FACTORs INFLUENCING PROMOTION FROM ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL TO PRINCIPAL AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL EXPERIENCES HELPFUL TO NEW PRINCIPALS

By

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Factors Influencing the Promotion of Assistant Principal to Principal and Assistant Principal Experiences New Principals Find Helpful

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(ABSTRACT)

This study analyzes the factors that influence promotion from assistant principal to principal and examines experiences that principals new to their position considered helpful to them from their assistant principalship. The participants in the study were new secondary principals in Virginia in 1992-93. A review of the literature revealed a need to examine promotion factors that are pivotal in selecting one principal candidate over another. The study method consisted of the development of a survey instrument based on the information found through the literature review, principal center criteria and results of an earlier independent study by the researcher questioning administrators regarding their work. The data collected by the survey was analyzed using descriptive statistical procedures. The following summary findings are reported: leadership, problem solving ability, organization, sensitivity, professional reputation, and willingness to
move were the promotion factors considered to be most important for promotion. The assistant principal experiences considered most valuable were substitute teachers, student discipline and teacher evaluation. Additional study results include a comparison in importance of selected career and personal goals to participants at the time they began their teaching career and the time they began their administrative career.
To my husband, David, for all his support and patience throughout this endeavor.
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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The selection of a new principal is the topic of "endless review and gossip in board rooms, teachers' lounges and parent coffees" (PDK Hot Topics Series, 1963, p. 218). According to Baltzell and Dentler, the prevailing practice for selection takes little time and effort and lacks criterial specificity, and thus it opens the way for widespread reliance on local practices (Holliday, 1990, p. 15). Although principal selection is of critical importance to the well-being of the school, the qualifications and requirements for selection are often vague and varied. This ambiguity presents difficulties for those who wish to be promoted to the principalship and those who must make the selection. In spite of the importance of this pivotal position in the school, meager information is available in the literature on the topic of selection for the principalship (Greenfield, 1985).

What is known about the principalship is that most of the candidates for promotion come from the ranks of assistant principals. These assistant principals come prepared with varied experience in administration and varied levels of education beyond the master's degree. Both experience and education are normal requirements for the principalship, as stated in vacancy announcements. However,
beyond these requirements little else is clear-cut in the process. Many aspiring principals report the process of selection as random. Some indicate surprise upon being selected from a field of candidates, whereas others believe there is a series of hurdles that need to be overcome. Having surpassed the hurdles, they anticipate their selection. Others see certain keys as unlocking the door to promotion. They consider that selection hinges on "who you know," while others believe that the key to selection is "doing a good job." Further, there are few signposts or guidelines along the way that help candidates determine which strategies are useful and which are not (Greenfield, 1985).

The Problem

In the face of the lack of knowledge about selection criteria for principals, there is a pressing need to identify and select "qualified" individuals in unprecedented numbers. According to Paston (1992, p. 32) as many as 70 percent of today's school administrators will retire in the next 10 years. Thus, record numbers of job opportunities will become available. This need should be welcome news to those aspiring to the position, but, future candidates will need more than ever to demonstrate competence in a variety of areas (Holliday, p. 13).
The increased need to carefully select qualified persons, the increasing standards required of qualified persons, combined with the elusive nature of the selection process, present a challenge to those who do aspire to the principalship, most of whom come from the ranks of assistant principals (Marshall, p. 9). Marshall (1992) points out that the assistant principalship is a major recruitment position for the principalship and other administrative positions. While experience as an assistant principal is not universally required for gaining a principalship, it is the most common pathway to the position (Pellicer 1988). He states further that success as an assistant principal was perceived as important or very important by 71 percent of first year principals and 69 percent of the total sample in his study. On the other hand some question whether the experience of assistant principal adequately prepares individuals for the principalship. Koru's (1989) findings suggested that the socialization processes in the assistant principal role are "dysfunctional" as preparation for leadership roles of greater responsibility, such as the principalship. Drury (1993) citing Kelly (1987) and Panyuko and Rorie (1987) also believe an assistant principal position is not necessarily the best preparation for the principalship. Assistant principals spend most of their time on tasks they will not be directly responsible for as
principals—such as supervising buses, cafeterias, lockers, sports events, buildings and grounds, and disciplining students. They spend limited time on duties for which they will be responsible as principals. It is clear from the literature that the contributions made by the assistant principalship in acquiring the position of principal remain ambiguous at best.

The important question with respect to the assistant principalship is simply "are there identifiable factors that influence the promotion from assistant principal to principal"? Also of interest is the identification of factors of experience that are useful to the practicing principal. Considerations that bring focus to the problem of identifying the factors that determine promotion from assistant principal to principal are:

1. Insufficient information available for those seeking the principalship and those selecting principals.

2. The seemingly random nature of selection as seen by aspiring principals.

3. Lack of formal selection procedures for principalships in many of the nation's school systems.

4. Increasingly complex nature of the school principalship.

5. The need to not only hire new principals for newly created positions, but the need to fill the vacancies
created by unprecedented concurrent retirement of existing principals (Greenfield, 1985; Holliday reporting Mero, 1984; Paston, 1992).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify factors that may influence promotion from the position of assistant principal to principal and to identify assistant principal experiences that may be helpful to the individual new to the principalship. In addition it examines career and personal goals of new principals. The study identifies recognized factors influencing promotion of the assistant principal to principal and prioritizes promotion factors according to reported practice. It differentiates existing promotion procedures and determines those promotion factors considered to be important by the study population in obtaining promotion to principal. Finally, the study identifies assistant principal experiences that study participants reported to be most helpful to new principals.

The following research questions were addressed by this study:

1. What skills and knowledge factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to the principal?
2. What personal characteristics are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

3. What other important factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

4. Who is perceived by new principals to be most important in the promotion of an assistant principal to the principal?

5. What factors are perceived by new principals to stand in the way of promotion from assistant principal to principal?

6. What other experience factors are perceived by new principals to be important in the selection of assistant principal to principal?

7. What assistant principal experiences are useful to the new principal?

8. What are the career and personal goals of new principals?

**Delimitations**

1. The principals surveyed in this study were all employed in the Commonwealth of Virginia.

2. Surveys were mailed to newly appointed principals in Virginia.
3. All principals who participated in this study were new principals.

Limitations

Some individuals receiving questionnaires in the study did not respond. Therefore, study results might have been affected. Moreover, because the study subjects were from school districts in the Commonwealth of Virginia, the results must be cautiously generalized to school systems elsewhere.

Definition of Terms

1. Assistant principal: Person who is certified as a school principal by the state and is assigned to an administrative position in a school where he or she serves under the principal’s authority.

2. Principal: Person who is certified by the state as a school principal and currently serves in this role.

3. Selectors: While the ultimate decision maker for principal identification is the school board, the term selector for this study will be the individual who brings forward the recommendation to the school board.

4. Principal assessment centers: Centers where administrative candidates’ skills are evaluated along 12 skills dimensions as they work on activities (Marshall, 1992).
Summary

Because there will be a large turnover of school principals in this and the next decade, and because of the importance of the principal in the increasingly diverse and demanding environment of the school, there was a need to identify, prepare and select well qualified and capable individuals for the position. While it is true that many seek the principalship, there is little information in the literature to indicate to an assistant principal aspiring to the principalship what characteristics, skills, and qualities make the difference between remaining an assistant principal and being promoted to principal. The literature provided information on training programs and on assessment centers, a growing reality in examining an individual's administrative behavior on a list of twelve parameters, but there are no studies on the subtle factors that enable one aspiring assistant principal to be selected and another one, seemingly equally qualified, not to be selected. It was the need to determine selection factors for individuals seeking the principalship, the need to determine selection practices for those in positions to make selections, and the need for those in charge of educational administrative preparation programs to know factors that determine selection that were addressed in this study.
Organization of the Study

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter I provides an introduction, background, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, limitations, need for the study, definition of key terms, and organization of the study. Chapter II provides a review of the literature on assistant principalship as preparation for principalship, on the nature of the assistant principalship and the principalship, and on selection procedures for promotion to the principalship. Chapter III provides a description of the methodology and procedures used for the study. Chapter IV describes the findings of the study. Chapter V provides a summary of the data, conclusions and recommendations.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of the literature summarizes extant information pertinent to this study and it provides information about the assistant principalship and the principalship. It includes information on recognized factors influencing promotion of the assistant principal to principal, gives a prioritized view of promotion factors that operate in existing practice, provides information on existing promotion procedures, indicates assistant principal experiences that new principals believe were helpful to them in taking on their principalship, and provides information on principal assessment centers.

According to Alexander (1988) ordinarily the literature review of previous work done in a field helps the researcher clarify the focus for the present study. In the case of this study the literature review of studies about educational administration did not provide a knowledge base about promotion in the field. What the review did produce was background information: thus the search of the literature by its very absence of specific information on promotion factors served as a directional device toward the study topic. Greenfield (1985) pointed out that studies of school principals generally either examine relationships between
administrative performance indicators and organizational process and outcome variables, or gather descriptive data regarding their day-to-day work activities. McNeely (1989) cites Cornett (1982) stating that principals selection remains an unsystematic, undocumented process.

Background

During the present decade large numbers of America’s school principals are going to retire (Richardson, 1989; Alexander, 1988). These retirements suggest excellent opportunities for people aspiring to principalships. They also pose some complex problems for the institutions involved in preparation programs, and for local, state, and national school administrator associations. The next few years will offer an unparalleled opportunity to develop a close linkage between school and university personnel. As a result the need for an improvement in preparation for and identification of candidates for these principalships exists (Doud, 1989).

Because the next generation of principals will be the educational leaders of the next century, their influence is vitally important. It will impact the kind of society in which we live for a long time. Therefore, the methods employed in selecting them are critical to the future of education and to its outcome (Office of Research and Improvement, 1987).
Greenfield (1985) states that there is little in the literature that explains the administrative career in education or the dynamics of working in and administering schools. Among the 123 citations identified in the ERIC search, only 23 were informed by theory. Within that subset, only five appeared to researchers to contribute knowledge regarding the role, career, and work of assistant principals. The assistant principalship is seen as a necessary step to achieving higher administrative positions, including the principalship; hence the assistant principalship is closely bound in importance to the principalship. It is often upon the performance at the assistant level that promotion to the principalship is based. As a result, knowledge regarding the career path of the assistant principal on the way to the principalship is needed (Marshall, 1992; Valentine, 1981).

The gaps in knowledge concerning the factors that influence the promotion to the principalship are due in part to the subtle nature of the human characteristic variables of which educational research is comprised. Additionally, little information on the topic of personnel selection with regard to promotion to the principalship is available. Re-examination of the whole process of administrative promotion is recommended (Holliday, 1989; Alexander 1988). Greenfield (1985) says, "There is no substitute for thick
description when the object is basic understanding of social processes and the attendant contextual and structural variables mediating social behavior (p. 13)." He also states that there has been very little study of the educational administrative career. Thus, more research is needed to examine what happens to those who enter educational administration regarding mobility and reaching a plateau at various career stages (Bridges, 1965; Mascaro, 1973; McCabe, 1972; Greenfield, 1985).

Marshall (1992) describes the administrative grapevine --conversations, asides, gossip, phone calls within and among districts--as a source of key information and a referral function in selection of administrators. Incumbent administrators hold common assumptions about attitudes, background, and skills for aspiring administrators. They share their assessment of candidates through this grapevine. This grapevine is probably the most powerful assessment and selective structure in the school system. Freed from the fear of legal reprisals that come from putting works on paper, administrators gossip. Their observations, combined with their values and biases, are used by selection committees as they select the top and successful candidate. This is the "old boys' network (p. 34)."
Career Path

In the careers of most people promotion and demotion represent changes in status within an organization and are important events in their work life. Careers are more satisfying if they are higher in prestige, income, and power. Generally reasons for changing careers are to obtain more meaningful work; find a better fit of values and work; or simply seek change for greater achievement. Educators assessing the desirability of changing to administrative careers will observe the tasks, functions, status, satisfactions, and stresses of those in administrative roles. (Gattiker 1988; Gattiker 1988 reporting Rosenbaum; Robbins, 1980; Marshall, 1992).

In the literature, career stages have been conceptualized in various ways. One such conceptualization refers to stages or positions and the status that accompanies each of the stages. These stages are: (a) pre-entry, (b) early, (c) middle, (d) late, and (e) retirement. Most of the literature concentrates on the pre-entry and entry stage perspective; the other stages remain virtually unstudied (Schein, 1978).

In education, categories of orientation to the assistant principalship were identified from case studies to assist in understanding the career process. These categories were: (a) The upwardly mobile assistant
principal: a person who has developed a highly useful and active network of colleagues in professional organizations. This individual values loyalty to superiors and demonstrates a willingness to take risks. A "sponsor" has influenced in assisting their career goals. (b) The career assistant principal: This person does not wish to be a principal, but has created a pleasant working environment with preferred task assignments, good relations with higher administrators, and enough authority to view his or her position with pride. (c) The plateaued assistant principal: This individual would like a promotion to principal, but has applied several times and been rebuffed. No opportunities have existed for his or her advancement; such a person often lacks mentor assistance and good human relations skills. (d) The "shafted" assistant principal: This aspirant has fulfilled criteria for the upwardly mobile, but remains without a chance of promotion often due to the loss of a sponsor’s help. A person may also be shafted by inappropriate placement, or district changes. (e) The assistant principal who considers leaving education: This assistant principal is young enough to develop an alternative career and may have other skills. The candidate may have management experience outside of education, and, (f) The downward-mobile administrator: Research shows a reverse career trend in some assistant principals moving from principal to
assistant principal, or to teacher or principal with decreasing responsibility. These reversals could be involuntary, following reduction in administrative staff due to budget cuts, or demotion due to a political mistake. Voluntary reversals in position were often requested by principals with health problems, or those who wished to return to a job with tasks they preferred (Marshall et al., 1992).

Greenfield (1985) says of a study by Austin and Brown that out of a sample of 419 former assistant principals, a majority did not stay in that position for an extended period of time. Three patterns were believed to be of note: Fifty-six percent of the urban respondents reported a late entry into administration (eleven or more years of teaching experience before their first assistant principalship) and an average departure time (four to ten years) as an assistant principal before moving on to a position of higher responsibility. Of those in the early entry/early departure group, all were men, 80 percent were 44 years old or younger, and two-thirds had doctorates or at least 45 hours of study beyond the masters level. The rapidly mobile assistant principals reported that they thought educational administration would provide them with opportunities to use their special abilities and aptitudes. These assistant principals were less likely to report the
significance of salary, status and prestige, security and a pleasant working schedule. They thought that these things: salary, "a foot in the door" of administration, and a desire for a chance to exert leadership provided the impetus for seeking the position.

In terms of career, many principals (54.4%) do not see their present position as representing their final career goal. However, most (84.3%) do want to stay in education. Those who were interested in staying in the principalship were characteristically found in small town and suburban schools enrolling from 400 - 600 students (Doud, 1989).

In a study of superintendents' career paths, Burnham (1989) found that of eight identified career paths, superintendents who were identified as more effective had not followed traditional patterns. Their paths were characterized by the absence of any building level administrative experience at either the assistant principal or principal level. Their path was teacher, high level central office position, superintendent. Conversely, the traditional short route to the superintendency, that of teacher, principal, superintendent, was more characteristic of the typical superintendents.

Career patterns for female principals and female assistant principals were similar in a study conducted by Mulbrandon (1985). For example, both groups possessed
similar levels of education and had assumed their administrative role after teaching in the district. A difference between the two groups, however, was that assistant principals aspired to another administrative position, whereas principals did not aspire to another administrative position. Principals in this study were younger with less overall experience than ten years ago.

