

CHAPTER 4  
ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Introduction

This chapter contains the analysis of results of the data collection. Following the Introduction, information is presented in the following manner: Procedure for Analysis, Data Analysis (Phase I), Summary of Principals' Interview Questions, Data Analysis (Phase II), Interviewers' Summarized Responses to Questionnaire, and Chapter Summary.

The following study was conducted to examine the content, category, and type of interview questions and some practices used by middle school principals in this district as these principals make their personnel selections. Data were collected using teacher interviews and a questionnaire that was sent via E-mail to each principal included in the study.

Data collection was completed in two phases. Phase I was designed to answer the following research questions: (a) What is the content (meaning) of the interview questions asked, and are these questions open or closed? (b) What categories (classifications) of questions are asked? (c) Do principals in this study consistently ask the same questions of all interviewees? (d) Why do principals ask the questions they ask during their building-level interviews? (e) What is the relationship between the number of interviewees and interview time? and (f) Does the principal employ any interview practices deemed effective by personnel experts? Phase II of the data collection involved principals' responses to a questionnaire about the questions they asked. Initially, principals were asked to respond to

twelve questions (see Appendix C). However, once the responses had been received and reviewed, the researcher needed additional information about the interviews and the interviewees. Two additional questions were then sent to the principals, again via E-mail. An assessment of interview practices used by principals was also included in Phase II. A request for demographic data was also added the second time questionnaire responses were collected.

Findings from both phases of data collection are presented in this chapter. While the data are primarily qualitative, some quantitative analysis must be included. Specifically, frequencies were utilized to complete the picture that emerged from the qualitative analysis.

#### Procedure for Analysis

One year prior to 1997, seven middle school principals in the district had verbally agreed to participate in this study. Subsequently, each was given a packet by the researcher with release forms for themselves and interviewees, along with blank cassette tapes for recording their teacher interviews. Taping by principals were completed by the third week in August 1997. Principals either brought the packets back to the researcher or the researcher collected them from the principals herself. All packets had been received by the researcher by the last week of August. Following the interviews, these taped recordings were given to a stenographer for transcription. Once the transcripts were completed, the researcher numbered and highlighted each interview question for herself and the two other readers who coded the questions as to content and category. Results of the codings are shown in Tables 3 through 26. Once the researcher had reviewed all transcripts, Phase II of the data collection, an E-mailed questionnaire, was sent to principals. Responses were

returned either via E-mail or by the school division's internal pony mail system. All data for Phase II were collected by the end of January 1998. Results of this analysis can be found in Chapter 4.

#### Content of Question

Content of questions refers to the actual meaning embedded in the interview questions. Each interview question was labeled according to content. Labels were based simply on the essence or the main idea of the information the interviewer was seeking. In all cases, questions are listed in the tables in the order in which they were asked during the interview.

#### Category of Question

Six pre-determined categories (factual knowledge, cognitive ability, role play, problem-solving, synthesis, and professional opinion) were used to group the content questions. These categories were formed prior to data collection and were formulated from the literature review and input from members of the researcher's dissertation committee. No new categories emerged after data collection.

#### Coding of Data

This process began with the researcher and both raters labeling each interview question according to content and category. For example, a question that asked interviewees to summarize their educational preparation would be labeled "educational background." Or, a question referring to ways to manage a classroom would be labeled as "classroom management." While all three raters coded questions according to content and

category, the content label was decided based upon consensus of the group. Specifically, the two raters either agreed or disagreed with the suggestion made by the researcher, and in the case of the latter, they provided suitable alternatives that were accepted by consensus. With regard to category, placement of interview questions in various categories was based upon the type of response the question required. Questions were labeled according to one of six pre-determined categories. For example, if interviewees were asked to summarize their educational backgrounds, they might respond by providing factual knowledge information.

Lastly, all interview questions (N=844) were analyzed to determine principals' use of open-ended and closed questions. As operationally defined in Chapter 1, a closed question is one that limits the interviewee's response to usually just one word, i.e., "yes" or "no." On the other hand, an open-ended question is one that allows the interviewee the opportunity to express his/her feelings or thoughts as they relate to the question being asked. If a question was considered closed, the interview was further analyzed to see if follow-up questions of an open nature immediately followed the interviewee's response.

Pattern coding (Miles & Huberman, 1994) is "a way of grouping those summaries [in this case, the coded interview questions grouped according to both content and category] into a smaller number of sets, themes, or constructs," (p. 69). It was used to make the analysis of data more manageable. This was particularly helpful when grouping principals' individual interview questions. Frequencies of each type of coding follow the descriptive analysis of each principal's interviews.

### Interrater Reliability Procedure

After many hours of independent coding, the two raters and the researcher met to discuss their results; several phone conversations preceded these meetings. The first meeting resulted in the recording of coded interview questions for only one principal. Using a “round robin” approach, each question was read orally by the researcher. The two other raters responded with their already coded responses. This initial meeting showed the need for some clarification about how the questions should be categorized. Once this discussion took place, the second meeting was more productive, with more responses being recorded. Less discussion was necessary since everyone was clearer on the meanings of the categories and which questions should be placed where. A final phone conference was held among the three readers to finalize the process. All codes for determining category of questions were predetermined by the researcher prior to the principal interviews and were devised primarily from the literature review and from help from members of the researcher’s dissertation committee. Codes for content areas were not predetermined but simply emerged from the questions themselves. Type of question was determined by the researcher by reading what followed the interview question. Once all questions had been coded, interrater agreement of questions for each principal as well as for all principals was computed using the following formula:  $\text{agreement} \div (\text{agreement} + \text{disagreement})$ . No frequency tables for categories of questions included questions where there was not total agreement among interraters. Therefore, a distinction was made in the tables between total questions asked

and total questions coded. While interview questions for which there was not total agreement among interraters were not included in the numbers presented in the categories of questions frequency tables, the overall interrater reliability was computed using those questions. Also, while all interview questions were labeled according to both content and category, the mean for interrater reliability for combined principals' questions was computed for category only was 0.94 overall, which was deemed acceptable by the researcher.

### Data Analysis (Phase I)

Phase I of the data collection required principals to tape record each interview that was included in the study. Before tapings began, interviewers and interviewees were given letters by the researcher explaining the purpose of the study, as well as release forms giving consent for both groups to be included anonymously in the study. Principals handled the dissemination of letters and forms to interviewees. Blank cassette tapes were also provided by the researcher for each principal.

The following summaries provide a synopsis of what was transcribed from each set of interviews. Specifically, an analysis of the content and category of all interview questions is included. Frequency tables follow each principal's summary.

#### Principal A

Principal A, a 47-year-old white female, began her first principalship this academic year. To fill an eighth-grade science vacancy, she interviewed five persons, all of whom are endorsed in middle school education. Principal A used a structured interview guide that she

developed with the aid of her assistant principals. The number of questions asked of the five interviewees ranged from 22 to 33. The amount of time devoted to each interview was as follows: A1-27 minutes; A2-28 minutes; A3-27 minutes; A4-20 minutes; A5-30 minutes. The average time spent interviewing was 26.4 minutes.

The researcher and the two raters labeled interview questions for this principal according to fifteen content areas, which are as follows: educational background (e.g., educational degree, endorsement, student teaching), prior work experiences (e.g., substituting), personal history/qualities, teaching responsibilities, instructional strategies/style of instruction (e.g., multicultural education), classroom management(e.g., discipline), educational trends (greatest challenge teaching/motivating students), technology (e.g., computer knowledge/usage) parental involvement (e.g., communication), student evaluation (e.g., grading), teacher/staff relations, extra-curricular activities, teaching preferences, reasons to hire interviewee, and questions for interviewer.

From the above content areas, questions were grouped into six categories. For all five interviewees, the largest category of questions was factual knowledge, which equaled 51 questions or 35% of the total 146 questions asked of all interviewees A1-A5. Examples of questions from this category asked by the principal are, “First of all, if you’d summarize your educational background and experiences that you’ve had that would relate to this position” and “. . . from where did you get your master’s ?” The second largest category of questions was professional opinion with 40 questions (27%) of all questions asked. These questions required interviewees to state an opinion or critique something based on previous knowledge. Examples are, “What do you feel is the greatest challenge in teaching middle

school age children?” and “If you were given a choice for grade level and subject, what would it be?” Cognitive ability questions equaled 40 questions (27%) and included such questions as, “In what ways do you plan to maintain parental contact?”; “.... What are some other ways you would evaluate the progress of your students?” and “Describe for us four personal qualities that you possess that you think will help you be successful in the classroom.” Of the remaining three categories, two (problem solving and synthesis) accounted for 5% (7 questions and 1 question, respectively) of the total questions asked. Example of questions where interviewees had to problem solve are, “If there was a conflict between you and a staff member, what would you do to resolve it?” and “How are you going to help them [middle schoolers] with that challenge?” Only one question was asked where one interviewee was asked to synthesize. Specifically, the interviewee was asked, “How would you combine math and science?” No questions were asked of any interviewees where role-play was required.

With regard to open-ended or closed questions, the following was found: Principal A asked a total of 146 questions of all interviewees. Of that number, 18 (12%) were considered closed questions. Of the 18, follow-up questions were asked in half of these cases. When no follow-up questions were asked, it was because the interviewee responded in such a way that no additional questions were necessary. Examples of closed questions that necessitated follow-up questions were, “Do you consider yourself to be computer literate?” “Have you had any training?” and “But do you have good math skills?” Examples of closed questions whereby the interviewee responded appropriately are as follows: “Other than student teaching, have you had any other experiences with young people?” And “Do



you have an interest in coaching or being involved in any extra-curricular activities?" The interviewee responded to both questions by stating places he'd worked that gave him exposure to young people and by stating affirmatively that he'd be interested in coaching.

Results of the above quantitative data are summarized in Tables 3 and 4.

