Career Aspirations of Students in Educational Leadership Programs

by Mike Mitchell

B.S 1990, Old Dominion University
M.S. 1998, Old Dominion University

A Dissertation Submitted to

The Faculty of
The Graduate School of Education and Human Development
of The George Washington University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements
for the degree of Doctor of Education

May 17, 2009

Dissertation directed by

Marguerita Desander
Assistant Superintendent for Human Resources
Lincoln County Public Schools

The Graduate School of Education and Human Development of the George Washington University certifies that Mike Mitchell has passed the Final Examination for the degree of Doctor of Education as of February 27, 2009. This is the final and approved form of the dissertation.

Career Aspirations of Students in Educational Leadership Programs

Mike Mitchell

Dissertation Research Committee

Marguerita Desander, Assistant Superintendent of Human Resources, Lincoln County Schools, Dissertation Director

Greg Logan, Director, Hampton Roads Center, Committee Member

James Tucker, Assistant Superintendent for Instruction, York County Public Schools, Committee Member

Abstract of the Dissertation

Career Aspirations of Students in Educational Leadership Programs

There is an abundance of literature regarding the pending shortage of qualified candidates for the principalship. This shortage is predicted to be nationwide and to pertain to all educational levels, with the high school principal position's being the most difficult to fill. The literature cites multiple reasons for the shortage, including compensation, hours, job complexity, standardized testing requirements, lack of community support, and lack of respect for the position. There is, however, no shortage of teachers who currently hold administrative certifications. These individuals have completed the coursework for approved educational leadership programs yet have chosen not to pursue careers in educational leadership. There is also a significant body of information regarding why these teachers have chosen to stay in instructional positions.

This study focused on the career goals and outcomes of the current class of prospective administrative leadership candidates. The study focused on their career plans and aspirations. Specifically, the study sought to determine how many individuals were interested in the principalship as a viable career option. This study also examined specific job attributes and how they were rated by the current class of prospective principals. Additionally, this study attempted to determine what other types of career choices the individuals in the educational leadership programs were pursuing: central office or support positions, specialist positions, or continuation of their careers in the classroom. Finally, the study sought to identify specific current duties that the individuals fulfilled within their schools, which identified them as nonadministrative leaders within the building.

This study used descriptive statistics to develop a detailed picture of the goals and aspirations of the future educational leaders. A correlation analysis was conducted. Results indicate that the correlation between the dependent variable, the Job desirability Index and the variable scales: Work, School Context, Subjective and Objective factors was weak for all the variable scales. The Principal Job Survey (Merrill, 1999) was the evaluative tool used to collect the data and establish the job desirability of the principalship. Based upon the results it would be the recommendation of this researcher that this survey tool not be used again with students in educational leadership programs. The study built upon the work *Job Desirability of the Principalship: A Study of Perceptions and Intentions of Qualified Applicants* (Barksdale, 2003) and *Job Desirability of the High School Principalship: A Job Choice Theory Perspective* (Pounder & Merrill, 2001).

Table of Contents

Abstract of the Dissertation iii

Table of Contents v

List of Tables viii

Chapter 1: Introduction 1

Overview 1

Statement of the Problem 1

Statement of Potential Significance 3

Summary of the Methodology 3

Study Limitations 4

Definition of Terms 4

Conceptual Framework 6

Job Choice Theory 6

Research Questions 7

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature 8

Introduction 8

Educational Leadership Programs 11

The Standards-Based Movement and the Principalship 16

Shortage of Candidates 17

Teacher Perceptions 24

Teacher Leaders: Formal vs. Informal 27

Roles and Skills for Teacher Leaders 29

The Assistant Principal 33

The Principal 36
The Role of the Principal 39
Principal Leadership 44
Instructional Leadership 46
The Students 51
Theoretical Framework 58
Objective Theory 59
Subjective Theory 61
Critical Contact Theory 62
Recruitment and Demand 63
Restructuring in Georgia 64
Summary 69
Chapter 3: Methodology 73
Purpose 73
Methodology 74
Site Selection 75
Instrumentation 78
Procedures 83
Data Analysis 86
Ethical Considerations 86
Summary 87
Chapter 4: Results 88
Introduction 88

Sample Demographics 88
Research Questions 93
Valdosta State University 101
Job Desirability Index 106
Chapter 5: Conclusions 111
Introduction 111
Summary of Results 112
Interpretation of Findings 116
Conclusions 120
Recommendations for Practice 120
Recommendations for Future Research 122
Summary 127
References 130
Appendix A: Survey Cover Letter 141
Appendix B: Principal Job Survey 142
Appendix c: Permission to use Survey 148
Appendix d: Scatterplots 149
Appendix E: Histograms 153

List of Tables

Table 1. *Issues Underlying This Study*..... 10

Table 2. *Reliability Coefficients for Variable Scales*..... 85

Table 3. *Entire Sample Frequency Counts for Selected Variables*..... 91

Table 4. *Entire Sample Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* 93

Table 5. *Kennesaw State University Frequency Counts for Selected Variables* 97

Table 6. *Kennesaw State University Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* ... 99

Table 7. *Kennesaw State University Job Desirability Frequency Counts*..... 100

Table 8. *Valdosta State University Frequency Counts for Selected Variables*..... 101

Table 9. *Valdosta State University Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* ... 103

Table 10. *Valdosta State University Job Desirability Frequency Counts* 104

Table 11. *Comparison of Career Plans of Students between VSU and KSU* 105

Table 12. *Comparison Job Desirability Index Scores* 106

Table 13. *JDI Total Group*..... 107

Table 14. *Selected Descriptive Statistics for Each Variable Scale*..... 108

Table 15. *Correlation between Variable Scales and JDI for Students in Georgia Educational Leadership Programs*..... 109

Table 16. *Comparison Chart of Pearson Correlations* 123

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

Overview

The presumption that there will always be leaders in the field of education may not necessarily be true (Cooley & Shen, 1999; Educational Research Service, 1998; Fenwick & Pearce, 2001; Tracy & Weaver, 2000). Educational leadership requires a multitude of skills and personal characteristics. Educational leaders are expected to supervise and delegate, be instructional leaders, ensure that legislation at both the state and federal level is implemented within the schools, and manage large facilities (Pounder & Merrill; Fraze & Melton, 1992). Furthermore, educational leaders must "facilitate an administrative vision, demonstrate concern for students' learning processes, and relate to faculty, staff and community in a cooperative environment" (Richardson, Lane,& Flanigan, 1996, p.290.)

The principal must manage both staff and resources. They must also be instructional leaders, thereby needing knowledge about best practices as well as content with which they may or may not be familiar (DiPaolo, 2003; Doyle & Rice, 2002). Given the varying roles and responsibilities of the principalship, the position may appear less desirable to educational leadership students.

Statement of the Problem

Research indicates that a shortage of qualified educational leaders to fill positions of leadership in the nation's schools is imminent (Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2001; Educational Research Service, 1998; Fenwick & Pierce, 2001) even though there is no

shortage of teachers with administrative certification or credentials to fill such positions (McAdams, 1998; Barksdale, 2003). These teachers with administrative licensure cite numerous reasons for their lack of interest in leadership roles, including but not limited to the following: low pay, long hours, increased responsibility due to high-stakes testing and other legislative concerns, as well as the increased demands on schools regarding academic achievement, student social growth, and student safety. Many of these teachers are content with instructional positions and do not wish to fill administrative functions (Beck & Murphy, 1993). Other teachers with administrative credentials often pursue more informal leadership roles within their schools such as department heads, lead teachers, mentor teachers, or coaches. While pursuing these informal leadership roles, these teachers acquire experience that is similar to the functions administrators perform on a daily basis (Wasley, 1991). These teachers may constitute the most significant resource for school districts wanting to fill vacant administrative positions.

A principal shortage does not exist in every school district in the country. Many districts find themselves with a surplus of qualified candidates who have the appropriate certification, experience, and desire to fill the positions. These districts have resources to recruit and retain teachers and groom them for administrative roles. Many districts have implemented “grow your own” academy-type programs for teacher leaders desiring to advance to administrative roles (Chan & Richardson, 2003). A principal shortage is more likely to exist in schools that are resource challenged, have under-performing students who perform poorly on standardized tests, and lack parental participation (DiPaola, 2003).

Statement of Potential Significance

There is no scarcity of research related to the anticipated shortage of qualified administrators, specifically, principals. Additionally, there is a plethora of research related to school personnel in various positions, both instructional and administrative, who currently are certified to be principals but who have chosen not to pursue the jobs. There is, however, a gap in the literature with regard to the students in administrative preparation programs, who are currently pursuing administrative endorsements.

This study is significant in that it describes the candidates in educational leadership programs and their career goals. The topic is timely since the state legislature of Georgia was in the process of revising the law, thereby resulting in a restructuring of programs statewide. Additionally, this study sought information about the actual desirability of the principal position, as perceived by current educational leadership students.

Summary of the Methodology

This study focused on the desirability of the principalship. The participants in this study were enrolled in educational leadership classes at two public universities in Georgia. The population consisted of students taking educational leadership classes at Valdosta State University and Kennesaw State University during the summer semester of 2008. It is important to note that all of the students surveyed were required to have their entire program complete by September 2009. In September of 2009 all Georgia educational leadership programs operating under the old parameters expired. Therefore, all of the students surveyed were within one year of completing their respective programs.

The students were completing coursework at the certification, master's degree, and educational specialist degree levels. Students in these programs were surveyed using the Merrill Principal Job Survey. The validity and reliability of the survey had been previously established. Descriptive statistics from the survey are reported. Data were analyzed using the Statistical Programs for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 16.

Study Limitations

Limitations of this study include the following:

1. The data were limited with regard to the number of respondents and the types of responses of those who completed and returned the survey.
2. All of the participants who completed and returned the survey did so voluntarily.
3. The study was limited by the statistical treatment the researcher chose to analyze the data.
4. The degree of validity and reliability of the findings was dependent upon the survey instrument and the population of study.
5. The study was conducted in two public universities in the State of Georgia.

Definition of Terms

The following definitions are presented with regard to this research:

Assistant principal. Second person charged with managing the day-to-day operations of a school. Duties are varied and may include dealing with parent issues,

personnel, curriculum, materials, physical plant, or any other duties assigned by the principal.

Factors. Aspects or variables that positively or negatively influence job desirability. These may include the work of the principal, salary and compensation packages, personal goals, and job stress (Barksdale).

Job desirability. Perceived job attractiveness, enhancing the probability of an individual's seeking a principalship and accepting a principalship if offered (Barksdale).

Job desirability index. A statistic calculated by averaging the scores on the following survey items: (a) perceived attractiveness of the principalship, (b) perceived probability of the respondent's seeking a principalship, and (c) perceived probability of his or her accepting a principalship if offered

Principal. The chief executive officer of a public school serving grades K-12 (Barksdale, 2003).

Principalship. A position incorporating the administrative responsibilities of a principal, such as overseeing the functions associated with staff, students, facility, and operations, including both principal and assistant principal (Barksdale).

Qualified candidate - building level. Teacher who has demonstrated leadership qualities, is pursuing the appropriate certifications and endorsements, has the requisite number of years experience in the classroom, and is actively pursuing a building level administrative position.

Qualified candidate - nonbuilding level. Teacher who has demonstrated leadership qualities at the building level, is pursuing the appropriate certification and

endorsement, has the requisite number of years in the classroom, and is actively pursuing an administrative position other than those available at the building level.

Conceptual Framework

A school is a complex organization with multiple factions competing for resources to achieve goals. These goals are easily measured by a number of benchmarks including student achievement, attendance, disciplinary data, and community involvement. To achieve these goals the school's leadership must be able to articulate where the school is currently, what the goals of the school need to be, and how the leadership intends to steer the school in the direction of the goals. The leadership, specifically the building principal, sets the vision or the goals, allocates resources to ensure that goals can be achieved, and sets the general course for success for both the students and the staff within the building. Fewer teachers are choosing to pursue the principalship; nationwide numbers of applicants have declined, especially in urban and rural centers (DiPaola, 2003).

Job Choice Theory

Job choice theory focuses on the job applicant and the process by which the decision is made to pursue and accept a position. This theory is entirely process orientated and describes the process as being twofold. The first decision made by the applicant is to apply for and accept the job if offered. The second relates more to the quality of the job with regard to satisfaction and overall commitment to the organization. The level of satisfaction has a direct effect on the willingness of the individual to either

remain with or separate from the organization (Pounder & Merrill, 2001). Job choice theory can be subdivided into three critical components: critical contact theory, subjective theory, and objective theory. Collectively, job choice focuses on the applicant, the relationship between the applicant and the employer, and the psychological motivation of the applicant.

Research Questions

1. What are the career aspirations of the individuals enrolled in the administrative certification programs?
2. What are the perceptions of the candidates with regard to the principalship, as assessed through the Principal Job Survey?
3. In which specific jobs in educational administration are these individuals interested: building level administration, central office administration, specialist positions, or none?
4. What specific attributes (including but not limited to gender, race, years of teaching experience, current position, education level, family status, and geographical region) define the administrative students?
5. What specific leadership positions (department chair, grade level chair, new teacher mentor, school leadership council, or other position) have the students held?

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The position of school principal, as well as its expectations, has changed dramatically over the course of the 20th century:

> The role of the principalship has shifted over time from pedagogy in the 1920s; to scientific management in the 1930s; to patriotism during the 1930s and 1940s; to academic excellence in the 1960s; to social awareness in the 1970s; to instructional leadership in the 1980s; to improving student performance in the 1990s. (Bjork & Rinehart, 2004, p. 2)

Educational reform continues, and the changes have a profound effect on the way educational leaders run their buildings. Sergiovanni and Starratt (1998) believed the role of the principal would continue to evolve and become more complex.

The 21st century ushered in a new era, one in which standards-based learning, data disaggregation, and accountability with regard to the student, teacher, and school constituted the primary focus of the educational system: “In an era of accountability, policymakers have imposed new requirements, and the principal is responsible for enhancing progress on multiple, and often conflicting, measures of educational achievement” (Grubb & Flessa, 2006, p. 519). Currently, the principalship appears to focus on accountability and meeting the standards set forth in the No Child Left Behind legislation.

During this time of transition the principal will need to serve as the instructional leader, change agent, manager, personnel director, problem solver, and visionary. With

this vast array of job responsibilities, many qualified individuals are not pursuing a role that was once esteemed and respected. Instead, students are choosing retirement or other positions in the private sector.

Table 1 presents a broad overview of the foundational issues that drove this study. This table specifically details the convergence of ideas and authors related to many of the varied aspects related not only to the present but also to the future of the principalship in districts throughout the country. Multiple authors have presented myriad views in terms of the principalship; Table 1 defines those common themes.

Table 1. *Issues Underlying This Study*

Topic	Supporting authors
A principal shortage currently exists or will exist in the near future.	Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998; Colley & Shen, 1999; Educational Research Service, 1998; Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Tracy & Weaver, 2000; Howley, Andrianaivo, & Perry, 2003;
Salaries are a barrier in attracting qualified applicants to the principalship.	Walker & Qian, 2006; Whitaker, 2001; Gilman & Givens, 2001; Educational Research Service, 2005; Galusha, 2004; Pounder & Merrill, 2001
Educational leadership programs do a substandard job of preparing students.	Levine, 2005; Orr, 2006; National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2005; Southern Regional Educational Board, 2006
Instructional staff view the principalship as an unattractive career option.	Hurley, 1992; Howley, Andrianaivo, & Perry 2005; Boehlert & O'Connell, 1999; Million, 1998
Increased accountability has made leadership positions less attractive to students.	Elmore, 2006; Thompson, 2001; Harris, Ballenger, & Leonard, 2004; Arbor & Duarte, 2000
Leadership students seek degrees only for raises.	Levine, 2005; Woodruff, 2004; Winter, Rinehart, & Munoz, 2002; Educational Research Service, 1998.
Job responsibilities may have become too complex and sophisticated for one individual to handle.	Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2000; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Whitaker, 2001; Lyons, 1999; Murphy & Louis, 1994; Roe & Drake, 2003.

Educational Leadership Programs

Levine (2005) conducted a study to examine the programming and curriculum of schools offering programs and certifications in educational leadership. His findings were discouraging, bringing to light significant problems for which many schools of education were unprepared. In essence, Levine posited that nationwide schools of education are not preparing leaders to adequately run public schools. Reasons included low or no admission standards, self-selection, irrelevant curriculum, and inadequate assessment of curriculum and content.

The Levine (2005) study represented a policy watershed for educational leadership programs nationwide. The study resulted in a flurry of responses from the educational leadership community, at both the university and the public school or practitioner level. Much of the response to the study was critical; however, there was tacit agreement with many of the findings and recommendations. Presented here is information derived from a sample of the literature related to the Levine report.

A study report entitled “Preparing School Leaders for a Changing World: Lessons from Exemplary Leadership Development Programs” was released in 2007 (Darling-Hammond, Lapointe, Meyerson, & Orr). The researchers found that exemplary programs worked with districts to identify excellent teachers with leadership skills who were willing to take on leadership roles and who also were committed to the local population of students they taught. The graduates of these programs were much more likely to be females or to have more diverse racial backgrounds. Their experiences were frequently grounded in leadership activities such as department chair, mentor, or team leader.

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) also conducted a study in 2006 titled “Schools Can’t Wait: Accelerating the Redesign of the University Preparation Programs.” Participants in these preparation programs analyzed local data related to goals and instructional interventions, school reform models, and the planning and implementation of school-based research. The shift in the programs focused on curriculum and instruction as well as leadership, with 25% to 30% of the coursework’s being focused on curriculum. SREB has maintained that its leadership students should have access to a variety of field-based experiences, including observing, participating, and leading teachers in the instructional setting. These students also receive feedback and coaching from mentor principals during their fieldwork. Both Delta State University in Mississippi and the San Diego Unified School District have offered full-year paid administrative field experiences for their leadership students. The participants are embedded for a full year within their host schools; they perform their administrative functions and are essentially given a chance to refine their administrative skills before they are officially tasked with operating as a school official.

The Stanford School Leadership Study report was released in 2006 (Schwartz, McKenna, & Maurer (2007). This study was commissioned by the Wallace Foundation and undertaken by the Stanford University with assistance from the foundation. To create scalable models for other educational leadership programs, the study focused on what is known about principal leadership programs and what methodologies work best, with the ultimate goal of bringing effective leadership to schools nationwide. The study found that the graduates tended to have been recruited from minority or underrepresented groups; they tended to come from core academic or special education backgrounds rather than

coaching or physical education. The training was focused on instructional leadership, with particular attention to content and curriculum. Most of the graduates of these schools advanced to lead schools with great needs.

Mapping innovation in leadership preparation in the nation's schools, Orr (2006) repeated many of the recommendations set forth in the Levine (2005) study. Orr called for reorganization of educational leadership principles to align leadership standards with Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium **(**ISLLC) and National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) standards. She also advocated a reculturing of the programs to develop reform-minded leaders with perhaps a focus on social justice leadership. Finally, her recommendations included strengthening admission standards and shifting curriculum and coursework to include more of a focus on instructional leadership.

With regard to practitioners, the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) responded in 2005 with their Statement of Education School Leaders report. Some of the findings of their report concurred with Levine's (2005) findings; they agreed that many programs nationwide were "cash cow" revenue generators for universities. They also believed that the programs accredited through Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) and NCATE were adequately preparing school leaders for the school positions they were being trained to fill. They asserted that more programs should be required to meet the more stringent NCATE standards. Finally, they did not see the value in abolishing the doctorate in educational leadership in favor of a different degree, such as a master of science with a concentration in human resources, instructional leadership, law, or finance.

Mountford, Ehlert, Machell, and Cockrell (2007) conducted one of the few studies that examined students in educational leadership programs. The focus of their study was admissions criteria and how the traditional measures of G.P.A., G.R.E. scores, writing samples, and the interview process compared to nontraditional measures such as on-site, real-time problem-solving activities and on-site writing activities. Findings from the study indicated that within the cohort format the nontraditional measures are better indicators of overall success within educational leadership programs. Although the study used a statewide sample from leadership cohorts in Florida, it is important to note that the study involved educational leadership students at the doctoral level exclusively and did not include those seeking certification for building-level leadership positions.

Much of the literature in response to the Levine (2005) report has been scathing and critical, yet many clear recommendations that are congruent with Levine's recommendations have emerged:

1. Program admission requirements should be more rigorous. Programs need to focus on accepting students who demonstrate both the intellectual ability to succeed as well as a record of excellence within the classroom.

2. Programs need to meet national accreditation standards; NCATE and ISLLC are the acceptable standards at this time

3. Programs need to be restructured to become more relevant. Content and curriculum must be redesigned to incorporate new "themes" in leadership to include distributive leadership, social justice leadership, and instructional leadership.

4. Programs must strive to bring more minority students into the fold; additionally, programs must work to identify leaders who are willing to assume high-risk

types of leadership positions in urban areas and school districts that have not been successful under the provisions set forth by NCLB.

Currently, administrative leadership programs are having little trouble attracting students (Levine, 2005); there are, however, significant concerns about educational administration programs nationwide. Concerns also exist about the quality of the students being accepted to the programs and completing the degrees. Levine stated, “As a group, these students appear more interested in earning credits and obtaining salary increases than in pursuing rigorous academic studies” (p. 31). Students appeared to be primarily motivated by the ease of access to the programs as well as the easiness of the curriculum. Levine wrote,

> Unfortunately programs seeking to boost enrollments too often address ease of access by lowering admission standards and making their program too easy to attract students, and then allowing those admitted to survive. It is easier for their institutions to look the other way or ignore the problem since it brings bags of money to fund the rest of the university. (p. 35)

Levine (2005) was successful in drawing attention to the issue of educational leadership programs and the entire preparation process. At the least, he caused many programs to critically review their academic programming as well as the candidate pools they were accepting into their programs. Since the report was published many programs have been revamped; the State of Georgia passed legislation to curtail the “degree for raises” process and placed numerous limitations regarding (a) the persons who could seek degrees at certain levels as well as (b) the persons who were required to seek degrees at

certain levels. Although Levine did draw the ire of his peers, he also initiated the process of solving a problem that had taken a long time to develop.

The Standards-Based Movement and the Principalship

Currently, the focus of the principalship is student accountability and achievement; Elmore (2006) wrote, “Pressure for increased accountability is a distinctive hallmark for the present period of educational reform” (p. 134). Accountability reform has changed the role of the school administrator; the duties of the principal must be fulfilled within a public landscape that is influenced by state accountability policies centered on high-stakes standardized tests (Thompson, 2001). Harris et al. (2004) wrote, “Today the principal role for K-twelve schools is heavily defined by the standards-based movement” (p. 156). The increased focus on accountability has had a direct impact on the role of the principal at all levels.

The future of the principalship has come into question because increasingly large numbers of school principals are leaving the profession. Reasons for this phenomenon include the retirement of baby boomers and individuals’ leaving the profession for other more lucrative positions in the private sector (Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998). Additionally, members of the administrative workforce continue to retire due to challenges created by school reform and the high-stakes accountability movement (Arbor & Duarte, 2000). Traditionally, these retirements have been of little significance as the younger administrative workforce filled the positions; however, in many districts nationwide this is no longer the case.

According to numerous researchers and studies, many school districts are facing a genuine crisis with regard to school leadership (Cooley & Shen, 1999; Educational Research Service, 1998; Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Tracy & Weaver, 2000). “School districts are finding it increasingly difficult to recruit highly qualified new principals, while at the same time, record numbers of school administrators are now reaching retirement age” (Howley, Andrianaivo, & Perry, 2003, p. 757).

Shortage of Candidates

The National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) coordinated with the Educational Research Service (ERS) to conduct an exploratory study related to the principalship (ERS, 1998). The purpose of the study was to determine whether or not a principal shortage actually did exist and if it did, what potential barriers could be removed to attract potential qualified candidates for the principalship. In the study, superintendents were asked, “Is there a shortage of qualified candidates to fill current vacancies in principal and assistant principal positions?” Approximately 400 superintendents indicated that there was a universal shortage of qualified candidates. Study findings also suggested the existence of an adequate number of certified applicants, but not an adequate number of qualified applicants. The ERS study also found that the phenomenon of applicants’ pursuing administrative credentials but never applying for administrative openings also contributes to the shortage of potential principals. The study utilized quantitative methods to analyze the data collected during structured interviews with superintendents. The interview was developed following a review of relevant

literature; the collected data were coded thematically. The researchers interviewed a national random sample of 403 superintendents serving school divisions with enrollments of 300 students or more. Each district had experienced at least one principal vacancy in the previous year.

The data from the ERS (1998) study revealed national concern over the impending shortage of potential candidates. Shortages of candidates were reported across all levels: elementary school (47%), middle school (55%), and high school (55%) (p. 23). Superintendents cited numerous reasons for the shortage of candidates, including compensation, job stress and complexity, and time requirements. Overall, they were concerned about the shortage; however, they did not perceive that the shortage directly affected the candidates they hired, with whom they were satisfied. The data also revealed the need to recruit minority candidates for the principalship. Despite caution regarding the study's lack of rigor, the significance of this study within the field cannot be ignored; it identified the existence of a problem of which few were aware. The principal shortage was deemed to be a legitimate educational concern that could potentially have considerable negative impact on the nation's schools. The study involved those individuals responsible for hiring principals across the nation, who identified and acknowledged a shortage, as well as factors contributing to that shortage.

