11/24/07.
- American Association of Community Colleges. (2010). Statistics, State-By-State Profile. downloaded from <http://www.aacc.nche.edu/AboutCC/Pages/fastfacts.aspx> on 07/29/10.
- American Governing Boards of Universities and Colleges. (2007). Public Institutions. <http://agb.org/governance-public-institutions> downloaded October 12, 2008.
- Amey, M.J. (1992). Academic Women: Different ways of Knowing. Paper presented at ASHE, October 1992.
- Amey, M.J. (2006). Leadership in Higher Education. *Change*. 38, 6, 55-58.
- Amey, M.J. and Twombly, S.B. (1992). Re-Visioning leadership in Community Colleges. *Review of Higher Education*. 15, 2, 125-150.
- Bastedo, M.N. (2008). Conflicts, Commitments, and Cliques in the University: Moral seduction as a treat to trustee independence. Article in press, *American Educational Research Journal*. May 15, 2008
- Belenky, M.F., Clinchy, B.M., Goldberger, N.R., & Tarule, J.M. (1997). Women's Ways of Knowing: The development of self, voice, and mind. Basic Books. New York, NY.

- Bensimon, E.M. (1989). Transactional, transformational and "Trans-Vigorational" leaders. *Leadership Abstracts*. 2, 6.
- Bensimon, E.M. & Neumann, A. (1993). *Redesigning Collegiate Leadership: Teams and teamwork in higher education*. Johns Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland.
- Bensimon, E. M. & Marshall, C. (2000.) Policy Analysis for Postsecondary Education: Feminist and Critical perspectives, in *Women in American Higher Education: A feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series. 2000. Pearson Custom Publishing. Boston, Massachusetts.
- Blackmore, J. and Sachs, J. (2007). *Performing and reforming leaders: Gender, Educational restructuring, and organizational change*. State University of New York Press, Albany, NY.
- Bolman, L.G. (1995). *Becoming a School Board Member*. Corwin Press. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Burrell, B. (1996). *A Woman's Place is in the House: Campaigning for Congress in the Feminist Era*. University of Michigan. Ann Arbor, MI.
- Burrell, B. (2004). *Women and Political Participation*. ABC-CLIO, Inc. Santa Barbara, CA.
- Carver, J. (1997). *Boards that Make a Difference: A new design for Leadership in Nonprofit and Public Organizations*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Castallo, R.T. (2003). *Focused Leadership: School boards and superintendents working together*. Scarecrow Press. Lanham, MD.
- Cohen, A.M. & Brawer, F.B. (1989). *The American Community College*. 2nd Ed. Jossey-Bass, Inc. San Francisco, CA.
- Community College – Michigan in Brief. Downloaded from <http://www.michiganinbrief.org/edition06/text/issues/issue-14.htm>. downloaded on 9/28/04.
- Creswell, J.W. (1994). *Research Design: Qualitative & Quantitative Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications.
- Creswell, J.W. (2003). *2nd Edition. Research Design: Qualitative, Quantitative, and Mixed Methods Approaches*. Thousand Oaks, CA. Sage Publications. .

- Deckman, M. (2007). Gender differences in the decision to run for school board. *American Politics Research*. 35.4, 23, 541.
- Directory of Michigan Public Community Colleges: 2008. Downloaded from www.mi.gov on April 4, 2008.
- Duryea, E. D. (2000). *The Academic Corporation*. New York: Falmer Press.
- Eadie, D.C. (2003). Eight Keys to an extraordinary board-superintendent partnership. Scarecrow Press, Inc. Lanham, MD.
- Ebbers, Gallisath, Rockel and Coyan. (2000). *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. Vol. 24, #5.
- Education Commission of the States. (2006). The Center for Community College Policy. Downloaded from www.communitycollegepolicy.org on August 7, 2008.
- Education Commission of the States. (2007). State Profiles - K-12 Governance Structure Database. Downloaded from www.ecs.org on January 19, 2008.
- Evans, G.A. (2001). The World on our Backs. *Community College Journal of Research and Practice*. Vol 25, pgs. 181-192.
- Flynn, P.M. & Adams, S.M. (2004). Changes will bring more women to boards. *Financial Executive*. 20, 2, 32-35.
- Ford, L.E. (2006). 2nd ed. Women and Politics: The pursuit of equality. Houghton Mifflin. Boston, MA.
- Fox, R.L. & Lawless, J.L. (2004). Entering the Arena? Gender and the Decision to Run for Office. *American Journal of Political Science*, 48, 2, 264-280.
- Fox, R.L. & Lawless, J.L. (2005). To Run or Not to run for Office: Explaining nascent political ambition. *American Journal of Political Science*. 49, 3, 642-659
- Garcia, M. (1995). Engendering Student Services. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, 89, Spring 1995, pgs. 29-38.
- Glazer-Raymo, J. (1999.) Shattering the Myths: Women in Academe. The John Hopkins University Press. Baltimore, Maryland.