Table 3

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees A1-A5 by Principal A

Content	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	Total	%
Educational background	2	5	5	4	2	18	12.32
Prior work experience	4	1	3	5	1	14	9.58
Personal qualities	3	2	1	1	1	8	5.47
Prioritize teaching responsibilities	2	1	1	1	2	7	4.79
Instructional strategies	2	2	2	8	3	17	11.64
Classroom management	1	1	2	2	6	12	8.21
Educational trends	1	1	2	1	1	6	4.10
Technology	6	2	2	2	2	14	9.58
Parental contact	1	1	1	1	2	6	4.10
Student evaluation	1	1	1	2	0	5	3.40
Teacher/staff relations	2	1	2	2	2	9	6.16
Extra-curricular activities	3	2	2	2	7	16	10.90
Teaching preferences	2	1	1	1	0	5	3.42
Reason to hire	1	1	1	1	1	5	3.42
Questions for interviewer	1	1	1	1	0	4	2.73
Total	32	23	27	34	30	146	

Table 4

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees A1-A5 by Principal A

Category	A1	A2	A3	A4	A5	Total	%
Factual Knowledge	13	8	10	10	10	51	34.90
Cognitive Ability	6	8	7	11	8	40	27.39
Role Play	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Problem-Solving	1	1	2	1	2	7	4.79
Synthesis	0	0	0	1	0	1	0.68
Professional Opinion	8	5	8	10	9	40	27.39
Total	28	22	27	33	29	139	
# questions asked	146						
# coded agreement	139						
Interrater agreement	.95						

Principal B

Principal B interviewed four persons for an art position at her school. This 53-year-old white female is in her second year of her first principalship. The number of questions asked of all interviewees ranged from 47 to 69. Although many follow-up questions were asked (16 in the case of the interviewee questioned 69 times), the interviewer followed a structured interview that she devised. The time devoted to each interview was as follows: B1-32 minutes; B2-35 minutes; B3-29 minutes; and B4-40 minutes, for an average time of 34 minutes. The use of pattern coding of the interview

questions produced the following content areas: educational background (e.g., endorsement, college courses, grades); personal history/characteristics (e.g., hobbies, family, interests, associations); prior work experience (e.g., other teaching assignments, substituting); instructional strategies (e.g., use of clay, shading techniques); classroom management (e.g., students throwing clay), technology/computer knowledge/usage (e.g., Internet, software, home access), alternative assessment (e.g., grading, evaluation); understanding/definition of middle school concept, extra-curricular activities (past and future involvement); questions for interviewer, teaching preferences, and reason for interviewing.

Of the 216 questions asked of the four interviewees, 16 or 7% were considered closed questions. Seven had no follow-up questions or statements from the interviewer. Examples of questions of this type are: “Would you know what a rubric is?” “Do you know what alternative assessment is, and have you ever used it?” and “Do you know what middle school concept means?” Questions considered closed, but which were followed by additional questions related to the initial question are as follows: “You sound Irish. Are you Irish?” which was followed by, “Doesn’t she sound Irish?” Another example was, “Do you do clay in middle school?” This question was followed by two additional questions: “Do they ever throw clay?” and “What would you do if they threw clay?”

Of the six categories, 68% (147 total questions) of the four interviewees’ questions could be categorized as factual knowledge questions. Examples of these questions are, “What area of Virginia Beach do you live in?”; “Your endorsement area is in art?”; “[Is that] K-12?”; and “And you’re completely certified?”

Questions that required the respondent to explain or demonstrate cognitive ability equaled 39 questions or 18% of questions asked of all interviewees. Examples of questions that required demonstration of cognitive ability are, “How would you describe your style of teaching, including how you would set up discipline and management in your classroom?”; “How do you evaluate something a child makes, draws and paints?”; and “How do they—I’m trying to get the difference between the old-time junior high and the current modern middle school. What is the difference in how they are structured?”

Questions from the following three categories: problem solving, synthesis, and professional opinion, equaled 11% of the questions asked. Each interviewee was asked to problem solve a discipline problem such as, “What would you do with a student in your art class who’s sitting there with his head on the desk not doing any work?” or “What would you do if they [students] threw clay?” At least one question was asked where the respondents had to synthesize. In this case, each interviewee was asked, “Tell me—create a good middle school. What I want you to do is to tell me--what is a middle school, create a good one. . . . Then after you do that, I want you to tell me how the art program fits into the middle school.” From the last category, professional opinion, interviewees were asked to state a teaching preference when asked, “And you like fifth grade or higher better, I mean, if you had your choice, than the elementary?” or “Which was your favorite [student teaching experience]?” There were no questions asked of interviewees where role-play was required.

Table 5

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees B1-B4 by Principal B

Content	B1	B2	B3	B4	Total	%
Educational background	7	7	14	12	40	18.51
Personal history	3	14	18	15	50	23.14
Prior work experience	5	7	0	7	19	8.79
Instructional strategies	1	4	3	5	13	6.01
Classroom management	5	5	3	8	21	9.72
Technology	7	2	3	6	18	8.33
Alternative assessment	6	1	1	1	9	4.16
Knowledge of middle school concept	7	3	5	6	21	9.72
Extra-curricular activities	4	1	1	7	13	6.01
Questions for interviewer	2	2	1	2	7	3.24
Teaching preferences	0	4	0	0	4	1.85
Reasons for interviewing	0	0	1	0	1	0.46
Total	47	50	50	69	216	

Table 6

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees B1-B4 by Principal B

Category	B1	B2	B3	B4	Total	%
Factual knowledge	28	32	34	53	147	68.05
Cognitive ability	14	9	7	9	39	18.30
Role play	0	0	0	0	0	
Problem-solving	2	2	1	3	8	3.70
Synthesis	1	2	1	1	5	2.31
Professional opinion	0	4	6	1	11	5.09
Total	45	49	49	67	210	97.22
# questions asked	216					
# coded agreement	210					
Interrater agreement	.97					

Principal C

Principal C, to fill a mathematics vacancy, interviewed five persons with either a middle school or math endorsement. Starting his tenth year in this, his only principalship thus far, this 43-year-old black male conducted interviews for a position that ultimately was not staffed, although a person was identified had the position been staffed. It was not known until after the interviews had been conducted that budget constraints would prevent anyone from being hired for this position. Nevertheless, the principal interviewed each interviewee; no assistant principals participated in any of the interviews.

The number of questions asked ranged from 13 to 24. Each interview was conducted in the following times: C1-23 minutes; C2-18 minutes; C3-37 minutes; C4-26 minutes; and C5-17 minutes, with all interviews averaging 24.2 minutes. Much of the variance in time was the result of pauses from the interviewees, as well as the differences in the numbers of questions asked of each interviewee. Twelve content areas resulted from the questions asked and are as follows: educational background/preparation (e.g., schools attended, certification) and personal history (e.g., hobbies, community involvement); prior work experiences, personal qualities, instructional skills/abilities (e.g., strengths, weaknesses); philosophy of education, definition of team player, technology skills (e.g., use of computers); most important teaching responsibility, classroom management (e.g., discipline plan); questions for interviewer, career aspirations, and extra-curricular activities (e.g., cheerleading).

Only two closed questions were asked by this principal. Of the two, a follow-up question was asked by the interviewee for clarification. The question asked by the interviewer was, "This position may be tied to extra-curricular activities. Would you be interested in something like that?" The interviewee responded with: "Yes, I would." She continued with, "Now, what –in particular, what type of – I'm just wondering--?" This prompted the interviewer to respond with, "Right. Something like cheerleaders or something like that." The only other closed question was, "Did you take over a course over there?" which was followed by two follow-up questions from the interviewer: "Middle of the year?" and "Okay. Sick or something or person just left?"



Using the six categories of questions, interview questions were grouped in the following manner. Factual knowledge questions equaled 34 questions or 40%. Examples of Principal C's interview question from this category are, "First thing I'd like you to do is tell me about yourself in terms of activities, your preparation for teaching, hobbies, interests," "You've taught ten years at the alternative school?" and "Were you by chance in room number one?" Questions from the cognitive ability category comprised the next highest percentage with a total of 28 questions or 33% of questions asked of interviewees. Here interviewees were asked, "How would you define your philosophy on education?" and "What is your concept of a team player? How would you define team player?" A total of seven questions (8%) were asked where interviewees could demonstrate problem-solving abilities. All interviewees were asked to "... give me a step-by-step procedure in terms of handling minor discipline problems," while only two of the five interviewees were further instructed to respond to the interviewer's question "... how would you deal with a youngster that's somewhat disruptive and interfering with the instruction in the class?" A total of ten questions (12%) were asked whereby respondents could express a professional opinion. Examples from this category are, "How do you feel you can help our school?" and "As a classroom teacher, what is the most important responsibility or part of your job?" There were no questions in either the role play or synthesis categories.

Tables 7 and 8 illustrate the preceding descriptive analysis.

Table 7

Consistency of Questions Asked of All Interviewees C1-C5 by Principal C

Content	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	Total	%
Educational background	5	2	3	3	2	15	17.64
Prior work experience	2	7	1	0	3	13	15.29
Personal qualities	1	1	1	1	1	5	5.88
Instructional skills/abilities	1	2	3	2	3	11	12.94
Philosophy of education	1	1	1	1	1	5	5.88
Team player (define)	1	1	1	1	1	5	5.88
Technology	1	2	1	1	1	6	7.05
Teaching responsibilities (prioritize)	1	1	1	1	1	5	5.88
Classroom management	1	2	1	1	2	7	8.23
Questions for interviewer	1	1	1	1	1	5	5.88
Career aspirations	1	3	1	1	1	7	8.23
Extra-curricular activities	0	1	0	0	0	1	1.17
Total	16	24	15	13	17	85	

Table 8

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees C1-C5 by Principal C

Category	C1	C2	C3	C4	C5	Total	%
Factual Knowledge	7	13	5	4	5	34	40.00
Cognitive Ability	5	5	6	5	7	28	32.94
Role Play	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Problem-Solving	1	2	1	1	2	7	8.23
Synthesis	0	0	0	0	0	0	
Professional Opinion	2	2	2	2	2	10	11.76
Total	15	22	14	12	16	79	92.93
# questions asked	85						
# coded agreement	79						
Interrater agreement	.93						

Principal D

Principal D, a 52 year-old black male, has the most experience as middle school principal. This year he began year 12, having also served as principal of two other middle schools in this district. Data were collected from the four persons he interviewed to fill an eighth grade science position. Interviews were conducted according to the following times: D1-22 minutes; D2-17 minutes; D3-16 minutes; and D4-14 minutes, for an average time of 17.25 minutes.

