

Opinions, Beliefs, and Attitudes, Including Perceived Value, That Virginia Principals and Assistant Principals Have Towards Mentoring For Their Job Assignment

Ashley McCrary Cramp

Abstract

There is ample research (Bova & Phillips, 1994; Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, 1995; Daresh, 2002; Ginty & Gaskill, 1993; Playko, 1995; Riche, 1979) to demonstrate the need for and benefits of mentoring both in the business world and with first year teachers. Mentoring allows a more experienced person to work directly with a less experienced person. Some benefits of such a relationship can include knowledge transfer, increased learning, creation of a support network, a decrease in job stress and anxiety, and an opportunity for the protégé to learn the big picture. School administrators face an increasing number of challenges in a job where new responsibilities are created almost on a daily basis. Many states will experience a shortage of qualified administrative applicants for open positions. This shortage is due to the retirement in the next several years of many existing administrators in addition to a larger number of positions accompanying increased school enrollment. Many states are exploring ways to address this concern. The first is through a reevaluation of certification criteria (training). The second is through the development of mentoring programs for new administrators (keeping the administrators we have). However, there is little research available on the mentoring of new administrators. This study identified the existing opinions, beliefs, and attitudes, including perceived value that administrators have towards mentoring for their job assignment. Statistical significance was determined at $\alpha < .01$ for each analysis of variance between the groups. There was one item on the survey where a statistically significant difference was found between gender; assessment and grading ($p(F) = .007$). There was one item on the survey where a statistically significant difference was found between principals and assistant principals; school management ($p(F) = .008$). There was one item on the survey where a statistically significant difference was found between administrators who have and have not served as a formal mentor;

time for discussion together ($p(F) = .003$). There was one item on the survey where a statistically significant difference was found between administrators who have and have not served as an informal mentor; mentor at same school level ($p(F) = .005$). However, the final two items of statistical significance are from Section B of the survey. Section B had a reliability of *Cronbach's alpha* = .50 (see Table 1). Therefore, results of these items must be viewed with caution. It is important to note that 400 out of 414 (96.7%) individual item analyses found no statistically significant differences between the various groups.