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The Perceptions of Superintendents Regarding the Need for Graduate Business Classes in Educational Leadership

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The University of Southern Mississippi

THE PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS REGARDING THE NEED FOR
GRADUATE BUSINESS CLASSES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

By

Howard Leland Smith

Abstract of a Dissertation
Submitted to Graduate Studies Office
of The University of Southern Mississippi
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

December 2008

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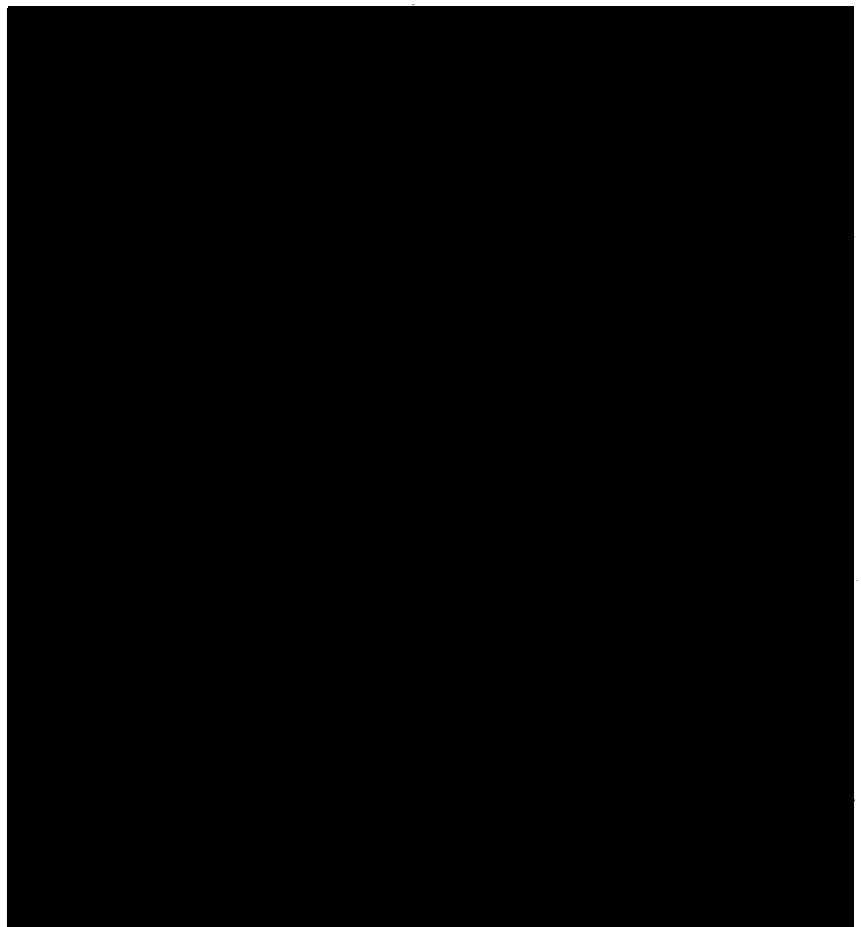
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Approved:



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ABSTRACT

THE PERCEPTIONS OF SUPERINTENDENTS REGARDING THE NEED FOR GRADUATE BUSINESS CLASSES IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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December 2008

The purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. Portions of the study included a discussion of current licensing practices, academic governance, basic business requirements for leadership and management, and basic financial literacy. A further purpose was to measure the perception of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process might increase the initial success of administrators

The literature review supported the concept that superintendents understand change management and fiscal responsibility. Survey respondents supported these concepts by indicating the specific need for classes in management and fund accounting. The survey results were somewhat surprising in that superintendents, in general, did not indicate support for the courses of study they took for licensure. Superintendents indicated support for management, marketing, fund accounting, and communications courses in their certification courses.

All of the study hypotheses were rejected. However, hypothesis one: There will be a significant negative relationship between satisfaction with current certification courses and the perception of the need for more graduate business courses, was rejected because the relationship was positive. Post hoc analysis provided one significant relationship between experience and self-reported business and administrative skills from superintendents in districts with ≥ 5000 students.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. The study includes a discussion of current licensing practices, academic governance, basic business requirements for leadership and management, basic financial literacy, a review of generally accepted accounting principles under the direction of the Financial Accounting Standards Board and the Government Accounting Standards Board, and the issues of adequacy, equity, and taxation. Additionally, the issue of buildings and grounds and the potential relationship to learning outcomes is discussed.

A further purpose is to measure the perception of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process may increase the initial success of administrators. The triangulation of thought between graduate schools of education, state departments of education, and certifying agencies has made entrance into public school administration very difficult for persons who have not previously pursued a career in education:

School superintendents have historically been former classroom teachers. This has become so accepted that little attention has been given the custom's strengths, weaknesses, or alternatives; or to findings of studies that have been done. And it is the custom that needs to be challenged, not individuals. (Kirkpatrick, 2004, Personal Communication)

Academic governance in P-12 public education is primarily manifested in the form of a particular state-licensed administrative hierarchy. The licensing model of governance

presumes that additional formal classroom education in conjunction with some level of classroom experience is sufficient preparation for an individual to function as an entry-level principal or superintendent in a public school district.

Sixteen states require 1-3 years of administrative experience, and 21 states require 2-8 years of classroom-teaching experience, in addition to additional graduate-education courses, to obtain a superintendent's certification. The states of Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ohio, and West Virginia do not require classroom-teaching experience to obtain certification as a superintendent. The states of Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, Nevada, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, and Wyoming, and the District of Columbia do not require superintendent licensure (National Center for Education Information, 2003a).

The implicit assumption in the prevalent model of academic governance is that academic preparation in educational leadership is sufficient to enable an individual to successfully run an educational enterprise. The role of principal or superintendent can be undertaken without transitioning through any position within an educational setting that provides appropriate managerial or business-oriented roles, because public schools generally have no designated supervisors that have managerial responsibilities and maintain any type of teaching load (Fullan, 2001). The most appropriate position for learning managerial type responsibilities would be the department chair. In unionized districts, teaching and administrative duties are often delineated with specific contractual language. Consequently, teachers, from whose ranks administrators are typically chosen, have little opportunity to experience any administrative duties. The lack of business education results in the new administrator handling an unfamiliar role that demands instant results and accountability without adequate job preparation or district-level

support. Frequently, administrators have little or no business orientation nor do they have the tools to deal with the most basic organizational problems (Fullerton, 2004).

However, superintendents are required to perform duties for which they were never trained. “Superintendents are in charge of our nation's greatest asset—our children. Yet many have little training or background in dealing with the myriad complex financial, labor, management and personnel issues they face every day” (The Broad Center for Superintendents, 2004, p2).

The Broad Superintendents Academy of The Broad Center for the Management of School Systems, Los Angeles, CA reports that 98 percent of superintendents are trained as teachers—not managers. The percentage was derived from a survey of sitting superintendents done by the Broad Superintendents Academy (Pryzbyla, 2008).

Because of the difficulties of alternative certification, many qualified businesspersons are typically not interested in pursuing second careers in education. Currently, thirty-seven states do not have an alternative route for administrative certification (National Center Education Information, 2003b). Only 13 states have regulations in place that allow an alternative route to obtain principal and/or superintendent certification. Barriers that confront such individuals exacerbate the scarcity of business-trained persons in district leadership roles.

Basic business functions such as time management, understanding organizational culture, and adoption of basic managerial styles by administrators are generally accomplished through on-the-job training (OJT) or adoption of a mentor's style from short internships or field experiences. While teachers receive little preparation in fiscal matters, asset management, customer-relations management, or human resources,

administrators only receive generic information in courses regarding asset management, fiscal responsibilities, contract negotiations, or personnel matters.

Financial Literacy Required

According to the U.S. Department of Education (USDE), approximately \$770 billion was spent on all levels of education during Fiscal Year (FY) 2003:

Unlike most private sector organizations, governmental entities must be responsive to a number of different groups and organizations, including elected officials, other units of governments, investors, creditors, and citizens that are focused on monitoring their activities. All government entities, including school districts, develop their annual financial reports in accordance with principles established by standard-setting authorities to provide consistency and comparability for users. (USDE, 2004a)

Without a substantive understanding of fiscal management including revenue and expense flows, superintendents are nearly dependent on the competency and honesty of the district chief fiscal officer.

The district chief financial officer is responsible for the daily fiscal operations of a district; but the superintendent retains the overall responsibility for the district finances. The 2002 bankruptcy of the Oakland, CA school district provided an example of why a superintendent cannot ignore the budget and delegate overall fiscal responsibilities to the district chief financial officer. Reports received by Superintendent Dennis Chaconas indicated a positive cash reserve of \$7 million when in fact; a \$21 deficit existed (Chan, 2004). This example illustrates a major concern expressed by Odden that many administrators lack the necessary training to develop appropriate fiscal management skills (A. R. Odden, personal communication, April 25, 2007).

Administrators rely on district chief financial officers for compliance with state and federal spending and investment guidelines; unless, the superintendent or principal has a specialized knowledge of governmental accounting and applicable state requirements for budgeting (Fullerton, 2004). Understanding business functions such as budgeting, purchasing, buildings and grounds, transportation, human resources, and Public relations are generally left to specialists on whom the superintendent must rely for expertise. According to the Jessieville, Arkansas school board policy manual, four of the twenty-five items regarding the duties of the superintendent bear particular notice:

- (1) To assume responsibility for the overall financial planning of the district and for the preparation of the annual budget recommendation, and submit it to the Board for review and approval.
- (2) To establish and maintain efficient procedures and effective controls for all expenditures of school funds in accordance with the adopted budget subject to direction and approval of the Board.
- (3) To assume responsibility for the use and care of all school district buildings, grounds, and vehicles.
- (4) To conduct a program of public relations that will keep the people fully informed of the activities, successes and needs of the schools. He shall cause to be maintained a wholesome and cooperative working relationship between the schools and the community. (Jessieville Public School District, 2003)

These four delineated duties are representative of sixteen duties that require a business orientation and demonstrate the need for at least a basic business understanding in each of those fields for the superintendent to perform at a minimally acceptable level.

Background

Accepted Accounting Standards

A review by the author of selected accounting bulletins and accounting manuals for 11 states established that each had a standardized fiscal accounting system for schools that incorporated Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) requirements and Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) requirements. Governmental accounting standards are set by GASB. The Financial Accounting Foundation is the governing body of both GASB and FASB. GASB rulings or standards are not statutory; however, governmental entities will not receive unqualified (no qualifiers or contingencies) opinions from auditing firms, if the standards are not followed. Governmental entities are unfavorably rated by bond-rating firms and underwriters when they receive a qualified audit.

GASB Statement No. 34 was issued June 11, 1999 containing new governmental accounting standards that directly affected public school districts. Compliance with Statement No. 34 requires governmental entities to adopt the accrual method of accounting, rather than using the cash method. The accrual method of accounting requires recording the historic cost of an asset and then matching fiscal period revenues with fiscal period expenses. Historic cost and fiscal period matching are two major principles of the accrual method. Historical costs are the estimated initial costs of acquiring, constructing, or substantially renovating a capital (substantial) piece of property. These historical costs are depreciated (approximate annual usage cost or expensed) over the estimated life of the project or improvement (Thelen Reid & Priest LLC, 1999).

State Funding Requirements

A majority vote of the district board of education is required in most states to approve sources of revenue, expenses, and personnel decisions (National School Board Association, 2004). However, because of varying state school statutes, it is important for administrators to understand the difference between board-mandated responsibilities versus the necessary authority to carry out those mandates. The states of Michigan and California have school finance funding controlled by the respective legislatures (EdSource, 2004a). Because of the heavy reliance on local property taxes for funding, New Jersey requires 549 of 609 school district voters to approve school district budgets (New Jersey Policy Research Organization, 2004).

A primary function of superintendents is working with budgets and expenditures in accordance with statutory or regulatory constraints. But, because of the intricate nature of state and federal regulations, administrators may have to initially rely on the district business manager or bookkeeper to explain how financial resources are ultimately obtained or reported.

Budgets and funding for public schools are generally based on perceived district needs based on a historic model. The most widely used approach for school district budgeting is the line-item method (NCES, 2003). Historical data drives revenue and expense projections. Administrators and chief executives often base budget requests on historic data because of the simplicity of the model. A line-item template provides stability and familiarity to anyone involved in the budget development process. This method budgets by organizational unit and object and is consistent with the lines of authority and responsibility in organizational units. Organizational control is enhanced as a result of this method, yet provides great flexibility to administrators with budget

authority (NCES 2003). Budgets are generated from departmental request through the building administrator. Central office budgets are generated through department heads to the superintendent or chief administrator. Budget requests must then be compiled and prioritized. The superintendent then proposes a budget to the school board for final approval. The superintendent needs to be knowledgeable in every area of budget requests. A private sector analogy would be funding branch offices with a branch manager responsible for everything that happens or fails to happen in the branch, whether or not that manager has any knowledge of a particular service offered by the branch.

Private sector branch offices are operated on a “cost and profit center” basis with the goal of delivering services in direct response to market needs. Market demands force flexibility in size and location of the various branches. When the market dictates closure of a branch, employees are displaced or absorbed into other areas of the enterprise. Enterprise success depends on customer satisfaction, employee satisfaction, and market responsiveness to products that are needed, wanted, and desired. Schools were and are placed to meet community needs but often outlive the original geographic location.

Unlike private entities, public schools operate on a cost center basis rather than on a revenue/cost center basis. Cost center can best be defined as an entity that produces no revenue from the sale of goods, delivery of services, or completion of contracts but uses revenue from other sources to meet expenses. A revenue/cost center is specifically accountable to the overall organizational financial well-being. This type of entity is responsible to generate significant revenue to cover expenses and produce surplus revenue over expenses.

School district budgets are requested from the classroom, through the building, and then to the district. However, spending is then mandated top-down, after building budgets are considered and approved by the district.

Even when schools are given the right to make their own decisions, they are generally not given the budget authority to back them up. Few urban school districts in the United States give schools budget authority over anything other than marginal issues, such as school supplies and textbooks. Typically, less than half of all per pupil funds are allocated to the schools, and schools control little of that. (Berne et al, 1995, p.8)

Major operating revenues are received at district level with expenses generally recorded against fixed-fund balances assigned to the various schools in the district. The principal is generally the only person in the school building with an enumerated chart of accounts and the allowable expense from each account for the building budget (Ouchi, 2003). Because of the flexibility of the line-item budgeting method, budget administrators may easily transfer funds from an over-funded account to an underfunded account. Even with complete budget knowledge, principals generally do not negotiate salary scales, benefits, or may not even be able to recommend hiring or rejecting certified staff. Because of the primacy of the line-item budgeting method, true site-based management is the exception rather than the rule (Ouchi, 2003).

