

A STUDY OF THE CAREER PATHS AND LEADERSHIP OF MALE PRINCIPALS IN THE
ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF OHIO

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To future male elementary school principals

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“The key to successful leadership today is influence, not authority.”

Kenneth Blanchard, author

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative biographical study was to develop a profile of five men in elementary principalships in Ohio public schools and gather information about specific career paths followed by these men. The study examined the influence social role theory had on male elementary educator career paths. In addition, the study explored the role that adult development theory, leadership styles, and the ethic of care played in shaping the career paths of these school leaders.

The majority of research dealing with career paths of elementary school principals has been conducted in the context of the female principal. Little research, if any, has been completed on the topic of male elementary school principals. Research conducted in this study attempted to define the life experiences that contributed to the career paths and leadership of male elementary school principals as well opportunities seized by male elementary school principals toward achieving personal and professional success. Furthermore, research involved the long term career goals of the male educator prior to and after attaining the elementary school principalship.

The findings of this study support that male elementary school principal's career paths are similar in nature. As they approached the time for a college education, personal and social forces repel the men away from a possible career in elementary education. After several years teaching at the secondary or primary education level or working in careers outside of education, some men feel a desire to work with young children in a school setting. This desire evolves from a decision that caring for the well-being of young children allows for personal and professional fulfillment. After several years administrating over the development of young children, the male elementary school principal may seek other opportunities in the field of education.

The challenges facing males who desire to and become elementary school principals are significant and cause many males to look elsewhere for careers. If the current trend continues, males occupying elementary school principalships will be a rarity. In order for the trend to be reversed, a cultural shift must take place in our society and in colleges of education. Males need to strengthen their position as educational leaders at all grade levels. Colleges of education must focus significant amount of time developing an ethic of care and philosophy and psychology of moral development among their male education majors.

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First and foremost, I thank God for the strength, wisdom, and health he has provided to me. To my wife of many days, Nancy, I can never give you enough thanks and praise for your countless hours raising our four children during my endeavor to complete this dissertation.

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Special thanks to Gene, Alan, Henry, Calvin, and Van for participating in this study. Their experiences and leadership abilities give hope and direction to future male elementary school teachers and administrators. Furthermore, their desire to work with young children supports the ideal that men do have a place in the education of our nation's youth.

To Dr. Pauken: I would like to extend a special thanks to you for the never ending hours you have spent instructing, guiding, and advising me in pursuit of my doctorate degree. Your work ethic and respect for others is contagious, admirable, and inspirational. You have shown to me that there is still room for an ethical way of life in the midst of an unethical world.

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Lastly, I would like to thank the staff at Paulding Elementary for their generous support and encouragement of my endeavors.

DEDICATION

While my grandparents have passed away and are unable to celebrate in my accomplishment, their struggles and accomplishments during their lifetime have inspired me to utilize my God given abilities to attain my dreams.....

My grandfather T. Frank Kohart was born to German immigrants in a sod house in Kansas. From this difficult beginning, he learned the importance of hard work and a desire to make his place in the world better than when he found it. After ninety years of life, he left behind to his grandchildren a challenge to do the same.

My grandmother Gladys (Cunningham) Kohart was born to an Irish family and tapped into the take charge trait of the Irish by raising four children while teaching in a local public school system. Everyone who knew Gladys could testify that she enjoyed and treasured her seventy-six years of life. In the last quarter century before her death, grandma managed to find the time to teach all her grandchildren everything she thought they should know and be able to do.

My grandfather Raymond Miller was born to German immigrants in the rural area of Northwest Ohio. While much of his eighty-five years of life was spent earning a living to support his wife and two children, he found personal pleasure in simple conversation with others and a card game. He also found happiness knowing that his grandchildren completed their education and would have as good of life as he had.

My grandmother Clara (Beaulieu) Miller was born in Michigan to a Chippewa Indian squaw and Frenchman from Canada. The ancestral combination produced a very tenacious and spunky little lady who managed to maintain her own way of living during her ninety-six years of life. My grandmother treasured life and let nothing stand in her way of enjoying it. Her

enjoyment shone on her face every time she read in the newspaper about the accomplishments of her grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Her visits to card club or the local senior center gave her the opportunity to tell others about her grandchildren's accomplishments. I will be the second of her six grandchildren to receive their doctorate degree. I remember to this day her words; "What did Ray and I ever do to deserve such marvelous and talented grandchildren?" The answer of course is nothing but simply doing their best with what God had bestowed upon them.

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CHAPTER 1. INTRODUCTION

Background of the Problem

Over the past two decades, there has been a continual decline in the number of male principals in our nation's elementary schools. Male elementary principals have declined from a peak in 1978 when they comprised 82% of the population (Pharis & Zachariya, 1978) to 58% in 1984 and just 44.9% in 2004 (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). Furthermore, elementary school principals typically begin their careers as elementary teachers and with only 9% of all elementary teachers being of the male gender (NCES, 2004) and just 3% of Kindergarten through third grade teachers (Allen, 1993), the prospects for a reversal in the downward trend does not look promising.

The reasons for the small percentage of males having chosen a career in elementary education and administration (Gamble & Wilkins, 1997; Klecker & Loadman, 1999; Wood & Hoag, 1993) center around the perception that elementary education as a career is better suited to women than men (Brookhart & Loadman, 1996; Siefert, 1988). In addition, the issues of low salaries and perceived low status, few male peers in the school, and the possibility of accusations of child-abuse and the questioning of their sexual orientation and preference (Rice & Goessling, 2005) serve as barriers to male career choice in elementary education.

The urgency to restore a gender balance in teaching and administration at the elementary education level is driven by the idea that restoring balance and diversity will provide children with a more balanced education (DeCorse & Vogtle, 1997). King (1998), for example, suggests that we need more men at the elementary level because it is culturally appropriate to have a gender balance in schools as in other workplaces.

In addition, by increasing the number of male educators at the elementary level, male

teachers and principals will be more readily available to serve as role models encouraging children about the appropriateness and importance of their early educational years (Montecinos & Neilsen, 1997). Other researchers point to the notion that male students need male role models to show them that education is important and worthwhile (Barnard et al., 2000; Lahelma, 2000; Rice & Goessling, 2005). Likewise, male educators and administrators are needed to make-up for the lack of adult males in young boys' lives. A study by Brutsaert and Brake (1994), for example, noted that primary school boys appear to be negatively affected by a school environment dominated by females. The effects included (1) a decrease in their self-esteem, (2) a decrease in their study and school commitment, and (3) an increase in their sensitivity to stress. Studies such as this have spurred a widespread call to increase the representation of male teachers in kindergarten through sixth grade (Bittner & Cooney, 2001).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative biographical study was to develop a profile of five men in elementary principalships in Ohio public schools and gather information about specific career paths followed by these men. The study presented information about their personal characteristics, family backgrounds, school situations, educational backgrounds, and the career paths which led to their present leadership roles. The study examined the influence social role theory had on male elementary educator career paths. In addition, the study explored the role that adult development theory, leadership styles, and the ethic of care played in shaping the career paths of these school leaders.

The majority of research dealing with career paths of elementary school principals has been conducted in the context of the female principal. Little research, if any, has been completed on the topic of male elementary school principals. The present study intended to examine the

challenges that men in education experience as they move along in their career path toward and as an elementary school principal. In addition, this study explores the qualities that male elementary school principals feel have led to personal and professional success as an elementary school principal.

This study is important for several reasons. First of all, it provides insight to the challenges facing men who desire to and become elementary school principals. Secondly, the study illustrates the leadership practices that allow some males to have rewarding experiences as elementary principals. Lastly, this study illuminates the value of having males in the position of elementary school principal.

A questionnaire was distributed to all male elementary school principals in Ohio. The questionnaire was administered for the deeper purpose of maximum variation sampling, enabling the researcher to identify and select five subjects for the qualitative phase of the study. Otherwise, the questionnaire was used for descriptive purposes. Interviews of five male elementary school principals assisted in establishing how each of the five men seized opportunities, transcended obstacles, and achieved success in the elementary school principalship.

Research Questions

1. What life experiences contributed to the career paths and leadership of male elementary school principals?
2. What leadership skills and styles has the male elementary school principals utilized toward achieving personal and professional success?
3. What are the long term career goals of the male educator prior to and after attaining the elementary school principalship?

Theoretical Frameworks

The elementary education field remains predominantly occupied by women. The small proportion of male educators in the elementary school setting has historical and cultural roots. These roots might be better understood through the unique connections offered by the following theoretical frames.

The Social Role Theory proposed by Eagly (1987) claims that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles due to the expectations that society puts on them. In the case of the elementary education field, males tend to steer away from a career in elementary education because historically and culturally elementary education has not been perceived by society as a male profession.

The relatively small number of males who challenge the expectations of society and pursue a career in elementary education is well documented. Data from four major universities with strong traditions in teacher education indicated that the male gender represented two percent of early childhood majors, 11% of elementary majors, 31% of middle school majors, and 45% of secondary teacher education majors (Nielson, 1995). According to the NEA (1997), the percentage of males at the elementary level has declined steadily since 1981, dropping from 17.7 percent to 9.1 percent in 1996.

For a large percentage of male elementary educators, elementary teaching is a doorway into occupations with more status and institutional power than classroom teaching. Nielson's (1995) study of the long term professional aspirations of male elementary education majors indicate that 39% of the men aspired to professional positions in educational administration. The reasons for the male educator to explore the career path toward an elementary school

principalship may be understood through the adult Development Theory proposed by Levinson (1978).

Levinson's (1978) theory proposed that adult life is made up of alternating periods of stable life structures and transition periods during which the old life structure is reexamined, adjusted, or altered. Furthermore, Levinson claimed that an individual's life structure is shaped by the social and physical environment. Many individuals' life structures primarily involve family and work, although other variables such as religion, race, and economic status are often important.

The male educator's aspirations in administration may be driven by a desire for power, prestige, or status. Furthermore, later career prospects in administration are important to teachers for the monetary rewards and job opportunities. Brewer (1996) noted from his study that many teachers do move into administrative positions and there are significant salary gains from doing so. Personal or family fiscal needs may be the trigger for the life structure transition.

While financial rewards may drive males toward administrative opportunities, research also indicates that males may engage in other life structures such as administrative opportunities for reasons other than financial rewards. Gerson (1993) noted that males have begun choosing careers that emphasize service to society and personal satisfaction over extrinsic rewards such as money and prestige. Decorse and Vogtle (1997) added that men have become disillusioned with traditional male professions and attracted to less lucrative but more personally satisfying lines of work. Furthermore, they have become more involved in child care and in experiences making clear how much pleasure men can derive from caring for children.

Whether an individual chooses to be an elementary school principal because of money, prestige, or a desire to work with young children, success and effectiveness at the job may

depend heavily on the principal's transformational leadership style and ethic of care. Burns (1978) proposed a leadership theory that he labeled as transformational. According to this leadership style, leaders set high standards for behavior and establish themselves as role models by gaining the trust and confidence of their followers. These leaders are innovators and encourage followers to develop their full potential.

The development of the full potential of school staff members and students through the leadership of the elementary school principal may be fulfilled through the application of an ethic of care (Noddings, 1984; Mayeroff, 1995; Starratt, 1991). The ethic of care was first described by Gilligan (1982) as a moral platform built upon the recognition of needs, relationship, and response. Individuals who are guided by an ethic of care consider each leadership decision and the potential impact of their decision making on others.

According to Starratt (1991), the ethic of care usually centers on the demands of caring relationships which is viewed as total consideration and commitment. The demands may have no basis in contractual or legalistic points of view but instead based in relationships and recognizing the value of another person. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) believe that their research confirms that an ethic of care provides administrators with a valuable perspective to guide their moral reasoning and decision making. Additionally, it can provide an overarching ethical framework to guide administrative decisions. Likewise, an ethic of care can help educational leaders determine which segments of a particular leadership model or models is needed in solving the day to day situations and problems encountered by the administrator.

Significance of the Study

This study expanded the body of literature on the career paths of male elementary principals. This was accomplished through an introspection of individual life stories within the backdrop of the four theoretical frames.

Individual life stories contributed information regarding the impact social role theory had on the collegiate determination to pursue a career in elementary education. Individual life stories also contributed information involving the connection adult development theory had to the career move from educator to administrator. Individual life stories likewise contributed toward recording the importance of transformational leadership theory in the leadership of the male principal in a female dominated environment. Lastly, individual life stories contributed information about the nature and degree of an ethic of care leadership style demonstrated by the male elementary educator and administrator.

In addition, this study provided information for collegiate schools of education, state educational officials, state school administrative associations, and local boards of education regarding the struggles and barriers males experienced while pursuing a career as an elementary school principal. This study also identified the leadership styles that male elementary school principals employed for effective administration of their schools.

Definitions of Terms

Adult development – Increasingly higher, more integrated levels of functioning and understanding. Adults continually reappraise the choices they have made and make adjustments in preparation for stages of development yet to come (Bee, 2000).

Biographical study – The study of a single individual and his experience as told to the researcher (Creswell, 1998).

Career paths – The route individuals choose to take in attaining and maintaining a specific occupation.

Elementary school – Referring to schools with children in kindergarten through grade six.

Elementary School Principal – The individual contracted to lead an elementary school, excluding the title of Assistant Principal.

Ethic of care – Concern for the welfare, protection, or enhancement of the cared for. This motivational state and leadership style is linked with a commitment to the growth of the recipient of care (Noddings, 1984).

Family background – A description of the family structure, parental occupations, expectations, and significant childhood experiences of the male elementary principal.

Leadership Styles – Relatively stable patterns of behavior that are manifested by leaders (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001).

Life history – A form of biographical writing in which the researcher reports an extensive record of a person's life as told to the researcher (Creswell, 1998).

Personal characteristics – Specific descriptions of a person such as gender, age, race, religion, marital status, and children.

Social Role Theory – The principle that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles due to the expectations that society put on them (Eagly, 1987).

Delimitations

This qualitative biographical study was limited to exploring the career paths of five male elementary principals in Ohio.

Limitation

The researcher cannot guarantee that participants responded honestly and sincerely to the questionnaire and data collected from the interviews of the small sample size of five male elementary school principals cannot be generalized to the entire population of male elementary school principals.

Organization of the Remaining Chapters

The second chapter of this study presents a review of literature on male elementary school principals and the relationship between the previously mentioned social role theory, adult development theory, transformational leadership styles, and the ethic of care. The third chapter of this study demonstrates the methodology used in the study of the career paths of male elementary school principals. Chapter four presents the questionnaire results from the male elementary school principal survey. Chapters five through nine presents the life histories of the five men that participated in this study. The tenth chapter of this study compares the life histories of the five male elementary school principals. Chapter eleven is the final chapter and includes a discussion and conclusions regarding the career paths and leadership of male principals in the elementary schools of Ohio.

CHAPTER 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter presents a summary of the literature related to male elementary school principals and their career paths. Specifically, the chapter reviews literature on the elementary school principalship and the influence of social role theory, adult development theory, leadership styles, and the ethic of care.

The Elementary School Principalship

History and Demographics

By the late nineteenth century in both America and Canada, most urban school systems had graded elementary and secondary schools with some form of a building principal who reported to a district officer (Tyack & Hansot, 1990). Rice (1969) described the responsibilities of principals as “lord and masters of their own schools”. In some cities, one principal might be in charge of a number of schools while in others, the principal was little more than a clerk whose job was to keep attendance. In the one and two room schools in rural America, the principal simply did not exist.

During the past century, the typical elementary school has evolved from a group of students supervised by one teacher to a group of students and teachers led by one administrator. The internal organization of a school being led by a principal and supervising other teachers significantly restructured power relations in schools. The principal became an educational manager in an increasingly complex school bureaucracy (Rousmaniere, 2007).

Well into the twentieth century, professional issues plagued the elementary principalship. The principalship retained many of the characteristics of the old head teacher with many job descriptions, teaching responsibilities, and low status. Elementary school principals were more likely than secondary school principals to teach classes, be involved with direct interaction with

children in the hallway, playground, lunch room, and in community and social service organizations (Ayers, 1929). In addition, gender inequality dominated most elementary schools across the country. The elementary school had long been considered both the domain of women and an institution that resisted formal bureaucratic order (Rousmaniere, 2007). In the United States between 1900 and the 1950s, over two-thirds of American elementary schools had women principals. Most of these positions were in rural schools, but women were also prominent in city schools, holding over three-fourths of elementary principalships in cities under 30,000 and well over half in many of the largest cities (Tyack & Hansot, 1982).

By the 1960s, the elementary principalship in the United States had been redesigned to align with the gendered norms of the day with women located in the classroom while men occupied the principal's office. Institutional and personal definitions of manhood and womanhood played out in the selection of who would hold the elementary school leadership position (Rousmaniere, 2007). University programs in educational administration paved the way for veterans of wars to apply their tuition waivers for graduate courses. Married men were also targeted to resolve a supposed masculinity crisis caused by too many women in elementary schools. The athletic, married male principal offered school districts a vision of stability and professionalism (Blount, 1998). The impact of these ideologies was noted in the tremendous decrease in the percentage of women in the principalship. By the 1970s, women held less than a quarter of the principalships in the United States (Shakeshaft, 1985).

At the turn of the 21st century, the elementary school principalship once again found itself redefining gender equality within the professional position. During the 1993-1994 school year, the majority of elementary school principals were men but by the 1999-2000 school year, the majority were women. These numbers reflect a significant decline from a peak in 1978 when

men comprised 82% of the elementary school principalship population (Pharis & Zachariya, 1978) to 58% in 1984 (NCES, 2004). Between 1993-1994 and 1999-2000, the proportion of elementary school principals who were women rose from 41 percent to 52 percent, and this percentage increased to 56 percent during the 2003-2004 school year (NAESP, 2006). Females remain more likely to choose a career path that begins in elementary schools while males tend to begin their careers in leadership at the middle or high school level (Graham, 1997; McNergney & Herbert, 1995).

The future trend does not bode well regarding the possible number of male elementary school principals. In practical matters, elementary school principalships are filled by individuals who previously occupied elementary teaching positions. A recent report by the National Education Association (2005) stated that the gender composition of the nation's elementary school teachers was 259,263 males and 1,558,375 females. In Ohio, the elementary school teacher gender ratio was 15,275 males and 68,478 females. The increasing gender ratio imbalance of elementary teachers suggests that the future number of male elementary school principals will continue to dwindle.

Adding to the already dwindling numbers of prospective principal candidates, retirements may create an even greater stress on the number of male elementary school principals. Nationwide, in 1993-1994, 43% of elementary school principals were over 50 years of age; in 1999-2000, 54% were 50+ years old. The number of younger principals (under 40 years of age) only increased from seven to 10 percent (National Association of Elementary School Principals, 2003).

In addition to the already small number of prospective male candidates for the principalship position, paragraph (A)(4) of rule 3301-24-04 of the Ohio Administrative Code

(2006) further limits the number of male teachers from seeking an elementary school principalship. The code specifies, among other things, that the individual must have completed two years of successful teaching under a provisional or professional teacher license at the age levels for which the principal license is sought. Hence, an individual seeking an elementary school principal license must have taught in elementary school grades for at least two years (grades K-6 in Ohio). Nationally, the majority of men teaching in elementary schools are clustered in grades 4 through 6, with less than 3% teaching kindergarten through third grade (Allan, 1993). Ironically, male elementary teachers possessing an elementary school teaching certificate may often teach at the 7th and 8th grade levels, thus excluding themselves from being able to obtain the elementary principal license in Ohio and other states with similar regulations. Accordingly, this rule prevents male teachers holding certification or licensure in grades 7-12 from obtaining an elementary principal license in Ohio.

As a means of offsetting the current and foreseeable shortage of principals, the Ohio Department of Education (2006) has developed rules for alternative principal licensure (Ohio Administrative Code sec. 3301-24-11). This pathway allows for educators and non-educators to obtain a principal license. Individuals must be willing to meet the requirements set forth in the ruling and a board of education must be willing to hire the person for the job.

As for those who currently hold the post, the typical male elementary school principal is most likely to be white, have a master's degree, be between the ages of 50 and 54, and have taught between 10 and 19 years before becoming a principal. He became a principal at age 36, earns \$60,285, works ten hours a day and devotes up to eight additional hours on school-related activities each week. If he were starting all over, he would still choose to become a principal and considers it his final career goal (Doud & Keller, 1998).

In an attempt to identify several common characteristics, The National Center for Education Statistics (NAESP, 2006) recently completed a survey of the nation's elementary school principals. The results show that the number of public elementary school principals grew from 54,000 in 1993-1994 to 61,000 in 2003-2004. About 31,000 of these public elementary school principals worked in schools in suburban areas, 17,000 in urban areas, and 14,000 in rural areas. The ethnic affiliation of these 31,000 elementary school principals range from 81 percent white, 11 percent black, six percent Hispanic, to two percent American Indian, Alaska Native, or Asian/Pacific.

Results from the survey also specified that public elementary school principals generally had extensive school experience. Data from the 2003-2004 school year indicated that elementary school principals had spent an average of 14 years as a teacher and eight as a principal. The length of experience is noteworthy considering that the proportion of elementary school principals 55 or older increased from 19 percent in 1993-1994 to 28 percent in 2003-2004. During this same time period, the proportion of principals who were 45 to 49 declined from 31 percent to 18 percent, and the proportion of those 40 to 44 declined from 19 percent to 10 percent. Principals under 40 years of age illustrated a modest increase from seven to 15 percent over the ten-year time span (NAESP, 2006). On a related matter, over 85 percent of all principals have been teachers (Papa, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2002).

Almost all of the surveyed elementary school principals have advanced degrees. Nearly 60 percent had a master's degree, 30 percent had an educational specialist degree, and eight percent had a doctorate. Principals with a master's degree had an average salary of \$74,000 compared with \$78,000 for those with an educational specialist degree and \$83,000 for those with a doctorate (NAESP, 2006).

The typical work day for an elementary school principal has changed dramatically over the past century. The elementary principalship was originally conceptualized in terms of the “principal teacher” (Peterson, 1970). Out of this original concept has grown the idea that the elementary school principal should devote most of his/her time and work for instructional supervision (The Elementary School Principalship, 1948). In recent decades, the role of the elementary school principal has shifted toward managerial roles along with the instructional leader (Renner, 2001).

As a means of better understanding what elementary school principals do, Renner (2001) completed an ethnographic investigation of elementary school principals’ workdays. The focus of the study was six suburban elementary school principals. The researcher spent five non-consecutive workdays with each principal. After analysis of the data, the researcher concluded that two models of work appeared.

One of the models emphasized the similarities in work content. Fourteen similarities were apparent in the work content of principals, including the following:

1. All principals administer their schools according to goals, objectives, policies, and procedures specified by their boards.
2. All principals worked directly with their staffs and communities with an interpretation and implementation of the district goals, objectives, policies, and procedures.
3. All principals used the district goals, objectives, policies, and procedures toward development and implementation of the elementary school’s goals and objectives.
4. All principals exchanged ideas, expertise, and resources with fellow administrators.
5. All principals provided instructional supervision.

6. All principals were concerned with the promotion of good public relations.

The second model specified ten similarities in work characteristics. Several similarities in this model include the following:

1. All principals' daily work activities varied, involved fragmentation, and were usually brief.
2. All principals exhibited a general familiarity with all aspects of their schools' operations.
3. All principals scheduled work activities in advance.
4. All principals assigned authority and responsibility to staff members.
5. All principals experienced frequent job stress.
6. All principals relied on the services of other individuals, groups, and agencies.

The study also found notable differences among the principals' work content and work performance. The differences were a result of each principal's leadership style, physical condition, activity preferences, district and school needs, community expectations, and the staff's personality.

The results of the investigation also indicated that the work lives of the principals were basically alike and that they were types of managers. The majority of the principal's work time was devoted to managerial activities. The principals depended on people to make their schools function logically, effectively, and efficiently. Additionally, the principals were often concerned with planning, organizing, commanding, coordinating, and controlling activities associated with the school day.

An analysis of the day-to-day working conditions of elementary school principals has also been completed by Peterson (1981). The analysis drew a precise portrait of a job

characterized by an unending variety of brief interactions, frequent interruptions, and continual cognitive and emotional demands (Ellis, 1988). According to Peterson (1981), these tasks require a wide variety of unexpected skills including bookkeeping, personnel management, budgeting, planning, and public relations and a wide variety of interactions with individuals ranging from young at-risk children to teachers, parents, salespeople, and central office personnel. As a result, the principal's time is filled with management, paperwork, marketing, and politics rather than the important work with the school community to shape a learning-focused environment (Militello & Behnke, 2006).

The unexpected skills needed to handle the elementary school principalship are not easily or quickly learned. Peterson noted that four characteristics of the job make learning the position difficult. First of all, the goals are unclear and hard to measure. An example of such a goal expected of a principal may include; the school will demonstrate excellence in education. This goal is unclear from the standpoint of the definition of excellence in education, how is it attained, and how it is measured. Second, the interaction rates are high and contact is extensive. The interactions may range from young at risk children, teachers, parents, textbook salesman, and central office administration. Third, the bases for moment-to-moment decision-making are unstructured and spontaneous. Typically, the unstructured and spontaneous reaction evolves from gathering information, assessing it, and then making a decision in rapid succession. Finally, the declaration of goals and expectations is a shaky proposition because so many variables are involved. The variables are likewise characterized by brevity, variety, and fragmentation.

Another important study of the characteristics of principals was conducted by Fowler (1991). The exploratory study investigated which characteristics of principals were identified as

effective by teachers in the same school setting. Furthermore, the purpose of the study was to investigate whether principals who scored higher on an effectiveness scale possessed similar characteristics or beliefs. Data for the study were obtained from the Schools and Staffing Study of 1988 from the National Center for Education Statistics of the United States Department of Education. The first findings of interest were that principals who are younger, less experienced, lower salaried, female, and have held elementary school principalships in smaller communities had higher Perceived Principal Effectiveness (PPE) scale scores than other principals. The second finding of interest from the research was how principals perceive their time usage and how that relates to teachers' perceptions of effectiveness. Surprisingly, the principals that spent less time on administrative duties such as budgeting building management, and scheduling showed no significant difference in effectiveness in comparison to principals who spend significant time on administrative duties.

Since the time of the Fowler (1991) study, a shift has occurred in the measure of effective leadership. The focus has shifted away from managerial tasks toward the need for principals to take a strong and active role in instructional leadership as well as other organizational culture phenomena. The phenomena include increased public information on student performance and the associated accountability of the public school system (Teske & Schneider, 1999).