There are a number of issues contributing to the shrinking pool of principal candidates. The reasons for the dwindling pool are both interrelated and curious. (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Most principals come from the teacher corps; as the number of people willing to teach in the public schools has declined, so has the number of quality applicants for the position of school principal. D'Arbon and Dorman (2003) identified

this phenomenon as the “pipeline effect” (p. 28). The teachers who are willing to enter the public schools are aware of the complexities and challenges confronting principals on a daily basis; many of them want no part of the longer hours, stress, accountability, or the perceived low pay (Walker & Qian, 2006). Finally, too often the process of obtaining an administrative position is too difficult. Walker and Qian stated, “Dysfunctional systems of recruitment, preparation and induction have been held responsible for the failure to attract qualified applicants” (p. 6). Hess (2003) asserted that many human resource systems need to reevaluate how they recruit their school leaders, reward them, and prepare them for positions. Hess also noted that these systems sometimes lock out candidates who possess the knowledge and ability to be successful in the positions. Furthermore, factors such as costly administrative licensure requirements dissuade potential administrative applicants from pursuing the jobs (Walker & Qian).

Many factors influence student achievement within the school building; leadership is one of those factors. Unfortunately, few applicants are willing to assume the lead position within many buildings. Although the school principal can have a significant impact on making a school successful, not enough educators want the position (Groff (2001). Million (1998) stated, “Teachers balk at giving up their job security to leave the classroom for a modest salary increase, a longer school day and year and a heck of a lot more stress” (p. 1).

Whitaker (2001) identified five major reasons that qualified candidates are not seeking the lead position at the building level: (a) salaries that were deemed inadequate, (b) excessive time commitment, (c) lack of parent and community support, (d) negativity of the media and the public toward school, and (e) overall lack of respect for the position.

Whitaker's study explored the perceptions of superintendents regarding the principal shortage, the quality of the candidates, and the variables that influence people in their decisions not to seek the lead position. Whitaker utilized survey research methods to assess the quality and number of principal candidates in a western state. She randomly selected 176 superintendents and achieved a 59% response rate. The survey consisted of questions with Likert-scale responses, ranging from 1 (*low*) to 5 (*high*); there was no mention of the reliability or validity of the survey instrument or whether or not it had been field tested. There was also a more qualitative phase to Whitaker's study: To gain more in-depth information about the shortage, interviews were conducted with 10 superintendents from different-sized districts in various parts of the state.

Results of Whitaker's (2001) study yielded additional evidence supporting the existence of a shortage of qualified candidates. Superintendents described the high school principalship as the most difficult job to fill, declaring that there was a moderate to extreme shortage at all educational levels. Additionally, 51% of the respondents reported that the quality of the candidates was generally good, whereas 28% described the quality of the applicants as fair or poor. Superintendents opined that lack of experience seemed to be the most significant factor contributing to the perception of overall lower quality of the principal pool. Conclusions derived from this study indicated that raising principal salaries, increasing benefits, and providing additional incentives might attract more qualified candidates to the principalship. The study provided additional descriptive data to support the overall contention that there is a shortage of candidates for the lead position in school buildings. The most significant problem with the study was lack of

detail about the survey instrument; however, viewing the data empirically did lend support to most of the literature regarding the shortage.

Gilman and Givens (2001) cited similar reasons that promising candidates are not applying for principal positions. Candidates consider the salaries not to be in line with the job responsibilities. Preparation requirements for the job often include costly degree and certification classes, including the preference for a doctorate degree. Gilman and Givens wrote, “A doctorate, for example, may require the equivalent of three years worth of a principal’s salary” (p. 73). Other issues that discourage applicants include pressures of accountability, the media, parents, legislatures, and outside special interest groups.

Time constraints impact the principal of any school building. Ferrandino and Tirozzi (2000) described the principal’s time during the day as so fragmented that reflection on problems or ways to improve student achievement and performance becomes impossible. Many principals reported working between 56 and 70 or more hours per week and never being able to complete all of their duties and responsibilities (Whitaker, 2001). Ferrandino and Tirozzi stated, “The principalship today is much more demanding than it used to be. For example, the typical elementary school principal puts in longer hours, leads a larger school, and supervises more people than the typical principal in past decades” (p. 440).

Increasingly, it is becoming more difficult to staff large high schools. The high school principal position usually involves managing a very large staff and infrastructure. The position also involves extra hours required to monitor sports, social, and community events. Candidates often consider both intrinsic and extrinsic factors when considering the lead position in a high school or evaluating job placements: (a) the desire to achieve

and improve education, (b) the additional time demands of the job, and (c) the salary and benefits (Pounder & Merrill, 2001, p. 47).

Pounder and Merrill (2001) stated, “The high school principalship is one of the most complex and challenging assignments in the public education system” (p. 35). The responsibilities of the principal continue to expand both in terms of instruction and management as additional duties are added with few responsibilities removed. Currently, the principal is viewed as the instructional leader within the building, whose primary role is to ensure that several key instructional functions occur. Lyons (1999) identified those functions: (a) providing for a safe and positive school environment, (b) fostering good teaching and learning, (c) promoting good school-community relations, (d) hiring and developing a strong staff, and (e) monitoring student progress (p. 21).

The aforementioned functions are focused exclusively on instruction and academics, yet the principal must also manage the logistical functions of the support services that facilitate the day-to-day operations within the building. Pounder and Merrill (2001) cited the importance of the “second curriculum, namely the co-curricular and extracurricular activity program and institutional and community constituent groups” (p. 36). The principal must often maintain the support programs of the school physical plant, including the responsibility of supervising a custodial and cafeteria staff as well as the endless flow of physical plant personnel who are in and out of large buildings on a daily basis. Although these functions may not be under the direct purview of the principal, they take place within the principal’s building and are, therefore, part of the daily schedule of duties.

There was evidence in the 1990s to indicate that a principal shortage did not exist based upon a supply-and-demand analysis of potential candidates. The following information, however, indicates a growing trend toward such a shortage:

1. Price (1994) found there was an adequate number of graduates from programs in Wisconsin and that few districts in the state were having problems finding applicants. He stated, “The numbers obtained in this study do not reflect a developing shortage of administrators” (p. 25).

2. In 2000, a shortage of qualified candidates was reported in 47 states replying to a survey of the directors of the NAESP and the NASSP for a study conducted by the Educational Research Service.

3. In 2001, 20% of the principals in Vermont either retired or resigned, with some being temporarily replaced by principals who had already retired (Vermont Legislative Research Shop, 2001).

4. In 2001, principals in southeastern Virginia received letters of solicitation from neighboring North Carolina districts offering perks and benefits for those willing to change states (DiPaolo, 2003).

5. In 2003, Texas and Kentucky vacancies that formerly would have attracted many applicants drew only a few applicants (DiPaolo, 2003).

Analysis of the literature indicated an array of underlying issues that have impacted the candidate pool. Although candidates for the positions exist, often the best candidates appear to be discouraged by the cumbersome process of acquiring the positions. The educational leadership degree process is both time consuming and expensive, but, more importantly, candidates do not see the value in seeking the degree.

Additionally, it appears that many districts continue to rely on outmoded systems of internal connectivity to place candidates in the positions. This phenomenon seems particularly true of the traditional first step into administration: the assistant principalship.

It appears that many good candidates are not considered for building administrator positions because of seemingly extraneous factors such as lack of an internal promotion from a current system administrator or lack of the appropriate building level credentials, such as a department chairmanship or coaching position. Finally, the problem of the surplus of candidates with administrative credentials but no desire to pursue the positions exists on the national scale. Such individuals have burdened the systems by utilizing the degrees for nothing more then pay raises. Institutions have responded to this wave of degree seekers by providing access to substandard degrees with little or no practical application for those desiring to enter the field of educational leadership.

Teacher Perceptions

Principals are school leaders; they lead instructionally, they manage personnel and resources, and they supervise teachers. Teachers have constructed a very clear idea of what effective leadership entails. They believe a principal must be honest, competent, forward looking, inspiring, and caring (Richardson et al., 1996, p. 291). According to Richardson et al., teachers cited other factors, including the principal's ability to provide a caring and supportive environment in which to work. The researchers wrote, "The implication for principals is clear: The better a principal understands teacher expectations, the more likely a principal can fulfill the expectations of the role" (p. 291).

The vast majority of principals have served as teachers during their careers. (Bobbitt, Broughman, & Gruber, 1995). Therefore, it is important to ascertain how the teachers view the position of the principal. Hurley found in 1992 that teachers viewed the principalship as (a) being too distant from the instructional core, (b) involving too many non-instructional duties, (c) being too large to perform duties effectively, (d) requiring too much time away from family, (e) providing too little direct contact with students, (f) requiring behaviors that do not match personality, (g) affecting existing relationships with teachers, (h) lacking autonomy and control, (i) being seldom offered to women, (j) having their relationships with students affected by disciplinary duties, (k) being too political, and (l) needing redefinition.

Howley et al. (2005) examined the leadership crisis with regard to the difficulty of recruiting new principals. The researchers focused on teachers and how they viewed both the incentives and disincentives associated with the principalship. There were several significant findings from this study, which generalize to the population of teachers. Individuals who considered the pursuit of the principalship to be “worth it” were male, already held administrative licensure, and had been encouraged to pursue the principalship by a practicing administrator. The teachers who were most interested in pursuing the job had fewer years of experience, placed value on career advancement, held administrative endorsement, and had been encouraged by a current practicing administrator. The study also found that the disincentives of the principalship outweighed the incentives. Teachers viewed the principalship as “an unpleasant task undertaken by individuals substantially different than themselves” (2005). The researchers mentioned one scenario that could possibly develop involving less-experienced educators assuming

the leadership positions and being in charge of the veteran instructional staff. This phenomenon could create problems as the staff would likely seek instructional and administrative guidance from the least seasoned individuals on staff. On the other hand, this situation could provide solutions as the new breed of principals usher in educational and administrative reform and ultimately a response to the pending principal shortage. The study by Howley et al. provided valuable data regarding views of the principalship by members of the instructional corps.

There are some areas of concern with the study by Howley et al. (2005). The researchers did not establish the reliability or validity of the survey instrument; the instrument was never pilot tested. History may also be an issue as the researchers mailed the initial questionnaires in March; they did not receive an adequate response rate and by the time they remailed the survey, teachers had been released for summer break. Due to the low response rate, the researchers compared the survey respondents to the rest of the population in the state; this comparison may not have been valid as the survey respondent group included more males than the state average and the teachers were more experienced then the state average (p. 764).

Boehlert and O'Connell (1999) conducted a similar study and found that, overwhelmingly, teachers' perceptions focused on the negative aspects of the principal position. They perceived the job as requiring sacrifices at both the personal and professional levels. Despite the greater salary, many teachers did not consider the additional time required for the job to be worth the aggravation accompanying the increased responsibilities. Others perceived that the move to administration created a gap between themselves, the teaching staff, and the students. Not all of the teachers'

perceptions of the principalship were negative. Newton described the positive perceptions: “The teachers perceived the principalship as a complex, diverse, and fulfilling position that provides individuals with intrinsic rewards” (as cited in Boehlert & O’Connell, p. 4).

Teacher Leaders: Formal vs. Informal

Within every school building there are teachers who assume informal leadership roles. These individuals choose to lead through activities such as coaching, club sponsorships, grade level chair, or department chair responsibilities. Informally, these people are leaders. Patterson and Patterson (2004) defined a teacher leader as “someone who works with colleagues for the purpose of improving teaching and learning, whether in a formal or informal capacity” (p. 74). Katzenmeyer and Moller (2001) stated,

> Within every school, there is a sleeping giant of teacher leadership that can be the catalyst to push school reform into the next century. By using the energy of teacher leaders as agents of school change, the reform of public education stands a better chance to succeed. (p. 1)

Teacher leaders can be effective and successful only if they have the support of the administration within the building. Therefore, the building principal must recognize the importance of the teacher leader and know how to use him or her effectively to accomplish tasks. Schmoker (1999) asserted that principals cannot accomplish their goals for improvements in student achievement without the help of teachers and that change is more likely to occur if teachers and principals collaborate to translate and negotiate new practices. Waters, Marzano, and McNulty (2003) found that principals can have either a

positive or negative impact on student achievement through effective or ineffective relationships with parents and teachers.

Teacher leaders generally fall into one of two separate and distinct categories, formal and informal leaders. Formal teacher leaders are usually given familiar titles and positions that involve either additional salary or a lighter teaching load (Birky, Shelton, & Headly, 2006). These individuals typically are department heads, child study chairs, or leaders serving in a disciplinary capacity within the formal school structure.

Informal teacher leaders are those who do not hold positions of genuine authority. These individuals operate within the realm of the school setting to further the goals of the school and ultimately create a continuous learning model. Wasley (1991) stated,

> An informal teacher leader is recognized by their [sic] peers and administrators as members who are always volunteering to head new projects, mentoring and supporting other teachers, accepting responsibility for their own professional growth, introducing new ideas, and promoting the mission of the school. (p. 112)

These informal teacher leaders operate on a wide variety of levels within the school setting. They often function in logistical positions at extracurricular activities, supporting school events such as carnivals, athletic activities, or social events. Teacher leaders also provide invaluable expertise for new teachers or teachers needing assistance in mentoring roles. Often these teachers also lead their peers in areas related to teacher training or in-service training; they take on these roles to maintain the continuous improvement of the school. Further, these tasks are usually completed on their own time with no additional compensation involved.

Roles and Skills for Teacher Leaders

For teachers to fully understand and embrace their roles as teacher leaders it is important that they understand their roles and responsibilities beyond the classroom. Fullan and Hargreaves (1991) defined five of these responsibilities:

1. Each teacher has an obligation to increase the degree and quality of interactions with other teachers.
2. Each teacher has a responsibility to try to understand and to attempt to improve the culture of the school.
3. Each teacher has a leadership role that will vary according to the stage of the teacher's career.
4. Each teacher has a responsibility to become more knowledgeable about global educational and professional issues.
5. Each teacher has a responsibility to help shape the quality of the next generation of teachers.

Teachers who show leadership ability are very similar in terms of work habits and professional responsibility. They are effective teachers who model what they expect from their students. They are thoroughly knowledgeable and competent regarding their subject matter and teaching methods. Their professional qualities are visible to others and they have the ability through their respect and status to bring about change in others and within the building itself (Lieberman, Saxl, & Miles, 1988). Pellicer and Anderson (1995) identified six specific areas in which teacher leadership qualities could be clustered: (a) ability to build trust and rapport, (b) ability to examine issues within an organizational context, (c) ability to build skill and confidence within others, (d) ability to use resources

wisely and effectively, (e) ability to deal with the change process, and (f) ability to engage in collaborative work with teaching colleagues.

Clearly, the teacher leader is not afraid to assume added responsibility within both the classroom and the school building itself. The role of the teacher leader transcends being an individual who provides instruction; it becomes a multifaceted position where a variety of behaviors are enacted to ensure that the school is a learning community for all involved. Lieberman et al. (1988) noted several areas in which teacher leaders also exerted influence:

1. They assume responsibility for the continued development of their professional colleagues.
2. They mentor those new to the position by serving as role models.
3. They provide leadership in content areas by producing instructional materials and creating positive work environments under trying circumstances.
4. They engage in these leadership activities while continuing to teach their own classes.

Teacher leaders play an active role in schools across the nation. The duties of the teacher leader are broad and expansive. Often, teacher leaders are involved in motivating staff members to move in a particular direction, either instructionally or behaviorally. These leaders often enjoy a collegial respect among their fellow teachers. The use of the teacher leader as a mentor to teachers new to the profession has proven to be a successful practice. Most school principals have recognized the importance of utilizing teacher leaders and the various skills they possess. Many principals have identified and cultivated

teacher leaders to fill administrative positions in their districts; however, many of these teachers are not willing to assume leadership roles with authority.

Many teacher leaders enjoy a leadership-without-authority model (Heifitz, 1994). This model combines certain leadership attributes with the freedom of not having any final culpability or responsibility. The teachers enjoy the respect of their colleagues as well as the administration within the building, they share some power within the distributive leadership model, and they do not have any tangible accountability other than their own performance and that of their students. These individuals could potentially serve their districts better as true leaders with authority to enact positive change within their buildings.

Birky et al. (2006) conducted a study to examine the ways in which principals identified and encouraged teacher leaders to take the next logical step: administration. The qualitative study constituted a review of two previous studies (Birky, 2001; Shelton, Birky, & Headley, 2004, as cited in Birky et al., 2006). The first study assessed the value of personal informal leadership activities and responsibilities as perceived by teachers. The second study focused on how principals fostered or discouraged teacher leaders toward the next career level.

The Birky et al. (2006) study operated from a hermeneutical phenomenological orientation and, thus, was based on extensive interviews. Findings of the study supported previous assumptions found in the literature: (a) teacher leaders do valuable work, (b) teacher leaders are motivated both intrinsically and extrinsically, and (c) principals can either discourage or encourage teacher leadership.

Viewing the teacher leader pool as a viable candidate resource for potential principals gives value to the Birky et al. (2006) study. Several recommendations are made at the conclusion of the study to assist principals in nurturing the teacher leaders who are contemplating the career shift.

The study used a mixed-method approach that combined aspects of phenomenology with more quantitative survey methods. The phenomenological component consisted of only one 5-hour interview, which did not seem to address the need for data saturation. The survey methods are also questionable as there was no mention of reliability or validity for the survey instrument. The response rate was low at 21%; the researcher qualified this statistic by stating that response rates of below 30% are typical for survey questionnaires. Although the methodology of this study seems somewhat questionable, the results are fairly typical and, therefore, should be accepted with caution.

Arguably, the job responsibilities of both the classroom teacher and the school administrator have undergone more change since the passage of the No Child Left Behind act than in the previous 100 years. The national standards-based movement has shifted the position toward a more data-centered type of profession with teachers and principals being required to utilize assessment and testing to specifically target instruction. The response to intervention movement has also created an even greater need for the data-driven assessment process as it is now necessary to place children in special education (Bender & Shores, 2007).

Teachers can no longer shut the door and do as they choose within their classrooms; if they choose to do so, inevitably the data will reveal what is actually

occurring within the room. This fact has created an educational environment where teachers are essentially forced into viewing the bigger picture. They must contend with the quantitative data that reveal whether or not the students are actually learning. They also must contend with community perceptions of the schools in which they work. Some of these teachers will leave the profession; others will adapt and continue to provide good instruction for students. It is hoped that others will emerge with a desire to lead schools in a more formal capacity, as building level principals.

The Assistant Principal

Most principals were assistant principals before they became the leaders in their buildings. The assistant principalship is usually the position through which individuals are groomed for the principalship: “Individuals aspiring to the principalship normally serve in the capacity of A.P. prior to applying for the job of principal” (Winter, Partenheimer, & Petrosko, 2003, p. 300?). Interestingly, there is little research regarding the role of the assistant principal. This position is a vital role as it does serve as the training ground for most of the principals nationwide. The perceptions of teachers with regard to this job are similar to their perceptions about the principalship. Many teachers consider the assistant principal job to be even less desirable then the principalship, even if the job were to be restructured with more of an emphasis on instruction: “It appears that the general pool of teachers does not view the job of A.P. as highly attractive even if the job is configured to focus on instructional leadership” (Winter, Partenheimer, & Petrosko p. 309, 2003). Winter et al. found that middle school teachers viewed the position the most favorably whereas high school teachers viewed the position the least favorably,

perhaps due to the increased levels of night duties and extracurricular activities. Elementary teachers were also less attracted to the positions than were middle school teachers, possibly due to the high levels of job satisfaction reported by many elementary school teachers (Fresko, Kfir, & Nasser, 1997).

Chan, Webb, and Bowen (2003) conducted a study indicating that many assistant principals have no desire to become principals. Nevertheless, there was a specific segment of the assistant principal pool that was most intent on pursuing the principalship. Most of the assistant principals who aspired to be principals were male, working in the beginning years of the assistant principalship. They were aware of what it takes to align their assignments with the responsibilities of school principals (Chan et al.). Many assistant principals were assigned duties that were strictly managerial in nature, involving no instructional responsibility. Assistant principals listed the most important aspects of their jobs as instructional support, curriculum development, maintenance of a safe climate, teacher observation and evaluation, and meeting with parents (Chan et al.). Most of the assistant principals cited lack of experience as the primary hindrance in obtaining a principalship. The findings from this study shed light on the various factors considered by assistant principals with regard to the position of principal. There are, however some concerns with the methodology of the study. The researchers reported that they designed the survey instrument, yet there was no mention of its reliability or validity. Additionally, no response rate was reported for the participants, thereby making it impossible to know whether or not the assumptions for analysis of variance (ANOVA) were met. Otherwise, the study utilized descriptive statistics of frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations for analysis related to perceptions of assistant principals. Essentially, the study

supported the findings of most of the relevant literature; assistant principals perceived that lack of experience was the most significant area of concern as they transitioned to the principalship. The findings of this study should be accepted with caution.

The overall job description and the traditional duties of the assistant principal cannot be overlooked in relation to the principal shortage. Although the assistant principalship is viewed as a supporting position and one of less direct influence than the principalship, it is a vital position because the vast majority of principals are promoted from the ranks of assistant principals. The position itself is of special interest as it is traditionally the first step out of the teaching ranks into the administrative ranks. The path many educators take to gain their first administrative job usually involves a variety of quasi-administrative duty-based roles; these roles may include school improvement specialist, department or content level chair, mentor, or coach. These positions usually provide none of the specific skills needed by a fledgling administrator; instead, they simply signal to those in authority that these individuals are willing to devote extra time for the well being of the school. It seems that the procedure for grooming potential assistant principals is broken at best, nonexistent at worse. The problem does not seem to improve once the individuals move into the position as they are often assigned the tasks unwanted by the principal: maintenance of the physical plant, discipline, buses, and materials. It seems likely that the only way to groom assistant principals to be leaders is to conduct guided learning experiences for them in areas such as instructional leadership, the change process, labor relations and human resource management, and purpose-driven budgeting.

The Principal

The role of the principal in the success of a school must not be minimized or diminished. Successful schools are run by successful principals, yet the role has changed within the last decade: “Principals today find themselves in a magnified fish bowl; they are bombarded by changing expectations and responsibilities and often find themselves without the knowledge to adequately address such challenges” (Richardson et al., 1996, p. 290). The position of principal has evolved from manager to more active participant in the educational process. As the position has changed so have the expectations. Expectations are perhaps greatest for the high school principalship, which is likely the most challenging building level job in education. Candidates for this position are exceedingly difficult to find as the skill set for the position is extremely varied. The position continues to become more complex with new responsibilities and accountability measures being added while none of the existing tasks are being taken away (Roe & Drake, 2003; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Murphy & Louis, 1994).

There is a finite number of candidates actually qualified for the position of principal. Districts usually consider qualified candidates to be those who have the appropriate educational licensure and endorsements as well as some administrative experience. People who are qualified to be principals as well as those that have served in that capacity are becoming increasingly disillusioned with the position earlier in their career. Kerrins, Johnstone, and Cushing (2001) reported that principals are leaving their positions at younger ages due to stress, time demands, new state accountability legislation, and broadening requirements of the job, which far exceed salaries. The

development of a principal is normally accomplished over the course of years, through a progression of job titles.

Preparation for the principalship includes education, experience, and diligence. Whitaker (2001) asserted that many principals have advanced degrees as well as years of experience in the classroom; yet when they advance to administrative roles, they assume additional responsibilities in exchange for relatively low salaries. Further, they lose the job security that their teaching positions provided, while moving from a 180-day to a 220-day calendar year.

Throughout the United States the need for qualified candidates for the principal position is expected to grow between 10% and 20% through 2008. The current population of principals continues to age, with 40% becoming eligible to retire during the current decade (Ferrandino & Tirozzi, 2000). The average age of principals nationwide is close to 50 (Long, 2000). White males constitute 50% of all principals; approximately 35% of all principals are women. This statistic is changing. The percentage of women elementary school principals has increased to 42% from 20% a decade earlier. The gender shift is more pronounced when considering principals with 5 or fewer years of experience; 65% of these principals are women (Ferrandino, 2001). This shift is significant as it presents a more balanced representation of the population as a whole; however, an increase in the percentage of women in the lead administrative role has not materialized at the high school level.

Diversity is also a significant issue, with minorities' being the least represented in the principal pool. Groff reported in 2001 that only 16% of principals were minorities: 11% were African American, 4% Hispanic, and less than 1% American Indian. This

phenomenon is perhaps the most distressing statistic of all as the rapidly growing population of minority students nationwide was expected to reach 55% by 2004 (Ferrandino, 2001). The United States grows more and more diverse every year; consequently, so does the student population served by the educational system. Although the teacher ranks reflect this diversity, the administrative ranks do not. This lack of diversity in administrative ranks will affect student achievement as well as student behavior if not corrected over the course of the next decade.

One overriding question seems to persist: Is the job too difficult for one person? Grubb and Flessa (2006) conducted a study that examined several principals as well as nontraditional approaches to school leadership. This study employed a qualitative framework to collect data via interview. Ten schools with varying types of leadership models were evaluated; the models included the following: (a) teacher leader teams, (b) coprincipals in an integrated model, and (c) dual principals divided according to grade level. The study was primarily descriptive in nature; many of the schools had such significantly different models that it was difficult to make comparisons. The researchers noted that occasionally a coprincipalship had reverted to a more traditional principal and assistant principal model or that the two principals were responsible for completely different tasks.