Historically, government-run schools have enjoyed a near monopoly status in the primary and secondary grades. All states have compulsory attendance laws that provide an extensive customer and revenue base for government schools (Infoplease). Public school district revenue is generally derived through various formulae using a student

membership metric (enrollment, average daily attendance (ADA), or average daily membership (ADM)) (School Services of California, 2006).

Adequacy, Equity, and Taxation

Defining or attempting to compare funding issues such as adequacy, equity, and full-funding are not topics within the purview of this paper. In order to establish a basis for understanding, however, adequacy is used as an encompassing term. Adequacy is defined by Odden as “providing sufficient funds for the average district/school to teach the average child to state standards, plus sufficient additional revenues for students with special needs to meet performance standards also” (Odden & Picus, 2004). Odden and Picus further state, “Adequacy could be viewed as having both an inputs orientation as well as an outputs orientation: the inputs being the programs, curriculum and instruction that are sufficient to teach students to high standards and the outputs being the measurement of the results”. (2004, p. 72)

Eric Hanushek postulated in a presentation to the Kennedy School of Government at Harvard University that the concept of adequacy is drawn from equity studies concentrating just on the distribution of spending, while ignoring shortfalls in student achievement compared to state goals. Hanushek believes that adequacy is an effort to go beyond the distribution of spending and to contribute to the conversation regarding the overall level of funding (Hanushek, 2005). The overall level of funding concept as described by Hanushek would include capital budgeting as well as current operational budgeting.

School districts in North Carolina and ten other states do not have direct taxing authority in order to fund education in accordance with federal, state and local mandates. These states require school boards to request funding through county commissioners in

the same manner as any other county agency (Beckwith, 2005). However, of the 15,437 school boards that existed in 1994, 11,869 boards exercised taxing authority (Virginia School Board Association, 1994). Public school administrators have the additional problem of having policy and fiscal decisions made by a board of directors (school board members or county commissioners) who may or may not have the improvement or advancement of the district as a priority (Elizabeth, 2003).

Capital Budgeting and Student Outcomes

Two specific aspects of capital budgeting have direct impact on a district's administration, operations, management, and student outcomes. The first aspect is that GASB 34 requires a district to include depreciation expense as a current expense in public fiscal documents. Capital reserve funds to pay for current, but unbudgeted, as well as projected capital building needs would become part of the GASB 34 audit requirements. Capital reserve funds are generally difficult to maintain because of taxpayer reticence to fund future expenses. Set asides for capital projects are also difficult to maintain because of state limitations on fund balances and investments. Because of the lack of funding, the National Center of Educational Statistics (NCES) reports approximately 14 million students attend public schools that are in need of major repairs or replacement. These schools represent approximately one-third of all public school physical plants. "For schools that indicated the need to spend money to bring the school into good overall condition, the total amount needed by all schools was estimated to be approximately \$127 billion" (NCES, 2000a, p.16). Public school physical plants are often used to a point at which no repair renders the building safe for occupancy. Historically, US school buildings are used an average of 50 years to 60 years (Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut,

1995). Further, “Students will not be well served if new and reconstructed schools are designed like the 50-year-old buildings they replaced” (Riley, 2000, p. 3).

A number of studies indicate that good buildings provide positive educational outcomes. A meta-analysis concerning the relationship between school building condition and student achievement was performed by Glen Earthman, Professor Emeritus, Virginia Polytechnic Institute & State University, for the American civil Liberties Union Foundation of Maryland, on behalf of the Maryland Task Force to Study Public School Facilities. Professor Earthman reported that researchers found statistically significant differences in the achievement scores of students in poor buildings and in good buildings. “These differences in achievement scores indicates that students in poor buildings are falling behind student in those buildings with necessary elements to adequately support the educational program and permit student to learn effectively” (Earthman, 2004, p.18).

Because analyses indicate that better buildings help produce better students, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) provides key physical elements for high performance schools. The EPA reports that because buildings are healthier, students come to school more regularly, resulting in a higher ADA; and that more regular attendance combined with a higher quality indoor environmental quality (IEQ), yields higher test scores (EPA, 2007).

Eley reports in the American Society of Heating, Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Engineers Journal that life-cycle costing indicates that high performance schools ultimately cost less to operate because of energy efficiency through design, materials, and constituent care (Eley, 2006). The EPA also reports the potential for maximum revenue opportunities with high performance buildings. Because most state aid is based on ADA, increased attendance because of better health and student and faculty

satisfaction, means greater opportunity to maintain maximum revenue or prevent additional staffing expense. Better buildings raise revenue through higher student attendance. District expenses are reduced because of lower employee absenteeism and reduce the potential for litigation caused by building and property hazards (EPA, 2007).

Consequently, “When districts fail to address critical facility maintenance and construction needs, they limit the effectiveness of their academic programs, hinder attempts to revitalize neighborhoods and communities, and preclude students from access to quality programs and services” (National Trust for Historical Preservation, 2005, p.4). A report presented May 9, 2005 to the Elmhurst Community Unit District 205 Board of Education states:

The current budget does not appropriate funds for regular preventive maintenance. District current practice is to fund maintenance by life safety, which is creative, but should not continue. If small projects are taken care of in a timely fashion, they will not become big projects. Currently, inappropriate learning space is being used at most elementary and middle schools. This includes teachers providing instruction using substantive course materials from carts, mentors holding sessions with students in stairwells, special education and other critical curriculum being delivered in unfinished basements and former storage rooms without windows, and music lessons held in hallways and elevator foyers (Elmhurst, pp 3, 31).

A study conducted to assess public school facilities located in Washington, DC and Chicago, IL and teaching outcomes states “. . .if school facilities are inadequate or inappropriate then the educational enterprise will likely fall short, despite any other efforts at school reform.”(Schneider, 2005, p.4).

Managerial Span of Control

In the *Bulletin of the International Management Institute* in 1933, A. V. Graicunas, a Lithuanian mathematician, stated a very simple, conceptual hypothesis regarding the construct of span of control. The idea was that the superior, in dealing with subordinates, must not only attend to direct, individual subordinate relationships, but also the superior's relationships with different groupings of those direct subordinates and the cross relationships between all other subordinates. Reduced to the simplest terms, Graicunas' hypothesis is stated, "No superior can supervise directly the work of more than five or, at the most, six subordinates whose work interlocks" (Urwick, 1956, p.41).

As in other businesses, school personnel have to be managed, various constituencies need to be satisfied, and budgets need to be clearly and carefully administered, while attempting to work within a satisfactory managerial span of control. The ordinary understanding and application of span of control cannot be applied as an absolute, particularly in an educational setting. However, as a general, starting principle, the concept may prove a valuable diagnostic instrument in cases in which organizational weakness exists.

Few, if any, other types of organizations have the managerial and subordinate relationships that are found in educational settings. These relationships are generally explained through the construct of "span of control":

Span of control refers to how relations are structured between leaders and subordinates in an organization. A wide span of control exists when a manager oversees many subordinates; a narrow span of control exists when a manager oversees few subordinates. While a simple concept, span of control has widespread implications for the study of organizations (Meier, 2003, p.61).

The three key organizational variables providing appropriate organizational span of control are diversification of function, the element of time/stability, and the element of space:

- (1) Diversification of function: Routine tasks with similar job functions and outputs allow a supervisor a significantly larger span of control. However, diverse job functions combined with multidimensional outcomes requires a narrower span of control.
 - (2) Element of time/stability: Stable organizations do not have to spend time training new workers. Managerial span of control can be increased. However, professional development and training needs oversight to be appropriately accomplished.
 - (3) Element of space: Larger organizations generally have larger buildings and occupy greater physical spaces. These organizations generally need a narrower span of control for appropriate supervision. Generally, however, an organization that employs specialists may satisfy managerial needs with a wider span of control.
- (Meier, 2003, p.63).

The concept of managerial span of control is often ignored in the organization of school management. Because principals manage subordinates that perform extraordinarily diverse tasks, often in singularly large buildings or multi-building campuses, and have to oversee professional development of staff and constant new teacher training, the prevailing managerial theory points to a narrow span of control. However, a review by the author of 16 school districts in 15 different states shows a flat organizational chart that is common among public school districts. For example, the directing principal of Case High School, Racine, WI currently (2007) supervises in excess of 200 certified staff, the chief engineer, and three sub-school principals as direct reports.

Administration, Management, and Leadership

The positions of superintendent, principal, or assistant principal involve varying degrees of managerial, administrative, and leadership responsibilities.

Leadership involves the skills of managing routine processes and the dynamic task of leading individuals through technological, organizational, and cultural change. The managerial role emphasizes planning budgeting, organizing, and staffing, while the leadership role requires the ability to set an organization's direction and then align, motivate, and inspire (Hess, 2003).

Because administrators are often mired in district bureaucracy, managerial and leadership tasks are often set aside. Public visibility, as in management by walking around, and proactively developing a positive and a hands-on professional development program are aspects of the position that few new administrators truly understand (Hess, 2003).

Principals as managers generally make evaluations on teaching style, student engagement, the depth of questions asked, how the teacher is dressed, environmental factors, and classroom cleanliness (AFT/NEA, 1998). Rarely are evaluations based on content knowledge or student results. Most evaluators lack the content knowledge for subject evaluation (Worthen & Sanders, 1984).

Academic supervisors, as first-line management, generally do not exist in public schools. First-line supervision has generally been contractually negotiated away in states without right-to-work laws because of the influence of recommended bargaining practices from the National Education Association (NEA) or American Federation of Teachers (AFT). Supervisors were removed from that capacity because districts save money, as exemplified by the Detroit City Schools contract (Pratt, 2002). School district bargaining units are instituting professional positions titled *teacher mentors*. Teacher

mentors are specifically not supervisors, but are placed in a peer review/coaching position without giving up seniority or bargaining-unit rights.

Within the private organization, supervisors are normally found at appropriate levels, generally in direct proportion to the size of the profit center. In the private sector, each position has a direct report to a designated supervisor, culminating with the chief executive officer (CEO). Most employees have a “big picture” idea of organizational scope, mission, and purpose. New employee orientation, depending on level of hire, normally is handled through a human relations administrator or employee benefits department. Employees have a clear idea how a career path can be obtained. Management has a clear supervisory and leadership role in the evaluation of the quality of work and the ability to reward with various incentives that may be available to the manager. Upper and middle managers generally have assistants for administrative work. In other industries, general managers are trained in many aspects of governance, such as employee job reviews, customer relations, media relations, budgeting and forecasting.

Career Paths

Examples of corporate and governmental agency information regarding advancement, supervisory and leadership roles can be regularly found in the human relations section of the entity website. The Spheris Company specializes in medical transcriptions. The following career and advancement information is given on the company website, (The Spheris Company):

- (a) A clearly defined career path that gives an individual the opportunity to earn more as he or she improves knowledge and skill proficiency
- (b) Advancement potential, from Medical Transcriptionist (MT) to Senior MT to Editor, Quality Auditor, Trainer or Supervisor

Insight to supervisory and leadership roles expected from managers in The Farm and Foreign Agricultural Services (FFAS) division of the US Department of Agriculture (USDA, 2008):

- (a) Analyzing organizational needs with specific training requirements
- (b) Develop organizational and employee training plans
- (c) Allocating resources effectively to accomplish training needs and produce desired gains in efficiency
- (d) Evaluating the impact of training efforts and making necessary adjustments to ensure maximum results.

The author sought to find commonly named school district websites for the purpose of specifically identifying career progression, training, or leadership opportunities. School districts named Salem were found in 16 different states and school districts named Fairview were found in 12 different states for a total of 28 different states. However, an unpublished review by the author using these school district websites found:

- (a) 25 of 28 websites had a mission statement
- (b) 12 of 28 websites had no Human Relations (HR) Page
- (c) 1 of 28 titled the HR page -- Employment
- (d) 3 of 28 titled the HR page -- Jobs
- (e) 1 of 28 titled the HR page -- Work
- (f) 1 of 28 titled the HR page -- Careers
- (g) 0 of 28 had any career path or supervisory information

The point of exploring career path or lack of career path opportunity in teaching is because advancement generally means leaving classroom teaching and losing student contact.

Statement of the Problem

The previous section introduced the tasks and responsibilities of educational leaders. Each of these tasks and responsibilities requires different skills sets learned through formal classroom and on-the-job experiences. This section attempts to provide a philosophical differentiation of formal classroom experiences; while, simultaneously highlighting the similarities of desired course outcomes. Terminology, hypothesis, research questions, and a short explanation or methodology is also included.

Managerial and leadership Orientation

Organizational leaders who have good business or marketing orientations are generally well positioned to provide value to primary stakeholders. Thus, a strong business orientation has managers who focus on increasing the total value to the stakeholders by increasing revenue while restraining costs or reducing the costs to obtain desirable benefits. Such an orientation entails: (1) effective managerial leadership that; (2) communicates an appropriate vision (how the organization is valuable) and inspires employees to live that vision out; (3) seeks out leaders with the appropriate administrative skills to carry out the mission (not necessarily to focus on credentials to do this); (4) generates and disseminates the necessary intelligence to properly evaluate performance (relative to value creation) and diagnose areas of weakness; and (5) a mechanism for responding to identified problems (Kohli, Jaworski, & Kumar, 1993; Narver & Slater, 1990). Each of these five areas provides a benchmark for the measurement of profitability in a corporate setting. Managerial accountability is set in place at appropriate levels to maintain, refine, or replace processes designed to attain the corporate mission.

Success is significantly more difficult to measure in a public school setting. The federal government is attempting to cause success, mandating accountability through the *No Child Left Behind Act*. The Department of Education (USDE) tracks the federal government definition of educational success through the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) test administered in selected schools.

Examples of high stakes testing may be found in every state. The California state Board of Education regulation Section 60851(b) states that students are required to pass the California High School Exit Examination (CAHSEE) in order to receive a diploma. Students in New York State must pass the test provided by the NY Department of Education, State Assessment Office in order to graduate. Because high school graduation rates are notoriously difficult to calculate; high stakes testing appears to have exacerbated the dropout rate making reports of success dubious (Shriberg & Shriberg, 2006).