In addition, Teske and Schneider (1999) argue that principals must be able to create a vision and plan to guide their school's improvement and to be effective in communicating this vision to school employees and the public. Effective leadership literature also noted that principals must be flexible with regard to their frames of reference and be able and willing to adjust their thinking in response to the needs of different individuals and situations (Bolman &

Deal, 1997; Collins & Porras, 1999).

Career Paths

While significant literature exists on the attributes of effective principals, the reality is that there is little information regarding the career paths, mobility and working conditions of school administrators (Papa, Lankford, & Wyckoff, 2002). Likewise, Papa, Lankford, and Wyckoff also note that there have been very few studies examining the career choices of school administrators. Their research examined the attributes and career paths of all teachers and administrators in the state of New York over a 30-year period from 1970-1971 through 1999-2000. The data covered the careers of over 600,000 teachers and 125,000 administrators. The analysis of their data proceeded in three steps. First, the researchers investigated which individuals chose to become certified as administrators and which became certified and entered an administrative position. Second, the researchers attempted to identify the career paths that lead to the principalship. Identification included the percentage of principals that spent time as teachers, head teachers, and vice principals. In addition, data were checked to see how long they spent in each position. Third, the researchers examined the mobility of principals to assess movement across job titles, schools, and even out of the profession.

Data from the study identified that principals hired to their first leadership positions in 2000 are much more likely to be female, older, less experienced, and have graduated from lower-ranked colleges (Papa, et al., 2002). Prospective male principals are less likely to want principalships in hard to staff schools. Furthermore, there were more than 6,700 individuals younger than 45 years of age who were certified to be principals, a number 1.5 times the number of total principalships.

The data also revealed whether or not current principals had served as classroom teachers and whether they had worked as head teachers and/or assistant principals (Papa, et al., 2002). Eleven percent of current principals have never been classroom teachers. Among those who have taught, the median individual spends 10 years teaching before moving to an administrative position. Twenty-six percent of all principals have careers that included positions as teacher, head teacher, and assistant principal. Another 34 percent worked as assistant principals but not head teacher. Almost 80 percent of the previously stated groups were assistant principals immediately prior to becoming a principal for the first time. Regarding elementary school principals, 12 percent moved directly from a teaching position to a principalship.

Data were also gathered regarding career paths individuals follow after becoming principals (Papa, et al., 2002). The source of the data was the cohorts of individuals who became principals for the first time in 1990, 1991 and 1992. Each cohort was followed for six years. The data analysis on career mobility indicated that 34 percent of first-time principals remain in the same school in which they first assumed the principalship six years earlier. Only 16 percent transferred to become principals or other administrators in other districts. The data also indicated when principals transfer to another school, they move to schools that tend to have higher test scores, teachers with better qualifications, and a lower percentage of students receiving free lunch. Furthermore, high school principals are more likely to take administrative positions in different districts within the six years of their first principalship than are elementary or middle school principals. Elementary school principals are more likely to remain in the same school that they started in six years earlier.

The data analysis from the Papa, Landford, and Wyckoff (2002) study also presented several interesting statistics regarding the age and salaries of principals involved in their study.

Approximately 60 percent of all principals employed in 2000 were at least 50 years old. Furthermore, 66 percent of newly hired principals in 2000 were at least 50 years old and thus likely within 5 to 10 years of retirement at the time they assumed the principalship. Similarly, a report by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2001) indicated that 40 percent of principals will retire this decade.

The analysis of salaries of principals conducted by Papa, Landford, and Wyckoff (2002) indicates that the position of principal has been at an increasing disadvantage for at least the last decade. The study indicated that a common perception is that the small salary differential between principals and experienced teachers is not worth the additional hours, job responsibilities, and stress that accompany the principalship position. The researchers infer this trend may help account for the small and weak applicant pools for leadership positions at a time when there are a large number of individuals certified for the positions. Norton (2003) claims that national statistics relating to principal turnover and dwindling supplies of qualified replacements show clearly that principal turnover has reached crisis proportions.

Supporting this claim, school districts have indicated that when attempting to higher qualified elementary principals, a shortage occurs nearly 47 percent of the time (Quinn, 2002). The failure to attract quality leaders may involve increased job stress, inadequate school funding, balancing school management with instructional leadership, new curriculum standards, educating an increasingly diverse student population, shouldering responsibility that once belonged at home or in the community, and then face being fired if their schools do not show results (Fink & Brayman, 2006).

The succession of principals due to mobility and/or retirement creates difficulties that threaten the sustainability of school improvement efforts and undermine the capacity of

incoming principals to lead their schools (Fink & Brayman, 2006). A study completed by Fink and Brayman concluded that principals have been stripped of autonomy and the disenchantment of existing leaders have produced an increasingly rapid turnover of school leaders and an insufficient pool of capable, qualified, and prepared replacements. The study also noted that a continual turnover of principals has accelerated at an ever increasing rate leading to staff cynicism and insufficient long-term sustainable improvement. Fink and Brayman (2006) argued that the principal successors are caught in an environment of runaway reform demands while lacking the experience and preparedness to address the demands.

Fink and Brayman (2006) recommended that all schools should have a leadership succession plan that assists in the development of the new principal. This plan includes grooming inside leadership successors who have spent a period of time in the system to be ready to fill the leadership vacancies. The plan also includes encouraging leaders who are achieving success to stay longer in their schools so that the improvements put in place become strongly embedded with the staff and the school community.

Another study focusing on the career paths of principals was completed by graduate students in educational leadership at Valdosta State University who were matriculating in Human Resource Development courses (Livingston, 1998). The general emphasis of the study was to examine the perceived roles and demographics of entry level school administrators in rural Georgia. While the study focused on both male and female administrators, interesting data emerged in relation to social perceptions that principals demonstrate. Sixty-eight administrators were interviewed. All the administrators were in the first three years of their positions. Two-thirds of the participants were between the ages of 36 and 45. From these data, it is easy to see that the participants were an experienced group in terms of classroom teaching.

The majority of the administrators in Livingston's (1998) study had assumed their entry level administrator position as an assistant principal while some participants had moved directly from the classroom to principalships. Nearly half of the participants got their start in school leadership after realizing early in their careers that leadership was the area where a real difference could be made. Another twenty-five percent indicated that their interest came from coaching activities. The other twenty-five percent indicated they had leadership success as a teacher and sought an opportunity to help more students or to improve curricular programs. Additional responses regarding the motivation to seek careers in educational leadership included everything from career advancement and professional challenge to financial rewards and more challenging job demands.

After completing the early years of their career path, the participants noted that professional mentors and role models provided an invaluable amount of support and encouragement (Livingston, 1998). The participants also indicated that the best part of their jobs was the opportunity to impact what happens at school and the feeling of accomplishment that accompanies this experience.

Livingston (1998) noted that the most important finding of the study involved the participants' future role in educational leadership. Nearly all the participants interviewed indicated a degree of satisfaction with their positions that made them want to work in school leadership for the remainder of their education career.

Supporting Livingston's claim was a study of principals and their job satisfaction completed by Graham and Messner (1998), which investigated the relationship of factors, such as gender, size of school enrollment, and years of experience, to principalship job satisfaction. The definition of job satisfaction used in the study was: "An affective response by individuals

resulting from an appraisal of their work roles in the job that they presently hold” (Glick, 1992).

Responses to surveys were gathered from 226 American midwestern elementary, middle, and senior high school principals. Findings from the study indicated the following:

- American midwestern principals were generally satisfied with their current job, colleagues/co-workers and level of responsibility. However, they were less satisfied with their pay, opportunities for advancement, and fringe benefits.
- American Midwestern principals in midsize schools were the most satisfied with their current job.
- American Midwestern principals in smaller schools were the least satisfied with their pay, fringe benefits, and supervisor.
- Principals in middle schools and junior and senior high schools were the least satisfied with their colleagues/co-workers.
- American Midwestern female principals were less satisfied with their pay and fringe benefit package than were male principals.
- American Midwestern principals with moderate experience were the least satisfied with advancement opportunities, whereas, principals with fewer years of experience were less satisfied with their pay.

The degree of satisfaction expressed by the participants in these studies varies somewhat in comparison to other research conducted on school leaders. Administrators do have concerns with their perceived roles, change and their sphere of influence. Role perception and expectations are the most often cited career problems according to school leaders (Graham, 1996). Additionally, school leaders indicate concerns in adjusting to their changing roles and the modification in relationships that occur with friends, colleagues, and family (Ginty, 1995).

Similar findings were noted in a study completed by Harvey and Donaldson (2003). Surveys and interviews were conducted with more than 200 principals across the United States in an effort to find similarities in what counts in their work, what challenges their personal and professional lives, and how they cope with these challenges. The principals in the study indicated they were frustrated by the discrepancy between what they think their role should be and the reality of the work.

Bryant (2001) claims that job satisfaction research revealed that certain intrinsic and extrinsic factors exist that effect levels of job satisfaction. Bryant investigated factors related to job satisfaction among grade K-8 principals in North Carolina. The study revealed that general job satisfaction across the group appeared to be related to age but not gender. Furthermore, the job satisfaction of many administrators is related to the perception of their effectiveness, the effectiveness of their institution, and their level of influence in the setting.

Research conducted by Malone, Sharp, and Walter (2001) tried to ascertain the motivators of the principal's job and the way principals perceive their job. The study involved a survey of principals relative to the principals' perceptions regarding the positive aspects of their job. The responding principals from the state of Indiana had been in education for a mean of 24.4 years and in the principalship for a mean of 10.3 years. Of the principals responding, 71.2 percent were male and 50.8 percent were elementary principals.

The findings from the study suggest that the gloom-and-doom depiction that is present in literature is not the picture that principals report. When asked if they had it all to do over again, 95.1 percent of the responding principals said they would choose the principalship again. When they were asked to rate their overall job satisfaction, 34.4 percent rated their satisfaction as very high, with an additional 57.6 percent rating it as high, for a total of 92 percent for the two

positive ratings. The significance of this study is that the positive aspects of the principal job may very well serve as a motivating force for those who are trying to decide if they want to become a principal or not.

Social Role Theory

Social Role Theory suggests most behavioral differences we know about between males and females are the result of cultural stereotypes about gender (how males and females are suppose to act) and the resulting social roles that are taught to young people. Stereotypes arise because women and men play different roles in society. Because men and women do different things, people come to associate different personality traits and abilities to them. The gender role stereotypes can limit actions we take in a specific situation reducing individuality and creativity.

Gender Expectations

The reasons for the increasing shortage of male elementary teachers and thereafter, prospective principals, are complex and multi-faceted. Social Role Theory argues that a gender hierarchy arises from the interaction of physical sex differences and the demands of the cultural, economic, and ecological environments of a society (Wood & Eagly, 2002). Furthermore, Eagly (1987) claims this theory proposes that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles due to the expectations that society puts on them. As a consequence of these differing gender roles, women and men have somewhat different expectations for their own behavior in organizational settings and society as a whole (Ely, 1995). These gender role expectations are assumed to arise from the distribution of men and women into different specific social roles especially occupational and family roles. Differential role occupancy affects behavior through a variety of processes including the formation of gender roles by which people

of each gender are expected to have characteristics that assist them with tasks they perform in their usual social roles (Karau & Eagly, 1999).

The issue of whether and under what conditions men and women differ in their tendency to emerge as leaders has both theoretical and practical implications and is a critical issue for modern organizations. Differences in leadership styles of men and women were documented by Eagly and Johnson (1990) in a meta-analytic review of 162 studies. Their conclusion was that both gender and situational factors were important influences of leadership behavior.

Given the regularity of social roles in society, a person might expect gender-typed differences between women and men to be large. However, these gender differences may not be as large as popular culture suggests (Vogel, Wester, Heesacker, & Madon, 2003). Meta-analytic reviews of popular culture report average differences between the sexes indicate that women and men behave similarly over 98 percent of the time (Canary & Hause, 1993; Wilkins & Anderson, 1991). Karau and Eagly (1999) applied meta-analytic techniques on available literature and concluded that there are important sex differences in leader emergence, leader behavior, and reactions to male and female leaders.

With regard to leader emergence, the application of meta-analytic techniques revealed overall sex differences and also identified a number of situations under which these differences are more likely to occur. Eagly and Karau's (1991) synthesis of 58 studies that examined the emergence of leaders found a small to moderately sized tendency for men to emerge as leaders more than women and a somewhat larger tendency when leadership was defined in strictly task-oriented terms.

Eagly and Karau's (1991) synthesis also established that several attributes of the studies clarified the relationship between gender and the emergence of leaders. The tendency for men to

emerge was stronger when the groups being led included tasks that were stereotypically masculine (task involving independence, aggression, competition, and achievement) and did not require complex social interaction. Since men appear to prefer more task-related participation, the general tendency for men to emerge as leaders probably reflects favoritism on the part of the group being led to identify task rather than social contributions as more important components of leadership.

Consequently, when differences do occur, women behave in traditionally feminine ways such as sending and decoding nonverbal message, expression of certain emotions, maintaining intimacy in close relationships and men behave in traditionally masculine ways such as controlling nonverbal emotions, task orientation, maintaining autonomy in their close relationships (Vogel, Wester, Heesacker, & Madon, 2003). These differences, although small, are important because they may emerge more readily or strongly under certain conditions such as care-giving for children and aging parents or work outside of the home. Thus situational factors influence the degree to which women and men confirm gender stereotype.

The desire or ability to confirm gender stereotypes in leadership was confirmed through the work of Kolb (1999). Kolb's finding that masculinity was significantly correlated with leadership ratings, shadows the social role theory principle that individuals who engage in androgynous behaviors are more likely to be chosen as leaders. Masculinity included being self-reliant, independent, and assertive. Additionally, Taylor and Hall (1982) argued that masculinity often exerts stronger influence on social behavior and psychological health than femininity.

With regard to organizational applications, Martell, Lane, and Emrich (1996) concluded that an examination of evidence through meta-analytic techniques found that gendered

expectations and gender were found to have important influences on organizational behavior. Likewise, male leadership roles affect leadership behavior and opportunities.

In recent years, organizational researchers have found evidence that a redefinition of leadership roles is taking place. The redefinition is based on “feminine” approaches to leadership that emphasize cooperation, equality, teamwork, collaboration, participation, and the sharing of information and power (Fondas, 1997). Mathis (2007) described female leadership as relentless support, trust, respect, loyalty, charisma, inspiration, stimulation, and consideration. Furthermore, feminine style is more relationship oriented, democratic, and has a tendency to be more efficient when it comes to solving problems (Cummings, 2005).

A particular expectation that has emerged over the past few decades is the prevailing belief that the gender most appropriate for working with young children is female (Gamble & Wilkins, 1999). Adding to this belief are the psychological prohibitions that men have against choosing professions typically perceived as female dominated (Brabeck & Weisgerber, 1989). The psychological prohibitions come in the form of four prominent factors: experiences and attitudes related to status, salary, working in a predominantly female environment, and physical contact with children (Cushman, 2005).

Status, Salary and Peers

Men consider teaching an important job but regard it with low prestige and status (Rice & Goessling, 2005). When given the choice to teach at the secondary level compared to the elementary level, men choose the secondary over the elementary because they can coach, which leads to more earnings, status, and respect (Barnard et al., 2000). Men who provide the sole income for their families may find that they are unable to meet the financial necessities of the lifestyle they wish to lead.

Mancus (1992) noted that men continue to leave child care professions due to lower salaries. In addition, males who do go onto careers in elementary education face subtle and outright pressures to become administrators (Wiest, 2003). The move out of the classroom and into administrative positions allows for better pay and usually provides a domain where men can interact with other men. Men who stay in elementary education tend to feel uncomfortable with a lack of male peers (Rice & Goessling, 2005). The lack of male peers to communicate with forges a perceived gender difference or personal interests not associated with teaching hence; some men choose not to speak-up about their concerns because they don't want to alienate themselves (King, 1998).

A study completed by Gamble and Wilkins (1997) attempted to gain insight into the reasons for the comparatively low number of men in elementary education. Questionnaires were mailed to department heads or deans of 62 four year private and public colleges with elementary education programs in New York State. Two main questions in the survey were posed: "In your opinion, why aren't more men enrolled in elementary education teacher preparation programs?" and "In your opinion, what, if anything, should be done to increase male enrollment in elementary teacher education preparation programs?"

The top five most common responses to the first question were:

1. Low salary and low prestige of elementary education
2. Perception of elementary education as more suitable for the nurturing abilities of women
3. Elementary education not perceived as a male profession
4. Traditionally, elementary education teachers have been female--breaking from tradition very difficult

5. Family and peer pressures-elementary education not seen as a good career for men

The top five most common responses to the second question were:

1. Raise salary level of elementary teaching
2. Present job as exciting, stimulating, and rewarding while males are in high school and college
3. Educate and motivate high school guidance counselors to encourage capable males to consider teaching at the elementary level
4. Recruit directly at the high school level; develop programs where juniors and seniors take college credit bearing courses in an education program and receive priority admissions to the college
5. Change certification and teacher preparation programs; do not certify specifically for elementary and secondary education-require pre-service teachers to have experience teaching at all grade levels

Teaching is Women's Work

The belief that elementary education is women's work prevents some men from teaching and forces others out of the profession. This belief comes from not only female perspectives but also male perspectives. King (2000) noted that male teachers often saw themselves as doing women's work. The reason for this belief relies heavily on the idea that caring and nurturing are important acts of elementary education and synonymous with a caring behavior. King (1998) and Sargent (2000) stated that nurturing and building close relationship with children is essential in elementary education. Unfortunately, caring is seen as a feminine act (King, 1998) and some parents and educators think that women are simply better at nurturing than men (Cohen, 1990).

Wiest (2003) added that perceptions suggest that men aren't sensitive enough or nurturing enough to work with children. Compounding the problem then is the notion that caring is essential to primary education and caring is best done by women (King, 1998). Hansen and Mulholland (2005) believe that separating care from gender is an important distinction to make in the education of young children. By viewing the distinction in a relational way leaves room for both males and females to be caring. Therefore, working and caring for young children can be masculine actions, or they can be seen as actions taken by either sex.

Suspicion Factor

Unfortunately, stereotypical gender expectations have established a feeling of suspicions regarding male elementary educators. Male teachers are viewed as suspicious because people don't trust men who teach because they pass up higher status, better paying jobs to perform duties associated with a female gender (Sumsion, 2005).

Current public perception is that male elementary school teachers are often homosexuals, pedophiles, or merely principals in training (King, 1998). Under this perception, male teachers, or at least those who are not homosexuals or pedophiles, must be putting in their time in the classroom until the opportunity for advancement into administration occurs. Barnard et al. (2000) suggest that people perceive male educators as homosexual because images of men working in nurturing positions raises questions of gender identification and sexual orientation.

Sargent (2001) found that the cloud of suspicion surrounding men who work with children is on the minds of male primary teachers. One male primary teacher from Sargent's research commented that society views women educators' laps are places of love while male educator's laps are places of danger. Because of the fear of having their sexual preferences

questioned or intentions under scrutiny, many men choose not to teach primary education (Coulter & McNay, 1995).

Accusations of pedophilia have also contributed toward dissuading males from joining the ranks of elementary school teachers (King, 1998; Rice & Goessling, 2005; Wiest, 2003). Additionally, men do not want to take a job where they feel like they are being scrutinized extra carefully because of their gender. These accusations, scrutiny, and suspicions of male elementary educators put forth a distinction that females equal safety and males equal danger.

Brabeck and Weisgerber (1989) found that men have psychological prohibitions against choosing professions typically perceived as female dominated. Additionally, males often resist their initial motives and inclinations to work with children until they have explored other avenues, tried other majors and occupations, often on the advice of their parents (Williams, 1992). Further studies by Gaskell and Willinsky (1995) concluded that male avoidance of the elementary teaching profession comes from a psychological model of negative attitudes and poor self-efficacy, factors that influence adolescents to develop self-limiting occupational stereotypes and to resist professions typically associated with the opposite gender.

Perhaps the very idea of being nurturing and caring is so close to what is essentially female, it is a barrier for men. Being so concerned with society's perception of them as unmasculine, males appear to be driven away from a profession they might otherwise pursue. Thompson and Pleck (1986) concluded that the standards for being a man typically include a deliberate norm to stay away from anything feminine in pursuit of achievement status, independence, and self-confidence.

Research completed by Montecinos and Nielsen (2004) attempted to examine how prevailing and alternative conceptions of masculinity framed the way in which 40 white, male,

elementary pre-service teachers constructed the meaning of teaching. The men defined teaching through the following four specific reasons: be a male role model, be a sports coach, appeal to reason, and prepare yourself to move into occupations with higher status and financial rewards.

The definition of teaching for the purpose of being a male role model was based on the participants overwhelming belief that young children need males that can show them the way and be good role models. The view is derived from the number of children whose fathers were absent from their lives. Research conducted by DeCorse and Vogtle (1997) likewise found that males are needed in education to fulfill roles not being supplied for children, especially boys in society.

The definition of teaching for the purpose of being a sports coach was supported by 19 of the 40 men. The men stated that it was their interest in coaching that propelled them to seek an elementary teaching major. Montecinos and Nielsen reported that the participants in their study saw possibilities that their involvement in sports opened up to them opportunities for bonding with children and molding the character of their students.

The definition of teaching as an appeal to rationality centered on the views that elementary students need care, direction, and that these students tend to reciprocate an appreciation for teachers in comparison to students in junior or senior high (Montecinos & Nielson, 2004). The study also found that the participants were more comfortable with teaching students in the upper elementary grades in comparison to lower elementary. A dominant response was that the upper elementary students are able to think more logically and figure out more things for themselves. Of the 40 students interviewed, only six expressed an interest in teaching in the primary elementary grades of kindergarten through grade (K – 2).

The definition of teaching as a doorway into occupations with more status and financial reward centered on the view that they would move out of the classroom to take administrative positions or other leadership roles within the profession. The study found that only 9 of the 40 males indicated that they expected to remain classroom teachers throughout their careers.

The Montecinos and Nielson (2004) study also revealed that these men demonstrated traits typically associated with the opposite gender and emphasized aspects that correspond to their gender identity. First of all, they claim that men as well as women could be nurturing and caring. Secondly, they claim that their long term aspirations as administrators would place them in a position to oversee those working directly with children. The study further revealed that those men interested in primary elementary teaching were also those uninterested in coaching and in leaving the classrooms for administrative positions.

The revelations of the Montecinos and Nielsen study relate well to the theory of moral developments presented by Kohlberg (1984). Accordingly, the decision to stay with the choice of elementary teaching as a major despite the pressures surrounding that decision may indicate the person has moved into the postconventional level. The male education major, aware of the member-of-society perspective, questions and redefines it in terms of an individual moral perspective, so that social obligations are defined in ways that can be justified to any moral individual. The post conventional perspective, then, is prior to society; it is the perspective of an individual who has made the moral commitments or holds the standards on which a good or just society must be based (Kohlberg, 1984).

This moral commitment is noted by research completed by Montecinos and Nielsen (1997). Their finding revealed that the majority of male education majors' two main reasons for

pursuing a career in elementary education were commitment to children in making a difference in their lives and loving children.

Research completed by Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner (1997) confirms that men who make a commitment to working with young children question prevailing ideas that linked femininity, caring, and teaching. In doing so, they drew from new cultural images of fatherhood. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner claim the “new man” is a white, college-educated professional who is highly involved and nurturing father, in touch with and expressive of his feelings and sensitivity.

An increase in the number of males who will choose careers as elementary school teachers and principals will require a defiance of the stereotypical gender expectations that current society dictates. The males who are willing to defy the expectations may be individuals who are able to reach the highest of three moral levels known as the post conventional moral level (Kohlberg, 1984). Kohlberg stated that the post conventional level is reached by a minority of adults and is usually reached only after the age of twenty. The term “conventional” means conforming to and upholding the rules and expectations and conventions of society or authority just because they are society’s rules, expectations, or conventions. In the case of careers in elementary education and administration, the expectations and conventions of society lean in favor of the female gender.

Kohlberg believes that someone at the post conventional level understands and basically accepts society’s rules; but acceptance of society’s rules is based on formulating and accepting the general moral principles that underlie these rules. Furthermore, these principles in some cases come into conflict with society’s rules, in which case the post conventional individual judges by principle rather than by convention. The person differentiates himself or herself from

the rules and expectations of others and defines his or her values in terms of self-chosen principles.

The application of Kohlberg's theoretical description of the three moral levels to males seeking careers in elementary education may begin around the time males enter college. During this phase of the adult male's life, the "conventional" moral level may dominate his decision to choose a career in secondary education as opposed to elementary education. This decision may be driven by a "conventional" societal perspective that follows the reasoning of a concern about societal approval and concern about loyalty to persons, groups, and authority (Kohlberg, 1984). The young male may find himself being pressured by several forces to stay away from a career in elementary education. Decorse and Vogtle (1997) noted that peers and friends of male prospective teachers send more subtle messages that elementary teaching is a questionable profession for males.

Despite the obstacles that social stereotypes place upon males in the search for and exercise of the elementary school principalship, society entrusts whoever is in charge to mold a generation of children into independent adults. The opportunities to lead from the principalship position provide comfort in the abiding knowledge that parents send the schools their very best, their children. It is an inspiring responsibility to be given one's most cherished possession with the belief that you are the best person to be given that trust. In turn, the elementary school principal provides a faculty with the resources to do their work, maintains order, and tries to establish a climate that is a warm and welcoming place. For most principals, working with students and seeing them grow and develop is a motivating and fulfilling chapter in their career as educators.

Adult Development Theory

The typical male elementary school principal assumes his position at the age of 36 (Doud & Keller, 1998). Many of the reasons why male elementary school educators make the move into an administrative position at this point in their career stem from the previously mentioned aspects of the social role theory. Another major reason why male educators choose to move into an administrative position may be explained by adult development theory. Specifically, the reasons for the male educator to “move up the ladder” from teacher to principal at the mid point of his career may be explained by Levinson’s stage theory of adult change (Levinson, Darrow, Klein, & Levinson, 1976).

There are many theories of adult development ranging from Erikson’s theory of identity development, Loevinger’s theory of ego development, Kohlberg’s theory of moral development, to Levinson’s theory of adult change (Bee, 2000). Numerous researchers have also written about life-cycle development (Barnett & Baruch, 1978; Gilligan, 1982; Kaplan & O’Connor, 1993; Shanok, 1993). Prominent among the researchers and theorist is the life-cycle theorist Daniel Levinson (Kittrell, 1998). In exploring the career paths of male elementary school principals, it is helpful to understand stages of development that are nicely defined by Levinson’s theory.

