THE ROLE OF MENTORS IN THE DEVELOPMENT

OF SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

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(**ABSTRACT**)

The purpose of this study was to describe the role that mentors played in the development of school principals. This study focused on the role of mentors in the development of school principals as described by retired school principals who participated in the "Oral History of the Principalship Project," directed by Dr. Patrick W. Carlton. This research presents the perspectives of fifteen retired school principals on the informal mentoring process. It also identified and discussed differences the retired principals found in mentoring relationships among males and females.

Qualitative methodology was used in this study. Principals who retired between 1960 and 1997 were interviewed and described the role that mentors played in their professional development and what role, if any, they played in a formal mentoring process.

The mentors of the retired principals contributed significantly to their career development. During the time that they were serving as principal, the nature of the mentor network was primarily informal. Most of the retired principals made no application for the principalship but were invited to serve in that position. Most participants believed that women were likely to climb the career ladder faster with the help

of a mentor. As their careers were nearing an end, some of the participants were involved in the development of formal mentoring programs. Whether engaged in formal or informal mentoring processes, all of the participants made contributions. Those participants who had mentors all chose to mentor others. Ultimately, the retired principals described mentoring as having made an important contribution to their development as school principals. They encouraged the continued use of mentoring in both formal and informal venues.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my wonderful, loving parents, John and Ethel Doherty. They have always been a constant source of inspiration to me. They are my heroes.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background

Several dissertations have been completed on factors that contribute to the success of educators. In Samuel Perry's dissertation, all of the principals interviewed mentioned a mentor or role model who had a significant impact on their careers as successful school administrators.[1] In another dissertation, Gregory Williams noted that the role of a mentor appeared to have an impact on the success of school superintendents and recommended that further research would be helpful in training aspiring administrators.[2]

It seems clear that mentors play a key role in the lives of school administrators. Throughout the last decade principal preparation programs have been making efforts to include a formal mentoring process in their approaches to instruction. In 1986 the Danforth Foundation announced its support of innovative principal preparation programs at universities across the nation. Although the programs supported by this foundation differed, they all included a mentoring component.[3] Mentoring is now being implemented as a critical component of more effective leadership development programs in a large number of universities across the United States. More than twenty states currently have mandated mentoring programs for new administrators. Formal mentoring programs are now considered key components of the new principal induction process.[4]

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[1]Samuel Perry, "Key Events in the Lives of Successful Middle School Principals" (Ed.D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1994), 105.

[2]Gregory J. Williams, "Key Life Events of Successful School Superintendents in North Carolina" (Ed.D. diss, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1996), 105.

[3]John C. Daresh and M.A. Playko. "Mentoring Programs for Aspiring Administrators: An Analysis of Benefits to Mentors," *ERS Spectrum* (Summer 1993):12.

[4]John C. Daresh. "Research Base on Mentoring for Educational Leaders: What do we know?" *Journal of Educational Administration* 33, no.5 (1995): 7.

The term mentor is derived from Greek mythology. The story of Mentor is told in Homer's Odyssey. When Odysseus set off for the Trojan Wars, he instructed his wise advisor, Mentor, to stay and take charge of his son, Telemachus, serving as a counselor and advisor. Greek mythology also tells of Athene, the female goddess of Wisdom, and how she would sometimes assume the form of Mentor. Conceivably, then, other characteristics could also be added to Mentor, those of the mother figure and the wisdom of Athene.[5]

Available literature provides many definitions for the word mentor. In *Webster's New World College Dictionary*, mentor is defined as: (1) a wise loyal advisor, (2) a teacher or a coach. Dodgson defined a mentor as someone who is a trusted and experienced counselor who can influence the career development of an associate in a warm, caring and helpful relationship. Dodgson admits that the definition of a mentor is elusive and varies according to the view of the author.[6] Zey defines a mentor as a person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting and at times promoting or sponsoring.[7] Zey's definition will be used for the purpose of this study.

Although the current research base on mentoring is growing, the majority of the studies that have been conducted examined issues associated with the implementation and structuring of mentoring programs.[8] There is a lack of historical antecedents for administrative mentorships. According to Muse, the informal mentoring process in

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[5]Brian J. Caldwell and Earl M.A Carter, eds., *The Return of the Mentor* (Washington D.C.: The Falmer Press, 1993), 9.

[6]Judith Dodgson, "Do Women in Education Need Mentors?" *Education Canada* 26 (1986): 28.

[7]Michael G. Zey, *The Mentor Connection*: *Strategic Alliances in Corporate Life* (New Jersey, Transaction Publishers, 1990), 7.

[8]Daresh, John C. "Research Base on Mentoring for Educational Leaders: What do we know?" *Journal of Educational Administration* 33, no.5 (1995): 12.

education has no historical antecedents, with the exception of the 'good old boys' network.[9]

Statement of the Problem

While presently there is a rich literature on the formal process of mentoring, relatively little information is available on the informal mentoring process in education. There is a need to examine the role that mentors have played throughout the careers of public school principals, with particular emphasis upon the contributions of informal mentoring.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to describe the role that mentors played in the development of school principals. It traced the evolution of the mentoring process by means of historical perspectives on mentoring as described by fifteen retired principals and sought to determine what differences, if any, there were in mentoring relationships among males and females.

