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The relationships among selected demographic variables, school settings, attendance in leadership academies, and the self -perceptions of secondary school principals

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THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES, SCHOOL SETTINGS, ATTENDANCE IN LEADERSHIP ACADEMIES, AND THE SELF-PERCEPTIONS OF SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

by

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ABSTRACT

The purpose and research objectives of this study were to determine the perceptions of secondary principals toward the importance of specific skills necessary in performing their roles as school principals, their degree of preparation in the specific skills needed to perform their positional roles, and the helpfulness of certain training practices and courses included in their leadership preparation programs. The sample population consisted of the 191 public secondary school principals in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas who responded to a questionnaire developed by the researcher specifically for this study. Multivariate Analysis of Variance revealed a significant difference between gender and the ratings of importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management, and the only other demographic characteristic that was found to have a significant difference on the ratings of importance of any skill area investigated was years of teaching experience, impacting ratings of school/community relations skills. Gender was also found to be significant in the ratings of self-perceptions toward preparation in instructional leadership and communication skills and toward the helpfulness of courses in curriculum, supervision, educational research and statistics, computer applications, and school law. Leadership academy attendance was found to be significant in the self-perceptions of principals toward the helpfulness of instructional leadership courses, foundations courses, and the training practices of internship and leadership academy. The variable years of experience

as a principal was found to be significant in the self-perceptions of principals toward helpfulness of school policy courses while age was found to be significant in the self-perceptions of principals toward the helpfulness of school law. The number of years as a principal was statistically significant in the ratings of self-perceptions of preparedness of principals in skills in communications and school/community relations. Only the variable leadership academy attendance significantly affected the ratings of perceived preparedness in skills in the area of student services. School size and school setting were not found to be statistically significant in the ratings principals assigned to the importance or preparation in any skill area or to the helpfulness of any course or training practice investigated.

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother and the memory of my father, who, as with most parents, were my first teachers. My mother, Mary Kathryn Shepard, taught me through example to persevere despite seemingly insurmountable obstacles, through discipline to always do what is expected, and through love to believe in myself. My father, Marvin Benjamin Shepard, taught me through example to maintain a quiet humility balanced with a pride of family heritage and God-given talents and through deed to sustain resilience in response to any challenge.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The last three decades in education were burdened with restructuring and reformation. Principal preparation programs were not left unscathed during the heightened rhetoric calling for reform (Duke, 1992; Murphy, 2002). Traditional preparation programs turning out managerial leaders were urged to achieve a balance by focusing on human relations theory and transformational skills (Bjork & Ginsberg, 1995). Fullan (1997) discussed an unpublished study conducted by Christensen in 1994, addressing the perceived role of the principal in a restructured school. The findings of Christensen, according to Fullan, indicated a difference in the top behaviors cited in the literature about the role of the principal and those perceived by the principals in the study. Fullan further wrote that the role of the principal has moved from manager/administrator through instructional leader to transformational leader, and now should be seen as moral change agent or visionary leader. Fullan proposed combining the "moral purpose of leadership with the disposition and skills of effective change agents" to conceptualize the principalship (p. xi). How do principals in the first decade of the 21st century see their roles? What course(s), experience, or training best prepared them for their roles? How well prepared to perform their roles and responsibilities do principals feel?

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this research study was to discover the perceptions present principals have about the best training practices and courses they received while preparing for their positions in secondary schools in the tri-state area (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas). Furthermore, the study was designed to determine if the size or location of the school; the gender, years of experience, or age of the principal; or leadership academy attendance affected their perceptions of best training practices and courses. An outcome of the research was a list of pre-service instructional practices that can guide the design of graduate programs of study in educational administration. A second outcome of the study was a compilation of professional development experiences that principals perceived as helpful in keeping them prepared for their role requirements as school leaders.

Justification for the Study

The world of school principals is complex (Cistone & Stephenson, 2000; Daresh, 1997; Fullan, 2000; Lumsden, 1993; Restine, 1997; Williamson & Hudson, 1999) and requires skill in problem solving as well as in decision-making (Lynn, 1994). Research shows that the role requirements of principals have changed during the 20th century (Fullan, 1997; Williamson & Hudson). Greater internal and external complexity exists; the need for relationship building has increased; and the amount of reflective and proactive behaviors required for job success has risen. Because of the constant interruptions and dozens of small interactions that comprise the work day of principals, Fullan (1997) stated that researchers have labeled the work of principals as brief, various, and fragmented. Fullan wrote, "Principals, above all, are 'victims of the moment'" (1997, p. 37).

Reaching a similar conclusion, after extensive interviewing using the snowball research technique of asking an interviewee for names of other principals to interview until the names they received in response to their queries were of principals they had already interviewed, Tucker and Codding (2002) found that the work day of principals is one of constant interruptions. They described the job of principals as one-minute decision-making since principals have about one minute to make a decision before another task is brought to them. Tucker and Codding attributed the increased difficulty in effectively leading a school to an increase in the expectations for productivity, as measured by student performance, coupled with a decrease in the small amount of power once given to principals that is now shared by teachers and community members through site-based decision-making teams. Each day can bring a situation that requires unique expertise and creativity. Clark (2001) stated that school leadership positions have become too fast paced and complex for the poorly trained. Furthermore, Clark held that most internship programs do nothing more than place interns in roles as untrained assistant principals and that leadership academies often do not provide the on-the-job practice and feedback needed to understand the complexities of school administration. The challenge for school systems, colleges, and universities is, and will continue to be, to design training programs that prepare future principals for their positions as visionary leaders (Lynn, 1994; Playko & Daresh, 1992; Wilmore, McNeil, & Townzen, 1999).

Harle (2000) declared, in fact, that school systems expect principals to be fully prepared to meet the new and challenging roles thrust upon them and that leadership training should provide future principals with opportunities to meet those expectations. Harle further espoused that the leadership skills needed by future administrators could be

redefined by examining the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2001). Harle suggested that learning and following the ISLLC Standards would assist future leaders in making connections between their preparation and effective practices. Glasman (1997) encouraged examining principal preparation programs to discover the extent to which each program implements the best training processes possible to produce capable and certifiable educational leaders. By becoming aware of what school leaders feel best prepared them for their real-world roles, training programs for educational leaders can make a better connection between the preparation process and the fields of best practice.

To this end, in a New York study, 400 principals and assistant principals were mailed questionnaires eliciting their opinions regarding the extent to which necessary skills were developed and the modes used in their preparation programs (Ashe, Haubner, & Triosi, 1991). Findings from this study pointed to the internship as the most important experience in university preparatory programs and the significance of preparatory program experiences to the success of the internship. The importance of research in this area was discussed by Ashe, Haubner, and Triosi who wrote, "It is imperative that in a scholarly way, through research, we validate our perceptions as to how successful our preparatory programs for prospective administrators are" (1991, p. 150).

The goal of ensuring excellence and equity for all school children is a daunting task that requires collaborative effort from key stakeholders and data that address the strengths and weaknesses of principal preparation programs (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002). The disconnect between what principals need to know and what is being taught in preparation programs will most certainly continue without reliable data that measure how

well principals are prepared for their profession (Young et al.). While much has been written about effective leadership in the last two decades, current information is not sufficient to identify which methods of preparation and development work best (Hoachlander, Alt, & Beltranena, 2001). Hoachlander et al. further suggest that how to better prepare, develop, and sustain quality leadership must be explored and understood to bring about school improvement. The focus of this study was on one aspect of their suggested method of improvement: how to better prepare quality school leadership.

Theoretical Framework

Demands for accountability and reform have led to evaluating and, in some instances, re-inventing principal training programs (Calabrese, 1991). Effective leaders are essential in creating effective schools which, in turn, affect the kind of society that exists; thus, the quality of principal training programs is of crucial importance (Calabrese; Rutherford, Hord, & Thurber, 1984). Initiatives to improve educational leadership preparation programs have been assisted by foundations and national organizations. For instance, the Danforth Foundation has funded efforts to form partnerships between universities and school districts (Lynn, 1994); the National Policy Board for Educational Administration was established; and the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) reviewed preparation programs nationwide (Daresh, 1997). The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) created the Potential Administrator Development Program (PADP) to combine key components of administrator preparation (Peel, Wallace, & Buckner, 1998). Focusing on mentoring and experiential learning, the program developers sought to improve principal preparation by providing opportunities for practical applications to support classroom theories of educational leadership. On a follow-up survey PADP participants indicated the most

beneficial parts of the program. Components that focused on practical experiences and role-playing were chosen as best practices (Peel, Wallace, & Buckner, 1998). Additionally, participants asked that the following recommendations be considered for improving the program: "more practical experiences in managing school finances, personnel, auxiliary services . . . legal issues, student behavior and managing paperwork" (Peel et al., p. 32).

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered as perceived by principals having completed programs of study in educational leadership. Each of these research questions has been converted into null hypotheses found in Chapter Three.

1. Does size or setting of the school; gender, years of experience, or age of the principal; or attendance at a leadership academy affect the perceptions of secondary school principals about their roles and responsibilities and the importance of specific skills needed to perform their duties in the areas of instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management?
2. Does size or setting of the school; gender, years of experience, or age of the principal; or leadership academy attendance affect the perceptions of secondary school principals toward their level of preparedness in skills needed for their roles in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management?
3. Does size or setting of the school; gender, years of experience, or age of the principal; or attendance at a leadership academy affect the perceptions of

secondary school principals with regard to training practices or courses in their leadership preparation programs?

The relationships of the variables investigated in this study are depicted in Figure 1. The categorical dependent variables are located in the center block, while the demographic independent variables are located in the blocks surrounding the dependent variables. The main objective of this proposed study was to determine the relationships of the independent variables (age, gender, and years of experience of principals; location and size of schools; and whether or not principals have attended a leadership academy) and the dependent variables (the importance of training and courses in leadership preparation programs, the importance of roles and responsibilities of principals, the importance of skills needed for the their roles, and how well prepared principals feel to fulfill the roles responsibilities of their positions).

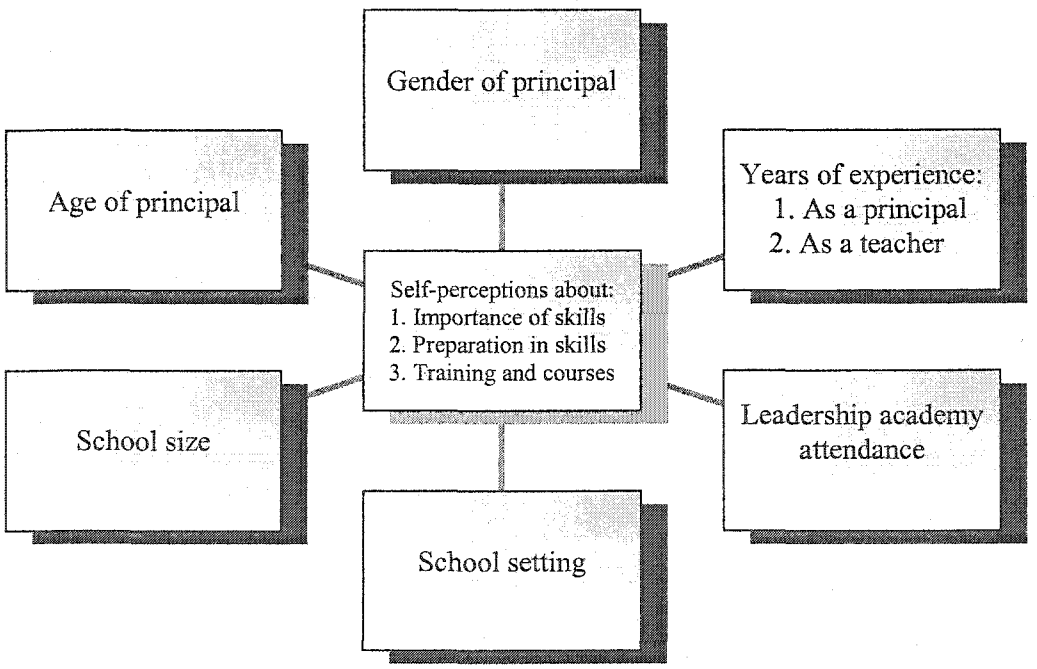

Figure 1. Dependent and independent variables of the study.

Hypotheses

1. Female principals of secondary schools will view possession of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management as more important than do male principals of secondary schools.
2. Principals in the older age groups of respondents will view management skills as more important than do principals in the younger age groups who will view skills in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, and student services more important.
3. Principals who have attended a leadership academy will view having skills in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management as more important than do principals who have not attended a leadership academy.
4. Principals with less than 10 years of experience in their positions will view instructional leadership skills, communication skills, skills in school/community relations, and skills in student services as more important than do principals with 10 or more years of experience who will view management skills as more important.
5. Principals of small secondary schools will view instructional leadership skills as more important than do principals of large secondary schools while principals of large secondary schools will view communication skills, student services skills, school/community relations skills, and management skills as more important than do principals of small secondary schools.

6. Principals of urban secondary schools will view having developed skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management as more important than do principals of rural secondary schools.
7. Male principals of secondary schools will view their preparation in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management as having been better than do female principals of secondary schools.
8. Principal in the younger age groups of respondents will view their preparation in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management as having been better than do principals in the older age groups of respondents.
9. Principals who have attended a leadership academy will view their preparation in instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management as having been better than do principals who have not attended a leadership academy.
10. Principals with less than 10 years of experience in their positions will view their preparation as having been better than do principals with 10 or more years of experience.
11. Principals of large secondary schools will view their preparation in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management as having been better than do principals of small secondary schools.

12. Principals of urban secondary schools will view their preparation in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management as having been better than do principals of rural secondary schools.
13. Gender impacts the perceptions of secondary school principals toward training or courses in their leadership preparation programs.
14. Age impacts the perceptions of secondary school principals toward training or courses in their leadership preparation programs.
15. Leadership academy attendance impacts the perceptions of secondary school principals regarding the training or courses in their leadership preparation programs.
16. Years of experience impact the perceptions of secondary school principals toward training or courses in their leadership preparation programs.
17. School size impacts the perceptions of secondary school principals with regard to the training or courses in their leadership programs.
18. School setting impacts the perceptions of secondary school principals toward training or courses in their leadership preparation programs.

Limitations

This study is bounded by two limitations:

1. The study is not necessarily representative of the national population.
2. The return rate may be too small to allow generalization to other populations.

Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the following terms discussed in the methodology section are defined.

1. Secondary school – A school housing students in grades 7-12, 8-12, or 9-12 (Schools containing any combination of grades K-6 and grades 7-12 will be omitted from the study.)
2. Large school – A school with a student enrollment of or greater than 750 which is the average public high school size (mean number of students per school) in the United States as calculated for the school year 2001-2002 (NCES, 2003)
3. Small school – A school with a student enrollment below 750 which is the average public high school size (mean number of students per school) in the United States as calculated for the school year 2001-2002 (NCES, 2003)
4. Rural – An area that has a population between 2,500 and 50,000 people and that is outside of an urbanized area. (United States Census Bureau, 2000)
5. Urban – An area that has a population of at least 50,000 with an overall population density of at least 1,000 people per square mile of land area. (United States Census Bureau, 2000)
6. Male – Demographic characteristic of principals based on gender – 65.4% of public school principals were men in 1993-1994 (NCES, 2005)
7. Female – Demographic characteristic of principals based on gender – 34.5% of public school principals were women in 1993-1994 (NCES, 2005)

8. Age – Number of years since birth – average age of principals set at 47.7 as appeared on the 1993-1994 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) (NCES, 2005)
9. Years of experience – Number of years employed as a principal and number of years of teaching experience prior to becoming a principal – principals with fewer than three years considered as new in the 1993 -1994 Schools and Staffing Survey conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) – average number of years of teaching experience of principals surveyed in 1990-91 by NCES was 10.6 years (NCES, 2005)
10. Leadership academy – A leadership professional development program and/or statewide partnership that prepares a cadre of educational leaders for authentic leadership of a school organization through a process of reflective learning and observation (Arkansas Leadership Academy, 2003)

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter is organized into four sections: (a) a call for change, (b) pre-service principal training, (c) continuing learning after pre-service training, and (d) status of principal training. Each of these sections is further delineated for clarity.