In this theory, Levinson proposed that adult life is made up of alternating periods of stable life structures and transition periods during which the old life structure is reexamined, adjusted, or altered. Levinson (1978) argued that an individual’s life structure is shaped by the social and physical environment. Many individuals’ life structures primarily involve family and work, although other variables such as religion, race, and economic status are often important.

Levinson’s theory pivots on his expansion of Erikson’s conception of the “life course,” which includes the patterning of events and relationships that distinguish each person’s life and

interaction between the individual and the world. Levinson (1978) further asserted that the life course evolved through a standard sequence of developmental periods which he termed the “life cycle.” Levinson proposed that every life course followed a sequence of four, partially overlapping “eras,” each approximately 20 years long and each with its own distinctive character and set of developmental demands (Levinson, 1996).

Levinson grouped the eras according to age, with preadulthood covering the years from 0–22, early adulthood from 17-45, middle adulthood from 40-65, and late adulthood from 60 years on. Levinson claimed the pattern of life at any given time developed through a standard sequence of periods within each era and the periods were age linked and transitional in character. These periods did not necessarily illustrate changes in any aspect of life but they revealed an underlying unity in developmental concerns within the life structure during those years.

The general task of each period, usually lasting 6 or 7 years, is to form and maintain a life structure, make certain key choices reflecting goals and values, and to form a structure around them (Levinson, 1978). Furthermore, the tasks of the transitional periods, normally lasting 4 or 5 years, are the termination of the current life structure, strengthening of individualization, and an exploration of new possibilities and making new choices. Levinson (1996) believes that the transitional periods serve as bridges and that almost half our lives are spent in developmental transitions since no single life structure permits expression of all aspects of the self.

Levinson (1978) originally studied forty adult males between thirty-five and forty-five years of age. The results of this study suggest that most men developed primarily occupational “Dreams” in their late teens and early 20s and that the failure to develop a “Dream” early in adulthood had developmental consequences. Conversely, Levinson claimed that those who built

a life structure around the “Dream” in early adulthood had a better chance for personal fulfillment than those who did not.

According to Levinson, the “Dream” was a personal myth providing purpose and meaning for an individual’s life. The “Dream” could take a dramatic, heroic form or more subtle vision of respected member of one’s community or skilled craftsman. Ultimately, it provided a psychological basis for the person to make major life choices in the early adulthood era, an assessment of one’s progress at midlife, and the fine tuning of one’s legacy in late adulthood (Newton, 1997).

Occupation was often the main theme of men’s dreams for the future. The crucial time for these occupational dreams occurred during the 17-33 years of age phase. During this phase, crucial skills, values, and credential development and refinement occur. In addition, the development of significant relationships with other adults who would support and mentor the novice proved invaluable.

Levinson proposed that the first period Preadulthood (*Early Adult Transition 17 - 22*), serves as a connection between adolescent life and full entry into the adult world. Separation from the family of origin and an initial move into the occupational world provide for the development of adult identity. During this period, male educators are typically seeking their first teaching assignment upon graduation from college.

An example of the connection between an individual’s move into an occupation and the early beginnings of adult development occur in a narrative study completed by Bradley (2000). Bradley explored the preliminary career choices for those few male teacher candidates who selected elementary education as an initial career path. A number of general themes emerged from the commentaries of the male elementary candidates. First of all, individuals showed an

interest in elementary education over secondary education because it appears less difficult to teach elementary students than secondary students. A second trend was that several candidates viewed a teaching career as a short term, almost temporary job rather than a long-term vocation. The third trend is that students appear to have made a move into education after having attempted other avenues. The fourth and final theme was that these potential male elementary teacher candidates simply like kids (Bradley, 2000).

The second period, early adulthood (*Getting Into the Adult World*), extends from the early to late twenties. During this period, Levinson claims the major developmental task is to form an occupation and to work on the ego stage of intimacy vs. aloneness. The adult male may seek to marry and establish a family while strengthening his teaching career. After an evaluation of themselves at about age thirty, men settle down and work toward career advancement. This period, sometimes referred to as the *Age Thirty Transition* lasts around five years and provides an opportunity for transition to the next stage. The male educator may begin considering a career as an administrator and begin preparation to go back to college to earn the licensure status and/or graduate degree to be a principal.

An example of this period of adult development was found in a study completed by Riehl and Byrd (1997). Riehl and Byrd examined factors associated with the career move from school teaching to building level administration. The study collected data on nearly 4,800 elementary and public school teachers. An analysis of data found that a male elementary teacher working in a small town with plans to leave teaching, a degree in educational administration, an administrative role model, and a spouse and children had an adjusted probability of 99 percent toward becoming a school administrator. Data retrieved from the study also indicated that school administration may be a convenient, accessible, and desirable route out of teaching for

dissatisfied male elementary teachers. Riehl and Byrd noted that these results are consistent with research by Allan (1993) and Jacobs (1993), which found that male elementary teachers working in feminized professional context tend to experience gender role disharmony and resolve this by leaving their jobs or by seeking positions in education, such as administration, that are more typically held by men.

Another transition occurs at about age forty (*Mid-Life Transition*), as men realize some of their ambitions will not be met. During this stage of middle adulthood, men deal with their particular individuality and work toward improving their skills and assets. The adult male attempts to build a second and more stable life structure. Initiation of middle adulthood involves the modification of past stages of life and formations of a new life structure. The career change into administration may occur during this period.

A study completed by Brewer (1996) found that educators consider employment opportunities and monetary rewards expected over their lifetimes when making decisions whether to quit teaching and move into an administrative position. Brewer employed two models to verify his study. The first model was the economists' conventional discrete choice model. This model is based on the proposition that in deciding between two (or more) courses of action, an individual compares the lifetime expected utility he would receive from each choice and selects based on the one yielding the highest satisfaction. The second model was the structural discrete choice model. This model implies that the main variables in a worker's decision to quit his current job are the expected present value of returns from remaining in the current job compared to the alternatives.

By the age of 40, male elementary school teachers may find themselves in a tenured situation with few opportunities for additional compensation within teaching itself (Brewer,

1996). Evidence gathered by Brewer suggests that many teachers do move into administrative positions and there are significant salary gains from doing so. Furthermore, the Brewer study suggests that male teachers are somewhat sensitive to expected administrative rewards.

Brewer noted that teacher-administrator careers have all the features associated with a well-defined career ladder. The career ladder has as its strength the drive for higher salaries as this has been found to be an important determinant of quit decisions for teachers (Murnane & Olsen, 1989). Movement up these ladders is typically competitive but brings higher monetary rewards. Sicherman and Galor (1990) noted that quitting is a device by which workers realize an optimal career path.

The Brewer (1996) study also compared data gathered from the job assignments and personal characteristics on all professional staff employed in schools in New York State from 1975-1990. The data revealed that administrators are older, more qualified, higher paid, and have more experience than teachers. Nearly four-fifths of new administrators have more than a master's degree. The median age for all administrative appointees is around 40 while those under age 30 occasionally attain jobs in administration. Teachers with between five and 15 years of experience in a district and more than five years of experience in other districts appeared most likely to move into administration. The least likely to move into administrative positions were individuals with less than five years of experience or more than 20 years of experience.

This middle adulthood era is also noted for other changes in careers males may undertake. After engaging in other careers or occupations males develop a more mature outlook on the prospects of their life's work. Gerson (1993) citing that males have begun choosing careers stressing service to society and personal satisfaction over extrinsic rewards such as money and prestige. Decorse and Vogtle (1997) added that men have become disillusioned with

traditional male professions and attracted to less lucrative but more personally satisfying lines of work. Furthermore, they have become more involved in child care and in experiences making clear how much pleasure men can derive from caring for children.

For the next decade, the individual builds upon his new life structure and seeks stability in this structure. Time is divided among family, career, and additional education.

Coincidentally, Crow (1990) found that elementary principals perceive their career as having economic, ancillary and task-related rewards. The principals varied in the kinds of incentives they preferred and the nature of their future goals. Elementary principals who have moved among several districts in their administrative careers are more likely to be satisfied and to emphasize incentives, such as contact with school personnel, which comes from staying in the principalship. In contrast, principals who have remained in the same district throughout their administrative careers are more likely to prefer incentives which advancement to central office can offer (Crow, 1990).

A study completed by Militello and Behnke (2006) addressed several related questions. Answers to the questions were derived from the use of a survey of Massachusetts principals. Principals who responded to the survey (459) were demographically representative of the population as a whole. Fifty-four percent of respondents were female; 46 percent were male. Sixty-five percent were elementary school principals. The average age of the principals was 52.2 years. Nearly percent of the respondents had been in their current principalship for less than five years, and 41 percent had been in their current principalship for less than three years. Only 16 percent of the respondents reported more than 10 years at their current post.

The first question asked if the principals were anticipating leaving the field because of retirement or lack of job satisfaction. Sixty three percent of principals surveyed expected to

leave the occupation within five years. Retirement was a much more significant factor than dissatisfaction. Nearly 70 percent said they are leaving the field due to retirement. An additional 15 percent anticipate moving into the superintendency or other position in district level administration. The authors of the study also found it noteworthy that 7 percent of the principals plan to leave their positions because of high stress levels, inadequate salary levels in comparison to responsibilities, and the complexity and time demands of the job. These reasons were consistent with other research and studies (Education Research Service, 2003).

The second question inquired as to what the usual career path is for people who become principals. The vast majority of principals have been teachers, and most have held several positions with increasing leadership prior to becoming principals. Eighty-four percent of principals served as teachers before assuming the principalship. Twelve percent held assistant principal positions, and the remaining four percent held other positions at the school level. One principal responded that the principalship was his first position in education.

The third question asked why the individual became a principal at the point in time when they did. The most frequent response was that principals wanted an increase in responsibility and challenge in their careers. Other responses included they wanted to impact more students, and that it seemed like the next logical career step. Of particular interest was that 12 percent of the men responded that fewer family responsibilities allowed more time for the demand of the principalship. This statistic concurs with Levinson's theory that males move into a career change in their 40s which is typically a period of time when their children are in their teens or early 20s.

The final question asked what principals identify as priorities for their own ongoing professional development. Most of the principals agreed that having been an assistant principal

was good preparation for the principalship. However, 62 percent said that whether they were assistant principals or not, they were unprepared for budget management roles as a principal. Understanding and knowledge of government regulations was the second greatest weakness of principals. Respondents believed that professional development on legal issues and on distributed leadership would have been most useful for them as new principals. When asked what kind of professional development would be useful to them at later stages of their career, 75 percent of the respondents said that formalized meetings with fellow principals is most beneficial followed by legal aspects of the job, and curriculum updates.

Regardless of the age or length of service of the principal, a strong relationship develops between career stages of the principal and need for new skills and knowledge (Peterson & Kelley, 2001). As a result, there has been a new call for mentoring experiences for principals and standards based leadership programs (Daresh, 2004; Pounder & Crow, 2005).

For those who have reached the end of their career as an elementary principal and seek no further advancement or continuation in the profession, the transition to late adulthood is a time to reflect upon successes and failures and enjoy the rest of life (Levinson, 1996). Reflections might include the successful application and demonstration of their leadership styles.

Leadership Styles

Throughout the years in educational administration, the male elementary school principals' leadership skills are honed and improved for the purpose of leading the staff in the education of the student body. The leadership style that is demonstrated is influenced heavily by several key factors. First, the male elementary school principal considers the general leadership expectations that a majority female staff tends to favor. Second, the principal leads in an

environment that is dominated by young children with specific psychological and developmental needs of love and care.

Leadership is often regarded as the single most important factor in the success or failure of institutions such as schools (Bass, 1990). Leadership of schools most often resides with the principal. The principal's performance is generally regarded as the primary factor in raising student achievement in successful schools (Cotton, 2003). Research has also shown that the leadership of a school principal is a determining factor in school effectiveness, second only to the role of a student's classroom teacher (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2005). This is, in part, because a school principal is well positioned to re-shape a school's culture (Deal & Peterson, 1998). Likewise, the principal's performance is apparent in the leadership style demonstrated day after day.

Over four decades ago Gross and Herriott (1965) published a large-scale study of leadership in public schools. A major finding of their study was that the effectiveness of professional leadership was positively related to "staff morale, the professional performance of teachers, and the pupils' learning" (p. 150). This benchmark study set the stage for much of the research that since emerged regarding the proper role and leadership style of the school administrator. Of particular interest was the question of whether or not male and female school administrators have similar leadership behaviors.

After two decades of research on differences in the leadership behaviors of males and females, the consensus appears to be that there are very few if any differences (Powell, 1990; Shimanoff & Jenkins, 1991). Powell reported that his research showed no significant differences between male and female managers in task-oriented behavior, people-oriented behavior, effectiveness ratings of managers, and subordinates' responses to managers. Shimanoff and

Jenkins concluded that their research demonstrated that there are far more similarities than differences in the leadership behaviors of women and men, and each are effective. However, their research indicated a difference in perceptions of leadership behavior. Differences were noted that leadership is often described in stereotypically masculine terms.

Supporting this difference in perceptions, Butler and Geis (1990) noted that males who exhibit the same behaviors as females are often rated more positively. In addition, males are judged less harshly than women when they fail to be responsive to the needs of others (Helgesen, 1990).

The perceptions of leadership by the followers and likewise the determination of effectiveness of leadership by followers may significantly impact the type of leadership style exhibited by the male administrator. Kolb's (1999) findings from her research indicated that variables such as organizational culture, the nature of the work, and the nature of the employees working with and for the leader influence the need for and the expectations of certain leadership behaviors.

The behaviors demonstrated by the leader may serve as the measure that individuals use to determine the effectiveness of the leader. Leithwood and Montgomery (1982) found that effective principals are typically proactive and take steps to secure support for change initiatives on behalf of students and staff. Stallings and Mohlman (1981) indicate that principals deemed effective in program implementation extend themselves to be helpful to teachers, offer constructive criticism, and explain reasons for suggesting behavior changes. Effective principals share ideas, set good examples, are well prepared, and care for the personal welfare of their teachers (Hall, Rutherford, Hord, & Huling, 1984).

The National Education Association (1986) published a list of six leadership behaviors that they feel have consistently been associated with effective schools and effective leaders. The first behavior is that effective principals are visible and involved in what goes on in the school and classrooms. They convey to teachers their commitment to achievement. The second behavior is that effective principals set instructional strategies and develop plans for solving students' learning problems. The third behavior is that effective principals provide an orderly atmosphere by ensuring that the school climate is conducive to learning. The fourth behavior is that effective principals set expectations for the entire school and check to make sure those expectations are being met. The fifth behavior is that effective principals coordinate instructional programs to meet the overall goals and programs of the school. The sixth behavior is that effective principals communicate with teachers about goals and procedures.

For these reasons, male elementary school principals must develop a type of leadership style that will assist them in effectively managing their elementary school. While several styles of leadership exist, historically, the gender stereotypic expectation is that male leaders operate in a task oriented style as opposed to an interpersonal oriented style typically used by the female gender (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). A task oriented style of leadership was also noted by research completed by Eagly and Johannesen-Schmidt (2001) who found that gender roles and expectations are manifested in agentic characteristics. Agentic attributes are more prevalent in men than women and include tendencies to be assertive, controlling, and confident. Goleman, et al. (2002) sternly caution that coercive and pacesetting leadership styles degrade organizational climate and employee performance. By contrast, human-relations leadership theories largely value attention to relationships, collaboration, and team-oriented strategies for accomplishing organizational goals (Sharrock, 1995).

A more complete understanding of gender leadership styles evolved from work completed by researchers Eagly, Karau, and Johnson (1992). The researchers conducted a meta-analysis review of 50 studies that compared the leadership styles of principals of public schools. Their objective was to find evidence for differences between the sexes. The review was confined to the three most frequently researched aspects of leadership style: (a) interpersonally oriented (concerned for morale and relationships among group members), (b) task oriented (concern for task accomplishment), and (c) participative (allow subordinates to participate in decision making) versus directive (discourage subordinates from participating in decision making).

The researchers looked for the results to possibly confirm that male school principals carry out their roles in a manner consistent with gender stereotypes and that men are believed to be more self-assertive and motivated to control their environment with tendencies such as aggressive, independent, self-sufficient, forceful, and dominant behavior. The gender role perspective suggests that male principals would be more task oriented, less interpersonally oriented, and more directive than would female principals.

The predictions made by Eagly, Karau, and Johnson (1992) prior to their meta-analysis were acknowledged by the researchers as somewhat simplistic and in fact contrary to the social role theory stated by Eagly (1987) that organizational roles and expectations play a major part in the leadership styles demonstrated by the two genders. In response to this acknowledgement, the researchers hypothesized that principals are more influenced by the requirements of their school administrative role than the requirements of their gender role. Therefore, their prediction moved toward a confirmation that any sex differences in principals' leadership styles would be negligible among the two genders.

The studies used in this meta-analysis typically involved principals who administered elementary schools, were in their 40s, occupied a male-dominated administrative role, and supervised predominately female teachers. The measuring instruments typically had teachers rate the principals' leadership styles or principals rate their own styles and used ratings based on observation of principals' behavior.

Several models were also employed in the study. One particular model of interest from the meta-analysis was the examination of the relationship between leadership style sex differences and the educational level of the schools in which principals were employed. The findings showed that there was an overall tendency for female principals to be more task-oriented than male principals and that the grade level of the school made no difference. Elementary school principals showed no sex differences in interpersonal style.

The most substantial sex difference was the tendency for males to lead in a more autocratic style than female principals. Men apparently adopt a less collaborative style and are relatively more dominating and directive than women (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992). On the tendency to lead in a task-oriented manner, a small sex difference was measured in that female principals were more task-oriented than were male principals. The researchers noted that the sex difference obtained on task-oriented style may seem surprising because it is counter stereotypic; however, a possible interpretation may be that both sexes emphasize task accomplishment to the extent that they were in a leadership role.

This interpretation may be supported based on data Eagly and Johnson (1990) collected on college-level psychology students. The students generally felt that school principalship is a career that is especially congenial for women, particularly at the elementary level. The female

students reported themselves more competent if they were in the principal role and were more interested in occupying it than the male students were.

The researchers' interpretation of the results from the meta-analysis and the college data suggest that occupying a role that is especially congenial in gender relevant terms may have gains for school administrators in terms of an increase in their tendency to organize activities to accomplish relevant tasks. As school principals, women may encounter role expectations that are especially congenial with their own gender role (Eagly, Karau, & Johnson, 1992).

The implications of the findings from the meta-analysis substantiate that male and female educational administrators have somewhat different styles. However, sex differences in principals' leadership styles provide no evidence that women or men are more or less qualified to administer public schools. Therefore, the gender of the leader has little or no bearing on the potential to be an effective principal.

Due to their very nature, elementary schools may require specific types of leadership styles in opposition to the task oriented style. Donaldson (2001) theorized that the elementary principalship may not be gender congenial for males and that elementary schools might be better off with a more feminine style of leadership such as nurturing and supportive rather than a masculine one of directive and hierarchical. Hence, the behavior of female leaders, compared with that of male leaders, may be more interpersonally oriented, democratic, and transformational (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001).

University of Minnesota studies of identical twins raised apart have shown positive correlations to hereditary connections to specific leadership traits (Arvey, Rotundo, McGue & Johnson, 2003). In actuality, the Minnesota studies suggest as much as 60 percent of leadership ability is inherited genetically. However, Daw (1996) claims that although some individuals

may be better equipped genetically to lead, trained leaders will have a better chance of succeeding than untrained ones. Assuming the University of Minnesota findings are valid, 40 percent of leader ability remains subject to influences of training, professional development, and other factors. Bass (1990) suggests that research shows that leaders at all levels can be trained to be charismatic in verbal and non-verbal performance, including critical evaluation, visioning, communication, impression management and empowering skills. Therefore, regardless of the type of leadership required of elementary school principals, males can be effective leaders of elementary schools.

An additional debate in leadership theory has focused on the distinction between management and leadership. Gardner (1990) suggests that leadership is the process of persuasion or example by which an individual induces a group to pursue objectives held by the leader or shared by the leader and his or her followers. Management, on the other hand, is reserved for those individuals who hold a directive post in their organization and preside over the resources in which the organization functions, allocating resources wisely, and making the best possible use of people.

As early as 1978, Burns distinguished between the role of manager as someone who negotiates with employees to obtain the exchange of rewards for employee efforts and the role of leader who targets efforts to bring about change, spur innovation and entrepreneurship. The leader changes and transforms the organization according to a prescribed vision. Leaders are therefore change makers and transformers, guiding the organization to a new and more compelling vision, a demanding role expectation (Bass & Avolio, 1994).

Burns' Transformational Leadership Theory

Burns (1978) proposed that researchers study a type of leadership that he labeled transformational. According to this leadership style, leaders set high standards for behavior and establish themselves as role models by gaining the trust and confidence of their followers. These leaders are innovators and encourage followers to develop their full potential. Burns contrasted this style of leadership to the more masculine, autocratic and directive transactional style of leadership. Based upon these ideals, male elementary principals' attempts to be effective leaders may require the use of a transformational style of leadership in addition to a common trait to demonstrate transactional leadership.

According to Greenfield (2004), the relationship of most leaders and followers are transactional. Leaders approach followers with an eye to exchanging one thing for another. These transactions comprise the bulk of the relationships among leaders and followers. Conversely, transforming leaders recognize and exploit an existing need or demand of the follower. The result of the transforming leadership is a relationship that changes followers into leaders and creates a relationship not only of power but of mutual needs, aspirations and values.

Bass (1985) and Kouzes and Posner (1987) undertook large-scale empirical studies of managers in the 1980s, and produced broadly similar results. These studies led to slightly different ideals of the term "transformational leadership" than Burns. Rather than transforming followers, Bass (1985) refers to a new empowering and enabling approach to leadership which recognizes that influencing followers is crucial to organizational performance. Bass's model of transformational leadership was based on the following elements:

- Charismatic leadership – The leader is highly esteemed by followers.

- Inspirational leadership – The leader provides optimism about the achievement of the mission.
- Intellectual stimulation – Leaders invite followers to look at problems differently and encourage innovation.
- Individual consideration – Leaders work with individual followers to understand their needs and help them to identify personally rewarding goals.

Bass's model asserts that the test of an effective leader lies in the followers' perceptions of the leader. It is crucial therefore for leaders to not only understand themselves, but also to have an understanding of how they are perceived by others, particularly subordinates, whose views they may not previously have paid much homage too. In measuring transformational leadership, Bass and Avolio (1994) found that women score significantly higher than men.

Similarly, Kirkpatrick and Locke (1996) identified the following four core components of transformational leadership:

- Charismatic communication style – The leader engenders trust and respect, motivates, intellectually stimulates.
- Communication of a vision – The leader sets challenging goals and causes followers to question traditional approaches, values and beliefs.
- Implementation of a vision – The leader energizes followers and focuses efforts on achieving goals.
- Individual consideration – The leader gives followers the feeling they are treated as unique individuals.

Podsakoff, MacKenzie, and Bommer (1996) found that the staff's professional orientation, experience and ability and the cohesiveness of the work group were significant variables that defined a leader's effectiveness.

Homrig (2006) developed the following list of ten ingredients necessary for transformational leadership to occur:

- Leaders have high moral and ethical values.
- Leaders express genuine interest in followers.
- Leaders have an inspirational vision.
- Genuine trust exists between leaders and led.
- Followers share leader's values and vision.
- Leaders and followers perform beyond self-interest.
- Participatory decision-making is the rule.
- Innovative thinking and action is expected.
- Motivation is to do the right thing.
- Leaders mentor.

Bass and Steidlmeier (1998) stressed that transformational leadership is predicated upon the dynamics of a change of heart in the realm of core values and motivation, and upon intellectual stimulation and a commitment to treat people as ends not mere means. Starratt (1991) suggested that mistrust, manipulation, aggressive and controlling actions or language on the part of the administrator can lead to a relationship that is hypocritical, dishonest, disloyal, vicious, and dehumanizing.

The move toward a values-laden caring culture of leadership was exactly what Noddings (1992) referred to when she challenged school leaders to adopt the ethic of caring to enable

schools to become caring communities that nurture all children. According to Starratt (1991), educational administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred. A full discussion of the ethic of care follows this section.

A second important contribution shaping educational leadership was Burns' (1978) differentiation of transactional from transformational leadership. The distinction between these two types of leadership did much to call attention to and legitimize the concept of moral leadership (Greenfield, 2004). The idea of moral leadership holds much promise for enabling school administrators to lead in a manner that can best help teachers develop and empower themselves to teach and lead. The values and norms that the leader demonstrates can go along way toward building trust and binding the school community.

The empowering of elementary school teachers through transformational and moral leadership is supported from the work of Starratt (2004). Starratt proposed that the virtues of responsibility, authenticity, and presence are basic to the action of moral educational leaders. Starratt claimed that there is logic to the dynamic relationship among the virtues. The exercise of these three virtues provides a foundation for an ethics of moral educational leadership.

The virtue of an authentic leader is shown through the genuine interaction, social exchange, and concern for the follower. The authenticity of the leader enhances the human and natural energy in our surroundings and ultimately produces good (Starratt, 2004). The virtue of a responsible leader is one who responds to a certain situation or event with proactive regard, full attention and sensitivity that has been developed through education and experience. Starratt described this virtue as going beyond tinkering with the status quo to a clearer sense of what it

will take to transform the status quo into something more humanly fulfilling that also fulfills the mission of the organization.

Starratt referred to presence as being the missing link between these two virtues. Starratt proposed that the Ethic of Presence plays a major part in followers believing in the transformational and moral leadership of their leader. Starratt described the Ethic of Presence as meaning that the leader has a full awareness of self and others in the organization, pays full attention to others, and maintains closeness and support for them. Furthermore, the Ethic of Presence substantiates a dialogue between leader and follower. Similarly, the elementary school principal maintains a relationship with the staff through communication that is both mutual and authentic.

Starratt claimed that Presence has three primary characteristics, which sometimes function alone and frequently together. The first characteristic is an affirming presence. The elementary school principal affirms that the teachers are distinct, authentic beings in their own right and affirms the right of the teachers to be what or who they want. The second characteristic is a critical presence. The elementary school principal critically examines problems and uses authentic communication with teachers to correct the problem and prevent future dialogue problems between leader and follower. The third characteristic is an enabling presence. The elementary school principal invites teachers to exercise their autonomy and actual or potential talents in carrying out the education of children. Enabling presence invites teacher involvement at various levels of increased participation in the work of the institution.

Starratt explained that the three expressions of presence constitute an ethic of presence that mediates the relationship between the leader's ethics of authenticity and ethics of responsibility. Furthermore, Starratt concluded that the interplay between these virtues must be

considered in light of the more formal ethics of educational leadership whether it is an ethic of justice or ethic of care.