Fourteen content areas were gleaned overall from the interviewer's questions, although not every interviewee was asked a question from each category. Following is a list of those content areas: educational background (e.g., school attended, year graduated, major, endorsement area(s), student teaching); middle school concept/teaming (e.g., knowledge of, organizational structure); technology (e.g., knowledge of video scope); instructional strategies (e.g., best lesson ever taught, use of technology to teach science); educational trends (e.g., direction of Virginia, SOL's testing); school/community relations (e.g., how to get parent on teacher's side); evaluation (e.g., grading), career aspirations, questions for interviewer, prior work experience, personal history (e.g., location of residence, schools children attend); teaching preferences (e.g., subject preferred); extra-curricular activities (e.g., interest in coaching); and classroom management (e.g., discipline).

Six of this principal's 111 interview questions (5%) were considered closed. Of these six, five did not lead to follow-up questions. Examples include, "That's very good. Do you think the SOL's will make things better?" "Right. And that's the good thing about inclusion, wouldn't you say?" and "All right. You think we need to keep the teacher involved in the community?" The one closed question with a follow-up question asked for clarification/additional information was, "So you're the interdisciplinary type?" It was followed by, "Oh, so you have a middle school endorsement?" and "Oh, that's very good. So you have an endorsement rather than a master's?"

Questions from the above content areas were then grouped according to the six categories previously mentioned. The largest category of questions was factual knowledge

with a total of 49 questions (44%) asked of all four interviewees. Examples of questions asked from this category include, “What school did you attend?” “What year did you graduate?” “So you’re an interdisciplinary type major?” and “History. Is that right? History major. How did you get this science thing?” Cognitive ability was the second largest category with 29 questions (26%) of all questions asked. Here, interviewees had to describe or explain a concept. Examples of cognitive ability questions are, “And tell me how they operated [the teaming concept]?” “Tell me about the [lesson] that you think struck lightning or lightning struck—whatever,” and “How would you use technology if you were given the opportunity?” Questions from the professional opinion category comprised the third largest group with 23 questions (21%) being asked. Principal D asked interviewees questions such as, “What do you see for us ten years down the road as an educator yourself? What do you see for us—and in the way we do business and teach—train children?” “Where do you see yourself as a teacher fitting into the scheme of things of a school/community relationship here?” “If you had to select a science that you feel most comfortable with, which one would it be? Which one would you say would be your thing, physical science or life science?” and “We’re hearing a lot about school reform nowadays, and I guess in many ways, teachers may be the grass roots to school reform. Where do you see this school reform thing going? Where do you see education going?” A total of seven questions (6%) were asked which required interviewees to solve a problem by asking them what they would do if they were in a conference with an upset parent and the principal. Another example where interviewees were asked to solve a problem related to classroom management is as follows: “.... Let’s

say you have Billy Joe in the back of that class again, and he's giving you a fit, a real discipline problem, how would you work with this child to get him back into the groove, get him back on target?" The following question was asked of one interviewee only and required that interviewee to role-play: "Okay. And now you've got the parent here, and the parent still thinks you're the problem. What are you going to do? Parent looking at you with the evil look in the eye that they can give you, and they're going '[D4], I don't think you like my child.' " [Interviewee is being asked to respond as s/he would do if actually in the conference.] No questions were asked which required interviewees to synthesize.

Tables 9 and 10 provide quantitative data of the above descriptive account.

Table 9

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees D1-D4 by Principal D

Content	D1	D2	D3	D4	Total	%
Educational background	14	3	8	9	34	30.60
Middle school teaming concept	3	1	1	2	7	6.30
Technology	1	1	4	2	8	7.20
Instructional strategies	6	3	1	6	16	14.40
Educational trends	2	2	2	1	7	6.30
School-community relations	1	2	3	7	13	11.71
Evaluation	2	0	0	1	3	2.70
Career aspirations	2	1	1	1	5	4.50
Questions for interviewer	1	2	1	1	5	4.50
Prior work experience	1	0	0	1	2	1.80
Personal history	0	3	0	0	3	2.70
Teaching preferences	0	2	1	0	3	2.70
Extra-curricular activities	0	2	0	1	3	2.70
Classroom management	0	0	1	1	2	1.80
Total	33	22	23	33	111	

Table 10

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees D1-D4 by Principal D

Category	D1	D2	D3	D4	Total	%
Factual knowledge	20	8	9	12	49	44.10
Cognitive ability	7	5	6	11	29	26.12
Role play	0	0	0	1	1	0.90
Problem-solving	1	1	2	3	7	6.30
Synthesis	0	0	0	0	0	
Professional opinion	5	7	6	5	23	20.70
Total	33	21	23	32	109	98.30
# questions asked	111					
# coded agreement	109					
Interrater agreement	.98					

Principal E

Principal E began this year as a newly appointed principal of this middle school. Prior experiences include principalships at both the intermediate and high school levels. She is a 46-year-old white female with an earned doctorate in educational administration.

Three interviewees were questioned for a special education position. Several content areas were covered during the interviews. Those content areas are as follows: educational background (e.g., student teaching, certification); perception of role as staff member, extra-



curricular activities, teaching preferences (e.g. level, type of student); instruction (e.g., planning, addressing students' instructional needs); classroom management, school/community relationships, school/staff relations, interviewee's reasons to be selected, planning, prior work experiences, and questions for interviewer. The times for the interviews were as follows: E1-25 minutes; E2-9 minutes; and E3-8 minutes, for an average interview time of 14 minutes. Respective to the interview times listed above, the following numbers of interview questions were asked: 24, 21, and 20.

One interviewee was asked a closed question; it was not followed by any additional questions or comments from the interviewer. The question was, "So you like the fifth/sixth grouping?" Although the interviewee responded with, "Yeah, I really did. It was real challenging," it solicited no follow-up comment or question.

Of the sixty-five questions asked, 24% were categorized as factual knowledge questions and 28% were categorized as cognitive ability. Some factual knowledge questions are, "All right, [E2], give me a little bit about you—tell me a little bit about your background, if you would," "All right. So that was Deep Creek Intermediate? Elementary?" and "Greenbrier Intermediate, and that was?" Examples of cognitive ability questions are, "Okay, [E2], as a special ed teacher, how do you perceive your role on staff?" "OK, describe your style of classroom management, grading, behavior, issues like that," and "Describe how you would plan to communicate with the parents." Seven questions (11%) were asked which required interviewees to role-play. Situational questions from this category include "How would you handle a situation if a non-special education parent

approaches you and expresses concern that their child may be ADD and expresses concern/anxiety about how the regular ed teacher is working with their child in the classroom and I [as that parent] approach you and I'm getting very loud in the grocery store, and I'm saying, 'you know, [E1], I just—I am really upset. I don't feel that my child is making any progress in your classroom.' And I'm getting louder and louder. How are you going to deal with me?" Nine questions (15%) such as, "Okay, [E2], if all of the candidates are found to be equal, why should I be selecting you for this job?" and "... What's your preference as far as disability?" asked the respondent to give a professional opinion. No questions were coded which required interviewees to synthesize.

Overall interrater agreement was .81. Tables 11 and 12 illustrate the preceding analysis.

Table 11

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees E1-E3 by Principal E

Content	E1	E2	E3	Total	%
Educational background	6	5	4	15	23.07
Perception of role	1	1	1	3	4.61
Extra-curricular activities	1	1	0	2	3.07
Teaching preferences	2	3	3	8	12.30
Instruction	3	2	2	7	10.76
Classroom management	1	1	0	2	3.07
School/Community relationships	5	4	4	13	20.00
Teacher/Staff relations	1	1	1	3	4.61
Interviewee's reasons for being selected for position	1	1	1	3	4.61
Planning	2	2	1	5	7.69
Prior work experience	0	0	2	2	3.07
Questions for interviewer	1	0	1	2	3.07
Total	24	21	20	65	

Table 12

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees E1-E3 by Principal E

Category	E1	E2	E3	Total	%
Factual knowledge	6	6	4	16	24.61
Cognitive ability	7	5	6	18	27.69
Role play	2	3	2	7	10.76
Problem-solving	2	0	1	3	4.61
Synthesis	0	0	0	0	
Professional opinion	5	3	1	9	13.84
Total	22	17	14	53	81.51
# questions asked	65				
# coded questions	53				
Interrater agreement	.82				

Principal F

Principal F, a 37-year-old black female, is now in her fifth year as principal. She is one of three middle school principals who have experience as principal at the intermediate level. Data collected were gathered from her six interviews to select a guidance counselor. The number of questions asked of all interviewees ranged from 17 to 35. Many questions that were asked of the interviewee questioned 35 times were about prior work experiences. The amount of time devoted to each interview was as follows: F1-20

minutes; F2-14 minutes; F3-20 minutes; F4-25; F5-22 minutes, and F6-26 minutes, for an average of 21.1 minutes.

Thirteen content areas were gleaned from this principal's interview questions. Those areas are as follows: educational background/personal history, prior work history, interviewee's perception of role, plan to assist staff members (e.g., guidance strategies); test-taking strategies for students, plan to facilitate career development of students, groups to offer students, plan for handling student problems (e.g., student problems with teacher, family); teacher/ principal relationship (e.g., interviewee's problem with principal's decision); definition of good staff member, interviewee's reasons why s/he should be hired, preferences for grade level, and questions for interviewer. No closed questions were asked by this principal.

