

A Snapshot of Female Administrative Representation in the Florida Public Schools

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Abstract

In some areas of the country, female administrators are underrepresented in educational administration when compared to the number of female teachers. A review of data from the Florida Department of Education's website was utilized to examine school level administrative staff, district level administrative staff, and total administrative staff during school year 2010-2011. This snapshot provided some insight into the overall numbers of male and female administrators in Florida's Public School Districts, and the snapshot captured where these administrators worked in the state of Florida. The results of this study indicated that the majority of the state's K-12 school leaders were female administrators at the school level, district level, and total administration in all regions of the state.

Keywords: gender, female school administrators, women school administrators, K-12 administrators, educational leadership, educational administration

1. Introduction

Mertz (2002) indicated that when Title IX was passed in 1972 females dominated the teacher ranks but were practically absent in school administration. The NEA Research Division (1973) reported that in 1972, eighty-eight percent of teachers in elementary schools were female, forty-nine percent were female secondary teachers; and in contrast men made up eighty percent of elementary principals, ninety-seven percent of principals of junior high schools, ninety-eight percent of high school principals, ninety-five percent of assistant superintendents, ninety-four percent of the deputy and associate superintendents, and ninety-nine percent of the superintendents (Mertz, 2002).

Since 1972, a great deal of progress has been made in terms of females working in school level and district level administrative and leadership positions in the U. S. public schools. Although progress has been made in the gender gap in educational staffing, the underrepresentation of women continues to exist in educational leadership (Rand Corporation, 2004; Gupton, 2009). This study focused on female teacher and administrative representation in the state of Florida.

2. Literature Review

Historically, the majority of teaching positions have been filled by females; however, females are still underrepresented in school leadership positions (Schmidt, 1992; Holloway, 2000; Young & McLeod, 2001; Loder, 2005; Ivery, 2008; Sanchez & Thornton, 2010; Shakeshaft, 2011). Shakeshaft (2011) indicated that in the late 1990's there were more females in school administration programs who obtained administrative certification. The National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) (1994) indicated that during the 1987-1988 and 1990-1991 school years, the proportion of female teachers were higher than the female principal proportions.

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"For the principalship, NCES (2007) indicated that between 1993-1994 and 2003-2004, the percentage of female public school principals increased from 41 to 56 percent in elementary schools and from 14 to 26 percent in secondary schools" (National Center for Education Statistics, 2007; Sanchez & Thornton, 2010, p. 2). Clifford (2012) indicated that females in principal positions increased to 44 percent by the year 2000. In 2000, females made up sixty-two percent of principals in the state of New York (Papa, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2002; Brown & White, 2010).

Male dominance was identified as a pattern in administrative positions particularly at the secondary level (Mertz, 2006). Middle schools and secondary schools tend to have fewer female principals than elementary schools (Gupton, 2009). There were larger proportions of female principals in Illinois elementary and middle schools than in the high schools (Brown & White, 2010). Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray (2013) found that during the 2011-2012 school year fifty-two percent of the school principals were female. They also indicated that sixty-four percent of the female principals were in primary schools, forty-two percent of the middle school principals were female, thirty percent of the high school principals were female, and forty percent of the principals in combined schools were female (Bitterman, Goldring, & Gray, 2013).

Brown & White (2010, p.1) stated that "The proportion of female principals in Illinois doubled between 1990 and 2008, and the principalship in Illinois has been a predominantly female profession since 2005. They added that the percent of female principals increased from 45.9 percent in 2001 to 52.0 in 2008 (Brown & White, 2010). Females in the state of Illinois are still underrepresented in the principalship when compared to the number of female teachers (Brown & White, 2010). Roser, Brown, & Kelsey (2009) reported that there was a higher number of female principals than male principals in the state of Texas (McGee, 2010).

In a recent analysis of the assistant principals in the state of Florida, females made up sixty-three percent of this category of school level administrators (Folsom, Osborne-Lampkin, & Herrington, 2015). Females made up sixty-four percent of the principals in the state of Florida in a recent analysis of the workforce (Folsom, Osborne-Lampkin, & Herrington, 2015). Researchers indicated that when compared with the female teachers in Florida, there is an underrepresentation of females in the principal positions (Folsom, Osborne-Lampkin, & Herrington, 2015).