Ethic of Care

In the fields of moral development, education, and leadership persists a central philosophical debate concerning the nature of morality as it relates to gender (Snauwaert, 1995). The debate concerns the relationship, or lack thereof, between justice and care as described by the work of Kohlberg (1981) and Gilligan (1982).

Kohlberg maintains that within the context of moral development, impartiality entails the ability to separate one's self from one's own egocentric needs, stepping back to a reflective position wherein one can judge moral claims impartially. Additionally, Kohlberg sees moral dilemmas as justice dilemmas in the sense that they require judgments of right and duty in situations that involve conflicting claims. However, real life dilemmas involve love, forgiveness, compassion, conflict, struggle, pain, and care. These dilemmas are entangled and embedded within complex relationships. This is precisely the feminist critique of Kohlberg developed by Carol Gilligan (Snauwaert, 1995).

The ethic of care was first described by Gilligan (1982) as a moral platform built upon the recognition of needs, relationship, and response. Individuals who are guided by an ethic of care consider each leadership decision and the potential impact of their decision making on others. Gilligan's theory is based upon the distinction between the development of masculine and feminine identity with the development of male identity being critically tied to separation and individualism. This male trait of separation is at the core of Kohlberg's moral theory (Snauwaert, 1995). Gilligan (1986) suggests that every problem that can be constructed morally can be constructed from either the justice or care orientation. Gilligan argues that feminine

identity is not dependent upon separation, but is defined in terms of attachment. Consequently, as male development continues in terms of separation, female development progresses in terms of connection and relatedness. Snauwaert added that in Gilligan's view, the moral development of the female is a function of the ethic of care, while male moral development is a function of the ethic of justice.

Based upon the theories of Kohlberg and Gilligan, male school administrators tend to favor making decisions based on an ethic of justice rather than an ethic of care. However, elementary schools may be havens for a caring orientation. Research completed by Marshall, Patterson, Rogers and Steele (1996) argued that an ethic of caring is needed if our purpose as educators is to nurture children and to teach them to be caring, moral, productive members of society.

Snauwaert (1995) believes that the ethic of justice and the ethic of care actually complement rather than conflict with each other. The first means of complement involves a commitment of respect for the inherent dignity of all persons. The second means of complement is found in the function of one's capacity to respond to others. Snauwaert concluded that there exists a web of relationships which interconnects us, and that interconnection demands that we respond to each other with care.

Flanagan and Jackson (1987) explained that one issue in need of clarification is the precise nature of the ethic of care and its relation within moral personality to the ethic of justice. The authors used the gestalt vase-face illusion to clarify their position. The vase-face illusion involves looking at an image and determining what a person sees. Some people view the image and see a human face while others see a vase. Flanagan and Jackson stated that for most individuals, one way of seeing moral problems dominates the other way of seeing to some

degree, and that the direction of dominance is correlated with gender. Regardless, the authors note that there is a deep and important difference between visual perception and moral construction. The important point is that there is no impossibility in imagining persons who are both very fair and very caring and who have sensitivities for perceiving moral issues and seeing particular problems with multiple issues attached.

Coincidentally, Flanagan and Jackson believe that the two ethics involve seeing things in different and competing ways. The justice orientation organizes moral perception by highlighting issues of fairness, right and obligation. An elementary principal entirely in the grip of the justice orientation may be able to see a problem as a moral problem only if such issues can be constructed in it. Furthermore, the care orientation focuses on the connections among the individuals involved, their particular personalities, and their needs and opportunities.

The claim is that typically one of the orientations dominates moral thinking and that the direction of dominance is gender linked (Flanagan & Jackson, 1987). However, the authors note that two things must be kept in mind. First, although one way of conceiving of moral problems dominates, most individuals use both orientations some of the time. Second, the data on how people in fact conceive of morality have no simple and direct implications on the issues of how the domain of morality is best conceived, what virtues and reasoning skills are required by morality, and how best a particular moral issue is constructed.

The male elementary school principal leads an environment dominated by female staff. Additionally, the school environment is one in which a caring orientation is expected while educating youth. Mixed into this equation is the idea that the male leader feels more comfortable basing decisions on an ethic of justice orientation. According to Flanagan and Jackson (1987) we have to learn to tolerate, and perhaps applaud, a rich diversity of good moral personalities.

Through this tolerance, male elementary school principals may have tools necessary to strengthen their development and implementation of an ethic of care orientation.

Much of what has been written about an ethic of care centers on the belief that females have the upper hand when it comes to being cooperative and collaborative and more oriented to enhance others' self-worth (Book, 2000; Helgesen, 1990; Rosener, 1995). Historically, women have taken the responsibility of providing care (Sommers & Shields, 1987). The responsibility has been connected with the feminine ethic of care, which focuses on supposed feminine virtues oriented to caring and feelings (Rudnick, 2001). Additionally, the ethic of care in professional life is visible in the essence of nursing, teaching, and social work, which are careers traditionally associated with women (Allmark, 1998; McCance, McKenna, & Boore, 1999; McCartan & Hargie, 2004; Poole & Isaacs, 1997).

An ethic of care is not held exclusive to nurses, teachers and social workers. Caring is also important within many other professions. Natural caring and professional caring may share many characteristics or ethical principles, such as commitment, knowledge, skills, and most of all respect for others (Ware, 1996).

People who display an ethic of care typically associate the action with situations and aspects of situations that focus on abandonment, detachment, gender bias, hurt, pain, and violations of interpersonal intimacy (Walker & Snarey, 2004). In addition, these people feel a moral responsiveness to another's needs and this response focuses, in part, on the ethic of care (Gilligan, 1982). Some individuals eagerly take on the responsibility to care; hence, they should be allowed to play a pivotal role in looking after those who are close to them (Harris, 2002).

According to Starratt (1991), the ethic of care usually centers on the demands of caring relationships, which are viewed as total consideration and commitment. The demand may have

no bases in contractual or legalistic points of view but instead is based in relationships and recognizing the value of another person. Coincidentally, the caregiver and the cared-for enjoy a dignity and worth that deepen the relationship. Noddings (1992) concluded that people are born totally reliant on the caring of others; if an individual life is to be preserved and experience growth, as well as to arrive at some stage of acceptability in today's culture and community, that individual must be cared for unconditionally from the moment they enter this world. People are relational by nature. Therefore, caring interactions represent the natural and appropriate expression of reality (Beck, 1994).

A caring relationship is also depicted when someone exemplifies a concern for others on their own terms (Brilowski & Wendler, 2004). Goldstein and Lake (2000) suggested that caring involves the creation of significant relationships, the ability to maintain connections, and the commitment to respond to others with sensitivity and flexibility. Mayeroff (1971) described a sincere commitment to caring for other in the following passage:

In caring, I experience the other as having potentialities and the need to grow; I experience an idea, for instance, as seminal, vital or promising. In addition, I experience the other as needing me in order to grow; consider how we sometimes feel needed by another person or by a cause or an ideal. This does not simply mean that I know, in some strictly intellectual sense, that the other has needs that must be satisfied and that I can satisfy those needs. I do not experience being needed by the other as a relationship that gives me power over it and provides me with something to dominate, but rather as a kind of trust. It is as if I had been entrusted with this care of the other in a way that is the antithesis of possessing and manipulating it as I please. (p. 337)

In a general sense, relationships between oneself and others lay the foundation for caring to take place. From this foundation, personal and intimate connections with others begin to emerge. The relationships may expand into social responsibility and morality (Enomoto, 1997; Weinstein, 1998). Noddings (2002) noted that people who care may use reasoning to decide what to do and how best to do it. However, feelings with and for the other should motivate people to naturally care.

The use of reasoning in deciding what to do and how best to care for others occurs because of several major ingredients of caring having been put in place (Mayeroff, 1995). Several of the major ingredients as described by Mayeroff include knowing, patience, honesty, trust, humility, hope, and courage.

The caring ingredient of knowing involves knowing several things. Mayeroff claimed that what we know in caring, we know in different ways. Caring includes knowing something and being able to verbalize it and also just simply knowing how something occurs without the need or unable to articulate it. In the case of the male elementary school principal, he must know his staff and students, their strengths and limitations, what their needs are, how he should respond to their needs, and what the leader's own powers and limitations are.

The caring ingredient of patience demonstrated by the elementary school principal enables the school staff and students to grow in their own time and own way. In contrast, the impatient leader does not give time but may often take time away from staff and students. Conversely, patience involves participation by the leader with staff and students in which they give fully of themselves. Mayeroff expressed that the man who cares is patient, because he believes in the growth of the other, but besides being patient with the other, the leader must also be patient with himself. The leader must give himself a chance to learn and a chance to care.

The ingredient of honesty is present in caring as a positive and not as a matter of not doing something, not telling lies or not deliberately deceiving others (Mayeroff, 1995). In caring, the elementary school principal is honest in trying to see truly. While caring for staff and students, the leader must see them as they are and not as he would like them to be. Mayeroff proposed that honesty is also present in caring between how the leader acts and what he really feels, between what he says and what he feels. In other words, the elementary school principal cannot be more concerned about how he appears to other people rather than seeing and responding to the needs of staff and students.

Research conducted by Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) examined how school administrators operating from an ethic of care practice their professional duties and how that practice differs from administrators operating solely from traditional leadership models. The traditional leadership models that the researchers used to compare were four models of educational administration “systematic approximations of reality” proposed by Sergiovanni (1989). The models are known as the rational, mechanistic, organic, and bargaining models.

Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) claim that critics and scholars argue that the traditional leadership models are no longer valid and new theories for leadership and organizations need to be framed from radically different perspectives. Their claim is based on the belief that leadership theory was primarily developed by observations of white males working in leadership positions in bureaucracies. The behaviors and values of women, minorities, and others were excluded from leadership theory and research.

Recent theoretical developments set aside the assumptions that schools are apolitical and that school administrators are neutral, technical, bureaucratic managers who coordinate work, enforce rules, and maximize efficiency (Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, & Steele, 1996). Theorists

proposed that administrators operate from their values (Marshall, 1992). Foster (1986) likewise proclaimed that administrators should critique their organizations with a values laden view.

In so doing, the feminist critique of Noddings (1992) enabled school leaders to adopt the ethic of care. The ethic of care enabled schools to become caring communities that nurture all children, regardless of gender, race, or class. Noddings believes that the development and maintenance of positive relations and sense of community in schools is made possible when the ethic of care guides administrative decision making. Put into practice, the ethic of caring emphasizes connection through responsibility to others rather than to rights and rules. It also involves relationships with others that are based on the act of affirming and encouraging the best in others (Noddings, 1992). Therefore, if we also want students to learn how to care for themselves and each other, administrators and teachers must engage in genuine dialogue with them, build continuity and a sense of trust through repeated and consistent interactions, and model caring by living it (Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, & Steele, 1996).

Unfortunately, career pressures, bureaucratic structures, and endless demands for quick decisions and fast action create walls that pull principals toward the traditional models of school administration. Fisher and Tronto (1990) stated that the main goal of traditional bureaucracies is standardization and maintenance which is in direct opposition to holistic caring. As a result, both careers and caring are devalued.

For the school administrators who decide to fight the urge to use the traditional models of leadership, Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) believe that their research confirms that an ethic of care provides administrators with a valuable perspective to guide their moral reasoning and decision making. Additionally, it can provide an overarching ethical framework to guide administrative decisions. Likewise, an ethic of care can help educational leaders

determine which segments of a particular leadership model or models is needed in solving the day to day situations and problems encountered by the administrator.

Marshall et al. (1996) conducted an analysis of data collection looking for the training, values, supports, motivations, and satisfactions of 50 assistant principals from nearly one half of the United States, including urban, rural, and suburban districts. The assistant principals ranged from 1 to 23 years in elementary, middle, and secondary schools serving populations with varied demographic and economic characteristics. The dominant themes emerging from the data were that the administrative practices of caring and the building and nurturing of relationships were present rather than the traditional administrative practices of formal, impersonal, and controlled communication, top-down decision making, and neutral application of policy.

As a group, the assistant principals exhibited many of the caring behaviors Gilligan (1982) and Noddings (1984, 1986, 1992) describe and contributed to building nurturing and connected school environments of communities of care as described by Noddings (Marshall et al., 1996). Based on these findings, the researchers concluded that they had an empirically based description of caring in administration and that the perspective is consistent with Nodding's ethic of caring. Their empirically based description of caring is characterized by the weight it gives to creating, maintaining and enhancing positive relations. Managing relationships with the ethical framework of caring also requires concern for responsiveness to others.

Three common themes were found to be prevalent within the ethical framework: connections, context, and concern. The assistant principals were able to forge connections with students, parents, teachers, community members, and fellow administrators (Marshall et al., 1996). These individuals demonstrated a willingness to commit both personal and professional

time to relationship building. These individuals also recognize the diverse and individual qualities in people and create individual standards of expectations, incentives, and rewards.

The assistant principals demonstrated an ability to be sensitive to the context in which problems or challenges arise (Marshall et al., 1996). The administrators thoughtfully analyze situations and take action specific to the situation. Likewise, they are able to give full consideration to the concerns of all parties involved in a situation rather than simply relying on bureaucratic rules and procedures as the basis for their decisions.

The assistant principals were so-called “people persons”. Others perceived that they cared more about what was happening to the people around them than they cared about money, status, or power. The administrators understand that making themselves accessible and responsive to students and teachers is essential for developing and sustaining successful relationships (Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, & Steele, 1996).

The research completed on assistant principals confirms that caring administrators do exist, they can be male or female, but job and organizational structures often interfere with caring. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) suggest that educators need to explore ways to alter schools to incorporate a reality based order of policies and norms that support the caring professional who centers his or her work around children’s development, demands a stable family life, and is ready, willing and able to assert professional values that highlight caring in schools. Noddings (1992) suggests for students and teachers to feel connected to their schools and for learning to occur, educational administrator’s behavior must be centered on caring. This focus in turn could then generate changes in policy, structures, and career paths that would help achieve these ends. As men travel down the career path toward the elementary principalship, construction of a caring perspective appears to be a necessity.

Conclusion

Male elementary principals can play a significant role in the education of our youth. The role includes leadership that focuses on transforming the educational environment into a community of caring educators with a purpose toward realizing the potential of all children and developing them into independent life long learners. For most male elementary principals, the opportunity to lead a staff toward accomplishing this goal will occur near the latter half of the career. The first half of his career will be spent in the classroom interacting with children. During these years, the male educator will have several social and developmental factors tugging and pushing him to move out of the classroom and into an administrative leadership position. In actuality, the desire to someday be an administrator was with him while completing his teacher preparation program in college.

The career path described above is in jeopardy. With only eight percent of typical elementary education teacher preparation programs comprised of males (Gamble, 1997) and retirements in full swing, the number of male elementary school principals will continue to decline to levels never seen before. The reversal of this trend will require elementary schools, college teacher preparation programs, communities, and government entities to collaborate in promoting elementary education as a valuable, rewarding, and worthwhile profession for men. Furthermore, gender stereotypical concerns that elementary education careers are for the female gender must be altered and males must play a more significant role in the education of our youth.

CHAPTER 3. METHODOLOGY

This chapter provides a review of the methods used in this life history study. Specifically, the following are presented: research design, role of the researcher, participants, data sources, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, and trustworthiness and credibility.

Research Design

A biographical research design was utilized to develop a profile of the career paths followed by five men in elementary principalships in Ohio public schools. Creswell (1998) suggests that a life history study of an individual and his experiences, as told to the researcher, serves to broaden the understanding of an individual's life. Denzin (1989) defines the biographical method as the studied use and collection of life documents that describe turning-point moments in an individual's life.

The guiding questions of this study are: (1) What life experiences contributed to the career path and leadership of male elementary school principals? (2) What leadership skills and styles has the male elementary school principal utilized toward achieving personal and professional success? (3) What are the long term career goals of the male educators prior to and after attaining the elementary school principalship?

Role of the Researcher

My experience as a teacher and elementary school principal is my motivation for pursuing this study on the career paths of male elementary school principals. Reflecting back on my own life history, I realize now that several factors have influenced why I pursued a career in secondary education rather than elementary education and why, fifteen years into my career, I decided to change my career path toward an elementary school principalship. In addition, I have

discovered that certain leadership factors have significantly impacted the effectiveness of performing my job as elementary school principal.

My selection in college of a career in secondary education versus elementary education was driven by societal expectations and my own inadequacies and fears of working with young children. After more than a decade of successful teaching at the secondary level, my career objectives began to change. The reasons for the desire to change my career path were influenced by the need to achieve greater financial and personal status and to use my talents to improve the quality of education for a larger number of students. After careful consideration, I felt the best area to accomplish this objective was in the position of elementary school principal. I believe this position provides a greater opportunity to focus on academics as opposed to discipline matters that may dominate the middle and high school principal's daily schedule. Additionally, the elementary school principal position tends to have fewer after school duties, as opposed to the middle and high school principalship.

Shortly into my new career, I realized that my success and effectiveness as a principal in an elementary school setting was largely dependent on my ability to empower my staff and a desire to care for the needs of my staff and students. I have also realized that my success and effectiveness as an elementary school principal is directly related to the amount and depth of communication conducted with parents and the public.

My experiences described above have led me to consider whether other male educators have similar career experiences. If so, is it then possible that a theoretical basis for our career path experiences exists? In order to find the answer, I have embarked on a journey to identify and present the theories that may influence the career path of the male elementary school principal.

Participants

The population for this study was the male principals in elementary schools in Ohio during the 2007-2008 school year. I obtained the names and e-mail addresses of the male elementary school principals from the Ohio Department of Education Directory Information system. I sent a questionnaire via e-mail to each principal. I then conducted a series of interviews with a criterion sample of five elementary school principals selected based upon the following criteria: (1) three individuals who have been elementary school teachers at least five years and elementary school principals for 1-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11 or more years, respectively, (2) one individual who has been a secondary school teacher for five or more years and then an elementary school principal for at least one year, and (3) one individual with at least one year experience as an elementary school principal having come to the position through a non-traditional route (e.g., retire/rehire, second career with prior career in business, medicine, or social work). Individuals selected for the interview came from the following age ranges (27-32, 33-38, 39-44, 45+).

Data Sources

In this study, data were collected through a questionnaire and interviews.

Questionnaire

I used an online questionnaire to collect demographic and background data from all male elementary school principals in Ohio. From these responses, I created frequency tables highlighting demographic trends and/or patterns in the demographic profiles of these respondents. The second purpose of the questionnaire was to narrow the pool of potential participants for the interview portion of the study by identifying male elementary principals that meet the following criteria: (1) One participant with 5 or more years of teaching experience at

the elementary level followed by 1-5 years experience as an elementary principal, (2) One participant with 5 or more years of teaching experience at the elementary level followed by 6-10 years experience as an elementary principal, (3) One participant with 5 or more years of teaching experience at the elementary level followed by 11 or more years experience as an elementary principal, (4) One participant with 5 or more years of teaching experience at the secondary level followed by at least one year experience as an elementary principal, and (5) One participant with at least one year experience as an elementary school principal who came to the elementary principal position through a non-traditional route (retire/rehire, second career, etc.). The criteria for the selection were determined based upon the main topics discussed in the literature review.

There were two important limitations associated with this type of data collection process. Obtaining a high percentage of responses depended on the willingness of the respondents to complete an online survey via Survey Monkey. A second limitation that contributed to the number of responses was in the timing of the e-mail and the subsequent response. Although the best time to receive a timely response to any survey of school administrators would be during the summer months, my timing dictated that the questionnaire be completed during the spring, which tends to be the busiest of time of the year for elementary school principals due to spring state achievement testing.

The questionnaire I developed had two sections with a total of 15 questions (see Appendix A). The first section focused on personal information, educational background, and the teaching phase of the respondent's career path. This section consisted of nine questions ranging from "Your current age" to "How many years did you teach at the elementary school level"? The second section focused on the elementary school principalship phase of the career

path and consisted of five questions ranging from “How many years have you been an elementary principal”? to “What factors influenced your decision to be an elementary principal”?

Interviews

To address the main research questions for this study, I conducted four interviews with a criterion sample of five male elementary school principals selected from the pool of questionnaire respondents (see Appendix C and D). Each participant received a list of questions related to a given topic at least one week in advance of each interview to help evoke memories of specific events in their lives. The first interview session, lasting 30 minutes, consisted of open-ended questions to gain the participants’ trust and to facilitate discussion about their career path experiences. The basic purpose of this session was to mentally prepare the participants for the next two interview sessions. The next two interview sessions lasted an hour each and focused on a specific topic: educational experiences kindergarten through collegiate years, and career work experiences. A fourth and final meeting was designated at the end to allow participants the opportunity to reflect on the interview experience. I selected the location for the interviews based upon the availability and preference of each participant. The questions for each interview are located in Appendix B. Following the traditions of life history research, I hoped to understand through these interviews these participants’ career paths and how they reflect societal, personal, and institutional themes, and social histories (Cole, 1994).

Data Collection Procedures

In this study, the following steps were taken in collecting the data:

1. Submitted and received approval for a cover letter (Appendix C), interview questions, questionnaire, and a proposal for this study to the HSRB of Bowling Green State University.

2. Obtained the names and e-mail addresses of all male elementary school principals in the state of Ohio from the 2007–2008 State of Ohio Directory of Public Schools.
3. E-mailed to each male elementary school principal a cover letter and link to the online questionnaire in early spring.
4. Compiled returned questionnaires and summarized responses.
5. Randomly selected five individuals from the pool of respondents meeting the study criteria and requested their approval to be interviewed, establish the time frame for the interviews, and completed the interviews.
6. Transcribed and analyzed interview data.

Data Analysis Procedures

I compiled the data gathered from the two sections of the questionnaire based upon the frequency of responses. I also developed tables and graphs for descriptive purposes and to assist in understanding general characteristics of the participants (see Appendix E). I then categorized participants according to the interview selection criteria to determine which questionnaire respondents were possible interviewees.

The interview aspect of this qualitative study involved data collection, organization, and interpretation in a concurrent fashion, all guided by the primary research questions of the study. Data gathered in the interviews were coded and analyzed to identify themes and patterns. Glesne (1999) described coding as a progressive process of sorting and defining and defining and sorting pieces of data that are applicable to the research purpose. Glesne also referred to this as “the code mines”. In a similar fashion, I organized and relate codes into a conceptual framework that identifies important emergent themes and epiphanies within and across the life stories of my

participants (Creswell, 1998). Sufficient time was allotted for analysis and transcription. Each participant has his own individual chapter.

Trustworthiness and Credibility

To increase accuracy during data collection and the appropriateness of my interpretations, participants received a copy of their transcripts after each round of interviews for feedback. Any deletions or revisions to the transcript during member checking gave this study more validity because my participants may have addressed certain areas in the data analysis that they may disagree with before publication and offer their own interpretive conclusion (Atkinson & Hammersley, 1998). This process assured that I properly represented the lives of the participants in this study (Glesne, 1999).

To further increase the credibility of my interpretations, peer review was also incorporated throughout the data collection. Reviewers looked for researcher bias in the study and requested clarification on specific analytical findings. The peer review process was carried out by a professional colleague in elementary administration and my dissertation committee members.

CHAPTER 4. QUESTIONNAIRE RESULTS

The Ohio Male Elementary School Principal survey was emailed to 816 male elementary school principals in the state of Ohio. A total of 145 individuals responded to the online Survey Monkey survey. Four individuals responded that they were unable to open the Survey Monkey URL. A paper copy of the survey was mailed to the four individuals and they were asked to complete the paper copy and mail it back to the researcher. After receiving the paper copies of the survey, I entered their answers into the online Survey Monkey program. A total of 94 emails did not reach the intended destination. The reasons may include incorrect email addresses, changes in email addresses, and network blocks on incoming email.

Graphs of the response rates to the questions are available in Appendix E. Graphs of total responses illustrate the following information:

The first question asked the participants to state their current age. The age category of 53-60 received the highest percent of responses with 26.2 percent while the age category of 45-52 received 24.2 percent of the responses. The age category of 61+ was represented by 4.7 percent of the participants. This is consistent with data presented by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (2003) which noted that in the 1999-2000 school year, 54 percent were 50+ years old. Furthermore, a survey completed by NAESP (2006) noted that the proportion of elementary school principals 55 or older had climbed to 28 percent during the 2003-2004 school year.

The second question in the survey asked the participants to indicate their marital status. The category of married received an overwhelming response by 91.3 percent of the participants. The categories of single and divorced were indicated by 4.7 percent and 3.4 percent, respectively. The high number of individuals who are married is not necessarily surprising given

that the majority of the individuals responding to the survey were 45 years of age and older. It is noteworthy that the nation's divorce rate is nearly 47 percent (U.S. Census Bureau, 2002), while the percent of this survey group who are currently divorced and single is 8.1 percent.

Questions three and four of the survey asked the participants to indicate the number of children they have and the number of their children that are under 18 years of age. Nearly 40 percent of the participants indicated that he had two children while 24.1 percent indicated they had 3 children. A total of 1.6 percent indicated that they have 4 or more children. The number of children under 18 years of age that received the highest response rates was the zero category. A total of 37.6 percent of the responses indicated they have no children under age 18. The responses given for these two questions illustrate that the majority of our male elementary principals in Ohio public schools have children who no longer attend elementary or secondary schools.

Question five of the survey asked the participants to indicate their undergraduate major. A major in elementary/early childhood was indicated by 51.7 percent of the participants. A category of *other* (possibly k-12 certification or content area outside of education) was indicated by 24.8 percent while secondary majors were indicated by 22.8 percent of the participants. The category of middle childhood received less than a percent of the responses. This may be due to the newness of this area as a separate field in Ohio. With nearly half the participants having indicated that their major was something other than elementary/early childhood, it is plausible that social role theory and/or adult development theory has played a part in the educator's decision to move into an elementary school setting rather than stay in the area of their major. This potential conclusion is discussed in greater detail in the following chapters.

The sixth question of the survey asked the participants to indicate their age when they were employed in their first full-time position in public education. The youngest age response was 20 and was indicated by three individuals. The oldest age response was 55 and indicated by one individual. The mode of all responses was age 22 having been indicated by 48 individuals. Of the 149 responses, 118 individuals were in the age range of 21-25 when they accepted their first full-time position in public education.