Interview questions were then grouped into the six categories. A total of 44 questions (32%) required a factual knowledge response. An example of this type of question is, "All right. We'll start something I'm sure you're real comfortable with, and that's talking about yourself. Tell me about [F1]." Another example is, "I'll tell you what, tell me about your 17 years. Where were you?" Or, still another example is, "The next question I had is had you given thought to sponsoring any school activities and if so, what might be an area of interest?" Cognitive ability questions equaled 39% with 54 questions that required interviewees to either describe or explain a concept, process, etc. These were questions such as, "Tell me how you perceive the role of a guidance counselor," "What plan would you use to assist staff members in helping students to develop a positive and realistic

self concept?” “What strategies or techniques would you use to help students acquire study skills and test-taking skills?”; and “What’s your definition of a good staff member?” Each interviewee was asked at least one question (4%) that required the respondent to role play. An example [as given by the principal] pertains to a situation “where a student comes in and tell you that she really needs to talk to you, and she asks before she goes into great detail, ‘Promise not to tell anyone what I’m about to share with you.’ She proceeds to tell you that while sleeping at night, her father gets in bed with her and touches her in ways that make her feel very uncomfortable.” As counselor, the interviewee is asked, “What do you do?” Problem-solving was a category with fourteen questions (10%) being asked. One example of a question which required the interviewees to solve a problem for a student who wants out of a science class because he feels the teacher is picking on him. The counselor had already spoken to the student once , but he has returned. The question posed by the interviewer is, “Let’s say you’ve done that and the student still says [F2], I want out. Take me out.” Another example of a situation was a student informs the counselor that s/he has had thoughts of suicide. [As counselor] “What do you do?” No questions were asked where interviewees had to synthesize a response. Each interviewee was asked to give a professional opinion by responding to questions such as, “Tell me why I should hire you for this position,” “If you had a choice, what would be your preference of grade level?” Overall interrater agreement for Principal F was 98%. Tables 13 and 14 illustrate the above descriptive analysis.

Table 13

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees F1-F6 by Principal F

Content	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	Total	%
Educational background/personal history	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	4.34
Prior work history	1	1	6	2	2	4	16	11.59
Perception of role as counselor	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	4.34
Plans to assist staff members	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	4.34
Test-taking strategies for students	1	1	2	1	3	1	9	6.52
Plan to facilitate career development of students	1	1	2	1	1	1	7	5.00
Groups to offer students/what interviewee can offer school	2	2	7	4	4	2	21	15.21
Handling student problems	4	3	6	4	3	4	24	17.39
Teacher/principal relationship	2	1	1	3	1	1	9	6.50
Definition of good staff member	1	1	3	2	1	1	9	6.50
Reason to hire interviewee	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	4.30
Grade level preferences	2	2	3	1	2	0	10	7.20
Questions for interviewer	1	1	1	2	2	2	9	6.50
Total	19	17	35	24	23	20	138	

Table 14

Categories of Questions Asked by Principal F

Categories	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5	F6	Total	%
Factual Knowledge	4	4	12	8	9	7	44	31.88
Cognitive Ability	8	7	13	10	8	8	54	39.13
Role Play	1	1	1	1	1	1	6	4.34
Problem-Solving	2	2	3	2	2	3	14	10.14
Synthesis	0	0	0	0	0	0		
Professional Opinion	4	3	3	3	3	1	17	12.31
Total	19	17	32	24	23	20	135	97.82
# questions asked	138							
# coded agreement	135							
Interrater agreement	.98							

Principal G

Principal G is a 45-year-old white male principal with six years of principal experience at the middle school level. He has experience as a principal at both the elementary and intermediate levels as well. His taped interviews were conducted to fill an eighth-grade science position. The times for each interviewee are as follows: G1-20 minutes; G2-16 minutes; and G-3 17 minutes, averaging 17.6 minutes. The number of questions asked of the three interviewees were 24, 29, and 30, respectively.



Fifteen content areas emerged from Principal G's interview questions. Following is a list of those areas: educational preparation (e.g., endorsement, student teaching); work preferences (e.g., subject, type of student desired); prior work experience (e.g., substitute, teacher assistant); interviewee's reason for interviewing, knowledge of interviewer's school and community, personal characteristics (e.g., assessment of self and "fitness" for this job, including sense of humor, flexibility, strengths, weaknesses); expectations of job, level of commitment (e.g., level of commitment for anything sought); extra-curricular activities (e.g., coaching); definition of team player (e.g., ability to get along with others, rapport with students); classroom management (e.g., techniques or discipline plan); instructional techniques, knowledge of middle school child, personal information (e.g., interviewee's phone number) and questions for interviewer. No closed questions were asked by this principal.

Questions from the content areas were further grouped into six categories. A total of 83 questions were asked of the three interviewees. Of this number, 67 were actually coded by all three raters. The other sixteen questions were not coded because raters could not agree on the category to which they would be assigned. Factual knowledge questions comprised 30% of all questions asked, with a total of 24 questions being asked. Examples of factual knowledge questions are, "Can you start by just telling me what areas you're endorsed in?" "And you were branch manager for who now?" "You have it [endorsement] in all four [subjects] because I'm looking—the position is really for math and science," "All right. You just want to start by just going through your experiences, when

you graduated, what places you've worked, that type of thing?" The category with the greatest number of questions was cognitive ability with 32 (39%) being asked. Questions from this category included, "Okay, are you—why do you want this position?" "How would you describe your sense of humor?" "Can you think of –well, can you describe your ability to get along with others?" "How would you describe yourself in terms of flexibility?" and "Describe your work ethic." No questions were asked that required interviewees to role-play, problem solve, or synthesize. Eleven questions (13%) were asked that required respondents to state an opinion based on some previous knowledge or experience. Questions from this category include, "... What do you think are some of the most important ingredients that a person has to have to be an effective team member?" and "What stands out about you that makes you a good candidate for this position?" Tables 15 and 16 illustrate the above descriptive analysis.

Table 15

Consistency of Questions Asked of Interviewees G1-G3 by Principal G

Content	G1	G2	G3	Total	%
Educational preparation	3	3	3	9	10.84
Work preferences	0	1	2	3	3.61
Prior work experience	3	4	6	13	15.66
Reasons for applying for job	1	1	1	3	3.61
Knowledge of school and community	1	2	2	5	6.02
Personal characteristics	9	8	7	24	28.91
Expectations of job	0	0	1	1	1.20
Degree of commitment	2	1	1	4	4.81
Extra-curricular activities	1	3	1	5	6.02
Team player (define)	1	1	1	3	3.61
Classroom management	1	1	1	3	3.61
Instructional techniques	1	1	1	3	3.61
Knowledge of ms child	0	1	2	3	3.61
Personal information	0	1	0	1	1.20
Questions for interviewer	1	1	1	3	3.61
Total	24	29	30	83	

Table 16

Categories of Questions Asked of Interviewees G1-G3 by Principal G

Category	G1	G2	G3	Total	%
Factual Knowledge	6	11	7	24	28.91
Cognitive Ability	10	10	12	32	38.55
Role Play	0	0	0	0	
Problem-solving	0	0	0	0	
Synthesis	0	0	0	0	
Professional Opinion	3	4	4	11	13.25
Total	19	25	23	67	80.72
# questions asked	83				
# questions coded	67				
Interrater agreement	.81				

Summary of Principals' Interview Questions

Principals' interview questions were compared according to content and category according to the following demographic attributes: experience as principal, age, gender, and race. Because the number of questions asked by principals varied considerably, comparisons are based on percentages of their content area questions only and are presented in the frequency tables that show combined results for all principals. In addition to the

percentages, a column denoting totals of content areas covered by all principals is included (see Tables 17-26). The following observations were drawn from a careful analysis of the 844 interview questions.

All principals asked questions about the interviewee's educational background, prior work experience, instructional strategies, and classroom management. In addition, each principal ended the interview by asking the interviewee if there were any questions for the interviewer. The percentage of questions asked by principals in the educational background content area, for instance, ranged from 4.3% to 31%. The average for questions in this group was 17%. Neither age, race, gender, nor experience had any effect on the questions asked in this content area.

In the prior work content area, percentages ranged from a low 1.8% asked by Principal D to a high 15.66% asked by Principal G.

Another content area covered by all principals was instructional strategies. Here, Principal F, the only black female principal, asked instructional strategies questions (in her case, she asked questions about guidance strategies to help students and teachers) that equaled 31% of her total questions. This was more than three times the number of instructional questions asked by the following principals: A (12%); B (6%); C (13%); D (14%); E (11%) and G (4%). Again, differences in questions followed no pattern with regard to demographics.

Classroom management was another area where all principal asked questions of at least one interviewee. In this area, questions asked by Principal F, who was seeking to fill a

guidance position, were removed before comparisons were made because the responses here are related to actual classroom behavior of students. Principal F's questions were more of a nature of handling problems that might erupt in a classroom, but would eventually end up in the guidance office. Therefore, in reviewing the percentages of the other six principals, the following comparisons were made. Principals A and B, white females with less than five years' experience as principal, both asked fewer than 10% of their total questions in this content area (8.2% and 9.7%, respectively). One of the two black males asked classroom management questions equal to 8.2%. The other black male with over eleven years' experience asked questions equal to 1.8%. One white female and one white male, both with more than eleven years' experience, each asked 3% and 3.6%, respectively in this group.

Other content areas with questions from some principals and not others included job preferences, whereby interviewees were asked what grade level they would prefer. Percentages in this group ranged from 1.8% to 12%. Only three principals, a white female, a black male, and a white male asked questions about the interviewee's knowledge of middle school. Percentages for the three are as follows: 9.7%, 6.3%, and 3.6%, respectively.

Educational philosophy and interviewee's reasons to be hired are two other areas where not all principals asked questions. Of the twenty-four content areas, no patterns in questions could be discerned with regard to demographic characteristics (see Tables 17-26).

Categories of questions simply show the percentages of questions asked in each group by each principal and did not necessitate additional discussion (see Tables 17-26).