Gupton (2009) and Kochanowski (2010) indicated that although the teaching force consist largely of females, they are still marginally represented in the top level positions. The top level positions are where the authority and best salaries are provided (Gupton, 2009). Tallerico, Burstyn, & Poole (1993) indicated that females are underrepresented in the superintendency.

Barriers created by attitudes and practices in organizations continue to limit opportunities and advancements for women in the twenty-first century (The Gale Group, 2007; Gupton, 2009). The "glass ceiling" has been identified as a barrier for women aspiring to top level leadership positions (Eisner & Harvey, 2009; Kochanowski, 2010). Chin (2011) indicated that females have achieved greater gender equality over the years. Munoz, Mills, & Pankake (2014) suggested that regardless of gender, all educators should be given the opportunity to work in the capacity for which they are most qualified.

4. Methodology

The methodology utilized in this study was based on an examination of the public use data sets from the Florida Department of Education's website related to school level administrative staff, district level administrative staff, and total administrative staff for school year 2010-2011. The research design was a document analysis. The analysis is based on the Florida Department of Education (2011) definitions of administrative staff. Administrative District Staff included the following positions: superintendents; deputy superintendent; associate superintendent; assistant superintendent; area superintendent; director; supervisor; coordinator; consultant and supervisor of instruction. Administrative School Level Staff included: principal; assistant principal; dean; curriculum coordinator; registrars; and community education coordinator. The design was handled quantitatively utilizing descriptive statistics. The data analyses provided some insight into the representation of male and female administrators in Florida's K-12 Public School Districts.

5. Results

The number and percent of male and female classroom teachers by regions in the state of Florida during the 2010-2011 school year are reflected in Table 1, and the number and percent of male and female school level administrative staff by regions in the state of Florida during the 2010-2011 school year are reflected in Table 2.

The number and percent of female school level administrators were consistently less than the number and percent of female classroom teachers throughout the state of Florida.

The greatest percent difference was found in the Northwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.86% and the percent of female school level administrators was 56.55%, reflecting a difference of 24.31 percent. The second greatest percent difference was in the Southwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.27% and the percent of female school level administrators was 55.51%, reflecting a difference of 22.76 percent. The third greatest percent difference was in the North Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.52% and the percent of female school level administrators was 59.18%, reflecting a difference of 19.34 percent. The fourth greatest percent difference was in the East Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.68% and the percent of female school level administrators was 60.69%, reflecting a difference of 18.99 percent. The fifth greatest percent difference was in the Southeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 77.91% and the percent of female school level administrators was 61.18%, reflecting a difference of 16.73 percent. The sixth greatest percent difference was in the state's Special Schools in which the percent of female teachers was 83.84% and the percent of female school level administrators was 68.42%, reflecting a difference of 15.42 percent. The seventh greatest percent difference was in the West Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.00% and the percent of female school level administrators was 64.82%, reflecting a difference of 14.18 percent. The eighth greatest percent difference was in the South region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.55% and the percent of female school level administrators was 65.18%, reflecting a difference of 13.37 percent. The least percent difference was found in the Northeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.20% and the percent of female school level administrators was 67.22%, reflecting a difference of 12.98 percent.

The number and percent of male and female district level administrative staff by regions in the state of Florida during the 2010-2011 school year are reflected in Table 3. The number and percent of female district level administrators was consistently less than the number and percent of female classroom teachers throughout the state of Florida. The greatest percent difference was found in the Northwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.86% and the percent of female district administrators was 57.77%, reflecting a difference of 23.09 percent. The second greatest percent difference was in the North Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.52% and the percent of female district administrators was 57.22%, reflecting a difference of 21.30 percent. The third greatest percent difference was in the Southwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.27% and the percent of female district administrators was 57.64%, reflecting a difference of 20.63 percent. The fourth greatest percent difference was in the Northeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.20% and the percent of female district administrators was 60.79%, reflecting a difference of 19.41 percent. The fifth greatest percent difference was in the Southeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 77.91% and the percent of female district administrators was 60.16%, reflecting a difference of 17.75 percent. The sixth greatest percent difference was in the South region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.55% and the percent of female district administrators was 61.19%, reflecting a difference of 17.36 percent. The seventh greatest percent difference was in the East region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.68% and the percent of female district administrators was 62.53%, reflecting a difference of 17.15 percent. The eighth greatest percent difference was in the state's Special Schools in which the percent of female teachers was 83.84% and the percent of female district administrators was 68.89%, reflecting a difference of 14.95 percent. The least percent difference was found in the West Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.00% and the percent of female district administrators was 64.30%, reflecting a difference of 14.70 percent.