Research Questions

I.   Did mentors affect the career development of former school principals? If so, in what way?

II. How did the retired principals themselves contribute to the evolution of the mentoring process?

III. What was the nature of the mentor network during the time the subjects were serving as principals?

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[9]Ivan D. Muse and F.D. Wasden, *The Mentor Principal Handbook* (Provo, UT: Brigham Young University, 1988), 7.

Subsidiary Questions

I. Did mentors affect the career development of former school principals? If so, in what way?

1. How did mentors help assistant principals in climbing the career ladder?
2. To what extent did mentors encourage the retired principals to earn advanced educational degrees?
3. To what extent did mentors introduce protégés to colleagues and friends who were helpful to their careers?
4. Did mentors serve as advisors to the principals in their daily work life? If so, how?
5. Did mentors help principals make key decisions in running their schools? If so, how?
6. Did protégés follow their mentors as they moved into different positions?
7. Did the protégés have different mentors throughout the course of their careers?
8. Were female protégés more likely to climb the career ladder at a more rapid pace with the assistance of a mentor?

II. How did the retired principals themselves contribute to the evolution of the mentoring process?

1. Had the retired principals served as mentors to aspiring principals or other principals? If so, how was their protégé selected?
2. Had the retired principals participated in the development of any formal mentoring programs?
3. Had the retired principals participated as mentors in any formal mentoring programs?
4. What perceptions did the retired principals have of formal mentoring programs?

III. What was the nature of the mentor network during the time that the subjects were serving as principals?

1. Were the mentors of the retired principals generally of the same gender?

2. Did any of their colleagues also have mentors?

3. Were the mentoring relationships more personal or more professional in nature?

4. Did the families of the mentor and protégé know each other?

5. Was the mentor also serving as direct supervisor of the retired principal?

6. How were the mentors selected?

7. Did the mentors have more than one protégé during their careers?

8. Did the protégés ultimately surpass the mentor in educational or career development?

Limitations of the Study

The graduate students who conducted the interviews for the "Oral History of the Principalship Project" were given a set of questions to be used as guidelines during the interviews with retired principals. Due to the nature of the interviews, retired principals were not always asked all of the same questions. Further, not all the graduate students possessed uniform interviewing skills. As a result, there was some unevenness in both the content and the technical quality in the interviews collected by the graduate students.

The telephone interviews designed to extend the currently available information were not administered to all of the retired principals originally interviewed. Some of them had moved, leaving no current address, and at least thirteen interview subjects are known to be deceased. The attrition rate became apparent as requests for follow-up interviews were mailed to former principals in the original database. One of the inherent flaws of this study is that bias may occur as a result of this elimination process.

Due to the nature of the selection process, the sample cannot be assumed to be representative of the entire population of retired principals. The findings were generalized only to the pool of principals in the original database, and not to any larger group.

Definitions

The following definitions will be used for the purpose of this study:

Mentor: A person who oversees the career and development of another person, usually a junior, through teaching, counseling, providing psychological support, protecting, and at times promoting or sponsoring. The mentor may perform any or all of the above functions during the mentor relationship.

As a teacher, the mentor imparts various organizational and occupational skills to the protégé; instructs the protégé in the power and political framework of the organization, and gives the protégé tips on corporate comportment and social grace.

As a counselor and source of psychological support, the mentor generally tries to build the protégé's sense of self through 'pep talks,' confidence building, and the like.

As an intervenor, the mentor actually intercedes on behalf of the protégé, at some times protecting the protégé when organizational pressures become overbearing, at other times advertising the protégé as a 'good manager.'

As a sponsor, the mentor either promotes the protégé into a higher position (if the mentor has the power to do so) or influences the 'powers that be' to promote the protégé.[10]

Protégé: A person who perceives himself or was perceived by another person to have had his professional and/or personal growth and development significantly influenced by another person.[11]

Informal Mentorship: Informal Mentorship exists whenever one person explains to another the how or why of something.[12]

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[10]Zey, 7.

[11]Bobby J. Primus, Health Occupations: Effects on Personal Development" (Ed.D. diss, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1984), 14.

[12]Mel P. Heller and N. Sindelar, *Developing an Effective Teacher Mentor Program* (Bloomington, Indiana: Phi Delta Kappa Educational Foundation, 1991), 7.

Formal Mentorship: Formal Mentorship is the act of two people engaging in an organized, systematic relationship of providing and receiving assistance and insight.[13]

Significance of the Study

Little attention has been given to the informal administrative mentoring that has taken place for years in public school systems. This research presented the perspectives of fifteen retired principals on the informal mentoring process. Relationships of retired school principals and mentors were explored and analyzed. The information gathered in this study contributed to the research and literature on how mentoring affects the development of school principals.

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[13]Ibid.

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

Mentoring relationships span centuries and were first described in Greek Mythology. Over the years there have been both formal and informal mentoring programs. The use of mentoring in the business world has frequently been cited in the discussion of mentoring in the educational field. Chapter Two includes information regarding the history of mentoring, including both the corporate and educational fields, and descriptions of mentoring relationships. In this chapter formalized mentoring programs for aspiring administrators and newly hired administrators are also addressed. Finally, gender and the mentoring relationship are reviewed with an emphasis on the career development of women.