The Principalship

The principalship emerged in the 1850s because of the increasing complexity of the school population and the organization of schools and curriculum (Patton quoting Wells and Nelson, 1965). Today schools are again facing increasing complexity. They must adopt new missions, structures and relationships to meet the changing school environment. Under these conditions school leaders must possess the skills to manage change. They must be able to work with diverse groups and have greater collaborative decision-making and problem-solving skills than were necessary in the past (Richardson quoting Zakaruja, 1983; Poston, 1992, National Commission on the Principalship, 1990).

Because of the emphasis placed on the principal to provide instructional leadership and expanded accountability for developing and sustaining productive schools, the role of the principalship has changed from that historically
practiced by most principals (Richardson, 1989). Moreover, principals have the critical role in school effectiveness and school improvement. At the same time, school boards and superintendents expect principals to implement administrative policy while teachers and students expect curriculum development and a supportive climate (McPhearson, 1982; McGiffin, 1988). As a result the principal is the most crucial position in the school system and has emerged as a key factor in the success of a school (Trump, 1987; Bass citing Berman and McLaughlin, 1978; Edmonds, 1979; Hale, 1979; Henthorne, 1980; Brookover, 1981).

Four job roles have been identified for effective principals (Poston 1992 citing Pull 1981): (a) Visionary--comprehensive mental model of effective schooling, goal setting and sharing, communicating the school’s academic mission, becoming an instructional change agent. (b) Facilitator--listening and affirming, coordinating teaching and assessment, grouping pupils for instructional purposes; depending on others. (c) Evaluator--monitoring instructional programs, gathering intelligence, assessing teacher performance in classrooms, scrutinizing student progress, and, (d) Improver--coping with weakness, staff developer, problem solver, training and modeling provider.
While these characterizations of the principal would suggest a super principal, others see the effective principal as one who engages in creative insubordination or one who is the coordinator of teachers as instructional leaders and not:

the principal as Rambo, leading a school up the path of glory. This concept—the principal as all knowing, all wise, and transcendent in vision, who can lead the staff development council, and the curriculum council, be an expert on group facilitation and organizational change, can spend 50 percent of his or her time in classrooms with uncanny analytical and conferencing abilities, deal with all manner of students, staff, parents and communities, plus fill out all necessary forms, run all the schedules, and take care of maintaining the air conditioning and furnace—this is an incomprehensible idea for supporting school reform.


The new style principal is not so much a superpower or super-competent person, but one who works to develop competent, problem-solving, followers. This principal teaches, coaches, encourages, and helps others to become effective in their work. Stuart Sampson, Director of Personnel, in the Jefferson County Public Schools in Louisville, Kentucky put it, "No one teaches the principal
how to do what he or she does. They learn it by the seat of their pants or by experience, or maybe they’re just good at it naturally, but it sure isn’t because they’ve had any formal training to deal with interpersonal conflict." However the principal role is viewed, it is more encompassing and complex than ever before. Selecting people to fill this role is of the utmost importance in determining how to find and recognize principals with those behaviors "built in" before employment (Phi Delta Kappa, 1983; Poston, 1992).

As Super (1957) asserted, there are four major needs for which satisfaction is sought in work: human relations, status, work, and livelihood (Williams, 1987). The principalship provides for these needs and requires a high level of development in each of these areas. Selection therefore, needs to be based on clearly defined criteria in each area.

In Nasser’s 1981 study the following factors were discovered:

1. The average age of principals was 43.3 years.
2. Sixty-four percent were married and twenty-seven percent were divorced, separated, or single.
3. Their average salary was $20,865.
4. Sixty percent of the principals had children above the age of fifteen years of age.
5. The principals’ average experience was five years and the assistant principals’ median was six years.

6. They had encouragement through their school administrators.

7. They perceived competence and intelligence as the most important factors in career progress.

8. Sixty percent of the population reported job satisfaction.

9. They reported that perseverance and organizational skills were their strengths and lack of training their weak point.

10. The percentage of women in secondary school principalships is not high.

11. Female principals find the most satisfying aspect of their job is student growth and high staff morale as well as respect for and recognition for the female principalship.

12. Factors leading to lack of satisfaction relate to bureaucratic confusion and ineffective and uncooperative people and groups associated with school programs (Fansher, 1984).

Studies of what principals do demonstrate that the majority of their time is spent in brief, unplanned, verbal interactions only distantly related to instruction. Principals have considerable autonomy with regard to assistant principals. They not only assign tasks but also
define the style of the working relationship between themselves and the assistant. When they see the assistant only as someone to do the undesirable tasks, they lose the opportunity to multiply administrative efficacy. Such a "mop-up" assistant principal merely supplements the work of the principal. However, principals who work as administrative teams with their assistants could multiply, not just supplement, their effectiveness (McNeely, 1989; Marshall, 1992).

The Need to Investigate Factors in Selection of Principals

As described in the previous section of this literature review, the principalship faces increasingly complex responsibilities in an increasingly intricate educational setting. Candidates for principalships will face more stringent selection procedures and standards than their predecessors, especially as pressure increases for principals to have greater collaborative decision-making and problem-solving skills (Paston, 1992, p. 32.). In addition to the increased sophistication and multi-faceted, pivotal nature of the principalship, there will be an increasing demand for individuals who can meet the challenges of this job. The increase in the demand is based on projected retirements in the ranks of existing principals. It is estimated that as many as 70 percent of the existing principals will retire within the next ten years. This will
create a record number of positions for which those interested in the principalship may apply (Paston, 1992, p. 32; Richardson, 1989).

The high number of retiring principals and societal pressures to hire more women and minorities will make attracting, identifying, and preparing future educational leaders of critical importance. As more administrator vacancies occur in the near future, the process of screening and selection will become a more significant concern to all school districts (Alexander, 1988; Richardson 1989).

In Virginia, 43 percent of high school assistant principals aspire to the principalship. About 15 percent prefer to remain in the assistant principalship and 20 percent would like to be assigned in some position to school division central offices. Over 17 percent expect to be retired within five years and the remainder reported that they would like to return to teaching, either at the high school or college level (Patton, 1987).

Another consideration concerning the need for more principals and for more careful selection procedures to meet that need, revolves around the crucial affect of the principal on the well-being of students. Poor principal selection can often destroy an entire decade of progress or hamper educational improvement for years. An ineffective teacher may damage a classroom of students for a year, but
an ineffective principal may damage an entire generation of young people. Beyond meeting minimum requirements, principals need to be selected "who appear likely to succeed on the job," not just fill a position (Richardson, 1989).

In addition to the importance of selecting individuals for the principalship who are qualified to promote the well being of students, it is equally important to find individuals who will gain enough satisfaction in the principalship that they will want to stay in the position and maintain stability and continuity. As Richardson (1989) says, "Continued turnover of top administration leads to problems with both teachers' and students' morale and decreases the efficiency of the individual school as well as the whole district (p. 6)."

The combination of the increased complexity of the schools and the increased need for more principals due to retirements during the 1990's speaks clearly to the need for careful selection procedures. The purpose of the selection procedure is to find the individuals who meet the established qualifications (Richardson 1989).

The selection procedures for choosing a principal, while increasing in importance, remains largely unsystematic and undocumented in most school systems throughout the country. Such considerations as local custom, "fit" and fitting in are believed to be primary, unidentified criteria
used in the process (Baltzell and Dentler, 1982; Cornett, 1982; McNeeley 1989).

According to Holliday (1989), systematic principal selection procedures were few in choosing new middle school principals in Ohio (Scholl, 1980). In Texas less than half of the districts in the study used a formal selection process (Williams, 1978). Selection procedures were not well-understood by those conducting the procedures or those candidates involved in the procedures. The usual methods of selection took little time and effort to formulate and Baltzell and Dentler (1983) said, "lack of criterial specificity opens the way for widespread reliance on localistic notions of 'fit' or 'image' which emerged as centrally important in almost every district. Even when there were specific notions of definite skills and qualities principals should exhibit, 'fit' criteria still came significantly into play.... Even among administrators who were able to definitely state their criteria, there was a constraint in terms of the local culture's 'image' of the principal."

According to Marshall, Schmidt (1990) verifies the lack of literature available that details procedures for selection of principals. McNeely points out that although there are new concepts of the principalship, there is little difference between new and old hires with regard to
preparation and experience. Hence, practices in selection have not changed.

Selection factors and procedures that are in practice are centered at the local level. While the practices vary greatly from jurisdiction to jurisdiction some patterns do exist. Studies on selection practices indicate that the superintendent and the school board frequently have decided on their choice for the position prior to the final interview (Cornett, 1983).

Some school districts have very formalized selection procedures such as selection committees comprised of teachers, administrators and parents and highly structured interviews that are used to narrow the field of candidates (Cornett, 1983). Some school districts develop a local pool of eligible candidates (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). Even when outside candidates are recruited for the purpose of expanding the pool, it is not unlikely that the outside candidate will have some connection with the inside network (Holliday, 1989).

Administrative districts that had more inclusive procedures were generally positive toward broader participation in the selection process (Holliday citing Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). Among the advantages of broader participation they cited were: (a) various constituencies have an opportunity to test the candidate;
(b) committee participation is a method of conflict control and management; (c) it is better to deal with duly chosen representatives of constituencies than with a mass of constituents; (d) allowing various constituencies to participate in the selection process can be a good way to win their support.

Holliday (1989) found, in a study on the selection of principals in public schools in Ohio, that superintendents are the key role players in selecting principals and that school boards depend on the superintendents for selections. References provided by other superintendents and administrators were highly influential as were personal interviews. Personal appearance and fit with local expectations of principals were also very influential.

Holliday reports in the 1978 Bryant, Lawlis, Nicholson, and Maker (1978) study that college and university placement bureaus were the leading source of candidates for principals. Proper business letter form was important when letters of application were considered, as was neat writing and grammatical correctness of letters.

Marshall (1992) points out that in the process of selecting and training individuals for administrative positions, organizations teach a person to "make decision by himself, as the organizations would like him to decide (March and Simon, 1958)." Individuals are socialized to
think and work within the status quo. People who raise questions and challenge the system are more likely to be viewed as misfits than as potential leaders. The question is what recruitment, selection, reward, and assessment system will require and support schools to include innovators, leaders of reform, builders of school community integration, and participatory managers?

The Assistant Principalship

The assistant principalship is designed to be a stepping stone to and a training ground for the principalship (Greenfield 1985 and Marshall). It rarely is a career goal in itself. Those assistant principals who were comfortable in the job and did not aspire to the principalship admitted two things in Marshall’s (1992) research review on the assistant principalship. They made conscious decisions to put their family first and to reject the time commitment required by the principalship. Most assistant principals perceive the position of assistant to be a transitional one in which to learn skills and prove oneself.

Hess (1985) suggests implications for superintendents and university preparation programs that there needs to be more effective utilization of assistant principals. He says that experience suggests that the position has evolved in a haphazard manner.
NASSP's Council on the Assistant Principalship (1991) in discussing the restructuring of the assistant principalship said that actualization of the dynamic and personal abilities of this key actor in the educational process is necessary. No longer should the assistant principal be given responsibility only for discipline and attendance; that assignment does not use the full capabilities of the individual.

Greenfield (1985) reports that the Austin and Brown investigation of three sub-studies tentatively concluded that the assistant principal was "pretty much the person who actually kept things going." Greenfield later reports that except for the work of McDonald (1981) and Reed and Connors (1982) relatively little is known about the conditions, substance and impact of the work of the assistant principal.

Some assistant principals have clear visions of where they want to move in the future, and set up a plan for systematically demonstrating as many skills as they can. While some consider the assistantship as training for the principalship, observation of the assistant principalship raises doubts for others that the tasks and roles in the assistantship allow them to develop competencies in curriculum leadership and teacher supervision (Marshall, 1985; Reed and Himmler, 1985; Marshall, 1992).
Hess (1985) states that it is clear that occupants of the position of the assistant principalship must have instructional qualification, through undergraduate and graduate level courses, as well as through classroom experience.... It is also clear that criteria for the selection of assistant principals must include training and experience in operations management. At the building level, such preparation can promote the development of supervisory, motivational and other skills required of this level.

Pellicer (1988) reports in a study on high school leaders and their schools that the principalship encompasses all the tasks and all the persons involved in organizing and administering a school. The assistant principal as a person and the assistant principalship as a role are integral parts of the principalship. Further, Pellicer says that the assistant principals is a vital part of the school administrative team. As schools attempt to serve a more complex student population, the assistant principal may well assume an increasingly important role in the functioning principalship.

Discussing evaluation of assistant principal, Iannacone and Podorf (1984) point out two developments that affect the standards of evaluation for assistant principals: (a) the tendency of the public to expect much more from school administrators than in the past, and (b) the assistant
principal's tendency to see their positions as permanent rather than temporary. According to these authors, the assistant principalship as it exists in practice is viewed as: (a) a response to, and therefore evidence of, improper organization and administration; (b) inadequately helpful or perhaps dangerously dysfunctional as a transition stage to an administrative career; and, (c) potentially harmful or at best only marginally useful to the schools' instructional accomplishment.

Iannaccone (1985) discusses two concerns about the work of the assistant principal: (a) absence of instructional responsibilities in the role and (b) the inadequacies of the role in preparing its occupants for the principalship and superintendency and, as well, facilitating career mobility into higher-level school administration. Although these two are not unrelated, indeed the second rests in large part upon the first, they are rooted in two different value contexts. The first concern reflects a focus on the school's instructional mission with its goals and outcomes. The second takes a somewhat different perspective. It views the assistant principal status as a transitional stage in a series of occupational stages within administrative career mobility systems anchored in classroom teaching and leading to the office of superintendent.
The assistant principal's daily work is described as predominantly proactive behavior to prevent disturbances and immediate responses to reduce and remedy such disturbances that do occur in the flow of activities. The role receives referrals from teachers in cases of disturbance within instructional units supervised by teachers (Iannacone reporting Greenfield, Marshall, and Reed and Hemmler, 1985).

Iannacone (1985) says implicit in the abbreviated description of the assistant principal position is the existence of many conflicts among the organizational participants in the school building. As indicated by the continuous activities of assistant principals to prevent disturbances, many potential conflicts are normally present. The next largest portion of the job appears to be remedying the disturbances that do arise.

In McElveen's (1989) study, while many similarities were found to exist between more and less experienced assistant principals, significant differences also existed between them. These differences were in the following areas: (a) actual and ideal job security; (b) delegated responsibility for school management; (c) four aspects of the job environment—results achieved, rapport with teachers, rapport with students, rapport with parents/community; and (d) career plans for the next three to five years.
Alexander (1988) recounts Iannacone and Podorf’s findings that the changes in our society, whether they be racial, economic, drug and substance abuse, the increase of one-parent families, the impact of technology, the effect of culture shock, tend to focus upon the individual who is chiefly concerned with matters of student behavior and discipline. The function of today’s assistant principal has certain unique qualities about it. Certainly, they say, there is a higher degree of stress associated with the position. They predict that the assistant principalship in the next five to ten years is about to undergo rather dramatic changes. The position will not continue to be a bridge to the principalship and it cannot continue to be a position that handles student misbehavior exclusively. Rather, as society changes and as the individuals holding the position change, we may expect the resulting changes in the position itself.