The seventh question of the survey asked the participants to indicate the grade level of their first teaching position. The natural assumption is that nearly all of the elementary principals in this study should have started out their careers in elementary education. While the majority of the participants (57.7 percent) indicated that they started their teaching career in a pre-K-6 position, a surprising 34.2 percent of the participants indicated that they started their teaching career in a 7-12 grade level position. The reason for the relatively high percentage may be supported by the belief that when given the choice to teach at the secondary level compared to the elementary level, men choose the secondary over the elementary because they can coach, which leads to more earnings, status, and respect (Barnard et al., 2000). A study completed by Gamble and Wilkins (1997) attempted to gain insight into the reasons for the comparatively low number of men in elementary education. Ultimately, their study found that men do not enroll in elementary education teacher preparation programs because of low salary and prestige and because elementary education is presumably more suitable for the nurturing abilities of women.

Question eight of the survey asked the participants to indicate how many years of classroom teaching experience they had prior to accepting an elementary school principalship. The category of 5-9 years teaching experience received 41.5 percent of the responses. The category of 10-14 years received 28.6 percent of the responses. Several sources of research

found in the literature review support the data represented from the responses. Research completed by Doud and Keller (1998) found that the typical male elementary principal taught between 10 and 19 years before becoming a principal. Results from the NAESP (2006) study indicated that elementary school principals had spent an average of 14 years as a teacher and eight as a principal. A study completed by Papa, Lankford, and Wyckoff (2002) found that the median individual spends 10 years teaching before moving to an administrative position.

The ninth question of the survey asked the participants to indicate the age when they accepted their first elementary school principal position. The category with the highest percentage of responses was the category of 30-37 years of age. The category received 41.6 percent of the responses. The category of 38-45 years of age received 26.2 percent of the responses while the category of 22-29 years of age received 22.8 percent of the responses. The data support research by Doud and Keller (1998) who found that the typical male elementary principal became a principal at 36 years of age. Furthermore, these data coincide with the Theory of Adult Development proposed in the literature review. According to Levinson's adult development theory, at about age thirty, men settle down and work toward career advancement. This period, sometimes referred to as the Age Thirty Transition, lasts around five years and provides an opportunity for transition to the next stage of life structure. Brewer (1996) noted that the trigger for the life structure transition move into administrative positions may occur because the male educator may feel compelled to meet personal or family fiscal needs.

The tenth question of the survey asked the participants to indicate how long they have been an elementary school principal. Thirty-five percent of the participants selected the 6-10 years category while 31.5 percent selected the 1-5 years category. Similarly, a survey of the nation's elementary principals during the 2003-2004 school year by the National Center for

Education Statistics (NAESP, 2006) indicated that elementary school principals had spent an average of eight years as a principal.

Question eleven of the survey asked the participants to indicate the percent range of their teaching staff that is female. The category 90-100% received a 75.9 percent response rate. The data are not surprising when they are compared to a recent report by the National Education Association (2005). The report stated that in Ohio, the elementary school teacher gender ratio was 15,275 males and 68,478 females.

Question twelve of the survey asked the participants to indicate if they were actively seeking an elementary principalship when they were offered a principal position? A majority (63.2 percent) indicated that they were actively seeking when they were offered a position. Probably of more interest was the 36.8 percent of the respondents who were offered a position even though they were not actively seeking to be an elementary principal. The reason for this response rate was the significant availability of administrative positions.

The thirteenth question of the survey asked the participants to indicate the time in their career that they decided they wanted to be an elementary school principal. The category of *after teaching 1-5 years* received 30.6 percent of the responses while the category of *after teaching 6-10 years* received 29.2 percent of the responses. Furthermore, 9 percent of the participants indicated that they intended to be an elementary principal prior to their first teaching experience. These data support earlier claims by a study completed by Nielson (1995). Nielson's study of the long term professional aspirations of male elementary education majors indicated that 39 percent of the men aspired to professional positions in educational administration.

A narrative study completed by Bradley (2000) explored the preliminary career choices for those few male teacher candidates who selected elementary education as an initial career

path. A number of general themes emerged but the one that corresponds to the data from question thirteen is that a trend exists that views a teaching career as a short term, almost temporary job rather than a long-term vocation.

Question fourteen of the survey asked the participants to select which factor most influenced their decision to move toward the elementary principalship. A *desire to lead* received 34.7 percent of the responses while *available opportunity* received the next most responses with 18.1 percent. Interestingly, only 5.6 percent of the participants indicated *financial reasons* for their decision to move toward the elementary principalship. Brewer (1996) noted from his study that many teachers do move into administrative positions and there are significant salary gains from doing so. However, research also indicates that males may engage in administrative opportunities for reasons other than financial rewards. A study completed by Militello and Behnke (2006) found that individuals determined to be elementary principals wanted an increase in responsibility and challenge in their careers. Gerson (1993) noted that males have begun choosing careers that emphasize service to society and personal satisfaction over extrinsic rewards such as money and prestige.

The fifteenth question asked the participants to indicate if they were interested in participating in the interview portion of my study. A desire to participate was indicated by 46 of the 149 participants. Of the 46 individuals who were interested in participating in the interview portion of the study, five were selected based upon the following category criteria: (1) three individuals who have been elementary school teachers at least five years and elementary school principal for 1-5 years, 6-10 years, and 11 or more years, respectively, (2) one individual who has been a secondary school teacher for five or more years and then an elementary school principal for at least one year, and (3) one individual with a least one year experience as an

elementary school principal having come to the position through a non-traditional route (e.g., retire/rehire, second career with prior career in business, medicine, or social work). Individuals selected for the interview will be representative of the following age ranges (27-32, 33-38, 39-44, 45+).

The 46 individuals who agreed to participate in the interview portion of the study were representative of the following categorical criteria: 36 out of the 46 participants were elementary teachers for 5 or more years. Ten of these 36 participants were elementary school principals for 1-5 years, 16 were elementary school principals for 6-10 years while 10 participants were elementary school principals for 11 or more years.

Another categorical criterion for the study was one individual who has been a secondary school teacher for five or more years and then an elementary school principal for at least one year. Ten participants out of the 46 met the criteria for this category. An additional categorical criteria was an individual with a least one year experience as an elementary school principal having come to the position through a non-traditional route (e.g., retire/rehire, second career with prior career in business, medicine, or social work). Eleven of the 46 participants indicated they had come to the position through a non-traditional route.

Representation in the age range categories were as follows: one individual from the range of 27-32 years of age, seven individuals from the range of 33-38 years of age, 13 individuals from the age range of 39-44 years of age, and 26 individuals from the range of 45+ years of age.

In addition to the previous categorical criteria used for selection of the interviewees, the potential interviewees were selected based upon their school being located in Northwest Ohio. This saved on time and expense of travel for the interviewer.

CHAPTER 5. GENE

Background

Gene (pseudonym) is a 37-year-old elementary school principal. He has been an elementary school principal for the past five years. The factor that most influenced his decision to become an elementary school principal was a desire to work with and influence a larger number of children. Prior to the principalship, he taught fifth grade for seven years in the same elementary school. At the end of his seventh year of teaching, he received a reduction in force notice stating that he would not have a job the coming school year. Gene was not actively seeking an elementary school principalship, but fortunately, the elementary school principal position was vacant and he was selected to fill it. Gene's undergraduate major was elementary/early childhood education. Gene is single and resides on a farm in a neighboring school district.

Early Life and Career Preparation

Life on the farm has been a familiar scene for Gene. Most of his early life involved work on the farm. While his father maintained the farm, his mother worked at a local bakery. Both parents taught Gene the importance of hard work. Today, Gene's father is deceased but his mother continues her work at the bakery as an office manager. Gene enjoyed going to school and being involved in several different activities. "The good times I had in school, especially at the elementary and junior high level, were a driving force toward going to college for the educational field." A career in education would also give Gene the opportunity to have some time off during the summer to complete work around the farm.

Gene decided to attend the University of Toledo and major in elementary education. Gene had several friends that were attending the university and this made his transition into

college life a little easier. Gene admitted that he really didn't know much about Toledo's education program. "My main interest in Toledo was that it was far enough away from home yet close enough that I could come home on the weekends." Gene was proud of the fact that he was the first person in his family to attend college.

Gene expressed his gratitude to the university for the variety of educational experiences he was offered. "I got a lot of background experience with elementary education at the university. I got to experience inner city, rural, and urban school settings. I got to see a lot of students in different settings." Gene was also appreciative toward the university due to all the odd jobs he was paid to complete. The income helped him stay in college and pay his bills so his father and mother wouldn't have to.

As one of a handful of male elementary education majors at the university, Gene was aware of the gender imbalance in his classes, however, he saw it as an opportunity to possibly get a job sooner than his female classmates. "I don't recall ever receiving harassment or being made fun of by others because of my interest in elementary education. If anything, I often was complimented for having the guts to go into elementary education. Otherwise, I really didn't give it much thought that people looked at me as a weird person."

Gene's career plans as he neared the end of his collegiate educational experience was to simply find a job. His only prerequisite was that he wanted to stay close to home. "I wasn't interested in Cleveland or Toledo. I wanted to come back to my hometown area and teach the kids in this area."

Pre-Principal Career

After graduating from the University of Toledo in 1995, Gene spent nearly two years substitute teaching in schools within the county he resided. "I did everything from elementary,

to high school, to SBH [severe behavior handicap]. I tried to get as much experience as I could and get my foot in the door.” In 1997, he was hired by a local school district to teach fifth grade. For the next seven years, Gene taught science, social studies, and math at the fifth grade level. As one of three male educators in his building, Gene knew he was also serving as a male role model to his students. Additionally, Gene believed the women staff members looked to him to be the disciplinarian in the building. The expectations did not bother Gene. However, he felt that a few more males in the building would have lessened his burden. “Sometimes I needed the time to talk to other guys about things that didn’t involve school and it was hard to relate my conversation to the women in the building.”

As he finished his fourth year as a teacher, Gene decided it was time to start work on a master’s program.

I got interested in the idea that maybe I would get a masters’ in administration and supervision. One thing that strengthened my decision was that a lot of the elementary school principals I knew were to retire soon and someone would have to fill those jobs someday and I thought it would be a good idea to give it a try. I also had in mind that I wanted to make my master’s degree worth something. Some people get a master’s degree in education but I wanted mine to be something I could grow on. I wanted to be able move up the ladder, so to say, with my degree. That way I could take the next step. Gene also considered that as a principal, he would receive a higher salary. “The financial aspect was in my mind but not the biggest factor. Also, the ability to see the educational system from a different perspective was important to me. I was totally happy as a teacher but learning about leadership through the college courses got me interested.”

After three years of study, Gene completed his master's degree in administration and supervision and coursework for his principal licensure. The timing couldn't have been better. In mid April of that year, Gene was informed that his teaching position was being eliminated. As the summer neared, Gene considered whether or not to seek an administrative position or to be a substitute teacher during the upcoming school year. He decided that he was not ready to be a principal so he made plans to substitute teach, farm, and wait for someone in the school system to retire. Soon after this decision, the elementary principal in his building accepted a position in a neighboring school district. "The superintendent called me and asked if I was interested in the position. As a teacher, I was totally happy with what I was doing but the opportunity came up and I took it."

Principal Career

Gene recently completed his fifth year as elementary principal. During the five years, Gene has found several leadership skills to be useful while leading his building.

You have to be a good problem solver. It may be a problem with a student, teacher, or parent. I have to be able to resolve the problem in a fast and efficient manner and try to come up with a fair solution. The second thing is that I believe you have to be a good listener. People continually try to bend my ear about a problem they have. I have to be able to lead them in the right direction. Next, I believe a principal must have vision of the direction the building is headed. I try to lead people to change because education is in constant change. Teaching techniques always need updated because students are constantly in change. A lot of teachers get stuck in ruts and need someone to lead them in the change. This is a big thing to try to get them to do this. New ways of doing things and new approaches can help students.

Gene described his overall experience as an elementary school principal as a continual learning experience. “I have counted on a lot of people for advice and help in the daily situations that occur.” One group in particular that has helped Gene is the neighboring elementary school principals from the local area. The group meets once a month to discuss issues. “These men and women are very beneficial because I get to bounce questions off them and seek their wisdom regarding how they handled situations [similar to those] that I experienced.”

The learning experiences also include the noticeable change in the amount of time working with students. “As a teacher, that is all I did. As a principal, I spend very little time working with students. I still work with students but in a different capacity. There is never a dull day. I work through one situation with a student and here comes another one around the corner.” Gene has also had the learning experience of leading a staff that he originally taught with. “Working with the staff was a big challenge for me. Many of them I taught with or worked with and that was difficult for me. I am now their boss rather than their colleague.”

Future Plans

At this point in Gene’s career, his goal is to continue to improve his skills and leadership as an elementary school principal. In addition, Gene plans on taking courses to renew his principal license and possibly earn his superintendent license. “Some time down the road I might consider moving into a superintendent position but it will be way down the road. Otherwise, I will be an elementary school principal or I might even go back into teaching at some point.” The reason for Gene’s thought of going back into the classroom is based on his observation that there are teachers who make more money per day than he does. “If I got to the point where I continue to fall further and further behind the standard going rate of pay for teachers, I might consider going back to teaching.”

Regardless of the pay concerns, Gene believes that a career as an elementary school principal is a very rewarding profession. “The kids need male role models and the principalship is a neat place to illustrate the role model. I would also say that if a male likes to work with kids, this is the place to do it. It is a lot of work and stressful but the kids make it all worthwhile.”

CHAPTER 6. HENRY

Background

Henry (pseudonym) is a 43-year-old elementary school principal. He has been an elementary school principal for the past four years and prior to that completed two years as a high school principal. Henry initially sought out an elementary school principal position due to the location of the job and his place of residency. Otherwise, the factor that most influenced his decision to become an elementary school principal was a desire to work with young children as opposed to working with students in middle school and senior high. Prior to the principalship, Henry taught physical education, health, and special education for 14 years to students in grades K-12. The majority of the time was spent with students in grades seven through twelve. Henry's undergraduate degree was in K-12 physical education and health with a minor in athletic training. Henry is married and has two children. Henry and his family reside in the same school district of his employment.

Early Life and Career Preparation

As a young boy, Henry loved to play outside. The outdoor activities were dominated with various sports. Henry, his brother, and neighborhood friends occupied their time playing basketball, baseball, and football. Unfortunately, Henry's father was not around much to see his son's enjoyment of outdoor activities. At age eleven, Henry's mother and father divorced each other. "My dad was not around much because of the divorce and his business." Fortunately, Henry's uncle took it upon himself to be the father figure in his life.

As Henry progressed through his high school years, his uncle played a significant role with influencing Henry's decisions. "My uncle was a teacher and coach and really influenced me toward studying to be a teacher when the day would come for me to go off to college." The

combination of this influence and the love of sports led Henry to believe that he might want to be an elementary physical education teacher someday.

In the fall of 1982, Henry enrolled at Rio Grande College in Southern Ohio. “When I started college, I thought I would major in pre-med and play baseball but I soon realized how tough the math and science were and quickly changed directions.” After one year at Rio Grande College, Henry came back to northern Ohio and enrolled at Defiance College and within four years graduated from the college. “I thought about Pharmacy and settled for my original dream of a physical education teacher.”

Henry’s goal at Defiance College was to finish with a K-12 physical education degree and teach that or 7-12 health. He also finished with a minor in athletic training. As graduation from college approached, Henry decided that he would postpone looking for a job and instead go to graduate school in the coming fall at Bowling Green State University. In addition to being a student, Henry was a graduate assistant in athletic training through the health and physical education department at Bowling Green State University and eventually ended up with a master’s degree in sports management and athletic administration.

Pre-Principal Career

After completing graduate school, Henry began to hunt for a job. “It was tough going especially with the physical education degree and a master’s degree.” Henry started subbing with hopes that a full-time job opportunity might develop. The opportunity came rather quickly. “I subbed one day a week as a physical education teacher at a county level SBH [Severe Behavior Handicap] unit.” In November of that first year of subbing, the school had a teacher resign in a fourth/fifth grade classroom and the superintendent asked him if he would be a long term sub in that position for the rest of the year. In actuality, the administration had to get a sub

for him every Wednesday so that he could teach the physical education to the students in the SBH unit. Otherwise, he taught the fourth/fifth grade four days a week. During that year, Henry went to the University of Toledo to complete his course work in order to get his SBH teacher certification. For the next two years, he taught grade 7-12 students in the SBH unit. The classroom was predominately a self-contained classroom with minimal inclusion.

After completing this two-year stint, Henry took on a similar teaching position in another county to be a SBH job specialist. He worked at this position for the next three years. This involved working with the same age population but also included getting them trained for jobs, finding jobs, and development of social skills and life skills. After three years as the SBH job specialist, Henry was hired at another school as a K-12 physical education teacher and baseball and basketball coach. He worked at this position for the next three years. Near the end of the third year, Henry had a good friend who told him about a teaching position that was going to occur at a school the friend was currently a teacher and coach. The school also needed a varsity volleyball coach and junior varsity basketball coach. Henry interviewed for the position and was notified in July that he was selected for the job of teaching high school health, physical education, and general science along with the two coaching positions. Henry worked at the positions for the next three years.

Henry not only had a new job but also a wife and more coursework. "I got married right after I got hired for this position. I got the job in July and got married in September." Because of the teaching of general science, he had to go back to college to get certified to teach that subject to the high school level students. Following this three-year stint, the K-8 physical education position opened up in the same district so Henry opted for this position. After eleven years of teaching high school level students, Henry made the switch to the elementary level. "At

this point in my career, I wanted to work with the younger students. I knew I could handle them and was basically tired of trying to get high school students to do their school work.”

During the second year of teaching physical education to students in grades K-8, Henry had thoughts of another career switch. “The superintendent asked me if I thought I might be interested in administration. I gave it some thought and decided to take coursework to get my principal certification.” Henry had two other reasons driving his decision toward a position as a school principal. “The financial aspect was a perk but I also suppose my best reason was the effect I could have on the greater number of students. I probably got to see all the students when I taught physical education but I got to know them better as a principal.” After two years of study, Henry completed the program and received his principal license. Henry immediately started the search for a principal position.

Principal Career

Henry’s attempts to find a principal’s position landed him a job as a principal of a 7-12 building in southern Michigan. After one year in this position, Henry looked for and obtained a principal position in a high school back in northern Ohio. “I was there for one year. During that time, I had tried to sell our house so I wouldn’t have to drive so far to work. The commute was nearly an hour. We got the house sold and then I ended up applying for and was selected for the job I currently hold. My wife and I had wanted to move into a bigger house and this gave us the opportunity to do it.” Henry settled into his new job as the pre-K through sixth grade principal. This past June, Henry completed his fourth year at this position.

Henry’s decision to change his career path from a high school principal to an elementary school principal was somewhat based on his desire to work with younger children. “I felt it was time to work with the younger children rather than the older students. It was a good career

switch for me. I was getting tired of the older students and their apathy.” Prior to his move, Henry wondered what the big difference was going to be. “One of the biggest things was the conversations I had with students. Discussions with high school seniors are far different than with a bunch of first graders.”

Henry’s transition from teacher to high school principal and then to elementary school principal provided a wide array of issues and experiences for Henry to confront. Probably the most significant issue was his personal view of how others and himself viewed him in an administrative position. “I self imposed on myself that I was just a physical education teacher. I tried hard to overcome that stigma that I mentally had on myself.” Henry also had to deal with the perceptions of his staff.

One person on my staff said to me that I needed to make sure my personality didn’t change because I was now an administrator. I said to the person that my personality isn’t going to change, it will remain the same. The things that are going to change were the issues that as a teacher I felt needed changed but didn’t have the power or authority to do so. Of course, as the principal, I now had the power to make the changes. That belief caused several barriers to exist.

While Henry battled with the views and perceptions of staff members, he also battled with the loss of time spent at home with his family. “The demands of time were more than I imagined going in but my family members were very understanding of that.” Like their father, Henry’s two children enjoyed playing sports and Henry felt a deep commitment to be involved with his children. “I tried to do as much as I could with my kids. I coached the teams they played on as much as possible. My son and I love to play golf together as well. We also spend a lot of time playing catch or other games outside.”

Despite the issues that Henry had confronted, he felt that his experiences as an elementary school principal were relatively good. He credited most of his success to his strong communication skills and ability to understand people.

A person can either create or solve a lot of problems with good communication skills. I think honesty and doing what you say you're going to do are very important. Also, delegating things for people to do is important but I still need a lot of work in this area. I consider myself a perfectionist and a lot of times I think I can do it quicker and I won't have to redo it. It does prolong some of my work but at least I am comfortable with the way something is done. I am learning how to cut some things loose but it is a struggle. I also think being a friendly person has helped with my success. At the elementary level in particular, a principal crosses paths with many people, some who are not friendly. It is important how the principal handles that situation. The ability to listen is likewise very important. I have people who come into my office swearing and cursing. I listen as best I can. At times I simply say to them that this conversation is over unless you are going to talk in a civilized manner.

Henry also believes that he has had a positive experience thanks to the relationships that he has with the elementary school principals in neighboring school districts. Through these relationships, Henry has an avenue toward bouncing questions or ideas off of them and receive significant and worthwhile feedback.

Henry's experiences have provided the opportunity for him to reflect back on his preparation for the job and recommendations for others considering a career as an elementary school principal.

I would recommend the person get as much experience as possible before making the jump and make sure that it is really what you want to do and I don't mean that in a bad way. I really think a person should go through a one-year internship because there are so many things that are part of the job that no one can accurately describe to you. A person must experience them first hand. A person should also talk with as many other male elementary school principals and find out how they view the job.

Future Plans

Henry's career plans are unclear at this point in time. "I cannot see me at this point becoming a superintendent. I just don't have the desire to do that job. People ask me about that all the time. I have not taken any classes to get my superintendent license because I don't have the desire to be one someday. I will continue in the administrative role as elementary school principal. However, I may go back into the classroom. I am not sure at this point."

CHAPTER 7. ALAN

Background

Alan (pseudonym) is a 39-year-old junior/senior high school principal. He has been in this position for the past three years. Alan started out his administrative career as an assistant principal for grades K-12 for one year. He then moved into a middle school principal position for one year. At the end of the one-year period, the position was eliminated and Alan had no other option then to move into the elementary position for the next school year. After one year in this position, Alan was able to garner the position he currently holds. Prior to the principalships, Alan spent eleven years teaching English to high school students and coached several sports. Alan's undergraduate degree was in English education. Alan is married and has two children. Alan and his wife enjoy bicycling together.

Early Life and Career Preparation

Alan was born in central Ohio. His mother was a homemaker while his father was a high school English teacher and basketball coach. When Alan was six years of age, his father received a teaching and coaching position at another school so the family packed up and moved to west-central Ohio. As a young adult, Alan spent most of his time involved in sports. "I probably took my athletic career far more seriously than my academic career from ages 12-18 but I was still a decent student and I graduated in the top 20 percent of my class and was well above a 3.0 grade point average but could have done much better; but who hasn't done the same?"

After graduating from high school, Alan planned to attend Mt. Union College in northern Ohio and major in communications. Alan's dream was to be a sports writer for a major newspaper and someday possibly a sports editor. The college years were not exactly what Alan

had envisioned. Alan was at Mt. Union for just one year then transferred to Huntington College as a sophomore. “When I transferred to Huntington, I decided I wanted to be a teacher. My focus was more on writing, composition, and grammar. I hoped to teach writing and coach track. I think the predominant reason why I wanted to teach was that I wanted to coach track and basketball at the varsity level. I eventually graduated with a degree in English Education and got a job as an English teacher at the secondary level and I was also hired as a track coach.”

Pre-Principal Career

During the following eleven years, Alan taught English to students in grades 7-12 and coached a variety of sports at different levels including assistant boys’ basketball coach and head cross country coach for four years and the head track and field coach for eleven years. Alan also completed a five-year stint as athletic director while still teaching English. Alan’s teaching and coaching career have all occurred in the same school district.

Upon completing his fifth year of teaching, Alan contemplated the idea of getting his master’s degree in administration although he had no desire to be a principal. “I really had no idea what the job of a principal involved. I knew they took care of discipline and came into my room two times a year to observe me. I ultimately went this direction to have another option in case I changed my mind and wanted to do something other than teaching. Having been an Athletic Director for two years, I realized I had some organizational skills and good communication skills especially with adults and I thought this might help me if I ever became a principal.” In the spring of 2001, Alan received his master’s degree in educational administration from Indiana University/Purdue University in Fort Wayne, Indiana. “It took me five years to get this done because I didn’t have two nickels to rub together.”

Principal Career

As the 2000-2001 school year came to a close, the high school principal that Alan worked under retired. "I honestly thought I was going to get the job but instead they gave it to another person who had more experience than I did." During that summer, Alan was asked if he was interested in being the assistant principal for grades K-12. "It was a position that the school board created so that I could get the middle school concept started for the next school year." The job included getting substitute teachers for grades K-12, and serving as testing coordinator, attendance officer, and disciplinarian for grades seven through twelve. Alan also had to observe and evaluate grade 6-8 teachers.

I got hammered that first year but I learned a lot from the high school principal about communicating with students and being diplomatic with parents. It turned out best that I didn't get the high school principal job that year. I don't know how well I would have done in that position.

In the spring of that school year, the board of education announced that Alan's position as assistant principal would change to middle school principal beginning with the coming school year. The school year went well for students, staff, and Alan. Unfortunately, the school district's enrollment dropped by 40 students during that school year. "We went from 745 to 705 students and that was the end of the middle school principal."

In early spring of 2004, it was apparent that the school district would have to go back to two principals. Alan talked to the superintendent about the issue and he suggested that he might want to start looking for another job. In July, Alan interviewed at other schools for a high school principal position as well as an elementary school principal position.

During the time I was interviewing for other jobs, the superintendent of my school calls me into his office for a meeting and says the elementary school principal job is yours if you want it. I asked him what had changed and he said that the board of education told him that they wanted me to be the elementary school principal. The previous elementary principal stepped aside and I took over the elementary school principalship for the coming school year even though I had not dealt with any grade lower than sixth grade in my entire career in education.

Alan's reign as elementary school principal lasted one year. At the conclusion of that school year, the high school principal moved into the superintendent position and Alan moved into the high school principal position. Alan's experience as an elementary school principal was very positive. "I never had the remotest idea of dealing with small children but looking back at that school year, I really enjoyed being around them. One thing that I always got a kick out of was the times I would say to the young students what is your name, what grade are you in, and do you like school? Invariably, the little ones will say yes. That is the beauty of the elementary school. They like school, they like coming to school, and most of them still want to please the teacher. Seeing me in the hallway was a cool thing and when I went into the classroom it was an awesome event. I was typically the bearer of good news, such as the times I brought pencils to students for good attendance. Had I known that I liked kids as much as it turned out, maybe I would have considered elementary school teaching; but since I had all my experiences in secondary education, it made more sense to pursue the high school principalship."