The History of Mentoring

The tradition of mentoring began with Mentor, a character in Greek Mythology. As Odysseus, King of Ithaca, prepared to leave for the Trojan Wars he instructed his faithful companion Mentor to remain in Ithaca and to take charge of his son, Telemachus. He was entrusted to teach Telemachus all of the things that would help him to become a great ruler. Mentor served as a teacher, role model, trusted advisor, counselor and, among many other things, a father figure to Telemachus. Thus, the classic mentoring relationship began.[14] "History is replete with examples of such relationships: Socrates and Plato, Freud and Jung, Lorenzo (sic) de' Medici and Michelangelo, Haydn and Beethoven, Hoad and Mead, Sartre and de Beauvoir, and so on."[15]

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[14]Caldwell, 9-10.

[15]Sharan Merriam, "Mentors and Proteges: A Critical Review of the Literature," *Adult Education Quarterly* 33, no. 3 (Spring 1983): 162.

Mentoring Relationships and Functions

The practice of mentoring is now being acknowledged and embraced by major business corporations, schools and universities, foundations, and associations as a formal component of career and human resource development.[16] Levinson, in a study of adult male development, placed great emphasis on mentoring relationships. He described the functions of a mentor:

> He may act as a teacher to enhance the young man's skills and intellectual development. Serving as sponsor, he may use his influence to facilitate the young man's entry and advancement. He may be a host and guide, welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources and cast of characters. Through his own virtues, achievements and way of living, the mentor may be an exemplar that the protégé can admire and seek to emulate. He may provide counsel and moral support in times of stress. The mentor has another function, and this is developmentally the most crucial one: to support and facilitate the *realization of the Dream.*[17]

Levinson found the mentoring relationship extremely important in adult male development. "Poor mentoring in early adulthood is the equivalent of poor parenting in childhood: without adequate mentoring a young man's entry into the adult world is greatly hampered."[18]

In <u>Mentoring at Work</u>, Kram described some of the functions that the mentoring relationship provides:

> Through sponsorship, coaching, protection, exposure-and-visibility, or challenging work the junior colleague learns the ropes of organizational life and prepares for advancement opportunities. Through role modeling, acceptance-and-confirmation, counseling, or friendship, he or she develops

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[16]Martin Gerstein, "Mentoring: An Age Old Practice in a Knowledge-Based Society," *Journal of Counseling and Development* 64 (October 1985): 156.

[17] Daniel L. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Man's Life* (New York: Knopf, 1978), 98-99.

[18]Ibid., 338.

a sense of competence, confidence, and effectiveness in the managerial role. By providing a range of career and psychosocial functions, the senior colleague gains recognition and respect from peers and superiors for developing young talent, receives support from the junior colleague who seeks counsel, and experiences satisfaction by helping a less experienced adult navigate effectively in the world of work.[19]

Kram described career functions as those aspects of the relationship that mainly enhance career advancement. Included in these functions were sponsorship, exposure-and-visibility, coaching, protection, and challenging assignments.[20] Kram described psychosocial functions as those aspects of the relationship that primarily enhance a sense of competence, clarity of identity and effectiveness in the managerial role. She identified these functions as role modeling, acceptance and confirmation, counseling, and friendship.[21]

"No matter how one chooses to describe the phases of mentoring, healthy mentor/protégé relationships involve a progression from relative protégé dependence at the beginning of the relationship to autonomy and self-reliance as the protégé grows into a colleague and a peer."[22] "Roughly eighty percent of the judgement jobs are hidden in the unpublished job market reached only through the grapevine or the mentor system."[23] This alone may be a reason for people to develop a mentor relationship.

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[19]Kathy E. Kram, *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life* (Illinois: Scott Foresman and Company, 1985), 47.

[20]Kathy E. Kram, "Phases of the Mentor Relationship," *Academy of Management Journal* 26, no.4 (1983): 614.

[21]Ibid., 614.

[22]Theresa M. Bey and C.T. Holmes, eds. *Mentoring: Contemporary Principles and Issues* (Reston, VA: Association of Teacher Educators, 1992), 12.

[23]Gail Sheehy, *Passages* (New York: Bantam Books, 1976), 190.

Mentoring in the Business World

Most of the empirical research on mentoring has been conducted in the business world. Although most studies of mentoring in business have documented that having a mentor is important to both men's and women's career advancement, not all successful men and women in business report having had a mentor.[24] In a study of business executives conducted by an international management firm, almost two thirds of the executives indicated that they had a mentor and those with mentors earned more money at a younger age and were more pleased with their career growth.[25] In an interview with the *Harvard Business Review* Donald Perkins stated that every manager must be a sponsor and felt that being a mentor was part of his responsibility:

> I don't know that anyone has ever succeeded in any business without having some unselfish sponsorship or mentorship, whatever it might have been called. Everyone who succeeds has had a mentor or mentors. We've all been helped. For some the help comes with more warmth than for others, and with some it's done with more forethought, but most people who succeed in a business will remember fondly the individuals who helped them in the early days.[26]

Research has shown that the mentor relationship has become prevalent in the workplace and that it adds measurably to the success and satisfaction of people at work.[27] Gaskill discusses the benefits of mentoring to both the mentors, and businesses:

> The protégé benefits through the gaining of support and knowledge; through increased self-esteem by involvement in developmental relationships, and by gaining clarity in career goals. Mentors also benefit

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[24]Sandra J. O'Dell, *Mentor Teacher Programs* (Washington, D.C.: National Education Association, 1990), 6.