NCATE SPA Standards and AACSB Standards for Accreditation

Comparison of the NCATE Specialty Program Area (SPA) standards to the AACSB standards required for graduate accreditation helps provide the basis of commonality and differentiation between graduate business and graduate education programs. In an attempt to provide minimal benchmarks for public school leader education and certification, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) requires the seven standards in the SPA for accreditation of graduate Educational Leadership programs. The Association to Advance Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB) has 21 combined standards for accreditation at the undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral levels.

Unlike education programs, whether undergraduate or graduate, business administration programs do not seek to prepare students for specific licensing.

Specifically, the degrees offered in graduate business schools are designed to open a broad spectrum of career opportunities for the graduate. A primary difference in the requirements for accreditation at the graduate level from NCATE and the AACSB is that AACSB presupposes a common core of knowledge from undergraduate education; whereas, graduate education students come with specific educational experiences and prior formal education classes designed to fulfill licensure requirements.

Both graduate business and graduate education programs strive to provide a basis for success in supervisory roles. Students that pursue business degrees and administration degrees have many similarities. The similarities include: acting with integrity and ethically, recognition of diversity, inclusion of stakeholders and community, and working to create organizational value. The primary difference is that graduate education students are generally seeking administrative licensing, while graduate business students are seeking broader employment opportunities in either the private profit or non-profit sectors of the economy.

The mission statement from the University of Southern Mississippi (USM) College of Business (COB) is included because the mission statement is the primary factor for accreditation from the AACSB. The mission statement for The College of Business found on page 193, of the USM Undergraduate Bulletin for SY 2006-2007 has just two words, *Developing Careers*. Page 202 of the same bulletin, states that the programs of study in the COB have three objectives that include:

- (1) Providing a graduate the concepts, knowledge and skills for the effective management of governmental agencies, for profit organizations, and not-for-profit organizations;
- (2) Preparing students for managerial responsibility; and

- (3) Making education in general management available to students pursuing technical, professional, and education careers.

Within the scope of the mission statement, the College of Business claims that a student's education and training will, when coupled with maturity and experience, serve to further their careers in more responsible management positions.

The USM College of Education and Psychology has as a mission statement found on page 225 of the SY 2006-2007 undergraduate bulletin:

The mission of the College of Education and Psychology is to provide quality programs for five major areas: psychology, professional education, instructional technology, library and information science, and child and family studies. The college develops individuals who possess critical thinking and problem-solving abilities; theoretical, practical, and technical competence; effective communication skills; an appreciation for diversity; sensitivity to standards of ethical conduct; and a commitment to lifelong learning. The college fulfills its mission through programs characterized by excellence in instruction and supervised practice, research training, scholarly productivity, leadership, professional service, and collaborative activities.

The purpose of mission statement inclusion is to illustrate the fundamental philosophical differences between the colleges of business and education and to differentiate potential initial career paths and possibilities as delineated by the two colleges. The primary difference noted is that the College of Business specifically states that a career ladder with expanding responsibility is possible with business education. The College of Education never mentions careers or career paths.

NCATE-approved undergraduate programs offer candidates the opportunity to obtain certification for state licensure in teaching, coaching or counseling. A graduate degree from an NCATE-approved program is generally required to become certified as a public school administrator. Business or marketing organizations select management candidates from current employees and entry-level candidates who demonstrate excellence, regardless of any particular formal education (Murphy, 2004).

The research problem is thus stated, *Administrators perceive that accredited graduate educational leadership programs provide the necessary foundation for successful financial, marketing and management skills for initial success as an administrator because mentors, graduate instructors, and current supervisors have completed a similar type program without any business emphasis.*

Research Questions (RQ) and Hypotheses (H)

The research will examine the following hypothesis.

RQ1: How does superintendent satisfaction with current certification courses correlate with the perception for more graduate business courses

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship between satisfaction with current certification courses and the perception of the need for more graduate business courses.

RQ2: Does a correlation exist between current school administrator certification courses and administrative skills rating (self reported)?

H2: There will be a significant positive relationship satisfaction with current school administrator certification courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

RQ3: Does experience produce a positive correlation with administrative skills rating (self reported)?

H3: There will be a significant positive relationship between experience and administrative skills rating (self reported).

RQ4: Does a correlation exist between a perceived need for graduate business courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

H4: There will be a significant negative relationship between perception of the need for more graduate business courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

Definition of Terms

Accrual Method of Accounting – accounting method that recognizes revenue when earned and expenses when assets are used for the production of revenue.

Alternative Certification - license issued by a state department of education based on criteria other than traditional academic preparation.

Audit - detailed examination of randomly tested transactions to determine accuracy of financial reporting.

Average Daily Attendance (ADA) - The State of California School Finance Code defines ADA as equal to the average number of pupils actually attending classes who are enrolled for at least the minimum school day. Up through 1997-98, ADA included excused absences. Effective 1998-99, excused absences no longer count towards ADA.

Capital Assets – assets built or acquired that are intended to have a significant (greater than one accounting cycle) life and cost more than a designated dollar amount.

Cash Method of Accounting – accounting method that recognizes revenue when cash is received and expenses when cash is paid.

Depreciation - the systematic allocation of an asset historic cost to expense.

Entity – a separate, legal person.

Financial Accounting Standards Board (FASB) – quasi-governmental body responsible for establishing accounting principles and financial reporting standards for nongovernmental entities.

Fiscal – accounting and budget responsibilities.

Fiscal Year (FY) – The period of time over which revenues and expenses are measured.

Government Accounting Standards Board (GASB) – the body responsible for establishing accounting principles and financial reporting standards for state and local government entities.

National Center for Education Information (NCEI) - The NCEI is a private, nonpartisan research organization in Washington, DC, founded in 1979 by Dr. C. Emily Feistritzer. The NCEI specializes in survey research and data analysis.

National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) – division of the U.S. Department of Education responsible for collection and analysis of educational statistical information.

National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) - the professional accrediting organization for schools, colleges, and departments of education in the United States.

Right-to-Work - State laws permitted by §§14(b) of the Taft-Hartley Act provide in general that employees are not required to join a union as a condition of getting or retaining a job. Right-to-work laws forbid unions and employers to enter into agreements requiring employees to join a union and pay dues and fees to it in order to get or keep a job. Twenty-one states have right-to-work laws.

Tax Anticipation Loans – short-term loans obtained through a private fiduciary agent by a public entity with taxing authority to cover current cash-flow requirements.

Unqualified Audit – an audit report from a certified public accounting firm that contains no major criticisms (qualifications) of the basic accounting records or methodology of the entity audited.

Delimitations of Survey

1. Only persons listed as superintendent were surveyed.
2. Superintendents were named on state department of education website.
3. Surveys were limited to a maximum of 1,000 disseminated surveys due to cost and time limitations.
4. Surveys were not equally distributed by geography. Generalizability may, therefore, be limited.

Assumption

1. The surveys returned will contain honest responses.

Justification for This Study

The primary purpose of this study was to quantify perceptions of practicing administrators regarding graduate education required for licensure. The study attempted to determine whether accredited graduate programs in educational leadership provide an adequate skill set for initial success for an administrator in the areas of finance, marketing, and management. Additionally, this study assisted in determining whether different courses in preparation programs could assist in the prevention of fraud and mismanagement that leads to the distrust of educational institutions by the general public. An example of fraud, waste, and financial abuse is the 2003 bailout of California school

districts by the California legislature and particularly the case of the Oakland, California Unified School District.

Public schools have experienced mismanagement of finances and cases of large-scale fraud (Snell, 2004). In 2003, the California legislature bailed out public school districts with huge budget shortfalls due to waste, fraud, fiscal mismanagement, and corruption, with approval of millions of additional taxpayer dollars (Snell, 2004). The State of California approved a record \$100 million state bailout for the Oakland California Unified School District. Previous school district officials changed budget numbers to make projections match year-end actual revenues, artificially inflated enrollment, and illegally shifted money earmarked for specific programs to the general fund, along with funds from a voter-approved construction bond issue. State and federal auditors also investigated the alleged misuse of U.S. Department of Agriculture cafeteria funds and student activity funds (Snell, 2004).

Comparing the required makeup of a corporate board of directors and a typical public school board shows the need for financially literate public school administrators and further justifies the present study. The Sarbanes-Oxley Act of 2002 requires a corporate board of directors to have five financially literate members, appointed for 5-year terms. Two of the members must be, or have been, certified public accountants, and the remaining three must not be and cannot have been CPAs. The chair may be held by one of the CPA members, provided that he or she has not been engaged as a practicing CPA for 5 years (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants, 2006).

Because public school board members are locally elected officials, no single qualification standard exists. The Commonwealth of Virginia typifies the statutory requirements for membership on public school boards. Code §22.1-29 (Qualifications of

school board members) of the Commonwealth of Virginia states that each person appointed or elected to a school board shall, at the time of his or her appointment, or election be a qualified voter and a bona fide resident of the district from which he or she is selected or elected (Administration of Public Education in Virginia, 1993).

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. The literature shows academic governance in PK-12 public education is primarily manifested in the form of a particular state-licensed administrative hierarchy (National Center for Education Information, 2003b). Teachers, from whose ranks administrators are typically chosen, have little opportunity to experience any administrative duties (Fullan, 2001). Odden expressed many administrators lack the necessary training to develop appropriate fiscal management skills (A. R. Odden, personal communication, April 25, 2007). Understanding business functions such as budgeting, purchasing, buildings and grounds, transportation, human resources, and Public relations are generally left to specialists on whom the superintendent must rely for expertise (Fullerton, 2004). Public school physical plants are often used to a point at which no repair renders the building safe for occupancy (Ehrenkrantz & Eckstut, 1995). High performance schools ultimately cost less to operate because of energy efficiency through design, materials, and constituent care (Eley, 2006).

CHAPTER II

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

A dearth of research concerning content in graduate educational leadership programs currently exists.

. . . there is very little data that accurately describes the current content of higher education programs that prepares superintendents for initial licensing. There is virtually nothing known about faculty characteristics and course requirements. State and national groups involved in approving preparation have not produced descriptive literature about the programs, participants, or faculty (Glass & Franceschini, 2007, p.33).

The purpose for reviewing literature regarding preparation of potential school administrators is to highlight public school leadership team problems and solutions documented by various experts in school administration, finance, management, and leadership. Because administration, management, and leadership are different skill sets and functions, each skill set is ultimately needed by school leaders to successfully lead and manage a school or district. Each person in a position of responsibility may have one skill set, some of the skill sets, or may have all of the skill sets. Even if a person has all of the skill sets, successfully functioning in each role of administrator, manager, and leader is extremely difficult.

A review of literature and historical documents regarding the disparity between administrator topics addressed in preparation programs and actual administrator duties reveals five cogent areas for discussion:

- (1) Differentiation of administration, management and leadership

- (2) Organizational structure of public schools
- (3) Academic preparation of potential administrators
- (4) Financial management
- (5) Accountability and ethical considerations of administration

Differentiation of Administration, Management and Leadership

Leaders acting in all forms of organizational structure must perform two fundamentally different tasks: These two tasks are efficient delivery of services and vision for future growth and success. Administration is the process of planning, directing routine and ongoing tasks, and coordinating the work of others (Brennen, 2006). Management can be clearly defined as a set of organized and systematic responsibilities designed to provide expected outcomes within the process of administering and coordinating resources effectively, efficiently, and in an effort to achieve the goals of the organization (Lewis, Goodman, & Fandt, 1998). “However, leadership is the exercise of high-level conceptual skills and decisiveness”(Brennen, 2006, p.1). Leadership does not imply a position of responsibility. Strategically, the distinction is important to determine the outcomes and long-term effects of managers and administrators’ necessary actions and to measure the immediate outcome and long-term effects of managing and leading:

- (1) Getting clear about this distinction is important for strategic reasons.

Executives managing rather than leading are blocking the leadership of others, potentially limiting organizational innovation needed to survive.

- (2) When leadership and management are clearly differentiated, areas are identified for change and championed through leadership. Leaders are no longer just good managers.

- (3) Current, effective, profitable execution requires good management. Not all managers need to be leaders, nor do leaders need to be managers.
- (4) Differentiation between leadership and management becomes vital — leadership serves the function of finding solutions; management serves the function of efficiently accomplishing problem solving.
- (5) While one person can, in principle, perform both functions, only one person would normally be the manager of a group.
- (6) Conversely, leadership can be shown by all and can shift from one person to another rapidly in any given context. (McCrimmon, 2006)

Organizational Structure of Public Schools

A short history of public school organizational challenges can be found in the Bowling Green State University, Ohio (BGSU), archives. The archives clearly show that questions regarding public school administration, physical location of school buildings, and financing of public schools are neither new nor unique to the modern era.

The placement and distribution of schoolhouses have their origins in the legal framework for public education established by the Land Ordinance of 1784 and the Northwest Ordinance of 1785. One section in each township was to be reserved for the support of "common schools," and could be leased to raise operating funds (Harper, 1990, p.1).

In the end, communities were left to finance schools themselves. The Ohio General Assembly passed the first law for organization of public schools in 1821. This law allowed township voters to determine the division of the township into school districts and to levy taxes for the support of public schools (Harper).

Schools are organized, financed, and managed unlike other governmental or nonprofit organizations. Each state department of education regulates the organizational design of public school districts. Southeast regional U.S. districts are generally organized by geography conforming to county or parish lines. However, the structure may be altered through independent school districts based on other political subdivisions such as cities. For example, Texas school districts are all designated as independent school districts. But Illinois school districts are divided both by grade level and by geopolitical boundaries. Districts may be further divided in organization as neighborhood schools, magnet schools and academic centers, schools within schools, comprehensive secondary schools, or vocational centers.

School districts in 46 states are independent governmental entities—Maryland, North Carolina, Virginia, and Hawaii represent organizational exceptions. These four states have school systems dependent on either state or county governments (Brimley et al., 1996). Over 80% of all public school districts have taxing authority. However, even in districts that have independent taxing authority, the school budget is often the only governmental budget subject to general public approval:

Financing local, public schools is generally a great test of district leadership.

Public school districts generally obtain financing for facilities from issuing and selling tax-exempt municipal bonds, or directly from local tax revenues.

Generally, municipalities such as cities, counties, and school districts have the authority to levy taxes and issue bonds—not individual public schools.