A Call for Change

Preparation Programs

Commissions. The year 2001 was a year filled with meetings focused around educational leadership. The National Commission for the Advancement of Educational Leadership Preparation (NCAELP) was one of many organizations that proactively responded to the "urgent calls for changes in the way educational leadership is practiced and in how educational leaders are prepared and developed" (Young & Peterson, 2002, p. 130). The members of the NCAELP held their first meeting in 2002 to improve the practice of educational leadership. The establishment of this commission and the articles solicited by it were an attempt by the profession to assess the status of leadership preparation and collaboratively address the challenge of improving educational leadership preparation for the benefit of the school children of the nation (Young & Peterson). In a commentary on the NCAELP articles appearing in *Educational Administration Quarterly*, Cambron-McCabe and Cunningham (2002) postulated an uncontested call for change in leadership preparation. The only discourse, as seen by

Cambron-McCabe and Cunningham, was among the different approaches to be taken to bring about reform in the field. Having worked for a decade with a group of 60 superintendents convened by the Danforth Foundation's Forum for the American School Superintendent, Cambron-McCabe and Cunningham stated that they possessed the expertise to voice their "grave concerns about the lack of relevancy leadership preparation programs have for the crisis conditions facing many school administrators in this country" (pp. 289-290). Likewise, the forum superintendents had serious concerns about the relevance of preparation programs that forced them to rely "in their practice on tacit knowledge more than on knowledge acquired in graduate programs" (Cambron-McCabe & Cunningham, p. 298). The authors concluded their commentary with a call for advocacy and political activism to redesign preparation programs and improve education for all children. The political action called for was not unlike that of school leaders in the 1950s whose commitment led to the development of the educational administration profession and to the improvement of schools (Cambron-McCabe & Cunningham).

The NCAELP was not the first national commission to study leadership preparation. The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration (NCEEA) studied the preparation of educational leaders as it existed in the 1980s and made recommendations for change that would carry the profession into the next century (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002). In the wake of this commission's recommendations, the Danforth Foundation began an initiative to identify and support innovative principal preparation programs. The National Policy Board in Educational Administration (NPBEA) in conjunction with states across the nation established standards to ensure the quality of administrator training (Young et al.). The NPBEA issued a report in the late

1980s that attacked the status quo of present school administrator preparation programs and made recommendations for reform (Hawley, 1990). The report urged that recruitment to school administrator programs focus on the smartest and most analytical with the strongest potential who were also successful teachers (Hawley). The report proposed a curriculum of breadth, concentrating on what should be learned rather than on how learning occurs. Furthermore, the report proposed that no one without a doctorate in school administration should be allowed to administer a school.

Hawley criticized the NPBEA report recommendations stating that depth leads to higher order thinking and no evidence supported the view that having a doctorate increased the quality of the administrator. A little over a decade later, Usdan (2002) criticized the NCAELP commissioned articles as having overlooked the "secularization of the nation's educational leadership" (p. 303). Usdan discussed the proactive role of business leaders and politicians in driving the standards movement and how this movement has impacted the needs of school leaders to effectively perform their jobs. This secularization trend is visible today in the growing number of local, state, and national leaders of education who do not have educational backgrounds. Usdan presented a belief held by many influential political and business leaders:

> Traditional school administrators for the most part have existed in insulated and isolated environments and do not have the managerial experience or acumen to lead huge multimillion dollar organizations that operate in such complex and politically volatile environments. (p. 305)

Bell (1993) postulated that leadership was emerging as a key ingredient in successful school reform. A decade of reform efforts following the National Commission

on Excellence in Education's (1983) report, *A Nation at Risk*, pointed to training and recruitment of effective school leaders as crucial for success (Bell). The demand for educational reform following *A Nation at Risk* inevitably led to the need for reform in the training programs for public school principals (Milstein & Krueger, 1997). Williamson and Hudson (1999) cited research that criticized traditional pre-service principal training programs for the lack of field-based experiences. Such criticism, coupled with the call for greater accountability and national standards, led to changes in principal preparation (Willliamson & Hudson). The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration examined principal training programs and discovered, among other deficiencies, a need for a definition of effective leadership, a partnership between universities and superintendents, and a variety of sequential, up-to-date clinical experiences (Milstein & Krueger).

The importance of school and school district participation in the principal preparation process was confirmed by the 1987 National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration which addressed the issue in the 1993-94 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) (DeAngelis & Rossi, 1997). The SASS findings evidenced that schools and school districts played active roles in principal preparation for more than one-third of public school principals and about one-half of minority principals. Reporting higher levels of participation in aspiring principal programs of school districts were new principals, female principals, and elementary principals (DeAngelis & Rossi).

Ricciardi (1997) compiled a different list of training needs when 140 South Carolina public school principals responded to questions about their training. The questions elicited the perceptions of principals about prior training activities and

recommendations for improvement. The respondents in this study were concerned with several areas involved in operating a school and "identified their most important professional training needs in curriculum design and instruction and the learning environment" (p. 66). This study did not reveal any significant differences in the training needs reported by principals with different demographic profiles. The principals did report that training needs change as situations in schools change.

Competencies/Effectiveness. A paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) described the need for change in pre-service preparation and the continued development of graduates to achieve competencies required by school districts in Florida (Cox, Biance, & Herrington, 1999). Cox et al. wrote that the educational system of the new millennium no longer requires a charismatic leader operating within an environment of control, consistency, and predictability to solve all problems. Educational leadership in the 21st century calls for a leader who can build partnerships and empower others to assume responsibilities in a more complex educational system.

In an effort to meet this call for a new kind of leader, the faculty at Florida State University redesigned the university's educational leadership program, making it a competency-based approach that offered continual learning opportunities to graduates and current leaders. The basis of the preparation program at Florida State included the 19 competencies determined by the state of Florida as necessary to acquire principal certification. The conceptual framework for the preparation program was developed from an analysis of the knowledge and skills required of effective school leaders and an alignment of the identified knowledge and skills and the competencies of the Florida

Educational Leadership Examination and the Florida Principal Competencies (Cox, Biance, & Herrington, 1999). Behar-Horenstein (1995), Assistant Professor in the Department of Educational Leadership of the University of Florida, Gainesville, discussed the transitions in the principal preparation programs initiated by the demand for accountability that resulted in a call for change. Behar-Horenstein argued that programs should be "redesigned, rather than merely refined" (p.19). Florida's two-tiered certification process thus limits the authority of universities to establish certification standards, while universities in states, such as Illinois, with a one-tier system have more influence in certification standards, influencing program design and course offerings (Behar-Horenstein). Behar-Horenstein advised developing a competency-based program grounded in "a change-oriented model comprised of five domains: (a) interpersonal communication, (b) curriculum pedagogy, (c) administrative leadership, (d) effective instructional leadership, and (e) staff development . . ." (p. 29).

A study by Nelson (2002) concluded with a call to better prepare principals for their roles as administrators of special education programs in their schools. Nelson surveyed 285 Louisiana administrators and 37 full time educational administration faculty members to elicit their perceptions of how adequately administrator programs in Louisiana prepared principals to lead special education programs in their schools. Eighty-six of the 202 administrators ranked their training as poor or fair and five of the 26 faculty members ranked their programs as poor or fair. Fifty-nine of the 202 administrators took no courses in special education. Increased accountability for the success of all students makes the preparation of administrators to lead special education programs an imperative call for change. The most recent national education reforms in

the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 call for all students, including special education students, to achieve adequate average yearly progress (AYP) on a standardized instrument from which only 1% of a school's population are exempt from taking (NCLB, 2001).

In a study of leadership practices of secondary principals, Leech, Smith, Green, and Fulton, (2003), investigated five effective leadership practices that had been identified by Kouzes and Posner in 1995. Teachers were asked to measure their principals' use of the following five effective practices: (a) challenging the process, (b) inspiring a shared vision, (c) enabling other to act, (d) modeling the way, and (e) encouraging the heart (Leech et al.). The first practice, challenging the process, requires critical thinking and the willingness to take a risk by challenging the status quo of the current educational system. Rated by 27% of the teachers as only occasionally or almost never being utilized, the second practice, inspiring a shared vision, was reported to be the one of the most difficult to actualize. Sharing a vision requires communicating in a way that will motivate others to follow and work toward achieving the vision.

Both the second and the third effective practice involve action, but the third practice, enabling others to act, involves the leader's willingness to share power through a covenant of commitment to collaborative goals and loyalty. The fourth effective practice, modeling the way, requires visibility of the principal while performing daily tasks and was the highest ranked practice for high school principals. Leech et al. contend that the fifth effective practice, encouraging the heart, ranked as the behavior least used by the principals in their study, may be one of the most important to achieving success in these stressful times of high stakes performance testing and accountability. Although this

study showed some evidence of principals practicing these five strategies, the authors called on preparation programs to "undertake the responsibility of improving out school leaders' abilities to employ effective leadership practices" (Leech et al., p. 9).

Grogan and Andrews (2002) report that, traditionally, university training of aspiring principals had prepared principals "for the role of a top-down manager" (p. 238). The main focus had been on management areas, such as planning, organizing, supervising, and budgeting, not on developing relationships and environments that would promote and enhance student learning. During the most recent decades, change in principal preparation programs has begun to occur, but the change has been slow in comparison to the changing role of the principalship. Increased state standards of the accountability movement have dictated a change in preparation programs to include philosophies at opposite ends of the instructional spectrum (Ediger, 2001). Principals evaluate teachers operating from educational philosophies ranging from the testing and measurement movement that equates high test scores and good teaching to constructivism that involves holism and students constructing their own knowledge and learning in context (Ediger, 2001).

In the 1990s, schools demonstrating the largest increases in student achievement by economically disadvantaged students and students of minorities were schools led by strong instructional leaders who made curriculum and instruction their highest priority (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). The instructional leaders of these schools created a school climate of high expectations for academic achievement and respect for all students. The growing awareness of the importance of the effect of school leadership on student learning and the desire that all children reach higher levels of learning have pushed

university training programs for aspiring principals to include courses that address instructional leadership as well as management concepts (Grogan & Andrews). Goldberg (2000), in an interview of John Goodlad, quoted Goodlad as believing that a leadership training program should be a "logical continuation of the best training available to be a teacher. Too much of educational leadership training is for technical management" (p. 84). Goodlad cited principal preparation courses in school budgets as an example of management training in an area where business managers not principals have control. Goodlad believed that leadership training programs should focus on two emphases: (a) developing an agenda for renewal and persuading colleagues to pursue that agenda and (b) learning how to achieve a continuing critical mass of people committed to the agenda (Goldberg).

Blasé and Blasé (1999) investigated the role of the principal as instructional leader and found that instructional leadership profoundly impacts "a broad range of dimensions of classroom instruction" (p. 355). Findings from this study by Blasé and Blasé indicated a need for principals to develop reflective, collaborative, problem-solving contexts for dialogue with teachers about instruction. Blasé and Blasé developed a questionnaire that elicited responses from teachers about characteristics of school principals that improved classroom teaching and those characteristics that hindered classroom teaching. The researchers analyzed data from the 809 teachers, from the southeastern, midwestern, and northwestern United States, who participated in the study to determine the influence of actions and lack of action by principals on classroom teaching. Blasé and Blasé found four processes present in effective principal-teacher interaction about instruction: (a) inquiry, (b) reflection, (c) exploration, and (d)

experimentation. These four processes existed in two major themes that became the basis for the Reflective-Growth (RG) model of effective instructional leadership developed by Blasé and Blasé. The core of the RG model was "talking with teachers to promote reflection and promoting professional growth" (p. 359). The RG model consists of five strategies to encourage principal-teacher dialogue about instruction and "promote reflection: (a) making suggestions, (b) giving feedback, (c) modeling, (d) using inquiry and soliciting advice and opinions, and (e) giving praise" (p. 359).

The teachers in the study (Blasé & Blasé) identified six teacher development strategies used by effective instructional leaders:

> (a) emphasizing the study of teaching and learning; (b) supporting collaboration efforts among educators; (c) developing coaching relationships among educators; (d) encouraging and supporting redesign of programs; (e) applying the principles of adult learning, growth, and development to all phases of staff development; and (f) implementing action research to inform instructional decision making. (p. 362)

These strategies were aimed at developing the professional growth of teachers by improving teaching methods and promoting professional interactions among colleagues. Blasé and Blasé further suggested a set of guidelines that principals, both prospective and practicing, should follow to become effective instructional leaders. One of these guidelines, talking with teachers about instruction, requires skills, knowledge, attitudes, and personal characteristics not routinely developed in traditional principal preparation programs. Blasé and Blasé additionally stressed that principals engage in the study of teaching and learning and model effective teaching.

Introducing an alternate view of what constitutes instructional leadership, Donmoyer and Wagstaff (1990) suggested that instructional leaders impact learning through the managerial tasks they engage in daily. Through this view of instructional leadership, managers are instructional leaders. In defense of their point of view concerning managerial instructional leaders, Donmoyer and Wagstaff named seven managerial tasks that can significantly influence teaching and learning: (a) scheduling, (b) establishing policies, rules, and norms that protect instructional time, (c) hiring competent teachers who are committed to student improvement, (d) supervision of instruction, (e) coordinating pupil services, (f) managing staff development, and (g) budgeting. Dwyer (1984) also found instructional leadership within the routine activities of principals. Setting effective principals apart from less effective administrators was their capacity to connect routine acts to their expectations for students that became a part of an overarching plan influenced by the community and institutional context that created both constraints and resources for their activities. Dwyer gave examples of principals who found opportunities in what others would see only as problems. One example was a principal who "capitalized on his community's poverty to encourage a local bank to finance an instructional computer center for the school" (p.34). Additionally, Dwyer cited personal traits, experience, training, and beliefs as influential factors affecting the daily activities of principals that had an impact on their instructional leadership.

Meeting the demands of the 21st century will require principal preparation programs to design their curriculum around what constitutes a good school (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Grogan and Andrews present five conditions that are present in good schools:

> (a) teachers perceive their principals as instructional leaders, (b) the educators in schools hold high and uniform expectations for all students, (c) educators in schools frequently monitor student progress and adjust instruction based on student performance, (d) educators in schools hold a shared vision and common goals for the school, and (e) a nurturing leaning climate is present in the school and supported by a collegial community with high levels of professional autonomy. (p. 241)

These five conditions promote active student engagement in learning and instructional strategies that intensify learning.

Criticism of Programs. A Public Agenda Survey conducted in 2000 revealed that 80% of the 853 superintendents surveyed and 69% of the 909 principals surveyed believed that graduate school preparation programs "are 'out of touch' with the realities of running schools today" (Johnson, 2002, p. 27). Johnson further reports that school leaders criticized leadership training as being "impractical, unfocused, and geared toward training researchers rather than developing school leaders" (p. 28). Thompson and Legler (2003) surveyed more than 1,000 principals in the Midwest to discover the principals' perspectives of how well their principal preparation programs prepared them to perform their daily tasks. The results of the survey indicated that principals do not feel well prepared in many areas of their work. In no area of their work did more than half of the principals respond that they felt well prepared. The authors offered an explanation for this lack of confidence in the principals' preparation and a few suggestions for improving the preparation process. The explanation they posited presumed that because their profession contains so many different tasks, it could be impossible to train any one person to handle

all of those tasks well. Thompson and Legler, however, gave six recommendations to improve the principal preparation process:

1. Improve collaboration between the academic and practice components
2. Promote a larger role for the National Policy Board for Educational Administration
3. Increase the practicum time
4. Strengthen induction programs
5. Integrate technology
6. Strengthen instruction in the areas of student assessment and data analysis. (pp. 9-10)

Thompson and Legler further postulated that although principal preparation programs were moving toward more practice in an actual school setting and alignment with the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) standards, the change had been slow compared to the increased demands for school reform, state assessment standards, and accountability.

Moving beyond the call for change in principal preparation programs, Haller, Brent, and McNamara (1997) suggest that perhaps what is needed is less training or no pre-service training at all. The authors proposed their study after considering the cost of training school principals in the United States compared to the effectiveness of school administrators in other countries where little or no formal training in administration is required. The researchers further considered that while principals of private schools in the United States may receive less graduate training than principals of public schools in the United States, the performance of private school students is not significantly below that

of public school students (Haller et al.). The researchers admitted that this claim is contentious, but they pointed out that while 34% of private school principals did not hold a masters degree, only 9% of public principals lack the degree, yet there is little difference in student performance in public and private schools. Haller et al. did not discuss other possible influences on student performance that might account for the lack of significant differences. In this study, Haller et al. examined data from three files of the 1988 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS) conducted by the United States Bureau of the Census to compare the impact of graduate training on school effectiveness. The results of this study indicated that neither the level nor the field of graduate study had a positive impact on school effectiveness. Limitations of this study are that the measures of school effectiveness were gathered from the perceptions of teachers, the effects on student achievement were not assessed, and individual graduate training programs were not evaluated.

Other professionals in educational leadership have written about the inadequacies of administrator preparation programs. Tirozzi (2001) called the preparation programs of aspiring principals inadequate and the professional development of employed principals episodic. Tirozzi further criticized the alignment of instruction and real-world demands of the typical principal's challenging position. Although opinions vary on the actual degree of inadequacy, the popular opinion that too many ineffective programs exist has reinforced the call for reform of educational leadership preparation (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002).

During the first two years of the 21st century, national attention on educational leadership came in two forms: (a) funding and (b) media exposure. Two major

investments in school leadership were $40 million from the School Leadership Initiative supported by President Clinton and $50 million from the Annenberg Foundation. Media exposure primarily came from articles that were more critical than applauding of traditional university preparation of school leaders (Young, Peterson, & Short, 2002).