Alan's experiences with his elementary staff were for the most part very positive. "When I was the elementary school principal, I hardly had any problems." Alan's staff was primarily a veteran staff and he tried to use their experience in teaching to its greatest potential. "The one

thing I learned from the previous elementary school principal was that I give the veteran staff lots of freedom and power to make decisions. I called myself the tiebreaker and that is truly how I handled a lot of issues. I let the teachers decide how and what they wanted. If there was a need for a deciding vote, then I cast it.” Alan attributed much of his success to the fact that he had a staff that was dominated by females. “There was only one man on my staff and he was actually a part-time tutor.” Alan felt his ability to work along side women helped him in this administrative position.

Alan also believed that his success with the female veteran staff developed from his communication efforts. Alan worked hard at sending out communications. “I always sent a weekly calendar. I had a two-day rule. If there were any changes in the schedule, I tried to give them two days’ advance notice and often times more than that.” Alan also tried to spend a considerable amount of time in the classroom, on the playground and in the cafeteria. “I think the teachers appreciated seeing me out and about.”

With Alan moving onto a high school principal position, the hopes of being an elementary school principal again are questionable. “I would definitely consider being an elementary school principal after I retire and then get rehired. I probably will not be an elementary school principal prior to my thirty years in education unless it is the only option.” Alan’s reasons for this feeling are primarily that he likes the interaction with high school students. He also likes to get out of the building and go to meetings or events. “As an elementary school principal, I never had the time to do it.” Finally, Alan mentioned that he wouldn’t miss having to go to PTA meetings.

In conclusion, Alan found the move from high school principal to elementary principal as a relatively easy one. One thing that makes the move easy is simply because the kids are not as

rebellious. Alan also noted that he believes the elementary school principal position to be an easier job than high school principal. "I think in a lot of cases, if you're an elementary principal it is because you cannot be a high school principal. The elementary school principal job is the easier of the two positions."

With the passing of the 2007-2008 school year, Alan has completed his third year as high school principal since his one year as elementary school principal. Regardless of the school level Alan leads over, there are several leadership skills that he has used to create an effective educational environment. "Without question, I am someone who tries to stay two or three days ahead at all times. It is rare that I get caught not knowing about something. I like to think of myself as a forward thinker. I also think I do a better than average job with my communication in writing and speech." Alan believes in putting people in a position to do their job and demand it be done well. "I believe I give my teachers the power to do their job."

Alan recommends that those individuals wanting to practice their leadership skills at the elementary school principal level should have the ability to let the women elementary school teachers have control over their kids. "Most women go into elementary school teaching because they like children more so than content material. The elementary school principal needs to let the teacher manage them the way they see fit and stay out of her way as long as things are going well. Give the teacher the power to be in charge of her students and be a good listener." Alan also recommends that the elementary school principal must be able to get along with a wide range of school personnel.

The time Alan spends trying to lead his school is significant. Part of that management involves spending time at extra-curricular events. As the high school principal and father of two teenage students, Alan can usually be found virtually every evening at a sporting event for the

school. However, Alan also finds the time to manage his own health and well being. “During the summer months, my wife and I spend a great deal of time bicycling. We have now taken together twelve 100-mile rides.”

Future Plans

Alan’s careful planning of school and his own time also applies to his future career plans. “At this point in time, I plan to stay in my current position for another three years. My daughter has three more years of high school and I would like to see her through that at this school. At that point, I may consider other options.” Alan hopes to someday be a superintendent. The current superintendent can and may retire at any time. Alan would love to have that job but not right away. Ideally, Alan feels three years from now would be the perfect transition time. If that doesn’t happen, he has thoughts of maybe moving to the Columbus area and search out the job market for a school administration position.

CHAPTER 8. CALVIN

Background

Calvin (pseudonym) is a 47-year-old elementary school principal. He has been an elementary school principal for the past six years. The factor that most influenced Calvin to seek an elementary school principalship was the possibility of higher income and the available opportunity that came along in his career. Prior to his principalship, Calvin taught at the elementary school level for five years. Calvin's undergrad major was elementary education but that was not obtained until he was 36 years old. Calvin and his wife were restaurant owners until Calvin's decision to be an elementary school teacher. Calvin and his wife have one child who is now in college. Calvin spends much of his spare time with the drama and music department at his school of employment.

Early Life and Career Preparation

Calvin and his brother and sister grew up on a dairy farm. Life on the farm required everyone, including the kids, to work hard and help their parents with the daily needs of the farm. Calvin looked forward to going to school each day but farm work awaited his return from school.

Throughout his high school years, Calvin participated in as many activities as possible. After graduating from high school, Calvin went to work for his cousin at a restaurant in his small hometown. As his 25th birthday approached, Calvin was given the opportunity to buy the restaurant. Calvin bought the business and spent the necessary time and energy to develop the restaurant into a respectable business in the community.

With the restaurant business doing well, Calvin decided to go to college for the purpose of improving his business skills and knowledge and do a better job as a restaurant owner. "I

understood the importance of upgrading my skills in business and besides, who doesn't need a refresher on improving themselves. I was in my early 30s and decided to go to college and get my associate degree in business. I went to a nearby community college to complete the two-year associate degree."

During this time, Calvin met a 23-year-old pre-school teacher. She would later become his wife. "She convinced me that I should get my bachelor's degree." For the next 96 weeks, Calvin attended night school at a local college and received his bachelor degree in business.

Calvin worked diligently at the restaurant business but also found time to be involved in local theater productions and assist with the drama productions at the local school district. Meanwhile, his wife taught pre-school, assisted with the restaurant, and gave birth to their only child. The busy life was especially difficult on Calvin's wife.

I remember talking with my wife about the restaurant and she asked me if I really wanted to continue with work in the restaurant business. I got the hint that maybe it was time to move onto something else. As much as I hated to go back to college, I thought hey, why not? My interest to go back to college was strengthened by my experiences I had teaching kids in Sunday school. I enjoyed that so much. It really gave me encouragement that I could teach kids at school as well. Another thing that drove my interest to go back to college to be a teacher was that I loved drama and was very involved in the drama presentations at our school. People constantly wanted to know why I wasn't teaching. So back to school I went and finished about two years later.

Pre-Principal Career

Upon receiving his teacher certificate in 1995, Calvin completed substitute teaching assignments for a period of time and also filled in as a substitute teacher at the local school for a

Title I teacher who was on a leave of absence. “These were some good times. I got to meet people and got my foot in the door. Most of my subbing was done at this school that I now work at. I was heavily involved with the high school drama so I was always at school.” Shortly after completing the short term leave of absence substitute teacher position, a second grade teaching position opened up and the elementary school principal asked Calvin if he was interested in the position. Calvin accepted the position and continued in that position for three years. “During this time, I figured it out that if I was going to do this job, I might as well get paid the most I can while doing it, so I took classes through a local university to get a master’s degree in educational administration. In my consideration of being an administrator some day, the thought crossed my mind of the opportunity I might have to impact bunches of kids.”

Principal Career

Near the completion of the program, the assistant elementary school principal position opened and his brother, who was a school board member, insisted that Calvin apply for the position. “I am one of those people who has a hard time saying ‘no’ and I am also a person who loves attention and not one to shy away from a challenge. I was also naïve enough to believe I could do the job if my brother thought I could.”

Calvin applied and was selected for the position. After one year as assistant elementary school principal, the elementary school principal retired and Calvin jumped at the opportunity. Calvin recently completed his sixth year as the principal. “I suppose the biggest fear I had accepting this position was that this was my home town and I worried if things didn’t work out, what would I do? I had no plans to move if I needed to get a job somewhere else. I guess I ultimately worried that I might not cut it as a principal. A real sense of insecurity surrounded

me. As it turned out, I did my best each day, just like in the restaurant business, and am reaping the success of that effort.”

Throughout the past six years, Calvin has had the opportunity to use his seasoned communication skills that he developed while working in the restaurant business. Work in the restaurant business also helped Calvin meet the challenges and confront the issues of the elementary school principalship. “Looking back, the job is very similar to running a restaurant. Every day is a new adventure and new challenges and issues constantly arise. The opportunity to work with all the kids in the building in comparison to just the ones in my classroom was a thrill. In the restaurant business, I had to make sure all the customers’ needs were met, not just a few. I also had to manage my staff at both jobs and complete orders in a timely fashion.”

Calvin often relied on others to help him with challenges and issues. “Numerous people were helpful as I had to deal with abuse cases, incompetent parents, and incompetent staff. Dealing with the abuse cases really got to me. First of all, I didn’t realize it was so prevalent and secondly, I really got upset at what I saw. Thankfully I had veteran people around me who helped me deal with these situations.”

Probably the most challenging part of the job was the transition of being a teacher and administrator in the same building. However, Calvin’s ability to work with people in a service type atmosphere proved beneficial. “Generally the staff loved me and I loved them so it wasn’t a bad transition. I had to establish my ground initially but after that, things went pretty well. I know some people who have had difficulty with it as they try to make the transition but I seem to think that I approached it in the right way and the rest is history.”

The most rewarding part of the job for Calvin has been the time he has spent with the students and their respect for him.

For years, I worked with students preparing drama productions. I have done this at the high school and elementary level. It has always been an adrenalin rush for me. Another example is the countless times, regardless of my location, the kids will find me and make over me. If I saw them in the hallway, grocery store, church, or walking down the street, they just show a lot of love and appreciation for the position I hold. I have lived here all my life so I know who everyone is and their relationships to each other. When I see little Johnny with his mom and he sees me, little Johnny goes nuts about seeing me and then I usually strike up a conversation with him.

Calvin has no doubt that he made the right decision to be an elementary school principal:

To do the job right, a person has to be committed and work hard at it. It is not a job that a person can take lightly. People sometimes think that males like myself go into administration to get out of the classroom. I can assure you that this job is not an escape. Working with young kids and a staff with intense emotions can be mentally draining. However, the idea that a man should be the one who leads a staff of women elementary teachers is really blown out of proportion. It is just like working in the business world. In the business world, males and females work with each other without a hesitation of their gender. If the person can get the job done, that is all that I care. That being said, I will tell you that there are days that I have to go down to visit the boys (male teachers) and check to make sure that there are still some men around here to talk to. I am not saying that I cannot communicate with the ladies but I know that the things I need someone to listen to or get feedback from can only be attained through communicating with other men. I am sure that any other male elementary school principal can attest to

the fact that there are times you need solutions rather than emotions when dealing with an issue. Men tend to be straightforward with a response while women wear their emotions on their shoulders and that is the type of response you sometimes get.

Future Plans

Calvin admits to having a love affair with his job as an elementary school principal. Calvin has no desire to move into another administrative position at his school or any other school. When the day comes for retirement, Calvin may retire completely, go back into the classroom as a teacher, or go back into the restaurant business. As for now, Calvin views his job as the best thing in the world. “This is a great job and a great place to work. We work hard at this school to improve the academic attainment of each student. We accept nothing less. If that would ever change, I might retire. Otherwise, I love it.”

CHAPTER 9. VAN

Background

Van (pseudonym) is a 53-year-old elementary school principal. He has been an elementary school principal for the past nine years. The factor that most influenced his decision to move toward the elementary school principalship was financial opportunities. Prior to his principalship, Van taught at the elementary school level for nine years. Van's undergraduate major was elementary/early childhood but he did not receive his degree until he was 35 years of age. Van spent much of his early adult life selling insurance. Van is married and has five children. The youngest child is finishing her last year in college. Van is very active in his community's fire department and emergency response squad.

Early Life and Career Preparation

Van was born and raised on a dairy farm. His father ran the farm and supplemented his income by selling insurance. His mother served as a secretary for a school district and would later become the treasurer for the same school district. Van understood that he was expected to work hard on the farm and did what his father requested.

Van's father also expected his sons and daughter to work hard at school. Van and his brother and sister enjoyed school. Education and the local school were often a discussion topic at dinner and family gatherings. Besides his mother's secretarial work at the school, Van had an aunt that taught school. Van's sister likewise pursued a career as a teacher.

Van's fondest memory of school was his sophomore year in high school. During that school year, Van had a social studies teacher who really inspired him regarding the joy of teaching. This teacher was also one of Van's high school sport coaches.

I remember when I was a sophomore in a civics class. I recall how the teacher seemed to love his job. I thought to myself that it was an awesome thing to have a job that you love with such passion that it really isn't a job and yet to boot, you get paid for doing it.

Truly, I tell you, when I began to work my way toward becoming a teacher, I had a passion to be a teacher just like that man. I remember telling people that I admired that man and thought it would be awesome to be a teacher just like him.

During his senior year, Van met with the guidance counselor to discuss the results of a standardized aptitude test taken earlier in the year and also to discuss his future plans. The results of the test indicated that he should have worked in a factory. Van did not want to work in a factory and his parents were likewise opposed to the idea of factory work and pushed him to go to college. "I had mainly B's and C's in high school and I was not really interested in a four-year degree so I went to a technical college. It wasn't until my late 20s and early 30s that I realized that I could do college work and do it well."

Van attended a two-year school in Indiana and graduated with an associate's degree in electrical engineering. The degree helped Van obtain a job in a factory but that did not prove worthwhile in his long term plans. Van decided to get out of the factory job and sell insurance with his father. Two years later, Van purchased the insurance business from his father and worked to expand the business. "After selling insurance for nine years, I decided to take a couple of night classes toward a teaching license and also to get my bachelor's degree. I actually really enjoyed it and a passion developed to teach." Van initially thought that he might want to be a social studies teacher. However, it was during his coursework that he realized that his best job opportunity might happen in an elementary teaching position. "I caught on real quick that as a male, I would be in high demand. A real need existed for male elementary school teachers,

much like today, and so I worked toward getting my certificate for grades 1-8. My own children were in that range so I figured I could handle working with this age group.”

Van recalled the awkwardness he felt of being a male in his early 30s sitting in elementary education classes and in the commons area of the education building with female students in their early twenties.

They looked to me as a father figure and I constantly found myself giving advice or guidance to their daily or long term plans. Their discussions focused on what they were going to do on the weekend. Most were going to parties with their friends while I talked about how my wife and I had five children to take care of. I was definitely the odd duck, but you know, I think they respected me or looked to me as the person they could rely on for advice, wisdom or even leadership. I remember that whenever I had some down time, I would have my nose in the books because when I got home, there was no time to study. I had too many other things to do when I got home and the last thing on my list was college work. I even studied while I was driving to and from school. If I wanted to achieve my dreams, I had to make every minute count.

Van did really well in the courses and graduated from Ohio State University with a bachelor’s degree in elementary education.

Pre-Principal Career

After completing his undergraduate degree, Van wanted to have the opportunity to teach. “I envisioned being a teacher the rest of my working life. Probably the thing that bothered me most during my first few years was that people kept telling me that after five years of teaching, I would be an administrator. I remember calling them liars and stating that I would never want the headaches that comes with that job. But you know, they were prophetic in their statements.”

With teaching certificate in hand, Van filled in as a substitute teacher for a year and a half while maintaining his insurance business. “During that time, I also did some volunteer work with kids through a program sponsored by the United Church of Christ. Working with those kids fueled my desire and passion to be the best teacher I could be.” After the stint of substitute teaching, Van applied for and was selected to be a fifth and sixth grade teacher. He spent the next eight years in that position.

During his third year of teaching, Van realized that he would be a very old man when he could retire and reap the benefits of the longevity of teaching and subsequent retirement system. For purely financial reasons and the timeline of his career in education, Van decided to take the coursework toward a master’s degree. “My wife and I had three kids and a set of twins on the way. The five kids were within seven years of each other so we needed a bigger house and an increase in revenue.” During that year, the superintendent asked Van what he was planning on doing ten or fifteen years from now. “He asked me if I planned on being a librarian or something like that. He was of course suggesting that I not waste my time getting a master’s in education. He thought I should get my master’s degree in administration and supervision.”

Van considered the financial issues of his life knowing that administrators have a better opportunity of higher income than a teaching position. Therefore, Van went back to college in pursuit of his principal license. “At the same time, I had an insurance business that my secretaries were running very well. However, I could see that I needed to be more involved in it but didn’t have the time to do it. As a means of getting out from underneath the needs of the insurance business and increase my family’s cash flow, I sold the insurance agency.” Near the end of completing his coursework and receiving his license, Van had no desire to be a principal other than the increased income that would come with it.

In October of 1995, a superintendent (also a good friend of Van) of a nearby school district called Van and asked him if he was interested in filling the vacancy of an elementary school principal position in his district. He was interested in interviewing three people. “This was mid October and I wasn’t even certified yet. I thought what the heck, let’s give it a try, surely the board would choose someone else rather than me. Well, I interviewed with the board one evening. I went home after the interview and about 11:30 p.m. that night the superintendent called and said the job was mine.”

Principal Career

After nearly eight and a half years of teaching at the elementary school level, Van accepted an elementary school principal position in a rural school district relatively close to the district he was teaching in. “This was a great opportunity and learning experience for me but after one year, I had the chance to go back to my previous teaching job so I took it. My apprehensions toward the principalship really emerged. I suppose if I would have stayed at it, all would have turned out well. As it turned out, I went back into teaching for four years, than in 1999, I received an offer to be an elementary school principal at one of the four elementary schools in the district I currently work in.” Van served as elementary school principal at that elementary school as well as two other elementary schools in the same district during the past eight years.

Van’s transition from teacher into the elementary school principalship came with several notable changes. The biggest change Van experienced was his interaction with fellow educators. “While I was teaching, I interacted and communicated with my colleagues throughout the school day and at gatherings after school, on weekends, and during the summer. Upon becoming an administrator, my interactions and communications were limited to other administrators.”

Van also experienced a change in the quantity and quality of interactions he had with parents, adults, and students. His job as principal required more of his time be set aside to deal with the parents of school children. “The shift of spending the majority of my work time with adults versus students was somewhat disheartening at first but my work as an insurance agent provided great background of how to work through problems or issues. My relationship with kids took on a new dynamic as well. I dealt with kids in a different light and had to figure out my way of dealing with kids. Fortunately, I have had the honor of working with some really awesome adults and kids.”

From a personal standpoint, Van tried to make sure that the change in the amount of time he spent at work was kept to a minimum. Van tried to and continues to make sure he is home around 5:00 p.m. everyday. “I know some principals who get home sooner than I do but I have not figured out how to do that. Maybe it is my organization skill or the lack of them. Nevertheless, the day that this job keeps me from missing my family events is the day I find something else to do.”

While most of his non-working hours are spent with his family, Van enjoys doing volunteer work as an emergency medical technician and also with the local fire department. Van receives intrinsic rewards from his volunteer work. “I love to help other people and I am convinced there is no better way to do it than to serve people in need during a crisis such as an emergency. The emergency calls at 2:00 a.m. in the morning are a real release for me. I find fulfillment in helping others in times like that.” Besides the volunteer work, Van also finds time to teach basic EMT classes at a nearby career technology school and watch an Ohio State Buckeye football game.

With nine years of experience as an elementary school principal, Van has had plenty of time to adapt to the transition into an administrative position. Van's observation is that over this span of time, his experiences have been very positive. "I have never had a really negative experience. I have always tried to understand and listen to the other person's point of view. Maybe my years in the insurance business prepared me for the interactions adults have with other adults in the educational setting."

Van's interaction with fellow administrators has also contributed to his success and positive experiences. Van has had the opportunity to work beside several very good principals and veteran teachers who have guided him rather than watch him blunder. Van has also completed the SAIL (Standards Aligned Instructional Leadership) program. "This program provided the opportunity for me to examine my job as a principal and make improvements. This was probably the single most important experience I have had to improve my skills as a principal. It took a lot of time and effort but the networking that went with it was outstanding."

An additional positive experience that emerged from Van's position as elementary school principal was the opportunity he had to play a positive role in the lives of all students in the elementary but in particular, the male student population.

There were a couple of male teachers besides myself in the elementary school. We knew that the students as well as the female staff looked to us as surrogate fathers for a large part of the male student population. In my way of thinking, that was a pretty neat opportunity and I took pride in doing so. The kids just seem to always adore me. I could not walk down these hallways without a kid hugging my leg. They really make a person feel wanted and it keeps me coming back day after day. As a matter of fact, when I'm in a low point or things are not going well, I get out of my office and head down one of the

hallways. Inevitably, I will meet up with one of the students and the friendly greeting follows.

The issue of gender has also played a part with the interactions Van has experienced with a predominately female staff.

I have noticed that female educators' passion for what they do or believe tends to be more visible than male educators. Women educators tend to openly express their emotions while males tend to suppress their emotions. Knowing this, I take the approach that I need to be a good listener and realize that some of the things they are expressing may not be an urgent or necessary as there emotions are dictating. I have been known to tell staff members that are in an emotional uproar to take a deep breath and relax and we will resume our conversation later.

Van believes that his ability to effectively manage the education of young children and effectively communicate with adults existed because of a combination of things. First of all, Van likes to do things on his own. He knows for a fact that if he does something, it will be done right and on time. However, that isn't the whole picture. His success as an effective leader is due to his ability to allow others to do part of the work and require it to be done right. "My brother is a minister and he really taught me a lesson about this very topic. In his line of work, there is so much that needs to be done. He could literally put himself in the grave trying to get it done. Instead, he surrounds himself with individuals who he knows and trusts to help with the work load. This is exactly what I try to do and feel confident saying I have done a good job with it."

Two other aspects play a large part in Van's leadership. Van believes honesty is key to the success of his principalship. "If you cannot be honest with people, you are doomed to fail at what you're doing. In the field of education, staff, students, and the community need to know

that the principal's word can be trusted. With this in place, the school can move forward through the issues that continually arise." Van believes the second aspect is that the educational setting must be an enjoyable place. "I want everyone to enjoy school and have fun. Sometimes I have staff members who question why I try so hard to create that type of environment. I believe the ridiculous stuff I do creates an environment in the school that excites kids to come to school everyday. Isn't that what we really want, kids wanting to come to school?"

Van also wants to come to school everyday. He believes he has the greatest job there is. However, he feels that over the past five years the job of elementary school principal has gotten harder and more challenging. "It is really tough to do creative things when every time you turn around someone from central office is asking me what else can be cut. That is probably the single most depressive thing about this job."

Van is quick to point out that the positives significantly outweigh the negatives and he highly recommends that other males seek a position as an elementary school principal but do so for the right reasons. "My philosophical belief is men go into elementary education because they have a desire and passion to work with kids. Men go into secondary education because they generally want to coach along with teaching."

Van believes that prospective male elementary school principals need to be positive people, have an abundance of common sense, and a true passion to work with kids. "If your passion is to simply teach kids, then do just that. The ideals that the principalship will bring you power and prestige are a mirage. Those things only come after a high level of passion is directed toward the job, not the other way around." Furthermore, Van believes the prospective elementary school principal needs to search out their dreams and discover why they are dreaming

of the position. “Hopefully your dream is centered on the kids, staff, and your school being a success.”

Future Plans

Van acknowledges the fact that at age 53, his career plans are fairly solidified. Van loves his job as an elementary school principal. “I leave here some days saying to myself, do they really pay me to do this job?” As for a move upward into a superintendent position, Van lacks the desire and the ambition to complete the coursework to get the appropriate license. “Do I think I could handle a career move into the superintendent position? Absolutely, but I can’t imagine that it would be an upward movement from what I am doing right now. At this point in my life, I am not in any need for the money in exchange for the headaches experienced by superintendents.” A career change that Van has considered is a move back into the classroom. As for now, Van plans on completing five more years as an elementary school principal.

CHAPTER 10. COMPARISON OF LIFE HISTORIES

The previous five chapters presented a summary of the life histories of five male elementary school principals. This chapter presents a comparison of the similarities and differences that existed among the five men. The comparison is completed with the three research questions as subheadings: Contribution of Life Experiences to the Career Path, Utilization of Leadership Skills and Styles, and Career Goals.

Contribution of Life Experiences to the Career Path

Throughout their years as primary and secondary education students, the five men in this study had pleasurable school experiences. In addition to the positive school experiences, Gene and Van mentioned teachers who were influential in their eventual career choice in education. Alan's father and Henry's uncle played a major role in their eventual decision to become educators. Calvin's work at the school with drama productions provided a stimulus toward a career in education. Calvin loved the interaction he had with the drama students. He emphasized the intense pleasure and joy he experienced seeing his students improve in ability, skill development, and maturity. However, when it came time for high school graduation and entrance into college or an occupation, Gene was the only man who had hopes of recapturing the pleasurable experiences of school with a career choice in education. The other men would follow suit later in their lives.

As the men progressed into their early 20s, Alan and Henry switched their majors in favor of a career in education. Both men had their sights set on a career in secondary education and coaching opportunities. Gene maintained his hopes of being an elementary school teacher while Calvin and Van were involved in business opportunities for an extended period of years.

Gene was the only one of the five men to complete an undergraduate major in elementary/early childhood education in the traditional time frame of early to mid-20s age range. Henry's major was in K-12 physical education but he intended to teach at the secondary level. Alan's major was in secondary English education. Calvin and Van completed their undergraduate majors in elementary/early childhood education while in the mid-30s age range. The choices made by the five men correspond with the data collected from the survey and discussed in chapter four. A review of the data demonstrated that a major in elementary/early childhood education was indicated by 51.7 percent of the participants and three of the five men (Gene, Calvin and Van). A category of other (possibly non-degree, K-12 certification, or content area outside of education) was indicated by 24.8 percent and one of the five men (Henry) while secondary education majors were indicated by 22.8 percent of the participants and by one of the five men (Alan). With nearly half the participants (47.6%) having indicated that their major was something other than pure elementary/early childhood education, it is plausible that social role theory and/or adult development theory has played a part in the educator's decision to move into an elementary school setting later in their adult life rather than stay in the area of their original major. This potential conclusion is discussed in greater detail in the following chapter.

Employment for the five men as full-time teachers came relatively soon after graduating from college. However, four of the five men served as substitute teachers prior to being hired for full-time positions. As they began their teaching careers, none of the five men had any intentions of someday being a principal. Their intentions to be a principal in their career in education came along for similar reasons and yet at different points in their teaching career.

Four of the five men took coursework to get a master's degree to improve their income potential as a teacher and, if the opportunity occurred, to move into a principal position which

would also improve their annual income. Henry was the only one of the five men who purposely took the coursework to actually get a job as a principal. After eleven years of teaching, Henry had made the decision that it was time to move into an administrative position. The other four men had fewer years of teaching experience and were less convinced on making that decision. Calvin, Van, Gene, and Alan began taking courses for their principal license after 2, 3, 4, and 5 years of teaching, respectively. The decisions of the five men in this study differed slightly from the data collected from the survey. This difference may be due to the unique issues associated with the five men. Alan and Henry started out as secondary education teachers. Calvin and Van spent nearly a decade outside of education while Gene was involved in a reduction in force action.