(Government Accounting Office, 2000)

Management or Administration of Loosely Connected Organizations

Within the state-approved and defined school district areas, administrators, teachers, and other certified personnel are tied to the state through minimum requirements for licensure. Students are tied to the state through mandated, minimum course requirements for high school graduation (Gardner, 1999). The school as an organization is tied to the state through accreditation, usually codified by each state legislature. Districts are further connected to the state through financial aid and other regulatory ties. The community is tied to the district through the various forms of school boards. Schools within a district are connected through administration. Grade-level, academic department, or organizational activity connects teachers.

According to Weick (1976), each connection is loose. Weick defines loose coupling as a situation in which "organization's structure is not coterminous with its activity" (p.5). Thus, according to Weick (1976), organizational structures do not dictate the practices of the members of that organization (Stelmach, 2004).

Generally, connections can be broken once the classroom door is closed. Weick (1976), states "schools are more loosely coupled than most other organizations and reflect a mass of conflicting, often indeterminate, goals and objectives" (p. 3). Weick further states, "schools are organizations with ambiguous goals, unclear technologies, uncoordinated activities, and loosely connected structural elements tenuously linked to organizational outcomes"(p. 14). However, Orton and Weick (1990) report that administrators have employed the management techniques of enhanced leadership, focused effort, and shared values as compensating actions making positive direction possible in a loosely-coupled organization.

Decision-making in an educational setting is often not proactive, but instead relegated to reactive or “garbage can” models, because of the loose organizational system. Cohen, March, and Olsen (1972) believe that decision-making by public school administrators is a nexus in which “problems, possible solutions, and choice opportunities interact to produce somewhat fortuitous decisions.”(p. 23) Dr. Gunter Krümme (2002) posits that the “Garbage Can Model” provides a source of explanation for, what on the surface, appears to be irrational behaviors or decisions, when in fact, decisions were the result of reaction to a problem that did not exist at the time of the solution.

Influence of School Board Members on Decision Making

Administrators often have to deal with pressure or meddling from school board members while making decisions. “The most frequent ethical lapses on their school boards dealt with delegating proper authority to the superintendent — in other words, not allowing the superintendent to perform his or her job without undue meddling” (Riede, 2004).. According to Frase, (2001) school board members mistakenly attempt to take on supervisory, managerial, or day-to-day operational roles.

School boards have failed with regularity to check their micro-management inclinations at the door. They have invaded the rightful turf of school leaders and don't seem likely to retreat to macromanagement. In one school district, the board vice president issued a formal letter to the superintendent ordering him not to meet with two named members of the board unless a member of the majority was present. This effectively established the board majority as heavy-handed dictators with full power to establish gag orders and shut down the democratic process.

(p.1)

Furthermore, statutes of many states make policy and fiscal matters the purview of school boards and leave daily operations to administrators (Kolb & Strauss, 1999). According to the U.S. Department of Education:

Principals have to be able to survive the politics of the building, school board, and other community members in order to be successful leaders. They need to build a base with businesses, teachers, students, parents, and other community members in order to weather the winds of politics. (1996, p.1)

The abilities to behave as the educational leader and chief decision maker in a district are extremely important tasks. The chief administrator is generally significantly better educated, and has far more experience with education facility operations than a vast majority of school board members. As of 2006, Mississippi was one of only twenty states requiring rudimentary training for school board members. Mississippi School Board Association cites the Mississippi Code of 1972 as amended in Section 37-7-306 that provides for the following training and education requirements:

- (1) Every school board member selected after July 1, 2002, shall have a high school diploma or its equivalent.
- (2) Every school board member selected after July 1, 1993, shall be required to complete a basic course of training and education for local school board members. Such basic course of training, approved by the State Board of Education, shall be conducted by the School Executive Management Institute of the State Department of Education.

Academic Preparation of Potential Administrators

“The focus on and criticism being lodged against educational leadership preparation has provided a ripe opportunity for a number of different interests to impact educational leadership” (Creighton, 2002). However, the negative images of traditional university preparation of primarily public school administrators and the faculty participating in such programs are perpetuated through the silence of faculty who wish to institute reforms (Creighton).

Over the past quarter century, university preparation of educational administrators has fallen into a downward spiral dominated by low-prestige institutions, diploma mills, outmoded instruction and low expectations. Many of these sub-par training programs have virtually no entrance requirements save an applicant's ability to pay tuition. The doctor of education (Ed.D) degree conferred has lost any real salience (p.2).

A California State University (CSU) study published by the Office of the Chancellor found that existing doctoral programs in education had reputations for uneven quality or utility:

The State of California does not impose accreditation requirements on programs leading to education doctorates. Across the nation, the reputation of even high-quality education doctoral programs at private institutions have been tainted by the proliferation of programs that may be little more than “diploma mills” (2001, p.4)

During the period in which educational achievement expectations have arisen nationwide, research hasn't been able to find the key to high academic performance for all students wishing to excel (Whiteley et al., 2002). Missing pieces of the success puzzle

are educational management technologies and methodologies that move in synchronization with those nationwide expectations. At the present time, many elite universities no longer offer educational administration as a discipline:

There are few analogues to great business schools or to military academies for providing intellectual nourishment in education management. Finally, good management training is expensive [Wharton tuition and fees are \$42,180 for 2005-2006; the total estimated cost for first-year students is \$66,171] and demanding. West Point and Wharton cost a lot to operate, and their students see the personal investment and sacrifice as having an economic or emotional payoff. Few in education perceive anything close to a similar lifetime return on training in education leadership (Guthrie & Sanders, 2001, p.2).

Administrators as Change Agents

Administrators need the ability to make quick, decisions based on the best information provided. The ability to make immediate, rational decisions with appropriate outcomes is a leadership hallmark. However, decision making, considered in a vacuum, should rarely be considered as leadership. For an administrator to affect change, visionary and unconventional thinking generally has to occur.

Change is very hard and extraordinarily slow to come to public education, the education of teachers, and the education of school administrators. For example, the National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (NBPTS) has been in existence for 18 years. The NBPTS has spent approximately \$400 million to oversee national board certification of about 1 percent of the U.S. teaching force (Boyd & Reese, 2006). “Sadly, the workings of governance, administration, leadership, and responsibility in many of the

nation's school districts are a half-century old, but recognition in states and communities that this is the case has been slow in coming" (Usdan, 2001, p 1).

Profit-making or not-for-profit businesses have to change to meet marketplace demands. "Intelligent business organizations understand the 'fit' between their products and their markets. Over time, companies develop strengths that need to be developed in a positive way. They adapt what they do best to the changing requirements of the market place" (The Times 100, p.1). Businesses need to understand change to survive.

Change is a common occurrence in business today. Because of this, it is important that you possess strong change management skills if you want your business to be a success. Change management skills include leadership development (to get people to believe in you), marketing and sales abilities (to promote your case for change), and communication skills (to help build support for the decision to change) (Small Business Administration, 2008, p.1).

Langley (1995) observed that managers need to tread a fine line between ill-conceived, arbitrary decisions and an unhealthy obsession with numbers, analyses, and reports in their decision-making activities. A careful study of cogent issues is often necessary and justified. The most crucial error made in an analysis is failure to identify the real problem and hence solve the wrong problem (Wertheim, 1997). The tactic calling for more research can be used to defeat or cause a project to become obsolete because of changes in current events (Cristol, 2004). "You can't keep doing the same thing over and over and expect different results" (Tracy, 2006, p.1).

The lack of change in education leadership preparation is borne out in "Educating School Leaders" by Dr. Arthur Levine, the immediate past-president of Columbia University's Teacher's College. The research instrument used in the referenced study to

survey principals indicated that more than 80 percent of graduates took the same core curriculum. This curriculum consisted of instructional leadership, school law, educational psychology, curriculum development, research methods, historical and philosophical foundation of education, teaching and learning, child and adolescent development, and the school principalship. The typical respondent reported, "The course of study for the principalship has little to do with the job of being a principal. In fact, it appears to be a nearly random collection of courses (Levine, 2005, p.27). Mullen and Cairns research in 2001 indicates many administrators come to the principalship with little previous administrative, managerial or supervisory experience, training, or education that is suitable preparation for the administrative role.

Concepts of supervision have changed over the course of history. However, the method of teaching or training supervisors hasn't appreciatively changed. "For 30 years, I have followed the traditional methodologies of training supervisors, and I have become discouraged" (Kamanski, 2005).

The current model for the education of administrators developed over the course of years through legislation and regulation, and gave administrators professional status through an alliance of academics and the adherents to the tenets of organizational behavior. Universities, state departments of education, and accrediting agencies were able to create a near monopoly over potential administrators through the licensing process (Cooper & Boyd, 1988). This model is being questioned with the advent of alternate licensing and unlicensed administrative appointments. "We have institutionalized the claim as a myth. The profession says that these kinds of activities and standards should produce effective administrators and hardly anyone questions the assumption" (Miskel, 2004, p.9).

A principal generally brings limited experience as a supervisor or evaluator to the job when first appointed. This peculiar problem was brought to NYC Mayor Bloomberg by Chancellor Joel Klein. Klein found a profound lack of middle managers in the NYC school system. This problem was addressed by borrowing leadership training methods from companies like General Electric. The New York City Leadership Academy is trying to bridge an important gap in the way principals have traditionally been trained and certified — a gap that education experts say divorces principals' training from the realities of public school life (Gabor, 2005).

Many new principals have emotional difficulty adjusting to the role. Communication of clear expectations to staff and following through create emotional conflict. "Tough personnel problems demand that principals manage their own emotions like anger, empathy and guilt, deal effectively with the emotional responses of adults and use the personnel systems to serve students' best interests" (Bloom, 2004, p.1). Principals then have to cope with the poor training received for a role that essentially isolates them from others. The research concluded that leadership preparation for any school administrator needs to be improved (Mullen & Cairns, 2001). New administrators need to understand the difference between managing and leading.

The difference between managers and leaders lies in the conceptions they hold, deep in their psyches, of chaos and order. Managers embrace process, seek stability and control, and instinctively try to resolve problems quickly—sometimes before they fully understand a problem's significance. Leaders, in contrast, tolerate chaos and lack of structure and are willing to delay closure in order to understand the issues more fully (Zaleznik, 1977, p.2).

“Leadership succession, whether planned or unplanned, has become an accelerated and cumulative process that is including people of increasing levels of inexperience. Succession is now a chronic process rather than an episodic crisis” (Fink & Brayman, 2006, p.1). Successful transitions and change management are handled by recognizing the forces creating successful change agents (Fullan, 2001).

Even successful organizations must overcome the stress of new leadership. Uncertainty follows change. Leaders must perceive and conceive methodologies causing employee “buy in” of change rather than dictates of change from a top down force (Small Business Administration, 2006). A meaningful comparison of the definition of success language between corporate leadership and educational leadership concludes that corporate language centers on actionable and quantifiable verbs while educational language centers on soft and ethereal goals.

The Small Business Administration (SBA) recommends that business managers and leaders who wish to affect meaningful and sustained change:

- (1) Set an example. Direction of leaders in behavior, ethics, and standards sets the foundation for positive employee change.
- (2) Eliminate perks. Perks suggest division and hierarchical thought processes. A positive foundation is laid by reducing perks to encourage creative ideas and solutions that are originated by employees.
- (3) Walk around and talk to people. Management by walking around is still a great way to determine what works and what needs attention.
- (4) Be genuine. Change leaders are open and honest in all dealing and have no hidden agendas.

- (5) Have passion. A leader must have a passionate vision. Leadership is a precursor to physical burnout. Passion of purpose provides fuel to prevent burnout. (SBA, 2006)

Obstacles exist to transformational decision making. Understanding these obstacles provide administrators a basis when attempting change management and leadership. Brower and Balch (2005) make the following points in the negative. However, by expressing the thoughts positively, each point clearly parallels good business practices for a change leader:

- (1) The leader makes only moral, ethical, and legal decisions.
- (2) The leader has no addiction that clouds great decision making.
- (3) The leader forms only good habits of character
- (4) The leader always makes decisions based on the greater good of the organization, never selfishly.
- (5) The leader focuses completion of necessary and important tasks, not distracted by “emergencies”.
- (6) The leader grounds decisions through rational, reasoned, and researched processes.
- (7) The leader has the moral courage to explain difficult decisions and encourages buy-in rather than imposition.
- (8) The leader looks forward to implementation of change in order to make any corrections of that change required and make the change even better.
- (9) The leader has a clear institutional vision and mission and can clearly communicate both to subordinates.

Any change leader, who embraces the 14 points made between the two sets of concepts, will be a remarkable individual. But, not to reach for the ideal fails to grasp the concept of excellence.

Sustainable Leadership

Sustainable leadership is defined by Hargreaves and Fink as follows:

Sustainable leadership matters, spreads and lasts. It is a shared responsibility, that does not unduly deplete human or financial resources, and that cares for and avoids exerting negative damage on the surrounding educational and community environment. Sustainable leadership has an activist engagement with the forces that affect it, and builds an educational environment of organizational diversity that promotes cross-fertilization of good ideas and successful practices in communities of shared learning and development. (Hargreaves & Fink, 2003, p.3)

Hargreaves and Fink along with other authorities in the field have suggested that the definition produces seven principles of sustainable leadership. These principles are:

- (1) Sustainable leadership creates and preserves sustaining learning. In education, the first principle of sustainability is to develop something that is itself sustaining. The prime responsibility of all educational leaders is to sustain learning (Glickman 2002; Stoll & Fink (1996).
- (2) Sustainable leadership secures success over time.

Successful educational organizations choose school leaders on the basis of talent, selecting the right people, and placing them in the right positions. With the proper fit, new and established principals will come to understand themselves and build strengths. (Gallop, 2006)

- (3) Sustainable leadership sustains the leadership of others. Leadership continuity planning prevents transition difficulties, and prevents premature promotion of principals (Normore, 2004).
- (4) Sustainable leadership provides a basis of responsibility to the schools and students in the wider environment.
- (5) Sustainable leadership develops rather than depletes human and material resources.

Sustainable leadership provides intrinsic rewards and extrinsic incentives that may attract the best and brightest to the leadership pool.
- (6) Sustainable leadership develops environmental diversity and capacity.

Sustainable leadership recognizes and cultivates many kinds of excellence in learning, teaching, and leading.
- (7) Sustainable leadership undertakes activist engagement with the environment.