- Glazer-Raymo, J., Townsend, B.K., & Roopers-Huilman, B., Editors. (2000). *Women in Higher Education: A Feminist Perspective*. Pearson Custom Publishing, Boston Massachusetts.
- Greenleaf, Robert K. (1977). *Servant leadership: A journey into the nature of legitimate power and greatness*. New York, NY. Paulist Press.
- Hammond, T. H. (2004). *Herding Cats in University Heirarchies: Formal Structure and Policy Choice in American Research Universities*. (R. G. Ehrenberg, Ed.) Ithaca, New York: Cornell University.
- Hart, J. (2006). Women and Feminism in Higher Education Scholarship: An analysis of three core journals. *The Journal of Higher Education* (77), 40-61.
- Hawkesworth, M. (1999). Analyzing backlash: Feminist standpoint theory as analytical tool. In *Women in Higher Education: Feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series, 2nd Edition. (2000). Pearson Custom Publishing, Boston, MA.
- Herrnson, P.S., Lay, J. Celeste, & Stokes, A.K. (2003). Women Running "as Women": Candidate Gender, Campaign Issues, and Voter-Targeting Strategies. *The Journal of Politics*. 65, 1, 244-255.
- Hess, F.M. (2002). School Boards at the Dawn of the 21st Century: Conditions and challenges of district governance. National School Board Association.
- Houle, C. O. (1989). *Governing Boards: Their Nature and Nurture*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Jablonski, M. (1996). The leadership challenge for women college presidents. In *Women in higher education: Feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series, 2nd Edition. (2000). Pearson Custom Publishing, Boston, MA.
- Keith, K. M. (1994). ERIC (ED409764). Servant Leadership. Paper presented at the Meeting of the Social Science Association. Honolulu, HI. October 3, 1994.
- Kezar, A. (2000). Pluralistic Leadership: Incorporating Diverse Voices. *The Journal of Higher Education* (71), 722-743.
- Konrad, A.M. & Kramer, V.W. (2006). How Many Women do Boards Need? *Harvard Business Review*. 84, 12, 22.

- Lawless, J.L. and Fox, R.L. (2005). *It takes a candidate: Why women don't run for office*. New York, N.Y.: Cambridge University Press.
- Lovell, C. and Trouth, C. (2002). State Governance Patterns for Community Colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges* (117), 91-100.
- Martínez Alemán A.M. & Renn, K.A. (2002.) *Women in Higher Education: An encyclopedia*. ABC-CLIO. Santa Barbara, California.
- McCann, C.R. and Kim, S-K. (2003). *Feminist theory reader: Local and global perspectives*. Routledge. New York, NY.
- McCauley, L.M. (2002). Perspectives on governance in community colleges using different organizational models. ERIC document ED.469.069.
- McGuinness, Aims C. (1997). The changing structure of state higher education leadership. In *Public Policy and Higher Education*, ASHE Reader Series. Pearson Customer Publishing, Boston, MA. Pgs. 125-159.
- Michigan in Brief. (2004). Community Colleges. (14). downloaded from <http://michiganinbrief.org/edition06/text/issues/issue-14.htm> on 9/24/04.
- Michigan State Board for Public Community Colleges. (1997, October). Michigan State Board for Public Community Colleges 1998 Goals, Policies, and Objectives: To Promote Access to Quality Comprehensive Community College Services.
- Mitchell, R. and Eddy, P. (2007). In the Middle: A gendered view of career pathways of mid-level community college leaders. ASHE 2007.
- National School Boards Association (1974). Women on school boards. Research paper presented to the NSBA Board of Directors, March 29, 1974.
- Nidiffer, J. (2001). New leadership for a new century: Women's contribution to leadership in higher education. In *Women Administrators in Higher Education: Historical and Contemporary Perspectives*. State University of New York Press: Albany, NY.
- Park, S.M. (2000). Research, Teaching, and Service: Why shouldn't women's work count? In *Women in American Higher Education: A feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series. 2000. Pearson Custom Publishing. Boston, Massachusetts.