Table 17

Content of Questions Asked of All Interviewees by All Principals (in percentages)

Content	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total	%
Educational background	12.32	18.51	17.64	30.60	23.07	4.34	10.84	137	16.23
Prior work experience	9.58	8.79	15.29	1.80	3.07	11.59	15.66	79	9.36
Personal info/qualities	5.47	23.14	5.88	2.70	0	0	30.12	91	10.78
Teaching responsibilities	4.79	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	12	1.42
Instructional strategies/guidance procedures	11.64	6.01	12.94	14.40	10.76	31.00	3.61	110	13.03
Classroom management/handling student problems	8.21	9.72	8.23	1.80	3.07	17.39	3.61	71	8.41
Educational trends	4.10	0	0	6.30	0	0	0	13	1.54
Technology	9.58	8.33	7.05	7.20	0	0	0	46	5.45
School/community relationship	4.10	0	0	11.71	20.00	0	0	32	3.79
Student evaluation	3.40	4.16	0	2.70	0	0	0	17	2.01
Teacher/staff/principal relationships	6.16	0	0	0	4.61	6.50	0	21	2.48

(table continues)

Table 17 (continued)

Content	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Total	%
Extra-curricular activities	10.90	6.01	1.17	2.70	3.07	0	6.02	40	4.73
Job preferences	3.42	1.85	0	2.70	12.30	7.20	3.61	33	3.90
Interviewee's reasons to be hired	3.42	0.46	0	0	4.61	4.30	3.61	18	2.13
Questions for interviewer	2.73	3.24	5.88	4.50	3.07	6.50	3.61	35	4.14
Knowledge of middle school	0	9.72	0	6.30	0	0	3.61	31	3.67
Educational philosophy	0	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Team player/good staff member (define)	0	0	5.88	0	0	6.50	3.61	17	2.01
Career aspirations	0	0	8.23	4.50	0	0	0	12	1.42
Perception of role	0	0	0	0	4.61	4.34	0	9	1.06
Knowledge of school and community	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.02	5	0.59
Expectations of job	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.20	1	0.11
Degree of commitment	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.81	4	0.47
Planning skills	0	0	0	0	7.69	0	0	5	0.59
Total questions	146	216	85	111	65	138	83	844	





Table 19

Content of Questions Asked by Interviewers Based on Years of Experience as Principal (in percentages)

Content	0-5		6-10			11+		Total	%
	A	B	C	F	D	E	G		
Educational background	12.32	18.51	17.64	4.34	30.60	23.07	10.84	137	16.23
Prior work experience	9.58	8.79	15.29	11.59	1.80	3.07	15.66	79	9.36
Personal info/qualities	5.47	23.14	5.88	0	2.70	0	30.12	91	10.78
Teaching responsibilities (prioritize)	4.79	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	12	1.42
Instructional strategies/guidance procedures	11.64	6.01	12.94	31.00	14.40	10.76	3.6	110	13.03
Classroom management/ student problems	8.21	9.72	8.23	17.39	1.80	3.07	3.61	71	8.41
Educational trends	4.10	0	0	0	6.30	0	0	13	1.54
Technology	9.58	8.33	7.05	0	7.20	0	0	46	5.45
School/community relationship	4.10	0	0	0	11.71	20.00	0	32	3.79
Student evaluation	3.40	4.16	0	0	2.70	0	0	17	2.01
Teacher/staff/ principal relationships	6.16	0	0	6.50	0	4.61	0	21	2.48

(table continues)

Table 19 (continued)

Content	0-5		6-10			11+		Total	%
	A	B	C	F	D	E	G		
	10.90	6.01	1.17	0	2.70	3.07	6.02	40	4.73
Extra-curricular activities									
Job preferences	3.00	1.85	0	7.20	2.70	12.30	3.61	33	3.90
Interviewee's reasons to be hired	3.00	0.46	0	4.30	0	4.61	3.61	18	2.13
Questions for interviewer	2.7	3.24	5.88	6.50	4.50	3.07	3.61	35	4.14
Knowledge of middle school	0	9.72	0	0	6.30	0	3.61	31	3.67
Educational philosophy	0	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Team player/good staff member (define)	0	0	5.88	6.50	0	0	3.61	17	2.01
Career aspirations	0	0	8.23	0	4.50	0	0	12	1.42
Perception of role	0	0	0	4.34	0	4.61	0	9	1.06
Knowledge of school and community	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.02	5	0.59
Expectations of job	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.20	1	0.11
Degree of commitment	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.81	4	0.47
Planning skills	0	0	0	0	0	7.69	0	5	0.59
Total questions	146	216	85	138	111	65	83	844	

Table 20

Categories of Questions Asked by Interviewers Based on Years of Experience as Principal  
(in percentages)

Category	0-5		C	6-10		11+		Total	%
	A	B		F	D	E	G		
Factual knowledge	34.90	68.05	40.00	31.88	44.14	24.61	28.91	365	43.20
Cognitive ability	27.39	18.30	32.94	39.13	26.12	27.69	38.55	240	28.40
Role play	0	0	0	4.34	0.90	10.76	0	14	1.65
Problem-solving	4.79	3.70	8.23	10.14	6.30	4.61	0	46	5.40
Synthesis	0.68	2.31	0	0	0	0	0	6	0.71
Professional opinion	27.39	5.09	11.76	12.31	20.70	13.84	13.25	121	14.30
Total questions coded	139	210	79	135	109	53	67	792	93.80
# questions asked	844								
# of questions coded by raters	792								
Coded agreement	.94								

Table 21

Content of Interview Questions Asked According to Age of Principals (in percentages)

Content	35-40	41-46			47+			Total	%
	F	C	E	G	A	B	D		
Educational background	4.34	17.64	23.07	10.84	12.32	18.51	30.60	137	16.67
Prior work experience	11.59	15.29	3.07	15.66	9.58	8.79	1.80	79	9.32
Personal info/qualities	0	5.88	0	30.12	5.47	23.14	2.70	91	9.57
Teaching responsibilities (prioritize)	0	5.88	0	0	4.79	0	0	12	1.40
Instructional strategies/guidance procedures	31.00	12.94	10.76	3.61	11.64	6.01	14.40	110	13.00
Classroom management/ student problems	17.39	8.23	3.07	3.61	8.21	9.72	1.80	71	8.40
Educational trends	0	0	0	0	4.10	0	6.30	13	1.50
Technology	0	7.05	0	0	9.58	8.33	7.20	46	5.40
School/community relationship	0	0	20.00	0	4.10	0	11.71	32	3.70
Student evaluation	0	0	0	0	3.40	4.16	2.70	17	2.00
Teacher/staff/ principal relationships	6.50	0	4.61	0	6.16	0	0	21	2.40

(table continues)

Table 21 (continued)

Content	35-40	41-46			47+			Total	%
	F	C	E	G	A	B	D		
Extra-curricular activities	0	1.17	3.07	6.02	10.90	6.01	2.70	40	4.73
Job preferences	7.20	0	12.30	3.61	3.42	1.85	2.70	33	3.90
Interviewee's reasons to be hired	4.30	0	4.61	3.61	3.42	0.46	0	18	2.13
Questions for interviewer	6.50	5.88	3.07	3.61	2.73	3.24	4.50	35	4.14
Knowledge of middle school	0	0	0	3.61	0	9.72	6.30	31	3.67
Educational philosophy	0	5.88	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Team player/good staff member (define)	6.50	5.88	0	3.61	0	0	0	17	2.01
Career aspirations	0	8.23	0	0	0	0	4.50	12	1.42
Perception of role	4.34	0	4.61	0	0	0	0	9	1.06
Knowledge of school and community	0	0	0	6.02	0	0	0	5	0.59
Expectations of job	0	0	0	1.20	0	0	0	1	0.11
Degree of commitment	0	0	0	4.81	0	0	0	4	0.47
Planning skills	0	0	7.69	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Total questions	138	85	65	83	146	216	111	844	



Table 23

Content of Questions Asked by Principals According to Gender of Principal (in percentages)

Content	Male			Female				Total	%
	C	D	G	A	B	E	F		
Educational background	17.64	30.60	10.84	12.32	18.51	23.07	4.34	137	16.67
Prior work experience	15.29	1.80	15.66	9.58	8.79	3.07	11.59	79	9.32
Personal info/qualities	5.88	2.70	30.12	5.47	23.14	0	0	91	9.57
Teaching responsibilities (prioritize)	5.88	0	0	4.79	0	0	0	12	1.40
Instructional strategies/guidance procedures	12.94	14.40	3.61	11.64	6.01	10.76	31.00	110	13.00
Classroom management/student problems	8.23	1.80	3.61	8.21	9.72	3.07	17.39	71	8.40
Educational trends	0	6.30	0	4.10	0	0	0	13	1.50
Technology	7.05	7.20	0	9.58	8.33	0	0	46	5.40
School/community relationship	0	11.71	0	4.10	0	20.00	0	32	3.70
Student evaluation	0	2.70	0	3.40	4.16	0	0	17	2.00
Teacher/staff/principal relationships	0	0	0	6.16	0	4.61	6.50	21	2.40

(table continues)



Table 23 (continued)

Content	Male			Female				Total	%
	C	D	G	A	B	E	F		
Extra-curricular activities	1.17	2.70	6.02	10.90	6.01	3.07	0	40	4.73
Job preferences	0	2.70	3.61	3.42	1.85	12.30	7.20	33	3.90
Interviewee's reasons to be hired	0	0	3.61	3.42	0.46	4.61	4.30	18	2.13
Questions for interviewer	5.88	4.50	3.61	2.73	3.24	3.07	6.50	35	4.14
Knowledge of middle school	0	6.30	3.61	0	9.72	0	0	31	3.67
Educational philosophy	5.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Team player/good staff member (define)	5.88	0	3.61	0	0	0	6.50	17	2.01
Career aspirations	8.23	4.50	0	0	0	0	0	12	1.42
Perception of role	0	0	0	0	0	4.61	4.34	9	1.06
Knowledge of school & community	0	0	6.02	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Expectations of job	0	0	1.20	0	0	0	0	1	0.11
Degree of commitment	0	0	4.81	0	0	0	0	4	0.47
Planning skills	0	0	0	0	0	7.69	0	5	0.59
Total questions	85	111	83	146	216	65	138	844	



Table 25

Content of Questions Asked by Principals According to Race of Principal (in percentages)