The activity suggested with this statement is the engagement of students to press for excellence in leadership and that schools and education authorities should engage pupils in decision making (Henderson, 2006).

Financial Management

A unique feature of U.S. education is the degree of control that has been granted to local governments. Autonomous control matters because the governance arrangements (both formal and informal) determine the power structure for the makeup of the body for decision making. This body is then in a position to decide what interests and objectives will receive priority and to influence the allocation of resources in accordance with those priorities. School boards have historically played a crucial role within the governance structure given the power to raise revenue for schools, district. "While too much local

control of education may be detrimental to the educational interests of some students, local control generates at least one key benefit worth preserving: the country is kept from making wholesale major errors” (Ladd & Hansen, 1999, p.28). Financial management needs to encompass quantifiable results.

Obviously the power of the purse provides incentive to provide quality administration and management within the policy guidelines provided by the governing body. Financial management is not a matter of budgeting, budget control, accounting or bookkeeping. This narrow approach generally results in isolation for the business department and causes detachment from the rest of the organization. The overall process of financial management should be broadened and also focus on management of results and management of the organizational capacity. (World Bank, 2003, p.1)

The expenditure of public funds for K–12 education has a long tradition in the United States. While the United States Constitution does not make any federal provisions for public education, every state’s constitution guarantees some level of free public schooling for its citizens. Each state governs the public education system and decides how to raise revenue to sustain that system (EdSource, 2004b).

Currently, the common approach to school funding is to determine available funding sources and funds from each source and then budget to the source. Emphasis on funding adequacy, defining the educational goals of the system, and then determining the level of resources schools needed in order to meet those goals is gaining momentum through court actions. “In 19 states, supreme courts ruled that school finance systems were unconstitutional, and litigation or the threat of litigation sometimes spurred finance reforms even in the absence of a court order” (Addonizio, 2003, p.11).

Local administrators also need to be thoroughly familiar with the American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in order to fund capital and physical improvements to be in compliance with the spirit and the letter of these laws. Often, grant funding is required or available to maintain physical plants in order to comply with IDEA (Iowa Department of Education, 2000).

If new administrators develop an understanding of cash flow and financial statements, then sole reliance on the business department will not be necessary. Sole reliance on the business manager or bookkeeper invites fraud at worst, fiscal mismanagement at best (Akresh, 2004). Basic skills in financial management begin with understanding cash management and transactional records kept according to GASB rule 34. Generating financial statements is generally not an administrator's duty. But, the ability to analyze financial statements for board reporting and community communications is critical. Very often, financial realities dictate organizational direction. Consequently, knowledge and practice of financial management help guide the direction of the organization rather than allowing financial pressures to pull the organization (McNamara, 1999).

An obvious difference exists between the for-profit sector and the nonprofit sectors of the economy. The for-profit sector has to grow shareholder value by generating operational profits (Drucker, 1990). "...a nonprofit's bottom line is different from a for-profit business. For-profit companies measure their success by how much money they make for their owners. For nonprofits, the bottom line is the organization's mission" (Maryland, 2006, p.1).

Entities, other than public school districts, in the nonprofit sector have other types of financial measures, such as the ability to generate grants and attract patrons willing to

pay user or membership fees. Public school districts generally have the ability or are mandated by force of law to raise operating funds through a combination of local, state, and federal funding sources. “Many people are surprised to learn that most money for public schools comes from state and local governments—not from Washington” (Denver, 2005, p.3).

The National Center for Education Statistics, U.S. Department of Education, National Center for Education Statistics, Common Core Data, "National Public Education Financial Survey" School year 2002-2003 breaks down funding accordingly.

1. 8.5% Federal funds
2. 42.8% Local and Intermediate funds
3. 48.7% State funds

The National Education Association reports an 11 year trend from SY 1994 to SY 2005 in *Ranking and Estimates* (2005) showing a slight trend toward greater federal and state funding. Federal funding has trended from 6.9% to 8.8%, representing an increase of approximately \$23 billion dollars. The same report shows state funding increasing from 47.6% to 48.6% representing an increase of \$100 billion dollars; and while local funding decreased as a percentage share, 45.6% to 42.7%, real dollars increased approximately \$77 billion dollars (NEA, 2005).

Ohio reports that local property taxes are the primary source of revenue for funding public schools. Statewide revenues for school funding average 8% from federal and miscellaneous sources 49% from local taxes, and 43% from state aid according to the Lakota, Ohio school district (Lakota, 2006). For the 2004-2005 SY, the State of California reported that federal funds represented 13%, local funds represented 27%,

state and lottery funding represented 59% for total funds expended in the state (EdSource, 2004b).

“Historically, local property taxes have been the major source of funding for public schools. The property tax rate is typically set by the local school board, other local officials, or directly by citizens” (EdSource, 2004a, p.1). Local controls lead to dramatic differences in school funding. Courts, under the equal protection clause of the U.S. Constitution and the “free and appropriate” education clauses in state constitutions, have attempted to equalize funding of school districts regardless of the economic underpinnings of the district. As a result, school finance systems today look dramatically different from state to state. The trend has been toward a larger portion of state funding and control due to rulings such as the *Abbott vs Burke* (172 NJ 294, 798 A.2d 602 (2002)) decision in New Jersey.

Plant, Property, and Equipment

Administrators should become be familiar with the plant, property, and equipment needs of the schools for which they are responsible. Each underlying asset of every district requires physical examination, maintenance or upgrading on at least an annual basis. Each budget decision outside the classroom impacts the potential for learning (Darling-Hammond, 1999). Consequently, fiscal planning for physical plant needs is critical to enhance learning potential.

School facilities maintenance competes with other priorities in a school district’s operating budgets; including teacher and staff compensation, new technology, new textbooks, and special education. Without adequate operating funds, districts defer maintenance, fail to address classroom overcrowding, and are unable to modify facilities to achieve successful outcomes. The effectiveness of academic programs is limited when

critical facility maintenance and construction needs are not met (Twenty-first Century School Fund, 2005).

Within the realm of plant, property, and equipment, purchasing skills need constant cultivating. An example of good policy would include the definition of the lowest responsible bidder or provider. The State of Wisconsin, Bureau of Procurement, provides this purchasing policy for all state agencies in the state procurement manual:

"Lowest responsible bidder" refers to the supplier who submits the lowest dollar total appearing in combination with other elements of the bid that best meet the requirements of the solicitation. An important observation regarding purchasing is that the lowest price does not always win the bid.

The manual further states:

It is the responsibility and authority of the purchasing agent making an award to exercise good judgment and, in the best interests of the state, to honestly and fairly determine the responsibility of the bidders involved, and, of the responsible bidders, to select the lowest responsible bidder. (Wisconsin, 2001, PRO-C-16)

Fiscal Budgeting and Strategic Planning

Fiscal budgeting allows smooth operations for a year. Fiscal planning provides transition from fiscal year to fiscal year. Understanding the difference between fiscal budgeting and strategic planning is important because finance efforts in most districts concentrate on budget development, financial compliance and reporting, and control of expenditures. Far too little time is spent evaluating how effectively district funds are being used, what educational impact is caused by district expenditures, identifying future financial needs, and gauging the impact today's decisions will have on future needs or goals. "Traditional budgets show categorical spending only. Strategic financial plans

show whether the funds are being used effectively, what funds are used for, what they will accomplish and most importantly, what affect the money will have on students and education” (Costa, 2002, ¶10). According to Pereus (2000), planning and budgeting differ in fundamental ways:

1. Purpose--compliance versus fiscal stewardship. Budgets are usually developed to match revenues against planned expenditures and comply with state budget development and reporting requirements. The purpose of financial planning is to project the long-term sources and uses of funds, and evaluate the effectiveness of programs and departments.
2. Process--routine versus evaluative. The budgeting process usually involves routine review of annual expenditures. Budget center directors are given directions on spending limits and possible increases. Financial planning requires an evaluation process that identifies areas of strength or weakness. With financial planning, programs are renewed if they produce material results for students--not because they have become part of the way of doing things.
3. Focus--tactical versus strategic. Budgets handle ordinary, daily funding needs. Financial planning focuses on allocating resources efficiently, making long-range plans for new funds, and ensuring that funds are directed toward goals and priorities.
4. People involved--middle- to lower-level employees versus top administrators. The superintendent's cabinet, including principals, and department managers need to be involved in financial planning. Financial planning

plays the strategic role of long-term success and places accountability on those managing budgets and departments.

5. Time frame--next year versus next five years.
6. Accountability--spending questions versus goals questions. Budgets are expense centered. Financial planning is goal and objective centered.
7. Communication with taxpayers--dollars and cents versus results. Budgets show categorical spending; financial plans show whether funds are being used effectively.

“Financial concepts dismissed as radical just a few years ago are now helping public-school officials better serve their students. Many administrators make greater use of outside contractors for support services, allowing them to focus on their core function—education” (Beales & O’Leary, 1994, p.1).

Accountability and Ethical Considerations of Administration

Challenges of educational funding accountability and educational outcomes are a worldwide phenomenon. The International Institute for Educational Planning (IIEP), through a grant supported from the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization, decided to launch a new research project in 2001. The main objective of the project, entitled “Ethics and Corruption in Education,” was to improve decision-making and the management of educational systems by integrating governance and corruption concerns in educational planning and administration methodologies (International Institute for Educational Planning, 2001, p. 2). This study was undertaken to probe corruption among educational entities because of the size of federal education budgets and the monopoly exercised by public education in most countries. Various

corrupt practices that have been identified by the IIEP as pervasive in world education communities include:

1. Fraud and embezzlement in construction projects;
2. Fraud and embezzlement in the purchase of textbooks, food, and equipment;
3. Administrators taking bribes to accept unqualified students, showing favoritism toward students, awarding positions and promotions to relatives or friends;
4. Selling answers for examinations and diplomas;
5. Manipulating attendance data to receive unearned funding; and
6. Failure to follow bidding or purchasing procedures in order to favor specific vendors or products. (Adapted from Hallak & Poisson, 2005)

The list of corrupt practices may be worldwide, but these practices are remarkably similar to ethical and accountability problems found in many U.S. public school districts. Unsurprisingly, the accrediting bodies for both business and education programs stress ethics as a part of course offerings. Clearly higher education can no longer ignore ethics as an important aspect of preparation (Illingworth, 2004).

Accountability of Administration

Lessinger (1970) argues that teachers and administrators need to be primarily concerned with measurement of and quantification of instruction. An argument can be made that accountability based on high stakes testing is counterproductive because “as high-stakes testing dictates the curriculum, less and less choice is available for students” (Jones, 2004, p.1). Jones then describes “a balanced school accountability model that includes: 1) student learning; 2) opportunity to learn; 3) responsiveness to students, parents, and community; and 4) organizational capacity for improvement” (Jones, 2004, p.1).

Goertz and Massell (2005) provide insight into the difficulty of implementing measures of accountability in a single school, let alone throughout a school district. Goertz and Massell report results that indicate accountability design alone is not sufficient to drive consistent, comprehensive action across high schools, or produce actions that deeply influence instruction.

Accountability policies theorize that once school staffs have identified their needs, they will organize themselves to search for new strategies to improve student performance. However, the lack of teacher training in the use of test data to analyze and address weaknesses in individual student performance was also a factor in transforming the theory of data use in standards-based reform into practice (2005, p.5).

Accountability processes can positively influence the actions of administrators and teachers. In this age of accountability, veteran educators and school leadership experts alike insist that the principal, as the prime shaper of school culture, must listen to other groups within the school. School community members should have a complete idea of the school vision. Challenges can then identified by the principal, allowing solution input by different stakeholder groups to obtain that vision (Allen, 2003).

A positive approach in accountability is the ability to interact with the public when releasing news. As with any good business practice, interactive communications provide the intended audience the opportunity to understand and react to the message in the most positive light. The difference between this public and that of earlier generations is that people today want to be a part of any changes that are planned at their local schools. Because of today's public demands for accountability, educators have to provide ever more detailed information about schools (NWREL, 2001). Administrators, as do any

corporate CEOs, need to directly, honestly, and ethically present any type of positive or negative message in a timely manner to the appropriate audience.

Conclusions

The conclusions that may be drawn from this literature review are:

- (1) Schools are more loosely coupled organizations than other types of entities (Weick, 1976).
- (2) Schools are difficult to manage because of this loose coupling and the individuality of teaching methodology and subject matter (Goertz & Massell, 2005).
- (3) Administrators rarely bring experience beyond teaching to fulfill the requisite duties of an administrator because of the training and formal education requirements for licensing and certification (Hess, 2004).
- (4) A lack of fiscal understanding by administrators may lead to fraud, waste, and abuse of public funds (Akresh, 2004).
- (5) The collection of courses required for a graduate degree and administrative certification has little to do with the actual job duties of a principal (Levine, 2005).
- (6) Administrators and managers make many decisions and get involved in the day-to-day operations. Leaders focus on important decisions impacting overall functions or processes of an organization and differentiate between generic and strategic problems rather than attempting to solve daily problems. While managers concerns generally include maintaining organizational status quo to produce requested results, leaders have a commitment or vision and shape

people around their commitment or vision. A manager is concerned with carrying out policies, while a leader formulates policies. The conclusion is a manager can be a leader, while a leader does not have to be a manager (Brennen, 2006).

- (7) Fiscal Planning and strategic planning are two different functions and administrators need to be trained to think and behave differently towards these functions (Costa, 2002).
- (8) Ethics need to be a part of every course in educational leadership programs. American Association of School Administrators (AASA) members were surveyed by William Fenstermaker (1996) and was designed to replicate the research and sought to update a 1968 study by long-time AASA member C. Roy Dexheimer. Both studies found that superintendents often made choices inconsistent with the AASA Code of Ethics (Fenstermaker, 1996).
- (9) Accountability in education currently addresses outputs as in a factory model (Stecher & Hanser, 1992). Accountability should be addressed with all stakeholders input based on an understanding of the shared vision for the school or district. The principal remains the prime figure in setting the culture for accountability (Allen, 2003).

The research is designed to provide a basis for potential curriculum review or revision in the field of educational leadership.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. This chapter includes descriptions of the research design and instrumentation used in the study, participants for the study and how the participants were chosen, and the procedures in collection and analyzation of the data. The study was approved by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board (IRB) (Appendix A).