[25]Gerard R. Roche, "Much Ado About Mentors," *Harvard Business Review* 57, no.1 (Jan/Feb 1979): 14.

[26] Eliza G.C. Collins and Patricia Scott, Eds. "Everyone Who Makes it Has a Mentor," *Harvard Business Review* 56, no. 4 (1978): 100.

[27]Gerstein, 157.

through the gaining of information and through the prestige of being involved in a mentor relationship. Formal mentoring programs can provide numerous benefits to an organization. For example, turnover can be reduced when junior executives perceive a concern for their well-being and career development. Frustrations of being lost in the system are minimized as individuals are acclimated to the organization and company culture. Networks within the organization are enhanced through increased communication. A result of this intervention is realized through managerial succession and development, reduced turnover, and increased productivity.[28]

Other reasons for which businesses are turning to mentoring programs include:

Growing competition among U.S. companies for a dwindling supply of qualified first time employees, as well as the affirmative action mandates of the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, The Civil Rights Act-Title VII, the Civil Service Reform Act of 1978, and enhanced societal awareness of the advisory/support needs of special populations (e.g. racial minorities, the disabled, and women engaged in occupations traditionally dominated by men), have stimulated development of formal mentoring programs in the public sector (the Internal Revenue Service, The Presidential Management Intern Program, the Federal Executive Development Program, and the Science and Education Administration of the U.S. Department of Agriculture) and in private businesses (Jewel Company, Federal Express, American Telephone and Telegraph's Bell Laboratories, Hughes Aircraft, Merrill, Lynch, Pierce, Smith, Kaiser Aluminum and Chemical Corporation, and Security Pacific National Bank). In addition, some colleges, universities and professional organizations have established formal mentoring programs.[29]

Zey's research found that mentoring relationships were critical in the corporate promotional structure. The respondents in his study described many chains of mentoring

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[28]LuAnn Ricketts Gaskill, "A Conceptual Framework for the Development, Implementation, and Evaluation of Formal Mentoring Programs," *Journal of Career Development* 20, no. 2, (Winter 1993): 157.

[29] Ann D. Carden, "Mentoring and Adult Career Development: The Evolution of a Theory," *The Counseling Psychologist* 18, no. 2, (April 1990): 285.

relationships in the upper stratum of organizations.[30] Career development, success, and advancement can be enhanced through the establishment of formal mentoring programs.[31]

Informal Mentoring

"Historically and traditionally a mentoring relationship has been an informal process. It is usually a chance relationship based on common goals and interests. The mentor enters a person's life at a time when changes are imminent, helps the person through changes, and then either departs, or develops a lasting friendship with the person."[32]

Results of a survey conducted on mentoring for college administrators showed that only one-fourth to one-third of college administrators had mentors. This study was particularly interesting because of the informal process of leadership development in academe. In this study, the surveys were followed by interviews which identified a series of steps in the mentor-protégé relationship. The first step usually involved the mentor's recognizing the talent and promise of the protégé. This was often followed by a series of tests that could either be arranged by the mentor, or which were part of the job of the protégé. During these 'tests' the potential protégé would be watched by the mentor to see how he/she carried out assigned responsibilities. The third step was when the actual mentor-protégé relationship began. At that point in time the mentor typically had the protégé work closely with him or her.[33]

In England there was a somewhat informal mentoring network that was called

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[30]Zey, 213.

[31]Gaskill, 158.

[32]Karen A. Fleming, "Mentoring: Is it the key to opening doors to women in educational administration?" *Education Canada*, 31 (Fall 1991): 28.

[33]Kathryn M. Moore, "The Role of Mentors in Developing Leaders for Academe," *Educational Record* 64, (Winter 1982): 23-25.

'sitting next to Nellie.' This was basically a restricted learning system through which the protégé was offered the chance to acquire skills vicariously and to acquire the skills demonstrated by the "Nellie" that he was permitted to watch. Concern was expressed that Nellie's methods would subsequently be regarded as the right and only way to do the job.[34] As a result, the British Government moved to the more formalized mentoring program discussed in the next section.

Zey reported that informal mentor relationships have formed the basis for many corporate success stories.[35] While Gaskill discussed the success of formal mentoring programs, she stated that "these programs are not viewed as a replacement for informal, spontaneous mentoring relationships."[36] In spite of such success stories, "many companies and organizations are turning to the formalized mentoring program because the mentoring takes place faster than during the informal process. The time (six months to a year) needed in informal mentoring for the mentor and mentee to bond is eliminated. Once the two have been selected and matched, mentoring begins right away. If the match is unsuccessful and the two will not be able to work it out, then the participants switch to other mentoring partners."[37]

Formal Principal Mentoring Programs

California, North Carolina, and Ohio were among the first states to create mandatory mentoring programs for beginning educational administrators. One of the commonalities in all of these states was that experienced administrators who were successful in the educational field were to be identified and selected to work with new

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[34]Caldwell, 59.

[35]Zey, xiii.

[36]Gaskill, 158.