Content	Black			White				Total	%
	C	D	F	A	B	E	G		
Educational background	17.64	30.60	4.34	12.32	18.51	23.07	10.84	137	16.67
Prior work experience	15.29	1.80	11.59	9.58	8.79	3.07	15.66	79	9.32
Personal info/qualities	5.88	2.70	0	5.47	23.14	0	30.12	91	9.57
Teaching responsibilities (prioritize)	5.88	0	0	4.79	0	0	0	12	1.40
Instructional strategies/guidance procedures	12.94	14.40	31.00	11.64	6.01	10.76	3.61	110	13.00
Classroom management/student problems	8.23	1.80	17.39	8.21	9.72	3.07	3.61	71	8.40
Educational trends	0	6.30	0	4.10	0	0	0	13	1.50
Technology	7.05	7.20	0	9.58	8.33	0	0	46	5.40
School/community relationship	0	11.71	0	4.10	0	20.00	0	32	3.70
Student evaluation	0	2.70	0	3.40	4.16	0	0	17	2.00
Teacher/staff/principal relationships	0	0	6.50	6.16	0	4.61	0	21	2.40
Extra-curricular activities	1.17	2.70	0	10.90	6.01	3.07	6.02	40	4.73

(table continues)

Table 25 (continued)

Content	Black			White				Total	%
	C	D	F	A	B	E	G		
Job preferences	0	2.70	7.20	3.42	1.85	12.30	3.61	33	3.90
Interviewee's reasons to be hired	0	0	4.30	3.42	0.46	4.61	3.61	18	2.13
Questions for interviewer	5.88	4.50	6.50	2.73	3.24	3.07	3.61	35	4.14
Knowledge of middle school	0	6.30	0	0	9.72	0	3.61	31	3.67
Educational philosophy	5.88	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0.59
Team player/good staff member (define)	5.88	0	6.50	0	0	0	3.61	17	2.01
Career aspirations	8.23	4.50	0	0	0	0	0	12	1.42
Perception of role	0	0	4.34	0	0	4.61	0	9	1.06
Knowledge of school & community	0	0	0	0	0	0	6.02	5	0.59
Expectations of job	0	0	0	0	0	0	1.20	1	0.11
Degree of commitment	0	0	0	0	0	0	4.81	4	0.47
Planning skills	0	0	0	0	0	7.59	0	5	0.59
Total questions	85	111	138	146	216	65	83	844	

Table 26

Categories of Questions Asked by Principals According to Race of Principal (in percentages)

Category	Black			White				Total	%
	C	D	F	A	B	E	G		
Factual knowledge	40.00	44.14	31.88	34.90	68.05	24.61	28.91	365	43.20
Cognitive ability	32.94	26.12	39.13	27.39	18.30	27.69	38.55	240	28.40
Role play	0	0.90	4.34	0	0	10.76	0	14	1.65
Problem-solving	8.23	6.30	10.14	4.79	3.70	4.61	0	46	5.40
Synthesis	0	0	0	0.68	2.31	0	0	6	0.71
Professional opinion	11.76	20.70	12.31	27.39	5.09	13.84	13.25	121	14.30
Total questions coded	79	109	135	139	210	53	67	792	93.80
# questions asked	844								
# of questions coded	792								
Coded agreement	.94								

#### Data Analysis (Phase II)

The second part of the data collection centered on fourteen questions or statements to which principals were asked to respond following their last interviews. Also included in this second part is an assessment of practices used by principals during their interviews. Specifically, the questionnaire gave principals the opportunity to reflect upon the reasons that they structure their interviews as they do. The assessment of practices used by principal involved the researcher's use of a checklist of practices believed by

experts in the field of personnel management to be effective interview practices. (This summarized chart was first presented in Chapter 2.) A comparison was made of what interviewers in the study did and what the experts believe should occur. Both pieces of data gave the researcher the opportunity to analyze and summarize some aspects of principals' interviews. Lastly, demographic data were collected in Phase II. Tables displaying this information precede the summarized responses of the questionnaire and the comparison of practices.

Table 27

Demographic Data for All Principals as Reported from Phase II of Questionnaire

Race and Gender	n=7	%
White female	3	43
White male	1	14
Black female	1	14
Black male	2	29
Total	7	100

Table 28

Demographic Information for All Principals as Reported from Phase II of Questionnaire

Years as middle school principal	n=7	%
0-5	4	57
6-10	2	29
11+	1	14
Total	7	100

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have held their current positions as middle school principal by writing this number in the space provided on the questionnaire. According to Table 28, more than half (57%) of the principals have been in their positions less than 5 years.

Table 29

Demographic Information for All Principals as Reported from Phase II of Questionnaire

Years as principal at any level other than middle school, excluding this year's assignment	n=7	%
0-5	3	43
6-10	1	14
11+	3	43
Total	7	100

As shown in Table 29, respondents were asked to provide on the questionnaire the number of years they have served as principal at levels other than middle school. (This includes primary, elementary, intermediate, and high school.) Prior to this year, of the three principals in the 0-5 category, two had not served as principal at any other level. The third principal had served as principal of an intermediate school prior to becoming principal of a middle school. In the 6-10 category, this principal has served as principal at the middle level for his entire tenure as principal. Two of the three principals with eleven years or more of experience have each served as principal at either the elementary or intermediate levels. Additionally, one of these three principals had been principal of a technical school.

Table 30

Demographic Information for All Principals as Reported from Phase II of Questionnaire

Years of other administrative experiences, excluding all principalships	n=7	%
0-5	4	57
6-10	2	29
11+	1	14
Total	7	100

As indicated by Table 30, more than half of the current principals (57%) served in other administrative capacities (e.g., assistant principal, supervisor, educational psychometrician) for five years or less before moving into their current position as



principal. Two principals (29%) served in other roles between six and ten years. Only one principal has other administrative experiences totaling eleven years.

Table 31

Demographic Information for All Principals as Reported from Phase II of Questionnaire

Years of all administrative experiences, including all principalships	n=7	%
0-5	0	
6-10	1	14
11+	6	86
Total	7	100

Six principals (86%) have been administrators for at least eleven years or more. Therefore, while the number of years' experience as middle school principal may be low (4=57%), other administrative positions have been held, thus allowing opportunities for them to possibly have varied experiences in interviewing.

Interviewers' Summarized Responses to Questionnaire

Question 1: When you interview a prospective teacher, exactly what are you looking for?

Principals indicated they were looking for teachers who are enthusiastic, energetic, intelligent, communicative, and knowledgeable in content areas. While different principals listed different characteristics that were important them, all stated that the prospective teacher must be a team player or one who has good interpersonal relations skills. For

example, principals asked the following questions to discern the interviewee's potential to be a team player:

1. "If there was a conflict between you and a fellow team member, how would you resolve it?"
- 2.. "What is your concept of a team player? How would you describe team player?"
3. "And tell me how they operated it [teaming concept] and how you felt about it?"
4. "What are some ways you communicate with the regular classroom teacher to ensure consistency in the students' program?"
5. "Suppose you had a problem with a decision I've made. What would you do?"
6. " How would you describe your ability to get along with others?"

Question 2: How do you prepare for an interview?

Six of the seven principals in this study said they prepare or make up a list of interview questions before the interview. In addition, two principals would either talk to the personnel administrator who set up the interview or review records of the interviewees. One of these two principals also indicated that she would look at her current staff to try to find a match. Additionally, this same principal stated that she would seek input from her assistant principals with the formulation of interview questions.

Question 3: Prior to the interview, did you know the interviewees? If yes, under what circumstances did you know this/these person(s)?

One principal wrote that she interviewed a former student. The other six principals stated that they did not personally know the interviewees.

Question 4: If the answer to number 3 is yes, did you formulate different interview questions from those asked of interviewees whom you did not know? Why or why not?

Five principals responded “NA” to this question, while the sixth principal stated she would not have changed the questions had she known the interviewees. The seventh principal who did know the interviewee said all questions were the same.

Question 5: What consideration, if any, is given to personality factors? Why is this important to you?

All seven principals responded that personality is an important consideration for the following reasons: it is an important characteristic of a successful teacher; it is always a factor in the delivery of services to human beings; it is important because the interviewee must work as a part of a team; the person must be someone who is approachable; students work harder for someone they like and respect. Another principal felt personality was important but for a different reason. She looks at it while considering the other members of the staff to create a staff that blends and doesn't clash. She stated that she doesn't want people whose personalities are so similar that they are like one. Responses to Question 1 address this question as well.

Question 6: I believe you focused on (varied with each principal) during you teacher interviews. If this is true, why did you give this area so much attention? What do you think you focused on? Why was this important to you?

The researcher, to determine an area where principals seemed to focus, perused principals' teacher interview questions. (In most instances, this meant to the researcher that principals asked at least two questions that were specific to a given content area.)

All principals had different areas of focus. For instance, Principal A stated that she focused on areas such as job responsibilities because this is an important factor in determining the success of the employee. Questions asked to get interviewees to respond to this content area were: "If we were to prioritize the responsibilities of the teacher, because there are a lot of them and we're automatically going to place instruction as the number one priority, what would you list as number two through five?" and "Classroom management is the teacher's responsibility that you saw. What is your approach to classroom management?"

This principal asked seven questions (4.8%) in this content area. Principal C said his focus was on prior teaching experiences because this indicates if the interviewee has had success. Thirteen questions (15.2%) were asked of the five persons he interviewed.