Alexander (1988) discusses Marshall’s 1985 presentation of field study research that addresses the socialization processes that the assistant principal undergoes as an aspiring administrator, and the processes that make an assistant principal successful and mobile within the organization. She states that from observations of the daily activities the descriptions of career progression and decision making there emerged a picture of the enculturation
tasks of assistant principals, the essential learning-to-be-administrator hurdles to be overcome. The analytic focus is on the process by which individuals learn how to fill the norms, interact with the right people, and have the appropriate attitude so that they are seen as competent and trusted members of the administrative group. Further, Alexander states that once a person begins to see opportunities for moving into administration she or he looks carefully at who else seeks and succeeds in attaining administrative positions. Sponsors and mentors and intensive interactions with incumbent administrators help candidates conduct this search; in some cases, aspiring administrators find role models. Aspirants take note of the qualities, skills, functions filled, and personal characteristics, background, and style of the people who are selected as opposed to those who are rejected for administrative positions. Culture shock is the term Marshall applies to conditions experienced by assistant principals as the enculturation process develops. Sources she lists as possible causes of cultural shock in the field study are conditions such as: (a) current principal’s incompetence and unprofessionalism, sexism, racism, plateauing; (b) overwhelming tasks, conflicting values; (c) favoritism, double standard, lack of academic emphasis; (d) political
fighting; (e) school tension due to radical changes in one year; (f) resistance to bureaucratic structures; (g) first woman to be line administrators in district; and, (h) overwhelming, time consuming tasks, details, lack of administrative power (p. 20). Marshall states that their sense of shock, the degree of stress from the shock, and the ways assistant principals find to maintain a front in face of this shock, may provide insights into the administrative culture. Marshall further states: The culture of administration is different enough to be a shock to new assistant principals. Assistant principals learn that they must not display this shock, must present a united front with other administrators (against teachers, students, parents, district office, even when their sense of professionalism conflicts with this front). "Covering" or finding ways to cope with that shock and continuing to appear competent, calm, and loyal are essential enculturation tasks. Prior administrative duties, getting help, continuous sponsorship, fairness (the absence of racism and sexism) and professionalism in the administrative culture affiliation with the district personnel, advice on how to manage one’s sense of shock, and signals that patience will be rewarded enable people to cope with culture shock.

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Apparently, both the profession and the public have greatly underestimated the complexity of the operations and instructional management tasks that are involved in the position of assistant principal (Hess, 1985).

Those selected to the assistant principalship are usually selected because of the success and visibility they enjoyed as teachers, department heads or counselors. It is the administrative candidate who conforms to work requirements and promotes tradition who is most likely to be selected for promotion. It is not surprising that many talented, innovative educational leaders are rejected for entry level administrative positions in the process. Many others with potential for creative educational leadership may look at the assistant principal position and decide not to enter administration. The need for good training and selection guidelines is a pressing policy issue. Questions about recruitment, selection, reward, and assessment systems that will require and support schools to include innovators, leaders of reform, builders of school-community integration, and participatory management face those responsible for educational leadership positions (Greenfield, 1982; National Policy Board, 1989a, 1989b; Silver, 1991; Thompson, 1988; Marshall, 1992).

Marshall (1992) states that each district and each school organization has its own norms and traditions. The
school culture imposes an uneven set of conditions, restraints, and even possibilities on each assistant principal. The working environment has a profound effect on the attitudes and aspirations of assistant principals.

According to the research reported by Marshall (1992), assistant principals have the opportunity to move up in their organization depending on their time in a position and their experiences. A continual series of decisions and the making of opportunities with precise timing is required as they move up the career ladder. Through socialization the assistant principal learns whether he or she has the right "fit" for the district's goal structure and image of a school administrator. Many women assistant principals observe differences in treatment from their male counterparts. Administrative careers develop in a mobility system. Sponsorship offers informal training and support to an assistant principal and provides advice and direction to the aspiring administrator.

Many assistant principals are appointed by upper-level management and then allowed to sink or swim, depending on the conditions in the district. Other assistant principals benefit from training provided by their principal. One principal who takes seriously the training of assistant principals includes three areas of concern in his selection. Beginning with the candidate's reaction to stress and
previous success in management or other work and sterling personal attributes. But he stresses that the selection of the assistant principal be deliberate and detailed (Marshall, 1992; Lindsay, 1985).

**Assistant Principal Internships**

Some believe that internships for the position of assistant principal are needed. These internships should include considerable amounts of evaluation. Individuals selected for these positions should have extensive involvement with professional, civic, or social organizations, preferably in leadership capacities. However, the essential guidelines for selection of these professionals appears to be instructional, operations management, and interpersonal qualifications, in a systematic and directed manner (Hess, 1985).

In an internship, the initial months of the program should include considerable orientation to the knowledge and skills required for the position. This phase must be followed by a second period during which the intern performs actual responsibilities of the assistant principalship within the local school district (Hess, 1985).

The assistant principalship should undergo extensive evaluation in an on-going manner in order to provide feedback, direction, and opportunity for growth and improvement. The principal should be in continual
communication with the assistant giving evaluative information in a formative manner. Information for evaluation should be provided from a variety of sources, including the principal's experiences, evidence of the assistant principal's performance in assigned tasks, and the reactions of teachers, students and other building personnel (Hess, 1985).

Iannaccone describes the assistant principal role as predominantly maintaining the school organization's steady rate. Hess citing Austin, Brown and Greenfield says the assistant principal is frequently perceived as "the man who makes the school go." In many districts the assistant principal walks a treadmill of endless operational tasks, a series of disconnected responsibilities that lack any unifying thread. This work entails a good number of important, although disconnected tasks. It may include student discipline, supervision of maintenance, development of reports, staff evaluation, all within the same working day (Hess, 1985, p. 63).

Alexander (1989) cited Greenfield and Spady on the issue of training for the assistant principal. The issue is complicated by limitations in the scope of the assistant principal position. They suggest a reconceptualization of the assistant principalship. Greenfield points out that the role of assistant principal is fairly ambiguous and oriented
primarily to serving the function of maintaining stability in the organization and that this function is only peripheral to instructional concerns.

The assistant principal is identified by one theme running consistently through the literature as predominantly maintaining the school organization’s steady state. That daily work is primarily a response to potential expansion of disturbances into major conflicts. This piece takes as its central point of view that ever-present danger is a core feature of the school site organization. It views the school as an American polity, a micro governance unit. The assistant principal’s socialization and role behavior is the window through which the essential features of this polity are seen and as the key security office in the school site. Schatschneider pointed out that governments exist, not because they are omnipotent--nor, one might add, because of the many beneficial services they can provide--but at bottom "because the world is a dangerous place to live (1975, p. 121)." The assistant principal exists because a school, too, is a dangerous place in which to live (Iannacone, 1985).

The position, Hess says, must also be structured around objectives that relate to the professional fulfillment and development of the individual who occupies it. Instructional leadership and operations management include a
variety of important administrative skills and competencies, that must be mastered by aspiring school professionals. If properly structured, an assistant principalship can make a critical contribution to the development of these skills (Hess, 1985).

From their positions that combine these forms of management, assistant principals should become effective resources for superintendents (who are also operations and instructional managers) as they plan, manage, and elevate programs. For the same reasons, the assistant principalship may become a useful training pool and proving ground for superintendency and other general management positions (Hess, 1985).

At the global level these objectives include meeting the needs of society by supporting the instructional process and serving the profession by functioning as an arena for the development of knowledge and skills (Hess, 1985).

Marshall (1992) asserts that the most powerful reward and incentive for most assistant principals probably lies in the possibility of using the position as a stepping-stone to administrative careers, particularly line positions as opposed to staff specialist positions. In school administrative careers, a common career route to the superintendency is that of teacher, secondary curriculum specialist, secondary principal associate superintendent and
then superintendent. The elementary principalship appears to be a dead end position while the secondary principalship provides opportunities for district-wide linkages (Carlson, 1972; Gaetner, 1980; Gallent, 1980; Ortez, 1982). Marshall (1992) goes on to say that many view the assistant principalship as a step up the career ladder. Few practicing administrators prefer to remain in the assistant principalship. The Austin and Brown study showed that between forty and fifty percent of all assistant principals advance to other professional posts. A minority (thirty-nine percent urban, twenty-nine percent suburban) of the respondents expected to make the assistant principalship a lifetime career when they entered the field, while a majority expected to be promoted within their own districts. This situation creates role dilemmas.

In the early 1970s a majority of assistant principals viewed their position as a necessary career step to achieving higher positions. However, when upward mobility is not possible, what happens to these people? Many assistant principals must face the reality that they will end their careers in the same position. Many entered their careers later in their work lives. Others are seen as particularly valuable in the position and hence will not be moved. Others are labeled as potentially troublesome if promoted; still others are viewed as "not fitting in" as
they defy the assumptive worlds. And in districts with declining enrollment there simply are no viable opportunities for advancement. Such realities are frequently faced with a sense of failure and frustration. Yet these realities continue to confront educators as they sense their careers reaching a plateau and the possibility of upward movement in the career becomes more and more remote (Marshall, 1992).

**Assistant Principals Promotion/Selection Factors**

Marshall, et al., (1992) stated that career timing and planning, and the ability to define situations in which one can successfully take limited risks are major factors that promote or inhibit mobility on the career ladder for the assistant principal. When positive factors such as opportunity for promotion, the sponsorship of a respected individual(s), demonstrated ability to handle tasks and remain calm in a crisis, and demonstrated desire for promotion, exist the assistant principal aspirant should be able to attain promotion to the principalship.

The principal is in control of the promotion to the assistant principalship. The principal provides opportunity for training experiences in the school as well as access to information sources and opportunities for visibility. The relationship of both teachers aspiring to the assistant principalship and assistant principals to the principalship
is vitally important in gaining the principal’s support and sponsorship (Valverde, 1980; Mitchell, 1987; Marshall, 1992).

Assistant principals frequently face moral and ethical decisions which demand choices that affect their careers. Failure to observe loyalty norms constitutes a social error that may prevent an assistant principal from advancing. Loyalty errors include failure to support the boss, defiance of district orders, or publicly questioning superiors. (Marshall, et al., 1992).

Mentors are considered to be helpful to administrators aspiring to promotion. Shelton (1992) found that 73 percent of administrators did not have a mentor when they moved into administration, 91 percent believed one would have been helpful and that they would have done a better job had they received such guidance. More females (54%) strongly agreed that having a mentor was helpful to them than males (44%). Females also reported being closer to mentors than did their male counterparts.

Selection Factors

Selection factors vary from school district to school district. Techniques and procedures are available and can be used to elicit evidence to determine whether or not candidates measure up to new role requirements.
Traditional techniques have usually included: evaluation of written applications (including transcripts), reference checks, and personal interviews. However, principals selection processes today are more complex, structured and comprehensive. When a school district is seeking the highest quality leadership, many additional factors should be considered. Comprehensive principal selection procedures are likely to contain such measures as:

1. Analyses of application material, including biographical data, experiential and preparation profiles, expressed interests and goals, and communication skills.

2. Written tests or questionnaires.

3. Evaluation of profiles designed to elicit leadership styles and decision making processes.

4. Assessment of oral responses to carefully structured interviews which have standardized, or normed responses.

5. Analysis of job samples or visits to actual job sites.

6. Analysis of specific skill or task demonstrations, such as in candidate evaluations of videotaped instructional segments which have been carefully assessed by qualified evaluators.

7. Large group interviews, with analysis of performance under stress.
8. Consultation with assessment experts and analysis of detailed assessment reports.


The evaluation of resumes is one of the most widely used selection techniques. A study conducted by Batchelor, Bedenbaugh, Leonard, and Hampton in 1987 investigated the importance of secondary principals' resumes. The findings of the study implied that candidates for the secondary principalship were considered as total individuals. The ability to relate to the external environment was found to be significant in this study (Holliday 1985). Whereas Bryant et al., (1978) found humanism to be the highest rated of the selection qualities of candidates for principals' positions even though defining the term humanism was elusive.

Holliday (1985) cites Baltzell and Dentler's findings that screening procedures for positions typically involved two or three steps. First, initial screening of resumes and applications served primarily to determine that minimal certification and experience standards had been met. Second, the paper screening was usually a formal screening interview. And third, the form of the screening varied. The interview might be conducted by a superintendent, personnel director, a team of central office administrators
or committees of teachers, parents, students or a combination of these groups. Committee control was usually concentrated in the hands of the superintendent. Holliday (1985) reported from the Baltzell and Dentler (1983) study that some school districts utilized a more inclusive approach to administrator selection. They said that among the advantages of broad based participation were: (a) various constituencies have an opportunity to test the candidate; (b) committee participation is a method of conflict control and management; (c) it is better to deal with duly chosen representatives of constituencies than with a mass of constituents; and, (d) allowing various constituencies to participate in the selection process can be a good way to win their support. Interview questions range from carefully constructed questions that are put to all candidates to freewheeling extemporaneous topics raised by any member of the committee. Interviewers tend to use questions not so much to get "right answers" as to test the interviewee’s reflexes in the areas of poise, self-confidence, and "fit" with local expectations. Screening committees generally summarize their responses to a candidate by numerical ratings or rankings, consensual agreements or open-ended discussion of candidates’ strengths and weaknesses. This information is then shared with the superintendent who is the final decision maker. The final
interviews typically belong to the superintendent. The importance of the screening interviews were very significant. This procedure assures a test of both merit and legitimacy.

Holliday (1989) also notes Gips and Bredeson (1986) reported that there is a very low level of teacher involvement in the process of selecting principals. They reported that administrators think that teachers are much more involved in the selection process of principals than they actually are.

In a dissertation study by Dailey (1989) relationships among targeted selection results, supervisors’ assessments and self-assessments in the selection of school administrators was conducted. The results included the following conclusions: (a) there was a demonstrated effect by level of education on the targeted selection scores in the areas of leadership, control and monitor and stress tolerance; (b) there was a demonstrated effect by the level of education on the supervisors’ rating in the area of leadership, control and monitoring, planning and organizing, adaptability and judgement; and (c) there was a demonstrated effect between level of teaching experience in the areas of stress tolerance as rated by the candidates’ self-assessment.
Holliday (1985) says that 85 percent of the respondents in the Bryant et al., study rated previous administrative experience as above average or highly important as a selection factor. Further, 89 percent said that having knowledge of administrative theory and principles was rated as above average or high. They drew the conclusion that university training in education administration was highly relevant.

Richardson (1989) asserts that in some selection situations candidates are assessed for employment based on "who will be effective contributors" to both school and organization goals. He also says that the selection process identifies candidates "who will be sufficiently motivated to achieve a high level of self development." Superintendents desire administrators who are self-motivated, with a clear sense of mission for both themselves and their school constituency.

In selection processes Richardson (1989) says job descriptions are crucial to any professional job, especially for educational administrators, especially as they provide the structure for the entire selection process.... Without an accurate job description potential principal candidates are unsure of the selection process, the job requirements, and are apprehensive about the school systems expectations. Further he says job descriptions also provide a benchmark
for candidate comparison. Potential principals can all be judged against common criteria, not some hypothetical rendition of "what should be." The job description should be explicit, organized, and an accurate reflection of duties and responsibilities assigned to the principal, including community, faculty, student and administrative expectations.

Richardson (1989) points out that many rural school districts do not attract the substantial number of applicants often present in large suburban school systems.... And, he goes on to say that advertisement is important. However, many school districts have negotiated employee contracts which either enhance or restrict the opportunity for advertising vacancies. He continues that once the pool of applicants has been identified, several tools can be utilized to gather information about the prospective principal. One such instrument he notes is an assessment of the education and administrative philosophy of the candidate.... Without an objective, written measure there is often an over-reliance on non-specific methods for determining "fit" (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983). There is a tendency in many school districts....to rely on personal perceptions of a candidate's physical looks, personal projection, and assertiveness rather than on objective measure of philosophical principles and identification of
personal and professional strengths and weaknesses (Buckler, 1987).