[37]Fleming, 29.

administrators. Daresh and Playko believe that the use of such mentors is a powerful tool for bringing about effective school practice. Furthermore, they see structured mentoring programs as being very effective in helping both women and minority administrators move into leadership roles more smoothly. The Ohio Lead Center, a program supported by the Federal Leadership in Education Development Act of 1986, has developed some training materials and activities to support local induction programs in Ohio. These entry level programs helped smooth the transition of new administrators from the classroom to the front office and included a mentoring component. In Ohio, state certification policy calls for newly hired administrators to work with experienced colleagues as mentors.[38]

One program through which new principals are assigned mentors is called The Management Profile Program. This is an integrated professional development model that was developed at the Texas A&M University Principal's Center. It is modeled after a program used in the College of Business Administration, also at Texas A&M. This program begins with a videotaped interview of the new principal. The interview is extensive and is composed of open-ended questions. The results of the interview are assessed and compiled into a report that diagnoses the principal's relative strengths as well as areas that need to be developed. This confidential report becomes the property of the principal who was interviewed. The principals interviewed frequently work with their assessors to create a professional development plan for the next three years. They are then encouraged to choose a mentor who will work with them on this plan, preferably a principal who has also undergone management profiling. The principals select their own mentors, who have the option of declining the request for assistance. Mentors and mentees work together without any intervention from the central office. Mentors work in a variety of ways: they call periodically; meet on a regular basis; give advice; and serve as a coach, cheerleader and confidant. This is a time-consuming and structured mentoring

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[38]John C. Daresh and M.A. Playko, "Mentoring for Effective School Administration," *Urban Education* 25, no.1 (April 1990): 43-54.

program that encourages new principals to meet their goals and also to become mentors themselves.[39]

In England the 'sitting with Nellie' activity was dropped in 1992, when the British Government authorized each recently appointed school principal to experience seven days of mentoring by an experienced colleague. They explained their move to formal mentoring as follows:

> Mentoring trains principals while they are doing their own jobs. Each new principal is paired with an experienced principal, who guides learning through encouraging observation, discussion, and reflection. It claims to provide a personalized, hands-on learning experience. It offers structured management knowledge in a framework related to real issues facing school principals. It offers directed observation experience and friendly support, without being prescriptive about a right way to be a school principal.[40]

Pre-Service Mentoring Programs for School Administrators

A number of universities participated in the Danforth Foundation Program for the Preparation of School Principals implemented in 1987. The program was first implemented at Cleveland State University, Georgia State University, the University of Alabama, and Ohio State University. This program was designed to better prepare and assist aspiring administrators in order to allow them to take on future leadership responsibilities in schools.[41] The primary objectives of the Danforth Foundation program were:

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[39]Elaine L. Wilmore, "It's Not Easy Being Green: Mentoring for the First Year Principal," *NASSP Bulletin* (April 1995): 91-96.

[40] Caldwell, 59-60.

[41]John C. Daresh, "Mentoring: A Key Feature of the Danforth Program for the Preparation of Principals," (paper presented at the thirtieth anniversary convention of the University Council for Educational Administration, Charlottesville, Va., October, 1987), Dialog, ERIC, ED 287 217, 1.

1) To work with selected university faculties to think and act boldly in developing alternative programs for the preparation of principals, in collaboration with practicing school administrators;

2) To develop future principals' knowledge, attitudes, and skills about school leadership through methods not traditionally included in university programs;

3) To enable aspiring administrators to gain practical skills prior to accepting their first administrative positions.[42]

A number of principles and practices were embraced at all institutions hosting the Danforth programs. "It was accepted that the programs designed in each case would emphasize learning through experience rather than simply through the accumulation of graduate credits in traditional university courses. Second, all local adaptation of the Foundation agenda attempted to make certain that positive and collaborative relationships were formed with the local school systems as the basis for any university-based effort. A third common ingredient in all Danforth programs has been the designation of individual, experienced, school administrators to serve as ongoing mentors to the candidates selected for participation in each local effort. Relationships formed between aspiring educational leaders and their mentors were believed to serve as a central activity leading to effective leadership preparation."[43]

Within six years the Danforth Program had expanded to include twenty-four

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[42]Martha A. Playko and J.C. Daresh, "A Training Institute for Administrative Mentors," a project report of the Danforth Foundation-Ohio State University Program for the Preparation of School Principals, 1, October 1988, EDRS, ED 299680, microfiche.

[43]John C. Daresh and M.A. Playko, "Perceived benefits of a Preservice Administrative Mentoring Program," *Journal of Personnel Evaluation in Education*, 6 (1992): 15.

universities. The mentoring programs which were implemented varied. In reviewing the program, Daresh and Playko found that a major value of mentoring consists of the help it provides to aspiring administrators seeking to learn their craft. Furthermore, mentoring activities were found beneficial by both the protégés and the mentors who served in the program. Their study suggested that the individuals who had contact with the aspiring or beginning colleagues learned as much as they taught. Thus, encouraging school administrators to serve as mentors could be a powerful approach for their own inservice education.[44]

In 1988 Virginia Tech's Educational Administration Program faculty examined the Danforth Program approach and decided to add it to their principal preparation program.[45] At that time Virginia Tech faculty members were already involved in restructuring their program and had some ideas about the path their program would take. They indicated this to the Danforth Foundation and told them that they were interested in continuing along the lines they were going. They submitted a proposal which was approved. Prior to the inception of the program there was an objective-driven internship component. The principal served as an informal mentor to the intern and met with a faculty member hour prior the beginning of the internship to review the intern's expectations and at least twice during the experience to review progress. With the inception of the Danforth Program the principals that mentored the students participated in a three day training session, using a mentoring and coaching program developed by the National Association of Secondary School Principals. This program utilized an extended set of activities. The interns worked with their mentors over a two year period. Follow-up meetings were held with the

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[44]Marsha A. Playko and J.C. Daresh, "Mentoring Programs for Aspiring Administrators: An Analysis of Benefits to Mentors," *ERS Spectrum* (Summer 1993): 14-15.