Comprehensive School Reform. The demand for school reform has brought about an abundance of changes in what principals need to know to lead in the 21st century. Leithwood, Leonard, and Sharratt (1998) described organizational learning as a necessary component to bring about conditions in which children can benefit from the most current knowledge about teaching and learning. They found leadership to be one of the variables that impacted organizational learning. Principals, acting as the designers and stewards of school improvement and the teachers of teachers who will bring about the improvement, were considered continual catalysts for change (Leithwood, Leonard, & Sharratt, 1998). The researchers also found that practices present in transformational leadership foster organizational learning. These practices included: (a) articulating a vision, (b) promoting cooperation toward group goals, (c) conveying high expectations, (d) being good role models of change and excellence, (e) providing moral and tangible support for professional development, (f) providing intellectual stimulation, (g) building a productive school culture, and (h) encouraging participatory decision making. In their concluding statements about the impact of specific leadership practices on organizational learning, the researchers proposed that the practices associated with instructional leadership and transformational leadership "could lead to a new synthesis of school leadership" based on building a model of what works (p. 273).

Roles of Principals

Wagner (2001) stated that the media, labeling schools as failing and calling for reform, has been critical of the nation's schools as well as leadership preparation programs. Combating both the diagnosis made by the media of the educational problems faced by the United States and the proposed solutions to those problems has affected the role of school principals.

Instructional Leadership. The role of principal has moved beyond school manager to instructional leader. The role expectations of a school principal "include building manager, instructional leader, community and public relations guru, fundraiser, and visionary" (Thompson & Legler, 2003, p. 1). Scholars characterize instructional leaders as developing mission and goals and as managing the educational production function (Ogawa & Bossert, 1995). Hallinger and Murphy (1985) conducted a study that examined the instructional management behavior of ten elementary principals. Believing that principals had received little direction in what was meant by instructional leadership, Hallinger and Murphy first attempted to define the role of principal as instructional leader. Hallinger and Murphy, herein, suggested that the definition of the instructional leadership role of the principal could be divided into three dimensions: (a) defining the school mission, (b) managing the instructional program, and (c) promoting a positive learning climate. The principal could implement the job functions of these three dimensions by indirect and direct activities. An example of indirect activities is communicating school policy to stakeholders; an example of direct activities is supervision of teachers to improve instruction.

In a study designed to show the relationship of academic training and years of administrative experience to role perceptions of high school principals, Bullock (1969) concluded that wide differences of role perceptions existed among high school principals. This study explored four dimensions of role behavior of school administrators: (a) status dimension, (b) authority dimension, (c) institution dimension, and (d) means-end dimension. The status dimension involves the actions taken to satisfy conflicting desires for superior status versus acceptance as a member of a group. The authority dimension concerns the locus of control, others or self, of actions taken by the administrator. The institution dimension concerns behavior prompted by conflicting personal and social pressures. The means-end dimension relates to actions taken for immediate versus long-term results. Since role perception influences behavior, Bullock urged further study to discover the determiners of role perceptions of high school principals.

In a study of the changing roles of principals in the state of Washington, Portin and Shen (1998) concluded that legislated and sociological changes have had a detrimental effect on the ability of principals to perform effectively. The 687 principals or assistant principals of the Association of Washington School Principals who had held their positions for at least five years and returned questionnaires for this study reported that special education was the factor that caused them the most frustration. The respondents believed that administrative requirements for special education and an increased number of students requiring special services contributed the most to their growing sense of being overwhelmed by managerial responsibilities. The perceived inability of principals to perform both their management and leadership functions efficiently was another source of frustration that decreased their morale and enthusiasm

for their job. The data from this study were from Washington state only and do not show what impact school reform is having on principals in other states; however, since school reform and increased accountability for student achievement is a national call for change, the data are worth considering.

The findings of the Washington study (Portin & Shen, 1998) indicate that while the principals, for the most part, welcomed the changes, the increased demand on their time led them to believe that role changes for principals in their state compromised their leadership effectiveness. This impact on leadership amid the school effectiveness research that points to the school principal as the key to school improvement (Calabrese, 1991; Rutherford, Hord, & Thurber, 1984) has led to a call for research aimed at developing a strong support system of training for principals. The value of a strong support system for aspiring principals as they move through the stages of a career change was emphasized by Browne-Ferrigno (2003) in a study that analyzed the growth process of aspiring principals. Role conceptualization, role-identity, socialization, and purposeful engagement were four major themes found in the growth process of aspiring principals. The role of facilitator was the only role used by practitioners in all subgroups participating in the study. Students who engaged in field-based administrative practice were most likely to change their perceptions about the role of principalship (Browne-Ferrigno). Browne-Ferrigno also found that the timing of developing a new role identity varied among participants from before, during, and after participating in a principal preparation program.

The role of the principal has moved from a top-down manager to an instructional leader who is orientated toward the development of the intellectual and professional

capital of teachers (Grogan & Andrews, 2002). Within this role, the principal functions as a teacher of teachers and communicator of the school's vision and mission; "the science of administration has given way to the psychology of leadership, with an emphasis on interpersonal perspectives and a focus on the development of followers" (Grogan & Andrews, p. 243). Knowledge about learning and its implications for the practice of teaching during a time of results-driven accountability for increased student achievement has contributed to the changing role of principals as leaders of instructional teams. The principal's influence is collegial and focuses on the empowerment and development of human capital of others rather than on controlling others. The principal role is more supportive, and executive power is distributed to members of instructional teams (Grogan & Andrews).

Tucker and Codding (2002) name the role of instructional leadership as crucial to the principalship. They use the words "turnaround artists," borrowed from business jargon, to describe principals who are needed to bring about change in the schools of today. Principals of the 21st century must be able to lead a school's "faculty, students, parents, and community to turn it around, make it sing, and enable all of its students to succeed at levels few thought possible before" (p. 38). Tucker and Codding further state that the principalship, having become over time, "disassociated from the work of teaching and learning," must now have as its focus the role of instructional leadership making it "the heart and soul of the job" (p. 35). About instructional leadership, Marks and Printy (2003) wrote, "Early conceptions of instructional leadership focused on the principal's role in managing school processes and procedures related to instruction and supervision" (p. 391). This managerial role of the instructional leaders was lost as the pressures for

school reform led to a demand for the school principal to become an agent of change (Marks & Printy). Explaining that the role of instructional leader has expanded since its inception to include school-based management, choice, vision, and community, Poplin (1992) called the new role of the school principal as administrator/servant who will promote teacher growth. The new school leader will be at both the top and the bottom of the hierarchy, entrenched in the process of change that can only happen when everyone, including teachers, is growing.

Change Agent. The key role of a principal of today is change agent whose fundamental purpose is to reinvent a school system that has been rendered obsolete by the changes of the last twenty-five years in the nature of work and the expectations for citizenship (Wagner, 2001). In the Harvard Institute for School Leadership, Wagner has taught three steps to prepare leaders for their roles during a time of change:

1. Leaders must understand the need for change and create a climate conducive to change.
2. Leaders must stress seeking solutions to problems, not placing blame.
3. Leaders must provide time for teachers to analyze and understand different kinds of data. (p. 5)

The self-renewal process for schools relies on the leadership of the school. Principals who involve teachers in the change process expand the leadership capacity of the school by capitalizing on the knowledge and skills of the teachers (Marks & Printy, 2003). While seeking to raise the level of commitment of teachers to develop the collective capacity of the organization, transformational leadership brings about change by focusing on "problem finding, problem solving, and collaboration with stakeholders"

(Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 372). Marks and Printy also investigated the effect of collaboration on school performance within both transformational leadership and instructional leadership and found that transformational leadership was necessary but insufficient by itself. They recommended an integration of transformational and shared instructional leadership as having the most positive influence on school performance. This recommendation grew from their contention that "while transformational leadership is necessary for reform-oriented school improvement, it is insufficient to achieve high-quality teaching and learning" (Marks & Printy, 2003, p. 377).

The National Center for School Leadership at the University of Illinois conducted case studies in four schools that had gained national recognition for the benefits achieved by economically disadvantaged students through each school's commitment to change (Thurston, Clift, & Schacht, 1993). The data analysis from these four case studies pointed to school principals as the key to reform and led the researchers to call for reform in educational administration programs. The programs were called upon to prepare collaborative leaders who are child-centered, able to process a variety of student data, and skilled in communicating their vision for the schools they serve (Thurston et al.). As responsibilities of principals increase, Peterson (2002) suggests training that will improve their abilities to handle the daily rush of activity that surrounds principals amid this role change. Among the suggested training to make them more effective are learning to switch gears quickly, to handle interruptions, to develop communication skills, to resolve conflicts, and to analyze data.

The role of the principal has changed in the standards-based educational system of today in which students, parents, teachers, and principals are aware of the learning targets

Cross & Rice, 2000). The principal in a standards-based system must possess an understanding of the curriculum and be able to interpret data to enhance student learning. Cross and Rice maintain that monitoring the academic health of the school must be among the highest priorities of the principal; they further suggest the need for delegating nonacademic tasks to other personnel. Aspiring principals with a desire to be effective instructional leaders must be prepared to assume the roles of committed visionary, effective communicator, relationship builder, and collaborator (Cross & Rice). The key leadership roles of the middle school principal are outlined in *Turning Points 2000* as (a) mobilizing support for change, (b) maintaining school-wide focus on improving student learning and quality of teaching, (c) establishing trust and respect, and (d) communicating the school's strengths and achievements (Jackson & Davis, 2000).

Moral Steward. Murphy (2002) identifies the central roles of school principals as moral steward, educator, and community builder. These three roles correspond with three "powerful synthetic paradigms" (Murphy, p. 186) that are a synthesis of knowledge and understandings about the educational administrator profession and the standards imbedded within that profession. According to Murphy, these three paradigms: (a) social justice, (b) school improvement, and (c) democratic community, have the potential to revamp the school administration profession.

The moral steward, acting on a system of beliefs and values grounded in issues of social justice and serving all school children equally, views the job of the principal as a mission. The moral steward is purpose-driven and reflective in daily decision-making that emerges from a deep commitment and passion to affect society by improving learning opportunities for all students in the school. School administrators, acting as moral

stewards, use their personal leadership platforms to persuasively model their commitments to the paradigm of social justice. Their role is not to simply manage the system as it already exists, but to reconstruct the system (Murphy, 2002).

The educator metaphor, coined by Murphy (2002) to describe one of the three roles of the school principal, repositions the leadership role of the principal from management to education. The principal (a) develops an understanding of the most current research on learning, (b) develops a plan to implement new forms of instructional practice in schools, and (c) motivates teachers to use the best instructional practices in their classrooms (Murphy). The leadership skill of the school principal shifts to instructional leadership, and in a sense, the principal becomes a learner and a teacher of adults.

The role of the school principal as community builder exists on three levels (Murphy, 2002). On one level, the principal builds relationships with parents and community members that encourage involvement and collaboration. The role of the principal is to nurture the development of environments where the principal leads by "empowering rather than controlling others" (Murphy, p. 188). On a second level, the principal builds a community of learners among the professional staff and ministers "to the needs of organizational members rather than gaining authority over them" (p. 188). Finally, the principal builds a learning environment for children that is personalized and ensures opportunities for success. The community builder leads not from the top of an "organizational pyramid but from a web of interpersonal relationships" (p. 188).

An important role for the principal of the 21st century is promoter of respect and appreciation of cultural diversity in school populations. Growe (2002) defends the

necessity of multicultural training in administrator preparation programs by referring to the 15% increase in minority students in public schools from 1972 to 1998. Principals are charged to motivate teachers to integrate multicultural content in their subject areas and learn to appreciate cultural diversity as an opportunity to develop a unique resource rather than as a problem to be fixed or eliminated. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that the minority students, 37% of the total public school population in 1998, are given equal educational opportunities in a school that incorporates a multicultural approach to serving all children (Growe).

Cline and Necochea (2000) discussed "the need to redefine the role of educational leaders to include action research, life-long learning, change agentry, client advocacy, and collaboration" (p. 156). They stated the need for school leaders "to be able to negotiate multiple roles, such as instructional leader, action researcher, community liaison, change agent, and child advocate" (p. 156). They suggested that the slow pace of school reform has in some ways resulted from the paradoxical need for innovative, non-conformist leader behavior from those who have come up through the ranks while conforming to the policies, procedures, and norms of the system. The need for school reform juxtaposed against systems that strive to maintain the status quo is a paradox that has created the need for role innovation for the school leader (Cline & Neochea, 2000). This needed change demands leaders who have been socialized to engage in non-conforming behavior (Cline & Necochea, 2000). Concluding that school reform will not occur without changing the preparation of educational leaders, Cline and Necochea (2000) presented four steps to transform schools:

1. Alter existing administrative programs so they will nurture maverick, non-conforming behavior;
2. Create induction programs that will help maverick leaders survive as transformational administrators;
3. Place transformational leaders in school systems that are ready for change;
4. Support collaboration between school systems and universities in the development of administrative preparation programs that will support role innovation that is needed to produce transformational leaders. (p. 156)

Pre-service Principal Training

If role change is having a detrimental impact on school leadership at a time when principals are called to be instructional leaders, moral leaders, and change leaders, (Fullan, 2002), preparation programs are called upon to give principals the needed leadership skills to cope with rapid change (Houston, 2000). Additionally, principals are asked to be visionary and transformational leaders (Siegrist, 1999), and their work is seen as more than just management (Houston, 2002; McGowan, 2001). Therefore, Siegrist calls for graduate programs that do more than train efficient managers when "leadership is vital to the schools" (Siegrist, 1999, p. 297).

Content

Because schools need effective leaders, what prospective principals should know has been the subject of research and dialogue among concerned stakeholders for decades (Daresh, 1997). The National Council for the Accreditation of Colleges of Teacher Education (NCATE) has called for increased standards for principals (Wilmore et al., 1999). In 1996, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) adopted a

set of six standards for principals that are currently being followed, entirely as written or in adapted form, in thirty-five states (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2001). Many states have state licensure examinations that graduates in educational administration must successfully pass before becoming fully certified (Wilmore et al.). The three states in this study require successful completion of examinations before state certification: (a) the ExCet in Texas (Wilmore et al.), (b) the NTE or PRAXIS in Louisiana (ETS, 2003), and (c) the School Leaders Licensure Assessment (SLLA) in Arkansas (Council of Chief State School Officers).

A case study of the educational leadership program at the University of Texas at Austin (UTA) was conducted by Wilmore et al. (1999). The principal training program at UTA is based upon a knowledge and skills base developed in a collaborative effort using information contained in four pieces of research: (a) the National Policy Board for Educational Administration's Principals for our Changing Schools: Knowledge and Skills Base; (b) Learner Centered Schools for Texas: A Vision of Texas Educators; (c) Principals for the Schools of Texas: A Seamless Web of Professionals; and (d) 21st Century Leaders for the Schools of Texas (Wilmore et al.). Before graduation, students in educational leadership must pass oral and written comprehensive exams after completing 36 graduate hours for a master's degree and 9 additional hours in mid-management for Texas certification (Wilmore et al.). Daresh (1997) recommends five strategies to improve the content of principal training programs: (a) developing reflective skills, (b) acquiring skills as moral and ethical leaders, (c) acquiring knowledge of the principles of adult learning, (d) experiencing curricula that are coherent, integrative, and sequenced, and (e) learning about the processes of teaching and learning.

Reflective. Reflective activities assist future principals in realizing what decisions should be made and why (Daresh, 1997). Restine (1997) cites Schon's discussion of reflective practice stating that individuals are not always cognitively aware of reflection that occurs during an action. Restine further explains that while it is more difficult to achieve than reflect on past events, reflection during an action has greater potential for improvement of practice because one must act decisively while observing and analyzing.

Moral/Ethical. The cultivation of moral and ethical skills is seen by more than one researcher as a crucial component of principal training (Daresh, 1997; Fullan, 1997; Sherman, 2000). Fullan calls the principal of today a moral change agent who demonstrates moral and spiritual leadership. Fullan further defines the moral and spiritual leadership in education as "principled behavior connected to something greater than ourselves that relates to human and social development" (2002, p. 14).

According to Fullan (2002), educational reform requires the development of four aspects of leadership. One aspect is making a difference in students' lives; a second aspect is committing to reducing the gap between high and low performers within a school or district. Fullan's third aspect of leadership that he believes should be developed is contributing to reducing the gap in the larger environment, and the fourth is "transforming the working (or learning conditions) of others so that growth, commitment, engagement, and the constant spawning of leadership in others is being fostered" (2002, p. 14). Daresh and Parra (1999) call leading a school a moral endeavor. Cistone and Stephenson (2000) report that Chinese school administration programs emphasize moral and ethical issues. Critics of traditional leadership programs encourage training that

includes actual practice that includes the ethical and moral dimensions of the role (Murphy, 2001).