Grubb and Flessa (2006) did find several benefits in the nontraditional models they examined. Accessibility was deemed to have improved with the coprincipal model in that the leaders could respond more easily to teacher concerns and focus to a greater extent on the instructional aspects of the job. It was also easier to manage the logistics of routine events such as staff, department, or I.E.P. meetings. Finally, coprincipals could

specialize in specific areas of interests and become experts in those areas. Areas such as maintenance or personnel had become easier to manage because the responsibilities were divided equally between the two leaders. Many of the districts that had implemented these types of alternative practices had very supportive school boards and superintendents; yet problems persisted. Unless specific attention was paid to the compatibility and relationship between the two leaders, the model suffered.

The very nature of the shared leadership model challenges the traditional school leadership models. School leaders' wanting their own schools remains the norm; the coprincipal models seem to be more of a function of a series of circumstances that are beyond the control of the school districts themselves. These circumstances may include a lack of qualified applicants or a qualified applicant close to retirement, who does not want to assume the full responsibilities of the job. There are also additional costs that factor into the coprincipalship; paying coprincipals often represents a greater expenditure than financing the traditional principal and assistant principal model.

The Role of the Principal

It appears that the only constant variable in descriptions of the role of the principalship is continuous change. In the late 1800s the teacher performed many of the logistical duties involved in running the school building; instructional, clerical, disciplinary, and janitorial tasks were performed by the teaching staff. Structurally, the students were housed in a one-room schoolhouse where instruction was dispensed at individualized levels. Generally, the duties were performed by a woman who answered directly to the mayor. Over time the one-room schoolhouse evolved into a larger school where the "principal teacher" performed a dual role: as an instructor and an administrator

who classified students, maintained records, managed property and the physical plant, and handled disciplinary problems (Cuban, 1988).

The Industrial Revolution fundamentally changed the nature of education with regard to curriculum as well as the amount of time students were required to spend in school. To prevent children from being exploited through unfair labor practices, compulsory education was instituted.

Through the first half of the 20th century the role of the principal remained relatively static. The principal maintained order in the school and managed the teachers; little time or energy was devoted to instruction. The job consisted of administrative management with an emphasis on emulation of the corporate managerial style (Hallinger, 1992). This philosophy began to change during the 1960s and 1970s when the role of the principal began to take on the characteristics of an educational program manager.

During the 1960s and 1970s, the federal government began to be much more involved in education at the local level. Many new federally mandated programs, with which the principals were unfamiliar and, therefore, not fully prepared to implement, appeared in the local schools: “Compensatory education, bilingual education, education for the handicapped and other federal entitlements required implementation support from the school site administrator” (Hallinger, 1992, p. 36). Additionally, an increase in spending at the federal level related to curriculum revision created widespread change in the math and science subject areas.

The changes mandated at the federal level during this era affected the principalship in two significant ways. First, the principal was now tasked with monitoring compliance with federal regulations, assisting with staff development ideas, and

providing direct support to classroom teachers with regard to curriculum. There was essentially a complete shift in the role of the principal: from the building administrator who maintained the status quo to a change agent who ushered in new ideas regarding curriculum development and implementation. This was the first time in history the principal was viewed as a potential change agent (Leithwood & Montgomery, 1992).

The 1980s ushered in a new era of scrutiny for American public education with publication of the National Commission on Excellence in Education 1983 report, *A Nation at Risk.* The report presented a bleak, dire, forecast for the future of public education. Specifically noted was how American students lagged behind their peers from other parts of the world. This report not only changed the educational system by laying the foundation for the standards-based movement, but it also shifted the role of the principal from program manager to instructional leader.

Several new guidelines for instructional leadership focused not only on the day-to-day logistics of instruction but also on the academic preparation of teachers and students. The principal's role became multidimensional; expectations included being knowledgeable about curriculum, with the ability to assist teachers in making wise choices in curricular decisions; having high expectations for both teachers and students; and closely monitoring classroom instruction and student progress. The new model of instructional leadership was unable, however, to document the specific practices that principals implemented to aid schools in becoming instructionally effective (Cuban, 1988).

The instructional leadership model did facilitate reform of the role of the principal; however, the partial reshaping of the role's focus did not significantly change

the primary responsibility of the principal, which remained administrative. Hallinger and Hausman (1994) asserted that instructional leadership demanded a new focus and set of work activities from the principal; however, the primary role of the principal was still managerial in nature in terms of staff, students, and operation of a large physical facility.

The 1990s brought a new perspective to the principalship and to school management. School reformers recommended a more decentralized approach to administration, shifting curricular and instructional decisions from the school division's central office to the school itself. This trend created the site-based management model, which "expanded roles for teachers and parents in the decision making process, and created an increased emphasis on complex instruction and active learning" (Hallinger, & Hausman, 1994, p. 39).

The emerging philosophy of the 1990s also changed the way principals viewed both the teacher as a professional and the actual activity of teaching itself. Teaching was viewed as a "complex, dynamic, interactive, intellectual activity, not as a string of routinized tasks" (Hallinger & Hausman, 1994, p. 40). The researchers further opined, "If teachers are to meet the rapidly changing needs of their students their practice cannot be prescribed" (p. 40). This change involved the scripted nature of educational curriculum and the move toward new roles for both the principal and the teacher with regard to problem identification and problem solving. The principal and the teacher now were on even footing with the understanding that the teacher not only was an expert in the curriculum but also knew the child far better then the administrator. The administrator was aware of this phenomenon and thus abdicated a degree of power in decision making, thereby creating a more transformational style of leadership.

Sergiovanni (1992) advocated the reform away from instructional leadership and toward a more transformational style of leadership: “The instructional leader suggests that others have got to be followers, principals ought to be leaders of leaders, people who develop the instructional leadership in their teachers” (p. 48)

The dawn of the 21st century ushered in further change with regard to educational leadership. The perspective on educational administration shifted toward a more distributive style of leadership with an emphasis on standards-based performance and student achievement. Spillane, Halverson, and Diamond (2001) described distributive leadership as a framework for thinking about leadership and teaching in relation to the transformation of teaching and learning for students. Additionally, the distributive model takes into account how leadership focuses on leaders with authority as well as those who do not have formal authority. The key to being able to create an effective distributive leadership model is having the ability (a) to link the microfunctions with the macrofunctions of school leadership and (b) to explore their relationship to instructional and institutional change (Spillane et al.). The distributive model relies heavily on the collective expertise of the whole group with regard to both instructional change and leadership direction. School leaders must recognize that knowledge and expertise at the group level may be superior to the vast amount of expertise and experience of one individual leader. The distributive leadership model is widely regarded as the model most likely to generate instructional capacity within a given educational environment (Elmore, 2004). Instructional capacity refers to the historical durability of both student and staff achievement within an educational institution.

The No Child Left Behind Act has also been responsible for changing the landscape of domestic policy regarding education. Accountability across the board in education depends upon individual student test scores, aggregate school test scores, and test scores of subgroups of students, as well as teacher quality and certification. By extension, this level of accountability has fundamentally changed the responsibilities of the principal; it has created a system in which two strands of accountability must coexist: "They [principals] must work indirectly by creating a culture of internal accountability in which teachers improve their teaching in concert with others" (Grubb & Flessa, 2006, p. 520) The need for this internal accountability, in conjunction with the external accountability systems established by the landmark NCLB legislation of 2001, has resulted in the role of the principal being dominated by federal, state, and local mandates, all of which revolve around the accountability issue.

Principal Leadership

It is difficult to address the role of the teacher leader without examining the leadership styles of the principal. Effective principals often possess leadership traits that enable them to guide their schools toward their own predetermined goals. Often one of these goals is the identification of individuals with leadership potential, who could fill leadership positions. Diggins (1997) identified four traits that leaders of learning organizations usually possess: character, vision, behavior, and confidence. Hoyle, Steffy, and English (1998) believed leaders "must be good listeners, understand the social structure of the school and community, and be attuned to the sentiments of the staff, students, and patrons" (p. 34). Teschke (1995) expanded the list of desired qualities of the learning leader, describing the leader as follows:

1. Articulates a clear vision of the future.
2. Encourages and supports shared decision making, collaboration and team building.
3. Is a coalition builder who models and rewards collegiality.
4. Is fair and sincere and likes people.
5. Has trust and respect for staff and students and elicits trust and respect in return.
6. Leads by example and models appropriate behavior.
7. Has a sense of professionalism and is appropriately focused.
8. Is visible and accessible to students, staff and parents.
9. Is proactive and functions as a change agent.
10. Has excellent communication skills, especially listening.
11. Has confidence, courage and conviction.
12. Is a genuinely caring and sensitive individual who is empathetic to the needs and wants of his or her staff and students.
13. Encourages, coaches and attempts to build the self-esteem of all students and staff.
14. Is people and task oriented at the same time.
15. Is a leader of leaders and attempts to empower the members of his or her staff.
16. Displays organizational skills and attempts to empower the members of his or her team.
17. Has high expectations for student and staff success.
18. Is flexible and looks to resolve conflicts with win-win solutions.

19. Models strong character and values. (pp. 10-11)

The leadership of the principal has been identified repeatedly as one of the most important factors in predicting student achievement (Groff, 2001). In the mid-1980s, many school districts shifted the role of the principal from program manager to instructional leader, fundamentally changing the nature of the principalship (Hallinger, 1992).

Instructional Leadership

Stronge (1988) stated, "If principals are to heed the call from educational reformers to be the instructional leaders, it is obvious that they must take on a dramatically different role" (p. 33). Cuban (1988) identified three dominant roles of the educational leader, specifically the principal. First, the principal must maintain a managerial role as the chief administrator in the building. Second, the position is political as the principal must function as a negotiator and facilitator with parents, the community, central office, and other constituencies. Finally, the position is instructional as the principal should be a teacher of teachers. Cuban presented a compelling argument in which he maintained that the first two roles, managerial and administrative, trump the instructional leader component. The job responsibilities of principals have changed significantly during the past 2 decades; the advent of school reform and accountability has had a tremendous impact on the role of the principal.

DiPaola (2003), in a study conducted in the Commonwealth of Virginia with a focus on Virginia principals, outlined several of the responsibilities of the principal prior to the age of accountability. The methodology was somewhat questionable as the researcher utilized an exceedingly lengthy survey containing 176 questions; there was no

mention of the validity or reliability of the survey instrument. Additionally, the researcher reported a survey response rate of only 38%. Data analysis was conducted through descriptive statistics. The roles and duties of the principal were clearly defined and very narrow. Primary responsibilities included the logistics of managing the buildings and the personnel. Student discipline also was under the principal's purview. Other duties such as maintaining a safe school environment, managing the budget, and evaluating teacher performance were also aspects of the job. The findings of the study should be accepted with caution as they mirror findings from similar studies about the principalship. Results may be somewhat difficult to generalize as the study focused exclusively on principals in Virginia.

Recently, there has been a shift in the conventional thinking regarding the principal's role within the building. That shift has changed the philosophical ideal of the principal's role from being a manager of resources to being the leader of the building with regard to academics and instruction.

DiPaolo (2003) wrote, "Effective principals provide leadership in instruction, coordinate instructional programs, and emphasize high academic standards and expectations" (p. 44). Many of these leaders recognize the importance of their being change agents within their facilities. The focus of such leaders is often a combination of the big picture with a laser-like focus on academic instruction and high student achievement. This dual focus is accomplished by the principal's having the ability to provide instructional support for teachers and being able to communicate goals adequately and positively. Above all, these leaders have the ability to maintain the instructional focus within the school.

Principals who are truly instructional leaders operate from a position of enlightenment regarding a vision for their schools; a vision that each faculty member can envision and emulate operates as the blueprint for the entire school. Expectations for student achievement are high and nonnegotiable. It is vital that good communication be in place and that every classroom participate in the instructional plan of the building leader for this type of instructional model to succeed (Supovitz & Poglinco, 2001).

Supovitz and Poglinco (2001) identified 11 crucial areas that instructional leaders foster and develop within their buildings. Many aspects of these areas relate directly to instruction; however, staff development is also a strong component of the model. The 11 areas identified by Supovitz and Poglinco are the following: (a) creating a safe environment for teachers, (b) emphasizing collaboration and communication, (c) developing other leaders, (d) displaying and celebrating symbolic acts, (e) providing a framework for accountability, (f) rearranging priorities as a principal, (g) observing instruction and the product of instruction, (h) developing content knowledge and facilitating teacher content knowledge, (i) managing time to maintain an instructional focus, (j) becoming a supporter and service provider for teachers, and (k) having a passion for performance.

Woodruff (2004) proposed a theory that might shed light on why there is such an abundance of individuals within the teaching ranks who hold certification but do not pursue the principalship. Woodruff's window of opportunity theory states that among newly graduated students of administrative programs, "there is a limited window of opportunity in which they are eager to become principals and take on the challenges of the position" (p. 132). If these individuals do find positions as principals within their

districts, they will work hard to meet the challenges of the position and mature into capable and competent principals. These individuals will work with or without the support of supervisors in the district to meet the challenges of the position. Conversely, if they are not successful in finding employment as principals, they will seek to fulfill their leadership ambitions in other areas; some of these potential areas may be coaching, departmental chairmanship, or union representation. Additionally, they will continue to advance on the teacher salary scale until it eventually becomes less economically viable to make the transition to administration.

Eventually, these principal aspirants reach a point of discouragement and decide they no longer have an interest in pursuing an administrative career at any level. They may find fault with the position and the bureaucracy involved with obtaining the job. They will have missed their window of opportunity to make a career change and, without significant encouragement, will never embark upon the administrative path again. This phenomenon may explain in part why there are so many teachers exercising leadership positions within the schools, who are totally disinterested in actively pursuing administrative roles. Additionally, it explains the findings that the only differences between principal aspirants and nonaspirants were age and the number of years of classroom teaching. Many of the aspirants and nonaspirants do assume informal leadership roles within the school; they also view the core job responsibilities of the principal in a positive light. Woodruff (2004) stated, “Perhaps most importantly, the window of opportunity theory explains why so many teachers spent so much time and money pursuing administrative degrees and did not end up using them” (p. 134).

Without question, there are numerous individuals within the teacher ranks who hold administrative credentials but who will never hold administrative positions. A multitude of issues influence these teachers in not pursuing the principalship. Many of them may have never intended to apply for an administrative job in the first place; instead their motivation was to increase their salary through acquiring additional degrees or certification. Others may be held back due to political reasons or lack of cognitive ability in dealing with the complexities of the administrative role. Still others may have missed their window of opportunity and decided to continue in the classroom, fearing change or the challenges that a late-stage career change would most certainly bring.

Woodruff's (2004) study was thorough and the methodology statistically sound. The researcher readily admitted there were problems with the generalizability of the findings. The study was conducted in three small districts in a northeastern state, for which finding qualified applicants for the principalship was generally not a problem. Each of these districts was affluent, with a stable and wealthy school population; therefore, the findings of this study may not generalize to urban or rural populations. The study did provide an interesting analysis of how school systems view potential candidates and how bias and misconceptions may eliminate some candidates from the prospective pool.

Describing the roles and responsibilities of a principal as being complex is an understatement. The job has multiple requirements; it is difficult, though not impossible, to prepare for those requirements. All of the literature has suggested that an effective principal has a vision or a set of goals that must be communicated to and made a priority for the entire school community, including faculty, students, and stakeholders. A good

principal also values a truly good teaching staff and knows how to harness their strengths and build upon their weaknesses. Effective building leaders continually guide their schools toward the attainment of preestablished goals; these goals are often evaluated through student assessment data or through more traditional informal assessments. Informal assessments can be conducted by walking around the building talking with students and staff. The literature is abundantly clear with regard to several themes. The job of the principal is difficult. The principal can make the job easier by effectively communicating and by having the ability to recognize what the school does well and what the school needs to improve. Furthermore, once strategic assessment has been completed, an effective principal works to implement a plan to accomplish the tasks necessary to foster continuous improvement within the model.

The Students

The shortage of qualified candidates for the principalship does indeed seem to be reaching a critical point; yet there are thousands of students enrolled in administrative programs across the country. Based on the literature, it appears that individuals are not inclined to pursue building level positions in K-12 education. The job of the principal is complex, and educators who aspire to be principals are aware of the difficulties of the job. Hess and Kelly (2005) stated,

> In an era of accountability, of charter schooling, merit pay, of data driven standards and skill management, school principals are the shop stewards, the brigade commanders, the ones who will lead a team to new levels of effectiveness. Or not. (p. 1)

The roles and responsibilities of the principal have changed over the course of the past decade. Legislation at both the state and federal levels has highlighted concerns about school accountability and student achievement. Public schools can no longer operate without scrutiny from the public citizenry. This scrutiny has increased the pressure on school principals and conceivably made the position less attractive to teacher leaders, who would feasibly be the most likely candidates.

The problem of not having enough qualified candidates to fill positions exists on the local, national, and international levels (Walker & Qian, 2006). Browne-Ferrigno (2003) stated, “Nationally, school districts face shortages of quality personnel to lead their schools” (p. 4). Although there are more than enough certified individuals eligible for the administrative positions, these people do not seem inclined to apply for the jobs. Reasons for their not applying are both internal and external.

Winter, Rinehart, and Munoz conducted a study in 2002 to determine if individuals holding principal certification were (a) interested in pursuing a principalship, (b) interested in pursuing leadership in another capacity, or (c) content with their current position. The participants held a variety of positions within the school district: assistant principal (40%), teacher (29%), counselor (6.5%), and other (25%). Results of the study indicated that a majority of the participants were approaching retirement eligibility and were not pursuing the principalship. Gender, ethnicity, and efficacy were all found to be nonsignificant factors with regard to job likelihood or self-reported capability. ANOVA results indicated that assistant principals and school counselors rated the job significantly higher then did teachers or individuals holding other administrative positions. Most

individuals acquired the principal credential to expand career options and to assume a leadership role within the district.

The study suggested several guidelines for increasing the pool of candidates for the position, including internal recruitment ("grow your own"), external recruitment, and job restructuring to make the position more attractive. Perhaps the most significant conclusion of this study was that school districts may need to look outside their traditional talent field for new school leaders; they may need to focus more on external recruiting for viable candidates. The study did exhibit some shortcomings; for example, the researchers did not establish the reliability and validity of the survey instrument. Further, a Likert scale was utilized to collect data pertaining to background information, job satisfaction, certification, job attraction, and barriers to success, yet the survey included only 20 items, thereby appearing to attempt evaluation of many different variables with a limited number of questions. Finally, the researchers never reported the response rate from their study, thereby creating potential problems with several of the statistical assumptions of both the *t*-test and the ANOVA that were used in this study. Although there were some issues with the methodology and instrumentation of the study, it produced findings that were atypical of other studies that have examined the principal shortage. The results of this study should be accepted with caution.

Becoming a principal or even a viable administrative candidate requires that an individual shift his or her thinking from an instructional perspective to a leadership or managerial perspective. Essentially, the change from being a teacher to being an administrator is a complete identity change, which some educators are reluctant to undertake. Pounder and Merrill (2001) identified several areas that predicted principal

potential in candidates. These included (a) expectations of being considered a viable applicant, (b) a desire to achieve and influence education, (c) acceptance of additional time demands, and (d) greater salary and benefits.

The work of Pounder and Merrill (2001) was an integral part of this researcher's study. Pounder and Merrill utilized a multiple regression analysis to examine the job desirability of the high school principalship. The framework for their study was job choice theory, which comprised critical contact, subjective, and objective theories. Instrumentation for the study was designed by the researchers utilizing a focus group of three high school principals, two assistant principals, and a former principal. The focus group evaluated job attributes common to the principalship and prioritized them with regard to the theoretical framework of the study. A principal components analysis was conducted to organize the data into the following measures: objective, subjective, critical contact work, and school context groups. The researchers found that attraction to the high school principalship was significantly impacted by one's expectations of being perceived as a viable candidate, the desire to achieve and influence education, additional time and work demands, and salary and benefits. The regression model explained 38% of the variance in respondents' job desirability ratings.

Pounder and Merrill's (2001) study displayed several significant strengths as well as a few fairly significant limitations. The theoretical framework of the study was sound as it drew from multiple perspectives about the motivational factors of people with regard to career choice. The instrumentation also represented a strength as the researchers utilized statistical methodology and experts in the field to develop the specific job attributes listed in the survey tool. The study achieved the return of 170 usable surveys,

thereby yielding a 73% response rate. Variable scales were developed and subjected to reliability analysis to confirm their internal consistency; the scale reliabilities ranged from moderate to strong (Cronbach's alpha = .57 to .88).

The design of this study did exhibit some limitations. No study can accurately predict the intentions of potential applicants for specific employment. Additionally, it is difficult to identify all of the attributes that might either attract or repel a candidate regarding a specific position. Pounder and Merrill's (2001) study was conducted in one state with a sample population that had already demonstrated a firm commitment to secondary education. The sample population included high school assistant principals and middle school principals; other respondents might have held a significantly different view of the high school principalship. If the researchers had surveyed elementary principals, central office personnel, or veteran teachers, the result might have been significantly different. The survey was meant to address only job intentions of the sample participants and not actual behaviors with regard to accepting the position. Finally, the survey instrument included no way of distinguishing highly qualified candidates from marginally qualified applicants.

The life of the beginning principal is fraught with problems and pitfalls, of which administrative candidates are aware. Daresh and Playco (1995) identified the following main problems that new principals face: (a) problems with role clarification and understanding what it means to be a principal, including making sense of their new found authority; (b) limited technical experience, knowing how to do the things they are supposed to do; and (c) difficulties in socialization to the profession and the system or getting things accomplished within a particular setting.

An administrative candidate faces the realities of actually being the lead person in the building. First-year principals, however, often receive a distinct message that they should not “make waves” (Rooney, 2000, p. 77). Principals also have reported that if no trouble ensues following their appointment, they receive very little further feedback or positive direction (Walker & Qian, 2006).

Perhaps the most daunting issue for the administrative candidate, as well as the most significant change for the beginning principal, is the isolation of the position. Walker and Qian (2006) stated, “The place of the principal within the school can be a very lonely one indeed, even in these days of distributed leadership and communities of learning” (p. 301). Moreover, the age of accountability has ushered in competition between schools, often making principals reluctant to share views on common problems with regard to student achievement, resources, or personal issues (Draper & McMichael, 2000). This phenomenon, coupled with the harsh reality that “the buck stops here” (Walker & Qian) for everything that occurs within the school, stands only to increase the isolation that the beginning administrator feels. Walker and Qian wrote, “Even today, teachers, parents and children often perceive the principal’s office as the touchstone of authority (and even wisdom) in the school” (p. 301).

Barksdale (2003) conducted a study focusing on teachers with educational leadership certification and examining their aspirations for school administration. specifically, the principalship. The study utilized both descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis to examine factors associated with an individual’s decision to apply for, pursue, and ultimately accept an administrative position within a school building. Descriptive statistics depicted factors associated with the application for and acceptance

of a job as school principal. Regression analysis was used to determine the relationship between predictor variables (objective, subjective, work, and school context) and the criterion variable, the job desirability index.

The Barksdale (2003) study was extremely thorough in every respect. All of the assumptions of the regression model were met. One significant area of weakness inherent in the study was the sample size. Ideally, a multiple regression study should involve a sample size of approximately 30 participants per predictor variable. As the study had five predictor variables, 150 participants would have been an acceptable number. The sample consisted of 116 participants, representing a 68% response rate. Although the response rate was excellent, this number represented a relatively small sample for a regression study. Appropriate survey research methods were employed, and the survey instrument was deemed to be reliable and valid by a panel of experts. The reliability and validity of the survey had been established through previous use. The size of the sample and the diversity of the participants also contributed to the generalizability of the findings. The most significant flaw of the work was the possibility of multicollinearity within the regression model, which was not accounted for by the researcher.

Results from Barksdale's (2003) study indicated that only the work predictor variable was positively correlated to the job desirability index. Specifically, the work itself correlated to job desirability, overall attractiveness, and the probability of both seeking and accepting a principalship. Perhaps the most significant conclusion of this study was that the roles and responsibilities of the school principal represent major factors for individuals considering the principalship as a career. Barksdale made several recommendations for future study in her final analysis. One of her suggestions was to

analyze factors in place at the time students actually pursue the principal endorsement. She further suggested that additional research be conducted with regard to whether or not these individuals ever intended to apply for an administrative position and if so, in what capacity.

Theoretical Framework

Job choice theory focuses on the applicant and the decision-making process with regard to job selection. The theory, which was developed in the late 1960s, stems from industrial and organization psychology. Ultimately, the decision to either accept or reject employment is made by the individual applicant; however, there are factors that influence the applicant's decisions. Schwab, Rynes, and Aldag (1987) found that the job evaluation and choice process are most heavily influenced by the following factors: (a) perceptions of the job's attributes vis-à-vis the job seeker's attributes preference function (compensation, type of work, meaning or emotional benefit derived from work); (b) the type of decision process used to evaluate those attributes (employment evaluated in regard to the other types of jobs being considered, subjective ideas in regard to ideal job situation, requirements to maintain desired standard of living); and (c) the ability of the individual applicant to evaluate what the job will entail from both a content and a process orientation in making the decision to accept a position. The applicant must first determine the position for which to apply as well as the desired outcome if the job is offered. Secondly, the applicant must discern the quality of the position as it relates to overall job choice, personal satisfaction, and commitment to the organizational structure (Schwab et al.).