[45]Albert Camburn, "The History of the Principal Preparation Program: Planned Program Change at Virginia Tech." (Ed.D. diss, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1994), 60.

mentors to discuss their experiences with the interns and to ask how they could facilitate the internship experience. The mentors took their work seriously and wanted to be able to help the students as much as they could. The reactions of interns and mentors were quite positive. In fact, the students often stated that they had more than one mentor. In addition to their assigned mentors, they often considered their home principal and faculty members as mentors. Although the Danforth Program has ended, the principal preparation program at Virginia Tech has maintained its mentoring component.[46]

The mentoring programs that were developed by universities were not without problems. Muse, Thomas and Wasden gave some helpful hints for finding solutions to problems that may exist in pre-service mentoring programs:

> Mentoring of aspiring school principals by experienced, caring, and competent principals has the potential to be one of the most effective ways of preparing future leaders for America's schools. Yet, a mentoring program must be more than assigning a graduate student to observe a local school principal for a few hours during a semester.   A meaningful mentoring relationship relies on the careful selection, training, and evaluation of mentor principals was well as the careful selection of interns so that the best instructional leaders are involved in the training of future leaders. Pitfalls may occur occasionally when the mentoring relationship fails to provide a valuable field experience to the aspiring administrator, but mentors and interns who are committed to the mentoring will all benefit from the close professional relationship provided by such a preparation program.[47]

Mentors may have a profound influence on new and aspiring administrators. The mentees who benefit from this process are more likely to serve as mentors to others and to continue this tradition as part of the organizational culture.[48] Milstein, Bobroff, and

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[46] David J. Parks, interview by author, 6 August, 1998, Blacksburg, VA.

[47] Ivan D. Muse, G.J. Thomas and F.D. Wasden , "Potential Problems (and Solutions) of Mentoring in the Preparation of School Administrators," *Journal of School Leadership* 2 (July 1992): 319.

[48] Mike M. Milstein, B.M. Bobroff and L.N. Restine, *Internship Programs in*

Restine pointed out the importance of selecting participants for educational administration internships based on criteria that focused on attributes that exemplify leadership.[49] They also discussed the importance of selecting leaders with the appropriate characteristics:

> The selection of professionals with the capacity for mentoring alleviates the isolation that aspiring or novice administrators may sense. In this way, networking is enhanced and communication channels among peers and colleagues are developed. A willingness to learn about mentoring and a commitment to preparing future educational leaders should be viewed as paramount in the selection and recruitment of participants.[50]

At universities, students prepare for the principalship in a variety of ways. Daresh considers mentoring a crucial component of experiential education programs. Mentors can help neophytes understand what is happening in their field, reduce their sense of isolation, serve as positive role models, and also work to provide psychosocial support to future leaders.[51]

Gender and Mentoring

According to a study completed in 1995 by the federal Glass Ceiling Commission, women hold only five percent of the top management positions in American corporations.[52] (The Glass Ceiling is a circumstance that occurs for women in some organizations, in which women can see the next steps in the career ladder but are unable to

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Educational Administration (New York, NY: Teachers College Press, 1991), 14.

[49]Milstein, Bobroff, and Restine, 12.

[50]Milstein, Bobroff, and Restine, 14.

[51]John C. Daresh, "Formation: The Missing Ingredient in Administrator Preparation," *NASSP Bulletin* 74, no.526 (May 1990): 1-5.

[52]Betsy Shelton and J. Hadley, *The Smart Women's Guide to Networking* (Franklin Lakes, New Jersey: Career Press, 1995), 17.

progress due to organizational bias against women).[53] "Generally, women have had fewer women as role models and have been mentored less than men for certain leadership positions."[54] Frequently the areas most difficult for women to break into are those with the most influence and power. Some traditionally 'male' industries remain closed to women.[55] Hadley and Shelton describe the former role of mentoring as a 'good old boy' tradition, one in which women played little part. They explain this rationale by telling how mentors tend to nurture relationships with people similar to themselves. As there have traditionally been few women in the executive ranks, even fewer have been able to gain access to mentoring relationships. They acknowledge the changing role of mentoring in the business world, where mentors are not necessarily the "next in line" superior but may come from outside the mentee's work environment. This allows for expanded mentoring possibilities. Some individuals may have more than one mentor at any given time.[56]

In a survey of the top executives listed in the "Who's News" column of the Wall Street Journal in 1977, all of the female respondents reported having had a mentor. (It must be noted that the female executives constituted a very small proportion of the total study, less than one percent.)