The number and percent of male and female total administrative staff by regions in the state of Florida during the 2010-2011 school year are reflected in Table 4. The number and percent of female total administrators was consistently less than the number and percent of female classroom teachers throughout the state of Florida.

The greatest percent difference was found in the Northwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.86% and the percent of female total administrators was 56.94%, reflecting a difference of 23.92 percent. The second greatest percent difference was in the Southwest region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.27% and the percent of female total administrators was 56.21%, reflecting a difference of 22.06 percent. The third greatest percent difference was in the North Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.52% and the percent of female total administrators was 58.43%, reflecting a difference of 20.09 percent. The fourth greatest percent difference was in the East Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.68% and the percent of female total administrators was 61.16%, reflecting a difference of 18.52 percent. The fifth greatest percent difference was in the Southeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 77.91% and the percent of female total administrators was 60.94%, reflecting a difference of 16.97 percent. The sixth greatest percent difference was in the Northeast region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 80.20% and the percent of female total administrators was 64.81%, reflecting a difference of 15.39 percent. The seventh greatest percent difference was in the state's Special Schools in which the percent of female teachers was 83.84% and the percent of female total administrators was 68.75%, reflecting a difference of 15.09 percent. The eighth greatest percent difference was in the West Central region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 79.00% and the percent of female total administrators was 64.69%, reflecting a difference of 14.31 percent. The least percent difference was found in the South region of the state in which the percent of female teachers was 78.55% and the percent of female total administrators was 64.47%, reflecting a difference of 14.08 percent.

6. Discussion and Summary

The female school level administrators from the highest percent to the lowest percent by Florida regions are Special Schools (68.42%), Northeast (67.22%), South (65.18%), West Central (64.82%), Southeast (61.18%), East Central (60.69%), North Central (59.18%), Northwest (56.55%), and Southwest (55.51%). In addition, the West Central (64.82%), South (65.18%), Northeast (67.22%), and Special Schools (68.42%) had a greater percent of female school level administrators than the State percent of 62.70 percent.

The female district administrators from the highest percent to the lowest percent by Florida regions are Special Schools (68.89%), West Central (64.30%), East Central (62.53%), South (61.19%), Northeast (60.79%), Southeast (60.16%), Northwest (57.77%), Southwest (57.64%), and North Central (57.22%). In addition, the East Central (62.53%), West Central (64.30%), and Special Schools (68.89%) had a greater percent of female district administrators than the State percent of 61.28 percent.

The female total administrators from the highest percent to the lowest percent by Florida regions are Special Schools (68.75%), Northeast (64.81%), West Central (64.69%), South (64.47%), East Central (61.16%), Southeast (60.94%), North Central (58.43%), Northwest (56.94%), and Southwest (56.21%). In addition, the South (64.47%), West Central (64.69%), Northeast (64.81%), and Special Schools (68.75%) had a greater percent of total administrators than the State percent of 62.30 percent.

The teacher ranks have been dominated by females while the educational leadership ranks have been comprised of males historically (Tallerico & Blount, 2004; Sanchez & Thornton, 2010). The results of this study supported the national data comparing the teaching staff with the administrative staff. In addition, this study indicated that the Florida school level administrative staff, district level administrative staff, and total administrative staff were predominately female with a state average of 62.30% female. The research of Folsom, Osborne-Lampkin, & Herrington (2015) found that the school leaders in Florida were mainly female.

McGee (2010, p. 19) stated "In the state of Florida, women have made significant strides in finding balance between family and careers". The progress of females obtaining administrative positions in the Florida Public Schools is to be commended; however, the leaders should make efforts in the recruitment and selection processes to avoid practices that encourage a negative impact on females or males in the hiring process of school level administrators and district level administrators. The Rand Corporation (2004) suggested school districts utilize staffing data to address gender goals. Shakeshaft, Brown, Irby, Grogan, & Ballenger (2007) indicated that females are also underrepresented in the administrative research. It is recommended that research continue to address females in leadership positions.