Examples of questions were: "Okay. What would you consider to be your teaching strengths? And the flip side of that would be what areas would you like to see yourself improve in?" "And you were at a junior high school, making the transition to middle school. In Maryland, you taught strictly math?" and "Okay. What math and what grade level did you teach?" Principal D said that how teachers respond to parents and how they fit into the

school/community was important to him. Questions asked by this principal which focused on this area include: "As a teacher, how would you describe your place in the school community?" "... How do you get parents on your side through communicating? What would be your process of getting the parents on your side, especially if there were a problem with a child?" Seventeen of Principal D's total questions were related to communication. Principal E's view was similar to the preceding principal because to her establishing effective communication with parents, as well as other staff members, was her focus during the interviews she conducted. Questions she asked include: "Okay. Describe how you would plan to communicate with the parents. You mentioned the importance of that," and "What are some ways you communicate with the regular classroom teacher to ensure consistency in the students' program?" Principal F felt it was important to know how a teacher (or a guidance counselor in her case) would handle classroom management, particularly with challenging students. Several of her questions were situational in nature and involved respondents having to handle problem situations. Twenty-four questions or 17% of her questions centered on handling students properly. Examples are, "Okay. All right. Give me an example of some of the types of groups that you would like to see us offer students at our school," and "Okay. All right. What strategies or techniques would you use to help students acquire study and test-taking skills?" Still another principal, (G), said he focused on the personal qualities of the interviewees, such as flexibility, humor, etc. because he feels good personal qualities are necessary to be successful in the teaching environment. Questions taken from his interview were, "I'm going to list some

characteristics, and I'd like you to describe yourself, when it comes to these characteristics, and if you can give examples of personal or professional experiences, feel free to add those in there. How would you describe your sense of humor?" "What about flexibility?" "How about work ethic?" "Would you describe yourself as a hard worker? Moderate worker? Can you think of examples?" and "Can you think of something that you—and again, either personally or professionally, that you've had to make a strong commitment to and you saw it through the end?" At least 25 or 30% of this principal's questions were on personal qualities.

Question 7: What formalized interviewer training have you had, and do you think training is necessary?

All principals indicated their training had been limited. Some had received "training" by observing their former principals when they themselves were assistant principals and by conducting initial interviews of prospective teachers for the school division's personnel department. One principal had previously worked in the personnel department, so she stated that she'd had "first-hand" experience with the process. In addition, this principal had, as a teacher, taught her students a unit on pre-employment skills. This was reflected in her questions since she had a larger percentage (14.4%) of situational questions than any other principal. She was also one of the principals who did not ask closed questions.

Nevertheless, no principal had received formal training on aspects of interviewing such as open-closed questioning, structured vs. unstructured interviews, telegraphing responses, using rating sheets, etc. One principal did mention that she had attended an in-service

meeting on types of questions to avoid. All principals felt that additional training would be beneficial, although one person believes training in itself is not sufficient.

Question 8: As an interviewer, can you reach a decision to recommend to hire or to reject within a few minutes? Why or why not?

The seven principals unanimously stated that they could make a decision about an interviewee within a matter of minutes, although the average length of the interviews was 22.3 minutes. According to one principal, “This wouldn’t be difficult if the interviewee makes comments such as, ‘I will be leaving the area in a few weeks’ or ‘I’m only interviewing for the experience.’ Comments like these indicate that the person had no real interest in the job.” Other principals stated that while they could make the decision early, they preferred to go through the entire interview so that they could feel more comfortable with their final decisions. (see Tables 33-37.)

Question 9: Should an interviewee go through the entire interview if it is obvious that s/he is having difficulty answering initial questions satisfactorily? If no, under what conditions should the interview be curtailed?

As an issue of fairness, all principals felt that all interviewees are entitled to the entire interview, although one principal said she would “abbreviate” the interview once she determines that the interviewee’s poor performance is not due to nerves. Perhaps this view is reflected in two of her three interviews, since two of the shortest interviews (eight and nine minutes, respectively) were conducted by this principal. Another principal said that

sometimes interviewees need help, so she “makes adjustments” by explaining her questions more or by providing examples of what she’s looking for. Still another principal stated that, “It’s only fair to complete the interview, but if I feel the candidate is not worthy, I do not go into the depth of the normal interview.” The only other female in this study said that she would complete the interview because she had seen people “redeem themselves with a little more time,” although she also said she would curtail the interview if she found the interviewee to be “bigoted” or “unqualified for the position.”

Question 10: Do nonverbal interactions during the interview influence your decision to recommend to hire or not to hire? If yes, give examples.

Six of the seven principals said nonverbal interactions during the interview do indeed influence their decisions not to hire. For example, if interviewees can’t maintain eye contact, don’t appear to be relaxed, don’t smile, and don’t exhibit good posture, then they might be rejected by these interviewers. One principal explained that she would be influenced not to hire someone “who only talks to the floor because we are not trying to teach the carpet.” Also, another principal believes that if an interviewee smiles and appears relaxed, then he or she will probably be able to do the same thing in front of students. Only one principal said that nonverbal interactions had “no influence” at all on his decisions.

Question 11: Please check one of the following statements to indicate how you would rate the amount of influence given to the interview when making a final decision to recommend to hire an individual. Are you

strongly influenced?



somewhat influenced?

mildly influenced?

not influenced at all?

Six of the principals said that they are strongly influenced by their interviews. One principal said he was somewhat influenced. One of the six principals who would be strongly influenced by the interview also said she would be interested in the interviewee's scholastic record and the recommendation from the personnel department.

Question 12: Would you select the same person if you were to interview today?

Responses indicated that the majority of the principals are comfortable with their decisions because they would still hire the same person four months after the interviews (the time at which the questionnaires were sent out). Comments ranged from a simple "Yes" to "Absolutely, [A1] is doing a wonderful job as a beginning teacher. I am very pleased with his performance." Another principal commented as follows: "Yes, [B4] has impressed everyone, especially since this is his first year of teaching. There is artwork all over the halls; now this is a novelty. He actually teaches art. In addition, he attends most school functions." One principal hired two persons for two like positions. (Both interviews were included in this study.) While she stated she was pleased with one of her decisions, she had subsequently questioned herself as to "why" or "how" did she make the decision to hire the other person. The interviews were conducted the same for these two interviewees, although the "questionable" interviewee (now counselor) was asked more questions about prior guidance

experiences, since she was one of two persons who were working as counselors at the time of the interview. The other four interviewees were teachers seeking counseling positions.

Question 13: Did you involve others (e.g., assistant principal(s), teacher, department head, etc.) during your taped interviews? Why or why not?

Four of the seven principals said they did not involve others during their taped interviews. Reasons for conducting the interviews solo ranged from time constraints, no one else available, to one principal who said he wanted to use the same criteria for each candidate, which he did. Only one question about coaching was asked of one other male interviewee that was not asked of the other four persons interviewed by this principal. The three female principals who did conduct a panel interview in their respective schools all said they were looking for a different perspective and also viewed this as an opportunity to provide interview training for their assistant principals. As one principal wrote, “2 [two] heads are better than one.” One male principal who conducted all his interviews alone said that conducting them that way was not the standard thing with every interview. In the past he had brought in department heads or assistant principals.

Question 14: Were there other reasons why you selected the person you chose? In other words, did you select this person solely to fill a teaching vacancy, or was s/he selected to fill other needs within your school?

Five principals stated the vacancy was filled because of the person’s perceived competence in subject area, not to handle extra-curricular activities. Two principals said that while they did not hire any of the interviewees included in this study to do anything other

than teach, if there had been sponsorships, coaching needs, etc., then these would have been considerations for whoever was ultimately hired.

### Practices Used During Principal Interviews

In addition to the analysis of the interview questions used by principals, the study was also designed to scrutinize some interview practices employed by principals while they were actually conducting the interview. As presented in Chapter 2, the researcher listed several practices that seven experts in the field of personnel management have included in their writings as practices that effective interviewers should follow. The following table is a listing of all these practices with indicators as to which of the seven principals employed the practice. Included also in this table is the number of the seven experts who support use of each numbered practice. Principals' use of a practice was determined by the researcher from listening to the interview tapes and from reading the responses given to the E-mailed questionnaire. The researcher made these decisions using her judgment and as much objectivity as possible.

Table 32

Effective Interview Practices Used by All Principals

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Experts (combined)
1. has received formal training in interviewing	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	6/7
2. uses a set of standard questions that are asked of all applicants	no	no	no	no	no	no**	no	6/7
3. determines the relevance of an applicant's experience and training in terms of the demands of a specific job	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	6/7
4. states the purpose and format of the interview	yes	yes	yes	no	yes	yes	no	6/7
5. conducts the interview in a set time period	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	5/7
6. probes for clues to behavior to develop a picture of strengths and shortcomings	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5/7
7. appraises the applicant's personality, motivation, and character	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5/7
8. is mindful of EEO considerations	yes	no	yes	no	yes	yes	yes	4/7
9. takes notes or records the interview	yes	*	yes	*	*	yes	*	4/7
10. conducts interviews in a pleasant environment	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	4/7
11. develops rapport with the interviewer by using small talk, calculated pause, facial expressions, reinforcement, or playing down unfavorable information	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	5/7
12. searches for unfavorable information	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	4/7
13. evaluates applicant's mental ability in the absence of aptitude tests	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	3/7
14. includes on the interview panel both the department head and another teacher from the same discipline as interviewee	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	3/7
15. does only 15% of the talking; allows interviewee to do the majority of the talking	yes	yes	no	no	no	yes	yes	2/7
16. presents a favorable image of the school district	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	2/7
17. uses techniques of control of interview (e.g., through use of an interview guide or interruptions)	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	yes	2/7
18. uses a rating sheet	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	2/7
19. is mindful of his/her own biases	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*
20. puts interviewees at ease; sees this as an important skill	yes	yes	yes	no	no	yes	no	1/7

(table continues)

	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	Experts (combined)
21. asks the interviewee to demonstrate a lesson	no	no	no	no	no	no	no	1/7
22. uses probes or follow-up questions to pre-planned questions	sometimes	sometimes	sometimes	sometimes	no	none asked	yes	1/7

\*no way to determine from tapes or transcripts

\*\* tape ended

### Chapter Summary

The purpose of Chapter 4 was to analyze and present data collected about the interview questions and practices of the seven principals included in the study. Like the analysis of data, this summary is divided into two phases: Phase I (summary of taped interview questions) and Phase II (questionnaire responses and assessment of practices used by principals). Research questions were first stated in Chapter 2 and are repeated here with a response or brief summary of the findings.

#### Phase I (Summary of Principals' Taped Interview Questions)

Research Question 1: What is the content of the interview questions asked and are these questions open-ended or closed?