> Women tend to have mentors more than men, averaging three sponsors to the men's two. While women executives had female mentors more often than men did, seven in ten of the women's mentors were male. Only one in fifty of the men had a female mentor and practically none of these mentors were in business. Our survey findings agree with Margaret Hennig and Ann Jardim, who find in The Managerial Woman that father-like sponsors are a necessity for women without family connections to

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[53]Neil M. Yeager, *The Career Doctor* (New York: John Wiley and Sons, 1991), 117.

[54]L. Nan Restine, *Women in Administration: Facilitators for Change* (Newbury Park, California: Corwin Press, 1993), 41.

[55]Shelton, 17.

[56]Shelton, 52.

reach top management positions.**[57]**

A longitudinal study of 199 female managers at AT&T also found that women with mentors experienced more rapid advancement than did the women without mentors.[58]

Males may be reluctant to serve as mentors to younger females because of the sexual innuendoes that are frequently associated with such one-on-one relationships. In the same sense, women are also reluctant to approach older males to seek legitimate assistance because of the way co-workers may view the situation.[59]

Research may legitimize their concerns. One study conducted with 381 professional women found that 26% of the women reported sexual encounters with their mentors.[60] Missirian reports that sexual tension is one of the complications that can occur in mentoring relationships:

> When one works closely, as these women did, with men who are as brilliant, dynamic and often physically attractive as these mentors were perceived to be by their protégés, it would be extraordinary if sexual tension did not exist between the two. All of the women who acknowledged having had a mentor felt that sexual intimacy with the mentor would have threatened the existing relationship, and they were not prepared to take that risk.[61]

A formalized mentoring program established within an organization can prevent such

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[57]Roche, 24.

[58]Belle Rose Ragins, "Barriers to Mentoring: The Female Manager's Dilemma," *Human Relations* 42, no. 1 (1989): 3.

[59]Michael Galbraith and Norman Cohen, *Mentoring: New Strategies and Challenges* (San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers, 1995), 12.

[60]Ragins, 9.

[61]Agnes Missirian, *The Corporate Connection: Why Executive Women Need Mentors to Reach the Top* (New Jersey: Prentice Hall, 1982), 82-84.

misconceptions and allow the mentoring relationships to flourish.[62]

Levinson, who described mentoring as so important to men, also discussed mentoring for women. However, he did not find that many of the mentors in relationships with women helped them to achieve their "dream". Instead he found that most adults in the women's lives were faculty members who served few mentorial functions. They helped women realize specific goals, feel appreciated, and cope with stressful situations. The few women that he did find with true mentorial relationships eventually became faculty members, not businesswomen. The mentoring relationships occurred in graduate school.[63]

Although top level college and university administrative positions are usually held by men, more women are now moving into the administrative field. Contrary to studies that indicate a lack of female interest in administrative positions, increased numbers of women do aspire to leadership positions.[64]

> The studies of male and female aspirations that have given credence to this assumption [that women are not as interested as men in positions of leadership] fall into three specific categories: (1) studies that show female students have lower aspirations for administrative positions than do male students, (2) studies that have reported that female elementary and secondary school teachers have lower aspirations for administrative positions than do their male counterparts, and (3) reports that indicate the administrative interests of women teachers decrease as the amount of responsibility increases.[65]

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[62]Galbraith, 12.

[63]Daniel J. Levinson, *The Seasons of a Woman's Life* (New York: Knopf, 1996), 237-241.

[64]Jeanette E. Bowker; D.E. Hinkle, and W.M. Worner, "do Women Aspire to the Same Administrative Positions as Men?", *education Administration Quarterly* 19, no. 2. (Spring 1981): 64.

[65] Ibid,66.

This was noted in an article describing a study of the administrative aspirations of male and female faculty members in land grant universities. The findings concluded that women were as interested in leadership positions as men and that women aspire to levels as high as those sought by men. The appointments that women receive and in which they tend to remain are not consistent with the administrative goals outlined in this study.[66]

The Report of the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration found, in 1987, that in spite of research demonstrating that women make good administrators, the percentage of women principals had declined and the number of female superintendents had only increased from 1.7 percent to three percent since 1970. At that time, approximately one-half of the graduate students in educational administration were women.[67] In spite of this large number of women trained as administrators, the history of women in administration since 1905 discloses continual male dominance in all positions. The only exception is the situation found in the elementary school principalship during early years.[68]

In Barbara Cooper's study of the effect of support systems on the careers of in-place women administrators, she said that the women she interviewed all depended on male mentors in pursuing and attaining their positions.[69] "Respondents felt that they had been discouraged from applying for and from receiving jobs based on bias. They perceived a definite bias against women holding certain positions in a school division, from

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[66]Ibid, 78.

[67]National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration. *Leaders for America's Schools* (Tempe: AZ: University Council for Educational Administration, (1987), 11.

[68]Shakeshaft, Charol., *Women in Educational Administration* (Newbury Park, CA: SAGE Publications, 1987), 19-20.

[69]Barbara O. Cooper, "The Effects of Professional Support Systems on the Careers of In-Place Women Administrators" (Ed.D. diss., Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1992), 58.

aspiring to positions and from receiving equal encouragement concerning certain positions."[70]

Research has noted that same-gender role models are critical for women but not for men. This is explained by the fact that women have difficulty envisioning and patterning themselves after men, since they often identify male behavior as inconsistent with their female selves. Although a role model should be of the same gender, a mentor is, perhaps, more important and can be either male or female. Regardless of the fact that most women have not had mentors, those who have successfully gained employment in administration have generally had mentors. As a result, mentoring seems to be an important aspect of the career development of female administrators.[71]

Summary

Most current research described mentoring, formal or informal, as a critical component of career development and success. Mentoring relationships have been extensively identified and studied. Not all of the studies have generated similar findings. Most do indicate, however, that formalized mentoring programs are on the rise.