Behling, Labovitz, and Gainer (1968) divided job choice theory into three distinct theories: objective theory, subjective theory, and critical contact theory. The objective theory refers to the individual job seeker as an "economic being" seeking to improve upon his or her current financial situation in life. Behling et al. wrote, "The position selection process is based on a weighing of the advantages and disadvantages of each offer in terms of objectively measurable factors" (p. 14). These objective factors include salary and benefits, educational opportunities, job location, and potential for advancement (Pounder & Merrill, 2001).

Objective Theory

The objective theory focuses on measurable factors and how they impact the quality of life of the individual. Behling et al. (1968) stated, "Each of these items is weighed in terms of its relative importance to the individual, and the results are combined into some overall index of desirability" (p. 115).

Salary

Repeated studies about the lack of qualified candidates for the principalship have specifically alluded to salary as a limitation of the position. Qualified applicants tend to view the salary as insufficient in light of the additional stress associated with assuming the lead role within a school building. A study conducted by the Educational Research Service (1998) found that principals were indeed the highest paid individuals at the building level. At the time of the study, elementary principals were typically earning $73,114; middle school and high school principals were earning $78,176 and $83,944 respectively.

A follow-up study by the Educational Research Service not in ref (2005) cited figures to indicate that the average pay of an elementary principal was actually declining; 2003-2004 salaries nationwide averaged $75,144 compared to $75,291 during the 2002-2003 school year. The trend continued at the high school level as well; the high school principalship reflected a 2% drop in wages from the 1994-1995 school year to the 2004-2005 school year. The superintendent position was not as negatively impacted; ERS reported that superintendents' pay dropped only a fraction of a percent. Interestingly, the ERS report found that teachers suffered the most significant setback with regard to pay; their salaries dropped 3.4%, even when adjusted for inflation, whereas high school principals and superintendents experienced gains of 2% and 12%, respectively.

Some districts provide additional compensation for individuals holding advanced degrees or handling extracurricular activities or provide additional retirement benefits for principals. On the surface, such incentives may make the lead position in the building seem attractive from an economic perspective. Nevertheless, numerous studies (ERS, 1998, 2005; DiPaola, 2003; Galusha, 2004; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Gilman & Givens, 2001) found that lack of compensation was ranked as one of the leading factors in discouraging applicants from pursuing the principalship. By all measures, the principalship is a difficult job to fill; it will become more difficult to find qualified candidates if salaries are, in fact, declining.

Climate

Typically, the principal works a longer work day than the standard 7½ or 8-hour contract day of a teacher. Additionally, the standard teacher contract usually ranges from 190 to 200 days, depending on additional duties and contracted responsibilities. The

principal serves a lengthened contract year, usually 240 days or more, essentially functioning as a year-round employee. Finally, principals relinquish job security when they move to the ranks of administration; although they maintain tenure as classroom teachers, few principals choose to return to the classroom after serving in an administrative capacity. Although the objective theory sheds light on the motivational factors relevant to some candidates, it does not necessarily explain the reasons that candidates choose to pursue or not pursue the principalship.

Subjective Theory

The subjective theory relates to candidates from a psychological perspective, with an emphasis on the organization's meeting the psychological needs of the individual. The candidate views the work environment as a place where he or she is fulfilled on an emotional or psychological level. The candidate may choose a specific position based on his or her perception of job satisfaction or fulfillment with regard to the work performed on a daily basis. According to the subjective theory, the candidate's desire to either accept or decline a position is driven by the "perceived ability of the firm to provide satisfaction for deep seated and often unrecognized emotional needs of the candidate" (Behling et al., 1968, pp. 15-16). This component of job choice theory may have particular relevance as individuals often enter the field of education to "make a difference." Candidates are not usually motivated by financial incentives as school systems generally pay within a specified range, which is similar to the salary ranges of other local districts.

Critical Contact Theory

Critical contact theory asserts that job candidates cannot differentiate between the objective theory and the subjective theory because (a) the depth of the contact with the firm or agency is too limited, (b) recruiting entities tend to blur the differences between competing organizations, or (c) the candidate lacks experience to evaluate the information provided by the firm or agency (Behling et al., 1968). Because the candidate is incapable of making a decision based on financial or psychological needs, he or she makes choices based on "the appearance and behavior of the recruiter, the nature of the physical facilities and the efficiency of processing the paperwork associated with his application" (Behling et al., p. 17). Critical contact theory is important as it emphasizes the initial contact between the prospective employee and the employer or recruiter. Ideally, job candidates are secure and certain in their job choices; however, it is evident from job choice theory that a multitude of factors impact an individual's decision to apply for and accept a position within an organization.

Based upon a list of attributes developed by Young , Rinehart, & Henneman (1993) for teachers, items related to the objective theory were created; parallel items for principals were then created by the survey development team. Objective theory scales focused on economic incentives such as salary, benefits, and earned leave time. A school context scale focused on specific items related to the school itself, such as reputation, size, location, and socioeconomic status of the school; the school context scale also included items of a descriptive nature with regard to the high school principalship. The subjective theory scale focused on the personal and psychological aspects of school administration; the development of these attributes was based on the personal experiences

of the team of administrators. Critical contact theory related to two variable scale categories: (a) attributes that have an influence regarding whether or not to pursue the position and (b) attributes that identify the actual work of the administrator or the day-to-day responsibilities that the job entails.

Recruitment and Demand

At some point in the future there will be a shortage of educational leaders, specifically, building level personnel to run schools. Some districts will have no problem attracting high quality, qualified applicants. Other districts may struggle, particularly those in urban or rural settings. The high school principalship may prove to be the most difficult job to staff as it is such a complex and varied role (Pounder & Merrill, 2001).

Chan and Richardson (2003) examined specific recruitment strategies that Georgia districts were using to attract both teachers and principals; the strategies included increasing salaries, lowering the selection criteria, using headhunters, and implementing "grow our own" plans. A significant percentage of the districts focused on the last strategy in recruiting and developing principals.

According to Chan and Richardson (2003), school districts in Georgia seemed to be attempting to reduce the number of administrators within the public school system. They wrote, "Data indicate that 118 school administrators retired and 80 resigned in 2000-2001. However, only 158 administrators were hired in the year 2001-2002" (p. 11). Reasons for this force reduction might have included the tightening of school district budgets nationwide, difficulty in identifying quality candidates for the positions, and pressure from the public to downsize the organization of academic administration (Chan

& Richardson). In the State of Georgia the trend has appeared to be twofold: grow your own programs and reduce the cadre of administrators. School districts statewide have been focusing on hiring more teachers and fewer administrators. Continuing such a trend will be difficult if projected increases in student enrollment materialize, the economy in Georgia continues to improve, and families continue to relocate to the south due to affordable housing and quality of life.

Restructuring in Georgia

On April 15, 2007, the Georgia Professional Standards Commission adopted rule 505-3-.58 Educational Leadership Programs mandating that educational leadership programs statewide restructure their programs (www.gapsc.com 505-3-.58). The focus of these rules was to adequately prepare and certify educational leaders in the State of Georgia as well as create a more performance-based system at the graduate level for future educational leaders.

More recently, state educational leaders in Georgia, in conjunction with the Georgia Professional Standards Commission (GAPSC), proposed new rules that changed the certification guidelines and requirements for educational leadership certificates (www.gapsc.com, 505-2-.300). The new rule change affected individual leadership certificates and was designated Rule 505-2-.300 Educational leadership. This rule was scheduled to go into effect September 30, 2009; all previous educational leadership students needed to complete their individual programs by that time or they would be required to adhere to the new GAPSC rules.

The new preparation program standards include a performance-based advanced degree requirement, a new state content assessment, and a new certificate program that not only differentiates between building level and system level but also is directly connected to specific jobs held by educational leaders. These changes are effective for individuals enrolled in programs after September, 15, 2009, educators moving to Georgia with out-of-state certificates, and those who already hold leadership certificates. The State of Georgia has defined leadership as a role "in which an individual has the authority and or responsibility, in a supervisory role, for a board approved educational program and or certified personnel" (www.gapsc.com, 505-2-.300). Many individual districts, however, are making local decisions regarding what constitutes a leadership position.

The new rule, 505-2-.300, has created several levels or tiers of educational leadership endorsements (www.gapsc.com, 505-2-.300). The levels are detailed as follows:

1. First-tier teacher leader endorsement enables teachers to pursue endorsement while continuing to teach and also assume some leadership responsibilities.

2. Second-tier initial pool of applicants or pre-leadership students pursue a degree at the master's level or higher and take and pass the Georgia Assessments for the Certification of Educators (GACE), resulting in a 5-year nonrenewable certificate. Educators at this status will be eligible for employment in a leadership position.

3. Third-tier students hold a nonrenewable, performance-based leadership certificate and have 5 years to complete a Georgia Professional Standards Commission (PSC)-approved, performance-based leadership program at the educational specialist or doctoral level. This status is available only to individuals who have been selected or

employed in a leadership position. These performance-based programs are offered at both the building level and the system level.

Individuals at the superintendent level and individuals with concurrent job responsibilities must hold both building and system level certificates. It is important to note that individuals are not permitted to pursue the level 6 or level 7 degrees (Ed.S or Ed.D) until they have been hired by a Georgia school district to fill an administrative position such as assistant principal, principal, or educational coordinator, either at the building level or the system level. Local districts hold the authority to determine which specific jobs constitute leadership positions.

Once these performance-based programs are complete, the educator is recommended by the PSC provider for the fourth tier. This tier involves an unencumbered, renewable performance-based leadership certificate at the building or system level.

The new rules represent a significant departure from the previous Georgia educational leadership program as they appear to dictate directly to the colleges and universities regarding the requirements for their graduates to earn state certification in educational leadership. Georgia also replaced the PRAXIS 2 leadership assessment with its own assessment for educational leaders, the GACE. The PRAXIS exam was no longer accepted after September, 2008.

Yet another point of interest in these new rules is the requirement (formerly an option) that new administrative hires return to school to pursue a degree at level 6, Ed.S, or level 7, Ed.D. For instance, if the individual is hired as an assistant principal, the building level option must be completed. If the individual is hired for a system level

position, such as a position in curriculum or a specialized field, the system level program must be completed. The individual must complete the program within 5 years; if the educator does not complete it within that time span, the superintendent may request a 1-year extension.

Preexisting Georgia leadership certificates continue to be valid; individuals holding them are not required to upgrade their certification status. An individual may, however, choose to add the performance-based designator to the leadership certificate he or she holds by completing a PSC-approved program at a higher degree level or by completing the certificate-only, performance-based requirement outlined by the PSC provider.

The new rules also address the issue of reciprocity with regard to individuals' holding leadership certificates from other states but applying for certification in Georgia. These individuals must apply for and satisfy all special Georgia requirements; they will then be issued renewable leadership certificates at the appropriate degree level. If the individuals do not meet all Georgia requirements, they will be issued 1-year nonrenewable leadership licenses; during that year, they will be expected to satisfy all Georgia requirements. Individuals with reciprocal certification are eligible for employment in leadership positions in the State of Georgia; at their discretion they may, but are not required to, add the designators to their leadership certifications. An educator living in Georgia, but completing an out-of-state leadership program, is eligible for a certification upgrade only if all Georgia requirements are met, including completion of the GACE assessment for educational leaders. Upon completion of the requirements, an

educator can apply for a nonrenewable leadership certificate. If the special requirements of the State of Georgia are not met, the individual does not receive a license upgrade.

The new legislation seems to place limitations on which individuals can pursue specific degrees. The law mandates that an individual must hold a position as a school administrator to pursue the Ed.S or Ed.D. The law also seems to indicate that once a position as a school administrator has been secured, it becomes mandatory that the employee return to school to earn the level 6 or level 7 certification status. Additionally, the law provides guidelines regarding individuals' earning certification out of the state and applying for licensure once that certification has been completed. The State of Georgia was apparently unsatisfied with the out-of-state certification programs; therefore, new provisions require that applicants adhere to the Georgia special requirements. The new law also divides the leadership certification into strands, either building level or system level, according to the educator's current job placement. The law makes provisions for changes in licensure status should an individual change jobs. Clearly, the law is a significant departure from previous legislation, according to which anyone could pursue any degree or certification program in which they were interested.

Rule 505-2-.300 Educational Leadership appears to be Georgia's response to the phenomenon of an individual's earning leadership endorsement simply because it creates a mechanism with which to earn more money through an increase in the yearly stipend. The new legislation eliminates that mechanism. Leadership endorsements beyond the master's degree level cannot be pursued until the candidate has secured a leadership position in a Georgia school system; securing such a position identifies the individual as a preservice leadership candidate and results in a 5-year nonrenewable leadership

certificate. This stipulation raises a question regarding the individuals who have pursued an advanced degree at level 6 to further qualify themselves and to set themselves apart in a very competitive field of applicants. Because these individuals are denied admission to such programs, they can no longer utilize advanced degrees to separate themselves from their peers.

The new rules in Georgia force a paradigm shift from the traditional system of educational licensure and compensation. Individuals are no longer able to accumulate degrees they never intend to use simply for the purpose of adding stipends to their base salaries. This regulation specifically affects educational leadership students. Therefore, this study assumes additional significance as it potentially serves as an initial test to determine whether or not the legislation has had any effect at all on the individuals enrolling in the programs. The state legislation has limited the degree completer to a master's degree; an individual can no longer pursue the specialist degree unless he or she secures an administrative position. If a person pursues other educational degrees, such as curriculum or reading specialists, he or she is not limited with regard to the choice of degree level and is still entitled to the stipend. If the legislation has been successful, the individuals currently enrolled in the programs should be truly interested in pursuing administration; this factor is one of the key areas this study sought to assess.

Summary

Certain issues emerged through review of the literature regarding the principalship during this study. There are shortages of qualified candidates willing to assume the leadership of schools because many of these individuals are retiring, moving

to the private sector, or taking themselves out of the applicant pool of potential educational administrators. The shortage of principals has resulted from an increase in the roles and responsibilities of the principal as well as the increased complexities of the job. Additionally, salaries are deemed to be inadequate for the amount of work and potential frustrations that accompany the job. Not only do the shortages exist across the nation but they have also been reported in the international literature (Walker & Qian, 2006).

Historically, teachers have been ready and willing to heed the administrative call, change career tracks, and pursue the administrative positions; however, this phenomenon seems to be changing. Teacher leaders are now rethinking the commitment required by the principalship. Although many of them respect the position and the work, they are not inclined to pursue the position for a myriad of reasons. Some teachers feel that by pursuing further education, they are "selling out" their peers; others believe the position moves them too far from the student body and the instructional core (Hurley, 1992). Concerns about salary, increased responsibility, and isolation are also factors that seem to keep qualified and competent teacher leaders from applying for the job. Finally, reluctance to expend the time and financial capital that the administrative certification programs require is also a barrier for some students. Clearly, the roles and responsibilities of the principal are complex and difficult, and seemingly fewer teacher leaders are willing to accept the challenges associated with this position of responsibility.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of the current administrator shortage is the fact that educational leadership programs across the nation are quite full. These programs have little difficulty filling seats in their classrooms, yet most of the students have no

interest in the principalship. Nationwide, programs in educational administration exist at the master's level, the educational specialist level, and the doctorate of education level.

Seemingly, with the existing levels of academic preparation there should be an abundance of qualified, competent, and willing individuals to serve as principals. Fortunately, there are good students emerging from these programs who are both willing and motivated to take on these difficult jobs. Many are ambitious people who wish to make large-scale improvements and who enjoy working with students. Such individuals have the ability to see the smaller pieces of the puzzle and understand how the puzzle fits together to create an organization that can serve increasingly diverse student populations. It is imperative that these future leaders find their way into the ranks of administration. By being progressive in education, the good they can do is immeasurable; the key seems to lie in creating opportunities for them to achieve their ambition.

There do not seem to be any quick fixes to the problem of the principal shortage. It is evident that the pressure of standards-based assessments will not recede at any point in the near future. Even if the federal government eases the mandates set forth by NCLB, surely individual states will initiate legislation to ensure student success and teacher accountability. The test results returned every spring will be viewed as a referendum on schools and ultimately on principals. Review of the literature indicated that one of the most compelling reasons for qualified individuals to avoid the principalship is inadequate salary. At this time salaries appear to be decreasing; this is an alarming statistic as they should be rising by at least 3%, which is roughly equivalent to the rate of inflation. The administrative salary issue will continue to be significant as rewarding instructional staff financially appears to be more popular and politically correct than rewarding

administrative workers. Often the perception is that building level principals are already overpaid, a perception that does not take into account the reality of a year-round work schedule.

Ultimately, the job of principal entails keeping hundreds of employees focused and on task, maintaining a safe environment for hundreds or thousands of students, and keeping tens of thousands of community stakeholders satisfied that the neighborhood school is performing at a level adequate to meet the needs of all students and to maintain property values.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Purpose

The overall purpose of this study was to determine the career aspirations of individuals enrolled in educational leadership programs. Specifically, the study focused on the individuals' views with regard to building level administrative positions either at the principal or assistant principal level. The study also sought to ascertain the perceptions of these individuals regarding the job desirability of the principalship as assessed via the Principal Job Survey. This study builds upon the work of Pounder and Merrill (2001) as reported in "Job Desirability of the High School Principalship: A Job Choice Theory Perspective"; that research focused exclusively on the role of the high school principal. This study was further based upon the work of Barksdale (2003), in which the researcher utilized job choice theory to examine the career goals of teachers who held certification but were not employed as principals; the study examined the respondents' views and perceptions of the principalship. The primary goals of this study were to determine (a) the career plans or goals of the current class of administrative program students and (b) their perceptions regarding the job desirability of the principalship. The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the career aspirations of the individuals enrolled in the administrative certification programs?

2. What are the perceptions of the students with regard to the principalship, as assessed through the Principal Job Survey?

3. In which specific jobs in educational administration are these individuals interested: building level administration, central office administration, specialist positions, or none?

4. What specific attributes (including but not limited to gender, race, years of teaching experience, current position, education level, family status, and geographical region) define the administrative students?

5. What specific leadership positions (department chair, grade level chair, new teacher mentor, school leadership council, or other position) have the students held?

Methodology

To answer the research questions, a quantitative study using survey research methodology was conducted. In order to judge the credibility of a quantitative study, threats to internal and external validity must be evaluated (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005). Selection was not a threat to the internal validity of this study as the Kennesaw sample was a comprehensive sample and the Valdosta sample was a representative sample of the target population. History was not a threat to internal validity – no unanticipated events occurred that would influence the survey responses. There was no threat due to maturation as the data was collected in a single session; thus, there was no threat due to repeated testing either. No participants dropped out during the study; therefore, mortality was not a threat to the internal validity of the study. The survey instrument was administered the same way for each student (via paper); therefore, instrumentation was not a threat to internal validity. Statistical regression was not a threat to internal validity. Statistical regression refers to the lowering of extreme high scores and the raising of

extreme low scores which can create interpretation problems; this did not occur in this study. Finally, selection maturation refers to groups maturing at different rates. Groups were not being studied; therefore, selection maturation did not pose a threat to internal validity.

External validity relates to the extent to which the findings of this study can be generalized to others. Response rates from Kennesaw State and Valdosta State were 100% and 67% respectively thus the samples are representative of the current populations of students in those educational leadership programs. Additionally, both department chairs indicated that the students enrolled during the summer session of 2008 were "typical" of educational leadership students in other semesters.

The new Georgia legislation may have an impact on the ability to generalize the findings of this study. The legislation has limited by job description students who wish to pursue an Educational Specialist or Doctoral degree. The legislation changes at the Master's degree level are not as dramatic and aside from a new assessment the requirements remain similar.

Site Selection

Several different universities were contacted in the initial stages of this study in order to determine if they would be willing to assist in this research. KSU and VSU both agreed to participate with the researcher and had educational leadership programs. Many schools declined citing the fact that they were in the process of restructuring their programs to meet the new state mandated guidelines. Access was a key determinant in

selecting the universities from which the sample population was drawn. Both of the universities were public universities in the Georgia public educational system.

Kennesaw State University (KSU), in the metro-Atlanta region, was the first of two public universities to agree to participate in this study. An educational leadership program at the university offered leadership degrees at the master's, education specialist, and doctoral levels. Kennesaw State University was a public educational institution operating in the metro-Atlanta section of the State of Georgia; specifically, the school was located in the northwest corner of the state. The university did not have a distance learning program; however, it sponsored programs at both the graduate and undergraduate levels, with a total student enrollment of approximately 20,000 students. Kennesaw was the third largest university in the state public educational system.

The school of education was accredited by NCATE. Admission required a 2.75 undergraduate GPA and at least two letters of recommendation; however, no standardized testing was required. Students accepted into the program could complete the degree in six semesters as they progressed through the coursework in a cohort format. Each student was expected to complete a portfolio during the course of study; the portfolio was required to align with the standards of the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, the license and certification agent of the state. Students were required to participate in an internship program or practical field experience; they were also required to take the Praxis 2 test to earn state licensure in educational leadership. Two master's degree programs yielded educational leadership certification through KSU. The two strands were (a) ethics and multicultural leadership and (b) technology leadership, both of which were 36-credit degrees. Additionally, a 21-hour, add-on certification program was available to

teachers who were already endorsed. This study sampled students in the ethics and multicultural and the certification-only classes.

Valdosta State University (VSU) was the second public university agreeing to participate in the study. This school, located in a more rural setting, in the extreme southern part of the State of Georgia, offered master's and education specialist degrees in educational leadership. VSU operated as a public educational institution in the southern section of the State of Georgia. The university spanned a 41-county service area and sponsored a distance learning program that individuals could access through three separate satellite centers. The school sponsored programs at both the graduate and undergraduate levels with a total student enrollment of approximately 10,500 students.

VSU offered several degrees in educational leadership, including a master's of science and an education specialist degree, as well as an add-on certification program. Admission standards were typical of other statewide programs; applicants were required to apply first to the university and then make application to the educational leadership program. Scores on either the Graduate Record Examination (GRE) or the Miller Analogies Test (MAT) were required as well as letters of recommendation. An appeals process was available for a student denied entry into the program because of a low undergraduate GPA or low standardized test scores. The school of education was accredited by NCATE, and the educational leadership program was structured around the ELCC standards. The certification program required 21 credit hours, the master's degree required 36 hours, and the education specialist degree required 39 hours. All of the programs required an internship and completion of an Inventory of Leadership Experience, which was essentially a very detailed portfolio documenting leadership

experience throughout the course of the program. Although students were required to take the PRAXIS 2 test, they were not required to pass the test to graduate. To receive the state educational leadership certification, however, they were required to pass the PRAXIS test.

Instrumentation

The Principal Job Survey (Merrill, 1999) was used to survey students enrolled in educational leadership courses in the summer of 2008 at two Georgia universities—Kennesaw State University and Valdosta State University. Students in educational leadership programs were deemed to be the logical aspiring applicants for principal positions. Students surveyed were at most one year from program completion. Essentially, the survey assessed the pool of aspiring educational leaders who might be applying for educational leadership positions within the next few years. Perhaps the most significant and predominant position in educational leadership is the principalship; therefore, this survey instrument was used to determine how the respondents viewed the job they could potentially be applying for in the near future.

Permission was granted by both Pounder & Merrill and is included in Appendix C. Due to the fact that a large number of students from two different universities needed to be queried in regard to their opinions about the principalship, a survey seemed to be the most appropriate method for acquiring the necessary information. The Principal Job Survey was the best instrument for this study due to its prior use by Pounder and Merrill as well as Barksdale.

The Principal Job Survey identified a wide range of responsibilities that ultimately rest on the principal's shoulders. These responsibilities were organized into 65 items that were further grouped into five variable scales. The survey was employed to acquire information about specific areas identified by students as being attractive with regard to the role of the principal.

Further, this instrument yielded reliable and valid results with similar populations. Based upon this information the study was not pilot tested with this sample population. The initial study conducted by Pounder and Merrill focused on actual practicing principals. The Barksdale study shifted the focus to classroom teachers who held certification but were not pursuing administrative positions. In light of the anticipated principal shortage, the choice to use the Principal Job Survey to assess educational leadership students was logical.

The Principal Job Survey was divided into three sections: 1) demographics, 2) job responsibilities or attributes, and 3) future career decisions or opportunities. The demographic section focused on the development of an understanding of the students in the educational leadership programs with regard to age, gender, experience, race, future career aspirations, and other information relevant to the study. It is important to note that the demographic section of this survey was modified slightly from its original content by Barksdale (2003); the modification pertained to the ability of the survey to assess the desirability of the principalship at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school. No information regarding the variable scales, predictor variables, or criterion variables was modified in any way from the original content developed by Pounder and Merrill.

The second section of the study focused on the job attributes and was further divided into specific variable scales, including the following: objective, subjective, work itself, critical contact, and school context. The list of 65 attributes sought to define and describe the principalship as perceived by the respondent. The Principal Job Survey randomly distributed the items with regard to the variable scales: objective, subjective, the work itself, school context, and critical contact. The objective items on the survey were designed to gather data about the influence of salary, benefits, and opportunities for professional development. The objective scale pertained mainly to economic incentives. Subjective items inquired about the influence of psychological needs such as empowerment, support and respect as well as the desire to achieve and improve education.