In order to address the purpose of the study, a survey was used to determine the perception of current superintendents regarding financial, marketing, and management skills taught in educational leadership programs. The author quantified the results of the survey to specifically determine whether a statistically significant number of superintendents perceive the educational leadership program that led to licensure, or position, provided an appropriate basis for making informed and educated financial, marketing, and management decisions. The survey results have been analyzed; findings and conclusions are addressed in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

Background Research

To assist with the development of the research instrument, an initial information-gathering stage employing a qualitative questionnaire was conducted. The purpose of these preliminary interviews was to establish commonalities of vocabulary between business and education administrators and to determine commonalities of contextual understanding.

The preliminary interviews were conducted in person, by telephone, use of Internet chat, or e-mail. Only one respondent is not directly involved in academic governance, but is directly responsible for a large district physical plant construction and maintenance. Two respondents, one a retired military officer and the other a retired professional contractor, chose public education as a second career. The respondents were from a small (300 students K-12) district administrator in Iowa, a superintendent of a medium-sized (1,200 students K-12) district in Mississippi, the assistant superintendent for instruction of a large (4,800 students K-12) district in Mississippi, the administrator of a charter school in Texas, the supervisor of construction and maintenance of a 20,000 student district in Wisconsin, a principal of a high school with a 333 student high school in Wisconsin, and the superintendent of a 2,500-student district in New Jersey. Responses were then classified, and a word search was made for potential commonalities in contextual vocabulary.

The preliminary study questions (PSQ) were designed to be open-ended questions in order to obtain as much relevant vocabulary as possible from the respondents.

PSQ1: Explore issues related to business orientation in public schools.

(1) In your opinion, what three factors must be present to have a successful school district?

PSQ2: Explore the semantic vocabulary used by administrators in discussing business-related issues.

(2) How would you define effective communication? Can faculty and parents ever know too much about the state of the district?

PSQ3: Explore understanding of community (market) concerns.

(3) District policy is formalized through the school board. How do board members bring community values to bear in formulating policy?

PSQ4: Explore responsiveness of school officials to community (market) concerns:

(4) In what other ways (if any) should community forces affect district governance or shape district policy?

PSQ5: Probe for any understanding of the similarity of management roles between public schools and private entities.

(5) How do you compare administrator responsibilities to industry supervision?

PSQ6: Search for any training other than formal classroom training.

(6) What managerial positions or leadership positions have you held outside an educational setting? Did you feel qualified as a manager when you first took an administrative position?

PSQ7: Explore disconnect of university educational administration programs and position requirements.

(7) Aside from credentialing requirements, what areas of preparation could assist a new administrator?

PSQ8: Search for any understanding of financial management or fiscal responsibility.

(8) How do administrators learn to successfully execute their fiduciary responsibilities as “caretakers of the taxpayer's money”?

PSQ9: Determine what competition exists.

(9) Is there a current plan to effectively market the district or schools within the district?

PSQ10: Explore for the understanding of managerial functions or training for potential promotion.

(10) What organizational changes between teaching and administration could be made to ease that transition?

Rational for Word Search

Prior to the preliminary interviews, the author and Dr. Barry Babin classified a series of words that could have dual usage within education and industry. Specifically, vocabulary was chosen that would indicate an awareness of the dual nature educational and business applications required to successfully manage an educational enterprise. Each word was categorized to orientation for usage as Management, Communication and Public Relations, Marketing, Labor and Employment, and Fiscal. The purpose for the search of the use of common terminology by interviewees was to find a specific base of vocabulary that provided a bridge between business use and understanding and educational use and understanding. A further purpose of the word count was to indicate how often each word with both educational and business meaning was used by interviewees in the course of the interview. A zero count indicated that the expected vocabulary was not used by the interviewee.

Table 1

Word Search Compiled by Author

The number in parenthesis indicates the word count.

Management	Communication and Public Relations	Marketing
Responsibility (3)	Information (17)	Vision (1)
Accountability (7)	Communication (12)	Market (1)
Delegate (4)	Disseminate (1)	Share (6)
Delegation (4)	Newsletter (2)	Market Share(0)
Management (14)	Public (16)	Marketing (4)
Manager (6)	Relations (4)	Customer (0)
Supervisor (1)	Community (33)	Consumer (0)
Supervisory (0)	Stakeholder (3)	Constituency(1)
Supervision (1)	Taxpayer (2)	Product (0)
Executive (0)	Partnerships (0)	Quality (1)
Leadership (23)	Chamber of Commerce (1)	Differentiation(0)
Mission (2)	Welcome Wagon (0)	Segmentation(0)
Mission statement(1)	Advertising (0)	Business (4)
Goals (14)	Pamphlet (0)	Data Collection (0)
Planning (2)	Booklet (0)	Analyze (0)
Strategy (0)	Mail-out (0)	Image (0)
Values (0)	Customer survey(0)	Trademark (0)
Character (0)	Reports (6)	Census (0)
Ethics (0)	Newspaper (0)	Population (0)
Morals (0)	Media (1)	Demographics(0)
Synergy (0)	e-mail (0)	Feedback (8)
Publics (0)	Web Site (0)	Publicity (0)
	Web page (1)	Business Reply Card (0)

Table 1 (continued)

Labor and Employment	Fiscal
Education (17)	Budget (7)
Career (1)	Budgeting (0)
Training (3)	Site-Based Management (1)
On the Job Training (0)	Fiscal (3)
Skills (3)	Fund Balance (0)
Staff (10)	Income (0)
Faculty (9)	Taxes (0)
Employee (1)	Cash Flow (0)
Promotion (0)	Expense (0)
License (1)	Expenses (0)
Incentive (0)	Liability (0)
Benefits (0)	Resources (6)
Professional(5)	Physical
Professionalism (1)	Plant (0)
Salary (0)	Facility (0)
Schedule (0)	
Insurance (0)	
Morale (0)	
Orientation (0)	
Teamwork (1)	
Contract (0)	
Negotiate (0)	
Conditions (0)	
Assessment (0)	
Evaluation (1)	
Review (0)	

Instrumentation

The vocabulary developed from the preliminary study questions formed the basis for the research questions and survey instrument. The vocabulary chosen to create statements on the instrument was demonstrated to have commonality of usage in both educational and business settings. Of specific interest to the researcher were similar words used in different context between education and business settings.

The instrument (Appendix C) consisted of a primary data set information regarding the respondent. The information requested consisted of position, district size expressed as number of students, the state in which respondent works, gender, number of years teaching, number of years as a practicing administrator, work experience outside education, any career area outside of education, was masters program a cohort, what level of education obtained for current position, any degrees earned that were not education related, traditional or nontraditional program and institution where final degree was earned.

Twenty-five Likert or "Summative" scale questions were developed with a seven-point response scale to provide a quantitative measurement tool. The scale consisted of responses worded as Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Somewhat Disagree, Somewhat Agree, Agree, Strongly Agree, and Not Applicable.

Similarly, a series of 10 opposites was developed for a 10-point semantic differential scale. The survey asked participants to answer comparative statements by darkening a box on the scale, leftmost indicating most agreement with the first statement, rightmost indicating most agreement with the second statement.

The two scales were used in conjunction with a traditional questionnaire to prevent scale bias or confounding results from social bias. The dissemination

methodology was a traditional paper survey. The population sampled consisted of regional mix of persons in variably-sized districts who were listed as superintendent on various state department of education websites. Responses provided data for analysis. This analysis provided a basis to measure the perceptions of superintendents who responded concerning the comprehensiveness of graduate educational leadership program curricula.

A pilot study was conducted with 50 superintendents. The purpose of the pilot study was to determine the reliability, validity, and usability of the survey instrument. The pilot study was conducted by mailing the IRB approved cover letter (Appendix B), the approved survey instrument, and a stamped, addressed return envelope. Eighteen Mississippi, 16 New Hampshire, and 16 Nevada persons identified as superintendents on the various departments of education for the States of Mississippi, New Hampshire, and Nevada were surveyed. Upon receipt of 15 surveys, representing a 30 percent response rate, the coefficient of reliability using Cronbach's Alpha revealed a .939 reliability using 25 items. The results of this test provided a basis to complete the full survey.

Participants and Sampling Plan

Participants for the study were selected from superintendent lists provided by the departments of education websites from the states of: Alabama, Idaho, Oklahoma, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, North Carolina, Utah, and Wisconsin. These states were selected because of the geographical diversity and similarity of license requirements for superintendent appointment.

Each participant received a mailed packet containing a signed copy of the IRB-approved letter (Appendix B); a questionnaire with the questions printed on each side of

one sheet of white, 8.5" x 11" paper; and a return envelope with the return address listed as Survey Results, 2708 McInnis Loop-B, Hattiesburg, MS 39402.

Nine-Hundred-Sixty-Nine packets were disseminated. Every superintendent identified on the Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Carolina, and Utah departments of education websites was solicited to participate in the survey. One-hundred-forty Idaho, 131 New Jersey, 141 Oklahoma, and 106 Wisconsin persons identified with the title of superintendent on the various state departments of education websites were solicited to participate in the survey. The number of participants solicited was determined through random selection of every fourth person to produce a solicitation with approximately equal representation of each geographical area.

The goal of the researcher was to receive greater than 299 completed surveys. The researcher received 372 responses for a return rate of 38.7%. This return rate was achieved from the mailing date of 9 June 2008 to a close-out date of 30 July 2008.

In an attempt to reduce costs, survey packets were separated by ZIP codes to provide the discounted rate of \$.58 for two-ounces of first-class mail. The return envelopes had first-class postage affixed. Avery 5160[®] address labels were prepared using website lists currently in Excel format. The Mailing Place, Inc., Hattiesburg, MS stuffed the envelopes for \$.02 each packet and mailed each packet for a total cost of \$1.07 apiece.

Data from each completed survey (completed equals >74% answered questions) were compiled in an Excel spreadsheet. Once more than 299 completed surveys were received, initial grouping and preliminary statistical analysis was started. Questions 13 through 35 were designed to allow the respondent to quantify a response to a single statement to elicit a response regarding the respondent's perception of graduate classes

taken for licensing versus graduate classes that may have helped the respondent when initially appointed.

(1) Satisfaction with current certification courses:

Questions 13, 14, 15, 16, 19, 24, 25, 31, 32, 33, 34, 35

(2) Perception of the need for more graduate business courses: Questions 17, 18, 20, 21, 22, 23, 27, 28, 29

(3) Administrative skills rating (self reported):

Questions 03, 04, 05, 06, 07, 08, 09, 10

Questions 3 through 10 were designed for the respondent to self-rate skills related to their perceived success. These skills included perception of overall success in position, administrative skills, managerial skills, writing and speaking skills, fiscal and physical plant knowledge, and marketing challenges.

Analysis

This study examined the following Hypotheses (H):

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship between satisfaction with current certification courses and the perception of the need for more graduate business courses.

H2: There will be a significant positive relationship between satisfaction with current school administrator certification courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

H3: There will be a significant positive relationship between experience and administrative skills rating (self reported).

H4: There will be a significant negative relationship between perception of the need for more graduate business courses and administrative skills rating.

Summary

Nine-hundred-sixty-nine initial surveys were sent to superintendents in geographically diverse school districts. The receipt of greater than 299 completed surveys provided the basis for analysis. The analysis completed in the manner described provided an adequate statistical basis to sustain or reject the hypotheses as stated. The analysis done in SPSS is provided in chapter 4.

CHAPTER IV

ANALYSIS OF DATA

This chapter presents the descriptive data and further analysis of the data that were provided by the superintendents participating in the study. The general purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. A further purpose was to measure the perception of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process may increase the initial success of administrators.

Potential survey participants were selected from the superintendent section of the Alabama, Idaho, Mississippi, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Utah, and Wisconsin Departments of Education websites. Every identified superintendent in Alabama, Mississippi, New Hampshire, North Carolina and Utah was solicited to participate. One-hundred-forty Idaho, 131 New Jersey, 141 Oklahoma, and 106 Wisconsin superintendents were solicited to participate. Superintendents whose participation was solicited represented approximately 20 percent of the superintendent population of the various states where the entire population was not solicited. The researcher received 372 completed responses for a return rate of 38.7%. Three-hundred-thirty-eight surveys were completed and usable in the analysis for a usability rate of 35.2%.

The analysis of the data is presented in three sections. The first section contains the presentation of the descriptive data, and the second section describes the tests of the hypotheses. The third section presents a chapter summary.

Descriptive Data

A total of 338 usable surveys were received for analysis. Not all questions on every survey were completed. A completed survey was defined as completion of >75% of the survey questions, not including the background data.

The background information requested included self-identification of position as assistant superintendent, deputy superintendent, or superintendent; district size in pupils; state where practicing; gender; number of years as a teacher; number of years as an administrator; number of years work experience outside education; career area outside education; whether master's program was a cohort; observations for what level of degree; what earned degrees outside of education; traditional or nontraditional program; and where final degree was earned. Not every question was answered on all surveys that were accepted as complete.

Seventy-three respondents failed to identify their positions; 265 identified themselves as superintendents (Table 2). Identified student populations in the respondents' districts ranged from 40 to 54,000. Number of responses that identified the state in which employed (Table 3): Alabama (48); Idaho (53); Mississippi (58); North Carolina (35); New Hampshire (18); New Jersey (22); Oklahoma (48); Utah (3); Wisconsin (42); no response (11). Seventy-six respondents self-reported their gender as female and 252 respondents self-reported their gender as male; 10 provided no response (Table 4). Three-hundred-seventeen respondents reported a mean of 10.92 years teaching experience. Three-hundred-twenty-six respondents reported a mean of 18.93 years administrative experience. Two-hundred-sixty-eight respondents reported a mean of 3.15 years experience outside of education. Twenty-three respondents reported participating in a nontraditional program, 267 respondents reported participating in a traditional program,

48 no response (Table 5). The number and level of degrees reported were: Masters of Education, 75; Education Specialist, 59; Doctorate of Education, 102; Doctor of Philosophy, 45; other, 10; and no response, 49 (Table 6). Ninety-two separate colleges and universities were identified by the respondents.

Table 2.

Superintendents

	Frequency	Percent
Superintendent	265	80.5
No Response	73	19.5
Total	338	100.0

Table 3.