Adult Learning. The third content improvement strategy, principles of adult learning, recommended by Daresh (1997) is important because principals work more directly with adults than children. Daresh writes that because many teachers in principal training programs are not prepared to deal with adult learners, the programs should "devote at least part of their time and energy to teaching future school leaders about andragogy, the art and science of working with adults" (p. 5). Believing change in schools to be connected to adult learning, Wagner (2001) wrote that successful leadership for change requires building and sustaining four essential conditions that are conducive to continuous adult learning:

1. Shared vision of the goals of learning, good teaching, and assessment;
2. Understanding of the urgent need for change;
3. Relationships based on mutual respect and trust; and
4. Engagement strategies that create commitment rather than mere compliance. (p. 3)

Learning Process. Murphy (2001) suggests that preparation programs, too long focused on academic disciplines outside the field of education, should currently promote an understanding of knowledge about learning, curriculum standards, and school improvement. The vision of the new education leader who has an understanding of teaching, learning, and school improvement demands attention to the intellectual and moral domains of educational leadership (Murphy).

Delivery

Equally important to content is the delivery of that content to prospective principal in training programs (Daresh, 1997). Delivery, how principals should acquire knowledge and skills, is addressed by more than one researcher. In the March 2001 Southern Regional Educational Board (SREB) review of literature on leading school improvement, Hoachlander, Alt, and Beltraneana (2001) found that while there is consensus about what school leaders need to know to be effective, there is less agreement on the best method for acquiring this knowledge. Jackson and Kelley (2002), in their review of the current state of leadership preparation, discussed six innovative principal preparation programs that were all cohort based and included an internship that was much longer than in a typical program. The six programs discussed were the University of Washington Danforth Educational Leadership Program, the East Tennessee State University administrative endorsement program, the California State University, Fresno, principal preparation program, the University of Louisville IDEAS Program, Wichita State University administrator preparation program, and the San Antonio Region 20 Educational Service Center alternative administrator preparation program. These programs, compared to less innovative principal preparation programs, were more demanding with strong collaboration with school districts in their areas and reinforced the "development of moral and ethical leadership" (Jackson & Kelley, p. 198). Daresh (1997) discusses five strategies for improving the delivery of pre-service principal training programs: (a) providing opportunities for clinical practice, (b) assigning mentors, (c) creating learner cohorts, (d) using authentic assessment techniques, and (e) viewing pre-service training as the first step.

Problem-Based Learning. Tanner, Keedy, and Galis (1995) and Bridges and Hallinger (1997) discuss the value of one delivery strategy: Problem-Based Learning (PBL). Students in PBL solve a problem by reasoning, identifying needs, applying new learning, and evaluating the process used to solve the problem (Tanner et al.). PBL follows information-processing theory in that it builds on prior knowledge and transfers newly-acquired knowledge to real world problems (Tanner et al.). Contextual learning theory is applicable in PBL which provides a context when the student first encounters the problem, and motivation theory is applied by teachers who encourage PBL students to take risks and learn from mistakes (Tanner et al.). PBL students learn by doing, either from a problem-stimulated approach in which an instructor sets goals and chooses resources, or from a student-centered approach in which the student defines goals and finds resources (Tanner et al.). The latter process prepares the learner to become the autonomous, lifelong learner that Fullan (1997) conceptualizes as a moral change agent. A Problem-Based Learning computer simulation called In the Center of Things (ITCOT) was created by the members of Peabody College of Education at Vanderbilt University to teach students about decision making amidst the complexity of the real world of school principals (Lumsden, 1992).

Copland (2000) further explored whether problem-based preparation equipped principals with greater problem-framing ability, the ability to understand and frame problems. School principals encounter problems in their work environment that require skill in understanding and solving problems. The PBL process familiarizes principals with various types of problems through the use of scenarios that present problems within the context of an educational setting. Copland's study assessed the problem-framing

ability of 18 students enrolled in Stanford University Prospective Principals Program. The students were divided into three cohorts who received different levels of exposure to the PBL process. The findings suggested that, "within this particular preparation setting, greater exposure to PBL is associated with greater problem-framing ability among students" (Copland, 2000, p. 601) and "merit a discussion of implications for instructional practice and curricular planning in educational administration" (Copland, 2000, p. 602).

Internship. The internship is another part of principal training that can be considered a delivery technique. By placing aspiring principals in schools where they will function as principals under the guidance of a supervising principal, this training method is the ultimate theory-to-practice approach (Sherman, 2000). Milstein and Krueger (1997) argued that internships provide hands-on learning that are "among the most highly valued program experiences" according to principal training program graduates. Barnette (1990) suggested exposing mentors and interns to the processes of shadowing and reflective interviewing to improve the intern experience. The observed events during shadowing which are later discussed during reflective interviewing allow aspiring principals to form conceptualizations that become the basis for decision-making in the future (Barnette, 1990).

Field Experiences/Clinical Practice. Connecting learning to clinical practice in real schools by integrating field-based learning into the program, not just providing it at the end during an internship, is an important delivery strategy (Daresh, 1997; Sherman, 2000). The Brigham Young Leaders Preparation Program infuses training with integration of theory and practice by providing practice opportunities, including 1,400

hours as interns, in five school districts (Muse & Randall, 1994). The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) workshops that are a part of the Brigham Young Leaders Preparation Program help to connect theory and practice. An important aspect of the Brigham Young Leaders Preparation Program is the guidance provided by mentor principals (Muse & Randall).

Mentors. Assigning mentors is directly linked to the strategy of providing opportunities for clinical practice. A limitation with this strategy is that the experience is only as good as the mentor. Some principals lack the skills needed to be good mentors (Daresh, 1997). Daresh (1990) included mentoring and personal reflection in a dimension of pre-service preparation that he called formation. The goal of formation is to address the novice's lack of understanding regarding the meaning of leadership, authority, power, and control (Daresh, 1990). Development of an educational platform, an understanding of interpersonal styles, and a personal professional action plan are three other elements that comprise the preparation dimension of formation (Daresh, 1990). Daresh wrote, "Formation is truly the missing ingredient needed to complete the preparation of effective principals" (1990, p. 5).

Bush and Chew (1999) investigated the value of mentoring by comparing a 1-year training in Singapore that includes mentoring and a model without mentoring established by the National Professional Qualification for Headship in England and Wales. A comparison of these two training models led Bush and Chew to conclude "that training is likely to be more effective if mentoring is a central component of the process" (1999, p. 41). Bush and Chew named the individual benefits of mentoring as peer support, reduction in isolation, and learning, perceived by 83% of the respondents in Singapore to

be the major benefit of the mentoring process. The benefits of mentoring for the educational system were seen as proliferation of organizational norms and culture, transfer of knowledge and skills to younger colleagues, improved performance of the work group, and provision of trained personnel who are capable of becoming more effective at an earlier stage in their careers (Bush & Chew). Limitations of mentoring included lack of time, problematic pairing of mentor and protégé, over dependence on the mentor, and lack of rigor within the process. Bush and Chew concluded that successful mentoring hinges around two factors: (a) the mentor and protégé relationship and (b) the skill with which mentors are able to develop the strengths and leadership qualities of protégés.

Cohorts. Another delivery strategy, establishing cohorts that progress through a training program together, is based on what is known about increasing student engagement in learning through collaboration (Daresh, 1997). Using a survey research design, Barnett, Basom, Yerkes, and Norris (2000) investigated the benefits and disadvantages of cohort delivery in educational leadership programs. Benefits to students occurred within the program and extended beyond the preparation experience to on-the-job benefits in interpersonal relationship and collaborative leadership skills of communication and problem-solving ability (Barnett et al.). When asked whether cohorts were better prepared for leadership roles, respondents' replies "fell into four main categories: (a) greater propensity for group development, (b) improved skills and knowledge, (c) more efficient program structure, and (d) increased professional contacts and networks" (Barnett et al., p. 269). Benefits to universities were reduction in scheduling problems and more consistent enrollments. Students and universities benefited

from integration of course content. Disadvantages expressed by university faculty (Barnett et al.) were greater demands from instructors by students in cohorts, increased likelihood of challenges by students to the relevance of content and use of conventional instructional strategies, and increased advisement workloads. Respondents cited inflexible structure as a disadvantage for students. The inflexibility of the cohort program structure limits students' entry points and places an unrealistic time commitment on students who cannot leave their jobs to be full-time students (Barnett et al.). The fifth strategy, viewing pre-service preparation as a first step, recommended by Daresh (1997), places the responsibility to continue learning upon principals.

Continuing Learning after Pre-service Training

Fullan (1997) stated that highly effective leaders are perpetual learners. In Lowell, Massachusetts, the 60 urban school leaders in the Lowell Leadership Academy continue their learning by participating in monthly book reviews (Boccia, Ackerman, & Christensen, 1997). Principals also receive additional training through induction programs required by state education agencies. In 1990, three states required a formal process of entry-year assistance and other states supported beginning principals through a less formal "buddy system" of one-on-one mentoring (Bass, 1990). Bass discussed the importance of blending theory and practice and wrote, "The preparation of school administrators is a process involving recruitment, classroom learning, field application, experience, and continuing professional development" (1990, p. 29). Barth (1986) pointed out the importance of principals becoming leaders who are also learners and discussed several impediments, the first of which was lack of time, to leaders becoming learners. Peterson (2002) articulated the importance of providing professional development programs that are complementary to pre-service preparation.

Leadership Academies

The Lowell Leadership Academy mentioned in the previous section is one of many training academies that address the need for continuous learning among school principals (Boccia et al., 1997). Beginning in 1984 as a voluntary opportunity, attendance at the Lowell Leadership Academy became an obligation of one week before the opening of school and monthly meetings during the school year. Another academy in an urban setting that follows a different schedule but shares the same mission of providing an opportunity for continued learning after becoming certified is Leadership Academy and Urban Network for Chicago (LAUNCH) (Duffrin, 2001). LAUNCH is similar to leadership academies in other states in that it matches the curricula of the program to leadership standards and provides in-basket activities, role-play, and networking. LAUNCH targets aspiring principals in Chicago who have their credentials but have not found jobs as principals (Duffrin).

In a discussion of the Chicago Principals and Administrators Association (CPAA) professional development programs for principals, Peterson (2002) stated that LAUNCH is "one of the best programs in the country for aspiring principals" (p. 227). Peterson (2002) discussed two other CPAA programs: Leadership Initiative for Transformation (LIFT) for first year principals and the Chicago Academy for School Leaders (CASL) for experienced principals. The California School Leadership Academy (CSLA) has served California school leaders since 1985 (Peterson, 2002), engaging aspiring, new, and experienced administrators in a two to three year program of professional development. Another leadership academy that targets individuals who are not full time principals is the Yselta Assistant Principals Leadership Academy in El Paso, Texas (Daresh & Parra,

1999). The goal of the Yselta Assistant Principal Leadership Academy is to give school leaders the skills needed to implement change in a system where little has been expected from poor and minority students (Daresh & Parra).

A 2001 review of state department of education web pages indicated a listing for a statewide leadership academy in 25 of the 50 states (Education Commission of the States, 2001). Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas were reported among the 18 states to have leadership academies at least partially funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The leadership academies in these states include a focus on integration of technology into instructional leadership practices and the role of instructional technology in school improvement.

Induction

Louisiana's Board of Elementary and Secondary Education (BESE) policy mandates its novice principals to complete an induction program. The purpose of the induction program is "to build the capacity of new building-level administrators to provide leadership to their schools in both instructional and administrative areas within the school" (Louisiana Center for Educational Technology: Louisiana Principal Induction Program, 2004, p. 1). The focus of Louisiana's induction program is on connecting leadership ability to productive schools and student achievement.

Induction of principals in Texas is one part of a continuous improvement pathway that includes "targeted recruitment, rigorous selection, relevant preparation, supported induction, and ongoing renewal" (Texas Principals Leadership Initiative, 2004, p. 1). Texas supports its new principals by offering the 1st Time Campus Administrators Academy (Texas Principals Leadership Initiative, 2004). This induction program

provides a novice principal with two years of support based on an individual growth plan, mentoring, and a cohort learning environment. The State Panel on Principal Induction (2001) defined induction as "the bridge between meaningful preparation and long-term retention and effectiveness" (p. 7). The State Panel on Principal Induction proposed ten critical components of the induction process:

1. Provide a strong mentoring component.
2. Develop a secondary mentoring support team.
3. Engage in building a performance-based profile of knowledge and skills.
4. Develop an individualized plan for professional growth and assistance.
5. Facilitate access to more formal professional growth opportunities.
6. Provide orientation to the new job.
7. Structure the new campus administrator's workload.
8. Develop formal and informal processes to give the novice constructive feedback.
9. Provide time for reflection.
10. Facilitate peer-group problem solving and idea sharing. (2001, pp. 9-13)

To strengthen the induction process in Texas, the State Panel on Principal Induction (2001) recommended collaboration among the following stakeholders: (a) school districts, (b) preparation entities, (c) education service centers, (d) professional associations, and (e) business and community leaders.

The Arkansas principal induction program is based on the beginning growth needs of the administrator (Arkansas Department of Education, 2004). The beginning

administrator and the administrator mentor develop a professional learning plan that is related to the state standards for administrators.

Professional Development

While pre-service programs that offer an internship, clinical practice, or field experience provide the aspiring principal a glimpse of the responsibilities and requirements for the position, these programs cannot provide adequate time to cover all aspects of the job prior to the first position held. Following pre-service preparation, it is crucial that the training of educational leaders continue along a seamless progression of professional development over their entire careers (Peterson, 2002; Walker, Mitchel, & Turner, 1999).

Research conducted at The Ohio State University revealed that first and second year principals had concerns in three areas: "(a) problems with role clarification, (b) limitations on technical expertise, and (c) difficulty with socialization to the profession and the system" (Daresh, 1986, p.169). Role clarification concerns centered on feeling uncomfortable with the nature and authority of the new leadership position. Technical expertise dealt with two categories of concerns. One category referred to normal how-to mechanical or procedural issues, such as how to read printouts of financial statements, how to handle legal issues, how to budget, and how to implement policies. The second category dealt with interpersonal relations skills, such as conflict management skills, school-community relations, and teacher performance evaluations (Daresh, 1986).

Recognizing the crucial need for effective professional development for urban school district principals, Walker, Mitchel, and Turner (1999) conducted a study of the perceptions of the professional development experiences of urban administrators. This

study was conducted over a two-year period while the vice-principals and principals in the district were taking part in a series of professional development activities delivered by a newly created Principal Leadership Institute, funded by three major foundations. The 182 participants were randomly assigned to cohorts assigned to eight different colleges/universities contracted by the school district to deliver the professional development and to provide advisory teams consisting of two graduate students and a faculty member. The administrators were interviewed three times over two years and the universities were interviewed once.

For their study, Walker, Mitchell, and Turner developed survey instruments, containing scaled and non-scaled questions. The scaled questions focused on administrator perceptions of relevancy of professional development activities to their administrative roles, the usefulness and ease of implementation, and the level of knowledge and support given by the universities. The non-scaled questions focused on the benefits, future activities, and success of the professional development experiences. The philosophical orientations of the universities/colleges influenced the focus of specific leadership issues addressed by each cohort. Arising from the philosophical approaches of the universities/colleges were "five general themes: moral and ethical leadership, instructional leadership, contingency theory, problem-based learning, and scientific management" (Walker et al., p. 12).

Three of the eight universities reported the moral and ethical leadership theme as their focus, while only one university chose all of the other four approaches. One university chose an eclectic viewpoint, drawing upon various philosophical perspectives in selecting a focus for its delivery of professional development. Four of the universities

chose instructional leadership skills as the concept area of focus, while only one university chose "the development of sound administrative and managerial skills" (Walker et al., p.14) as its concept. The cohort group of administrators who felt the most congruence between their role as administrators and their cohort professional development activities was the one associated with the university that held instructional leadership as its general theme. This same cohort group also felt more strongly that their leadership effectiveness had improved as a result of their participation in the Principal Leadership Institute. The administrators who most strongly felt that implementation of the knowledge newly acquired through the Institute activities would not be easy were those from the universities operating from a moral leadership theme. These administrators also felt the least improvement in their leadership effectiveness as a result of Institute participation. The administrators from all eight cohorts cited the opportunity for collaboration with colleagues as the single most important benefit of their participation. The perceived needs of administrators fell within "four categories: (a) relational issues, (b) instructional supervision, (c) meeting situational exigencies, and (d) basic administrative/management function" (pp. 20-21).

Walker et al. (1990) posed questions centered on the administrators' needs, how effectively school district/university collaborations met these needs, and how the results could contribute to leadership development. The needs of the urban administrators interviewed in this study were influenced by society and shifts in policy that force principals to secure instructional agenda and develop transformational abilities to lead their schools through an increasingly complex educational system. The researchers (Walker et al.) found that continuous professional development is critical and best serves

administrators when they have a voice in developing the content and delivery provided by the school districts in collaboration with universities. The results of this study contributed to the understanding of how to implement successful professional development programs.