Items related to critical contact theory were included within two scale categories: (a) those attributes that identify the influence of others such as family or colleagues, and (b) those attributes that identify elements of the work itself or descriptors of the specific job activities of the principal. These attributes included various aspects of the job, including staff supervision and the development of curriculum and policies. Results of the principal components analysis conducted by Pounder and Merrill indicted that several subscales actually existed within the work scale. These subscales included: Dilemmas/Problems, Time Demands, External Relations, Management Tasks, and Fiscal Management. Items included within the school context scale pertained to characteristics of the school environment, such as reputation, size, location, and socioeconomic status (Pounder & Merrill, 2001).

Content validity was established for the 65 attributes of the study by a "panel of experts" consisting of three current high school principals, two high school assistant principals, and one retired high school principal. This committee evaluated the job attributes that defined the principalship; they then added, deleted, or clarified items on the list. Once this task was completed, content validity was further assessed by former high school principals who had moved from the position and were serving in positions at the district level (Pounder & Merrill, 2001). As a final measure, Pounder and Merrill conducted a principal components analysis to reduce the data and provide more refined measures of the objective, subjective, critical contact, work and school context concepts.

The third section of the survey includes the items who, when combined, make the Job Desirability Index. The job desirability index which functioned as the dependent variable was calculated by averaging the scores on the following survey items: (a) the perceived attractiveness of the principalship, (b) the perceived probability of the respondent's seeking a principalship, and (c) the perceived probability of his or her accepting a principalship if offered. On the original survey developed by Pounder and Merrill these three items all loaded on the same factor during the principal component analysis, therefore the authors used these items to compute overall job desirability. Barksdale utilized the same three items to compute the JDI. In order to remain consistent with the previous studies and have an accurate dependent variable the same three items were utilized to calculate the JDI for this study. The survey did include an additional item in the Future Career Decisions/Opportunities section which asked "My perceived probability of being offered a principalship is" and was rated via a Likert scale. This item

was rated by the sample population but was not used as a component of the JDI for this study.

This study is based on previous studies conducted by Merrill & Pounder (2001) and Barksdale (2003). The aforementioned studies utilized a Likert scale to elicit responses. Respondents for this study utilized the same 5-point Likert scale to rate the various job attributes and how each might affect their decision to pursue an administrative position at some point in the future. The Likert scale designated the following values: -2,-1, 0, 1, and 2.

The values related to the students decision to accept a school principalship if offered and were described as follows:

-2 Strong negative influence on decision to accept

-1 Somewhat negative influence on decision to accept

0 No Influence on decision to accept

1 Strong positive influence on decision to accept

2 Strong positive influence on me decision to accept

N/A Not applicable to the position as I understand it

Even though the typical Likert scale ranges from 1 to 5 with 1 indicating the lowest value and 5 indicating the highest (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005), the Likert scale for this study ranged from -2 to +2 in keeping with Pounder and Merrill and Barksdale.

The Likert scale is a response scale often used in questionnaires with respondents specifying their levels of either agreement or disagreement with a statement. Likert scales may create distortion or inaccuracies in data as respondents may avoid extreme response categories(central tendency bias) agree with favorable statements with which they may

disagree with in an attempt to make themselves appear better (social desirability bias) or may agree with statements as presented (acquiescence bias) (McGreevy, 2007). The scales used in this study were identical to the scales in the previous studies in order for the findings to be comparable to the prior studies

Likert scales do contain some inherent drawbacks. It is possible that an individual may not be entirely truthful when self reporting in regard to the items or the individual may fake responses. Individuals also may develop a certain reaction set or tendency to respond in a certain way based upon the construction of the scale regardless of the content of the scale. (Wiersma & Jurs, 2005)

Procedures

The department chair of the educational leadership program at KSU was contacted 12 months prior to the distribution of the survey regarding their willingness to participate. Following approval by The George Washington University Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher surveyed the entire population of KSU educational leadership students taking courses in the summer of 2008. Eight sealed envelopes containing surveys were hand-delivered to the chair of the department. Each survey packet also contained letters to the educational leadership students stating the purpose of the study and thanking them for participating, as well as a letter to the course instructor providing directions for distributing the survey, stating the purpose of the study, and expressing appreciation for his or her instructional time in support of the study. After approximately 21 days, the researcher retrieved 7 packets yielding 99 usable surveys. The department chair held the final packet in case additional surveys were needed for the

study. After data analysis was completed the chair was contacted and asked to destroy the additional surveys as the returned surveys from KSU were adequate for the purposes of the study; 100% of the sample surveys distributed to KSU students were collected.

The VSU department chair was contacted approximately 9 months prior to the distribution of the survey regarding VSU's willingness to participate in the study. Following IRB approval, the researcher surveyed the entire population of VSU educational leadership students taking classes during the summer of 2008. Six sealed packets of surveys were mailed to the department chair. Each packet included 25 surveys for distribution, letters of consent for the students, and a letter of instruction to the course professor. Included with the surveys were postage-paid envelopes for use by the professors to return the surveys once completed by the educational leadership students. After approximately 21 days, 4 of 6 survey packets had been returned to the researcher, thereby reflecting a return rate of 67%; these 4 packets yielded a total of 69 usable surveys for the purposes of this study.

All data collected from the participants remained confidential throughout the course of the study. Surveys were kept in a secure location in the researcher's home and all data entry was handled by the researcher. Upon completion of the data entry process all of the Principal Job Surveys from both sites were destroyed. Table 2 presents reliability data for the 65 items on the Principal Job Survey, disaggregated by the reliability scales included in the instrument. Each item was placed into scales based on factor analyses conducted by the authors of the survey, Pounder & Merrill. Cronbach's alphas were then computed using SPSS. As the table shows, the reliability coefficients for this study are not largely dissimilar from the previous studies. For this study the

reliability coefficient for the critical contact scale was far below the acceptable level of .7; therefore, that scale was not included in the findings in chapter 4. That scale was below a reliable level in all three studies. The coefficient for the objective scale was slightly below .7 but was included as much of the literature regarding the desirability of the principalship had indicated economic incentives play a major role in determining whether or not the position was desirable. Overall, the reliability information suggests that the survey is a valid instrument.

Table 2. *Reliability Coefficients for Variable Scales*

Scale (n = 168)	No. of items	Item numbers	Cronbach's alpha Pounder and Merrill	Cronbach's alpha Barksdale	Cronbach's alpha Mitchell
Objective	8	1, 5, 8, 24, 27, 36, 43, 45	.73	.73	.66
Subjective	17	7, 10, 19, 32, 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 41, 42, 46, 47, 49, 57, 59, 60	.82	.87	.75
Work	32	2, 3, 4, 6, 9, 11, 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 20, 21, 22, 23, 25, 26, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 40, 44, 48, 50, 51	.82	.94	.86
School context	4	61, 62, 63, 64	.79	.87	.78
Critical contact	4	18, 52, 54, 65	.43	.53	.34

Data Analysis

Data for this study were analyzed using descriptive statistics. Percentages, means, and standard deviations for each school and for the total sample will be presented. Additionally, correlations of each Principal Job Survey scale and the Job Desirability Index will also be presented. Correlations are numerical representations of the relationship between two variables.

The following assumptions were met in regard to the statistical correlational analysis. Independence was met as no survey responses were influenced by other survey responses. Normality was met as all scale scores were evenly distributed. The assumption of linearity was met as there was no indication of a curvilinear relationship for any of the variable scales. Homoscedasticity was met as the range of the scores was similar in each of the variable scales with the exception of a few outlying scores (Pallant, 2005). Scatterplots and Histograms are included in Appendices D and E. All of the assumptions were met for the correlational analysis.

Ethical Considerations

This study was reviewed and approved by The George Washington University Institutional Review Board. The use of informed consent, subject confidentiality, correct data collection and management, and the exclusive use of the data for this study constitute the ethical guidelines under which this study was conducted. All individuals who chose to participate in this study were informed of the purposes, procedures, and rights associated with their participation. Confidentiality was assured as no individual

names were reported in the presentation of data. Participation in the study involved no more than minimal risk.

Summary

This research study was quantitative in nature. Data were collected via survey, using the Principal Job Survey (Merrill, 1999). This instrument utilizes job choice theory to assess the career goals of students enrolled in educational leadership programs at two Georgia universities. The entire populations of educational leadership students enrolled in courses during the summer session of 2008 were surveyed. 168 completed were received 99 from KSU and 69 from VSU. Chapter 4 presents the results of this research study.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

Introduction

This study focused on individuals enrolled in educational leadership programs in the State of Georgia, who were currently pursuing administrative endorsement or a graduate degree in leadership. The programs in which the students were enrolled yielded administrative endorsements or certifications qualifying the individuals to pursue administrative positions within public school systems statewide. Study results focused on job choice theory as defined in the Principal Job Survey (Merrill, 1999); specifically, the impact of work, subjective, critical contact, objective, and school context elements was assessed with regard to the overall perceptions toward the principalship held by the participants. This chapter reports descriptive statistics for the students as a group and by specific school. The chapter also contains descriptive statistics related to the job desirability index, which is an indication of how attractive the principalship is to the students. Finally, this chapter will offer some comparisons of descriptive data from the work of the previous authors, Pounder & Merrill & Barksdale.

Sample Demographics

The participants in this study were 168 students enrolled in educational leadership programs in the State of Georgia. The overall response rate for participants from both university samples was 84.0%. Kennesaw State University generated a response rate of 100%, which represents a comprehensive sample. The response rate for Valdosta State

University was 67% which while not a comprehensive sample was deemed to be representative of the sample population. Table 3 presents demographic data for the entire study sample. Females were heavily represented in the sample (78.6%). Approximately two thirds of the samples were Caucasian (66.1%); African Americans represented the next largest subgroup (28.0%). A bachelor's degree was the highest educational degree held by almost half (45.8%) of the sample; however, a small percentage (3.6%) held a doctoral degree. Most of the students in the programs were married (72.0%). The majority of the participants were teachers; elementary teachers represented the largest percentage (38.7%), followed by middle school (25.0%) and high school (20.8%). Several other educational professionals (14.3%) seeking the leadership certification participated in the study: guidance counselors, media specialists, special education directors, job and graduation coaches, curriculum directors, athletic directors and individuals in other district level positions. These educational professionals were represented at a higher rate at VSU (19%) compared to KSU (11%). Almost all (93.4%) of the participants were under the age of 50, with the 30-39 subgroup being the most heavily represented (45.8%). Table 3 includes information representative of the entire sample population and provides descriptive data regarding selected variables for both Kennesaw State University and Valdosta State University.

There are several similarities between the sample population of the Barksdale study and the current study. The Barksdale study included 116 participants and was also heavily represented by females (78.6%) compared to males (21.4%). The racial breakdown was also similar with Caucasians accounting for almost two thirds (65.0%) and Blacks accounting for almost on third (31%). Marital status was also similar in both

studies with married individuals heavily represented (73%) and single people in the minority (27%). In regard to current assignment elementary teachers were well represented (35%) followed by high school teachers (32%) and finally, middle school teachers (21%). This sample also included several guidance counselors, media specialists school psychologists and literacy counselors.

Some differences also emerged in a comparison of the two sample populations. The majority of the participants in the Barksdale study held Master's degrees (75%) with Educational Specialists (10.7%) and Doctorates (5%) represented as well. This population was also older with a concentration of participants falling in the 40-49 range (41.4%) the next largest concentration in regard to age was the 50-59 age range (32%). The least represented group in regard to age was the 20-29 year old demographic (1.7%). In this sample the majority of the participants were over the age of 40 (73.3%).

Table 3. *Entire Sample Frequency Counts for Selected Variables* (*n* = 168)

Characteristic	No.	%
Gender		
Male	36	21.4
Female	132	78.6
Age		
20-29	41	24.4
30-39	77	45.8
40-49	39	23.2
50-59	11	6.5
Marital status		
Single	47	28.0
Married	120	71.4
Race or ethnicity		
Hispanic	6	3.6
Caucasian	111	66.1
African American	47	28.0
Asian	1	.1
Other	3	1.8
Highest degree		
Bachelor's	77	45.8
Master's	67	39.9
Education specialist	18	10.7
Doctorate	6	3.6
Current assignment		
Elementary teacher	65	38.7
Middle school teacher	42	25.0
High school teacher	35	20.8
Guidance	2	1.2
Other	24	14.3

Table 4 presents frequency counts of individual career plans for the 3 to 5 years following the study. Individuals were asked to select only one option with regard to future career pursuits. Almost half of the participating individuals indicated plans to pursue a position at the building level: assistant principal (47.0%). Nearly one quarter (23.2) indicated a desire to remain in their current positions. There was some interest in the principal position at all levels; elementary (4.2%), middle school (2.4%), and high school (1.2%); of all the participants surveyed, only 7.8% indicated plans to pursue a principalship within the 3-to-5-year time span cited in this study.

Frequency counts for the Barksdale study were much different than the sample population in the current study. Many participants reported that they would stay in their current position (58%). Others reported that they would either leave the field of education (16%) or retire (15%). Almost half of the participants said they would not seek the principalship or assistant principalship at any of the three levels (49%). Of the individuals interested in pursuing the assistant principalship or the principalship, elementary (36.2%) garnered the most interest, followed by middle school (25.9%) with high school (19.8) rounding out the group. Participants in this group also indicated that they would be inclined to pursue a district level position (8.6%) or superintendency (17.2%). Many were also inclined toward seeking future employment in a college or university setting (20.7%). The questions from the Barksdale sample were multiple response questions resulting in percentages totaling more than 100%.

Table 4. *Entire Sample Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* (*n* =168)

Career plan	No.	%
Assistant principalship	79	47.0
Current position	39	23.2
District level position	12	7.1
Nonprincipal position within a school	11	6.5
Other	11	6.5
Elementary principal	7	4.2
Middle school principal	4	2.4
High school principal	2	1.2
Educational service agency	2	1.2
State level position	1	.6

Research Questions

1. What are the career aspirations of the individuals enrolled in the administrative certification programs?

The career aspirations of the students in both educational leadership programs were varied; however, there did seem to be a great deal of interest in the assistant principalship at all academic levels. Overall, the majority (54.8%) of the respondents indicated plans to pursue building level leadership at the assistant principal or principal level. The assistant principalship was seemingly the most desirable position (47%); there was less interest in the principalship, with only a small percentage (7.8%) indicating

willingness to pursue the position. As much of the literature had suggested, the high school principalship appeared to continue to be the least desirable of the building level leadership positions. Interest in nonbuilding level leadership positions or district level positions was indicated by almost 14% of the respondents. Interestingly, almost a quarter (23.2%) of the respondents indicated plans to remain in their current positions. That preference was much greater at Valdosta (43.5%) than at Kennesaw (9%).

2. What are the perceptions of the students with regard to the principalship, as assessed through the Principal Job Survey?

The job desirability index indicated that the majority of the surveyed students did view the principalship as a desirable position: 31.5% of the respondents rated the principalship as being very attractive, 30.9% as attractive, and 28.2% as somewhat attractive. These respondents also indicated they would be at least somewhat likely to seek or accept a principalship if offered. Although there were respondents who indicated that the position was not desirable, they were in the minority: approximately 6.0% indicated that the principalship was somewhat unattractive, 2.0% deemed it unattractive, and 1.5% very unattractive. Further, these individuals indicated they would be at least somewhat unlikely to be inclined to seek or accept a principalship. The overall perception of the students was overwhelmingly positive with regard to the desirability of the principalship: over 90% deemed the job to be very attractive, attractive, or somewhat attractive.

3. In which specific jobs in educational administration are these individuals interested: building level administration, central office administration, specialist positions, or none?

Students did express some specific intentions with regard to their career aspirations. It appeared that the students were very interested in the assistant principalship, followed closely by interest in the principalship. Apparently, most of the students who sought to move into the administrative ranks preferred the building level; over half of the respondents planned to pursue building level administration. There was interest in nonbuilding level leadership positions, as well. A small percentage of respondents indicated a desire to pursue positions specializing in curriculum or special programs, such as special education or gifted education, or positions specifically related to one content area. A small minority (2%) of respondents indicated interest in pursuing a career at an educational service agency, in a state level position, or in consulting.

4. What specific attributes (including but not limited to gender, race, years of teaching experience, current position, education level, family status, and geographical region) define the administrative students?

Specific attributes defined the administrative students according to gender, race, years of teaching experience, current position, educational level, family status, and geographical area. The sample surveyed for this study consisted primarily of females; males made up less than one quarter of the overall sample with Kennesaw State University surpassing Valdosta State University in male representation by approximately 5%. Approximately two thirds of the respondents were Caucasian, with about 30% being African American; KSU had greater minority representation than VSU. The mean number of years in education for the entire sample was 9.5; the median was 8 years. Almost 85% of the respondents held instructional positions at either the elementary, middle, or high school level. Some respondents held supporting roles within the schools

such as guidance counselor, graduation coach, and special education director. The field of students reported a range of educational credentials with four degree levels represented: bachelor's (45.8%), master's (39.9%), education specialist (10.7%), and doctorate (3.6%). With regard to marital status the majority (72%) of the respondents reported being married. The study sample was representative of two educational leadership programs in the State of Georgia. Valdosta State University served the southern geographical region of the state, whereas, Kennesaw State University served the northwestern region of the state.

5. What specific leadership positions (department chair, grade level chair, new teacher mentor, school leadership council, or other position) have the students held?

Respondents reported an array of leadership positions. Almost one third (31%) were currently operating as department or grade level chairpersons. Many respondents (54%) also reported being involved in the mentoring process for new teachers. A majority (62%) reported that they had served on the school leadership council or a curriculum development team. A minority (13%) reported being involved in coaching a sport or sponsoring a club or an activity at the school level.

Kennesaw State University

Table 5 presents specific demographic data for the KSU sample.

Table 5. *Kennesaw State University Frequency Counts for Selected Variables* (*n* = 99)

Characteristic	No.	%
Gender		
Male	23	23.2
Female	76	76.8
Age		
20-29	22	22.2
30-39	51	51.5
40-49	19	19.0
50-59	7	7.1
Marital status		
Single	35	35.4
Married	64	64.6
Race or ethnicity		
Caucasian	57	57.6
African American	34	34.3
Hispanic	6	6.1
Asian	1	1.0
Other	1	1.0
Highest degree		
Bachelor's	61	61.6
Master's	25	25.3
Education specialist	10	10.1
Doctorate	3	3.0
Current assignment		
Elementary teacher	41	41.4
Middle school teacher	24	24.2
High school teacher	22	22.2
Guidance	1	1.0
Other	11	11.1

The descriptive data from Kennesaw were similar to those from Valdosta in that the majority of the students enrolled in the program were female. There was a fairly evenly distributed age range for participants in the educational leadership programs with a slight majority (51%) of the respondents falling within the age range of 30-39. Approximately 57% of the respondents were Caucasian, with African Americans representing almost 34% of the sample; the Kennesaw State sample appeared to be more ethnically diverse than the Valdosta sample. Kennesaw was more heavily represented by individuals reporting undergraduate degrees as their highest levels of education (62%); more than one third (38%) held graduate degrees. Finally, almost 80% of the respondents were currently operating in an instructional capacity at one of the three levels: elementary school, middle school, or high school.

Table 6 depicts the specific short-term (within 3 to 5 years) career plans reported by the individuals enrolled in the KSU leadership programs.

Table 6. *Kennesaw State University Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* (n = 99)

Career plan	No.	%
Assistant principalship	54	54.5
District level position	11	11.1
Current position	9	9.1
Nonprincipal position within a school	7	7.1
Other	7	7.1
Elementary principal	3	3.0
Middle school principal	3	3.0
High school principal	2	2.0
Educational service agency	2	2.0
State level position	1	1.0

Reported career plans indicated a great deal of interest in a range of administrative positions, with a majority (55%) of the applicants viewing the assistant principal position favorably; many of the respondents were also interested in other leadership positions, at either the building or district level. As was the case at Valdosta, a small percentage (6%) of the students planned on pursuing a principalship at either the elementary or middle school level. Two (2%) of the students did indicate an interest in pursuing the high school principalship. A small minority (9%) of the students from Kennesaw State University reported plans to remain in the same position within the 3-to-5-year time span reflected in the survey.

Table 7 illustrates the JDI scores for educational leadership students at Kennesaw State University. Lower numerical scores indicate higher levels of perceived desirability related to the principalship.

Table 7. *Kennesaw State University Job Desirability Frequency Counts*

JDI Score	Frequency	Percent
1.0	12	12.1
1.3	16	16.2
1.6	6	6.1
2.0	12	12.1
2.3	7	7.1
2.6	12	12.1
3.0	14	14.1
3.3	4	4.0
3.6	6	6.1
4.0	3	3.0
4.3	3	3.0
5.0	1	1.0
6.0	3	3.0

The largest percentage (16.2%) of respondents generated a job desirability index of 1.3, reflecting a very positive perception regarding the principalship. The next largest percentage (14.1%) considered the job to be desirable, generating a score of 3.0. whereas 13% considered the job to be somewhat desirable. The most positive JDI score (1.0) was generated by 12.1% of the respondents; identical percentages generated scores of 2.0 and 2.6, also reflecting positive perceptions. Scores of 4.0 or higher, reflecting negative perceptions, were generated by 10% of the respondents.

Valdosta State University

Table 8. *Valdosta State University Frequency Counts for Selected Variables* (*n* = 69)

Characteristic	No.	%
Gender		
Male	13	18.8
Female	56	81.2
Age		
20-29	19	27.5
30-39	26	37.7
40-49	20	29.0
50-59	4	5.8
Marital status		
Single	12	17.4
Married	56	81.2
Race or ethnicity		
Caucasian	54	78.3
African American	13	18.8
Other	2	2.9
Highest degree		
Bachelor's	16	23.2
Master's	42	60.9
Education specialist	8	11.6
Doctorate	3	4.3
Current assignment		
Elementary teacher	24	34.8
Middle school teacher	18	26.1
High school teacher	13	18.8
Guidance	1	1.4
Other	13	18.8

The Valdosta descriptive data revealed that the majority of the students enrolled in the program were female. There was a fairly even distribution of ages within the educational leadership programs, with the largest percentage (37.7%) of the respondents falling within the age range of 30-39. Approximately 80% of the respondents were Caucasian, with African Americans representing almost 19% of the sample. Members of the sample population reported a wide range of educational credentials, with almost 77% holding graduate degrees. Finally, almost 80% of the respondents were currently operating in an instructional capacity at one of the three levels: elementary school, middle school, or high school.

Table 9 details the short-term, 3-to-5-year career plans for the students enrolled in the educational leadership programs at Valdosta State University. Worthy of note is the lack of interest in the high school principalship reflected by the respondents.

Table 9. *Valdosta State University Frequency Counts for 3-to-5-Year Career Plans* (n = 69)

Career plan	No.	%
Current position	30	43.5
Assistant principalship	25	36.2
Nonprincipal position within a school	4	5.8
Elementary principal	4	5.8
Other	2	2.9
District level position	1	1.4
Middle school principal	1	1.4
High school principal	0	0.0
Educational service agency	0	0.0
State level position	0	0.0

Reported career plans revealed some interest in a range of administrative positions, with many applicants' (36%) viewing the assistant principal position favorably. A small percentage (7.2%) of the students planned on pursuing a principalship at either the elementary or middle school level; however, no students in this sample were inclined to pursue the high school principalship. The largest percentage (44%) of the students from Valdosta State University reported plans to remain in their current positions during the 3-to-5-year time span reflected in the survey.

Table 10 illustrates the JDI scores for students at Valdosta State University. A numerical score of 1 indicates that the job was deemed most desirable. Increasing scores

indicate decreasing job desirability; a score of 6 indicates that the job was considered to be extremely undesirable by the respondent.

Table 10. *Valdosta State University Job Desirability Frequency Counts*

JDI Score	Frequency	Percent
1.0	11	15.9
1.3	6	8.7
1.6	3	4.3
2.0	9	13.0
2.3	6	8.7
2.6	6	8.7
3.0	14	20.3
3.3	5	7.2
3.6	3	4.3
4.0	2	2.9
4.6	2	2.9
5.0	1	1.4
5.3	1	1.4

The largest percentage (20.3%) of respondents generated a job desirability index of 3, reflecting a positive perception regarding the principalship. The next largest percentage (15.9%) considered the job to be extremely desirable, whereas 13% considered the job to be somewhat desirable. Only a small percentage (8.6%) of respondents generated scores reflecting negative perceptions, considering the job to be somewhat or very unattractive.

Table 11 presents comparative information for the two universities with regard to the 3-to-5-year career plans reported by the participants in the educational leadership programs.

Table 11. *Comparison of Career Plans of Students between VSU and KSU*

Career plan	VSU		KSU	
	No.	%	No.	%
Principal	5	7.2	8	8.0
Assistant principal	25	36.2	54	54.5
Nonbuilding level position	5	7.2	18	18.0
Current position	30	43.5	9	9.0

Nonbuilding level position includes nonprincipal position within a school and district level position.

Comparison of the two universities revealed several interesting findings. Reported plans for the principalship were relatively similar for both institutions, with 7%-8% of respondents indicating interest in the position. There was much greater reported interest in the assistant principalship at Kennesaw (54.5%) than at Valdosta (36.2%). The students at Valdosta also seemed much less inclined to pursue new positions upon graduation with almost 44% indicating a desire to remain in their current positions. Students at Kennesaw were also more inclined to pursue nonbuilding level leadership positions than were their peers at Valdosta. Kennesaw State University partnered with several local school systems in the development of school leaders. Many of these students were selected by administrative mentors within their districts; the expectation was that

they would pursue administrative positions. This expectation may account for the difference between the respondents at the two universities with regard to the assistant principalship as more individuals at Kennesaw State seemed to be inclined to pursue the position.