Perhaps more has been discussed and written about the oral interview than any other phase of the selection process (Donagly, 1984, p. 15). And yet, there is still immense concern regarding the inability of the oral interview to predict success on the job (Brannon, 1975). All personnel administrators and superintendents can share "war stories" about candidates who were brilliant in the interview, but bombed miserably as a principal (Baltzell and Dentler, 1983, p. 18). However, despite the obvious deficiencies, the interview remains "a cultural component of most selection procedures (Tengler and Jablin, 1983, p. 15)." Some researchers believe the popularity of the interview is connected to the tradition of indoctrination historically practiced by some superintendents. Others speculate that some superintendents continue to employ by using "gut level" perceptions about candidates rather than using more objective data. Whatever the reason, the interview continues to be the "bread and butter" approach with many school districts, particularly rural ones (Richardson, 1989, p. 18).

Assessment Centers

According to the Northern Virginia Regional Assessment Center at George Mason University, assessment centers are
widely used throughout business, government, and industry to identify and measure management potential. They provide valid and reliable information needed for making informed initial employment, placement, and professional development decisions.

Participants have an opportunity to show their skill and ability to plan and organize work, work with and lead others, analyze problems and make decisions, and communicate orally and in writing. Validation studies with entry-level candidates show an impressive relationship between ratings at an assessment center and performance on the job.

In the Northern Virginia Regional Assessment Center participants are required to perform simulated activities and tasks expected of principals. The participants are observed by a group of assessors trained by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. During the activities the participants are evaluated based on their behavior and skills related to the following areas:

- Problem Analysis
- Judgment
- Organizational Ability
- Decisiveness
- Leadership
- Sensitivity
- Oral Communication
- Written Communication
- Range of Interests
- Personal Motivation
- Educational Values
- Stress Tolerance

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Upon the completion of the assessment, a comprehensive final report describing strengths, improvement needs, and developmental suggestions is written for each candidate. The report is discussed in detail with the participant during a confidential feedback session. The participant and the sponsoring organization receive copies and explanations of the report (Northern Virginia Regional Assessment Center of Prospective School Principals, 1992).
CHAPTER III
METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors that contribute to the promotion of assistant principals to the position of principal and examine the assistant principals experiences that new principals consider important to their current responsibilities. Additionally the study examines career and personal goals of new principals. This chapter describes the population that comprised the study and outlines the methods used to gather and analyze the data. Answers to the research questions were based on responses to the survey instrument developed for the study.

Research Method

A survey design was employed to gather the data for this study. According to Isaacs and Michael (1990), this method of data collection is the most commonly used technique in education and the behavioral sciences. Information gathered through surveys describes the nature and extent of a specified set of data (Isaacs and Michael 1990). This data can be used to answer the research questions specified in the study. The purpose of a descriptive study is to make assertions about certain attributes or traits in a population. This kind of research
does not attempt to determine why the observed distribution exists (Babbie, 1973).

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed by this study:

1. What skills and knowledge factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to the principal?

2. What personal characteristics are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

3. What other important factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

4. Who is perceived by new principals to be most important in the promotion of assistant principal to the principal?

5. What factors are perceived by new principals to stand in the way of promotion from assistant principal to principal?

6. What other experience factors are perceived by new principals to be important in the selection of assistant principal to principal?

7. What assistant principal experiences are useful to the new principal?
8. What are the career and personal goals of new principals?

Population

There are 136 school divisions in the Commonwealth of Virginia. For this study the population was defined as individuals who were employed in the Commonwealth of Virginia as assistant principals during 1990-91 and individuals who were newly appointed principals in 1991-92.

School divisions in the state vary widely in size, and demographics. There are urban and rural as well as suburban schools throughout the state. The urban and suburban schools cluster around the tidewater area and the Northern Virginia region while smaller rural schools are to be found more in the central and south-western parts of the state.

Instrumentation

The survey instrument used for this study was comprised of questions developed from two sources:

1. review of the literature.

2. list of principal behavior criteria established by a principal assessment center.

Information from these two sources became the framework upon which the questions for the survey instrument were based. The survey instrument included forty-two Likert-type questions with a forced choice response set. Respondents were asked to respond from strongly agree to strongly
disagree. To improve reliability almost all items were presented in a negatively and positively worded question.

To address the skills and knowledge component of the study 13 questions were included. Eight questions focused on personal characteristics. Seven questions were directed at the overall most important factor influencing promotion. Ten questions were included to address the question of who is most important in promotion. Eight questions sought to identify what factors stand in the way of an individual’s promotion to principal. Three questions were included to address other factors that impact promotion. One question was included in which respondents were asked to rank 10 assistant principal experiences according to their usefulness to them as new principals. An open-ended question requested respondents to supply in rank order from most important to less important the five factors they believed were the most important for promotion. The purpose of this section was to provide respondents an opportunity to have input on factors that they thought, independent of the background sources of the researcher, were of significance for promotion. A twenty item section was included asking participants to rate the importance of selected career and personal goals.

Demographic questions related to personal, school, job and professional areas were added to the survey based on the
demographic surveys used by Austin and Brown in their 1970 study for the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP). Modifications were made to reflect the fact that the survey for this study was a state survey.

There is an assumption that people become principals by following certain steps. Originally this study was to be designed to deal with both successful and unsuccessful candidates for principal. However, it was not possible to identify the unsuccessful candidates in the population.

Once developed, the survey (see Appendix A) was piloted among a group of 25 elementary principals in the Fairfax County Virginia Public Schools. The pilot was targeted at elementary principals in order not to contaminate the population for the study. Their selection as a pilot group was also based on the fact that as principals they had ultimate responsibility for their schools as do the secondary principals in the study population. The pilot principals were selected from an alphabetical list of elementary principals. These individuals were called and asked if they were willing to participate in the pilot before a survey was mailed to them.

Data Collection

The population for this study was all new principals in the Commonwealth of Virginia during the 1992-1993 school year. The new principals were identified using The Virginia
Educational Directory supplied by The Virginia State Department of Education.

Surveys were sent to the study subjects with an accompanying cover letter detailing the intended use of the information gathered and requesting the individuals' response. (see Appendix B) The first return date was established as the end of March. A reminder was sent to nonrespondent on April 28, 1993 (see Appendix C) and on May 7, 1993 (see Appendix D) another letter and survey were sent. Participants were asked to return their surveys on or before May 14, 1993. Twenty percent of the nonrespondents were called to find out why they had not responded.

Analysis Procedure

Data was analyzed using Number Cruncher Statistical System Version 5.03, a statistical software package designed for use with surveys. The descriptive statistics used included frequencies, means, and percentages. Cross tabulations were used to determine differences in career and personal goals among new principals between the time they entered their teaching career and the time they entered their administrative career. Cramer's V were calculated for each set of negative and positive items to determine consistency. Cramer's V is a measure of association independent of sample size. This statistic is a
modification of the Phi statistic so that it is appropriate for larger than two-by-two tables (Hintze, p. 132).

Data was collected, coded, and entered into the database. Statistics were run and analyzed. Data were reported in text as well as tabular form. Research questions 1 to 6 were analyzed by computing frequencies, means and percentages. Chi square statistics were calculated for responses to items designed to answer the career and personal goal questions. Chi square is a test of significance to see if there's a significant relationship with alpha normally set at .05. Responses to questions designed for research question number seven were ranked by participants from least important to most important. For the purpose of clarity in reporting participants' responses, ten response categories were combined into four response categories.

In part two of the survey, participants were asked to rank the five factors they considered most important for promotion form assistant principal to principal. For the purpose of analysis an indexing scheme was developed comprised of eight categories. The indexing scheme was reviewed by an educational researcher for face validity and content validity. All responses appear in Appendix E.

The results of the data analysis are discussed in detail in chapter IV.
CHAPTER IV
RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to identify the factors that contribute to the promotion of assistant principals to the position of principal and to examine the assistant principal experiences that newly appointed principals consider important to their current responsibilities. In addition it examines the career and personal goals of newly appointed principals. The study is significant in that it identifies important and heretofore little studied promotion factors for aspiring principals (1983 PDK Hot Topics Series). Responses from newly appointed secondary school principals may prove of some use to aspiring assistant principals and those responsible for their selection. It should be useful to faculty and staff of university programs preparing graduate students for administration and those who mentor aspiring principals.

In this chapter, (a) statistical analysis of the data is presented, (b) procedures of the study are described. The population is described in the demographic data. Responses to the survey questions are reported in three categories: (a) demographics; (b) research questions; and, (c) responses to open-ended questions. A general summary concludes this chapter.

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General Demographic Information

The target population for the study included all secondary school principals in the state of Virginia who had been in the position for two years or less. The Virginia State Department of Education provided the 1993 list of all principals in the state as of January 1, 1993. This list was compared with the 1991 Virginia Educational Directory list. Those principals who were listed as principal in 1993 and whose names did not appear in the 1991 directory were identified as new principals.

A survey questionnaire was mailed to each of the new principals in the state. (see Appendix A) The purpose of the survey was explained in a cover letter. (see Appendix B) Each questionnaire was mailed with a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Follow-up postcards were sent to non-respondents. (see Appendix C) Two weeks later a second letter and survey form with self-addressed, stamped envelope were sent to remaining non-respondents. (see Appendix D) Twenty percent (20%) of those who did not respond were called, and it was determined that all seven were no longer employed in Virginia. One hundred and twenty-eight questionnaires were mailed. Ninety surveys (70% of the total) were returned in all. Forty seven (52% of those returned) were from principals who had been in their position for two or fewer years. This group
constituted the target population for the study. The other responses were from those who had been principals for more than two years. Because it is important to clearly define and specify the study population in descriptive research, these responses were not considered in the study since they were outside of the target population (Leedy, 1980). These principals were recipients of the questionnaire because they had moved to new positions during the two year period from which the study population was chosen. However, they were not new principals. They had already been principals elsewhere. The responses of those principals who had been in the principalship more than two years will be used in a comparison between the two groups in a follow-up paper.

Target Population

The demographic data for respondents is summarized in Table 1. The average age of new principals included in the study was 42. The oldest of the newly appointed principals was 55 years old, and the youngest was 30. Over three-quarters of the population (76%) were male. Eighty-four percent (84%) were white, and 16 percent (16%) were black. No other minorities were identified. Eighty-two percent (82%) were married; 11 percent (11%) were single; and 7 percent (7%) were divorced. Slightly over 18.5 percent (18.5%) had no children; slightly over 18.5 percent (18.5%) had one child; slightly over 37.2 percent (37.2%) had two
children; slightly over 18.5 percent (18.5%) had three children; and 7 percent (7%) had four children.

Table 1


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65
### Number of Years in Education

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### Number of Years as an Assistant Principal

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### Number of Years as a Principal

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<tr>
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</table>

Training and Experience

Information concerning the training and experience of the principals is summarized in Table 1. Certification for principal in the state of Virginia requires a master's degree. Forty-seven percent (47%) held a master's degree. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents had a master's degree plus 15 graduate education credits beyond the master's, 24 percent (24%) held a master's degree plus thirty graduate credits beyond the master's, 7 percent (7%) held a Certificate of Advanced Graduate Studies (CAGS) and nine percent (9%) held a doctorate degree.

All of the newly appointed principals had been in the field of education for at least six years. Four percent (4%) had been in education for six to ten years. Twenty-nine percent (29%) had been in education for eleven to
fifteen years. Thirty-one percent (31%) had been in education for sixteen to twenty years and 36 percent (36%) had been in education for more than twenty-one years.

Four new principals had never served in the capacity of assistant principal. Forty-two percent (42%) had been assistant principals for one to five years. Forty-six percent (46%) had been assistant principals for six to ten years. Ten percent (10%) had been assistant principals for eleven to fifteen years. Two percent (2%) had been assistant principals for 16 to 20 years.

Analysis of Responses to the Questionnaire

Research Questions

The study participants were asked to respond to questions concerning factors that contribute to promotion from assistant principal to principal. These questions were grouped as subquestions to the research questions for reporting responses. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they STRONGLY AGREED (4), AGREED (3), DISAGREED (2) or STRONGLY DISAGREED (1) with statements that were positively and negatively worded. The negatively worded items were added to assess consistency of responses of the participants. Cramer’s V were run. Cramer’s V ranged from .27 to 1.18 indicating consistency. A summary of Chi Square, probability and Cramer’s V results are presented in Table 2.
Table 2

Cross Tabulation Summary of Negative and Positive Survey Items

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Research Question #1: Skill and Knowledge Requirements

The first research question examined the skills and knowledge requirements that new principals reported to be most important for promotion. Table 3 summarizes the responses to the 13 survey items which were focused on this question.

New principals in Virginia rated leadership skill, organizational skill and problem solving ability as the most important skills and knowledge requirements for promotion to principal. Sixty-two percent (62%) strongly agreed that leadership skill is important for promotion to principal and 34 percent (34%) agreed it is important (X=3.5, S.D.=.7). Forty-nine percent (49%) strongly agreed that organization skill is important and 47 percent (47%) agreed it is important (X=3.4, S.D.=.6). Forty-six percent (46%) strongly agreed that problem solving ability is important for promotion and 50 percent (50%) agreed it is important (X=3.4, S.D.=.6).

Survey items with fewer respondents strongly agreeing and agreeing were those on knowledge of management information systems (X=2.9, S.D.=.6), facility management (X=2.1, S.D.=.7), and equipment management (X=2.2, S.D.=.6).
Table 3
Research Question 1
What Skill and Knowledge Factors Are Perceived by New Principals to be Necessary for Promotion from Assistant Principal to Principal?

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*X = Mean, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree, N = Number, SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, S.D. = Standard Deviation*
Research Question # 2: Personal Characteristics

Research question two looked at the personal characteristics respondents consider most important for promotion. Table 4 summarizes the data for the survey items for this research question. Sensitivity to the feelings of others is the item with which the highest number of new principals strongly agreed. Forty-seven percent (47%) of the respondents strongly agreed with this statement, and 47 percent (47%) agreed ($X=3.4$, $S.D.=.7$). This represents the highest strong agreement score of any item on personal characteristics. Principals agreed that decisive judgement was important ($X=3.3$, $S.D.=.7$). Forty-five percent (45%) strongly agreed and 45 percent (45%) agreed. While the response to persistence ($X=2.9$, $S.D.=.6$) was 13 percent (13%) strongly agreeing that it is important and 69 percent (69%) agreeing, this response was less strong as compared with the responses for the other characteristics ($X=2.9$, $S.D.=.6$). Presenting yourself well in person and on paper was rated agree by 4 percent (4%) of the respondents ($X=3.5$, $S.D.=.6$).
Table 4

Research Question 2

What Personal Characteristics Are Considered Most Important in an Assistant Principal for Principal Promotion?

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X = Mean
S.D. = Standard Deviation
SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly disagree
N = Number
Research Question #3: Most Important General Factor

Research question three focused on the general factor that participants in the study considered to be most important for promotion to principal. Table 5 summarizes the data. The item with which the highest percentage of respondents agreed for this research question was the importance of the individual’s reputation in the job they presently occupy. Eighty-one percent (81%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the present job reputation was important. Seventeen percent (17%) agreed with the statement and only 2 percent (2%) strongly disagreed with no response in the disagree category (X=3.7, S.D.=.5). The item of next importance was having a good reputation in the organization. Fifty-seven percent (57%) strongly agreed that having a good reputation within the organization was important. Thirty-six percent (36%) agreed that it is important (X=3.5, S.D.=6). Match between the principal and the school community was considered important (x=3.0, S.D.=.5). However, having a mentor (X=2.7, S.D.=.7) and affirmative action (X=2.6, S.D.=.7) both were rated as less important by the new principals.
Table 5

Research Question 3
What Other Important Factors Impact the Promotion of an Assistant Principal to the Principalship?