About 9 percent of the participants in the study indicated they intended to be an elementary principal prior to their first teaching position. Nearly 37 percent of the participants indicated that they aspired to be an elementary principal after teaching 1-5 years while 29 percent aspired while teaching 6-10 years. The other 28 percent made the decision after teaching eleven or more years. Additional discussion of this topic will occur in the Social Role section of the next chapter.

Upon nearly completing coursework or actually receiving their principal license, all five men accepted principal positions. Interestingly, four of the five men were not actively seeking a position at the time the opportunity arose. Van was the only person who was actively looking for a position. The four men in this study who accepted a position even though not actively seeking one appear to be an exception rather than the norm. Data from the survey showed that 63 percent of the participants indicated that they were actively seeking an administrative position when it was offered to them.

The factors that most influenced the five men to move into the principalship, when given the opportunity, changed somewhat from the days when they decided to take the coursework to obtain the principal license. Financial gains dominated four of the five men's decision early on; but the opportunity to lead and to have a larger impact on the education of the students took on a more significant presence in the thinking of four out of the five men as their careers progressed. Gene had other thoughts on his mind. Gene had recently been "riffed" (R.I.F. = reduction in force) from his teaching position and saw the vacant principal position as an opportunity to keep his career in education moving forward. The data from the survey illustrated somewhat different results. Unlike the five men in our study, the survey data indicated that 18 percent of the respondents said that the factor most influencing their decision to move into an elementary principalship was the available opportunity. A desire to lead received 35 percent of the responses while 6 percent of the participants indicated financial reasons for their decision to move into the elementary principalship.

As they moved into the principalship, the five men left behind them a significant number of years of teaching experience. Calvin moved into an elementary school principal position after five years of teaching at the elementary level, Gene seven years, Van nine years, Alan eleven years at the secondary level, and Henry had fourteen years of teaching experience with students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Henry's and Alan's first administrative posts were at the secondary level of education. The years of teaching experience before accepting a principalship among the five men parallel the data from the survey. The category of 5-9 years teaching experience received 42 percent of the responses. The category of 10-14 years received 29 percent of the responses. Additional discussion of the timing and reasons for the transition into an administrative position will occur in Adult Development section of the next chapter.

At this transition in their career paths, four of the five men were married and raising children. Gene was the only single man and remains single to this day. Nearly 91 percent of the participants from the survey indicated they were married as well.

Utilization of Leadership Skills and Styles

The five men in this study entered the principalship at different phases in their lives. The various phases of the five are similar to those of the male elementary school principals who participated in the survey. Gene was 32 years of age when he accepted his first elementary principalship position. Henry was 37 years of age, Alan was 32 years of age, Calvin was 41 years of age, and Van was 44 years of age. The ages of the five men in this study correspond to the data from the survey. The category of 30-37 years of age received 42 percent of the responses while the category of 38-45 years of age received 26 percent of the responses.

At the time this paper was completed, the men in this study have been principals for differing amounts of time. Alan was an elementary school principal for one year and a secondary level principal for five years. Gene and Henry each completed four years at the elementary level but Henry also completed two years at the secondary level. Calvin completed his sixth year while Van completed the most years with nine years experience as an elementary school principal among four elementary schools. The years of experience among the five men correspond with the data from the survey. Thirty-two percent of the survey participants selected the 1-5 year category. Thirty-five percent of the survey participants selected the 6-10 year category.

The years of experience among the five men provided a sufficient amount of time for each man to establish a leadership style and to practice their leadership skills. All of the men indicated the importance of good communication skills. They felt they did a good job of

listening to people and taking their time to be good problem solvers. The men also mentioned the importance of being very organized in all aspects of the job. Their organizational skills also included the ability to empower their staff to get things done. Each one of the men indicated that he felt comfortable letting his staff contribute significant input into the decisions regarding how the school was ran. This type of transformational leadership demonstrated by the men in this study will be discussed in the next chapter.

While the five men found comfort in empowering their staffs, they also found comfort with fellow administrators. Each of the five men mentioned, by name, a fellow principal or superintendent who played a significant mentorship role during their initial year as a principal. Van echoed the sentiment of the other principals that networking with other principals played a major part in guiding daily decision making. Gene and Calvin specifically mentioned that they check with other elementary school principals to see how they handled a situation or issue that was similar in nature to something they found themselves confronting.

The five principals mentioned several individuals who assisted them in mentorship or networking roles. In each case, the individual was male. The availability of male administrators is in contrast to the lack of availability of male elementary teachers. It is no secret that the gender of the teaching staff in the elementary schools of Ohio is predominately female. Data from the survey indicated that the category of 90-100% of staff being female received a 76 percent response. The five men in this study indicated that there is an average of two other men in their buildings. With this being the case, the men were asked if they lead their building in a certain way due to the gender ratio of their staff. Three of the five men mentioned the importance of having an understanding and professional response to the increased emotional responses that they felt came with having a staff dominated by the female gender. Van

mentioned that he feels female educators' passion for what they do or believe tends to be more visible than passion in male educators. He further mentioned that female educators tend to openly express their emotions while men tend to suppress their emotions. Van stated that he takes the approach of being a good listener and allow some time to separate the emotional response with his own feedback or response. Alan and Calvin indicated that they did not consider the gender ratio a big issue. However, Calvin noted that there are times when he needs solutions rather than emotions when dealing with an issue, indicating a possible gender difference in decision-making. He added that he believes men tend to be straightforward with a response while women wear their emotions on their shoulders and that is the type of response you sometimes get.

Three of the men indicated that they appreciated the social aspects of having a female dominated staff. The social aspects included the depth and breadth of communications that take place within the school and also outside of school time. Alan mentioned that his communication skills were challenged and improved because his staff constantly wanted to know what was going on in the school with school events, students, and personnel. Additionally, Van mentioned that he appreciates his staff's response to the personal needs that arise among his staff or with students.

Four of the men indicated that they felt that their staff looked to them to be the disciplinarian and father figure primarily because of their gender. Henry commented that over the course of his career as a teacher and principal, he has on numerous occasions been called upon to talk or work with a male student because a staff member felt he could give the student some fatherly discipline, guidance, or attention. Calvin reiterated a similar comment that he

feels a major part of his job is to be a role model and father figure to many of the male students in his building.

The five principals in this study love their jobs as an elementary school principal. While Alan had only served in the position one year, he likewise emphasized the joy he experienced in his service. Alan noted that he tried to spend a considerable amount of time with the children. Alan wanted his staff and students to know that he was interested and concerned with the education of each child. Alan spent a couple of hours each day in the classroom, cafeteria, and playground. Van commented that he would dress up in funny costumes or do ridiculous antics so that the kids would want to come to school every day. At the forefront of the attraction for each man was the continual statement that the kids make the job a wonderful career. Each principal stated that he highly recommend the job for other male educators. However, they also added that the prospective administrator must have a desire to work with young children, be a role model, and care for the well being of each student. Gene stated that the kids need a male role model and the principalship is a neat place to illustrate the role model.

The principalship is also a neat place to demonstrate care for others. Several of the men in this study indicated that working with students and staff and working with parents and the rest of the community is a major aspect of the elementary school principalship. Calvin made a statement about the significance with the job of caring which also reflected the feeling of the other principals. "This is a job that can really drain a person. You have to be mentally tough to handle the physical, social, and emotional needs of your students and staff." While Calvin used the word "tough" to describe the nature of caring for others, he may have meant it in the sense that it is really a challenge from day to day to uphold and express a desire to care for others. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) described similarly that administrators and

teachers must engage in genuine dialogue, build continuity and a sense of trust through repeated and consistent interactions, and model caring by living it.

Career Goals

While the principals spoke highly of their positions as male elementary school principals, their speculation of future careers in education varied considerably. Three of the five men have plans to move out or have already moved out of the position into such areas as secondary education or a superintendent position. Calvin and Van were the only principals who planned on finishing their career in education as an elementary principal. Alan has already moved into a high school principal position. Interestingly, Gene and Alan mentioned that they have entertained the idea of moving into a superintendent position. Gene and Henry also mentioned they might go back into the classroom. Calvin and Van said they might consider going back into the classroom after retirement. However, Calvin and Van emphasized their love for the elementary school environment. Gene, Henry, and Alan cited a concern for the amount of time versus pay as a reason for their discontent. Van and Calvin cited the demands of the job as elementary school principals as the main reason they looked forward to closing out their careers in a short span of time. The variation and uncertainty of the principals' future career in education are not that surprising in light of the research conducted on the topic. A study completed by Militello and Behnke (2006) examined the job mobility of principals at the elementary and secondary education level. Nearly 65 percent of principals in the study were at the elementary level. The data from the study indicated that sixty-three percent of the principals expected to leave the occupation within five years. Nearly 70 percent said they were leaving the field due to retirement. An additional 15 percent anticipated moving into a superintendent or other position in district level administration. The authors of the study also found it noteworthy

that 7% of the principals plan to leave their positions because of stress levels, inadequate salary levels in comparison to responsibilities, and the complexity and time demands of the job.

Discussion will continue on this career phase in relation to adult development in the next chapter.

Summary

In summarizing this chapter, it is apparent that the career path of the male elementary school principal is somewhat predictable yet marked with several key epiphanies. Prior to the career path forming, the typical male spends nearly 13 years in an educational system that is dominated by professional female educators. Over the course of time, the teenage male has developed a psychological perception that adult males do not find the educational system to be of much importance. After finishing high school and enrolling in college, the time comes for the male teenager to select a collegiate major. The possible selection of a major in elementary education is low on the list for several reasons but predominately for the main reason that society has its doubts that a male belongs in an elementary school setting.

Males who actually begin with a career in elementary education have a tendency to have a collegiate and/or career background in some other field and are typically in their late 20s or early 30s upon accepting the position. After several years as an elementary school teacher, the male teacher feels personal, family, and social pressure to move into an administrative position primarily for the purpose of higher pay.

The position of elementary school principal tends to be very enjoyable and rewarding to the male administrator. He finds that his staff appreciates being empowered with decision making authority, his constant efforts with developing professional relationships, and a team effort approach to solving daily issues rather than a top down approach. His staff also

appreciates and respects his attention to a caring attitude toward staff and students. The caring attitude includes character traits of honesty, respect, compassion, trust, and faith.

While the job of elementary school principal is enjoyable and rewarding, the male principal may branch in a different career path as he nears the final years of work in the educational system. For some, the branch is the superintendent position but for others it may be going back into the classroom. Regardless, the majority of male elementary school principals highly recommend that males consider a position in an elementary school as a teacher or principal.

CHAPTER 11. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

In a broad sense, the life histories of the five male elementary school principals presented in chapters five through nine, and the comparison analysis presented in chapter ten, attempted to illustrate the career paths and leadership of male principals in the elementary schools of Ohio. In a particular and more important sense, the life histories of the five male elementary school principals demonstrated the impact of Social Role Theory and Adult Development Theory on their career paths. The life histories also demonstrated how Transformational Leadership Theory and an Ethic of Care interplayed in the leadership style of the five male elementary school principals.

Social Role Theory/Adult Development Theory

As the five men in this study headed off to college in preparation for a career, only one of the men had visions of a career in elementary education. None of the men had interest in a career in secondary education or school administration. As one of the four men stated, “A career in elementary education never crossed my mind.” While none of the men stated or implied that they felt pressure to stay away from a career choice in elementary education, it is noteworthy that several of the men had family members that were educators and it would be natural to assume that the topic of going to college to study for a career in education appeared at some point in their youth.

The fact that only one of the five men (Gene) initially pursued a career in elementary education is not surprising when compared to the literature on male career choices. When given the choice to teach at the secondary school level compared to the elementary level, men choose the secondary over the elementary because of the opportunity for more earnings, status, and respect (Barnard et al., 2000). According to Montecinos and Nielsen (1997), the majority of

male education majors cited two reasons for pursuing a career in elementary education; commitment to children in making a difference in their lives and loving children. Research completed by Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner (1997) confirmed that men who make a commitment to work with young children question prevailing ideas that linked femininity, caring, and teaching. In doing so, they drew from new cultural images of fatherhood. Hondagneu-Sotelo and Messner claim the “new man” is a white, college-educated professional who is highly involved and nurturing father, in touch with and expressive of his feelings and sensitivity.

Bradley (2000) explored the preliminary career choices of male teacher candidates who selected elementary education as an initial career path. Gene’s choice to pursue an elementary education career coincides with Bradley’s fourth theme. The theme states that potential male elementary teacher candidates simply like kids.

Otherwise, male college-bound students take to heart society’s expectations and avoid a career in elementary education. A particular expectation that has emerged over the past few decades is the prevailing belief that the gender most appropriate for working with young children is female (Gamble & Wilkins, 1999). Adding to this belief are the psychological prohibitions that men have against choosing professions typically perceived as female dominated (Brabeck & Weisgerber, 1989). In addition, men consider teaching an important job but regard it with low prestige and status (Rice & Goessling, 2005). The literature also includes work completed by Gamble and Wilkins (1997) that men do not enroll in elementary education teacher preparation programs for five main reasons:

1. Low salary and low prestige of elementary education

2. Perception of elementary education as more suitable for the nurturing abilities of women
3. Elementary education not perceived as a male profession
4. Traditionally, elementary education teachers have been female—breaking from tradition very difficult
5. Family and peer pressures, elementary education not seen as a good career for men

In summary, the reasons and desire of males, and in particular, the four men in this study to pursue careers other than a career in elementary education may be explained by the Social Role Theory. Eagly (1987) claimed that men and women behave differently in social situations and take different roles due to the expectations that society put on them. Ely (1995) added that as a consequence of these differing gender roles, women and men have somewhat different expectations for their own behavior in organizational settings and society as a whole.

Reinforcing the Social Role Theory's influence on male career choice, Brabeck and Weisgerber (1989) found that men have psychological prohibitions against choosing professions typically perceived as female dominated. Further studies by Gaskell and Willinsky (1995) concluded that male avoidance of the elementary teaching profession comes from a psychological model of negative attitudes and poor self-efficacy, factors that influence adolescents to develop self-limiting occupational stereotypes and to resist professions typically associated with the opposite gender.

After two years in college, two of the five men (Henry and Alan) decided to switch their major to education--one elementary and one secondary, respectively. The men claimed the main reason for the switch was somewhat tied to influence family educators had made during their teenage years. Coincidentally, both men also transferred to another college during this time span.

The other two men (Calvin and Van) in the study made the transition to a career in elementary education after spending nearly a decade in a career in business.

A review of literature indicated that males often resist their initial motives and inclinations to work with children until they have explored other avenues, tried other majors and occupations, often on the advice of their parents (Williams, 1992). Decorse and Vogtle (1997) added that men have become disillusioned with traditional male professions and attracted to less financially lucrative but more personally satisfying lines of work.

The two men's switch to a career choice in education in a later stage of their lives appears to be a commonality among men and may be explained by Levinson's (1978) Adult Development Theory. Levinson's theory proposed that adult life is made up of alternating periods of stable life structures and transition periods during which the old life structure is reexamined, adjusted, or altered.

Levinson's theory may also give guidance to the reason that the five men in this study moved from teacher to administrator. The five men in this study noted that their aspirations toward an administrative position were driven in part by prospects of monetary rewards and further job opportunities. Accordingly, personal or family fiscal needs often served as the trigger for the life structure transition for the five men in this study. Brewer (1996) noted from his study that many teachers do move into administrative positions and for the significant salary gains.

An example illustrating this period of adult development is found in a study by Riehl and Byrd (1997). Riehl and Byrd examined factors associated with the career move from school teaching to building level administration. The researchers collected data on nearly 4,800 elementary public school teachers. An analysis of data found that a male elementary teacher working in a small town (much like the five males in this study) with plans to leave teaching, a

degree in educational administration, an administrative role model, and a spouse and children had an adjusted probability of 99% toward becoming a school administrator. Data retrieved from the study also indicated that school administration may be a convenient and accessible route out of teaching for dissatisfied male elementary school teachers. Riehl and Byrd noted that these results are consistent with research by Allan (1993) and Jacobs (1993), which found that male elementary teachers working in feminized professional context tend to experience gender role disharmony and resolve this by leaving their jobs or by seeking positions in education, such as administration, that are more typically held by men. Nevertheless, none of the five men in this study mentioned gender role disharmony as the reason they desired to move into an elementary school principal position.

Leadership Styles/Ethic of Care

While financial rewards may have been a key factor leading the men toward a career path as an elementary school principal, the rewards from the job often involved and included aspects unconnected to financial rewards. The men in this study often mentioned they really loved their jobs and felt their school building was a great place to work and learn. The love of their job and the success of their staff and students would not have existed unless the men demonstrated an effective leadership style. Bass (1990) commented that leadership is often regarded as the single most important factor in the success or failure of institutions such as schools. Research has also shown that the leadership of a school principal is a determining factor in school effectiveness (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2005).

Historically, the gender stereotypic expectation is that male leaders operate in a task oriented style of leadership as opposed to an interpersonal oriented style typically used by the female gender (Eagly & Johnson, 1990). The interpersonal oriented style largely values

attention to relationships, collaboration, and team-oriented strategies for accomplishing organizational goals (Sharrock, 1995). Interviews conducted with the five men in this study provided ample evidence that each of the principals valued their relationships with their staff and placed great importance allowing and empowering staff members to be leaders within their building. Alan echoed the sentiments of the other four men with his statement that he “gives the ball to his staff and lets them play”.

The style of leadership effectively utilized by the men in this study coincides with and confirms Burns’ (1978) transformational leadership theory. According to this leadership theory, leaders such as the five male elementary school principals in this study set high standards for behavior and establish themselves as role models by gaining the trust and confidence of their followers. These leaders encourage their followers to develop their full potential. Burns contrasted this style of leadership to the more masculine, autocratic and directive transactional style of leadership. Bass and Steidlmeier (1998) added to Burns ideas stating that transformational leadership is predicated upon the dynamics of a change of heart in the realm of core values and motivation, and upon intellectual stimulation and a commitment to treat people as ends not mere means. For example, Calvin noted in his interview that his successful leadership is due in part because his staff knows that he cares about them in their professional career and life outside of work. Calvin noted that he knows the names of their spouses and children. He also was proud to say that his staff loves and respects him.

Calvin and the other four men demonstrated efforts to develop and emulate in their schools a values-laden caring culture, supporting research completed by Noddings (1992). Noddings challenged school leaders to adopt the ethic of caring to enable schools to become caring communities that nurture all children. Additionally, Starratt (1991) stated that educational

administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human beings within it as sacred.

The five men in this study spoke with conviction regarding the importance of caring for the needs of the children in their school. Each principal specified that the work they do on a daily basis with their students is by far the most rewarding part of their jobs. Van mentioned the importance he portrays in the children's lives with his reference to his walking the hallways and the children flocking to see him and hug his leg. Caring for the educational, physical, mental, and social needs of the children can be tiresome but the men claimed that the growth they see in each child brings them back to work the next day.

The recognition of needs, relationship, and response are likewise at the core of Gilligan's (1982) moral platform of ethic of care. Gilligan claimed that individuals who are guided by an ethic of care consider each leadership decision and the potential impact of their decision making on others. Furthermore, Mayeroff (1995) expressed that the ingredients of caring include knowing, patience, honesty, trust, humility, hope, and courage. In the case of the male elementary school principal, he must know his staff and students, their strengths and limitations, what their needs are, how he should respond to their needs, and what his own powers and limitations are.

It was apparent from the interviews that four of the five men had reached points in their careers where an ethic of care was interwoven in their daily leadership. Whether by demands of the job or a learned process, the four men understood the importance of providing an environment that both students and staff worked together, developed relationships, and trusted each other. Alan was the one man who spoke the least regarding the ideals of an ethic of care.

His leadership style seemed to lean toward a formal approach with significant concern for structure rather than relationships. Alan appeared to believe that the elementary level of education was simplistic in comparison to the complex demands of the secondary level of education. Alan spoke very little of the interpersonal oriented side of his job but spoke often regarding the task oriented, managerial aspects of his job. He emphasized the importance of his daily schedule rituals, communication patterns, and formal assessments of students and staff. Alan appeared to favor an autocratic position where he had complete control of the operations of the school and drew strength being in this position. His protection and maintenance regarding the image of the school was very important to him.

Ironically, Alan mentioned that he missed the interactions and relationships he had with students and staff at the elementary school level and actually stated that he might consider going back to the elementary school level in a few years. It makes you wonder if his desire to be in a values laden school environment flourishing with an ethic of care is battling his personal tendencies to be assertive, manipulating, and controlling. The answer may reside in two statements that Alan made during his interview. Alan indicated that he enjoyed the attention and love he received from the elementary students. He said they actually like coming to school and generally the students had pleasant words to say to him. On the other hand, Alan indicated that most of the high school students he dealt with did not want to be in school and did not have anything nice to say to him.

Alan's desire to stay away from the "simplistic" elementary school level in favor of the "complex" secondary school level is not surprising. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) pointed out that males tend to favor traditional male leadership models in school administration that allow them to be technical, bureaucratic managers who coordinate work,

enforce rules, and maximize efficiency. However, radically different perspectives of leadership models are emerging in elementary and secondary schools. The models are based upon an ethic of care as described by Noddings (1992). Put into practice, the ethic of caring emphasizes connection through responsibility to others rather than rights and rules. Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele believe that an ethic of caring provides administrators with a valuable perspective to guide their moral reasoning and decision making.

The Male Elementary School Principal

The five men in this study illustrated that male elementary school principals can play a significant role in the education of elementary age children despite the obstacles hampering male educators from doing so. The men also demonstrated that a career in elementary education and administration is very rewarding despite societal pressures drawing men into careers that others see as having more prestige, power, influence, or male tradition.

As a current male elementary school principal, I can relate to the men in this study and the common life experiences and epiphanies that led us through a career path as an elementary school principal. During our late teens and early 20s, the thoughts of entering a career in elementary education didn't seem to be the thing to do. Society did not support the choice, colleges did not push the idea, and our apprehension of working with young children was too strong of a force to challenge. For those of us who were interested in a career in education, secondary education seemed to be the place to go. Society and colleges expected males to fill secondary school positions and our minds were more in touch with the expectations of secondary education once we got there.

After having spent nearly a decade in secondary education, I decided to take the necessary steps to someday fulfill the role as a school administrator. The reasons for this

decision, similar to the men's decisions in this study, were somewhat based on a desire for greater financial opportunity but they were also based on a desire to have a greater influence on the educational process. At that stage in my life, I viewed my career in education far differently than I had just ten years earlier. Like several of my fellow administrators in this study, we had taken on the challenge of raising our own children at home and developed an understanding of the process and importance of raising young children. Our own adult development led us to believe that our long term career goals in education could have more meaning and purpose if we engaged in the leadership of an elementary school staff and students.

As an elementary school principal, I quickly learned to utilize a style of leadership that I believed would allow me to achieve personal and professional success. The transformational style of leadership that I utilized was similarly utilized by most of the men in this study. We utilized this style of leadership due to the very nature of the task at hand. We found that elementary school staffs are dominated by individuals who thrive in a working environment that empowers them in the decision making process. Similarly, these same individuals favor leaders who are caring and foster relationship building. Furthermore, elementary school children need leadership that offers discipline, order, and direction in a caring and compassionate manner.

During the next decade, the majority of the five men (including myself) will approach or enter retirement. Prior to that next stage (or final stage) in our careers, the idea of finishing out our careers in education as a school superintendent is under consideration. One reason for the consideration of a move into a superintendent's position is the current perception that it is what administrators do as they approach retirement. We see ourselves in the top executive position of leading an entire school system toward excellence. Another perception is the long term financial rewards that can be reaped if an educator is able to attain and complete the duties of a

superintendent of schools after retirement. Until those days arrive, the elementary school principalship will continue to provide a daily dose of excitement, encouragement, and expectation.

The elementary school principalship has been a rewarding career move for me and my fellow colleagues in this study. Admittedly, we know that the rewards are such because of the tremendous effort we put forth to make the elementary school experience an unforgettable journey for our students and staff—the foundation for lifelong learning.

Implications for Leadership Practice

The challenges facing males who desire to and become elementary school principals are significant and cause many males to look elsewhere for careers. If the current trend continues, males occupying elementary school principalships will be a rarity. The significance of this trend resides, in part, in the answer to the question of whether a gender balance is important within the teaching field and principalship of the elementary school. DeCorse and Vogtle (1997) believe that restoring balance and diversity will provide children with a more balanced education. King (1998) suggested we need more men at the elementary level because it is culturally appropriate to have a gender balance in schools as in other workplaces. Additionally, male teachers and principals are needed to serve as role models encouraging children about the appropriateness and importance of their early educational years (Montecinos & Neilsen, 1997). Furthermore, Rice and Goessling (2005) noted that male students need male role models to show them that education is important and worthwhile. From my perspective and the research cited above, it is apparent that males are needed in the elementary school principal position.

In order for the trend to be reversed, a cultural shift must take place in our society and in colleges of education. The cultural shift involves males reassuming a role as educational leaders

at the elementary teacher and principal level. Successful male elementary teachers and principals must lead the way by demonstrating to males at high school “career days” or other recruitment opportunities the positive features of their career path from teacher to elementary principal. Successful male elementary teachers and principals must also illustrate to prospective male educators in the colleges of education the intrinsic and extrinsic benefits gained through their leadership positions. These same men must forge new pathways that encourage other males to follow in their footsteps. This is obviously difficult work but, nonetheless, possibly the only means to bringing males back into a career at the elementary school level.

Colleges of education must also play a major part in the preparation of young men in overcoming the societal and personal pressure that directs them away from a career as an educator in elementary schools. Colleges of education must focus a significant amount of time developing or honing an ethic of care (Noddings, 1984) within the psyche of the collegiate male student. Collegiate schools of medicine spend significant time teaching the importance of the Hippocratic Oath. Similarly, collegiate schools of education must devote a large amount of time teaching the philosophy and psychology of moral development proposed by individuals such as Kohlberg (1984).

Beyond the objective that males are needed in elementary schools to bring about gender balance and role modeling, it is also vitally important that males provide excellent leadership while serving in this capacity. Research has shown that the leadership of a school principal is a determining factor in school effectiveness, second only to the role of a student’s classroom teacher (Hallinger & Heck, 1996; Leithwood et al., 2005). For these reasons, male elementary school principals must develop a type of leadership style that will assist them in effectively managing their elementary school.