States in Which Respondents Reported Working

	Frequency	Percent
Alabama	48	14.0
Idaho	53	15.5
Mississippi	58	17.3
North Carolina	35	10.2
New Hampshire	18	5.5
New Jersey	22	6.4
Oklahoma	48	14.7
Utah	3	.9
Wisconsin	42	12.8
No Response	11	3.7
Total	338	100.0

Table 4.
Gender Reported by Respondent

	Frequency	Percent
Female	76	22.5
Male	252	74.6
No Response	10	2.9
Total	338	100.0

Table 5.
Type of Program Reported by Respondent

	Frequency	Percent
Traditional	267	78.9
Non-traditional	23	6.7
No Response	48	14.4
Total	338	100.0

Table 6.
Highest Level of Degree Reported by Respondent

	Frequency	Percent
MEd	75	22.2
EdS	59	17.3
EdD	102	30.1
PhD	45	13.2
Other	10	2.9
No Response	47	14.3
Total	338	100.0

Questions one through 10 were semantic differentials with a scale of 9 through 0.

These questions were designed to allow the respondent to self-assess skills. A rating of 9

indicated most agreement with the leftmost statement. A rating of 0 indicated most agreement with the rightmost statement.

Questions 1 and 2 were specifically designed to determine satisfaction of the respondent with administration positions in general and specifically the position held by the respondent (Table 7).

Q1. An education career was the best choice I could have made vs. I should have chosen some other career

Q2. My administrative position is the best job in education vs. I am sorry I ever left the classroom

Table 7

Response to Survey Q1 and Q2

	n	Mean	Std. Deviation
Q1-Best Career Choice	332	7.93	1.65
Q2-Best Job in Education	331	7.36	1.86

Scale: 9 = most agreement with the leftmost statement

0 = most agreement with the rightmost statement

Items were listed in Table 7 from highest mean to lowest mean. The reported mean of 7.93 on Q1 and reported mean of 7.36 on Q2 suggests that not only did the respondents believe that education was the best individual career choice, but also that the incumbent position is the best position in education.

Questions 3 through 10 were designed for the respondent to self-rate skills related to their perceived success (Table 8). These skills included perception of overall success in position, administrative skills, managerial skills, writing and speaking skills, fiscal and physical plant knowledge, and marketing challenges. Table 8 represents current perceived skills in highest to lowest respondent order.

Q3. I believe my success comes from my graduate coursework vs. My success comes from on-the-job hard work

Q6. I am an excellent speaker to a nonprofessional audience vs. I have difficulty speaking to a non-professional audience

Q8. I am an excellent manager vs. My management skills could use some polishing

Q9. I understand the challenges of marketing my school district vs. I don't need to know anything about marketing

Q10. I understand maintenance and deferred maintenance vs. I have no knowledge of physical plant needs

Table 8.

Respondent Self Reported Skills

	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q9 – Marketing Challenges	333	7.33	1.49
Q10 – Maintain Physical Plant	333	7.30	1.59
Q6 – Speak Non-Professional Audience	331	7.19	1.61
Q8 – Quality of Management Skills	333	7.16	1.40
Q7 – Understanding Fiscal Matters	333	6.88	1.62
Q4 – Involvement in In-Service	332	6.75	2.39
Q5 – Writing Abilities	331	6.64	1.97
Q3 – Source of Success	332	3.49	2.42

Scale: 9 = most agreement with the leftmost statement

0 = most agreement with the rightmost statement

With a mean reported score of 7.33, understanding marketing challenges (Q9) was perceived to be the most advanced skill. However, no inference can be made as to whether the respondent understands how to respond to that challenge. Respondents also reported significant knowledge (mean 7.30) of maintenance and deferred maintenance

(Q10). Again, no inference can be made regarding the use of that knowledge by the respondent. Responses to questions 6 and 8 indicate the respondents rated themselves well in public presentations (Q6), mean 7.19, and management skills (Q8) mean 7.16. However, a mean of 3.49 to Q3 indicates the perception of respondents that success is obtained from on-the-job training rather than from graduate coursework.

Questions 11 through 35 were designed to allow the respondent to quantify a response to a single statement. The questions were primarily designed to elicit a response regarding the respondent's perception of graduate classes taken for licensing versus graduate classes that may have helped the respondent when initially appointed. The questions were scaled using a Likert scale that contained seven possible responses. Strongly disagree equaled 1; disagree equaled 2; somewhat disagree equaled 3; somewhat agree equaled 4; agree equaled 5; strongly agree equaled 6; and not applicable equaled missing.

The following questions were grouped to determine satisfaction with the skills obtained through the graduate coursework required for licensure as a superintendent. The results are reported in mean order (Table 9):

Q13. Certification courses in graduate Educational Leadership are all I need to succeed as an administrator

Q14. I would not change any of my graduate education or Educational Leadership courses leading to my certification or my graduate degree

Q15. I learned how to market my school or district in my graduate education program

Q16. I learned how to preside over a site-based management system in my graduate education program

- Q19. I learned how to be an effective communicator from the courses in my graduate education program
- Q24. I was trained in human relations and personnel management in my graduate education program
- Q25. An administrative license means the administrator will be successful in managing schools
- Q31. I am well qualified to build relationships with school stakeholders because of my administrator certification courses
- Q32. I help other district personnel create safe-working environments because of my classes leading to certification
- Q33. My understanding of leadership was learned in my licensing program
- Q34. I value business experience because my graduate education emphasized understanding district stakeholders
- Q35. I succeed in passing on management skills through an organized mentor system learned in my licensing program

Table 9

Satisfaction with Position and Skills Learned in Graduate Program

	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q11 - I am Very Satisfied Working as an Administrator	314	5.63	.67
Q12 – I am Very Satisfied with my Current Position	314	5.56	.87
Q24 – Human Relations Training	312	4.00	1.30
Q34 – Value Business Experience	299	3.69	1.32
Q31 – Build Stakeholder Relationships	312	3.53	1.23
Q19 – Learned Effective Communications	312	3.43	1.25
Q32 – Create Safe Working Environment	308	3.39	1.21
Q33 – Understanding of Leadership	312	3.38	1.35
Q16 – Preside Over Site-Based Mgt	314	3.32	1.36
Q14 – Would not Change any Courses	316	3.17	1.49
Q35 – Organized Mentor System	290	3.10	1.30
Q15 – Market School District	317	2.67	1.32
Q13 – Certification Courses for Success	309	2.06	1.20
Q25 – Licensing Equals Success	312	1.95	1.14

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree

Respondents indicate 94th percentile and 93rd percentile satisfaction in responses to questions 11 and 12 respectively. Respondents agree with Q24 that their programs provided an understanding and training in human relations and personnel management. This was the only question that had any other level of respondent agreement. Respondents specifically rejected question 25 with a strongly disagree. The mean of 1.95 for this question is an indicator that respondents do not equate licensure with success. Responses to Q9 regarding understanding marketing challenges and responses to Q15 regarding learning marketing in graduate classes were responded to in opposite directions, suggesting that while the respondents recognize marketing challenges from

private and charter schools, respondents do not perceive themselves sufficiently educated to respond to those challenges.

The following questions were grouped to determine the perception for the need for business skills that might be obtained through graduate business coursework. The questions specifically addressed the need for graduate studies in communications, fund accounting, knowledge of cash flow, marketing, management, and the viability of a combined MBA/PhD in Educational Leadership. Table 10 reports the perceptions of respondents in order of means.

Q17. I am an effective manager because of the courses in my certification program

Q18. A combined MBA/PhD in Educational Management may be helpful to administrators in any size school district

Q20. An EdD provides the courses necessary to manage an educational physical plant

Q21. A graduate course in negotiation of contract language and grievances would have helped me be more successful

Q22. Management training should be an important part of administrative certification

Q23. Administrators are trained regarding budget matters upon certification

Q27. A course in fund accounting would have helped provide a basis for success in my fiscal duties as an administrator

Q28. I would be a better administrator if I understood cash flow when I was first certified and working as an administrator

Q29. A marketing course is essential for educational leadership because of open enrollment & private school

Table 10

Superintendents' Perceptions of Needed Business Education

	n	Mean	Standard Deviation
Q22 – Mgt Training Req. for License	331	4.93	.89
Q27 – Fund Accounting Course	324	4.73	.98
Q21 – Course in Contract Negotiation	316	4.51	1.32
Q28 – Understanding Cash Flow	316	4.31	1.19
Q29 – Marketing Course is Essential	326	4.13	1.27
Q18 – Combined MBA/PhD may be Helpful	320	4.06	1.30
Q23 – Adm. have Budget Knowledge	329	3.44	1.40
Q17 – Cert. Makes Effective Managers	330	3.43	1.31
Q20 – EdD Provides Physical Plant	290	3.24	1.32

Scale: 1 = Strongly Disagree to 6 = Strongly Agree

Question 22 indicates that responding superintendents perceive that management training should be an important part of administrative certification with a mean of 4.93. The perceived need for specific fiscal training is indicated by the Q27 mean of 4.73 and Q28 mean of 4.31. The Q21 mean of 4.51 indicates that superintendents perceive the need to be prepared to engage in contract negotiations. Questions 23, 17, and 20 are all within the somewhat disagree range of means (3.46 – 3.23). However, a negative response indicates that current superintendents perceive licensing programs do not provide business skills in management, budgeting, and physical plant management.

Test of Hypotheses

This section reports the analysis of data for each research question and corresponding hypothesis. Answers to the questions are given with the corresponding findings from the tests used.

Hypothesis 1

H1: There will be a significant negative relationship between satisfaction with current certification courses and the perception of the need for more graduate business courses.

A Pearson Correlation was conducted to test hypothesis I. The test was significant in a positive direction $r(332) = .423, p \leq .001$ (2-tailed), $n = 333$. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Because the test revealed a positive direction, the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 2

H2: There will be a significant positive relationship between satisfaction with current school administrator certification courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

A Pearson Correlation was conducted to test hypothesis 2. The test was not significant in a positive direction $r(332) = .102, p \leq .064$ (2-tailed), $n = 333$. Because the test was not significant, the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 3

H3: There will be a significant positive relationship between experience and administrative skills rating (self reported).

A Pearson Correlation was conducted to test hypothesis 3. The test was not significant in a positive direction $r(332) = .097, p < .080$ (2-tailed), $n = 333$. Because the test was not significant, the hypothesis was rejected.

Hypothesis 4

H4: There will be a significant negative relationship between perception of the need for more graduate business courses and administrative skills rating (self reported).

A Pearson Correlation was conducted to test hypothesis 4. The test was not significant in a negative direction $r(332) = .065, p < .236$ (2-tailed), $n = 333$. Because the test was not significant, the hypothesis was rejected.

In conclusion, hypothesis 1 was significant, but in the opposite direction and thus rejected. The inference is that superintendents are satisfied with current appointment methodology, but recognize the need for graduate business education. All other hypotheses were also rejected.

Ancillary Findings

The demographic data offered an opportunity for further analysis of the perceptions of school superintendents regarding their perceptions of their current business capabilities and the need for additional graduate business education. An ANOVA was conducted using the demographic information and item responses provided by the participants. The purpose of this additional analysis was to determine what, if any, additional significant findings might further inform the analysis of superintendents' perceptions regarding the extent of their business knowledge. This analysis provided only one test that yielded a significant difference.

Respondents were grouped by the size of the student population in their respective districts. Student populations of <1000 were classified as small, student populations ≥ 1000 but <5000 were classed as medium, and student populations ≥ 5000 were classed as large. Superintendents of large districts self-reported significantly higher levels of business-related administrative skills than superintendents from districts with smaller student populations. Small school superintendents reported a mean response of 6.78, medium school superintendents reported a mean response of 7.14, and large school superintendents reported a mean response of 7.20 on a scale of 9 – 0 to self-reported business-related administrative skills. The ANOVA yielded: (a) satisfaction with current certification, ($F[2, 292]=.168, p = .846$), (b) need for graduate business education, ($F[2, 292]=.398, p = .672$), and (c) self-reported administrative skills, ($F[2, 292]= 3.251, p = .040$). However, no other significant differences were found and consequently not reported. Respondents rated certification programs and the need for graduate business education in a similar fashion regardless of gender, level of graduate education, traditional or nontraditional preparation, geographical region, or experiences not associated with education.

Summary

This chapter presented the descriptive data and analysis of the data from item responses that were provided by the superintendents participating in the study. The general purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. A further purpose was to measure the perception of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process may increase the initial success of administrators.

The study was conducted using the methodology described in chapter three. Nine-hundred-sixty-nine geographically diverse persons, identified as superintendents by state department of education websites were invited to participate by completing an approved survey. Three-hundred-thirty-eight surveys were analyzed to test the hypotheses posed in chapter three.

Each hypothesis was rejected. The Pearson Correlation testing of the data for hypothesis one produced a significant result. However, the result was in the opposite direction of the predicted result and necessarily rejected. No other tests of the hypothesis produced any significant results. The post hoc analysis of data yielded one finding of significance.

CHAPTER V

SUMMARY

The purpose of this study was to explore the comprehensiveness of educational leadership programs regarding the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators. The study included a discussion of current licensing practices, academic governance, basic business requirements for leadership and management, basic financial literacy, a review of generally accepted accounting principles under the direction of the Financial Accounting Standards Board and the Government Accounting Standards Board, and the issues of adequacy, equity, and taxation. The issue of buildings and grounds and the potential relationship to learning outcomes was discussed. A further purpose was to measure the perception of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process might increase the initial success of administrators.

Discussion

The literature review supports the concept that superintendents understand change management and fiscal responsibility. Survey respondents support these concepts by indicating the specific need for classes in management and fund accounting. The survey results were somewhat surprising in that superintendents, in general, did not indicate support for the courses of study they took for licensure. Another surprising outcome of the survey was that respondents did not report higher levels of skills and knowledge associated with management, fiscal understanding, and understanding physical property and maintenance. The primary reason these results were surprising was because the respondents mean level of experience exceeded 18 years.

It was interesting to note the one significant ancillary finding from the post hoc analysis. Superintendents of large districts self-reported significantly higher levels of business-related administrative skills than superintendents from districts with smaller student populations. The data do not allow for interpretation of whether the respondents from large districts, who rated themselves higher in this skill area, are actually better skilled or merely perceive themselves to be better skilled because of additional personnel support for business management typically found in large districts.

Implications

In light of the previous section's discussion of findings, it is worthwhile to explore the implications of the present study. The following sections address implications for practice and further research.