Building on their belief that the school leader's role is complex and effectiveness in that role necessitates "extensive education and development experiences" (Cox, Biance, & Herrington, 1999, p. 3), the educational leadership faculty at Florida State University designed a leadership program that includes professional development in its delivery. The Florida State leadership program is based on the following contention:

> It is the expressed view of the faculty that the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for leadership in today's schools formally begins upon entry into a master's degree program and extends through the programs of study, district level training, on-the-job experiences, and advanced degree programs. (Cox et al., p. 5)

Florida State University offers an academy for assistant principals that assists in their professional development to achieve competencies required by the state of Florida to acquire Level II, School Principal, certification that makes them eligible for school principal positions (Cox et al.).

Ricciardi (1999) examined the professional development needs of middle school principals. The needs were based on the 21 performance domains identified as critical for school administrator success by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA). Ricciardi's mailing of questionnaires to 52 middle school principals yielded 43 responses containing quantitative data that were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (Norusis, 1999). Although the study was

conducted using middle school principals, the research problem is related to the topic of this research study. The findings, although limited to a small sample, contribute to the understanding of the shortcomings of principal preparation programs in matching perceived needs to curriculum content and delivery. The principals in this study reported three top areas of need that were coupled with low participation: "(a) Public and Media Relationships, (b) Motivating Others, and (c) Problem Analysis" (Ricciardi, p.12).

The findings of Ricciardi's study suggested an imbalance of exposure or lack of participation in development activities addressing the 21 domains set forth by NPBEA. However, congruence was evidenced by the principals' reporting the greatest level of participation in four training areas that were also rated as most useful: "(a) Instruction and the Learning Environment, (b) Leadership, (c) Legal and Regulatory Application, and (d) Curriculum Design" (Ricciardi, p. 12). Ricciardi further recommended that the needs of principals as adult learners be considered when designing content and delivery of professional development for administrators. Among the recommendations for administrative staff development were flexible scheduling that would match principals' work demands and individualized activities that were rich in content that could be implemented easily and varied in delivery that was innovative. Principals wanted time away from their campuses to be worthwhile.

In another study, Ricciardi examined the professional development training needs of experienced principals in a study conducted in South Carolina (Ricciardi, 1997). Based on the 21 domains established by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (NPBEA), the South Carolina principals who had at least two years of experience in the principalship made recommendations for improving their own

professional development. The two domains considered the most important training needs were in the areas of "curriculum design and instruction and the learning environment" (Ricciardi, 1997, p. 66). The principals in this study rated the lecture delivery method as the least effective and the most used training activity in which they had participated while on the job. The recommendations obtained from this study included finding convenient times and locations for training that consists of relevant content and providing networking support and follow-up activities related to the training (Ricciardi, 1997).

Redesigning Leadership Programs at Universities

The previous three sections of this chapter have shown the call for change in leadership roles and the needed changes in content and delivery of principal training. This section will discuss the present and future status of leadership redesign in university principal preparation programs.

Present Status

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) has established a Leadership Initiative that supports a network of universities as faculty members redesign leadership programs that will meet the challenge of preparing principals who can begin raising student achievement as soon as they step into a leadership role (Norton, 2002). School districts depend on universities to prepare future leaders and to assist in designing professional development for principals already on the job so that school leaders will have the expertise to drive instructional improvement.

In 2002, specialists in school leadership development gathered to discuss the status of the SREB leadership reform effort. Three areas of need surfaced and became the

focus of the eleven universities and six state academies in the SREB Leadership Networks. The three areas of concern were (a) collaboration with school districts, (b) tapping future leaders, and (c) real curriculum change based on higher standards for educational leadership (Norton, 2002).

Collaboration with Schools. Gene Bottoms, SREB Senior Vice President, described the present status of leader selection and preparation as "a hit-or-miss system" that could provide a good principal but could also produce a poor one. Bottoms stated, "An improved middle school or high school is one poor principal away from being a low-performing school again" (Norton, p. 1). Fry, head of the University Leadership Development Network, says that the goal of the eleven universities and six state academies in the SREB Leadership Redesign Networks "is to prepare school leaders who understand school and classroom practices that raise student achievement and who know how to work with faculty to implement continuous school improvement" (Norton, p. 2). Fry reported that few of the eleven network universities achieved optimum progress during the first year of redesign efforts. Stating that redesign requires new ways of interacting with each other and with schools, Bottoms pointed to the traditional culture of universities as a barrier to redesign of programs.

The collaborative experience between universities and school districts can be positive for both institutions even though, as Patrick Forsyth, the Williams Professor of Educational Leadership at Oklahoma State University, states, "the complex, disparate cultures of universities and school systems increase the odds against productive, long-term partnerships" (Norton, 2002, p. 6). Such partnerships will provide the districts with principals trained with the specific skills needed to increase student achievement in their

districts, and universities will have a predictable number of students involved in authentic experiences.

A 2004 SREB report provides an examination of the progress the sixteen SREB states made since 2002 on six key indicators of providing quality leadership in every school (Bottoms, Fry, & O'Neill, 2004). The six key indicators are practices and actions that will bring states closer to the goal of having a quality leader who can influence student achievement. These practices are to (a) identify future school leaders, (b) redesign leadership programs around curriculum and instruction, (c) incorporate school-based experiences into preparation programs, (d) base professional licensure on improved classroom practices, (e) create alternative pathways to initial licensure for principals, and (f) provide academies to support school leadership teams in low-performing schools.

While no state had made substantial progress in identifying future leaders, seven states had made progress. Louisiana, one of the three states proposed to be the subjects of the study of this prospectus, reached the classification of having made promising progress which was the highest classification achieved by any of the sixteen states in the analysis on this indicator of identifying future leaders.

Seven states reached promising progress in redesigning school leader preparation. Joined by Texas, Louisiana was included in this group receiving the highest classification achieved by any of the sixteen SREB states on redesign of preparation programs around curriculum and instruction. According to Bottoms, Fry, and O'Neil, Louisiana utilized outside agencies along with university faculty to redesign its leadership preparation program and implement the redesign statewide. All institutions in the University of

Louisiana System are providing leadership curriculum training materials for teams of faculty and district partners.

Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas, the three states included in this study, were the top 3 of the 16 states in providing school-based experiences in preparation programs. Louisiana and Texas achieved the ranking of "substantial progress," the highest ranking possible in the analysis, and Arkansas was the only state to receive the second highest rank of "promising progress" (Bottoms et al., 2004).

Eight of the SREB states have adopted two-tier systems for professional licensure or certification. No state has achieved substantial progress, but more states showed progress on this indicator than any other indicator included in the SREB analysis. The two-step system is necessary to link the professional license to demonstrated leadership performance. Principals must meet one or more requirements during the first years of practice to move from an initial license to a professional license. Arkansas and Louisiana received a rank of "promising practice" on this indicator (Bottoms et al., 2004).

The sixteen SREB states are equally split in creating alternative pathways to initial licensure. Eight states have adopted policies for alternative pathways, and eight states have no such policies. Louisiana, with a rank of "promising progress," leads Texas and Arkansas, although both are ranked having made some progress, on this indicator. The Louisiana alternative pathway to initial licensure allows the issuance of a Level I license upon review of the candidate's competencies during a program of study if the candidate holds a master's degree and has or is eligible for a teaching certificate (Bottoms et al., 2004).

On the indicator of establishing leadership academies to support low-performing schools, Arkansas and Louisiana reached the level of some progress, and Texas reached the "little progress" level. Five states rose above the three states involved in this study by achieving the higher promising progress level. Some of the problems experienced by the academies in their efforts to support improvement are: (a) voluntary participation, (b) training principals only, rather than school leadership teams, (c) providing a "one-shot" training agenda, and (d) lack of focus on continuous, comprehensive school improvement (Bottoms et al., 2004).

Tapping Future Leaders. According to Norton (2002), the selection process for students in principal preparation has been predominantly self-selection, which has led to a shortage of good principal candidates. At a 2002 conference, a senior vice president of SREB referred to an SREB study that found that most states in the southern region had no specific program designed to move away from the self-selection process. The SREB senior vice president stated that the admissions process at universities admitted students who were likely to be successful graduate students, not necessarily who were likely to be successful school leaders. The same senior vice president, agreeing with Norton, further stated that self-selection has saturated the principal pool with "certified, but not qualified, candidates" (Norton, 2002, p. 10).

Standards-driven Curriculum. A staff member of SREB reviewed the progress of the eleven universities in the SREB Leadership Initiative and found that the redesign of leadership preparation of only one university met the expectations for a standards-driven curriculum (Norton, 2002). The process recommended by SREB contains five strategies that begin with the standards and move forward to real change resulting in an integrated

standards-based curriculum. The five strategies are to (a) engage entire faculty in understanding standards, (b) prioritize standards that are most important to changing schools, (c) examine course content and teaching strategies to identify gaps or weaknesses, (d) organize teams to create learning activities and performance assessments, and (e) reassign faculty to form teaching teams.

The University Council on Education Administration (UCEA), a consortium of 67 research universities, has organized a national commission charged with the task of "defining the characteristics of preparation programs that support effective leadership" (Norton, 2002, p. 17). A director of UCEA stated in a presentation at an SREB network conference, "If we really want to produce successful school leaders, we need to know not just what effective practice looks like but what an effective preparation program looks like" (Norton, 2002, p. 17). The UCEA director iterated her belief that standards could assist universities in achieving consistency in preparation programs and pointed to the ISSLC content standards as what should be expected of school leaders as well as to state licensure and accreditation systems based on standards that can create incentives for future principals to seek rigorous preparation programs bolstered by standards-driven curriculum (Norton, 2002).

A Florida State University (FSU) professor described how the barrier of resistance to change was overcome in the successful redesign efforts at Florida State. The FSU educational leadership faculty collaborated in setting the standards, later checked for alignment with the national ISLLC standards, on which the entire graduate program was built. The faculty was more willing to change "once the criteria had been set by them and the goals were clear" (Norton, 2002, p. 18). The FSU faculty developed an electronic

assessment based on competency standards that could measure proficiency levels of graduates, working principals, and leadership academy participants. Other components of the program change were the requirement of a successful defense of an electronic portfolio constructed by each graduate student and a sequencing change for a course in Decision-Oriented Educational Leadership (DOER). The DOER course was moved to the beginning of the program that created a connection across every other course taught in the program. In this course, students identified a school by analyzing every piece of data they could collect and focused on one issue or pattern to be included in a school improvement plan.

Ideas for Future Programs

A senior policy analyst of the National Governor's Association called for the need to reform promotion and tenure polices as incentives to bring about real change in university education programs (Norton, 2002). The analyst cited a reward system that does not support bridging the gap from theory to practice as an obstacle to be overcome before university preparation programs will shift their focus to the real work of school leaders. A senior vice president of SREB concurred with the senior policy analyst when he calls for making "school-based work a part of the [university] faculty's teaching load and not an add-on responsibility that gets short-changed in the traditional environment of academe" (Norton, 2002, p. 20). Believing that research on how well educational leadership programs prepare principals who impact student achievement is meaningful, the SREB senior vice president further stated that discovering how to measure the impact of principal preparation programs on student achievement "is a critical next step in program design" (Norton, 2002, p. 22). Furthering this line of thinking, the Associate

Dean of Education at the University of North Texas, commented that dialogue with the leaders of school districts is vital if preparation standards and performance standards are to correlate. To clarify this point, the Associate Dean explained that university faculty who tend to be more content-focused than skills-focused must rely on school districts to assist in deciding what acceptable levels of mastery are for aspiring school leaders (Norton).

When SREB studied the research literature and interviewed successful principals, the analysts found less agreement in how to prepare and develop effective school leaders than in what school leaders should know and be able to do (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). Bottoms and O'Neill further called the future leaders needed to turn low-performing schools into high-performing schools "a new breed of school principals and other leaders" (p. 18).

Bottoms and O'Neill also recognized the need for university leadership preparation programs to change what is taught and how it is taught in order to prepare this new breed of leaders. To develop the new breed, leadership programs will have to provide more instruction on establishing standards, creating high expectations for most students, setting priorities for change, creating small learning communities that support students, applying research knowledge in making continuous school improvement, and using technology. Specific changes in leadership preparation must include emphasizing instruction and student learning, planning around school-improvement designs, providing quality experiences to practice with master leaders, and creating alternative group-preparation programs for inductees already employed in school leadership roles (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). The researchers called for state leadership academies to refocus on

comprehensive improvement and for states to connect administrator recertification to school improvement results. Furthermore, the researchers proposed a bold accountability move for states that should motivate universities to redesign their preparation programs to train leaders who will be able to improve student achievement: "Award professional leadership certification only to those persons who have demonstrated the ability to improve curriculum, instruction and student learning" (Bottoms & O'Neill, p. 31).

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURES

The purpose of this study was to embark upon a study of whether school size or location; the gender, years of experience, or age of principals; or leadership academy attendance affects the perceptions of secondary principals regarding the training or courses included in their own leadership preparation programs. Before this purpose could be accomplished, the researcher had to first identify the knowledge and skills considered by professionals in the field to be those required for effective school leadership. Once the requisite knowledge and skills had been established, the researcher, accepting the premise that these skills and this knowledge can be learned, attempted to ascertain which training components and courses are the best practices for attaining this knowledge and these skills.

Research Design

The researcher developed, as described in the Instrumentation section of Chapter 3, a questionnaire to collect data from secondary principals with regard to their leadership training. The questionnaire was sent to principals in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. All of the data collected from the returned questionnaires were entered by the researcher into a computer for quantitative analysis using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software program. The Likert ratings determined from the responses to the statements on the questionnaire were used to make comparisons among

variables of age, gender, years of experience, size and location of school, and leadership academy attendance. The ex post facto analysis of the interval data was conducted by using a Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). MANOVA was used in this study to determine if the response variables of importance of principalship roles and skills, degree of preparedness, and importance of training components or courses are affected by the demographic variables of age, gender, school size, school location, years of experience, and leadership academy attendance. The alpha was set at .05.

Sample

The sample in this study consisted of high school principals in Arkansas, Louisiana and Texas who responded to the questionnaire. Having had more experience at the secondary level, the researcher chose secondary rather than elementary schools as the target population for this study. Middle schools were not chosen because of the wide diversity of grade configurations of middle schools in the three states. Furthermore, the researcher attempted to limit the possibility of greater preparation differences among secondary and elementary or middle school principals. The target population was constituted from the principals in school districts where permission had been granted to conduct the study. The questionnaire was sent to principals of high schools with grade configurations of 7-12, 8-12, and 9-12 in 111 Arkansas high schools, 129 high schools in Louisiana, and 138 randomly selected high schools in Texas determined by selecting every seventh high school with the specified grade configurations on the state directory list. The researcher proposed that the sample would be large enough to make generalizations toward the target population. The

mailing addresses, phone numbers, email addresses, facsimile transmittal numbers, and names of all of the high schools included in the study were obtained by examining a copy of a school directory from each state. To find unlisted email addresses, the researcher searched the web sites of each school without a listed email address in a state directory. The researcher used the electronic survey site Survey Monkey to send the questionnaire to a total of 378 high school principals in these three states. The target population number was reduced to 352 due to technological errors reported to the researcher in emails from the prospective respondents. A total of 26 errors resulting from a combination of incorrect email addresses, undeliverable mail, technology errors in opening the site, and changes in personnel were reported to the researcher. The researcher does not know the number, if any, of unreported errors that prevented principals from responding to the survey.

Instrumentation

The researcher utilized an analysis of quantitative data obtained from a questionnaire developed specifically for this study by the researcher. The questionnaire, found in Appendix A, was designed by adapting a list of university courses found on a survey instrument created by a university professor (Lovette, 1997) and a list of areas of job responsibilities found on the 2001 high school principal survey used in a National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) study (NASSP, 2001). The list of university courses was compiled by collecting lists of courses being offered at 58 colleges and universities. The survey instrument developed was composed of a list of 52 course titles. The questionnaire used in this study contains 17 titles, found in Section Four of the questionnaire, created by clustering the 52 separate course titles and adding Leadership Academy as a training practice. Section Two of the questionnaire

developed by the researcher contains a list of skill areas important to the role of a school principal. This list of skills was compiled using four sources: a) a list of roles appearing in Question 14 on the Milken Family Foundation (MFF)/National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) Survey of Teacher Quality Issues (NASSP, 2001), b) a list of five categories of responsibilities of school leaders appearing in a study reported by North Central Regional Educational Laboratory (NCREL) (Thompson & Legler, 2003), c) a list of seven standards for School Principals in Louisiana (Louisiana Department of Education, 1998), and d) a list of domains and sub-domains found in the school analysis model in Louisiana (Louisiana State Department of Education, 2000, p. 76). Section Three of the questionnaire contains a scale for rating how well prepared the principals perceived themselves to be in the skill areas important to the role of a school principal. Using a questionnaire instead of interviewing participants in person or by phone makes a survey of a larger target population feasible.