- Patton, M.Q. (1990). 2nd ed. *Qualitative evaluation and research methods*. Sage. Newbury Park, CA.
- Pointer, D.D. and Orlikoff, J.E. (2002). *The High-Performance Board: Principles of Nonprofit Organization Governance*. New York, NY, USA: Jossey-Bass, Inc.
- Polonio, N. A. (2005). Best Practices for Community-College Boards. *The Chronicle of Higher Education* , 52 (10), B18.
- Polonio, N.A. (2008). The Citizen Trustee: Profile in Leadership. An original study by the Association of Community College Trustees.
- Poston, W.K. Jr. (1994). *Making Governance Work: TQE for school boards*. Corwin Press. Thousand Oaks, CA.
- Rich, A. (2000). Toward a woman-centered university, in *Women in American Higher Education: A feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series. 2000. Pearson Custom Publishing. Boston, Massachusetts.
- Richardson Jr., R.C. & de los Santos, G. E. (2001) Statewide governance structures and two-year colleges. In *Community Colleges; Policy in the future context*. Townsend, B.K. & Twombly, S.B., Eds. Ablex Publishing, Westport, CT.
- Rhodes, F. H. (2001). *The Creation of the Future: The Role of the American University*. Ithaca, New York: Cornell University.
- Sellers, P. (2007). Women on Boards (NOT!). *Fortune: 50 most powerful women*. 156, 8, 105.
- Sewall, A.M. (1996). New School Governance: The school board and its future. Presented at the Annual Meeting of the Mid-South Educational Research Association, Tuscaloosa, AL, November, 1996.
- Tedrow, B. and Rhoads, R.A. (1998). Senior Women Community College Administrators: Life in Higher Education's Inner Circle. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Association for the Study of Higher Education. Miami, Florida. November.
- The Chronicle Almanac 2004-5: The 50 States and the District of Columbia. Downloaded from <http://chronicle.com/weekly/almanac/2004/states/mi.html> on 4/5/06.

- Tidball, E., Tidball, C., Smith, D. & Wolf-Wendel, L. (1999). Priorities, Patterns, and Principals. In *Women in American Higher Education: A feminist perspective*. ASHE Reader Series. 2000. Pearson Custom Publishing. Boston, Massachusetts..
- Tollefson, T. (2000). Martorana's Legacy: Research on State Systems of Community Colleges.
- Townsend, B.K. (1995). Gender and Power in the Community College. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. 89, 23, 1-89.
- Townsend, B.K. (2008). Community College as Gender-Equitable Institutions. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. 142, No. 142, Pgs. 7-14.
- Twombly, S.B. (1995). Gendered Images of Community College Leadership: What messages they send. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, No. 89, Spring 1995. Pgs. 67-77.
- Valian, V. (2004). Beyond Gender Schemas: Improving the Advancement of Women in Academia. *NWSA Journal*, 16 (1), 207-220.
- Vaughan, G. B., and Weisman, I. M. (2003). Leadership Development: The Role of the President-Board Team. *New Directions for Community Colleges* (123), 51-61.
- Vaughan, G. (2000). The Community College Story. 2nd Edition. The American Association of Community Colleges. Community College Press. Washington, D.C.
- Vaughan, G.B., and Weisman, I.M. (1997). Selected Characteristics of Community College Trustees and Presidents. *New Directions for Community Colleges*. 98, 5-12.
- Wood, M. M. (Ed.). (1996). *Nonprofit Boards and Leadership: Cases on Governance, Change, and Board-Staff Dynamics*. San Francisco, CA, U.S.A.: Jossey-Bass, Inc.