Marshall, Patterson, Rogers, and Steele (1996) argue that the traditional leadership models are no longer valid and new theories for leadership and organizations need to be framed from radically different perspectives. Due to their very nature, elementary schools may require a transformational leadership style proposed by Burns (1978). According to this leadership style, leaders set high standards for behavior and establish themselves as role models by gaining trust and confidence of their followers. Bass and Steidlmeier (1998) stressed that transformational leadership is predicated upon the dynamics of a change of heart in the realm of core values and motivation, and upon intellectual stimulation and a commitment to treat people as end not mere means. Furthermore, Noddings (1992) challenged school leaders to demonstrate a values laden caring culture of leadership by adopting an ethic of caring to enable schools to become caring communities that nurture all children. According to Starratt (1991), educational administrators committed to an ethic of caring will be grounded in the belief that the integrity of human relationships should be held sacred and that the school as an organization should hold the good of human being within it as sacred.

Four of the five men in this study felt confident claiming that their leadership style has resulted in an effective and successful educational environment. Likewise, the men demonstrated a transformational style of leadership as described by Burns (1978) and the ethics of moral educational leadership described by Noddings (1992) and Starratt (1991).

The combination of empowering staff, developing relationships, and building trust and respect with and among staff members are significant leadership traits that have been proven to provide a rich educational environment. Likewise, leadership of a caring community within the school walls enhances and promotes an educational environment conducive to successful student learning and staff morale.

Recommendations for Future Research

As mentioned earlier in this study, little research has been completed on male elementary school principals. The research that does exist is primarily completed within the context of female elementary school principals. As a means of better understanding the male elementary school principal career path, research was completed on the life histories of five men in respect to four theoretical frames. The research surrounding the four theoretical frames provided a clear portrayal of the career path of male elementary school principals. While the research and the subsequent information gathered from the five men do not present any Earth shattering findings, it is noteworthy to mention that several aspects of the life history study raised additional questions or issues that might give rise to future research.

The literature reviewed in Chapter 2 indicated that male students attend elementary schools that are predominately staffed by females. The male students rarely see other males in the educational setting. It would be of interest to research the influence (positive or negative) that this type of gender imbalance has on the educational progress and future career choices of male elementary students.

An additional feature of this study that might benefit from additional research is the influence the family plays on the decision of males to select a career in elementary education. It is a common occurrence to have educators in a family generation after generation. Are the experienced male educators directing their offspring and/or nephews toward a career in elementary education? In the case of the five men in this study, four of the five men mentioned educators in their family as inspirations for their careers.

The collegiate years played a major part in the timing of the five men in this study toward entering a career in elementary education. None of the five men mentioned the influence college

professors or college friends may have played in their career decision making. Additional research into the influences of individuals during the collegiate years may shed important light on the subject of the small number of males who pursue an elementary education major.

One particular area of research that appears to be thoroughly completed in regards to male elementary school teachers and principals involves the reason why males stay away from a career in elementary education and lean toward a career in secondary education. Much of the research indicates that status, salary, and lack of male peers are the reasons. However, additional research appears to be needed in regards to the fear and anxiety males experience working with young children. Several of the men in this study indicated they had more confidence and desire to work with adolescents as opposed to young children. Additional research may clarify the strength of the fear and anxiety associated with males working with young children.

Two of the five men in this study entered a career in elementary education after having spent nearly a decade in business. The career change made by these two men was based on their desire to work with children and to make a difference in children's lives. Little research has been completed on the subject of males who switch careers into elementary education in the middle or later stages of their working careers. Additional research may indicate a strong presence among males to find a purpose and meaning in their own lives by working with children.

Future research into the career paths of male elementary school principals may benefit from an expansion in the number of participants studied from the life histories perspective. With additional participants, a more complete picture may emerge that solidifies the trends and patterns of this study or the additional participants may offer different trends and patterns in the career path of male elementary school principals. Future research into the career paths of male

elementary school principals may also benefit from a female conducting the life histories interviews. The male educator responding to questions directed by a female interviewer might bring about different responses. Likewise, a benefit may occur if the interview is completed by someone that is not an elementary school principal. At times I felt that the men in this study would not go deep into a response because of their realization that I may have dealt with the same situation and they didn't want to have a sense of inferiority.

The five men in this study were primarily from small, Midwestern cities, towns, and rural locations. The homogeneous geographical similarities may have influenced the results of this study. Future research may benefit from a more diverse demographic and geographic selection of participants.

Conclusion

When all has been said and done, the question that remains is "What do I know now that I didn't know before?" The answer is that I now can say with relative certainty that the career path of male elementary school principals is fairly predictable. As I reexamined my own career path and pondered how I got to where I am now, I realized that several forces played a major part directing me to my current career path as an elementary school principal. While the forces shared in the following paragraphs are not entirely new revelations, they do serve to illustrate a more defined understanding of the career paths of male elementary school principals.

Like nearly all men, we look back at our kindergarten through high school years and recall several fond memories and some not so fond memories. For those of us who had many fond memories, the choice of pursuing a career in education seems attainable and doable. Throughout our collegiate years, magnetic-like forces pushed and pulled us toward a career path in secondary education. Secondary education was fresh in our minds and very appealing. Some

of the most inspirational men in our lives were located there and we yearned to duplicate that experience with others like they had done with us. Collegiate preparation of male education majors propagated the belief and/or desire of males to pursue careers in secondary education. I do not recollect anyone discussing the positives of a career in elementary education. As a maturing young adult, the idea of working with young children seemed as foreign as green eggs and ham. We were content learning how to teach the subjects of advance math, English literature, and modern economic systems. Studying children's literature, phonemic awareness, and ways to teach addition didn't seem to have much purpose in our slowly maturing lives.

With the acceptance of a teaching position in secondary or elementary education, several years passed by before we actually became comfortable in our positions. During this same time span, we also become comfortable in our daily life with marriage and a family. The necessity to meet certification/licensure requirements, the need to earn more income to support a growing family, and a desire to position ourselves for later career opportunities move us to seek additional education. For many of us, a master's degree in educational administration met the recertification/licensure requirements and provided an alternate career path in education if needed. Ironically, most of us were content with our teaching position but felt a slight pull to show what we could do if given the opportunity to lead our own building someday.

Numerous opportunities existed for teachers to move into leadership positions at the administrative level. The availability of the jobs coupled with changes that were naturally occurring with our adult development attracted us toward accepting a principalship. At this point in our adult development, the fear and anxiety of working with young children had diminished as fast as our own children moved into puberty. Where at one time we had no desire to be in the

elementary school, we now felt an intrinsic desire and passion to make a difference in the lives of young children.

It didn't take long for us to figure out that a specific leadership style provided the best opportunity for an effective educational environment to exist. The very nature of the elementary school favored an interpersonal oriented style of leadership that values attention to relationships, collaboration, and team-oriented strategies. Additionally, the style of leadership favors the move toward a values-laden caring culture. Reiterating the words of Gilligan (1982), individuals who are guided by an ethic of care consider each leadership decision and the potential impact of their decision making on others. The effort needed to lead in this manner was exhausting yet rewarding beyond belief. It is no wonder that the elementary school principal stays in his position longer than most other administrators stay in theirs. After several years of passing out happy birthday pencils, eating endless cupcakes, and celebrating the 100th day, we began to consider the final stage of our career path in education. Once again, the opportunity to secure additional income came into play as well as the opportunity to move into a position of additional power and prestige.

For many of us, the position of superintendent of schools appears attractive and attainable; yet, we also consider the prospect of losing those fantastic relationships with students and staff that were established within the elementary schoolhouse gate. The magnetic attraction of seeing our students grow academically, physically, and socially over the course of a year is well worth the stay. The children's growth is as notable as the growth that occurs with a corn field in July in Northwest Ohio. The knowledge that we played a significant part in that growth brings us back to the elementary school with a new bucket of water and sunshine hoping to make a difference each day.

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Appendix A.....Questionnaire

1. Age: _____
2. Marital status: A) Married B) Divorced C) Single D) Widowed E) Separated
3. Number of children: A) 0 B) 1 C) 2 D) 3 E) 4 or more
4. Number of children under age 18: A) 0 B) 1 C) 2 D) 3 E) 4 or more
5. Undergrad Major: A) Elementary/Early Childhood B) Middle Childhood C) Secondary D) Other:
6. What age were you when you were employed in your first full-time position in public education? Age: _____
7. Grade level of first teaching position: A) PreK – 6 B) 7 – 12 C) A & B D) N/A
8. How many years of classroom teaching experience did you have prior to accepting an elementary principalship? A) 0 – 4 B) 5 – 9 C) 10 – 14 D) 15 – 19 E) 20 or more F) Not applicable
9. What age were you when you accepted your first elementary principal position?
A) 22 – 29 B) 30 – 37 C) 38 – 45 D) 46 – 53 E) 54+
10. How long have you been an elementary school principal?
A) 1 – 5 yrs B) 6 – 10 yrs C) 11 – 15 yrs D) 16 – 20 yrs E) 21 or more years
11. What percent range of your teaching staff is female?
A) 90 – 100 % B) 80 – 89% C) 70 – 79% D) 60 – 69% E) less than 60%
12. Were you actively seeking an elementary principalship when you were offered a position? A) Yes B) No
13. At what time in your career did you decide that you wanted to be an elementary principal? A) Prior to my first teaching experience B) After teaching 1 – 5 years
C) After teaching 6 – 10 years D) After teaching 11 – 15 years E) After teaching 16 or more years F) Other
14. What two factors most influenced your decision to move toward the elementary principalship? A) Needed a new challenge B) Financial reasons C) Available opportunity D) Advancement, prestige E) Desire to lead F) Desire to work with children G) Other
15. Are you interested in participating with the interview portion of this study? A) Yes
B) NO

Appendix B

Interview Protocol

Session 1

1. Discuss with me the highlights of your resume.
2. Tell me about your childhood, life since childhood, and schooling up thru undergraduate work.
3. Tell me about your collegiate years.
4. What were your career plans as you neared the end of your collegiate educational experience?

Session 2

1. Tell me about your career in education prior to accepting a position as an elementary school principal.
2. In what ways did your personal life change during this span of time?
3. What experiences (positive/negative) occurred in relation to working as a male in the education-related environment?
4. What do you think led you to choose a career path toward an elementary principalship?
5. What barriers, if any, hindered you from entrance into the elementary principalship?

Session 3

1. Tell me about your decision to become an elementary school principal.
2. Tell me about your overall experience as an elementary school principal; professional associations, networking, mentoring, individuals who helped you be successful.
3. How do you spend time away from work?
4. What leadership skills do you find most useful while leading your organization?
5. What is your career goal at this point in your career?

6. What recommendations do you have for other males seeking a career as an elementary school principal?

Appendix C

COVER LETTER and INFORMED CONSENT – SURVEY

March 2008

Research Investigator: Martin A. Miller

Phone: (419) 399-4656

Project Title: A STUDY OF THE CAREER PATHS AND LEADERSHIP OF MALE PRINCIPALS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF OHIO

I am inviting you to collaborate in a study designed to explore your career path and leadership as an elementary school principal. You are under no obligation to participate in this study. There are no risks anticipated with participation in this study.

If you choose to participate, please complete the attached electronic survey by clicking on the SurveyMonkey website provided at the end of this letter. Select an answer to each of the fifteen questions associated with the on-line survey. The survey will take approximately five minutes to complete. The data collected from your responses will be used to create frequency tables highlighting demographic trends and/or patterns. No individual participant or individual school or school district will be identified or identifiable. Participant responses are stored directly on the SurveyMonkey server and only accessible by me.

Please note that the last question of the survey asks whether you are interested in participating in a series of interviews with the researcher. Five individuals will be selected to participate in the interview aspect of this study. Four interviews will be conducted with each individual. Each interview will last from 30 minutes to 1 hour. The purpose of the interviews is to gather more specific and in-depth data regarding the life history of the male elementary school principal. If you are selected to participate in the interview portion of the study, a consent letter will be sent to you prior to participation. The consent letter will require your signature and serve as your consent to participate in the study and that you understand the nature and expectations of the study.

I will keep all information obtained from this study confidential. All information will be reported in aggregate through statistical and/or qualitative analyses with no specific connections made to you. I will identify any quotes used in research presentations (oral or paper) with a pseudonym, not your actual name. I will never reveal to anyone your identity or the identity of your school or school district. All data will be stored in a locked file cabinet accessible only to me, the research investigator.

Participation in the survey and the interview portions of this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from participating at any time without penalty to you. If you have any questions, please contact me at the above phone number or by e-mail at m_miller@pv.noacsc.org. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Patrick Pauken at paukenp@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2550. Should questions about this study, the conduct of the researcher, or your rights as a research participant arise, you may also contact the Chair of the BGSU Human Subjects Review

Board at (419) 372-7716 or at hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu. Once again, completion and submission of the questions associated with the SurveyMonkey survey constitutes consent to participate in this study.

Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Miller, Principal
Paulding Elementary School
Paulding Ex. Village Schools
Paulding, Ohio

Patrick D. Pauken, JD, PhD
Associate Professor and Graduate Coordinator
Leadership Studies
Bowling Green State University

http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.aspx?sm=8Pa7jUgXiiC5frXDyKkLiw_3d_3d

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ID # H08D247 GX2
EFFECTIVE 3-19-08
EXPIRES 3-11-09

Appendix D

COVER LETTER and INFORMED CONSENT – INTERVIEWS

March 2008

Research Investigator: Martin A. Miller

Phone: (419) 399-4656

Project Title: A STUDY OF THE CAREER PATHS AND LEADERSHIP OF MALE PRINCIPALS IN THE ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS OF OHIO

Thank you for participating in the online survey of male elementary school principals in Ohio, and thank you for volunteering to participate in the personal interview portion of the study. Five individuals have agreed to participate in the interviews. Four interviews will be conducted with each individual. Each interview will last from 30 minutes to 1 hour. Total time commitment will be no longer than 4 hours. The purpose of the interviews is to gather more specific and in-depth data regarding the life history of the male elementary school principal. This consent letter requires your signature and serves as your agreement to participate in the interviews and understanding of the nature and expectations of the study.

I will keep all information obtained from this study confidential, and I will report that information in statistical and/or qualitative analyses with no specific connections made to you. I will identify any quotes used in research presentations (oral or written) with a pseudonym, not your actual name. I will never reveal to anyone your identity or the identity of your school or school district. All data will be stored in a locked file cabinet accessible only to me, the research investigator.

Participation in the interview portion of this study is voluntary. You may refrain from participating at any time without penalty to you. If you have any questions, please contact me at the above phone number or by e-mail at m_miller@pv.noacsc.org. You may also contact my dissertation advisor, Dr. Patrick Pauken at paukenp@bgsu.edu or 419-372-2550. Should questions about this study, the conduct of the researcher, or your rights as a research participant arise, you may also contact the Chair of the BGSU Human Subjects Review Board at (419) 372-7716 or at hsrb@bgnet.bgsu.edu.

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ID # H08D247GX2
EFFECTIVE 3-13-08
EXPIRES 3-11-09

Thank you for your time and participation.

Sincerely,

Martin A. Miller, Principal
Paulding Elementary School
Paulding Ex. Village Schools
405 N. Water Street
Paulding, Ohio 45879

Patrick D. Pauken, JD, PhD
Associate Professor and Graduate Coordinator
Leadership Studies
Bowling Green State University

A Study of the Career Paths and Leadership of Male Principals in the Elementary Schools of
Ohio

Consent Form







The research described above has been explained to me, and I voluntarily consent to completing the interviews.




Signature_____




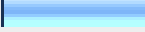
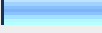
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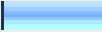

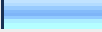

Appendix E

A Study of the Career Paths and Leadership of Male Principals in the Elementary Schools of Ohio





| 1. Current age: | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| 22-26 | 0.0% | 0 |
| 27-32  | 4.0% | 6 |
| 33-38  | 19.5% | 29 |
| 39-44  | 21.5% | 32 |
| 45-52  | 24.2% | 36 |
| 53-60  | 26.2% | 39 |
| 61+  | 4.7% | 7 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

| 2. Marital status: | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Married  | 91.3% | 136 |
| Divorced  | 3.4% | 5 |
| Single  | 4.7% | 7 |
| Widowed | 0.0% | 0 |
| Separated  | 0.7% | 1 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

| 3. Number of Children: | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| 0  | 9.7% | 14 |
| 1  | 9.7% | 14 |
| 2  | 40.0% | 58 |
| 3  | 24.1% | 35 |
| 4 or more  | 16.6% | 24 |
| | answered question | 145 |
| | skipped question | 4 |

| 4. Number of Children under age 18: | | |
|---|-------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| 0  | 37.6% | 56 |
| 1  | 16.8% | 25 |
| 2  | 23.5% | 35 |
| 3  | 16.8% | 25 |
| 4 or more  | 5.4% | 8 |
| | answered question | 149 |
| | skipped question | 0 |





5. Undergrad Major:

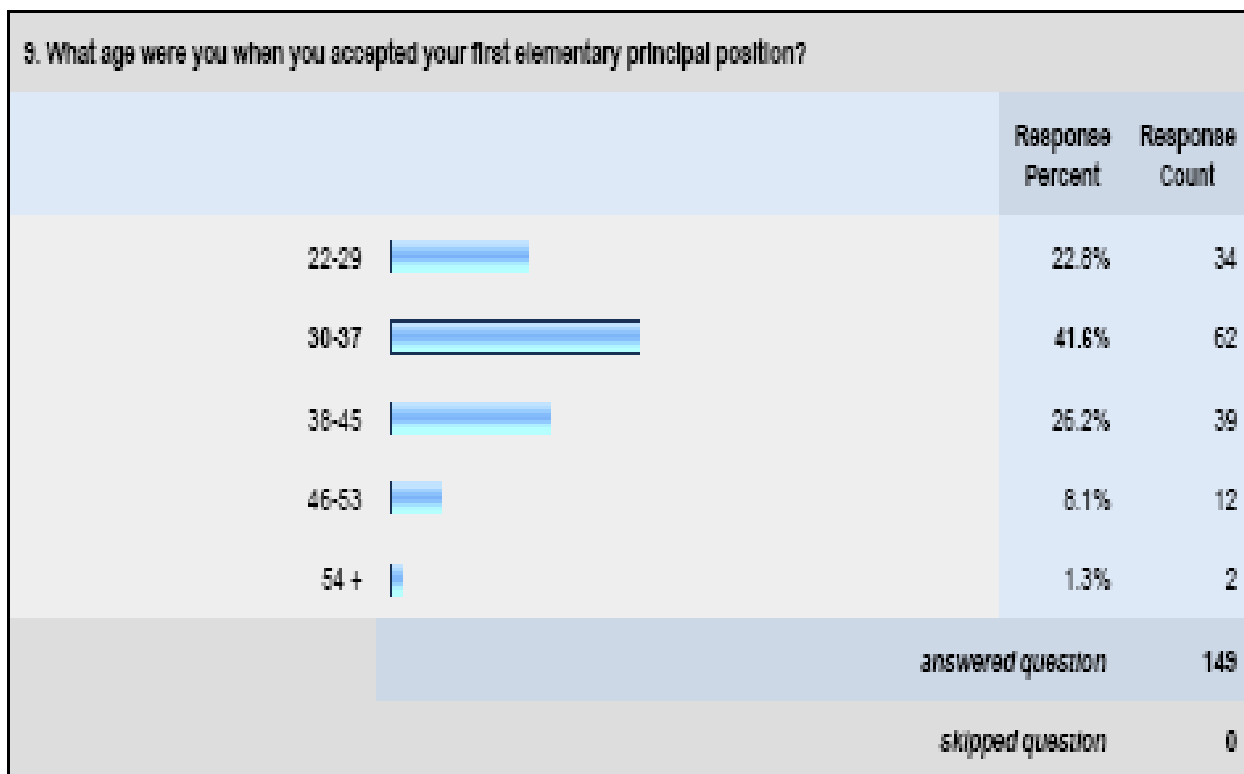
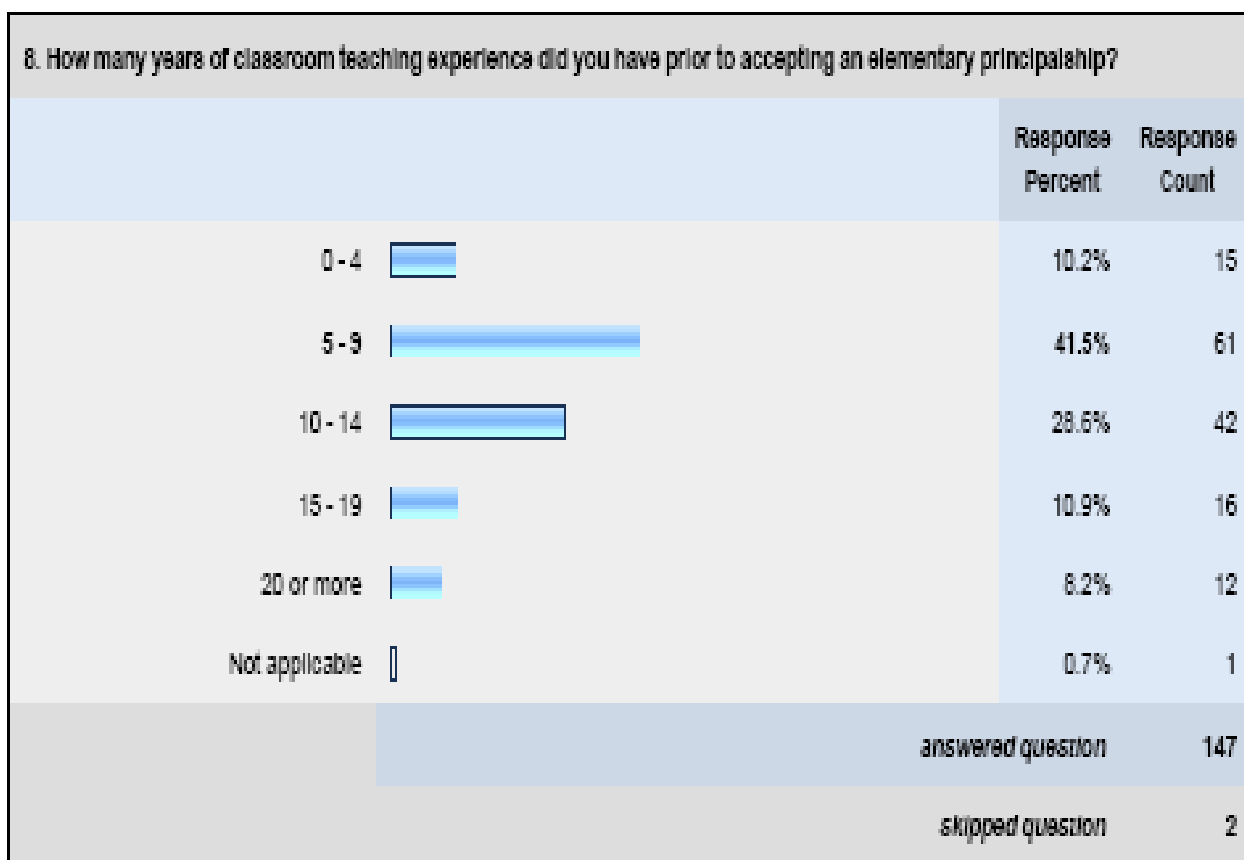
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| Elementary/Early Childhood  | 51.7% | 77 |
| Middle Childhood  | 0.7% | 1 |
| Secondary  | 22.8% | 34 |
| Other  | 24.8% | 37 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |






6. What age were you when you were employed in your first full-time position in public education? Age:






| | Response Count |
|-------------------|----------------|
| | 148 |
| answered question | 148 |
| skipped question | 1 |



7. Grade level of first teaching position:


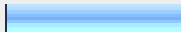




| | Response Percent | Response Count |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| PreK - 6  | 57.7% | 86 |
| 7 - 12  | 34.2% | 51 |
| K - 12  | 7.4% | 11 |
| N/A  | 0.7% | 1 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

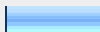

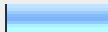

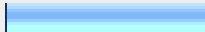




| 10. How long have you been an elementary school principal? | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| 1-5 years  | 31.8% | 47 |
| 6-10 years  | 33.8% | 50 |
| 11-15 years  | 13.5% | 20 |
| 16-20 years  | 8.8% | 13 |
| 21 or more years  | 12.2% | 18 |
| answered question | | 148 |
| skipped question | | 1 |


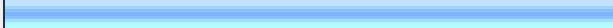
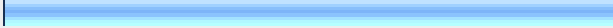
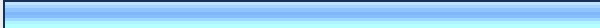
| 11. What percent range of your teaching staff is female? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| 90-100%  | 75.3% | 110 |
| 80-89%  | 20.5% | 30 |
| 70-79%  | 2.7% | 4 |
| 60-69%  | 0.7% | 1 |
| less than 60%  | 0.7% | 1 |
| answered question | | 146 |
| skipped question | | 3 |

| 12. Were you actively seeking an elementary principalship when you were offered a principal position? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Yes  | 63.8% | 95 |
| No  | 36.2% | 54 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

| 13. At what time in your career did you decide that you wanted to be an elementary principal? | | |
|---|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Prior to my first teaching experience  | 8.6% | 13 |
| After teaching 1-5 years  | 30.4% | 45 |
| After teaching 6-10 years  | 29.7% | 44 |
| After teaching 11-15 years  | 9.5% | 14 |
| After teaching 16 or more years  | 6.8% | 10 |
| Other  | 14.9% | 22 |
| answered question | | 148 |
| skipped question | | 1 |

| 14. Which factor most influenced your decision to move toward the elementary principalship? | | |
|--|------------------|----------------|
| | Response Percent | Response Count |
| Needed a new challenge  | 16.1% | 24 |
| Financial reasons  | 5.4% | 8 |
| Available opportunity  | 17.4% | 26 |
| Advancement, prestige  | 2.7% | 4 |
| Desire to lead  | 34.9% | 52 |
| Desire to work with children  | 14.1% | 21 |
| Other  | 9.4% | 14 |
| answered question | | 149 |
| skipped question | | 0 |

15. If you are interested in participating with the interview portion of this study complete the following section. If you are not interested, thank you for your completion of the survey.

| | Response Percent | Response Count |
|---|---------------------|-------------------|
| Include your full name and age  | 100.0% | 46 |
| Number of years teaching and level (Elementary/Secondary)  | 100.0% | 46 |
| Number of years as elementary principal  | 100.0% | 46 |
| Did you come to the principal position through a non-traditional route such as (retire/rehire, business, medicine, social work)?  | 97.8% | 45 |
| answered question | | 46 |
| skipped question | | 103 |