Implications for Practice

Superintendents report satisfaction in the position. Further, respondents indicated that leaving the classroom was a good decision. However, respondents did not uniformly give graduate programs credit for success. Survey results indicated that success primarily came from on the job experience. Respondents specifically disagreed with the concept that licensing or certification leads to managerial or administrative success.

Changes in Hiring Practice

Intuitively, superintendents coming from the teaching ranks should have the ability to relate to the particular or peculiar problems associated with classroom teaching. However, this author was unable to find any definitive studies that link classroom success to success as an administrator. However, the reader should note that no direct question regarding classroom experience was probed by this study.

The states of Illinois, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Ohio, and West Virginia do not require classroom-teaching experience to obtain certification as a superintendent. Specifically in states with union recognition, administrators are coming out from under the governing master teacher contract, to either an individual administrative contract, or as in the case of New York City, a contract within the principal's bargaining unit. The change from teacher to administrator requires a change of mindset that often sets off an internal, psychological conflict that may require years of service as an administrator to overcome. Because teachers do not receive management training, other than some classroom management techniques, managerial acts are foreign and unnatural.

Smaller or rural districts often have difficulty recruiting administrators from outside the district. This leaves the difficult prospect of internal promotion for a teacher whose only qualification is the appropriate license. As the survey clearly shows, responding superintendents do not equate credentialing with leadership success.

The states of Florida, Hawaii, Michigan, Nevada, North Carolina, South Dakota, Tennessee, Washington, and Wyoming, and the District of Columbia do not require superintendent licensure (National Center for Education Information a). Interestingly, no license is necessary in both bargaining unit and open-shop states. The inference is that not all bargaining units believe that superintendents necessarily have to have classroom teaching experience.

Unless uniform licensing or credentialing is implemented or imposed across the country, classroom teaching experience may or may not be a requirement for superintendent appointments. Silky (2008) reports that superintendent application pools are declining and that boards need to consider many factors other than just experience. Silky also reports that match is an important indicator of success. "Success as a

superintendent is heavily dependent on the match of the individual to the specific district. Many very successful chief executives have struggled earlier in their careers simply because of a mismatch with a particular school district” (Silky, 2008, p.1).

Changes in Education/Credentialing of Superintendents

Superintendents have very different responsibilities from other public school officials. Superintendents represent the district to community members; represent employees to the school board; often negotiate contracts for purchasing capital items; represent the school board during employment contract negotiations; handle employment disciplinary issues; and, address a myriad of additional duties. Superintendents rarely enter classrooms individually to assess teaching or curriculum delivery. However, five of the typical nine core graduate courses required for educational leadership programs contain significant elements related to the classroom.

Survey respondents indicated agreement with the concept of graduate business courses to help with initial success. These results are interesting because of the self-reported high-levels of administrative and business skills. Yet, respondents specifically agreed with the concept of including graduate business courses in certification programs. A reasonable explanation of this seeming conundrum may be that the generally prescribed courses for certification, combined with experiences in various intermediate administrative positions, fails to adequately equip superintendents with the level of business skills required to perform at a consistently high level of success.

Twelve respondents made substantive comments on the survey. A North Carolina superintendent responded, “I have been a superintendent for 24 years. A degree or selected classes from the business field should be required of every principal and superintendent. The courses I had in business have helped me far more than those in

education.” Another North Carolina superintendent stated, “Coursework may be a portion of the reason [for effectiveness], but a person with the skill to be an administrator is only enhancing their skills through their coursework.” This comment illustrates a weakness in the current self-selection of teachers or other persons to become administrators. No method, other than graduate courses, is used to identify potential persons for administrative positions. Persons who are not administrators generally have very few opportunities to learn or demonstrate managerial or administrative skills within educational settings. Several respondents specifically commented on the need for quality mentorships from other experienced superintendents. Perhaps the most cogent comment came from a Mississippi superintendent. She responded, “There are a lot of administrators who have completed programs, but, he/she doesn’t have a good understanding of the implementation process.”

Traditional licensing or certification is generally accomplished through programs in educational leadership or administration sponsored by a university college of education. Typically, a single graduate degree in educational leadership or educational administration is the formal education requirement for state licensing as an administrator. Some states require specific courses regarding the superintendency to obtain a superintendent’s license.

According to the respondents, traditional route superintendents would be well served with a course in fund accounting. This course could be based on the various states’ school finance manuals. Content in marketing the school district could be based on current marketing techniques taught for non-profit organizations, combined with active membership in the local chamber of commerce. Contract language and negotiation courses, taught by an attorney, would be important in states that recognize bargaining

units and may be very useful for all superintendents. Statistical sampling and test interpretation could be important tools to assist with curriculum alignment and course offerings. Additionally, a statistical understanding of demographics would assist a superintendent provide solid background information for school placements, class sizes, course offerings, and provide localized workplace educational support. Physical building maintenance and construction could be taught by architectural or engineering professionals. Opening the superintendency to experienced managers or business professionals without the constraints of specific licensing or credentialing requirements may attract persons to education who would otherwise not be interested in leading an educational enterprise.

Survey respondents clearly agreed that initial success as an administrator could be assisted with graduate classes in fund accounting, communications, marketing, and management. Furthermore, respondents indicated that administrative licensing did not equate to success as an administrator. The overall implications were that licensing courses were not significantly important contributing factors to success as an administrator.

Implications for Accreditation

This author does not presume to suggest that a single study serve as a foundation for an overhaul of accreditation criteria for school leader preparation programs. Most persons do not enter education as a career with the intent to go into the business operations of school districts. The divide between academics and business affairs has existed in American public schools since the establishment of a school committee in 1645 by the Dorchester, Massachusetts town meeting. Dorchester town meeting records, in the original old English verbiage that, "that three able and sufficient men of the Plantation

shalbe chosen to bee wardens or ourseers of the Schoole, who shall haue the Charge, ouer-sight and ordering thereof, and of all things Concerning the same"(Early, 2008, ¶20). Perhaps this divide can be bridged by the schools of education and schools of business by agreeing on some common standards involving financial, management, and ethics courses.

Implications for Future Research

Administrators are generally titled assistant principal or sub-school principal, principal, and superintendent. Realistically, the duties of each position require very different learning and skill sets. Each position has very defined roles and duties.

The current licensing and certification process is often a one-size-fits-all approach. Assistant principals and principals typically deal with the discipline of students. But assistant principals often have little direct responsibility for supervision of faculty or staff. Assistant principals may complete classroom evaluations, but generally do not have direct report responsibility. Principals need to deal with the discipline of professional staff and faculty, and non-professional staff. Discipline is noted in each job description; however, the skill set and managerial abilities are entirely different.

Superintendents generally only become involved in discipline at the extreme edges, such as the expulsion of students or the non-renewal of professional contracts.

Consequently, different levels of certification could offer administrative aspirants the opportunity to better align professional classes and duties. Assistant principals could be certified or licensed through a certificate program that requires classes in basic management, public speaking, adolescent behavior management, curriculum alignment, and scheduling techniques and methodology. Principals could be provisionally licensed with the courses for assistant principals combined with a managerial accounting course

for non-accountants, personnel management, leadership, school law and, written communications. Professional licensing could occur with the completion of a paid internship outside the applicant's current district or completion of a program sponsored by an organization such as the Broad Foundation.

Questions Arising from Study

The following questions, which were suggested by the combination of the literature review and data analysis, offer possibilities for additional future research.

01. What do superintendents perceive their job duties to be?
02. Why do superintendents believe that on-the-job training and experience are more important than graduate classes?
03. What relationship exists between licensing, certification and success as a superintendent?
04. What relationship exists between teaching experiences and success as a superintendent?
05. What relationship exists between non-educational managerial experience and success as a superintendent?
06. Does a transitional ladder exist between the positions of assistant principal, principal, and superintendent?
07. What relationship exists between self-reported skills and student achievement?
08. What can graduate education programs offer to better align classes with delineated administrative duties?
09. What can schools of education, departments of education, and schools of business do to offer courses recognized for certification that provide skills aligned with administrative duties?

10. What can schools of education, departments of education, and schools of business do to attract non-traditional administration candidates?
11. How can districts better identify potential administrators?
12. How can districts better promote administrative mentoring?
13. Is there a relationship between superintendent perceptions regarding the adequacy of preparation in business courses and student performance indicators?

A study of the leadership styles and effectiveness of current traditional and nontraditional superintendents to determine district success would provide a useful contrast. The study of leadership styles may provide insight to the degree of autonomy and authority delegated by traditional and nontraditional superintendents. A study of the sustainability of programs initiated by traditional and nontraditional superintendents may provide an insight to success in academic and managerial terms. This may provide a systematic methodology to determine if nontraditional superintendents view employability skills education more favorably than a traditional college preparation curriculum. Further study of district budgets under the leadership of traditional and nontraditional superintendents may indicate a significant difference in understanding the relationship of fiscal and physical surroundings and district success. Finally, it might be useful to conduct research that contrasts the nature of preparation for school administrators with executives in other sectors where administrators supervise caretaker professionals, without necessarily possessing the credentials and skills sets of the supervised professionals (e.g., hospital administrators). These studies may be able to significantly add to the body of literature addressing school leader preparation.

Summary

Part of the purpose of this study was to explore the extent of appropriate business knowledge attained by public school administrators and to measure superintendent's perceptions of how the inclusion of specific business-oriented graduate education in the certification process might increase the initial success of administrators. The study included a literature review that investigated the history and execution of business and educational management. The literature review also explored the implications of cash management and fiscal planning and property maintenance.

The data collected and analyzed from the survey instrument indicated that superintendents generally agree that additional business courses could assist with initial success as an administrator. Specifically, superintendents indicated that a management course should be a part of administrative licensing and that a course in fund accounting would be helpful.

Many more questions arose from this study. Only significant research can answer these questions. This author hopes to produce substantive literature answering these questions.

APPENDIX A



THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI

Institutional Review Board

118 College Drive #5147
 Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001
 Tel: 601.266.6820
 Fax: 601.266.5509
 www.usm.edu/irb

HUMAN SUBJECTS PROTECTION REVIEW COMMITTEE NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Human Subjects Protection Review Committee in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
- Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 28021201

PROJECT TITLE: The Perceptions of K-12 Superintendents Regarding Inclusion of Graduate Business Education Within Administration Certification Programs

PROPOSED PROJECT DATES: 02/15/08 to 06/30/08

PROJECT TYPE: Dissertation or Thesis

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATORS: Howard Le and Smith

COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education & Psychology

DEPARTMENT: Educational Leadership & Research

FUNDING AGENCY: N/A

HSPRC COMMITTEE ACTION: Expedited Review Approval

PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 04/08/08 to 04/07/09

Lawrence A. Hosman

 Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
 HSPRC Chair

4-9-08

 Date

H. Leland Smith
118 College Drive #5036
Hattiesburg, MS 39402

APPENDIX B

February 7, 2008

Dr. Mark Jones, Superintendent
Pennsville School District
30 Church Street
Pennsville, NJ 08070

Re: Investigation of Educational Leadership program outcomes vs. Actual Administration job Requirements

Dear Dr. Jones:

As a successful public school administrator, your assistance will be greatly appreciated by taking approximately 20 minutes of your valuable time to complete and return the questionnaire sent to geographically diverse superintendents to study and research the comprehensiveness of graduate Educational Leadership curricula. The questionnaire was designed specifically for this study. The risk of breach of confidentiality is minimized through the anonymous process employed. The questionnaires are not labeled or numbered in any fashion to determine origin of response. State of origin is the only potential identifier.

Your considered and straightforward responses will be greatly appreciated and contribute to the body of knowledge regarding the appropriate education of school leaders. Hopefully, this study will be accepted for publication by the Kappan or other scholarly publication. Perhaps NCATE may be interested in the results.

Your participation is voluntary and is guaranteed to remain anonymous. All survey data will be shredded upon conclusion of the analysis. Of course nonparticipation or withdrawing by not responding cannot have any penalty attached. Returning a completed questionnaire implies your consent to use the information supplied in the study.

Obviously, the greater the response rate the greater the opportunity to provide meaningful conclusions. If you are interested in receiving a finished copy of the study or have questions regarding the study, please call 1-601-266-4446 or make a request to the above address.

"This project has been reviewed by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, Box 5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406, (601) 266-6820"

Sincerely,

H. Leland Smith, MBA, EdS
Ph.D. Candidate
The University of Southern Mississippi

Enclosure

APPENDIX C (Continued)

Please respond to the following statements by marking the appropriate box with an X.

Strongly Disagree = SD Disagree = D Somewhat Disagree = SWD

Somewhat Agree = SWA Agree = A Strongly Agree = SA NA = Not Applicable

		SD	D	S W D	S W A	A S A	N S A
11	I am very satisfied working as an administrator						
12	I am very satisfied with my current position						
13	Certification courses in graduate Educational Leadership are all I need to succeed as an administrator						
14	I would not change any of my graduate education or Educational Leadership courses leading to my certification or my graduate degree						
15	I learned how to market my school or district in my graduate education program						
16	I learned how to preside over a site-based management system in my graduate education program						
17	I am an effective manager because of the courses in my certification program						
18	A combined M.B.A./Ph.D. in Educational Management may be helpful to administrators in any size school district						
19	I learned how to be an effective communicator from the courses in my graduate education program						
20	An Ed.D. provides the courses necessary to manage an educational physical plant						
21	A graduate course in negotiation of contract language and grievances would have helped me be more successful						
22	Management training should be an important part of administrative certification						
23	Administrators are trained regarding budget matters upon certification						
24	I was trained in human relations and personnel management in my graduate education program						
25	An administrative license means the administrator will be successful in managing schools						
26	I would encourage teachers to pursue a career in educational administration because of the quality and diversity of graduate education courses provide a basis for initial success as a principal or superintendent						
27	A course in fund accounting would have helped provide a basis for success in my fiscal duties as an administrator						
28	I would be a better administrator if I understood cash flow when I was first certified and working as an administrator						
29	A marketing course is essential for educational leadership because of open enrollment & private school competition						
30	A graduate communications class would have helped my initial success as an administrator						
31	I am well qualified to build relationships with school stakeholders because of my administrator certification courses						
32	I help other district personnel create safe-working environments because of my classes leading to certification						
33	My understanding of leadership was learned in my licensing program						
34	I value business experience because my graduate education emphasized understanding district stakeholders						
35	I succeed in passing on management skills through an organized mentor system learned in my licensing program						

This survey has been reviewed and approved by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board. Please make any comments regarding your thoughts on the survey or topic.

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