The researcher sent the questionnaire and a letter of explanation, found in Appendix B, to a panel of educational experts for review before it was used in the pilot study. The panel of experts and pilot study are further discussed in this chapter in the validity and reliability section. The questionnaire was used to elicit responses about the knowledge and skills required for positions as high school principals and the training high school principals received that best prepared them for their positions. The questionnaire contained a list of skills that the respondents rated based on their perceived level of importance and level of preparedness for performing the daily tasks of their positions. The respondents rated the importance level of the skills, using a

Likert scale of 1-4, with 1 being "not important," 2 being "slightly important," 3 being "important," and 4 being "very important." Similarly, the level of preparation was rated as 1 representing "not at all prepared," 2 representing "somewhat prepared," 3 representing "prepared," and 4 representing "well prepared." In addition, the questionnaire included a list of training practices and university courses that the principals were asked to rate, using a Likert scale of 1-4 representing, respectfully, "not at all helpful," "somewhat helpful," "helpful," and "very helpful." The basis for the rating was the extent to which the training or course helped to adequately prepare them to perform those tasks critical to their positions. The Likert ratings were tabulated and analyzed quantitatively. The findings from the quantitative data were analyzed to ascertain if there were significant differences that caused the null hypotheses to be rejected.

Procedural Details

Before data were collected, the researcher sought and was given written approval by the Louisiana Tech University Human Use Committee to conduct the research. A copy of the Human Use Consent form and the document granting approval are found in Appendix C and Appendix D, respectively. School addresses were obtained from a school directory of the three states in the study. The researcher mailed a letter, found in Appendix E, seeking permission from superintendents to conduct the study in their school districts. Following receipt of permission from the superintendents, the researcher sent the questionnaire using an email process to the principals in the target population. The questionnaire was accompanied with a statement to the principals explaining the anonymity of their responses and the

voluntary nature of their participation. First, the questionnaire was sent online using an electronic survey method. The list management feature of the survey tool allowed reminders to be sent to principals who had not responded. Reminders continued to be sent until a return rate of 53% was achieved. After the fourth reminder by email, the researcher sent a facsimile transmittal copy of the letter signed by the school district superintendent and a cover letter explaining that the study had been approved. Despite six reminders, the return rate did not go beyond 53% which may limit the generalization of the study to a larger population as presented in Chapter One. Data collected from the online survey tool was downloaded in a format compatible with SPSS. A statistical analysis was then performed on the downloaded data.

Data Analysis

Multivariate Analysis of Variance

Descriptive data are presented in Chapter Four in tables with accompanying narrative. The responses obtained from the questionnaire were exported from Survey Monkey to an Excel spreadsheet and into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) program. The data were analyzed to determine commonalties among the responses. Using SPSS computer software, the researcher analyzed the data and determined whether or not to reject the null hypotheses. The statistical analysis used to test the null hypotheses was Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA). The first step of the two-step MANOVA process of analysis was the overall F test. This step tested the null hypotheses for a difference in the means of the dependent variables for the different groups formed by the categories of the independent variables. Taking covariance into account as well as group means, the multivariate formula for F is based on the sum of squares between and within groups and on the sum of crossproducts.

Significance tests for multiple dependents all follow the F distribution and so an F value and corresponding significance level were printed out for each of these tests in SPSS. The multivariate significance test of mean differences that was used in this study was the Wilks' Lambda. This test is a measure of the difference between groups of the vector of means on the independent variables. The smaller the lambda, the greater the difference will be. The second step, post-hoc univariate F tests of group differences, in MANOVA is used if the overall F test shows the vector of means of the dependent variables is not the same for all the groups formed by the categories of the independent variables. The post-hoc univariate F tests of group differences were used to determine which group means differed significantly from others, thus specifying the exact nature of the overall effect determined by the F test. The alpha level was .05 for significance. The results of the analyses are given in accompanying tables.

Null Hypotheses

1. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between female principals and male principals.
2. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management among principals in 5 different age groups, each spanning a range of at least 10 years.
3. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services,

school/community relations, and management between principals who attended a leadership academy and those who did not attend a leadership academy.

4. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals with less than 10 years of experience and those with 10 or more years of experience.
5. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals of small secondary schools and principals of large secondary schools.
6. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals of urban secondary schools and rural secondary schools.
7. No statistical difference exists between female and male principals in the ratings of how well prepared they perceive themselves to be in the skill areas of instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.
8. No statistical difference exists among principals in 5 different age groups, each spanning a range of at least 10 years, and the ratings they assigned to their perceived level of preparedness in the skill areas of instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.

9. No statistical difference exists between principals who attended a leadership academy and those who did not attend a leadership academy and their ratings of how well prepared they perceived themselves to be in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.
10. No statistical difference exists between principals with less than 10 years of experience and those with 10 or more years of experience and the ratings of how well prepared they perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.
11. No statistical difference exists between the ratings of how well prepared principals of large secondary schools and principals of small secondary schools perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.
12. No statistical difference exists between the rating of how well prepared principals of urban secondary schools and principals of rural secondary schools perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.
13. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived helpfulness of training practices and courses between female principals and male principals.
14. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived helpfulness training practices and courses among principals in different age groups.

15. No statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived helpfulness of training practices and courses between principals who attended a leadership academy and those who did not attend a leadership academy.
16. No statistical difference exists in the rating of perceived helpfulness in training practices and courses between principals with less than 10 years experience and with 10 or more years of experience.
17. No statistical difference exist in the rating of perceived helpfulness in training practices and courses between principals of large secondary schools and principals of small secondary schools..
18. No statistical difference exists in the rating of perceived helpfulness in training practices and courses between principals of urban secondary schools and principals of rural secondary schools.

Validity and Reliability

The researcher used SPSS to calculate Cronbach's Alpha which gives a measure of coefficient of internal consistency for the second and third sections of the questionnaire. The results ranged from .901 to .922 for the items addressing self-perceptions of preparation in skills areas and from .775 to .868 for the items addressing self-perceptions of importance of skills areas. Table 1 contains the Cronbach's Alpha for all items examined. Content validity of the questionnaire was established by asking a panel of experts to review the instrument and provide suggestions in writing for improvements in ensuring that the instrument would measure the desired items for the purposes of this research project. The panel of experts consisted of nine university education department faculty members, two K-12 public school superintendents, and

four administrators who serve as secondary school supervisors or regional service center supervisors. The panel of experts was asked to complete the questionnaire and write remarks of constructive criticism about the wording of the questions and any other concerns they had about the instrument.

Table 1

Reliability Statistics of Survey Items about Skills

Skill Areas	No. of Items	Importance Cronbach's Alpha	Preparedness Cronbach's Alpha
Instructional leadership	7	.839	.918
Communication	7	.789	.914
School/community relations	4	.775	.901
Student services	6	.838	.908
Management	6	.868	.922

The one major change suggested by the panel of experts was to shorten the third section of the questionnaire. The third section contained the list of university courses generally found in leadership training programs. The researcher responded to the suggestions by grouping university courses in appropriate categories. The final result is found in Appendix A of this proposal. Construct validity and reliability were established by conducting a pilot study.

In the absence of a published questionnaire with established reliability and validity, the researcher attempted to ensure that the measuring instrument was valid by conducting a pilot study prior to the beginning of the proposed study. Following the

recommendation for conducting a pilot study by Crowl (1996), the researcher administered the questionnaire to a small group of people who were similar to the participants of the study. "A preliminary check of an instrument, even if conducted on a few people, can reveal ambiguities and weaknesses that were not apparent," (Crowl, p. 124). The researcher selected 50 high school principals from the three states involved in this study for the pilot study. The questionnaire was emailed to the selected 50 high school principals who were asked to complete it online. Twenty-four of the 50 surveys were completed, resulting in a return rate for the pilot study of 48%. The pilot study data were not combined with the data collected for the study.

Since the initial return rate for the pilot study was below 50% for the first mailing, a reminder was emailed to respondents who did not respond to the first mailing after one week. As a precaution to prevent duplicate responses by the same individual, respondents were instructed to ignore the second request if they had previously responded to the questionnaire. Actually, such notification was not necessary since Survey Monkey does not allow duplicate responses from the same IP address.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

Introduction

This study was designed to investigate the self-perceptions of secondary school principals toward their preparation for becoming school leaders. The researcher sought to determine these self-perceptions by surveying principals in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. The purpose of this study was twofold. First, the objective was to discover the self-perceptions principals have about the importance of specific skills necessary in their positional roles and about the training practices and courses they received while preparing for their positions in secondary schools in the tri-state area (Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas). The second objective was to determine if the size or location of the school; the gender, years of experience, or age of the principal; or leadership academy attendance affected the self-perceptions of principals about the importance of specific skills needed in their positions and the training practices and courses they received. The results of the statistical analysis of the data collected for the purposes of this study are presented in this chapter.

Sample

Return Rate

The sample in this study included principals in schools labeled as high schools with grade configurations of 7-12, 8-12, or 9-12. Two hundred one of the target

participants responded to the study for a total return rate of 53%. If the 26 undeliverable surveys were subtracted from the target, the return rate would be 57%. Table 2 shows the breakdown of the totals and percentages of respondents from each state.

Table 2

Study Return Rate

State	Sent	Undelivered	Returned	% Returned
Arkansas	111	0	34	31
Louisiana	129	14	69	54
Texas	138	12	98	71
Totals	378	26	201	53

Demographics of Respondents

Demographic data from the survey that describes the characteristics of the 201 school principals who responded in the study are included in Table 3. The gender, age, years of experience as a teacher, and years of experience as a principal of the respondents are listed. Additionally, the size and location of the schools and whether or not the respondents attended a leadership academy are noted.

Hypothesis Testing

Research Question One

The first research question focused on the effect specific demographic characteristics had on the perceptions of principals regarding their responsibilities and roles and the importance of instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management. Each of the five major responsibilities of

Table 3

Demographic Data of All Respondents (n = 201)

Characteristics	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
Gender							
Female	42						
Male	155						
Age							
<29		2					
30-39		34					
40-49		64					
50-59		90					
>59		8					
School size							
Large >749			94				
Small <750			103				
School setting							
Urban >2499				83			
Rural <2500				115			
Years of experience							
As principal / As teacher							
1-4					60	16	
5-9					60	51	
10-14					43	59	

Characteristics	N	N	N	N	N	N	N
15-19					18	46	
>24					4	15	
Leadership Academy							
Yes							138
No							58
Totals*	197	198	197	198	198	198	196
Note: * skipped	4	3	4	3	3	3	5

school leaders included on the questionnaire as skill areas were broken down into sub-groups of skills that could be categorized in one of the main responsibility or skill areas.

These main skill areas and sub-groups comprised the 30 skills included in Section Two: Importance of Skills of the questionnaire used in the survey for the study. In the area of instructional leadership were the sub-groups: (a) knowledge of learning, (b) curriculum standards, (c) assessment standards, (d) classroom observations, (e) staff development, and (f) instructional scheduling. The area of communication contained the following sub-groups: (a) parent issues, (b) teacher evaluation, (c) personnel documentation, (d) committee meetings, (e) strategic planning, and (f) sharing vision. School/community relations was the main skill area with three sub-groups: (a) school climate, (b) staff morale, and (c) school safety. The area of student services contained: (a) program development, (b) program evaluation, (c) discipline, (d) remediation development, and (e) special education. Management issues contained the five skills: (a) facilities, (b) budgets, (c) daily operations, (d) transportation, and (e) cafeteria.

Communication was considered very important by the highest number (92%) of principals. Interestingly, a specific skill included in the main area of communication received the lowest rating of importance; the skill of communication in committee meetings was rated only slightly important by 23% of the principals. Cafeteria management issues received the second lowest rating with 17% of the principals considering this skill only slightly important and 3% rating it as not important. Transportation was the only specific skill, other than cafeteria management, to receive a rating of not important by more than 1% of the principals.

Importance of Skills. Null Hypothesis 1 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between female principals and male principals. Null Hypothesis 4 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals with less than 10 years of experience and principals with 10 or more years of experience. The demographic variables of gender and years of experience were found to have a significant impact on the perceptions of principals regarding their roles and responsibilities and the importance of specific skills needed to perform the duties of their positions. Thus, both Null Hypothesis 1 and Null Hypothesis 4 were rejected. The results of MANOVA expressed in F values and significant difference values of the ratings school principals assigned to specific skill areas where ratings were impacted significantly by independent variables of the study are found in Table 4. Data are summarized by gender in Table 5.

Table 4

Multivariate Analysis Of Variance on Perceived Importance of Skills by Gender and Years of Experience as a Teacher

Skill Areas	Gender		Teaching experience	
	F	Sig	F	Sig
Instructional leadership	15.329	.000*	.871	.352
Communication	9.922	.002*	.099	.754
School/community relations	6.912	.009*	5.291	.023*
Student services	10.614	.001*	.327	.568
Management	4.282	.040*	1.985	.161

Note: *p < .05

Table 5 is a table of means showing the percentages between female and male principals in their ratings of importance of skills necessary to the role of principal. Additionally, the means of the ratings of importance given by principals with less than 10 years experience and those with 10 or more years experience are listed in Table 6.

Table 5

Table of Means for Importance of Skill Area Ratings Affected by Gender

Skill Area	Female			Male		
	M	N	Std. Dev.	M	N	Std. Dev.
Instructional leadership	26.7568	37	1.60564	24.9400	150	2.74713
Communication	25.8889	36	1.73663	24.3020	149	2.67042
School/community relations	15.6486	37	.75337	15.0000	148	1.52530
Student services	21.9189	37	2.09998	20.6040	149	2.48460
Management	20.6000	36	2.76746	19.5753	146	2.71607

Table 6

Table of Means for Importance of Skill Area Ratings
Affected by Years of Teaching Experience

Skill Area	Teaching Experience					
	<10			>9		
	M	N	Std. D.	M	N	Std. Dev.
Instructional leadership	25.0938	64	3.09489	25.3952	124	2.40196
Communication	24.4615	65	3.09777	24.6694	121	2.28177
School/community relations	14.7460	63	1.94246	15.3171	123	1.02683
Student services	20.6406	64	2.81925	20.9675	123	2.25772
Management	19.3387	62	2.93058	19.7735	181	2.63291

Importance Ratings Not Significant. Null Hypotheses 2 stated that there is no statistical difference in the ratings of skill areas in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals in different age groups. Null Hypothesis 3 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of importance of skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management between principals who had attended a leadership academy and principals who did not attend a leadership academy. No significant difference in the ratings of importance of instructional leadership skills, communication skills, student services skills, school/community skills, and management skills due to age and leadership academy attendance was found. Therefore, Null Hypotheses 2 and 3 were not rejected. School size and school setting were investigated in this study with regard to the impact of certain demographic variables

on skills needed for the position of school principal. Null Hypothesis 5 and Null Hypothesis 6 stated respectively that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of importance of instructional leadership skills, communication skills, student services skills, school/community relations skills, and management skills between principals of small secondary schools and principals of large secondary schools and between principals of rural secondary schools and principals of urban secondary schools. The results of Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) on the impact of school size and school setting on the ratings of importance of skills needed in the position of school principal did not show a significance of difference. Therefore, Null Hypothesis 5 and Null Hypothesis 6 were not rejected. The results of MANOVA on Null Hypotheses 2, 3, 5, and 6 are shown in Table 7.

Table 7

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Perceived Importance of Skills by Age, Leadership Academy Attendance, School Size, and School Setting

Skill Areas	Age		Attendance		Size		Setting	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
Instructional leadership	1.608	.174	2.665	.104	.780	.378	1.622	.205
Communication	.928	.449	.400	.528	.018	.892	.065	.800
School/community	1.951	.104	.815	.368	.005	.944	.032	.858
Student services	.638	.636	1.266	.262	1.229	.269	.827	.364
Management	.973	.424	1.995	.160	.259	.612	.268	.605

Research Question Two

The second research question focused on the effect specific demographic characteristics had on the perceptions of principals with regard to how well prepared they perceived themselves to be in specific skill areas of instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student/services, and management. Interestingly, the majority of principals did not report that they considered themselves well prepared in any of the 30 skill areas included on the survey, even though they rated 23 of the 30 skill areas as very important for their positional roles and responsibilities. Furthermore, most principals surveyed gave themselves a rating of "prepared" in 15 skill areas and "somewhat prepared" in 15 skill areas. Presented later in this section is a comparison of the means of ratings of importance of skills areas and ratings of preparedness in skills areas given by the respondents of this study.

Preparation in Skills. Null Hypothesis 7 stated that no statistical difference exists between female and male principals in the ratings of how well prepared they perceive themselves to be in the areas of instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management. MANOVA revealed a significant difference between female and male principals and their ratings of preparedness. A higher percentage of women perceived themselves prepared for their roles and responsibilities in the skill areas of instructional leadership and communication.