Job Desirability Index

Table 12 depicts the findings regarding the Job Desirability Index (JDI), which is a key measure of the Principal Job Survey. Reported are the minimum score, maximum score, mean score, and standard deviation for the JDI. The index was calculated by averaging the scores on the following survey items: (a) the perceived attractiveness of the principalship, (b) the perceived probability of the respondent's seeking a principalship, and (c) the perceived probability of his or her accepting a principalship if offered.

Furthermore, Table 12 details the scores for the JDI between the three studies. A numerical score of 1 (minimum score) indicates the position is most desirable according to the index; a score of 6 (maximum score) indicates the position is least desirable.

Table 12. *Comparison Job Desirability Index Scores*
(*n* = 168)

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
JDI 1	1.00	6.00	3.80	1.50
JDI 2	1.00	6.00	4.04	1.45
JDI 3	1.00	6.00	2.41	1.11

JDI1-Pounder, JD2-Barksdale, JD3-Mitchell

Table 13 represents data from the entire sample population from Kennesaw State and Valdosta State Universities.

Table 13. *JDI Total Group*
(n = 168)

JDI score	Frequency	Percent
1.0	23	13.7
1.3	22	13.1
1.6	9	5.4
2.0	21	12.5
2.3	13	7.7
2.6	18	10.7
3.0	28	16.7
3.3	9	5.4
3.6	9	5.4
4.0	5	3.0
4.3	3	1.8
4.6	2	1.2
5.0	2	1.2
5.3	1	.6
6	3	1.8

A high percentage of students rated the principalship as very attractive (1, 1.3, 1.6), attractive (2, 2.3, 2.6) or somewhat attractive (3, 3.3, 3.6) at over ninety percent.

Approximately, 10% of the remaining sample found the principalship to be unattractive, somewhat unattractive, or very unattractive.

Table 14. *Selected Descriptive Statistics for Each Variable Scale*

Variable	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Standard deviation
Objective	-7.00	16.00	6.77	3.79
Subjective	-1.00	30.00	13.84	6.89
Work itself	-14.00	54.00	18.39	13.04
Context	-4.00	8.00	2.67	2.76
Critical contact	-4.00	8.00	2.02	2.05

Table 14 presents the descriptive statistics associated with each of the variable scales. Minimum and maximum scores were reported as well as the mean score and the standard deviation for each variable scale. Negative scores are the result of a combination of negative values representing a negative to somewhat negative influence on the decision to accept a principalship.

Table 15. *Correlation between Variable Scales and JDI for Students in Georgia Educational Leadership Programs*

Job Attribute	Correlation Coefficient	*p*-value
Work	-.252	.001
Objective	-.112	.151
Subjective	-.240	.002
Context	-.112	.151

There is a significant negative correlation between the work attribute scale and job desirability (r = -0.252, p = 0.001). Though the correlation is significant, indicating a likelihood that the relationship exists in the population, the correlation is weak. It would be difficult to credit ratings for the work attribute scale, such as developing schedules or managing staff, to ratings for job desirability. There was a negative, but non-significant value for both the objective (r = -0.112, p = 0.151) and the context (r = -0.112, p = 0.150) attribute scales. Job desirability ratings were not significantly correlated to the objective attribute scale, including items such as salary and benefits, and the school context attribute scale, dealing with school reputation and socioeconomic status. The correlation between the subjective attribute scale, incorporating issues such as as empowerment and respect, and job desirability was significant and negative (r = -0.240, p = 0.002). The correlation, similar to the work attribute scale, was also weak. This indicates that it is

unlikely ratings for the subjective attribute scale would correspond to any specific rating for job desirability. It is likely this is also true of the population.

Based upon the results of the correlation analysis in conjunction with the Chronbach's alpha reliability analysis, it is the opinion of this researcher that the Principal Job Survey should not be used in future studies with regard to students in educational leadership programs.

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSIONS

Introduction

Public education is changing at a rapid pace, with increasing pressures being placed on school districts nationwide. School districts have been required to adapt and often change the implementation of their curriculum to prepare for standardized testing. Additionally, the benchmarks for these tests are shifting annually with regard to pass rates. Economically, districts struggle with increasing internal and external pressures; salaries, capital expenditures, and the costs of materials continue to rise faster than localities can adapt to the fiscal demands. These issues trickle down from the district level to the school level. The demands of educating students combine with the stringent rules set forth by federal and state legislation to create an environment for school leaders that is difficult at best, intolerable at worst. For many of these school leaders as well as teachers, the hours, salary, stress levels, and work load are different from what they expected. Many of these individuals leave the educational profession altogether. At the administrative level this phenomenon is of concern as the most experienced people are fleeing the profession (Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998; Arbor & Duarte, 2000). Additionally, the flight of good teachers impacts the future of the administrative ranks as these promising individuals never pursue educational leadership at the building level (D'Arbon & Dorman, 2003).

The literature has suggested that the position of principal is no longer as attractive as it once was to the best and brightest individuals (Woodruff, 2004; Hess, 2003; Walker & Qian, 2006). Skilled individuals are leaving the profession altogether, and others are

reluctant to leave the security of teaching positions for the perceived lower pay, longer hours, and significant workload increase that the building level administrative jobs require (Million, 1998). Perhaps one of the keys to understanding the shortage of qualified applicants lies in the motivation of the individuals currently enrolled in educational leadership programs. The preponderance of the literature has suggested that the principalship is a difficult job (Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Boehlert & O'Connell, 1999; Murphy & Louis, 1994; Roe & Drake, 1980). To develop new school leaders it is undoubtedly necessary to determine the degree of motivation of the individuals in the educational leadership classes with regard to the pursuit of building level administration as well as their views of the principalship: Is the principalship a position they deem attractive with regard to future employment?

Summary of Results

The data from this study depict some contradictory evidence with regard to many of the conclusions of the authors cited in the literature review for the study. Overwhelmingly, the students in the educational leadership programs involved in the study were indeed interested in educational leadership. There was interest in both building level positions and other supporting educational leadership roles. The assistant principalship traditionally has been viewed as the position through which most applicants access the ranks of school administration (Chan, Webb, & Bowen, 2003; Winter, Partenheimer, & Petrosko, 2004). This perception appears to be unchanged as the majority of individuals considered this position to be their most viable career option. The principalship was not an immediate goal for these people at the time of the study, yet

overwhelmingly they viewed the position in an attractive light as measured by the job desirability index.

Much of the literature indicated that programs need to aggressively recruit from minority groups with regard to both gender and race (Howley, Andrianaivo, & Perry, 2005; Darling-Hammond, Lapointe, Meyerson, & Orr, 2007; Stanford Leadership Study, 2006). The literature also indicated that males dominated the administrative ranks and that this trend was expected to continue (Ferrandino, 2001). In this sample, however, females were much more heavily represented in educational leadership programs, by roughly a 4:1 ratio. Males were poorly represented in the sample, thereby raising several questions regarding males' reasons for not pursuing administration: Did the age of accountability have a discouraging effect on these individuals? Did males seek to pursue other secondary roles within the schools, such as coaching, or informal leadership roles, such as department chair, teacher mentor, or union representative? If the trend of females greatly outnumbering males continues, educational leadership programs may find it necessary to actively recruit males into their programs.

Much of the literature also indicated a need for minority recruitment into education leadership programs (Darling-Hammond, Meyerson, Lapointe, & Orr, 2007; Schwartz, McKenna, & Maurer, 2007). Within this sample Caucasians accounted for nearly two thirds of the leadership students; African Americans represented nearly 30% of the overall sample. Minorities did seem to be well represented within this sample, specifically in both the metro Atlanta region and the southern region of the state of Georgia.

It appears that the principal shortage as predicted in the research (Cooley & Shen, 1999; Education Research Service, 1998; Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Tracy & Weaver, 2000) may not occur as forecast. Instead, if leadership programs, school leaders, and districts can groom, cultivate, and develop the vast numbers of individuals interested in the assistant principalship, there will be no crisis in leadership within public school systems nationwide.

Several findings were consistent with assertions set forth in the literature review relating to the high school principalship. This study provided support for the prediction that the high school principalship will remain the most difficult position to staff. Of the 168 individuals surveyed, only 2 individuals indicated interest in pursuing a high school principalship. It also appears that the trend of some students in educational leadership programs not pursuing building level leadership positions upon graduation will continue.

Georgia has adopted new legislation to quell the practice of educational leadership students' acquiring degrees but not pursuing positions. Georgia has taken a very proactive stance toward this practice, severely limiting the options of students' not pursuing administrative positions with regard to both compensation and licensure. Rule 505-3-.58 Educational Leadership, developed through the Georgia Professional Standards Commission, places specific content standards and requirements on programs designed to serve students in educational leadership programs. These limitations relate directly to the specific degrees that certain individuals can pursue. Through rule 505-2-.300, there are also specifications regarding (a) timelines for students' securing employment as an administrator and (b) the type of degree that an individual must pursue after securing an administrative post. Additionally, there are enhanced measures within the law related to

the comprehensive professional growth of practitioners. Although growth is assessed and measured at the building level, collaboration is required between district level personnel and university level personnel. The new training regimen is multifaceted and comprehensive; particular attention is focused on restructuring programs to specifically address ethical behavior, social development, and diversity, as well as the more traditional roles of the public school administrator related to accountability, curricular concerns, law, finance, and, of course, leadership.

The past few years have been interesting for many educational leadership programs in Georgia as they have worked aggressively to restructure. The special Georgia requirements in Rule 505-3-.58 became effective April 15, 2007 and created the initial mechanism that compelled educational leadership programs in the State of Georgia to restructure. Rule 505-2-.300 was scheduled to go into effect on September 30, 2009; therefore, to fall under the old rules, students would need to submit a completed certification package to the Georgia Professional Standards Commission by that date. In retrospect, it might have been useful to ascertain the chronological point in the educational leadership coursework in which the students were working; this knowledge might have yielded additional information from within the groups about career choices and job desirability. It would have been interesting to determine if the “old rules” group viewed the principalship differently from the “new rules” group with the more stringent certification standards.

Interpretation of Findings

The descriptive data in the study yielded a wide array of interesting information. The total number of surveys returned was 168, with the following breakdown: 99 surveys from Kennesaw State University and 69 from Valdosta State University. The respondents represented a wide range of diversity with regard to race, age, and educational levels. Respondents also held a wide range of positions; however, all of the respondents were employed in some manner through the public educational system.

The most sought after position of employment for this population sample was the assistant principalship. Nearly one half of the surveyed individuals indicated that this position was of interest to them as a potential career choice. The assistant principalship has historically been viewed as the training ground for the principalship; therefore, the finding was encouraging as many of these individuals may have long-term interest in pursuing the principalship. The role of the assistant principal at the building level is vital in cultivating future building level leaders. The survey instrument itself might have limited the responses about long-term career goals as the question focused specifically on career plans for the subsequent 3 to 5 years. This 3-5-year span represents the typical time an assistant principal spends acquiring the skills needed to operate a school building as the primary leader. Had the survey focused on more long-term goals, perhaps encompassing a 5-10-year span, the outcomes regarding the actual principalship might have been different. Much of this study focused on the principal shortage and the unwillingness of individuals to pursue the principalship for a variety of reasons. Evidently, many individuals are interested in building level positions; however, these individuals are realistic about the principal position. They appear to have a keen

understanding that in this age of accountability and testing, entering the job without adequate training and practical building level experience all but guarantees failure. The data indicate that there will be students to lead schools and that these individuals will indeed not only have the will to lead but also be cautious enough to realize that they have a great deal to learn prior to leading their own schools.

Some aspects of the data with regard to the principalship were congruent with the findings of the two previous studies. Overwhelmingly, students in educational leadership programs did not envision themselves pursuing the principalship within a 5-year time span after graduation or certification. The high school principalship still appeared to be the least attractive position to students, with only about 1% of the individuals even expressing an interest in the job; the two respondents who did rate this position as one they would like to pursue in the future were both male. The elementary position seemed to be viewed most favorably by the respondents, with a total of seven respondents indicating they would seek the position; of those seven respondents, six were female, one male. For the middle school position, a total of four respondents indicated interest; this group was evenly divided with regard to gender.

One of the basic underpinnings of this study relates to the lack of individuals interested in pursuing school administration, specifically the principalship. At the least, this study presents descriptive data indicative of a multitude of fledgling leaders seeking an opportunity to lead. These individuals have met the requirements for educational leadership programs certified by NCATE and therefore have some degree of the prerequisite qualifications for beginning careers as school leaders. It is true that as leaders they may lack experience but this lack of experience can be overcome to some extent by

enthusiasm and the willingness to learn. The findings of this study contradict much of the literature previously reviewed for this research. Researchers (Levine, 2005; Woodruff, 2004) reported that many of the students in educational leadership programs are interested in acquiring additional degrees only to bolster their salaries through additional stipends. The results of this study indicated that most of the participants did indeed plan to use the advanced degrees to pursue careers in school administration. This finding represents encouraging news as a shortage of qualified school principals has been predicted. There was also an abundance of literature regarding instructional staff with administrative certification but no desire to pursue administration (Barksdale, 2003; Woodruff; Winter, Rinehart, & Munoz, 2002). This study provides insight into the career plans of the students actually in the leadership programs. The results are descriptive in nature and provide a picture of a very motivated group of people who are intent on utilizing their degrees to pursue leadership positions. Much of the reviewed literature detailed multiple barriers to school administration, including long hours, low pay, and increased accountability concerns. Based on the findings of this study, these factors do not seem to present as disincentives to those who aspire to administrative roles.

The findings that people were interested in pursuing leadership jobs are encouraging, yet the key to this study is the expressed interest in the assistant principalship and the desire to attain that position as the entry point into administration. The interest in the assistant principal job represents a tremendous opportunity for districts across the nation. This pool of talent potentially encompasses the next generation of school leaders. Over 65% of the respondents in this study were between the ages of 20 and 40, leaving them with 20 to 30 years to work as school administrators before

retirement. Many of these individuals will secure positions as assistant principals and will learn the necessary skills to move into the principalship to lead schools. The interest in the assistant position is actually very logical when considering the sample population. Most of the students were from an instructional background and realized that the principal position was not necessarily the most realistic first administrative posting. Instead, these students recognized that the assistant job could provide them with the valuable experience needed to successfully run a school building. Additionally, the findings indicate that the students actually were not only realistic about their career goals but also cautious with regard to their chosen career paths.

The reality remains that not many people are interested in the principalship. It is difficult though to imagine that the respondents who did indicate an interest in the assistant principal job as a short-term goal do not have possible aspirations to head their own buildings within perhaps a 5-10-year span. Certainly some of these administrators will settle into the supportive role of assistant principal and do a fine job; presumably, though, others will not be satisfied with the supporting role and will strive to be school leaders.

The candidates for principal jobs clearly do exist and are currently matriculating through educational leadership programs nationwide. They need on-the-job training, but they are willing to be trained; therefore, it will be up to districts and sitting principals to grow this generation of school leaders. Clearly, these potential leaders may not be qualified to actually run large school buildings at this time, but the desire is present, representing a tremendous opportunity not only for the educational leaders but also for

the thousands of districts nationwide having difficulty filling their administrative slots with qualified and capable people.

Conclusions

Recommendations for Practice

The role of the public school principal will continue to become more demanding, complex, and difficult. The demographic descriptive data from this study indicate that there are few individuals interested in building level principal positions; fortunately, there are some who are willing to shoulder the burden.

Stakeholders must continue to work to revise and strengthen educational leadership programs to make them academically rigorous and relevant from both a practical and a performance-based perspective. These programs must make every effort to maintain high standards in an attempt to ensure that the best and brightest individuals are granted state certification to lead at the building level. Students' leadership experiences during the internship phase should be prescriptive and meaningful. Additionally, universities should work collaboratively with their regional districts to develop goals and work-related objectives for the students. This type of collaborative effort should also focus on the development of each candidate's attributes or skills specifically related to the challenges with which the individual districts must contend. Finally, coursework should be challenging, with concentrations in law, specialized educational programming, data disaggregation and interpretation, finance, and ethics.

Participants in this study indicated a tremendous amount of interest in the assistant principalship, which traditionally has been the stepping stone to the

principalship. This interest is encouraging for a number of reasons. First, these individuals are willing to take the initial step into administration and begin learning the fundamentals of building management. Additionally, many of these students have determined they are not ready or willing to pursue the principalship at this time. Superficially, this finding is somewhat distressing; however, one can assume that the reason they do not want to pursue the principalship is that they are not prepared to handle the job. The logical question emerges: How do districts prepare their aspiring principals who currently hold the assistant principal position? Clearly, the job needs to be fulfilling and diverse, instead of mundane and pedestrian. These characteristics can be accomplished by providing opportunities for the assistant principals to bridge out into areas that traditionally are within the principal's realm: instructional leadership, curriculum, community interaction and involvement, staff development, and evaluation. These types of experiences will enable the assistant principal to begin to develop and hone his or her leadership style so that upon completion of the 3-5-year time span an individual typically spends as an assistant principal, the person is ready to assume the lead position at the building level.

Throughout the course of this study, salary or compensation was repeatedly cited as a barrier to qualified candidates' decisions to pursue careers as school principals. This study built upon the work of Pounder & Merrill (2001), who found that the high school principalship was not a desirable position for a number of reasons, salary's being one of them. Now, almost a decade later, there still seems to be a dearth of individuals interested in the high school principal position. The job is indeed difficult with regard to the number of hours, activities, and supervisory duties, which do exceed those of similar positions at

the elementary and middle school levels. Perhaps it is time to take a more proactive look at the way salaries are constructed for these principals. To attract the most qualified candidates to these difficult positions, districts could build in incentive bonuses for meeting specific predetermined goals regarding student achievement, staff performance, and community-based measures. In this manner, exemplary individual performance would be measured objectively and rewarded. This process, essentially a merit system for principals, would incentivize them regarding various aspects of job performance and not be as limiting in terms of compensation for these demanding jobs. Naturally, by extension, this concept could also be applicable at the other two levels, middle and elementary.

Recommendations for Future Research

During the implementation of this study, several factors became clear regarding the state of educational leadership programs as well as the perceptions of the individuals enrolled in the programs. The study yielded some valuable results that may enable universities to further tailor their programs to those students specifically interested in the principalship. The study also raised some questions for consideration as future research in this area is pondered.

Table 16 compares the Pearson Correlation Coefficients between the Barksdale study and the current study.

Table 16. *Comparison Chart of Pearson Correlations*

Scale	Barksdale	Mitchell
Objective	.32	-.12
Subjective	.42	-.24
Context	.19	-.12
Work	.51	-.25

Based on the results of the correlation analysis it seems clear that the Principal Job Survey would not be the best tool with which to survey educational leadership students in regard to the principalship. The results indicated that the correlations between the different variable scales and the job desirability index were not strong in any of the areas. In comparing the two sample populations, the Barksdale sample was considerably more experienced in terms of years in the classroom, was chronologically older, and had a higher level of education than the Mitchell student sample. Additionally, the Barksdale sample indicated that they were more inclined to not pursue administrative positions than the Mitchell sample. The use of the PSJ may have overestimated the level of understanding that the students in the educational leadership programs had in regard to the complexities of the principalship. The results of the analysis indicate that if this study were to be replicated or reproduced in any way, it would be the recommendation of this researcher that the PSJ not be used to survey educational leadership students.

A qualitative study could be conducted to determine the perceptions of classroom teachers as they attempt to make the transition from teaching to their first administrative post, which in many cases is the assistant principalship. Of specific interest would be the perceived barriers they face as they attempt to make the change as well an exploration of the additional duties that seem to have become unspoken requirements for the candidates during transition. Such duties include coaching, holding department chair positions, or mentoring of new teachers; often these duties have no significant administrative value at all. Another area of relevance is the candidate's relationship with an administrative mentor to promote the candidate within the district and serve as a conduit for him or her to interview and network with those who do the hiring. Such relationships are often vital with regard to initial interviews and district-wide awareness of jobs available. It would also be of interest to determine at what point candidates might decide to give up and stop pursuing leadership positions.

A different area, but one of no less value, involves the determination as to whether or not any changes take place as the students advance through the administrative coursework in completion of their degrees. Specific questions might include the following: Do the goals of the students change at all as they learn what the administrative positions entail? Does the coursework reinforce initial career goals and desires regarding either building level positions or other administrative posts such as curriculum or support services? Do students decide to opt out of their initial career plans after learning what the job of a school administrator entails? If so, what factors cause them to reconsider and decide not to pursue their initial goals?

A significant segment of this study focused on the restructuring of current educational leadership programs. It would be of interest to take a more in-depth look at how these programs have restructured, perhaps comparing the graduates of a traditional program to a more nontraditional program with regard to coursework and curriculum as well as field experiences. As much of the criticism of these programs has been specific with regard to low admission standards, it might be helpful for a study to examine whether programs have raised their standards or continued to have an open-door policy for students desiring to pursue the degree. Such a study could be further developed with a focus on students progressing through cohort-type programs compared to a more traditional randomized program, through which the students enroll in the classes they need to complete the degree. As the educational leadership schools restructure, an additional area of interest pertains to the assistant principalship. Many of the students indicated an interest in the assistant principalship; perhaps schools of educational leadership could further refine or focus their academic programming to specifically address the responsibilities of that job.

The State of Georgia recently initiated legislation that has eliminated certification reciprocity for many out-of-state schools or schools conducting their certification process exclusively through online coursework. Many of these schools appear to offer degree or certification programs with considerably less rigor than more traditional programs. These schools usually are certified in at least one state; however, the certification process seems to vary according to the state granting the certification, with some states' being more flexible than others. An analysis of several of the programs on the State of Georgia banned list compared with those programs accepted by the state certification board would

be a study of interest. Such a study could focus on different aspects of the programs, including curriculum, comprehensive examination requirements, credit requirements for a degree or certification, time required to complete the degree, experience and qualification of faculty, and test scores required for certification in the State of Georgia. The state has made it clear that certification from certain institutions will no longer be accepted; it would be interesting to determine whether or not the programs in question are, in actuality, adequately preparing educational leaders.

When the final data from this study were reviewed, it became evident that females were heavily represented in many of the educational leadership programs. A study of interest would focus on specific factors creating this imbalance within the educational leadership programs. Females certainly make up the majority of the instructional staff at the primary level; however, the ratio begins to shift at the middle and high school levels in public education. It would be interesting to ascertain the perceptions of females with regard to promotion and advancement in education versus other fields. Of similar interest would be an attempt to determine the factors keeping men from pursuing administrative credentials and ultimately the leadership positions. A study examining an apparent developing gender gap in educational leadership seems to have significant value with regard to the current literature.

The descriptive data in this study revealed differences in the short-term career goals of the students. Overwhelmingly, the students at Kennesaw State University were inclined to pursue some facet of administration; whereas, students from Valdosta State seemed more inclined to remain in their current positions. It would be of interest to examine the factors that might influence students to actually utilize the degrees they are

working to earn. The possibility that administrative salaries are higher in the metro Atlanta compared to those in the southern part of the state may play a role. There may be other regional factors that have some effect with regard to the positions or there may be differences in academic programming, instruction, admissions, or the internship component at the schools, which influence the students. The difference in the desire to seek administrative roles does seem to be an area warranting further study.

Summary

Some aspects of this study are consistent with other studies regarding the desirability of the principalship. At this time there does not appear to be an adequate number of individuals who wish to assume the lead role in public school buildings; however, there are many individuals interested in pursuing building level administration. The majority of the individuals are ready to take the first step into building leadership and school administration, yet they have reservations about the lead position in a building. These reservations demonstrate a realistic view toward the complexity of the principalship; applicants appear to understand that the route to the principalship is best pursued through the assistant principalship, where the candidate can acquire the experience necessary to be successful.

The elementary principalship does appear to be the most desirable, with the high school position regarded as the least desirable. The findings of this study do not support the assertions in the literature predicting a shortage of qualified applicants within the next decade. The study findings also indicate that almost half of the students in the educational leadership programs were interested in and intended to pursue the assistant principalship.

The findings also indicate that the vast majority of the individuals viewed the principalship as an attractive position but not necessarily a desirable one. The burden then shifts to districts and policymakers to develop and enact policy to make the principalship more desirable to these people as they are developing their leadership skills. In essence, for the students to like the job is not enough; they must want to do the job.

There are varied ways to make the principalship more desirable. Ideally, districts can implement a two-pronged approach, wherein salaries are raised by a significant margin, and assistant principals are groomed and developed for the principalship.

Compensation packages should not only reflect the number of hours principals work, but compensation should also be in line with the demands of the position. The scope of the principalship has broadened so significantly throughout this decade of accountability that the responsibilities on that person are greater, yet pay has stayed the same or at best increased minimally. By all accounts, the principalship is a difficult position; to attract the best students, districts must adopt a more proactive stance with regard to developing, recruiting, retaining, and compensating school leaders.

It is also imperative that districts and sitting principals develop assistant principals to become principals. There is no substitute for the practical experience of running a building, and it is incumbent upon the sitting principals to see that their surrogates are exposed to the range of activities required to run a school building. Many of these leadership skills take both time and experience to develop, and the school setting is the ideal arena in which to do this. Districts also must play a part in the development of these leaders through leadership academies or programs designed to expose fledging leaders to

leadership theory or more practical aspects of the principal position, such as budgeting, resolving personnel disputes, school law, discipline, and finance.