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X = Mean
S. D. = Standard Deviation
SA = Strongly Agree
A = Agree
D = Disagree
SD = Strongly Disagree
N = Number
Research Question # 4: Who is Most Important

Research question number four asked who is most important in making the selection of an assistant principal to the principalship. Table 6 summarizes the items for this research question. The survey item with the highest mean for this research question was having contact with other administrators (X=3.0, S.D.=.5). Fifteen percent (15%) of the principals strongly agreed that having contact with other administrators is important for promotion and 75 percent (75%) agreed it is important. Response to the negatively stated item shows a disagree percentage of 62 percent (62%) and a strongly disagree of 21 percent (21%). The other most significant item for this research question was being asked by central administration to apply for a position (X=3.0, S.D.=.6). Fifteen percent (15%) of the principals strongly agreed that it was important, and 63 percent (63%) agreed. On the survey item on frequent contact with central office personnel (x=3.0, S.D.7), 26 percent (26%) strongly agreed that central office contact was important and 59 percent (59%) agreed. Principals indicated that contact with school board members and knowing the right people were less important. Only 4 percent (4%) strongly agreed that school board member contact was important and 44 percent (44%) agreed (X=2.6, S. D.=8). Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents strongly agreed and
51 percent (51%) agreed that knowing the right people (X=2.6, S. D.=.8) is important.

Table 6

Research Question 4

Who Is Most Important in the Promotion of an Assistant Principal to the Principalship?

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\(\bar{X}\) = Mean

S. D. = Standard Deviation

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly Disagree

N = Number
Research Question #5: What Factors Stand in the Way of Promotion

The focus of this research questions was the factors that new principals think stand in the way of promotion to the principalship. Table 7 presents a summary of the responses for this question. The factor respondents indicated was most important was willingness to move. Fifty-three percent (53%) of the principals strongly agreed that willingness to move is important for promotion. Forty percent (40%) agreed (X=3.4, S.D.=.7). Forty percent (40%) of the principals strongly agreed and 49 percent (49%) agreed that having diverse experience is important for promotion (X=3.2, S. D.=.7). Although not as strongly agreed to, new principals indicated that voicing one’s aspiration for promotion to principal was important for promotion. Twenty-three percent (23%) strongly agreed that it was important and 49 percent (49%) agreed (X=3.0, S. D.=.8). Diverse experience in different school districts was not considered important for promotion by the respondents. Forty-eight percent (48%) disagreed that was important and 4 percent (4%) strongly disagreed (x=2.5, S. D.=.7).
Table 7

Research Question 5

What Factors stand in the Way of Promotion from Assistant Principal to Principal?

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X = Mean

S.D. = Standard Deviation

SA = Strongly Agree

A = Agree

D = Disagree

SD = Strongly disagree

N = Number
Research Question # 6: Other Experiences

New principals responding to the survey questionnaire did not indicate other experiences were important to promotion from assistant principal to principal. Table 8 presents the results of the questions related to this research question. The survey items focusing on this research question concerned graduate education beyond certification requirements and leadership in professional organizations. Thirteen percent (13%) strongly agreed and 57 percent (57%) agreed that graduate education beyond certification requirements is important for promotion ($\bar{x}=2.8$, $S.D.=.7$). However, the value of the mean and standard deviation for this item indicated that its influence was less important than other factors. Only 9 percent (9%) strongly agreed and 47 percent (47%) agreed that leadership in professional organizations was important for promotion ($\bar{x}=2.6$, $S.D.=.5$).
Table 8
Research Question 6
What Other Experience Factors are Important in Being Promoted to the Principalship?

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X = Mean\[\text{ }\]A = Agree\[\text{ }\]N = Number
S.D. = Standard Deviation\[\text{ }\]D = Disagree
SA = Strongly Agree\[\text{ }\]SD = Strongly Disagree

Summary of the Results for Research Questions 1-6
According to the responses of the newly appointed principals participating in this study, the most significant skills and knowledge factors influencing promotion from assistant principal to principal were leadership skills, organization skills, and problem solving ability. The personal characteristics the respondents reported to be the most important promotion factor for promotion was sensitivity to other peoples' feelings. The other significant personal characteristic respondents reported was decisiveness. For research question three, respondents
rated a reputation for doing a good job in the present position as the most important factor for promotion and a good reputation in the school system as very important. For research question four, contact with other administrators was rated by the highest number of respondents as most important. Contact with central office personnel and being asked by central office to apply for a position were significant also. For research question number five willingness to move and having diverse experience in the school district were the factors with which the highest number of respondents agree. For research question number six, the factor with the highest number of most important ratings was graduate education beyond certification requirements. However, this factor did not receive as many "most important" ratings as factors for the other research questions. Fifty-seven (57%) percent agreed that graduate education was important beyond certification requirements and 13 percent (13%) strongly agreed ($X = 2.8$, S.D. = .7).

**Five Most Important Factors: Responses To Open Ended Questions**

In part two of the survey questionnaire participants were asked to write the five factors they considered most important for promotion from assistant principal to principal. These questions were open-ended. No choice of pre-selected variables from which respondents had to choose
was provided. The responses were to be ordered according to their importance from one, most important, to five, less important.

Content analysis was conducted on the responses to this section. An indexing scheme was developed comprised of eight categories. The categories that emerged were: LEADERSHIP, ORGANIZATION, HUMAN RELATIONS, PROFESSIONAL BACKGROUND, PEOPLE SKILLS, PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS, PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE, AND OTHER FACTORS. Examples of responses for the index categories appear below. All responses are provided in the appendix C. A summary of categorized results is presented in Table 9.

Examples of Indexing Scheme Categories

Attributes that were indexed under the leadership category included ability to inspire confidence and ability to motivate others. Ability to delegate and management issues were categorized under organization. Examples of human relations attributes were fairness and conflict management. The background category included education and experience. The people skills category included team player and good reputation. Personal characteristics included modeling [a good] work ethic and humor. The knowledge category included instructional knowledge and problem solving ability. The last category was indexed
circumstances and included being in the right place at the right time and demographics.

Results

Factors Ranked Most Important

The factor that was ranked in first place by the greatest number of respondents was leadership. Thirty-two percent of the participants ranked this factor as most important for promotion. Professional knowledge was ranked first in importance by 19 percent of the respondents. People skills and professional background were ranked in first place by 13 percent of respondents respectively. Human relations and personal characteristics were both ranked first in importance by 9 percent of respondents. Only 4 percent ranked organization first in important and 2 percent rated circumstances as most important.
Table 9

Rank Order 1 to 5

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Most Important Factor Ranked Number 2

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L = Leadership
O = Organization
HR = Human Relations
PB = Professional Background
PS = People Skills
PC = Personal Characteristics
PK = Professional Knowledge
OF = Other Factors
T = Total
N = Number
Factors Ranked Second Most Important

Personal characteristics were ranked second in importance by 19 percent of the respondents. Leadership, people skills, and professional background were ranked in second place by 17 percent of respondents respectively. Eleven percent ranked professional knowledge as second most important, and 4 percent ranked human relations in second place.

Factors Ranked Third Most Important

Twenty-two percent of the study participants ranked leadership the third most important promotion factor. Nineteen percent ranked organization third most important. Fifteen percent ranked personal characteristics third. Thirteen percent ranked people skills third, 11 percent ranked professional background third, 9 percent ranked professional knowledge third, and 6 percent respectively ranked human relations and circumstances third.

Factors Ranked Fourth Most Important

Twenty-six percent of the study participants put organization as the fourth most important factor for promotion. In this position 19 percent choose leadership, personal characteristics, and professional knowledge. Eleven percent put professional background in fourth place. People skills was placed in this position by 4 percent of
respondents and only 2 percent selected circumstances for fourth position of importance.

Factors Ranked Fifth Most Important

Twenty-eight percent of the respondents ranked personal characteristics the fifth most important factor for promotion to principal. Twenty-three percent ranked leadership in this position. Fifteen percent ranked people skills as the fifth most important factor for promotion to principal. Both professional background and professional knowledge were ranked fifth most important factor by 9 percent of respondents respectively. Organization was ranked fifth by 6 percent and circumstances was ranked fifth by 2 percent of respondents.

Summary of Factors Ranked Most Important For Promotion

In summary, the factor with the highest percentage of respondents selecting it for most important was leadership. The factor with the highest percentage of respondents selecting it for second most important factor was personal characteristics. The factor with the most respondents selecting it for third most important was leadership. The factor with the most respondents selecting it for fourth most important factor was organization. The factor with the highest percentage of respondents selecting it for fifth most important was personal characteristics. Both
leadership and personal characteristics were ranked most important in more than one position.

Those characteristics that were ranked in first position by the least number of respondents were circumstances and organization. Those factors ranked in second place with the smallest percentage were circumstances and human relations. The factors ranked third most important by the smallest percentage were human relations and circumstances. In fourth most important position the factors ranked with the smallest percentage were human relations and circumstances. In fifth most important ranking, the factors with the smallest percentage were circumstances and organization. While these factors were ranked most important by the least percentage of respondents, it should be noted that they are still of significance because they were selected as factors of importance to some respondents in open-ended questions where any factor could have been supplied.

**Research Question #7: Assistant Principal Experience**

Information for research question seven was gathered when respondents were asked to rank ten experience from their assignments as assistant principals. The ten experiences were ranked from (1) least helpful to (10) most helpful in preparing the assistant principal for the position of principal. A summary of the responses for this
research question appears in Table 10. The ten items were: Handling Parent complaint, Budget experience, Scheduling, Planning outside activities, Substitute teachers, Buses, Building maintenance, Custodians, Teacher evaluation, and Student discipline. The purpose of this research question was to determine the relative value of these experiences to the new principal.

Thirty-seven respondents provided useable answers. Four respondents did not supply any responses to this part of the questionnaire. Six did not provide a single, one to ten rank of importance to the items, but instead ranked several items with tens or ones or used the rating that they thought applied. Because these responses were not consistent with the directions or the majority of the responses they were not considered in the statistical calculations.

For the purpose of clarity in reporting participants’ responses, ten response categories were combined into four response categories. The top band was created by combining ranks ten, nine and eight. Since a rank of ten gave an item the highest or most valuable rank, and ranks nine and eight were also indicative of an item having considerable value, this category represented items highest in value to respondents. The higher of the two middle bands was created by combining ranks seven and six. These ranks indicated that an item was still of considerable importance or value
if it had a rank that fell into this category. The lower middle band was created by combining ranks five and four. This category was made up of rankings of less value and so it indicated that respondents considered items with these ranks less significant. Since a rank of one was the rank of least importance or value, the bottom band, created by combining ranks three, two and one, indicated that items with these rankings were considered of less value as an assistant principal experience.

Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents ranked experience with student discipline an eight, nine or ten. Forty-three percent (43%) ranked substitute teachers an eight, nine or ten. Forty-one percent (41%) ranked teacher evaluation an eight, nine or ten. These three assistant principal experience items had the highest percentage of respondents indicating that were very helpful to them as new principals.

The item with the highest percentage response of all was buses. Forty-nine percent (49%) of the respondents ranked buses a one, two, or three. Thus they indicated that this assistant principal experience was least helpful to them as new principals.

Forty-one percent (41%) of the respondents ranked planning outside activities a four or five. This indicated
that item was of less importance as a helpful assistant principal experience.

Twenty-four percent (24%) of the respondents ranked parent complaint a ten (most helpful), nine or eight indicating that their experience in handling parent complaint as an assistant principal was very helpful to them as new principals, and they thought it was one of the most valuable, if not the most valuable, of their assistant principal experiences. Eleven percent (11%) ranked this experience a seven or six indicating that their assistant principal experience with parent complaint was helpful to them. Eleven percent (11%) of the respondents ranked parent complaint a five or four indicating that their experience with it was not very helpful, and 14 percent (14%) ranked it a one, two or three indicating their assistant principal experience with handling parent complaint was not helpful to them as new principals.

Thirty percent (30%) of respondents ranked budget experience a ten, nine or eight. This indicated that their experience with budget as assistant principals was very helpful to them as new principals, and they thought it was one of the most valuable of their assistant principal experiences. Nineteen percent (19%) ranked this item a seven or six indicating that it was important but not the most important. Twenty-seven percent (27%) ranked this
experience a five or four, not as valuable, and 19 percent (19%) ranked it a three, two or one, not a valuable assistant principal experience for them.

Ten people, 27 percent (27%) ranked scheduling a ten, nine, or eight. These rankings indicate that these respondents found their experience with scheduling to be one of the most valuable, if not the most valuable, of their assistant principal experiences. Nineteen percent (19%) ranked scheduling a seven or six indicating it was a helpful assistant principal experience. Ten, 27 percent (27%) ranked scheduling a five or four indicating that it was of not great value to them, and ten, 27 percent (27%) ranked it a three, two or one indicating that as an assistant principal experience it was not particularly helpful to them now that they were new principals.

Only three, 8 percent (8%) respondents ranked planning outside activities a ten, nine, or eight. Fourteen, 39 percent (39%) ranked this assistant principal experience a seven or six indicating that it was a helpful assistant principal experience now that they were new principals. Fifteen, 41 percent (41%) respondents ranked planning outside activities a five or four, not very helpful, and five, 14 percent (14%) ranked it a three, two or one indicating that it was not a helpful assistant principal experience now that they were new principals.
Forty-three percent (43%) of respondents ranked substitute teachers a ten, nine or eight indicating that handling substitute teachers was a highly valuable assistant principal experience to them. Eight percent (8%) ranked this a seven or six meaning that this experience was valuable to them. Sixteen percent (16%) ranked this assistant principal experience a five or four indicating that it was not a particularly valuable assistant principal experience and 32 percent (32%) ranked it a three, two, or one, not a valuable assistant principal experience.

Twelve, 32 percent (32%) respondents ranked buses a ten, nine or eight indicating that this assistant principal experience was very valuable. Two, 5 percent (5%) ranked this experience a seven or six indicating that it was a valuable experience. Five, 14 percent (14%) ranked buses a five, or four or not very helpful to them and eighteen respondents, 41 percent (41%) ranked it a three, two or one indicating that this was not a valuable assistant principal experience to them now that they were principals.

Twenty-two percent (22%) of respondents ranked building maintenance a ten, nine or eight. Thus they felt this was a very valuable assistant principal experience. Twenty-seven percent (27%) ranked building maintenance a seven or six indicating it as valuable. Twenty-four percent (24%) ranked it a five or four indicating that it was not a particularly
important assistant principal experience, and 27 percent (27%) ranked it a three, two or one indicating that it was not a valuable assistant principal experience now that they were new principals.

Nine respondents, 24 percent (24%) ranked custodians a ten, nine or eight indicating that they considered handling custodians a very valuable experience acquired in their assistant principalship in preparing them for the principalship. Thirteen, 35 percent (35%) ranked custodians a seven or six indicating that handling custodians was a valuable assistant principal experience. Five, 14 percent (14%) respondents ranked custodians a five or four indicating it was not a particularly valuable assistant principal experience, and ten, 27 percent (27%) respondents ranked it a three, two or one indicating it not to be a valuable assistant principal experience for them.

Teacher evaluation was ranked a ten, nine or eight by 41 percent (41%) of respondents. This indicates that this assistant principal experience was considered a valuable one for these new principals. Sixteen percent (16%) ranked teacher evaluation a seven or a six indicating that it was considered by them to be a valuable assistant principal experience. Eight percent (8%) ranked it a five or four indicating that it was not a particularly valuable assistant principal experience for these respondents. Thirty-five
percent (35%) ranked teacher evaluation a three, two or one indicating that for them it was not a valuable experience.