Twenty-four categories of meaning resulted when all content areas for the seven principals were combined. In some instances, similar content areas were listed together (see Table 17). Of these 24 content areas, educational background was the largest with a total of 137 questions being asked by all principals. This is equal to 16% of the total of 844 questions that were asked of the 30 interviewees included in this study. With 110 total questions being asked, instructional strategies/guidance procedures was the second largest category (13%). The third largest category, with 91 questions being asked (9.5%), was

personal information/personal qualities. In most instances, questions asked from this area involved having the interviewee to describe qualities about himself/herself and to relate these qualities to being a good staff member. The number of questions from the other 21 categories ranged from 1 (expectation of job) equal to 1% to 80 (prior work experiences) equal to 9.36% (see Table 17). With regard to open-ended or closed questions, 43 (20%) of the 844 questions asked were considered closed. Of the 43 occurrences where closed questions were asked, there were twenty instances when follow-up questions were asked by the interviewers.

Research Question 2: What categories (classifications) of questions are asked?

With regard to the six categories of questions asked by all principals, the largest category of questions was found to be factual knowledge; 365 questions (43%) of total interview questions comprise this category. Cognitive ability followed in the number of questions asked with a total of 240 (28%) questions posed. Professional opinion was the third largest group of questions with a total of 121 (14%) questions being asked. Problem-solving, role play, and synthesis were the smallest categories with the number of questions asked totaling 46 (5.40%); 14 (1.65%); and 6 (0.71%), respectively. A more complete analysis is found in Table 18.

Research Question 3: Do principals in this study consistently ask the same questions of all interviewers?

No principal covered every content area with each interviewee, although most content areas were covered by all principals. In most instances, the number of omitted

questions was minimal. For example, one interviewer asked an interviewer to state her phone number, although no other interviewees were asked to provide this same information. Another principal asked one male interviewer about coaching football while no female interviewees were asked that question or any other questions about coaching. Still another principal told only one of his two female interviewees that the math position she was interviewing for might be tied to a cheerleading sponsorship. With one principal, the tape ended, thereby eliminating from data collection one question which was asked of the other five persons she interviewed. Were it not for this missing question, all content areas would have been covered, although the number of questions for each area still varied.

Research Question 4: Why do principals ask the questions they ask during their interviews?

From principals' responses to the questionnaire, the answers to this question varied based upon what the principal saw was important. Different qualities (in a teacher) were sought by principals. For instance, principals said they were looking for teachers who are enthusiastic, energetic, intelligent, communicative, and knowledgeable in content areas.

Interestingly, however, principals' and interview questions did not necessarily reflect what they said they were looking for, although the above qualities were listed in response to Question 1 of the questionnaire that was E-mailed to principals. A quality that all said was important, and which was reflected in their teacher interview questions, was the teacher's ability to be a team player. All seven principals asked at least one question aimed at

ascertaining the perspective teacher's ability to work with others.(Percentages for this content area were combined from "Personal info/qualities" and "Teacher/staff/principal relations"). Also, when asked what they thought they had focused on when interviewing the prospective teachers, principals responded that they asked questions that gave them insight into areas such as the future employee's perceptions of his/her job responsibilities, prior teaching experiences, teaching strengths/weaknesses, school and community relations, classroom management skills, and personal qualities of the interviewee.

Research Question 5: What is the relationship between the number of interviewees and interview time?

Interview times varied among interviewers from a short 8 minutes to a lengthy 40 minutes. A total of 670 minutes total time was spent interviewing the 30 interviewees in this study. The mean interview time was 22.3 minutes. If principals set a specific time in which to conduct their interviews, it was not evident from their recorded times. For example, one principal who interviewed three persons did so according to the following times: 8, 9, and 25 minutes. Interviewees selected for the positions averaged only a few seconds more time per interview than those not selected; yet, those selected were asked an average of four questions more than the non-selected interviewees (see Tables 33-37). It must be noted here that the time devoted to the interview session was different from the time devoted to the actual interview questioning. In some instances, interviewees brought to the interview portfolios which were reviewed during the interview session, although any questions asked



about these portfolios were not included in the question analysis, particularly since not every interviewee brought materials to be viewed.

Research Question 6: Does the principal employ any interview practices deemed effective by personnel experts?

To determine the answer to this question, the researcher relied upon what she could discern from listening to the interview tapes and from reading the principals' E-mailed responses to the questionnaires. Of the twenty-two practices of effective interviewers, the principals in this study unanimously employed or demonstrated use of seven practices, which are as follows: determines the relevance of an applicant's experience and training in terms of the demands of a specific job; probes for clues to behavior to develop a picture of strengths and shortcomings; appraises the applicant's personality, motivation, and character; develops rapport with the interviewee by using small talk, calculated pause, facial expressions, reinforcement, or playing down unfavorable information; evaluates applicant's mental ability in the absence of aptitude tests; presents a favorable image of the school district; and uses techniques of control of interview (e.g., through use of an interview guide or interruptions). More detailed information can be found by reviewing Table 32.

Table 33

Group Interview Times for All Interviewees

Time (minutes)	n=30	% of n	Total minutes	Within group mean (minutes)
0 to 9	2	7	17	8.5
10-20	13	43	225	17.3
21-30	11	37	284	25.8
over 30	4	13	144	36.0
Total	30	100	670	

Almost half the 30 interviewees (43%) were interviewed in under eighteen minutes. Eleven (37%) averaged almost twenty-six minutes for the interview. The two shortest interviews were conducted in eight and nine minutes, both by the same principal. Therefore, 87% or 26 interviewed in less than thirty minutes. The four persons who were interviewed for more than thirty minutes were allowed ten minutes more interview time than 87% of all interviewees.

Table 34

Group Interview Times for Interviewees Selected for Positions

Time (minutes)	N=30 Interviewed	Selected	% of n	Total minutes	Within group mean (minutes)
0 to 9	2	0			
10-20	13	5	16.6	91	18.20
21-30	11	2	6.6	52	26.00
over 30	4	1	3.3	40	40.00
Total	30	8	26.5	183	22.87

Of the thirty people interviewed, eight were selected for positions. While there were only seven principals included in the study, one principal filled two positions and both were included in this study. Five of the thirty (17%) were, on the average, interviewed in under twenty minutes. Two persons (7%) averaged less than thirty minutes per interview. One person interviewed in exactly forty minutes, which was more than twice the average amount of time spent interviewing over half the people chosen to fill the vacancies. No one selected was interviewed in less than ten minutes.

Table 35

Comparison of Time used to Conduct All Interviews and Number of Questions Asked

Time (minutes)	N=30	No. questions asked	Percent of total questions
0 to 9	2	41	5
10-20	13	327	39
21-30	11	295	35
over 30	4	181	21
Total	30	844	100

As noted in this table, 80% (24 interviewees) were interviewed for more than 9 minutes but for less than 30 minutes.

Table 36

Comparison of Time Used to Conduct Interviews of Those Selected and Number of Questions Asked

Time (minutes)	N=8	No. questions asked	Percent of group questions
0 to 9	0		
10-20	5	125	50
21-30	2	56	22
over 30	1	69	28
Total	8	250	100

The majority (7) of those chosen to fill the vacancies interviewed longer than nine minutes but for no more than thirty minutes; only one person selected interviewed for more than 30 minutes. Also, when compared to the total number of questions asked of all interviewees (N=844), this Table 36 shows that 250 questions or 30% of all questions asked were directed to the eight persons selected to fill the vacancies. This means that the average number of questions asked of 22 interviewees was 27, whereas the average number of questions asked of those selected was 31.

Table 37

Comparison of Times Used to Conduct Interviews for Those Not Selected and Number of Interview Questions Asked

Time (minutes)	N=22	No. questions asked	Percent of group questions	Percent of total questions
0 to 9	2	41	7.0	4.85
10-20	8	202	34.0	23.90
21-30	9	239	28.3	28.30
over 30	3	112	19.0	13.27
Total	22	594	88.3	70.32

Minus the 250 questions asked of the eight persons selected for positions, 594 questions were asked of the other 22 persons interviewed but not selected. Seventy percent (594 questions) of the total 844 questions asked were directed toward these 22 people. Therefore, the average number of questions asked of them was 27.

## Phase II (Summary of Questionnaires)

The fourteen questions asked via the principal's questionnaire revealed that while all principals may be looking for different characteristics/qualities in prospective teachers, all are trying to discern during the interview that person who will be a team player with good interpersonal skills. Personality is one aspect of the interviewee make up that interviewers were interested in. Subsequently, some principals devised questions which were intended to help them uncover some facets of the interviewee's personality.

To help them themselves conduct the interview more effectively, six of the seven stated that they prepare questions in advance of the interview. The focus of the interview questions varied according to what was important to the interviewer. For instance, if past performance was thought to be an indicator of future performance, then questions were framed to gather that information.

With regard to formalized training on how to interview properly, no principal had received any such training, although some had observed others when they themselves had been assistant principals. Interestingly, these interviewers, sans training, said they could reach a decision about an interviewee within a few minutes, although most would continue the interview unless there were clear indications that the interviewer was really not interested in securing the job (i.e., interviewing for the practice only, leaving the area soon) or was not qualified for the position (e.g., wrong certification/endorsement area).

Nonverbal interactions were considered by six of the seven principals and would be considered as reasons for the interviewees' not being hired i.e., if they don't sit up, don't look directly at the interviewer, or don't smile.

As an indication of the confidence in their interviews and the decisions based on them, principals stated in six of seven cases that they are strongly influenced by the interview when making a decision, and they would make the same decision to hire the person selected were they to conduct the interview again with the same interviewees. Five principals also indicated that the person they chose was selected based on that person's perceived ability to perform as a teacher, not as someone to teach and work with extra-curricular activities. Lastly, most principals who did not include others in on the interview (e.g., assistant principals, department heads, same discipline teachers, etc.) said the only reason others were not included was because of time constraints.

Lastly, a comparison was made of those practices used by principals in the study and those practices deemed effective by experts in the field of personnel management. The use of specific practices and the comparisons among principals can be found in Table 32.