Null Hypothesis 8 stated that no statistical difference exists between the ratings of how well prepared principals perceive themselves to be in the areas of instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management and the age of the principal. Null Hypothesis 10 stated that no statistical

difference exists between principals with less that 10 years of experience and those with 10 or more years of experience and the ratings of how well prepared they perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management. Age and years of experience as a teacher did affect, in a statistically significant way, the perceived degree of preparation in the skill area of communication. Years of experience as a principal affected the ratings of preparedness in the skill area of school/community relations. Null Hypotheses 7, 8, and 10 were rejected, as the F values and significant difference values between perceived degree of preparation and gender, age, and years of experience as a principal and as a teacher show in Table 8. The means of variables significant to preparation ratings are shown in Table 9, Table 10, Table 11, and Table 12.

Table 8

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Perceived Degree of Preparation by Gender, Age, and Years of Experience

Skill Area	Gender		Age		Experience as Principal		Experience as Teacher	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
Instructional leader	6.104	.015*	2.429	.050*	.464	.497	2.270	.134
Communication	4.540	.035*	2.566	.040*	3.628	.059	4.646	.033*
School/community	.106	.745	1.126	.346	5.804	.017*	2.485	.117
Student services	2.316	.130	1.897	.114	2.089	.150	.794	.374
Management issues	.055	.815	.895	.468	.833	.363	.044	.835

Note: *p<.05

Table 9

Table of Means for Ratings of Preparation in Skill Areas Affected by Gender

Skill Area	Female			Male		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
Instructional leadership	19.2647	34	4.97453	17.5315	143	4.62663
Community	19.0909	33	5.25811	17.9784	139	4.63363
School/community relations	10.9412	34	3.09390	11.1151	139	2.84141
Student services	15.4242	33	4.40901	14.6403	139	3.89538
Management	12.0000	32	4.45769	14.5071	140	4.05980

As shown in Table 10, the ratings given by principals over age 59 had the highest means and ratings given by principals below age 30 were the lowest. Interestingly, the means for age groups 30-39 and 50-59 were closer in similarity than any other age group.

Table 10

Table of Means for Ratings of Preparation in Skill Areas Affected by Age

Age	Instructional leadership			Communication		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
Age						
<30	16.0000	2	5.65685	17.0000	2	.00000
30-39	18.3438	32	4.47653	18.6452	31	3.90340
40-49	16.8103	58	4.37480	16.8947	57	4.76102
50-59	18.1625	80	4.81412	18.6282	78	4.67685
>59	22.8333	6	5.41910	24.4000	5	6.42651

Table 11

Table of Means for Ratings of Preparation in Skill Areas Affected by Years of Experience

Experience	Communication			School/Community Relations		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
As Principal						
<10 years	18.6762	105	4.34010	11.3774	106	2.76527
> 9 years	17.4853	68	5.28443	10.6324	68	3.00698
As Teacher						
<10 years	17.8276	58	5.06497	10.6833	60	3.21802
> 9 years	18.4000	115	4.60130	11.2982	114	2.67049

Preparation Ratings Not Significant. Null Hypothesis 9 stated that no statistical difference exists between principals who attended a leadership academy and principals who did not attend a leadership academy and their ratings of how well prepared they perceived themselves to be in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management. Null Hypothesis 11 stated no statistical difference exists between the ratings of how well prepared principals of large secondary schools and principals of small secondary schools perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership, communication, student services, school/community relations, and management.

Null Hypothesis 12 stated that no statistical difference exists between the rating of how well prepared principals of urban secondary schools and principals of rural secondary schools perceive themselves to be in skills in instructional leadership,

communication, student services, school/community relations, and management. An analysis of the data collected for this study showed that there was no significant difference in the ratings of preparedness as perceived by principals in the skill areas; therefore, Null Hypotheses 9, 11, and 12 were not rejected. The F values and significance values determined by MANOVA are listed in Table 12.

Table 12

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Perceived Preparedness by Leadership Academy Attendance, School Size, and School Setting

Skill Area	Attendance		School Size		School Setting	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
Instructional leadership	1.102	.295	1.555	.214	.333	.565
Communication	.355	.552	.921	.339	.227	.634
School/community relations	.825	.365	1.166	.282	1.542	.216
Student services	2.146	.145	1.384	.241	.513	.475
Management	.801	.372	.618	.433	.430	.513

The majority of principals in this study did not rate themselves as well prepared in any of the 30 skill areas included in this study, while the majority of principals rated the 30 skill areas as important or very important. To clarify this finding a comparison of the means of ratings of importance of skills areas and ratings of preparedness in skills areas given by the respondents of this study is presented in Table 13.

Table 13

Comparison of Means in Ratings in Skills as Perceived by Principals

Role and Responsibility Skill Areas	Importance M	Preparedness M
Instructional leadership	3.82	2.85
knowledge of learning	3.65	2.79
curriculum standards	3.58	2.47
assessment standards	3.65	2.48
Classroom observations	3.62	2.77
staff development	3.58	2.33
instructional scheduling	3.47	2.22
Communication	3.91	2.98
parent values	3.58	2.54
teacher evaluation	3.57	2.76
personnel documentation	3.62	2.51
committee meetings	2.93	2.34
Strategic planning	3.48	2.37
sharing vision	3.64	2.57
School/community relations	3.74	2.81
school climate	3.84	2.83
staff morale	3.74	2.62
school safety	3.84	2.76

Role and Responsibility Skill Areas	Importance M	Preparedness M
Student services	3.45	2.57
program development	3.38	2.42
program evaluation	3.40	2.40
discipline	3.76	2.68
remediation development	3.45	2.23
special education	3.50	2.34
Management	3.45	2.75
facilities	3.30	2.58
budgets	3.48	2.37
daily operations	3.51	2.57
transportation	3.01	2.16
cafeteria	2.94	2.03

Research Question Three

The third research question focused on the effect specific demographic characteristics had on the perceptions of principals about the training practices and courses in their leadership preparation programs. A Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) was conducted for training practices and clusters of courses found in educational leadership preparation programs.

Helpfulness of Courses. Null Hypothesis 13 focused on the impact that gender had on the responses of the ratings principals gave to the helpfulness of training practices

and courses. Gender affected the perceptions of the principals in the sample toward school supervision and educational research and statistics. The means for the ratings of helpfulness given by female principals toward school supervision and educational research and statistics were higher than the means given to the same courses by male principals. The ratings of helpfulness of two courses, school supervision and educational research and statistics, were found to be statistically affected by gender; therefore, Null Hypothesis 13 was rejected.

Null Hypothesis 14 stated that no statistical difference exists in the rating of training practices and courses among principals of different ages. The only course with a rating that was found to be significantly impacted by age was school policy. The results of MANOVA revealed that the ratings of helpfulness of school policy was affected by the age of the principals; hence, the null hypothesis that stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of the perceived helpfulness training practices and courses among principals in different age groups was rejected.

Null Hypothesis 15 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of training practices and courses between principals who attended a leadership academy and those who did not attend a leadership academy. The demographic variable of leadership academy attendance was found to have a significant impact on the perceptions of principals regarding the training practices they had experienced. Leadership academy attendance affected the perceptions of principals toward the training practices of leadership academy and internship.

Null Hypothesis 16 stated that no statistical difference exists in the rating of perceived helpfulness in training practices and courses between principals with less

than10 years experience and those with 10 or more years of experience. The data collected for this study included the years of experience as a principal and the years of experience as a teacher. School law was the only course included in the study that was found to have a statistical significant difference when examined by the number of years of experience. The F values and significant difference values between gender, age, leadership academy attendance, and years of experience as a principal and the training practices and courses included in this study are shown in Table 14.

Table 14

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Perceived Helpfulness by Gender, Academy Attendance, Age, and Years as Principal

Training/Courses	Gender		Academy		Age		As Principal	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
Leadership academy	.408	.524	31.556	.000*	.443	.778	.367	.546
Internship	.607	.437	5.778	.018*	.736	.569	2.459	.119
Instructional leadership	.001	.971	2.296	.132	.889	.472	.010	.920
Curriculum	3.374	.068	.017	.897	.181	.948	.219	.640
Psychology	.670	.415	.373	.542	1.437	.225	.639	.425
Sociology	1.691	.196	.088	.767	.766	.549	2.982	.086
School supervision	6.758	.010*	.013	.911	.597	.666	.112	.738
Ed. research/statistics	5.711	.018*	.312	.578	1.088	.365	.074	.785
Computer applications	2.990	.086	.058	.810	.479	.751	.567	.453
Communication	1.733	.190	.365	.547	1.012	.404	.114	.736
School law	2.720	.101	.242	.624	.945	.440	8.299	.005

Organizations	.044	.834	.515	.474	1.334	.261	.155	.694
Training/Courses	Gender		Academy		Age		As Principal	
	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig	F	Sig
Student services	.001	.981	.170	.681	1.306	.271	1.221	.271
Management	.205	.651	.022	.882	.330	.858	.771	.381
School policy	.025	.875	1.461	.229	2.472	.048*	.074	.786

Note: * $p<.05$

School law was the only course to receive the highest rating (very helpful) as perceived by a majority (55%) of the principals participating in the study. The majority of principals did not rate any course or training practice with the lowest rating of "not at all helpful"; however, they did give courses in curriculum, psychology, sociology, foundations and student services the second lowest rating of "somewhat helpful." There was a statistically significant difference between the perceived helpfulness of a course in school law and the years of experience as a principal; thus, Null Hypothesis 16 was rejected. Table 15, Table 16, and Table 17 are tables of means for courses affected significantly.

Table 15

Table of Means Showing Affect of Gender on Ratings of Helpfulness of Courses with a Significant Difference

Skill Areas	Female			Male		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
School supervision	2.9722	36	.77408	2.8095	147	.68580
Ed. research / statistics	2.6667	36	.79282	2.3514	148	.85607

Table 16

Table of Means Showing Affect of Age and Experience as Principal on Ratings of Helpfulness of Courses with a Significant Difference

Characteristic	School Law			School Policy		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
Age						
<29	3.5000	2	.70711	2.0000	2	.00000
30-39	3.6471	34	.64584	2.9677	31	.91228
40-49	3.4068	59	.74553	2.4821	56	.85261
50-59	3.4375	80	.69069	2.6627	83	.75348
>59	3.1667	6	.40825	2.6667	6	.51640
Experience as Principal						
< 10 years	3.5321	109	.64648	2.6577	111	.75673
> 9 years	3.3472	72	.75358	2.6892	74	.75717

Table 17

Table of Means Showing Affect of Leadership Academy Attendance on Ratings of Helpfulness of Courses with a Significant Difference

Courses	Academy Attendance			Academy Non-attendance		
	M	N	SD	M	N	SD
Leadership academy	3.1496	127	.78759	2.9262	122	.84470
Internship	2.1143	35	.99325	2.4906	53	.91194

Helpfulness Ratings Not Significant. Investigated in this study was the impact of school size and school location on the perceptions of principals regarding training and courses in leadership preparation programs. Null Hypothesis 17 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of the training practices and courses between principals of large and small secondary schools in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas. Null Hypothesis 18 stated that no statistical difference exists in the ratings of training practices and courses between principals of urban secondary schools and principals of rural secondary schools. There were no significant differences found between the ratings of helpfulness of training practices and courses and school size or setting; therefore, Null Hypotheses 17 and 18 were not rejected. The F values and significance values for school size and school setting are found in Table 18.

Table 18

Multivariate Analysis of Variance on Perceived Helpfulness of Courses by School Size and School Setting

Course/Training	School Size		School Setting	
	F	Sig	F	Sig
Leadership academy	.199	.656	.288	.593
Internship	.024	.877	.000	1.000
Instructional leadership	1.557	.214	.036	.849
Curriculum	2.444	.120	.160	.690
Psychology	.268	.606	.052	.821
Sociology	.003	.957	.034	.854
Education research and statistics	1.083	.300	.241	.624
Computer applications	.948	.332	.750	.388
Communication	.237	.627	.175	.677
School law	1.880	.173	.945	.333
Foundations	.086	.769	2.288	.133
Organizations	.157	.692	.564	.454
School/community relations	.048	.827	.036	.851
Student services	.112	.739	.016	.899
Management	1.005	.318	.099	.753
School Policy	1.479	.226	1.209	.274

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

Principals of the 21st century find themselves in the midst of critical problems facing education leadership. Schools are facing problems of outbreaks of violence, crumbling facilities, and accountability for student learning. External pressures, including complaints about educational quality, demands for skilled workers, technological advances, and growing popularity of alternatives such as school transfers and vouchers for private education, are catalysts for public school change that requires different forms of leadership focusing on leading for student learning (Usdan, McCloud, & Podmostko, 2000). This study focused on research questions that addressed the necessary skills for school leadership and the self- perceptions of school leaders about their preparation for their positions as school leaders. Additionally, the study investigated whether demographic characteristics of principals affected their self-perceptions of their role requirements, the necessary skills for their roles, and their preparation for their roles. Questions about the self-perceptions of principals relating to these skills and their roles were asked to examine the effectiveness of school administrator preparation programs.

For this study, principals of high schools in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas were surveyed to collect data about their self-perceptions of leadership preparation programs. A survey instrument, listing skills needed by school administrators to be effective and

titles of courses offered in university educational leadership programs, was sent to 378 principals in the three states included in this study. Principals were asked to rate 30 skills as to their importance and how prepared they were in each of the 30 skill areas when they completed their training programs. The ratings used for the importance of skills were "not important," "slightly important," "important," and "very important." The ratings used for extent of preparation were "not at all prepared," "somewhat prepared," "prepared," and "well prepared." Additionally, the principals were asked to rate the helpfulness of 17 training practices and courses. The ratings used were "not at all helpful," "somewhat helpful," "helpful," and "very helpful." The data were analyzed to determine if the demographic characteristics, gender, age, years of experience, school size, school setting, and leadership academy attendance, affected the self-perceptions of principals toward the importance of skill areas, their preparation in those skill areas, and the helpfulness of training practices and courses they experienced in their leadership preparation programs.

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies (Fullan, 1997; Williamson & Hudson, 1999) that the role of the principal has evolved from school manager to instructional leader. Skill areas in instructional leadership were perceived as very important by more principals (83%) than skill areas in management were perceived as very important by principals (49%). Most respondents did not perceive themselves to be well prepared in any of the skill areas that they rated as very important to effectively carry out the roles and responsibilities of their positions. Whether their feelings of not being prepared stem from a lack of practical field experiences during their training, an inadequate amount of time spent in certain areas, or the enormity of the tasks they are expected to succeed in to be effective was not addressed in this study. These are only a

few of the possibilities that could be explored in follow-up interviews or open-ended questions in a future qualitative study.

Conclusions

The focus of the first research question was on the training practices and courses included in leadership preparation programs. The size and setting of the schools in which the principals were working did not affect their self-perceptions of the helpfulness of the courses included in their preparation programs. It appears that principals shared opinions about what courses and training they needed regardless of the location and number of students enrolled in their schools. This finding is useful information for university program planners in that faculty members do not have to adjust their curriculum based on the size and location of schools at which aspiring principals might become employed. Since accurate predictions of future employment are unlikely, it is beneficial to know that programs do not have to be tailored to meet individual preferences of school setting and school size. An examination of the demographic characteristics of the principals who participated in this study showed that there were few significant differences in the perceived level of helpfulness of the 17 titles often found in university leadership programs. Only 7 of the 17 titles were found to have a statistically significant difference between the course or training practice and at least one of the demographic independent variables studied.

School law was the only title that received the highest rating of "very helpful" by a majority (57%) of the principals surveyed, and it was the only course that the number of years in the role of principal affected the rating given by principals in a statistically significant way. These findings warrant further investigation to discover answers to

several new questions. These questions may be articulated: (1) Do principals believe that their training programs in school law adequately prepared them for their roles, or do they believe that more time should be spent in school law courses since they were considered to be very helpful? (2) Did principals with less experience rate school law as "very helpful" because their lack of experience had proven to them the necessity of possessing knowledge in this subject? (3) Did more experienced principals find on-the-job training in school law to be more helpful than classroom study of the subject? (4) Why did a higher percentage of female principals give school law a high helpfulness rating?

Courses that received a significantly different, higher helpfulness rating by a greater percentage of females were school supervision and educational research and statistics. Why the helpfulness rating these courses received was found to be statistically significant when analyzed between male and female principals was another question to surface. Regardless of the questions raised, the findings in this study do indicate a perception of higher helpfulness in courses in school law, school supervision, educational research and statistics, foundations, school/community relations, instructional leadership, computer applications, communication in educational leadership, organizations, management, and school policy. The training practices of leadership academy and internship were also perceived as helpful. With this knowledge, members of university education departments could design programs to include more hours in these topics of study.

The second research question focused on the importance of skills needed to perform the role of school principal. A significant difference was found to exist between gender and all five major skill areas needed to be effective building leaders. A higher

percentage of female principals than male principals gave a greater importance rating to the skill areas of instructional leadership, communication, school/community relations, student services, and management. The least important sub-group of skills as reported by most principals was communication in committee meetings even though the major skill area of communication received the highest importance rating of any skill area. There was a significant difference between the ratings of importance of skills in school and community relations and years of experience as a teacher. Principals with more years of experience as a teacher gave skills in school/community relations a higher importance rating. The sub-group areas of school/community relations are school climate, staff morale, and school safety. Perhaps more years in teaching create a greater concern in providing a safe learning environment and increasing staff morale by improving the school climate.