7. References

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8. Tables

Table 1: Florida's Classroom Teacher Gender Representation by Regions 2010-2011

Region	Teachers		Total (n = 171,445)
	Male (n = 35,821) (% = 20.89)	Female (n = 135,624) (% = 79.11)	
Northeast	2,760 (19.80)	11,182 (80.20)	13,942
Northwest	1,909 (19.14)	8,064 (80.86)	9,973
East Central	6,386 (20.32)	25,042 (79.68)	31,428
North Central	2,421 (21.48)	8,851 (78.52)	11,272
West Central	8,492 (21.00)	31,946 (79.00)	40,438
South	7,946 (21.45)	29,091 (78.55)	37,037
Southeast	3,605 (22.09)	12,713 (77.91)	16,318
Southwest	2,023 (21.73)	7,288 (78.27)	9,311
Special Schools	279 (16.16)	1,447 (83.84)	1,726

Source of "n": Florida Department of Education Automated Staff Database, Survey 2, 2010-2011, as of May 24, 2011. Florida Department Of Education (2011, June). *Education Information & Accountability Services Data Report Staff Distributions, 2010-2011*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/word/psstf1011.doc>.

Table 2: Florida's School Level Administrative Staff Gender Representation by Regions 2010-2011

Region	School Level Administrative Staff				
	Male (n = 3,073) (% = 37.30)		Female (n = 5,165) (% = 62.70)		Total (n = 8,238)
Northeast	235	(32.78)	482	(67.22)	717
Northwest	189	(43.15)	246	(56.55)	435
East Central	550	(39.31)	849	(60.69)	1,399
North Central	249	(40.82)	361	(59.18)	610
West Central	668	(35.18)	1,231	(64.82)	1,899
South	642	(34.82)	1,202	(65.18)	1,844
Southeast	316	(38.82)	498	(61.18)	814
Southwest	206	(44.49)	257	(55.51)	463
Special Schools	18	(31.58)	39	(68.42)	57

Source of "n": Florida Department of Education Automated Staff Database, Survey 2, 2010-2011, as of May 24, 2011. Florida Department Of Education (2011, June). *Education Information & Accountability Services Data Report Staff Distributions, 2010-2011*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/word/psstf1011.doc>.

Table 3: Florida's District Level Administrative Staff Gender Representation by Regions 2010-2011

Region	District Level Administrative Staff				
	Male (n = 1,226) (% = 38.72)		Female (n = 1,940) (% = 61.28)		Total (n = 3,166)
Northeast	169	(39.21)	262	(60.79)	431
Northwest	87	(42.23)	119	(57.77)	206
East Central	184	(37.47)	307	(62.53)	491
North Central	160	(42.78)	214	(57.22)	374
West Central	231	(35.70)	416	(64.30)	647
South	156	(38.81)	246	(61.19)	402
Southeast	100	(39.84)	151	(60.16)	251
Southwest	97	(42.36)	132	(57.64)	229
Special Schools	42	(31.11)	93	(68.89)	135

Source of "n": Florida Department of Education Automated Staff Database, Survey 2, 2010-2011, as of May 24, 2011. Florida Department Of Education (2011, June). *Education Information & Accountability Services Data Report Staff Distributions, 2010-2011*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/word/psstf1011.doc>.

Table 4: Florida's Total Administrative Staff Gender Representation by Regions 2010-2011

Region	Total Administrative Staff				
	Male (n = 4,299) (% = 37.70)		Female (n = 7,105) (% = 62.30)		Total (n = 11,404)
Northeast	404	(35.19)	744	(64.81)	1,148
Northwest	276	(43.06)	365	(56.94)	641
East Central	734	(38.84)	1,156	(61.16)	1,890
North Central	409	(41.57)	575	(58.43)	984
West Central	899	(35.31)	1,647	(64.69)	2,546
South	798	(35.53)	1,448	(64.47)	2,246
Southeast	416	(39.06)	649	(60.94)	1,065
Southwest	303	(43.79)	389	(56.21)	692
Special Schools	60	(31.25)	132	(68.75)	192

Source of "n": Florida Department of Education Automated Staff Database, Survey 2, 2010-2011, as of May 24, 2011. Florida Department Of Education (2011, June). *Education Information & Accountability Services Data Report Staff Distributions, 2010-2011*. Retrieved from: <http://www.fldoe.org/eias/eiaspubs/word/psstf1011.doc>.