Student discipline was ranked with a ten, nine or eight as very valuable by 43 percent (43%) of respondents. Eleven percent (11%) ranked it as seven or six. These rankings indicate that for these respondents this was a very valuable assistant principal experience. Eleven percent (11%) ranked this a five or a four indicating it was not a very valuable experience for these respondents. Thirty-five percent (35%) ranked student discipline a three, two or one indicating that they did not consider it to be a valuable assistant principal experience.

Summary of Responses for Research Question # 7

In summary the highest percentage of respondents ranking any item in this portion of the survey was 49 percent (49%) ranking buses a three, two or one, not a valuable assistant principal experience. The next highest percentage of responses was 43 percent (43%) ranking substitute teachers a ten, nine or eight, a valuable assistant principal experience. Thirty-five percent (35%) ranked substitute teachers a three, two or one indicating that they considered substitute teachers experience not to be valuable assistant principal experience. Forty-three percent (43%) ranked student discipline a ten, nine or eight indicating that it was considered an important assistant
principal experience. Forty-one percent (41%) ranked Teacher Evaluation a ten, nine or eight indicating they felt it was a valuable assistant principal experience and 35 percent (35%) ranked Teacher Evaluation a three, two or one indicating they did not consider it a valuable experience. Table 11 provides a summary of the rankings.
Table 10

Ranked Assistant Principal Experiences According to Usefulness

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R = Rank  
PC = Parent Complaint  
BE = Budget Experience  
S = Scheduling  
POA = Planning Outside Activities  
ST = Substitute Teachers  
B = Buses  
BM = Building Maintenance  
C = Custodians  
TE = Teacher Evaluation  
SD = Student Discipline  
N = Number

96
Research Question #8: What are the Career and Personal Goals of New Principals

Research question number eight focused on career and personal goals of respondents. Study participants were asked to rank in importance to them selected career and personal goals when they entered teaching. Then they were asked to rank the same items in importance to them when they entered administration. The results are presented for teaching and administration. Cross tabulations to analyze the association between these items were run. The cross tabulation results are presented in Table 11.
Table 11
Cross Tabulation Results Career and Personal Goals When Entering a Teaching Career When Entering an Administrative Career

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In answering these questions the principals were asked to indicate how important the statements about salary; being
able to use special abilities; status or prestige; working with people; having opportunity to be creative; exercising leadership; security; being able to help others; vacation/hours; and other were in choosing a teaching career.

Respondents were asked to indicate for each item whether it was most important (1); highly important (2); of medium importance (3); or of little importance (4) to them. Table 12 provides a summary of these results.

The mean response on the importance of Salary when these principals entered teaching was 3.1, of medium importance. Four percent said it was most important; 11 percent said it was highly important; 48 percent said it was of medium importance, and 36 percent said it was of little importance.

The mean response on the importance of being able to use ability was 1.7, highly important. Thirty-six percent said it was most important. Fifty-six percent said it was highly important; 7 percent said it was of medium importance; 2 percent said it was of little importance.

The mean response to the item Prestige when entering teaching was 3.2, of medium importance. Thirteen percent said prestige was highly important. Fifty-three percent said it was of medium importance, and 33 percent said it was of little importance. Most important was not selected.
Working with people had a mean response of 1.6, highly important. Forty-nine percent selected working with people as most important to them on entering teaching. Forty percent said this item was highly important. Nine percent said it was of medium importance, and 2 percent said it was of little importance.

The mean response for Using creativity was 2.0, highly important. Twenty-two percent selected it as most important. Fifty-six said it was highly important. Twenty percent gave it medium importance and 2 percent said it was of little importance.

Exercising leadership had a mean response of 2.0, highly important. Thirty-six percent selected it as most important. Thirty-two percent selected it as highly important. Twenty-seven percent said it was of medium importance, and 5 said little importance.

A mean response of 2.1 was recorded for Security indicating that it was highly important. Sixteen percent indicated security was most important. Fifty-six percent said it was highly important at 2.1. Twenty-two percent rated it of medium importance and 4 percent rated it of little importance.

Helping others had a mean response of 1.5 falling between most important and highly important. Fifty-two percent of the responses gave a responded 1.15 or most
important to this item. Forty-three percent gave this item 2.0 or highly important. Five percent said it was of medium importance.

The mean response for vacation/hours was 3.2, of medium importance. Four percent of the responses indicated this item was most important, 1.2. Thirteen percent said it was highly important at 2.1. Thirty-six percent rated it medium importance, 3.0 and 47 percent said of little importance, 4.

Of the six individual responses for Other, five responses were most important, with one respondent rating Other of little importance. The responses were: "I love working with children--helping them to find success," most important; "Help at risk students," most important; "Return to childhood community," most important; "An occupation that was selected by a significant other in my personal education experience," medium importance; "Work with high school age students," most important; "Give back to a community what it had afforded me," most important.

Respondents were asked to indicate the importance to them of the same items as above when they were choosing an administrative career. Salary was selected as most important by nine percent of the respondents when entering administration. It was highly important to fifty-eight percent when entering administration. Twenty-four percent
said salary was of medium importance and 9 percent said of little importance when entering administration.

Use special abilities had a mean score of 1.64, between most important and highly important. Forty-two percent of the respondents considered it most important, 1.15. Fifty-one percent said it was highly important, 2.0. Seven percent said it was of medium importance, 3.

Prestige received a mean score of 3.0, or medium importance for individuals when entering administration. Twenty-four percent said highly important, 2.1. Forty-seven percent considered prestige of medium importance at 3.0 and 29 percent said of little importance, or 4 for this item.

Working with other people was selected by respondents when they entered administration as most important by 44 percent. The mean for this item was 1.7. Forty percent said it was highly important, and 16 percent marked it as of some importance.

Using creativity was highly important with a mean score of 1.7. Forty-four percent said it was most important, 1.1. Forty percent said it was highly important, 2.0. Sixteen percent rated this item of medium importance, 3.

For respondents entering administration, Exercising leadership received a mean score of 1.4, most important. Sixty-four percent considered it most important, 1.23. Twenty-nine percent considered it highly important, 2.15.
Four percent said it was of medium importance, 3.38. Two percent said it was of little importance, 4.

When entering administration respondents considered Security highly important with a mean score of 2.3. Twenty-four percent counted security most important, 1.23. Thirty-one percent considered it highly important, 2.1. Thirty-one percent said it was of medium importance, 3.07. Thirteen percent said it was of little importance, 4.

Helping others had a mean score of 1.4 or most important. Fifty-three percent marked it most important, 1.15. Forty-four percent said it was highly important 2.0. Two percent said it was medium importance, 3.

Vacation/hours had a mean score of 3.53, medium importance. Two percent said it was most important, 1.2. Twenty-six percent said highly important, 3.0 and sixty-five percent said of little importance, 4.

Five individuals indicated Other as most important. The mean was 1. The following reasons were provided for this response: "Helping children to find success in school." "Support the community." "Provided a broader range of educational experiences which afforded me the opportunity to impact positively on a far greater number of our students." "Needed to have more input in decision making." "Vision for how high school should operate." "I enjoyed it."
Career Plans

The principals in the study were asked to indicate whether they planned to be principals for the rest of their career, whether they eventually planned to be promoted to a higher position or whether they had not thought about this question. Nineteen percent (19%) reported that they did not intend to seek a higher position in the future. Fifty-eight (58%) percent indicated that they did intend to seek a higher position in the future, 17 percent (17%) said they had not thought about it and 6 percent (6%) gave no answer to this question.

Summary of Ranking of Career and Personal Goals

When study participants were asked to rank the importance of Salary to them when they entered teaching as compared to its importance to them when they entered administration, there was a shift in the importance they attributed to it. When entering teaching, salary was considered of only medium importance by 49 percent (49%) and of little importance by 36 percent (36%) (X=3.1, 4 = little importance). When entering administration, more new principals considered salary of greater importance. Nine percent said it was most important, as compared with 4 percent (4%) when entering teaching; and 58 percent (58%) said it was highly important, as compared to 11 percent (11%) when entering teaching (X=2.3, 1=most important).
Having the opportunity to use ability was highly important to most respondents when they entered teaching and there was no significant shift in the importance the respondents attributed to being able to use ability when they entered administration. When entering teaching, 36 percent of these new principals considered this aspect of the job as most important; and when entering administration, 42 percent considered it most important. Percentages for highly important were 56 percent when entering teaching, and 51 percent when entering administration (X=1.7 for teaching and x=1.6 for administration). Very little change was recorded on the item on Prestige between entering teaching and entering administration. Fifty-three percent considered it of medium importance, and 33 percent of little importance (X=3.2). When entering administration, 47 percent considered it of medium importance and 45 percent considered it of little importance (X=3.0).

There was very little change on the importance of the Opportunity to work with people between respondents when entering teaching and when entering administration. Forty-nine percent rated it of most importance and 40 percent rated it highly important (X=1.6) when entering teaching. Forty-four percent rated it most important and 40 percent rated it highly important (X=1.7) when entering administration.
There was a slight shift of importance in the opportunity to use creativity between responses for individuals when they entered teaching and responses when they entered administration. When entering teaching 22 percent rated this aspect of the career as most important and 56 percent rated it highly important ($X=2.0$), whereas when entering administration 42 percent rated it most important, and 44 percent rated it highly important ($X=1.7$). On the opportunity to Exercise leadership there was a shift of importance to new principals between the time they entered teaching and the time they entered administration. Thirty-eight percent rated this item most important when entering teaching ($X=2.0$). When entering administration only 2 percent rated it most important, but 62 percent rated it highly important while of medium importance remained almost the same, 27 percent and 29 percent respectively. In considering Security when entering teaching and when entering administration there was almost no shift in its importance to the respondents.

There was change between how respondents felt about Helping others between entering teaching and entering administration. However, this change was subtle. When entering teaching 0 percent, considered this aspect of the career of little importance, whereas 5 percent considered it of little importance when entering administration. Five
percent considered it of medium importance for teaching and 31 percent considered it of medium importance when entering administration. When entering teaching 52 percent considered it most important and only 24 percent considered it most important when entering administration. Highly important percentages changed from 43 percent considering it highly important when entering teaching to 31 percent considering it highly important when entering administration (X=1.5 teaching, X=2.3 administration). When entering teaching only 4 percent of respondents considered Vacation/hours most important and 47 percent considered it of little importance with 13 percent rating it highly important and 36 percent giving it medium importance. However, fifty-three percent rated this item most important when entering administration and 44 percent rated it highly important. Two percent rated it medium importance and 0 percent rated it of little importance.

Other considerations showed the greatest shift in importance, from 83 percent saying it was most important when entering teaching and 2 percent when entering administration. Sixty-five percent considered it of little importance when entering administration as compared with 17 percent when entering teaching (X=2.0 for teaching, X=3.5 for administration).
Overall the greatest change was seen in the category of Other. It was most important to respondents when entering teaching and became of little importance when entering administration. Salary was the item with next largest shift in importance. It was of little importance to these individuals when they entered teaching, but it became more important to them when they entered administration. Exercising leadership showed a shift as well. However, the shift was more subtle. More people considered it highly important when entering administration but fewer considered it most important when entering teaching.

Cross Tabulation Results of Career and Personal Goals

Salary

In examining cross tabulation results run on salary there was a shift in respondents' emphasis on the importance of this factor between when they entered teaching and when they entered administration. As they entered administration 27 subjects valued salary somewhat higher than they had when they entered teaching. When they were teachers, twelve subjects rated salary medium important whereas when they entered administration, those same subjects considered salary highly important. Similarly, nine subjects who rated salary of little importance when they entered teaching, rated the same variable as highly important when they were entering administration. Even three subjects who rated
salary as little important as teachers, thought that salary was of medium importance when entering administration. Seventeen of the subject had no change in their opinion on salary. (Chi-square = 16.86, p = .05, V = .35)

Using Ability

The opportunity for subjects to use their ability in their work showed an increase in importance for 20 percent of respondents. Seven subjects said using ability was highly important when they entered teaching and most important when they entered administration. Two said using ability was medium important when entering teaching and highly important when entering administration. Most people rated being able to use ability the same at the two points in their career. (Chi-square = 14.91, p=0.02, V=.40)

Working with People

Very little change was reported by subjects on the importance of working with people between the time they entered teaching and the time they entered administration. When entering teaching 22 respondents said working with people was most important, four said it was highly important when entering administration and 18 continued to rate it most important. When entering teaching 18 said it was highly important. Two shifted to most important when entering administration while the other thirteen did not
change from highly important. \( \text{Chi-square}=38.65, \ p=0.0, \ V=.65 \)

**Exercising Leadership**

For fourteen respondents being able to exercise leadership was most important when they entered teaching and it continued to be ranked most important to them when they entered administration. Eight people reported it as highly important to them when they entered teaching, but most important when entering administration. Two people shifted down from most important to highly important on exercising leadership. Six people shifted from considering it of medium importance when they entered teaching, but most important entering administration. Five people said it was highly important when entering both teaching and administration. \( \text{Chi-square}=37.27, \ p=0.0, \ V=.53 \)

**Security**

Most shifts in opinion on the importance of security when entering teaching and administration were to less importance. Twelve people reported that it was highly important to them at both points in their career. Six people said it was most important to them when they entered teaching and it continued to be most important when they entered administration. One person said it was most important to them entering teaching and medium importance when entering administration. Five people said it was
highly important when entering teaching but of only medium importance when they entered administration. Two people shifted from medium to highly important and one from medium to little importance. (Chi-square=40.19, p=0.0, V=.55)

Helping Others

Little change was reported about the importance of helping others between entering teaching and entering administration. For a little over 40 percent being able to help people was most important, and for 36 percent highly important, at both points in their career. (Chi-square=29.82, p=0.0, V=.59)

Vacation/Hours

For one respondent vacation/hours was highly important when they entered teaching and most important when they entered administration. Six people said it was of medium importance to them when they entered teaching, but of little importance when they entered administration. For nine respondents it was of medium importance at both points in their career and for 18 respondents it was of little importance at both points in their career. One person changed from little importance to highly important and two shifted from little importance to medium importance (Chi-square=31.28, p=0.0, V=.64) See Table 3.
Valuable Assistant Principal Experience

Forty-one percent (41%) ranked teacher evaluation ten, nine or eight in value while 35 percent (35%) ranked it a three, two or one indicating that they did not consider it a valuable assistant principal experience.

The lowest percentage of responses for any ranking was 5 percent (5%) ranking buses a seven or six. Other low percentages of rankings were 8 percent ranking planning outside activities a ten, nine or eight and 8 percent (8%) ranking substitute teachers a seven or six.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSIONS

The fifth and concluding chapter summarizes the results of this research study. It is divided into the following sections: (a) introduction, including the purpose and justification for the study; (b) summary of research methods and procedures; (c) findings; (d) conclusions; (e) implications for further study.

Introduction

The selection of new principals has never been a precise science. It is a process linking characteristics thought necessary to the position with the needs of the individual school. Demographics, politics, personal characteristics, interpersonal skills all play a part in the process. Preparation programs, selection criteria and policies, and expectations of aspiring applicants are changing in education at an unprecedented rate. Globalization of economies through modern technology and communication means globalization of education. While in a macro-sense these changes will create certain requirements for the principalship, in a micro-sense still more changes in society create the need for additional considerations for school leadership. From the broad ranging debates on schooling today, a few areas of consensus can be found. One of these involves the principalship. Most observers agree
that, (a) the principal plays a key role in determining school effectiveness, and (b) traditional preparation and state certification programs fail to anticipate the demands placed upon principals in our changing schools (Principals for Our Changing Times, 1990.)

In this climate of change the selection of the principal continues to be pivotal. This study focuses on factors that enhance or inhibit an individuals' success in obtaining a principalship. It examines career and personal goals of those who aspire to the principalship.

The Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze the factors that influence the promotion of assistant principal to principal. The study provides a synthesis of the extant literature. It identifies recognized factors influencing promotion of the assistant principal to principal. It prioritizes promotion factors according to existing practice. It distinguishes between existing promotion factors and it describes those promotion factors that lead to the promotion of assistant principals to principals.

The research questions were:

1. What skills and knowledge factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to the principal?
2. What personal characteristics are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

3. What other important factors are perceived by new principals to be necessary for promotion from assistant principal to principal?

4. Who is perceived by new principals as most important in the promotion of assistant principal to the principal?

5. What factors are perceived by new principals to stand in the way of promotion from assistant principal to principal?

6. What other experience factors are perceived by new principals to be important in the selection of assistant principal to principal?

7. What assistant principal experiences are useful to the new principal?

8. What are the career and personal goals of new principals?

Summary of Findings

Demographic Information

The analysis of responses to the demographic portion of the survey revealed that the new secondary school principals in Virginia were mostly white, male, and middle-aged. They were married, and had at least one child. They held a
master's degree and had been in the field of education for a minimum of six years. They were assistant principals prior to becoming a principal.

**Research Question One: Skills and Knowledge Factors**

Analysis of the data gathered on most important skills and knowledge requirements for promotion revealed that new secondary school principals in Virginia believed leadership skills, organization skills and problem solving ability were the most important skills and knowledge requirements for promotion from assistant principal to principal.

**Research Question Two: Personal Characteristics**

Principals most strongly agreed in their ratings that sensitivity to the feelings of others was an important personal characteristic factor in promotion. More of them agreed on the importance of this characteristic than on any other factor. The other personal characteristic that principals agreed was significant was decisiveness.

**Research Question Three: General Factors**

Principals rated reputation as the most important factor for promotion. Two types of reputation questions were asked on the questionnaire. One focused on reputation in the school system and one focused on reputation in the job presently held. Both received highest agreement scores thus underlining the importance reputation had as a promotion factor for principals.
Research Question Four: Important People Factors

In analysis of data collected concerning principals' opinion about who were important people to know for promotion, principals reported that knowing other administrators was important. Ninety percent (90%) agreed or strongly agreed that contact with other administrators was an important promotion factor. The principals also agreed or strongly agreed that being asked to apply for a position was an important factor in promotion.

Research Question Five: Inhibiting Factors

The purpose of the question was to find out what factors respondents felt inhibited the ability to be promoted. Principals said that people aspiring to principal promotion needed to be willing to move from division to division or school to school. Ninety-three percent (93%) agreed or strongly agreed that willingness to move was an important factor in ability to be promoted. Lack of diverse experience and failure to voice aspirations were also factors principals agreed were inhibitors to promotion.

Research Question Six: Other Factors

Principals indicated that graduate education beyond certification requirements and leadership in professional organizations were somewhat important for promotion. However, these factors were not considered to be as
important for promotion as other factors relating to the other research questions.

**Five Most Important Factors: Responses to Open Ended Questions**

Respondents in this study were asked to write the five factors they considered most important for promotion from assistant principal to principal. They were asked to rank these five factors from one to five in importance with one representing the most important ranking. The purpose of the question was to allow participants input outside of the questions supplied by the researcher. The results of this ranking were that 32 percent (32%) of the respondents ranked leadership the most important factor for promotion. Nineteen percent (19%) ranked professional knowledge as most important. Thirteen percent (13%) ranked sensitivity or people skills most important and thirteen percent (13%) ranked professional background as number one in importance for promotion.

The open ended ranking of leadership as the most important factor reinforced the findings on the first research question focused on skills and knowledge factors for promotion. Both people skills, which reinforced the responses of sensitivity to the needs of people as the most important personal characteristic for promotion and professional background, which reinforced the importance of
diversity of experience as most important, supported the
data gathered in the research question focused on these
factors. The finding that 13 percent (13%) of the
participant ranked professional knowledge, which is
analogous to professional training and involvement in
organizations, as important for promotion was contradictory
to what respondents reported on the Likert-type questions
about advanced education.

Research Question Seven: Experience Factors

The experiences that principals rated as most useful to
them from their assistant principalship experience were
teacher evaluation, substitute teachers, and student
discipline. While 41 percent (41%) (N=47) ranked teacher
evaluation as a most important experience, however, 35
percent (35%) (N=47) ranked it as least important. And
while 43 percent (43%) (N=47) ranked student discipline as a
most important assistant principal experience, 35 percent
(35%) (N=47) ranked that experience least important.
Similarly, substitute teachers was ranked by 43 percent
(43%) (N=47) to be a most important assistant principal
experience, but 32 percent (32%) (N=47) rated that same
experience as least important.

Research Question Eight: Career and Personal Goals

Principals registered changes in their thinking about
the importance of salary and exercising leadership between

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the time they began their teaching career and the time they entered their administrative career. When entering administration 27 subjects valued salary higher than they had when they entered teaching. At the beginning of their teaching careers, 12 subjects rated salary as medium in importance when they entered teaching, whereas they considered salary highly important when entering administration. Similarly, nine subjects who rated salary of little importance when they entered teaching, rated salary highly important when entering administration. Three principals who rated salary of little importance entering teaching rated it of medium importance entering administration, an increase in its importance.

Principals either continued to rate exercising leadership as important or increased the importance of exercising leadership between the time they began their teaching career and when they entered administration. Fourteen principals said being able to exercise leadership was most important when they entered teaching and it continued to be ranked most important to them when they entered administration. Eight people said exercising leadership was highly important to them when they entered teaching, but rated it most important when entering administration. Six people increased the importance they attributed to exercising leadership from medium importance
when entering teaching to most important when entering administration. Those individuals who did not change their opinion on this factor held it as most important when entering teaching and administration.

Although there were shifts in the importance attributed to the other factors in this section on goals, they were minor in comparison with salary and exercising leadership. Twenty percent (20%) registered an increase in the importance to them of using their ability. While few respondents changed their opinion on the importance of working with people, there was a slight shift from most important when entering teaching to less important when entering administration. The shifts registered by participants in the study on security were from more important to less important between the time they entered teaching and the time they entered administration. Principals reported little change in the importance helping others had between when they entered teaching and administration. Likewise with vacation/hours, this career element was of little importance for the majority of respondents at both career points.

Ranked Promotion Factors

Principals were asked to write in rank order from one to five (one being most important) the five promotion factors they considered most significant for promotion from
assistant principal to principal. This part of the survey gave respondents opportunity to provide any response. No list was provided, no previous questions were referenced. Over 120 different responses were provided by the participants. In order to manage the large variation of responses, content analysis was conducted on the responses and an indexing scheme was developed. The indexing scheme was comprised of eight categories. The categories that emerged were leadership, organization, human relations, professional background, people skills, personal characteristics, professional knowledge, and other factors.

Analysis of principals' response to the most important promotion factors revealed leadership the most important promotion factor necessary for advancement from assistant principal to principal. Personal characteristics and organization were the other factors ranked most important by principals participating in the study.

Other factors appearing in the ranking of most important factors were circumstances, and human relations. These factors were mentioned by a small number of respondents. Hence they appear to be outliers that while important to certain individuals' circumstances, do not impact all aspirants to promotion in all settings in the same manner as leadership, personal characteristics and organization.
Conclusions

Promotion Factors

Skills and Knowledge Factors

The major factors to be reported in this study were reflections of factors found in promotion literature, job announcements, and general promotion characteristics. Among the skills and knowledge requirements needed for promotion to principal, respondents indicated that leadership, organization and problem solving ability were the most important. The study respondents rated leadership as the most significant factor.

The finding of leadership as the most important skill and knowledge promotion factor was not unexpected; however, aspirants to principalships need to analyze carefully what leadership means. When participants were asked to rank the five most important promotion factors, 44 percent (44%) (N=47) of the responses that fit into the indexing scheme in leadership used the word motivation to convey their conceptual meaning of leadership. It may be that while leadership style is studied in educational administration courses, motivation is the underlying element upon which leaders must focus. The findings that leadership, organization, and problem solving ability (Bass, 1989; Daily, 1989; Paston, 1989) are considered the primary requirements for promotion confirm the literature, criteria
for evaluation in principal assessment centers and conventional wisdom.

**Personal Characteristics**

The study participants most strongly agreed that sensitivity to feelings of others was the most important personal characteristic for promotion to principal. While the literature does not talk about sensitivity *per se*, humanism is recognized in the literature (Bryant 1978; Cornett, 1983) as well as in conventional wisdom as important.

In the indexing scheme developed for the study responses, people skills was the umbrella term used to indicate sensitivity issues. Sensitivity to the feelings of others can appear as kindness, but it always means being tuned in to what’s going on. This is not merely for the purpose of observing social amenities, it helps avoid walking into minefields. Principals develop sensitivity for survival. Sensitivity manifests itself differently according to personality. While in some individuals sensitivity seems to occur naturally as an out-going caring toward others, it is a trait that can be developed. Whether a naturally occurring manifestation of a warm personality or a carefully developed skill, however, it is the personal characteristic the participants in this study considered the most important for promotion. If the principal shows
interest in the people that are doing the job for him or her, those people will perform the job better. Sensitivity enables the principal to know what is going on and hence avoid people problems that detract from achieving school goals. For promotion this characteristic must be in evidence to convince those in a position to promote a candidate that the individual aspiring toward promotion as a principal will be able to succeed.

**General Factors**

Respondents selected administrative reputation as the most important general factor in promotion. A good reputation is a precondition for promotion to principal (Marshall, 1992). The reputation factor as discussed in this study was defined as doing a good job in the present position and having a reputation for it. The respondents agreed that having a good reputation was more important than other promotion factors.

**Important People**

Principals in this study responded that the most important people to know for promotion were other administrators as opposed to school board members and central office personnel. Other administrators could be peers as well as superiors. They could be other principals or a superintendent. According to the study done by Holliday (1989) superintendents are the most important
people in the selection of principals. The references given to superintendents come from other administrators. It would seem that while the respondents in this study did not identify superintendents specifically, their conviction that knowing other administrators would agree with the findings in Holliday’s Ohio study because of the influence other administrators could have through recommendations to the superintendent when he or she is making the selection. The respondents in this study also believed that being asked to apply for a position by a superintendent or other administrator at a higher level was an important factor, 90 percent (90%) (N=47) agreed or strongly agreed that contact with other administrators was most important. It appears that what principals meant by their strong indication about the importance of interacting with and knowing other administrators was the concept of networking. This finding is in keeping with what Marshall (1992) called the administrative "grapevine". Through networking principals can not only learn of situational politics and possible job opportunities for themselves and those they know, but also they can rely on the recommendations of those other administrators for favorable recommendations. Although principals were clear about the importance of knowing other school administrators, it remains unclear whether knowing other administrators aids one in obtaining a position.
Inhibiting Factors

Principals felt that inhibiting factors for promotion were related to lack of diverse experience. As noted by other researchers, both lack of diverse experience and disinterest or inability to move can be inhibiting for promotion (Cornett, 1983; Marshall, 1992). They also indicated that failure to voice aspirations for promotion inhibited getting promoted.

In examining willingness to move, the issue may not have been the moving itself, but the willingness to accept inconvenience to reach the goal of the promotion. The strength of the motivation for the job may be the issue. Those who willingly moved for promotions said it was important. Some respondents were promoted to the principalship from an assistant principalship at the same school. They were successful in achieving their goal without moving. It appears that willingness to move is a measure of motivation to secure the position. However, moving may not be required in every situation involving a promotion to principal.

Other Factors

Principals did not consider graduate education beyond the certification requirements of the state or leadership in professional organizations as particularly important for promotion. While not ends in themselves, involvement in
professional leadership activities and participation in
graduate courses clearly provides opportunities for
networking with other administrators. Respondents did agree
that knowing other administrators was important for
promotion. It is not clear why the respondents did not
directly make the connections between the importance of
these activities for getting to know other administrators.
Possibly because of the way the questions were asked, the
participants had no way to connect the questions and
consequently they simply answered them for their face value.
Principals indicated through their responses to other survey
questions that these activities are important. It may be
that in small school divisions these networking
opportunities are of less importance than they are in large
urban and suburban school districts.

Rank Ordered Experience Factors

Principals in almost equal numbers ranked the most
significant assistant principal experiences as most valuable
and least valuable.

Teacher evaluation was ranked as a most valuable
experience by 41 percent (41%) (N=47) of the respondents at
the same time that 35 percent (35%) (N=47) ranked it as
least valuable. This disparity may reflect differences in
the quality of evaluation systems and the impact that the
evaluation has on the teacher, school, and principal. For
example, in some divisions where a very good evaluation results in merit pay or a very poor evaluation leads to dismissal, teacher evaluation has become a high-stakes activity for all concerned. In other divisions evaluation systems are less time consuming and produce less monetary and career-affecting outcomes. The possibility exists that for those principals responsible for teacher evaluation as assistant principals in a rigorous program, this experience is a significant one, whereas the same responsibility in a system with a less demanding evaluation system would not have a significant impact on assistant principals aspiring to principalships.

Likewise, student discipline had a high percentage (43%, N=47) of respondents ranking it high in importance as an assistant principal experience and a high percentage (35%, N=47) ranking this activity low in importance.

A possible explanation for this bi-polar response may rest in the nature of the schools in which principals gained their assistant principal experience. If a principal’s assistant principal experience was in a school with few student discipline issues with which to deal, he or she might rank student discipline low in terms of its importance as an experience preparing him or her for the principalship. And if a principal was the new head of a school with many student discipline problems to solve, then he or she too
would value the experience he or she had as an assistant principal that prepared him or her for handling these problems as a principal. However, if, in the converse, an assistant principal had his or her experience in a school with few student discipline issues to deal with, then they would not rank this as a valuable experience item.

Similar to teacher evaluation and student discipline, substitute teacher responsibility was ranked by 43 percent (43%) of the study participants as a very valuable assistant principal experience while 32 percent (32%) ranked it as of little value to them. This dichotomy might be explained on the basis that some principals may not have had responsibility for substitute teachers.

Career and Personal Goals

Principals were asked to reflect on their feelings about selected professional and personal goals at the beginning of their teaching careers and the beginning of their administrative careers. The same question prompts were given to them for the two different times. There was a shift in thinking from what was of most importance and what was of little importance at the beginning of both the teaching career and the administrative career. Although the changes were subtle, they were picked up when cross tabulations were run.
Not surprisingly, principals in the study indicated that salary increased in importance to them from the time they entered teaching to the time they entered administration. For 83 percent (83%) (N=47) it became a more important consideration. The increase in the importance of salary could be attributed to several possible factors. First at the time that principals were entering administration, they were older and in most cases married with children. At the earlier point in their lives, when they were beginning their careers, most were satisfied with the salary they received as beginning teachers. The demands on income resulting from family responsibilities and other factors make a good salary more important to these principals. Second, the increased time and responsibility that their administrative positions demand seemed commensurate with additional remuneration. Third, inflation may have cut into any real increase in salary experienced by principals during the time between beginning teaching and beginning administration.

Another factor that showed a marked increase in importance for principals between beginning their administrative careers was exercising leadership. While this component of job satisfaction was most important for 31 percent (31%) (N=47) of the principals at both points in their professional careers, for another 31 percent (31%)
(N=47) it increased in importance as they entered administration from highly important to most important and of medium importance to most important. It would appear that to some respondents, exercising leadership may have been important to early in their careers and they pursued administration in order to have more opportunity to do so; to others a desire for the opportunity to exercise leadership may have developed as they progressed through their careers. Although the exact evolution of interest in leadership is a matter for speculation, it is not surprising that those in leadership positions would consider exercising leadership most important to them in their careers.