The focus of the third research question was on how well prepared principals perceived themselves to be when they completed their training programs. The findings of the study indicated that most principals did not feel well prepared in any specific skill area. The area that most principals (71%) rated as "not at all prepared" or "somewhat prepared" was cafeteria management. Since this area was rated by twenty percent of the principals as being only "somewhat important" or "not important," it is not as critical as other skill areas with higher importance areas. One example is communication that received a "very important" rating from 91% of the principals and a "not at all prepared" or "somewhat prepared" rating from 27% of the principals in the study. There was a significant difference found between gender and the self-perceptions of the extent of preparation in instructional leadership and communication. The number of years of

experience as a principal affected the ratings principals gave to their perceived level of preparedness in school/community relations, while years of experience as a teacher affected the ratings principals gave to their perceived level of preparedness in communication.

The only other demographic variable that affected a perceived level of preparedness in any skill area was age of the principal. Older principals gave instructional leadership skills and communication skills higher ratings than did younger principals. Age was found to be statistically significant in the ratings of self-perceptions of preparedness in skills in the areas of instructional leadership and communication; however, the design of the study did not provide any method of discovering why the ratings differed. The findings from the study seem to have led to more questions than answers for the researcher. The questions raised can serve as the basis for further study.

Recommendations for Further Research

Two recommendations for further research stem from the limitations of this study. First, the researcher recommends expanding the sample to include a larger sample, perhaps extending to a regional or national sample or perhaps to include middle school or elementary principals. Further research expanding to a larger sample would allow generalization to principal training nationwide and to principal training of those of schools with other grade configurations. Secondly, research should be conducted that would compare the accountability ratings of schools with the perceptions of how well prepared principals were in the standards established by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium.

Other recommendations for further study arose from the lack of individual follow-up that could answer some of the questions that were raised by the findings. A qualitative study that would include open-ended questions on the data collection instrument or individual telephone interviews with some of the respondents might provide answers to some of the puzzling findings.

Much more research is necessary to redesign principal preparation programs that will strengthen and sustain principal leadership. At the very least, principal preparation programs should be redesigned to focus on instructional leadership, community leadership, and visionary leadership. These three roles of leaders must be connected with a central priority of leading for student learning within an atmosphere of constant change.

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APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Principal Survey

Please check yes or no to indicate that you have read the human use consent form and voluntarily agree to participate in this study. _____ Yes _____ No
I appreciate your cooperation in completing this survey. Please provide the demographic information that will remain anonymous.

Section One: Demographic Information

1. What is your gender? ____ Female ____ Male
2. What is your age? ____
3. Please enter the abbreviation of the state in which you work. _____
4. What is your school enrollment? _____
5. Is your school located in an area that is :
   ___ Urban (territory, population, and housing units in urbanized areas and in places of more than 2,500 persons outside of urbanized areas)
   ___ Rural (territory, population and housing units not classified as urban)
6. How many years have you been a principal? _____
7. How many years, if any, did you teach before becoming a principal? _____
8. Have you attended a Leadership Academy? _____

Section Two: Importance of Skills

9. Using a scale of 1-4, with 1 being not important and 4 being very important, please rank the following skills needed to perform the role of principal in importance based on your experience. **Circle the number** that represents the importance of the skill.

1 = Not Important 2 = Slightly Important 3 = Important 4 = Very Important

How important is this skill?	Not Important	Slightly Important	Important	Very Important
Instructional Leadership	**1**	**2**	**3**	4
Knowledge of learning	1	2	3	4
Curriculum standards	1	2	3	4
Assessment standards	1	2	3	4
Classroom observations	1	2	3	4
Staff development	1	2	3	4
Instructional scheduling	1	2	3	4
Communication	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**
Parent issues	1	2	3	4
Teacher evaluation	1	2	3	4
Personnel documentation	1	2	3	4
Committee meetings	1	2	3	4
Strategic planning	1	2	3	4
Sharing vision	1	2	3	4

School/Community Relations	1	2	3	4
School climate	1	2	3	4
Staff morale	1	2	3	4
School safety	1	2	3	4
Student services	1	2	3	4
Program development	1	2	3	4
Program evaluation	1	2	3	4
Discipline	1	2	3	4
Remediation development	1	2	3	4
Special education	1	2	3	4
Management Issues	1	2	3	4
Facilities	1	2	3	4
Budgets	1	2	3	4
Daily operations	1	2	3	4
Transportation	1	2	3	4
Cafeteria	1	2	3	4

Section Three: Extent of Preparation

10. Using the following scale of 1-4, with 1 being not at all prepared and 4 being very well prepared, rate the extent to which your training has prepared you to do the following aspects of your job. **Circle the number** that represents how prepared you were when you finished your training.

1 = Not at all Prepared 2 = Somewhat Prepared 3 = Prepared 4 = Well Prepared

How prepared in this area?	Not at all Prepared	Somewhat Prepared	Prepared	Well Prepared
Instructional Leadership	1	2	3	4
Knowledge of learning	1	2	3	4
Curriculum standards	1	2	3	4
Assessment standards	1	2	3	4
Classroom observations	1	2	3	4
Staff development	1	2	3	4
Instructional scheduling	1	2	3	4
Communication	1	2	3	4
Parent issues	1	2	3	4
Teacher evaluation	1	2	3	4
Personnel documentation	1	2	3	4
Committee meetings	1	2	3	4
Strategic planning	1	2	3	4
Sharing vision	1	2	3	4
School/Community Relations	1	2	3	4
School climate	1	2	3	4
Staff morale	1	2	3	4
School safety	1	2	3	4

Student services	1	2	3	4
Program development	1	2	3	4
Program evaluation	1	2	3	4
Discipline	1	2	3	4
Remediation development	1	2	3	4
Special education	1	2	3	4
Management Issues	1	2	3	4
Facilities	1	2	3	4
Budgets	1	2	3	4
Daily operations	1	2	3	4
Transportation	1	2	3	4
Cafeteria	1	2	3	4

Section Four: Preparation

11. Using the following scale of 1-4, with 1 being not at all helpful and 4 being very helpful, rate the extent to which each training practice or course prepared you to do your job. If you did not take the course or have the training, leave the response blank.

Courses/Training	Not at all Helpful	Somewhat Helpful	Helpful	Very Helpful
Leadership Academy	1	2	3	4
Internship	1	2	3	4
School Law	1	2	3	4
Computer Applications in Ed. Admin.	1	2	3	4
Supervision in Elementary and Secondary Schools	1	2	3	4
Educational Research/Statistics	1	2	3	4
Instructional Leadership courses (can include Educational Leadership, Analysis of Educational Concepts, Con temporary Philosophies of Education, Education as a Moral Endeavor)	1	2	3	4
Curriculum courses (could include Curriculum Planning, Theory and Design of Curriculum, Elementary and Secondary Curriculum)	1	2	3	4

Psychology courses (could include Developmental Psychology, Psychology of Classroom Interaction, Social Psychology in Education, The Psychology of Instruction and Learning, Psychological Aspects of Leadership)	1	2	3	4
Sociology courses (could include Sociology of Education, The Sociological Aspects of Leadership	1	2	3	4
Student Services courses (could include Administration of Pupil Services, School Auxiliary Services Management)	1	2	3	4
Foundations courses (could include History of Education, Foundations of Educational Administration, Seminar in Educational Classics, Social and Cultural Foundations in Education)	1	2	3	4
Organizational courses (could include Organizational Theory and Behavior, Dynamics of Organizations, Organizational Change in Education; Planning, Organizing, and Decision-making, Theory and Practice of Educational Planning, Human Resources in Educational Organizations)	1	2	3	4
School Community Relations courses (could include School and Community Relations, Multicultural Diversity and Leadership, Human Factors in Education, Leadership Beyond the Classroom)	1	2	3	4
Management courses (could include Collective Bargaining and Contracts, School Personnel Administration, Management of Labor Relations, School Finance and Taxation, Business Administration of Schools, Seminar in the Economics of Education, School Plant and Facilities	1	2	3	4
School Policy courses (could include Policy Formulation and Educational Decision-making; Educational Policies in a Political Context; Education, the Workforce, and Public Policy; Evaluation, Accountability, and Policy Analysis Models)	1	2	3	4

APPENDIX B

LETTER TO PANEL OF EDUCATION EXPERTS

6006 Dianne Street
Shreveport, LA 71119
July 31, 2004

Dear Fellow Educator:

I am a doctoral student at Louisiana Tech University. As part of my degree requirements, I am conducting research in an area of concern in educational leadership. My research focuses on the preparation school administrators receive. I am interested in learning what school administrators think are the skills and knowledge needed by principals to be effective leaders and how well prepared school administrators feel to meet the demands of their positions. Specifically, I hope to determine which college/university courses principals felt were most helpful in equipping them with the skills and knowledge required in their roles as school leaders.

I am developing an opinion questionnaire that I will use to conduct a survey in my research. I need your help in the construction of the survey instrument and ask that you complete the enclosed questionnaire, write a brief critique on the last page, and return it in the enclosed stamped, pre-addressed envelope. By agreeing to assist me in this research, you will become one of fifteen experts who will judge this survey instrument. If you desire to have your name included in the instrumentation section of my prospectus and subsequent dissertation as one of the fifteen experts, simply include your name on the questionnaire. Your individual responses will remain anonymous. Any writings or presentations as a result of this research will report only numerical data that cannot be used to identify individual responses. I will use your critique as suggestions to improve the survey instrument before using it in the pilot study.

Your participation in this research project will help to determine what knowledge and skills principals need to be effective leaders and how principal preparation programs can best impart that knowledge and develop those skills. Having served as a public school administrator for the past four years, I understand the demands on your time and thank you in advance for your assistance in this endeavor. If you have any questions, please email me at mbell@waskomisd.net or call me at 318-635-5905 (home) or 903-687-3372 (school).

Sincerely,

Margie Bell

APPENDIX C

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

HUMAN SUBJECTS CONSENT FORM

The following is a brief summary of the project in which you are asked to participate. Please read this information before signing the statement below.

TITLE OF PROJECT: Self-Perceptions of Secondary Principals about Their Leadership Training

PURPOSE OF STUDY/PROJECT: To determine the perceptions of high school principals concerning the importance and acquisition of leadership skills and how useful specific university courses and training practices were in preparing principals for positions of leadership in schools.

PROCEDURE: High school principals in Arkansas, Louisiana, and Texas will be asked to voluntarily complete a questionnaire regarding leadership skills and training. Data collected from the questionnaire will be analyzed to determine the relationships among demographic variables and the perceptions of the best training practices included in principal preparation programs and perception of the importance of specific skills to leadership in schools.

INSTRUMENTS: A questionnaire developed by the researcher

RISKS/ALTERNATIVE TREATMENTS: No inherent risks are associated with the voluntary participation in this study. There are no alternative treatments. Responses are anonymous.

BENEFITS/COMPENSATION: None

I, _____, attest with my signature that I have read and understood the following description of the study, "Self Perceptions of Secondary Principals about Their Leadership Training", and its purposes and methods. I understand that my participation in this research is strictly voluntary and my participation or refusal to participate in this study will not affect my relationship with Louisiana Tech University or my grades in any way. Further, I understand that I may withdraw at any time or refuse to answer any questions without penalty. Upon completion of the study, I understand that the results will be freely available to me upon request. I understand that the results of my survey will be confidential, accessible only to the principal investigators, myself, or a legally appointed representative. I have not been requested to waive nor do I waive any of my rights related to participating in this study.

_____ _____

Signature of Participant or Guardian **Date**

CONTACT INFORMATION: The principal experimenters listed below may be reached to answer questions about the research, subjects' rights, or related matters.

Dr. David Gullatt (318-257-4609)

Margie Bell (318-635-5905)

Members of the Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University may also be contacted if a problem cannot be discussed with the experimenters:

Dr. Les Guice (257-4647)

Dr. Mary M. Livingston (257-2292)

APPENDIX D

HUMAN USE COMMITTEE APPROVAL

LOUISIANA TECH
UNIVERSITY

OFFICE OF UNIVERSITY RESEARCH

MEMORANDUM

TO: Dr. David Gullatt, Margie Bell

FROM: Nancy Fuller, University Research

SUBJECT: HUMAN USE COMMITTEE REVIEW

DATE: 2/28/05

In order to facilitate your project, an EXPEDITED REVIEW has been done for your proposed study entitled:

"Self-Perceptions of Secondary Principals about Their Leadership Training"
Proposal # HUC-127

The proposed study procedures were found to provide reasonable and adequate safeguards against possible risks involving human subjects. The information to be collected may be personal in nature or implication. Therefore, diligent care needs to be taken to protect the privacy of the participants and to assure that the data are kept confidential. Informed consent is a critical part of the research process. The subjects must be informed that their participation is voluntary. It is important that consent materials be presented in a language understandable to every participant. If you have participants in your study whose first language is not English, be sure that informed consent materials are adequately explained or translated. Since your reviewed project appears to do no damage to the participants, the Human Use Committee grants approval of the involvement of human subjects as outlined.

Projects should be renewed annually. This approval was finalized on February 28, 2005 and this project will need to receive a continuation review by the IRB if the project, including data analysis, continues beyond February 28, 2006. Any discrepancies in procedure or changes that have been made including approved changes should be noted in the review application. Projects involving NIH funds require annual education training to be documented. For more information regarding this, contact the Office of University Research.

You are requested to maintain written records of your procedures, data collected, and subjects involved. These records will need to be available upon request during the conduct of the study and retained by the university for three years after the conclusion of the study. If changes occur in recruiting of subjects, informed consent process or in your research protocol, or if unanticipated problems should arise it is the Researchers responsibility to notify the Office of Research or IRB in writing. The project should be discontinued until modifications can be reviewed and approved.

If you have any questions, please contact Mary Livingston at 257-4315.

APPENDIX E

LETTER TO SUPERINTENDENTS

Margie S. Bell
6006 Dianne St.
Shreveport, LA 71119
March 1, 2005

Superintendent «First_Name» «Last_Name»
«Address_Line_1»
«Address_Line_2»
«City», «State» «ZIP_Code»

Dear Superintendent «Last_Name»:

I am a doctoral student in the Louisiana Education Consortium, which is comprised of Louisiana Tech University, the University of Louisiana at Monroe, and Grambling State University. To partially fulfill my degree requirements, I am seeking permission to survey a selected group of secondary principals in your school district.

The study is based on the perceptions principals have regarding their leadership training. The purpose of this research project is to determine what knowledge and skills principals need to be effective leaders and to discover how principal preparation programs can best impart that knowledge and develop those skills.

To conduct this study, an email will be sent to principals directing them to an online site containing a survey instrument with eleven questions to which principals will respond using a 4-point Likert scale. The participation of principals in this research project is voluntary, and their names, schools, and responses will remain anonymous.

The Human Use Committee of Louisiana Tech University has approved this research project. Please indicate your consent to conduct this study in your school district by checking and returning your reply at your earliest convenience in the self-addressed, stamped envelope enclosed or fax it to 318-635-6692. If you have any questions about this request, please call me at 318-635-5905 or 903-687-3372, ext. 31. If you have any concerns about the authenticity of this study, please contact the office of Dr. David Gullatt at Louisiana Tech University by calling 318-257-4609.

Respectfully,
Margie S. Bell

___ Yes, I give consent to conduct this study in my school district.

___ No, my school district will NOT participate in the study.

_____	_____	_____
Superintendent or Designee	School District	Date

VITA

Margie S. Bell is a native of Tennessee where she graduated with high honors from the University of Tennessee in Knoxville. She completed the requirements for a Bachelor of Science degree in secondary education, with a major in English and a minor in social studies. Bell attended graduate school at the University of Tennessee, Louisiana State University at Shreveport, and Centenary College, where she earned a Masters of Education in Administration and Supervision.

Bell began her teaching career in a public high school in Sevier County in the Appalachian Mountain area of East Tennessee. Later, she moved to Shreveport, Louisiana, where she taught at First Baptist Church School for three years and in Caddo Parish public schools for six years. The last years Bell spent as a classroom teacher were at Waskom Middle School in Waskom, Texas, where she was selected Teacher of the Year in 1998.

Bell began her administrative career at Waskom Middle School where she served in the area of guidance and counseling for two years and as principal for four years. It was during the time as administrator at Waskom Middle School that Bell began working toward a doctorate in Educational Administration at Louisiana Tech University in the Louisiana Education Consortium with the University of Louisiana at Monroe and Grambling State University. In 2004, Bell was named Instruction Coordinator and Grant Writer for Waskom Independent School District.

Bell is an active member of the Shreveport TAU Chapter of Alpha Delta Kappa.