As is often the case in public education, the fate of the principalship and, in large part, the leadership of schools across the nation lies in the hands of educators. If school leaders can work to develop the next generation of leaders, who appear to be quite literally waiting in the wings, the shortage of qualified students will cease to be a problem. School leaders must also successfully advocate for themselves in a positive, proactive manner to shift the perception of the principalship from a job that no one appears to want to an esteemed, desirable position with both extrinsic and intrinsic rewards.

REFERENCES

Arbor, A., & Duarte, A. (2000). Wanted 2 million teachers, especially minorities. *The Education Digest, 66*, 19-23.

Barksdale, C. V. (2003). Job desirability of the principalship: A study of perceptions and intentions of qualified applicants (Doctoral dissertation, The George Washington University, 2003). *Dissertation Abstracts International-A, 64*, 03.

Beck, L., & Murphy, J. (1993). *Understanding the principalship: A metaphorical analysis from 1920-1990.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Behling, O., Labovitz, G., & Gainer, M. (1968). College recruiting: A theoretical base. *Personnel Journal, 47*, 13-19.

Bender, W. N., & Shores, C. (2007). *Response to intervention: A practical guide for every educator.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Birky, V. D., Headly, S., & Shelton, M. (2006). An administrator's challenge: Encouraging teachers to be leaders. *National Association of Secondary School Principals, 90*(2), 87-101.

Bjork, L., & Rinehart, J. (2005, Spring). Perspective: Improving educational leadership: Alternative and conventional approaches. *AERA-A, Newsletter*, 2-8.

Bobbitt, S. A., Broughman, S. P., & Gruber, K. J. (1995). *Schools and staffing in the United States*: *Selected data for public and private schools.* Washington, DC: United States Department of Education, Office of Educational Research.

Boehlert, L., & O'Connell, R. W. (1999, April). *Where are the school leaders for the new millennium? A study of reasons cited by incumbent administrators who have decided not to pursue another administrative position.* Paper presented at the

annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Montreal, Canada.

Browne-Ferrigno, T. (2003). Becoming a principal: Role, conception, initial socialization, role identity transformation, purposeful engagement. *Educational Administration Quarterly*, *39*(4), 468-503.

Chan, T. C., & Richardson, M. D. (2003). Addressing teacher and administrator shortage: The Georgia way. *Journal of School Business Management, 3*(15), 8-11.

Chan, T. C., Webb, L. W., & Bowen, C. (2003). *Are assistant principals prepared for the principalship? How do assistant principals perceive?* Paper presented to the annual meeting of the Sino American Education Consortium, Kennesaw, GA.

Cooley, V. E., & Shen, J. (1999). Who will lead? The top 10 factors that influence teachers moving into administration. *NASSP Bulletin*, *83*(606), 75-80.

Cuban, L. (1988). *The managerial imperative and the practice of leadership in schools.* New York: State University of New York Press.

D'Arbon, T., & Dorman, J. P. (2003). Aspiring and practicing principals' perceptions of critical skills for beginning leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration, 32*(3), 35-45.

D'Arbon, T., & Dorman, J. P. (2003). Assessing impediments to leadership succession in Australian catholic schools. *School Leadership and Management, 23*(1), 25-40.

Daresh, J. C., & Playco, M. A. (1995). The arrival of the new principal: Reactions and staff. *Change, 3*(3), 322-333.

Darling-Hammond, L., Meyerson, D., Lapointe, M., & Orr, M. (2007). *Preparing school leaders for a changing world: Lessons from exemplary leadership development*

programs. Stanford, CA: Stanford University, Stanford Educational Leadership Institute.

Diggins, P. (1997). Reflections on leadership characteristics necessary to develop and sustain learning school communities. *Journal of School Leadership and Management, 17*(3), 413-425.

DiPaola, M. (2003). The principalship at a crossroads: A study of the conditions and concerns of principals. *NASSP Bulletin, 87*(634), 43-65.

Doyle, M., & Rice, D. (2002). A model for instructional leadership. Principal Leadership 3(3), 49-52.

Drake, T., & Roe, W. (2003). *The Principalship.* 6th Ed. Columbus, Ohio: Merrill-Prentice Hall.

Draper, J., & McMichael, P. (2000). Contextualizing new headship. *School Leadership and Management, 20*(4), 459-473.

Educational Research Service. (1998). *Is there really a shortage of qualified applicants for openings in the principalship? An exploratory study.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service, National Association of Elementary School Principals, & National Association of Secondary School Principals. Retrieved October 15, 2006, from http://www.naesp.org/misc/shortage.htm

Educational Research Service. (2000). *The principal, keystone of a high achieving school: Attracting and keeping the leadership we need.* Arlington, VA: Educational Research Service, National Association of Elementary School Principals, & National Association of Secondary School Principals.

Elmore, R. (2004). *School reform from the inside out: Policy, practice, and performance.* Cambridge, MA: Harvard Education Press.

Fenwick, L. T., & Pierce, M. C. (2001). The principal shortage: Crisis or opportunity? *Principal, 80*(4), 25-32.

Ferrandino, V. L. (2001). Challenges for the 21st-century elementary school principals. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 440-442.

Ferrandino, V. L., & Tirozzi, G. (2000). *Attracting and keeping the leaders we need*. National Association of Elementary School Principals. Retrieved October 24, 2006, from http://www.naesp.org/misc/edweek_article_3_22_00htm

Fraze, L. E., & Melton, R. G. (1992). Manager or participatory leader? What does it take? *NASSP Bulletin, 76*(540), 17-24.

Fresko, B., Kifr, D., & Nasser, F. (1997). Predicting teacher commitment. *Teaching and Teacher Evaluation, 13*(4), 429-438.

Fullan, M. G., & Hargreaves, A. (1991). *What's worth fighting for? Working together for your school.* Andover, MA: The Regional Laboratory for Educational Improvement of the Northeast and Islands.

Galusha, W. J. (2004). Factors that keep teachers with perceived leadership potential from seeking secondary principalship and assistant principalship positions. (Doctoral dissertation, The University of Nebraska, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International-A, 65*,02.

Georgia Professional Standards Commission. (2007). *Educational Leadership Programs.* Retrieved Nov.25, 2008 from http://www.gaps.com/rules/current/educator preparation/505-3.58pdf

Georgia Professional Standards Commission. (2008). *Educational Leadership.* Retrieved Nov. 25, 2008 http://www.gaps.com/rules/current/certification/505 -2-.300pdf

Gilman, D. A., & Lanman-Givens, B. (2001). Where have all the principals gone? *Educational Leadership, 58*(8), 72-74.

Groff, F. (2001). Who will lead? The principal shortage. *State Legislatures, 27*(9). 16-18.

Grogan, M., & Andrews, R. (2002). Defining preparation and professional development for the future. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 38*(2), 233-256.

Grubb, W. N., & Flessa, J. J. (2006). "A job too big for one": Multiple principals and other nontraditional approaches to school leadership. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 42*(4), 518-550.

Hallinger, P. (1992). The evolving role of American principals: From managerial leaders to instructional to transformational leaders. *Journal of Educational Administration, 30*(3), 35-49.

Hallinger, P., & Hausman, C. (1994). From Attila the Hun to Mary had a little lamb: Principal role ambiguity in restructured schools. In J. Murphy & K. Seashore-Louis, *Reshaping the principalpship: Insights from transformational reform efforts* (pp. 154-176). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications.

Harris, S., Ballenger, J., & Leonard, J. (2004). Aspiring principal perceptions: Are mentor principals modeling standards-based leadership? *Mentoring and Tutoring, 12*(2), 155-172.

Heifitz, R. (1994). *Leadership without easy answers.* Boston: Harvard University Press.

Hess, F. M. (2003). *A license to lead: A new leadership agenda for America's schools.* Washington, DC: Office of Educational Research and Improvement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED477346)

Hess, F. M., & Kelly, A. P. (2005). *The accidental principal*. Retrieved June 9, 2006, from http://www.educationnext.org/20053/34.html

Howley, A., Andrianaivo, S., & Perry, J. (2005). The pain outweighs the gain: Why teachers don't want to become principals. *Teachers College Record, 107*(4), 1-8.

Hoyle, J. R., Steffy, B. E., & English, F. W. (1998). *Skills for successful school leaders: Standards for peak performers.* Arlington, VA: American Association of School Administrators.

Hurley, J. (1992). *Becoming a principal? You must be kidding*. Paper presented at the annual conference of the National Rural Education Association, Traverse City, MI.

Katzenmeyer, M., & Moller, G. (2001). *Awakening the sleeping giant.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.

Kerrins, J. A., Johnstone, T., & Cushing, K. S. (2001). Take this job and fill it. *Leadership*, *30*(5), 20-23.

Leithwood, K., & Montgomery, D. (1992). The role of the elementary school principal in program improvement. *Review of Educational Research*, *52*(3), 309-339.

Levine, A., (2005). *Educating school leaders.* Washington, DC: The Education Schools Project.

Lieberman, A., Saxl, E. R., & Miles, M. B. (1998). *Teacher leadership: Ideology and practice, building a professional culture in schools*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Long, A. (2000). Administrative shortage: Perceptions/reality/solutions. *ILPA Special Edition, 13*(4), 3.

Lyons, J. E. (1999). How school principals perceive their roles, rewards, and challenges. *ERS Spectrum*, 18-23.

McAdams, R. P. (1998). Who'll run the schools? The coming administrator shortage. *American School Board Journal, 185*(8), 37-39.

McGreevy, J. (2007). Survey response Scales. *Issues of response scales*. Retrieved Mar. 15, 2009, from http://www.gpaea.k12.ia.us/media/11193.

Merrill, R. J. (1999). Attraction and retention of high school principals in the state of Utah. (Doctoral dissertation, University of Utah, 1999). *Dissertation Abstracts International, 60*, 11.

Million, J. (1998). Where have all the principals gone? *National Association of Elementary School Principals.* Retrieved Oct. 10, 2006, from http://www.naesp.org/comm./pro498htm

Mountford, M., Ehlert, M., Machell, J., & Cockrell, D. (2007). Traditional and personal admission criteria: Predicting candidate performance in U.S. educational leadership programs. *International Journal of Leadership in Education, 10*(2), 191-210.

Murphy, J., & Louis, K. (1994). *Reshaping the principalship: Insights from transformational reform efforts.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

National Association of Elementary School Principals. (2005). *Statement on education school leaders report.* Washington, DC: Author

Orr, T. (2006). Mapping innovation in leadership programs in our nation's schools. *Phi Delta Kappan, 87*(7), 492-499.

Pallant, J. (2005). *SPSS Survival Manual.* (2nd Ed.). United Kingdom: Open University Press.

Patterson, J., & Patterson, J. (2004). Sharing the lead. *Educational Leadership, 61*(7), 74-78.

Pellicer, L.O., & Andersen, L. W. (1995). *A handbook for teacher leaders.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Pounder, D. G., & Merrill, R. J. (2001). Job desirability of the high school principalship: A job theory choice history perspective. *Educational Administration Quarterly, 37*(1), 27-57.

Price, J. (1994). *The school administrator supply and demand report.* Madison, WI: State Department of Public Instruction for Teacher Education, Licensure and Placement. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED369164)

Richardson, M. D., Lane, K. E., & Flanigan, J. L., (1996). Teachers' perceptions of principals' attributes. *The Clearing House, 69*(5), 290-292.

Rooney, J. (2000). Survival skills for the new principal. *Educational Leadership, 58*(1), 77-78.

Schmoker, M. (1999). Results: The key to continuous school improvement. *Educational Leadership, 57*(5), 62-63.

Schwab, D. P., Rynes, S. L., & Aldag, R. J. (1987). Theories and research on job search and choice. In K. M. Rowland & G. R. Ferris (Eds.), *Research in personnel and human resource management* (pp. 129-166). Greenwich, CT: JAI.

Schwartz, J., McKenna, B., & Maurer, M. (2007). *Stanford school leadership study.* Palo Alto, CA: Stanford University in conjunction with The Wallace foundation.

Sergiovanni, T. S. (1992). *Moral leadership: Getting to the heart of school improvement.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sergiovanni, T. S., & Starratt, R. J. (1998). *Supervision: A redefinition* (6th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Southern Regional Education Board. (2006). *Schools can't wait: Accelerating the redesign of the university preparation programs*. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED492084)

Spillane, J. P., Halverson, R., & Diamond, J. B. (2001). Investigating school leadership practice: A distributed perspective. *Educational Researcher, 30*(3), 23-28.

Stronge, J. H. (1988). The elementary school principalship: A position in transition? *Principal 67*(5), 32-33.

Supovitz, J. A., & Poglinco, S. M. (2001). *Instructional leadership in a standards-based reform*. Philadelphia, PA: Consortium for Policy Research in Education.

Teschke, S. (1995). Why becoming a leader means being yourself. *Educational Leadership, 24*(7), 8-11.

Thompson, S. (2001). The school leadership challenge. *Strategies, 8*(1), 1-2.

Toothaker, L., & Miller, L. (1996). *Introductory statistics for the behavioral sciences.* Pacific Grove, CA: Brooks Cole Publishing.

Tracy, G., & Weaver, C. (2000). Aspiring leaders academy: Responding to the principal shortage. *NASSP bulletin, 85*(618), 75-83.

Vermont Legislative Research Shop. (2001). *Vermont's Principal Shortage.* University of Vermont. Burlington, Vermont.

Walker, A., & Qian, H. (2006). Beginning principals: Balancing at the top of a greasy pole. *Journal of Educational Administration, 44*(4), 297-309.

Wasley, P. (1991). *Teachers who lead: The rhetoric of reform and the realities of practice.* New York: Teachers College Press.

Whitaker, K. (2001). Where are the principal candidates? Perceptions of superintendents. *NASSP Bulletin, 85*(265), 82-93.

Wiersma, W., & Jurs, S. (2005*). Research methods in education: An introduction*. (8th ed). Boston: Pearson Education.

Winter, A. P., Partenheimer, P. R., & Petrosko, J. M. (2003). An experimental approach to evaluating the viability of potential applicants for assistant principal vacancies. *Journal of Personal Evaluation Education, 17*(4), 299-315.

Winter, A. P., Rinehart, J. S., & Munoz, M. A. (2002). Principal recruitment: An empirical evaluation of a school district's internal pool of principal certified personnel. *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 16*(2), 129-141.

Woodruff, J. (2004). Mismatched labor pools and perceptions: Contrasting suburban superintendents' and certified teachers' views of the principalship. (Doctoral dissertation, Columbia University Teachers College, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International-A 65*,06, 1-164.

Yerkes, D. M., & Guaglianone, C. L. (1998). Where have all the high school administrators gone? *Thrust for educational leadership, 28*(2), 10-24.

Young, I.P., Rinehart, J. S., & Heneman, H.G. (1993). Effects of job attributes categories, Applicant job experience and recruiter sex on applicant job attractiveness ratings. Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education, 7( ) 55-66.

APPENDIX A: SURVEY COVER LETTER

76 Shotgun Road
Cartersville, Ga. 30121
770-547-3259

Dear Colleague:

I am an Exceptional Education Coordinator for the Bartow County school system; I am also a doctoral student at The George Washington University. Presently, I am researching the factors that influence a person's decision to seek employment as a school administrator. You have been identified as a potential school administrator by being enrolled in an educational leadership program in the State of Georgia. For this reason, I respectfully invite you to participate in a research study entitled, The Principal Shortage: Crisis or Opportunity?.

Your response to this survey is imperative to understanding the overall attractiveness of the principalship to aspiring administrative candidates. Please complete the following survey and return it to your instructor. Completion of the survey should take 10-15 minutes.

When reporting survey results, your individual responses will be kept confidential. All data will be presented in aggregate form and no names of individuals will be revealed. Surveys are coded so that follow-up reminder cards will be sent, if necessary. Thank you for your time and assistance in this matter.

Sincerely,

Mike Mitchell

Coordinator for Exceptional Children
Bartow County School System

APPENDIX B: PRINCIPAL JOB SURVEY

(Merrill, 1999)

Section 1: Demographics

1. Gender: (*Circle the number of your answer*)

   1. Male 2. Female

2. Your age: (*Circle the number of your answer)*

   1. 20-29 2. 30-39 3. 40-49 4. 50-59 5. 60+

3. Ethnicity: (*Circle the number of your answer*)

   1. Hispanic 2. Caucasian 3. African American

   4. Native American 5. Asian 6. Other

4. Marital status: (*Circle the number of your answer*)

   1. Single 2. Married

5. Your current professional assignment: (*Circle the number of your answer)*

   1. Elementary school teacher 2. Middle school teacher

   3. High School teacher 4. Guidance Counselor

   5. Other_____

6. Highest Degree earned: (*Circle the number of your answer*)

   1. Bachelor's 2. Master's 3. Specialist Degree

7. Number of years in your educational career:_____

8. Career plans for the next three to five years: (*Please pick one)*

   1. Remain in current position

   2. Assistant Principal (at any level)

   3. Elementary school Principal

4. Middle School Principal

5. High School Principal

6. Non-Principal position within a school

7. District level position

8. State level position

9. Position within a college or university

10. Position in an educational service agency

11. Position outside the field of education

12. Retirement

13. Other_____

9. Current or former additional duties:

1. Department Chair

2. Grade level Chair

3. Teacher Mentor

4. Coaching

5. Other_____

Section 2: How Job Responsibilities/Duties/Traits Influence Your Career Decisions.
Below you will find a list of job responsibilities and job traits (attributes) common to the position of school principal. On the Likert Scale at the right of each attribute, rate the attribute as to the influence it has on your decision to accept the position of a school principal/assistant principal. ***(Note that the survey is not asking you to evaluate your current assignment but rather to determine which attributes are most important to your career decision-making.)***

The questions are rated as follows:
-2 Strong Negative Influence on my Decision
-1 Somewhat Negative Influence on my Decision
0 No Influence on my Decision
+1 Somewhat Positive Influence on my Decision
+2 Strong Positive Influence on my Decision
N/A Not applicable to the position as I understand it

	Job Attributes: Circle the response to the right of each attribute that best reflects the impact the job attribute has on your decision to accept a school principalship/assistant principalship, if offered.	Strong Negative Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Negative Influence on my Decision	No Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Positive Influence on my Decision	Strong Positive Influence on my Decision	Not Applicable to the position as I understand it
1.	Realizing an increased starting salary and career salary growth potential	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
2.	Defining staff (certified and classified) roles and assignments	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
3.	Handling budget constraints	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
4.	Managing student-teacher ratio issues (FTE management)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
5.	Receiving opportunities to attend conferences	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
6.	Dealing with issues related to students with disabilities (IDEA and Section 504)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
7.	Being empowered to influence school change	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
8.	Your physical health as it relates to the demands of position	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
9.	Building a master class schedule	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
10.	Experiencing job stress	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
11.	Interviewing/hiring school employees (teachers, counselors, secretaries, etc.)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
12.	Having adequate funding to do job	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
13.	Developing and monitoring school budgets	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
14.	Organizing/implementing parent-teacher conferences	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
15	Understanding and functioning within federal, state, and district laws, regulations and policies	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
16.	Dealing with teacher and staff issues	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
17.	Developing curriculum	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
18.	Rotating principalship assignments by district supervisors	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A

	Job Attributes: Circle the response to the right of each attribute that best reflects the impact the job attribute has on your decision to accept a school principalship/assistant principalship, if offered.	Strong Negative Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Negative Influence on my Decision	No Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Positive Influence on my Decision	Strong Positive Influence on my Decision	Not Applicable to the position as I understand it
19.	Being supported by parents and students	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
20.	Developing school policies	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
21.	Administering/Supervising the athletic program	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
22.	Registration of students	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
23.	Developing positive community relations (PTA, Alumni, Business Groups)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
24.	Having flexibility in choosing vacation periods	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
25.	Managing the school's career ladder program	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
26.	Working with site-based councils	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
27.	Years remaining until retirement	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
28.	Developing business partnerships/raising funds to support school programs	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
29.	Attending required meetings, workshops, conferences	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
30.	Being required to extend the work day to fulfill administrative responsibilities	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
31.	Supervising extracurricular activities/required attendance at evening activities	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
32.	Gaining respect/esteem/prestige derived from position	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
33.	Dealing with societal problems within the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
34.	Receiving staff loyalty and support	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
35.	Having authority to influence others in the educational community	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
36.	Salary compensation as it relates to the demands of the position	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
37.	Experiencing ethical dilemmas in decision making	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
38.	Developing personal/professional relationships with others inside and outside the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
39.	Having the opportunity to display and use leadership skills	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
40.	Developing and selling a vision to the school community (providing leadership in school improvement)	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
41.	Filling the desire to make a difference in the lives of students and staff	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
42.	Having opportunities for personal and professional growth and development	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
43.	Securing increased retirement benefits	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
44.	Planning and conducting staff training and development	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A

	Job Attributes: Circle the response to the right of each attribute that best reflects the impact the job attribute has on your decision to accept a school principalship/assistant principalship, if offered.	Strong Negative Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Negative Influence on my Decision	No Influence on my Decision	Somewhat Positive Influence on my Decision	Strong Positive Influence on my Decision	Not Applicable to the position as I understand it
45.	Having increased prospects for professional advancement	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
46.	Balancing the competing demands of job and family	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
47.	Being supported by district supervisors and the school board	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
48.	Terminating unfit employees	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
49.	Experiencing public visibility and accountability	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
50.	Handling teacher grievances/working with unions	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
51.	Dealing with student management and behavior issues	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
52.	Being encouraged by family and friends to take/remain in a principalship	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
53.	Countering the steady flow of problem situations	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
54.	Being encouraged by professional educators to take/remain in a principalship	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
55.	Completing written and verbal reports to supervisors	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
56.	Observing, supervising, and evaluating staff	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
57.	Experiencing pressure from special interest groups	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
58.	Finding ways to successfully educate at-risk students	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
59.	Assuming accountability for all that happens in the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
60.	Having autonomy to lead and manage the school without outside interference	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
61.	Enrollment size of school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
62.	Reputation of the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
63.	Socio/economical composition of the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
64.	Geographical location of the school	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A
65.	Selection process used by your district to choose principals	-2	-1	0	+1	+2	N/A

Survey continued on next page

Section 3: Future Career Decisions/Opportunities

1. Considering all the elements of the position of principal rate the over-all attractiveness of the position to you: (Circle one)
   1) Very Attractive
   2) Attractive
   3) Somewhat Attractive
   4) Somewhat Unattractive
   5) Unattractive
   6) Very Unattractive

2. My perceived probability of ***seeking*** a principalship is: (Circle one)
   1) Very Likely
   2) Likely
   3) Somewhat Likely
   4) Somewhat Unlikely
   5) Unlikely
   6) Very Unlikely

3. My perceived probability of ***being offered*** a principalship is: (Circle one)
   1) Very Likely
   2) Likely
   3) Somewhat Likely
   4) Somewhat Unlikely
   5) Unlikely
   6) Very Unlikely

4. My perceived probability of ***accepting*** a principalship ***if offered*** is: (Circle one)
   1) Very Likely
   2) Likely
   3) Somewhat Likely
   4) Somewhat Unlikely
   5) Unlikely
   6) Very Unlikely

Thank you for your participation in this survey. If you have any further comments concerning the principalship, please write them in the space provided below. Your prompt return of the completed survey is greatly appreciated.