Only a small percentage (20%) of the principals in the study indicated that using their ability was more important to them when they entered their administrative careers than when they entered their teaching careers. Whether this lack of increased importance corresponds with a modesty in these individuals that precluded their focusing on having particular abilities is not clear. This finding is interesting in light of what Greenfield (1985) reported in the Austin Brown study. They found that rapidly mobile assistant principals reported that they thought educational administration would provide them with opportunities to use their special abilities and aptitudes.
Principals indicated in the study that working with people had shifted from being a most important component of their job when entering teaching to a less important part when they entered administration. It may be that although principals work intensively with people in their positions as administrators, the day-to-day pressure to "get the job done" may impel them to rely somewhat on the authority of their position and less on discussion and persuasion.

For most respondents security became less important. Certainly, in administration there is less security than in teaching because there is no tenure. It stands to reason then that those who are risk takers are willing to attach less importance to security when they venture into the uncharted waters of their administrative careers.

Summary

The findings of the study validated many of the previously identified factors that were evidenced in the literature on promotion. The new principals confirmed leadership, organization, problem solving ability, sensitivity to the feelings of others, and good reputation as most important for promotion. They said that willingness to move was important and that being asked to apply for a positions was also important (Cornett, 1983; Holliday, 1989; Marshall, 1989).
Further, the assistant principal experiences that new principals said were most valuable to them in their new positions were those involving student discipline, substitute teachers, and teacher evaluation.

These and other findings of the study, while validating known factors, also indicate that little change has taken place in promotion practice, and that getting at subtleties such as the differences between candidates equally well qualified is elusive. While it was hoped that this study would shed some light on these subtleties, the study instrument used was not sufficiently refined to accomplish this end.

Recommendations for Further Study

Results of this study have shown that individuals who had recently completed the move from assistant principal to principal had a sense of those factors that were operative in their promotions. Nonetheless, while validation of previously known promotion factors took place, little new information was forthcoming from study results. Responses indicated that the participants had clear and strong ideas about the factors involved in promotion. However, the difference between known factors and unknown was not clearly identified. It is recommended that further study on this subject be effected with a focus on the distinguishing
factors between those that are successful in their bid for promotion and those that are not.

Recommendations for further research that could result from this study include the following.

1. Surveying those assistant principals who have applied for principal positions and not been successful in securing a promotion.
2. Comparing promotion practices between large and small, rural and suburban school districts.
3. Conducting a national random sample of secondary-school principals focusing on promotion factors.
4. Conducting a study of promotion procedures comparing regional similarities and differences.
5. Conducting a study of evaluation criteria and new principal profiles.
6. Studying the similarities and differences between individuals who have pursued a promotion for an extended period of time and those who have moved quickly through the levels of administrative responsibility to the principalship.
7. Studying similarities and differences between male and female promotion factors.
8. Conducting the same study with superintendents.
Additional suggestions include but are not limited to:

1. Adaptation of constructs from other disciplines to see if they fit promotion in education.

2. Additional descriptive study to add to body of knowledge on principal promotion.

There is a need in the literature to articulate more clearly constructs for promotion. Insufficient theoretical evidence in this field of study suggests the need for broader research in this area.
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APPENDIX A

A STATEWIDE SURVEY OF INFLUENCES REPORTED BY NEW PRINCIPALS ON PROMOTION/SELECTION AND PRACTICE OF ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS ASPIRING TO THE PRINCIPALSHIP

PLEASE PRINT YOUR NAME ____________________________
ADDRESS ____________________________

This questionnaire is being sent to selected individuals in Virginia who have recently assumed the position of principal and were assistant principals prior to becoming principal. The survey is designed to gather data about two areas: 1. factors that may influence promotion to the principalship. 2. assistant principal experiences that are most helpful to you in the principalship.

The information collected by this questionnaire will be kept in strict confidence. In order to control the return on my sample, I must know who returned my questionnaire. Once I have identified you as a respondent, your name will no longer be associated with any of your responses. The data analysis will be reported in such a way that no one can link you with a given response.

PART I

The items that appear in part one of this questionnaire concern the influences that led to your promotion to principal. The questions are based on information drawn from the literature on promotion/selection of assistant principals and principals and on information supplied by a panel of experts.

PLEASE INDICATE YOUR GENERAL BELIEF ABOUT HOW THE PROMOTION TO PRINCIPAL PROCESS TAKES PLACE BY PLACING A CHECK ON THE APPROPRIATE LINE IN THE QUESTIONS BELOW.

SA=STRONGLY AGREE; A=AGREE; D=DISAGREE; SD=STRONGLY DISAGREE

142
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Having frequent contacts with central office personnel is important for promotion to principal.</th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Having contacts with school board members is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Having contacts with other administrators is not important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Having a reputation for doing a good job in present position is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
<td>Willingness to move to a new school is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
<td>Voicing your promotion aspirations to others in your organization is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>6.</td>
<td>7. Affirmative action is not one of the primary factors in the promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>7.</td>
<td>Persistence in responding to promotion opportunities is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>8.</td>
<td>Having a good reputation is not important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>9.</td>
<td>Having diverse administrative experience at different levels is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>10.</td>
<td>Knowing the &quot;right&quot; people is not important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>11.</td>
<td>Having diverse experience in different school divisions is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>12.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
13. In designating a principal, consideration of the cultural makeup of the attendance area should be considered. [__  ___  ___  ___]

14. Graduate education beyond certification requirements is important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

15. Being asked by central administration to apply for a position is not important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

16. Providing leadership in professional organizations is important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

17. Your image is not important in your being promoted to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

18. Demonstrated knowledge of management of budget is important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

19. Responding with sensitivity to the feelings of others is not important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

20. Demonstrated knowledge of management of the facility is important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

21. Demonstrated ability to make a decision is not important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

22. Demonstrated knowledge of maintenance of equipment such as buses and furnaces is important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]

23. Problem analysis ability is not important for promotion to principal. [__  ___  ___  ___]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>SA</th>
<th>A</th>
<th>D</th>
<th>SD</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>24. Demonstrated knowledge of information support systems is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>25. Organization skills need not be apparent for promotion to principal.</td>
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<td>26. Having a mentor is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>27. Leadership skills need not be apparent for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>28. People get a promotion to principal without being knowledgeable about information support systems.</td>
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<tr>
<td>29. Organization skills need to be apparent for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>30. Demonstrated knowledge of facility management is not necessary for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>31. Problem analysis ability is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>32. Leadership skills need to be apparent for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>33. Demonstrated knowledge of budget is not necessary for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>34. Decisive judgement is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>35. It is not necessary to provide leadership in professional organizations for promotion to principal.</td>
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<tr>
<td>36. Responding with sensitivity to the feelings of others is important for promotion to principal.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
37. Graduate education beyond certification requirements is not necessary for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

38. Presenting yourself well on paper and in person is important to being promoted to principal. __ __ __ __

39. Having diverse experience at different administrative levels is not necessary for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

40. Being asked to apply for a position is important in promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

41. It is not important to have diverse experience in different school divisions for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

42. "Match" of demographic profile to the community is important in promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

43. It is not necessary to be persistent in applying for promotion opportunities for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

44. Knowing the "right" people is important in promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

45. It is not necessary to voice your promotion aspirations to others in your organization for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

46. Having a good reputation in your organization is important for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __

47. Having frequent contacts with central office personnel is not important for promotion to principal. __ __ __ __
48. Affirmative action is important in promotion to principal to principal.  

\[ \text{SA} \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{SD} \]

49. Having frequent contacts with school board members is not important for promotion to principal.  

\[ \text{SA} \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{SD} \]

50. Willingness to change place of work is not important for promotion to principal.  

\[ \text{SA} \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{SD} \]

51. Having contacts with other administrators is important for promotion to principal.  

\[ \text{SA} \quad \text{A} \quad \text{D} \quad \text{SD} \]

PART II

A. In the space below please rank the five items that you think are most important for promotion to principal.

1.  

2.  

3.  

4.  

5.  

PART III

Please rank in ascending order of importance from 1 to 10 (10= most important) those areas of experience that you had as an assistant principal that have been most helpful to you as a new principal. If you have not held an assistant principal position, go to part IV.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>EXPERIENCE</th>
<th>RANK</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. parent complaint</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. budget experience</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. scheduling</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. planning outside activities</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. substitute teachers</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. buses</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. building maintenance</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. custodians</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. teacher evaluation</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. student discipline</td>
<td>_____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PART IV

The following part of this questionnaire is divided into three sections. Please CIRCLE your answer or FILL IN THE BLANKS on this sheet.

PERSONAL INFORMATION

Please supply the following information by circling the correct answer or filling in the blank.

1. YOUR AGE______  2. GENDER______

3. FORMAL TRAINING  a. BA  b. BS  c. MS  d. MEd
   e. Masters+15  f. Masters+30  g. Masters+60
   h. Eds  i. CAGS  j. EdD  k. PhD

4. YOUR OFFICIAL TITLE ____________________________

5. YEARS IN CURRENT POSITION  a. Less than 1  b. 1-3
   c. 4-6  d. 7-9  e. 10-13  f. 14-16  g. 17-19
   h. 20 or more

6. MARRIAGE STATUS  M____  S____  D____  W____

7. NUMBER OF CHILDREN ____
8. RACE ________________

9. YEARS IN EDUCATION (including teaching) #________

10. YEARS AS ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL #_______

11. YEARS AS PRINCIPAL #_______

HOW IMPORTANT TO YOU WERE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT JOBS AND CAREERS AT THE TIME THAT YOU DECIDED TO ENTER TEACHING?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Teaching will:</th>
<th>Most Important</th>
<th>Highly Imp.</th>
<th>Medium Imp.</th>
<th>Little Imp.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Provide me with a chance to make a good salary.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Provide an opportunity to use my special abilities.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Give me social status or prestige.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Permit me an opportunity to work with people rather than things.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Permit me to be creative and original.</td>
<td>__</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Give me a chance to exercise leadership.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Enable me to look forward to a stable secure future.</td>
<td>__</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Give me an opportunity to be helpful to others.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
<td>____</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Excellent hours/vacations.</td>
<td>__</td>
<td>____</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Other (specific)__________</td>
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<td>____</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
HOW IMPORTANT TO YOU WERE THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ABOUT JOBS AND CAREERS WHEN YOU DECIDED TO ENTER ADMINISTRATION?

Administration will:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Little Imp.</th>
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<td>1. Provide me with a chance to make a good salary.</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Other (specific)________</td>
<td>___</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

WHICH STATEMENT BEST SUMMARIZES YOUR VIEWS AT THE TIME THAT YOU ACCEPTED THE POSITION OF PRINCIPAL?

a. I plan to be a principals for the rest of my career._____

b. I eventually plan to be promoted to a higher position._____

c. I have not thought about it._____

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APPENDIX B

Dear Secondary School Principal:

We are conducting a study focusing on the advancement of school personnel to the principalship. In particular we are considering: (1) factors affecting the promotion to the principalship and (2) experiences that are helpful to the individual new to the principalship. The study is being conducted as part of a dissertation.

You have been identified as a new secondary school principal in the Virginia Department of Education's Virginia Educational Directory. Your input based on your personal experiences would be gratefully appreciated and may be of great benefit to aspiring principals. A self-addressed, stamped envelope has been sent to you along with the questionnaire. Would you please complete the questionnaire and return it to us as soon as possible?

We will be happy to provide a summary of the results of this study to you at your request. Your cooperation and assistance in the collection of the requested data will be very helpful. We thank you for your help and the time you have taken from your busy schedule to provide it.

Sincerely,

Dr. Wayne Warner
Professor, Educational Administration
Virginia Tech
Blacksburg, VA

Elizabeth W. Lloyd
Graduate Student
Virginia Tech
Dear Principal,

On March 18, 1993 I mailed you a survey questionnaire requesting your opinions about factors that influence promotion to the principalship, but I have not yet heard from you. Your input on this questionnaire is vitally important to me. The responses I have already received are very interesting and if you are interested I would be happy to send you results.

I understand this is a busy time of year but I would greatly appreciate you taking the time to fill out the survey and return it to me. Your assistance in this effort will be very much appreciated.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth W. Lloyd, Assistant Principal
Doctoral Student
Va Tech

Dr. Wayne Warner
Professor of Education
Department of Education
Va Tech

Please call if you need another survey form. 703-836-3142 or 703-204-8100
APPENDIX D

May 7, 1993
603 South Overlook Drive
Alexandria, VA 22305

Dear Secondary School Principal:

At the end of March you received a survey questionnaire which you were asked to complete and return to me asking your opinion on factors influencing promotion of assistant principals to the principalship. Your questionnaire has not yet been returned.

Although encouraged by the number of individuals who have returned their questionnaires, your input is still needed to insure the success of this study.

It may be that you have already mailed your questionnaire back to me in response to a reminder I sent last week. If so please forgive this additional intrusion on your time. On the other hand, if you have not already done so. Would you please take a few minutes to answer the enclosed questionnaire and return it so me in the self-addressed, stamped envelope on or before May 14?

I hope to hear from you soon in order to include your input in my study. Again thank you for your contribution to this endeavor.

Sincerely,

Elizabeth W. LLoyd
Doctoral Student
Virginia Tech

Dr. Wayne Warner
Professor, Department of Education
Virginia Tech
APPENDIX E

Individual Responses to Open Ended Ranking Question

Leadership
Organization Skills
Knowledge
Making Good Decisions
Good listener
Having vision (for development of child and school)
Good PR skills
Managing time/people/money
Conflict Management
Instructional Skills
Human relations skills
Personal caring
Reputation
Fairness Education
Exposure
Competence as A. P.
Experience in or awareness of principal role
Ability to work with many types of people
Ability to inspire confidence in those who will select you
Being results driven, focused person, serious about your advancement
Social Skills
Patience
Health

Good Mentors: Mentor
Development of skills/abilities
High visibility in total school system/community
Graduate degree
Hard work/long hours
Appropriate Education, certification
Administrative experience as A. P.
Contacts with central office administrators
Diversity of experience
Knowing the right people/having contacts
Presenting self well in person/on paper
Sensitivity and problem analysis ability
Knowledge of budgets and information support systems
Knowledge of school based operations
Knowledge of facility management
Commitments to programs in your building
Willingness to work long hours
Ability to discern
Time management skills
Vision
Good discipline as classroom teacher

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Ability to deal with parents
Strong instructional knowledge
Fiscal responsibility
Demonstrated competence
Ability to see big picture
Good judgement
Image
Responsible/reliable
Visibility
Knowledge of school law (decisions)
Professional growth
Modeling a work ethic
Delegating
Empowering
Positive Affect
Flexibility
Mobility
Initiative
Team player
Be respected
Affirmative action
Demographics
Whim of the superintendent
Loves children
Personal behavior
Knowledge of systems and how they work
Knowing people in right places
Initiate in leadership
Innovative/handle stressful situations
Demonstrated work ethic
Being in the right place at the right time
Viewed as a change agent
"Match"
Communication skills
Community support
Energy/Endurance
Honesty/Integrity
Professional image
Ability to delegate and share decision making
Confidence
Previous success
Ability to work effectively with students
Willingness to promote/direct restructuring of education
Expertise in specific school system
Knowledge/understanding of curriculum
Educational philosophy
Management style
Knowledge of educational research (current)
Food discipline as classroom teacher
Humor
Persistent
Personality
Recommendations
Willing to pick and sort jobs applied for
Fact finding skills
Promoter of organizational growth
Collaborative skills
Integrity
Voicing aspirations
Ability to motivate others
Influential social contact
Knowing school board members