APPENDIX C: PERMISSION TO USE SURVEY

Mitchell, Mike

From: Diana Pounder [Diana.Pounder@utah.edu]
Sent: Wednesday, June 04, 2008 11:31 AM
To: Randy Merrill; Mitchell, Mike
Subject: RE: Doc student GWU request 1999 survey

Glad to see more research in this area. Diana Pounder

Diana G. Pounder, Ph.D.
Professor & Chair
Department of Educational Leadership & Policy
University of Utah
1705 E Campus Center Drive, Rm 339
Salt Lake City, UT 84112
Office Phone: 801-581-6714
FAX: 801-585-6756

From: Randy Merrill [mailto:randym@provo.edu]
Sent: Wed 6/4/2008 9:28 AM
To: mike.mitchell@BARTOW.K12.GA.US
Cc: Diana Pounder
Subject: Re: Doc student GWU request 1999 survey

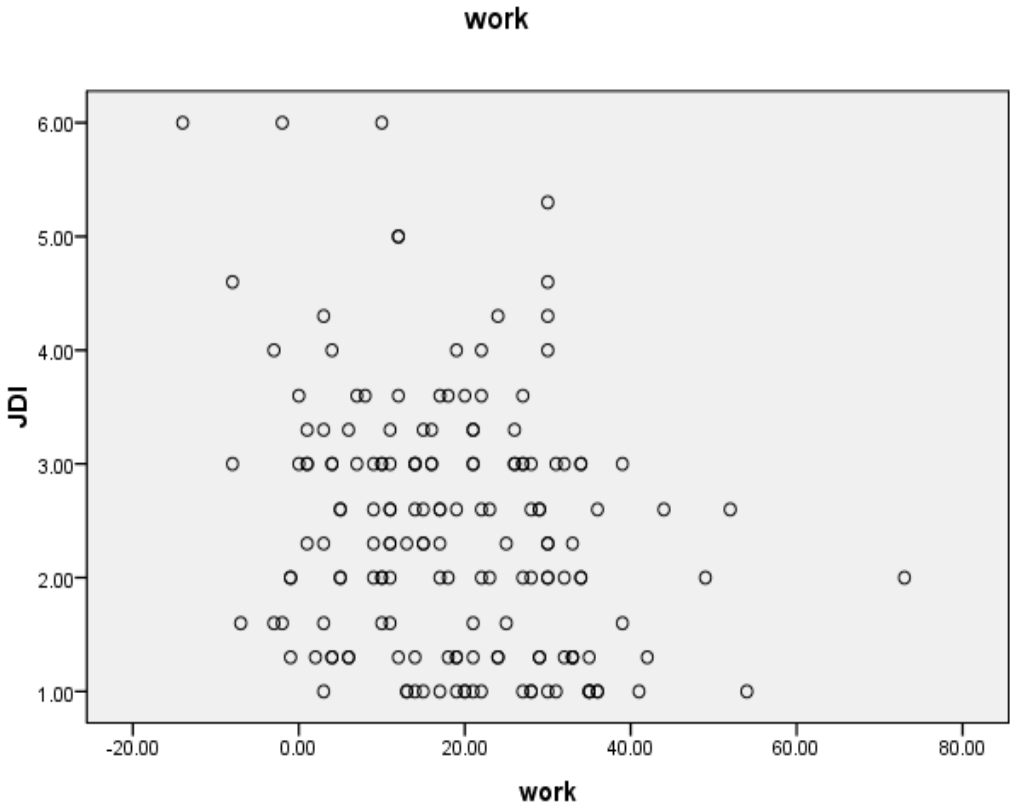
Hello Mike, You are approved to use my work as long as it is properly credited to myself and Dr. Diana Pounder (where applicable). Good luck in your research. Sincerely, Randall J. Merrill, Superintendent

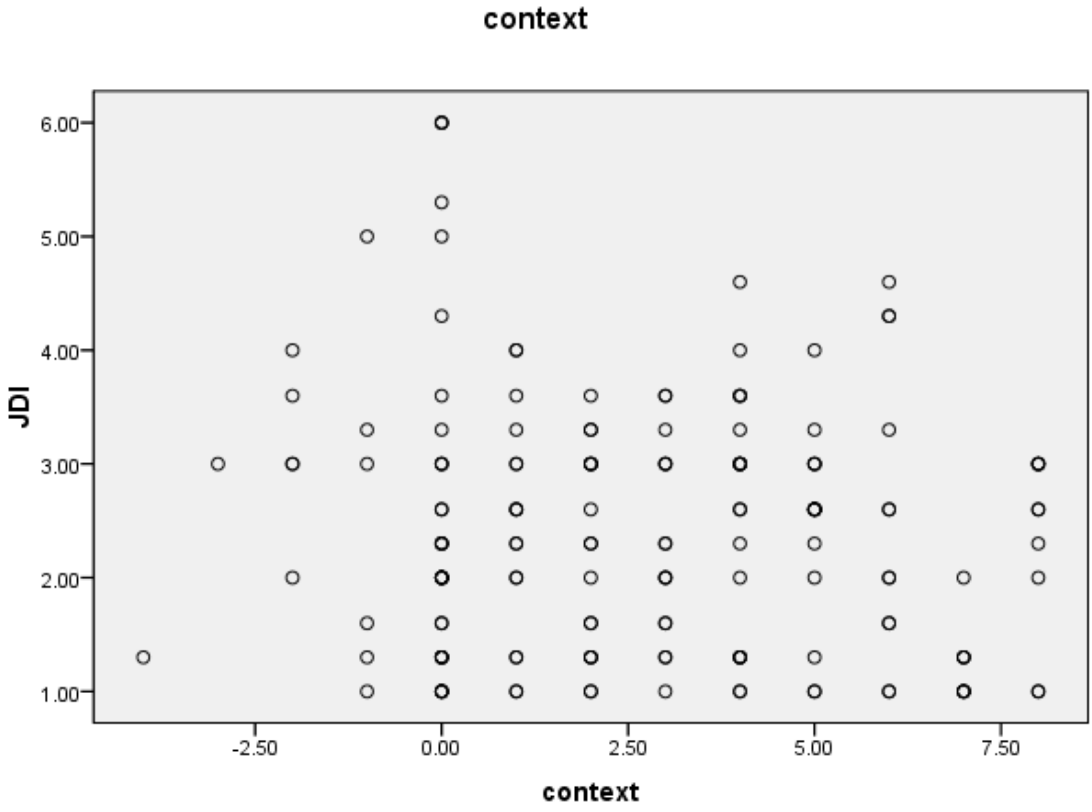
>>> "Mitchell, Mike" <mike.mitchell@BARTOW.K12.GA.US> 06/03/08 7:18 AM >>>
Good morning Dr. Merrill,

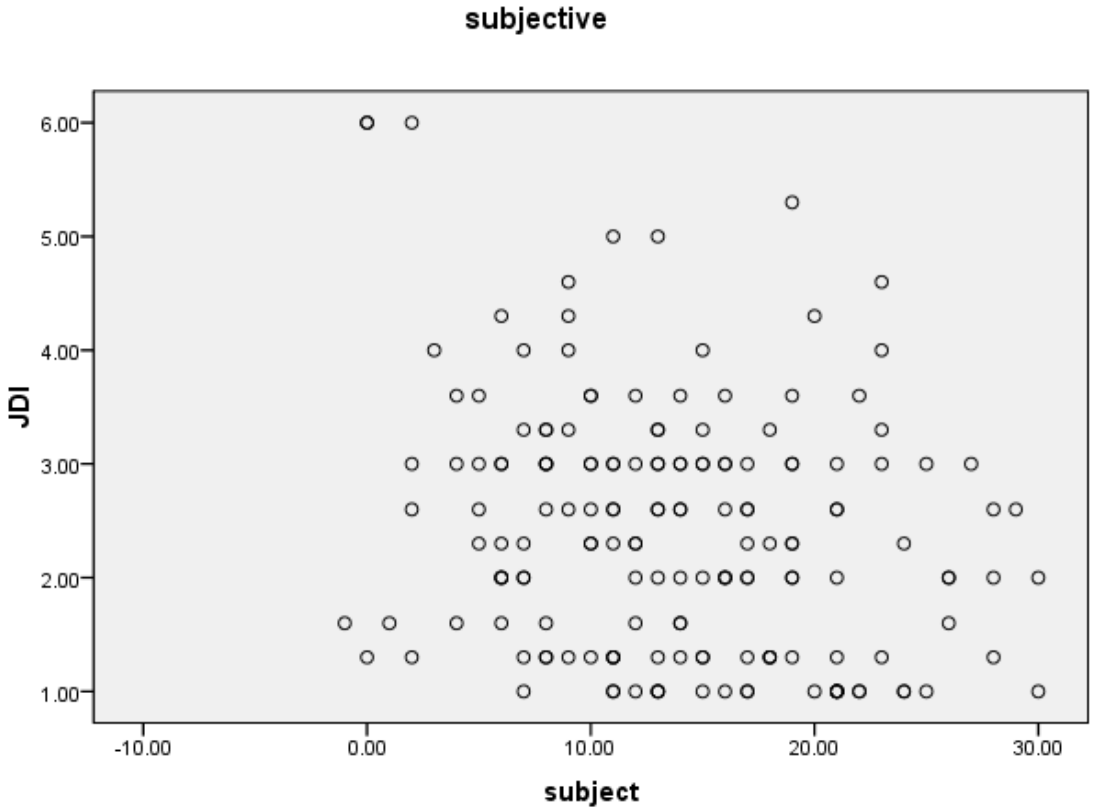
My name is Mike Mitchell and I am writing to you because I am interested in using a survey you developed several years ago for my doctoral dissertation. The survey is the Principal Job Survey which I would like your permission to use. I am interested in using the survey to assess students in educational leadership programs perceptions regarding the principalship. I am then looking at a multiple regression study based on the job choice theory framework you developed With Dr. Pounder. The study will assess two Ed. Leadership programs students in Georgia. The study will also have a demographic portion which will determine characteristics of the candidates. I believe this is an interesting and timely study as there appears to be a shortage of candidates willing to become building level leaders and I am interested in finding out if there are specific aspects of the job which they find to be particularly discouraging or encouraging. The survey you developed is an excellent tool for determining the information I need. I am currently in the Doc. Program at The George Washington University in Washington, D.C.

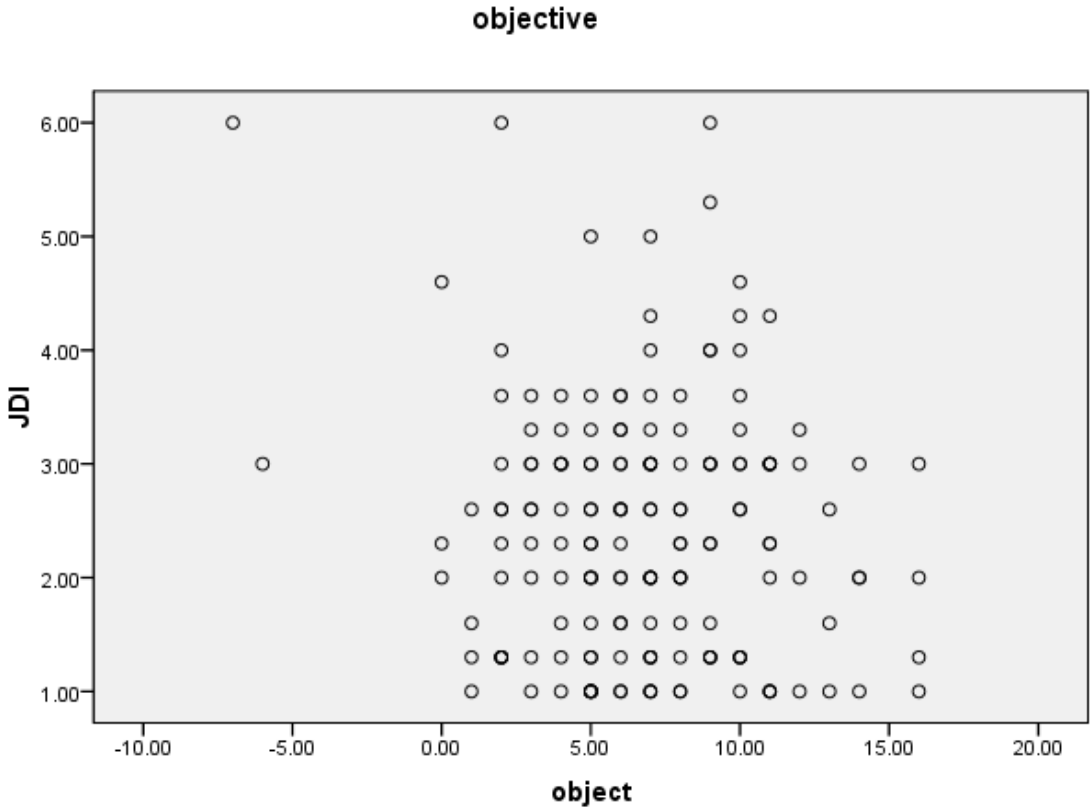
Thanks for your help with this and I really would appreciate permission to use the survey.

APPENDIX D: SCATTERPLOTS

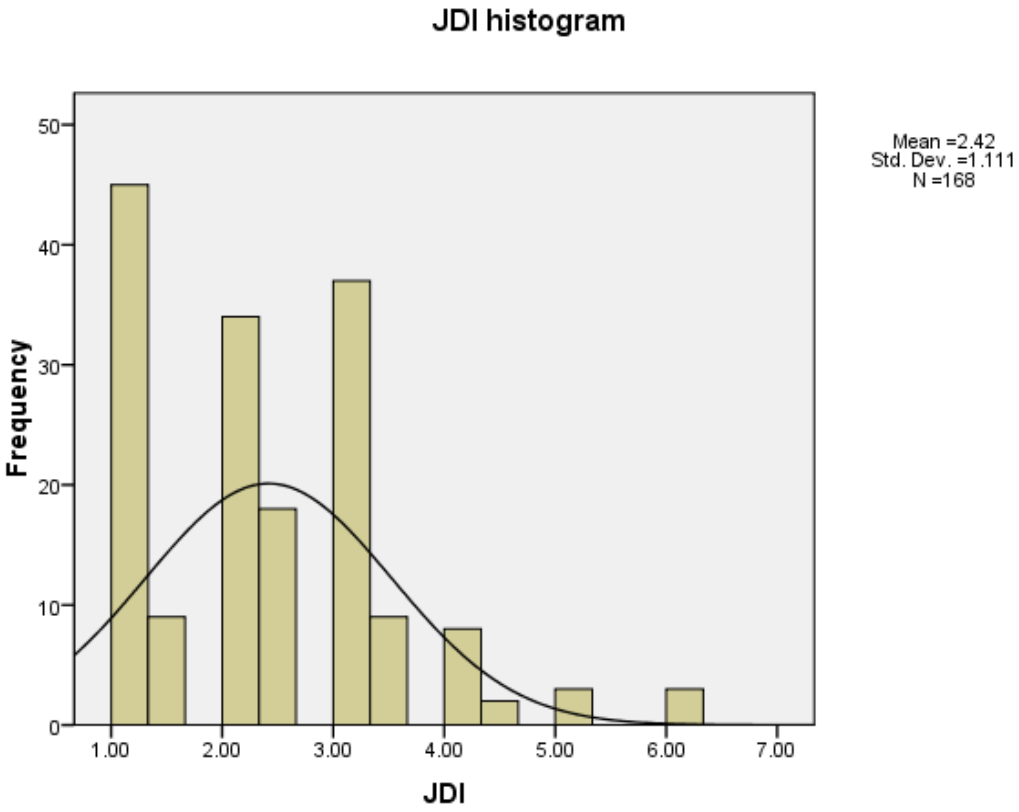


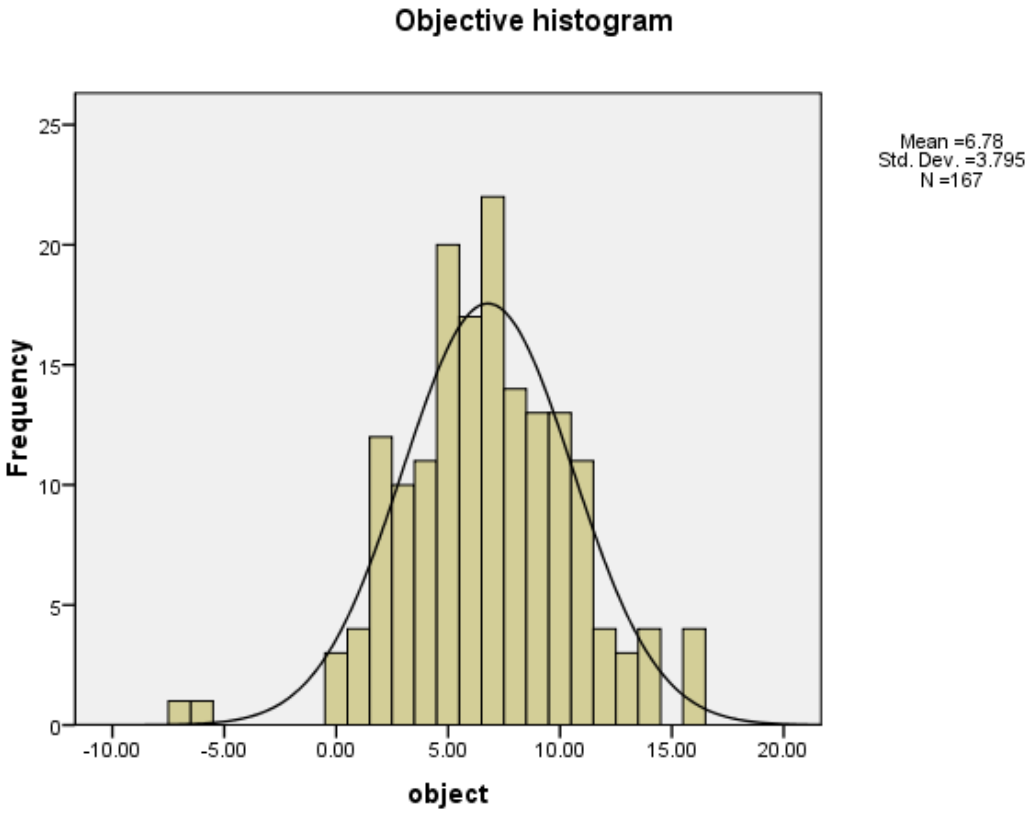

context
JDI
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
-2.50
0.00
2.50
5.00
7.50
context

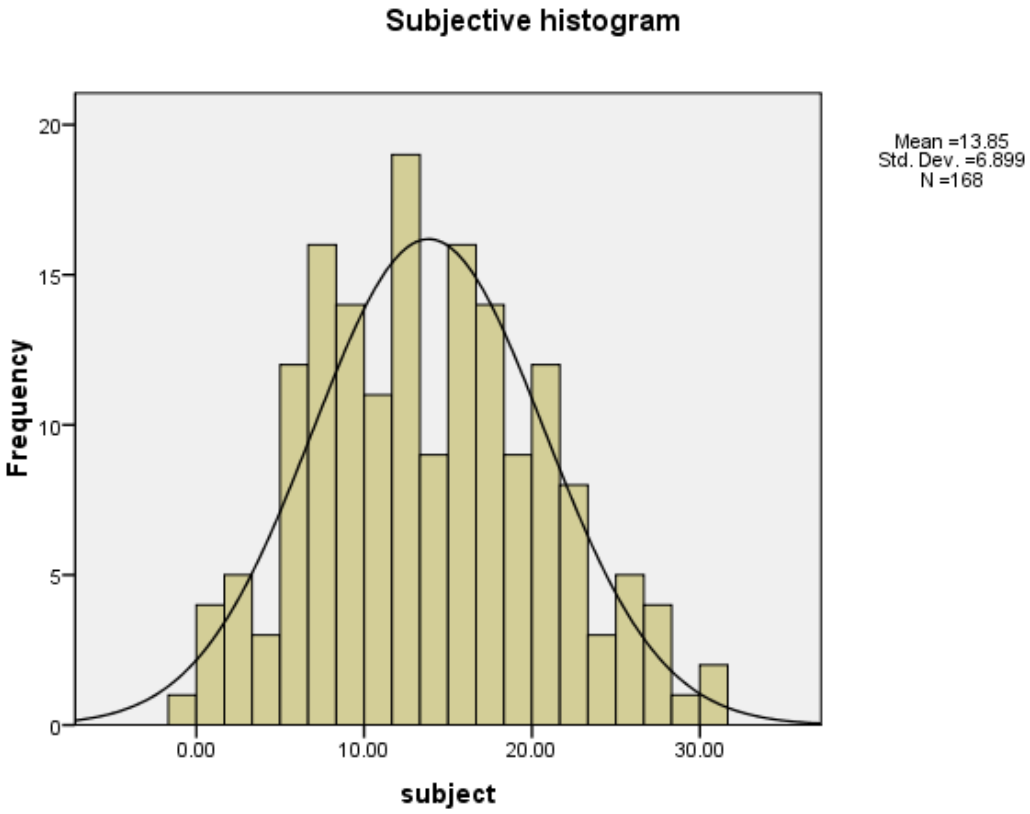

subjective
JDI
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
-10.00
0.00
10.00
20.00
30.00
subject

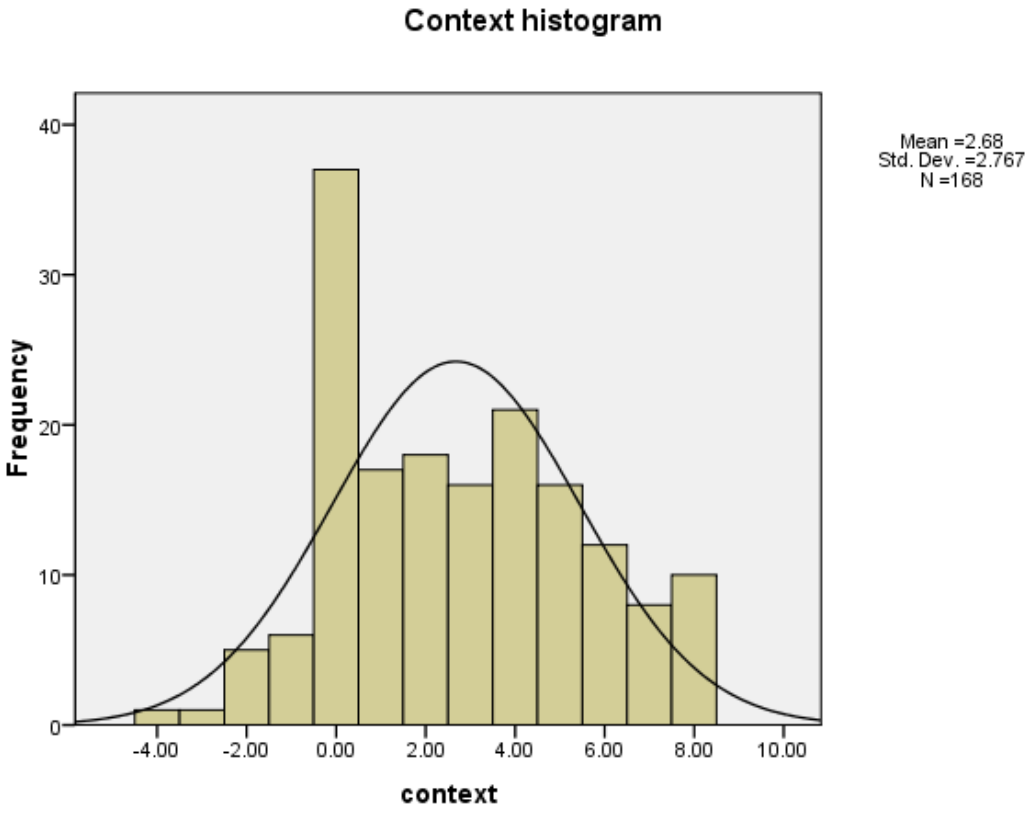

objective
JDI
6.00
5.00
4.00
3.00
2.00
1.00
-10.00
-5.00
0.00
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
object

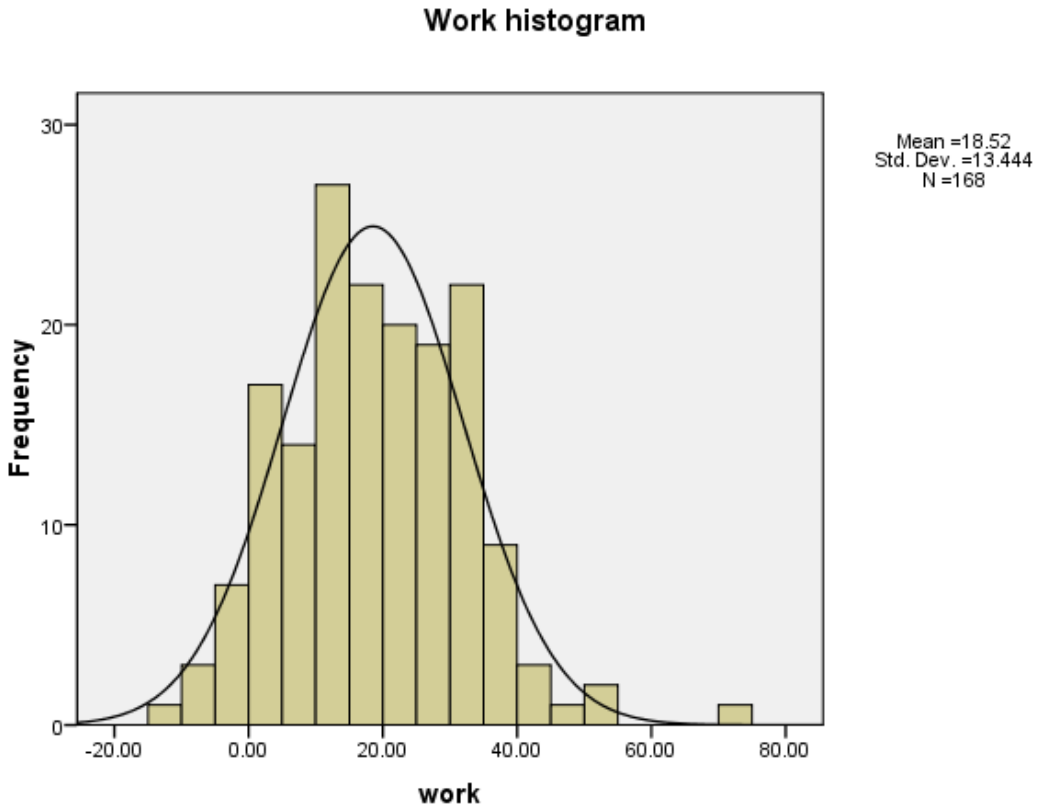
APPENDIX E: HISTOGRAMS




Objective histogram
Mean =6.78
Std. Dev. =3.795
N =167
Frequency
25
20
15
10
5
0
-10.00
-5.00
0.00
5.00
10.00
15.00
20.00
object


Subjective histogram
Mean =13.85
Std. Dev. =6.899
N =168
Frequency
20
15
10
5
0
0.00
10.00
20.00
30.00
subject


Context histogram
Mean =2.68
Std. Dev. =2.767
N =168
Frequency
40
30
20
10
0
-4.00
-2.00
0.00
2.00
4.00
6.00
8.00
10.00
context


Work histogram
Mean =18.52
Std. Dev. =13.444
N =168
Frequency
30
20
10
0
-20.00
0.00
20.00
40.00
60.00
80.00
work