Mentor programs for aspiring and current school administrators offer many benefits that will continue to help the mentees throughout their careers. The review of literature consisted of a discussion of the history of mentoring, mentoring in the business world, informal and formal mentoring, mentoring for school administrators, and gender's impact upon the mentoring relationship.

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[70]Cooper, 59-60.

[71]Shakeshaft, 116.

CHAPTER THREE
METHODOLOGY

This chapter includes the research methodology employed during this study, as well as the design of the study, nature of the database, the subject selection, data collection and the method of analysis.

Design of the Study

Qualitative research methodology was used in this study. Miles and Huberman note that one of the major features of qualitative data analysis is that it focuses on naturally occurring, ordinary events in natural settings so that researchers are able to develop robust conceptualizations of what "real life" is like. They further note the richness and holism of such data, which provides strong potential for revealing complexity, since such data provide "thick descriptions" that are vivid, nested in real context, and have a ring of truth that has a strong impact on the reader.[72] By analyzing the present database of interviews with retired principals and conducting follow-up interviews of her own, the researcher sought to create a study that added to the literature on the history of mentoring and describes it in a manner that is interesting to the reader.

The Database

This study focused on the role of mentors in the development of principals, as described by retired school principals in the "Oral History of the Principalship Project," directed by Dr. Patrick W. Carlton. This database presently consists of twenty-three volumes of transcripts of interviews with retired K-12 school principals whose careers span the period from the early 1930's to the present. The 273 interviews comprising the database have been conducted over the last twelve years by Carlton's graduate students in

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[72]Matthew B. Miles and Michael A Huberman, *Qualitative Data Analysis* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE Publications, 1994), 10.

educational administration. Most of the interviews were conducted with retired principals from Virginia. Other states represented include California, Colorado, Connecticut, Florida, Louisiana, Maryland, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Oregon, Pennsylvania, West Virginia, and Washington, D.C.

> The purpose of the Oral History of the Principalship Project has been to gather the recollections and wisdom of veteran building principals, most of whom have never before been invited to contribute to the literature of educational administration. These dedicated men and women constitute a 'national informational treasure' of immense proportions. It has been the aim of the project to capture, in an organized and scholarly manner, information on a wide variety of informational topics from those who experienced the events of the past forty to fifty years. The audio taped interviews, conducted by the writer and advanced graduate students in Educational Administration, vary in length from one to three hours. Transcript lengths vary between 15 and 100+ pages.[73]

The Original Interviews

The original interviews were conducted with elementary, middle, and secondary school principals who retired during the decades of the 1950's, '60s, '70s, and '80s. They varied in age from the mid-50s to the '90s. They were male and female, black and white. Their academic training varied from the baccalaureate to the doctorate.[74] Retired principals were selected for interviews by the graduate students, or were known and recommended by Dr. Carlton. Prior to the interviews the students were usually provided an interview protocol, (see Appendix C), with a list of fifty-three questions related to the principalship. In a directed interview, the interviewer is able to change the order, add additional questions, omit some questions, or change the terminology, if necessary, during

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[73]Patrick W. Carlton, *Oral History of the Principalship: Professional and Personal Recollections of Retired Elementary, Middle, and Secondary School Principals*, Volume 1 (Blacksburg, Virginia: Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, 1989), 1.

[74]Carlton, 1-2.

the interview.[75] Although the interviews were based on this protocol, modifications to the questions were made to suit the interests of the person being interviewed as well as those of the interviewer.[76]

All of the interviews were fully transcribed. The database is stored in a variety of formats, on computer, cassette tape, diskettes, and a set of 23 volumes of hard copy. Several interviews are archived on videotape. For the purpose of this study the researcher used the computerized database of interviews. ZyIndex, a computer program developed by ZyLAB Corporation, was used as the database manager. This program allowed the researcher to search and retrieve data, manage the database, and link data from throughout the collection.

Having perused the database, it became evident there were significant amounts of information which would contribute to this study. However, some interviews included only superficial answers to the questions on mentoring. More information was needed to more fully understand and describe the mentoring relationship. In these instances the retired principals were mailed a set of questions accompanied by a request for a telephone interview.

Telephone Interview Selection Process

Subjects chosen for telephone interviews met the following criteria:

1. They had served as principal and had participated in the "Oral History of the Principalship Project."

2. They indicated the presence of a mentor in their career or participation in a formal mentoring program.

3. They were alive and listed a current address.

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[75]Edward Richardson, *Research Techniques for the Social Sciences Manual* (Puerto Rico: Inter-American University Press, 1983), 47.

[76]Carlton, 2.

All of the retired principals who met the above criteria were contacted by mail and invited to participate in the telephone interview process. Participants for the final telephone interviews were selected from among the respondents. Thirty-five retired principals indicated the presence of a mentor in their career or participation in the development of a mentoring program in the original interviews. All thirty-five were contacted, seven women and twenty-eight men. Some of the letters were returned as being undeliverable. With the help of a search engine on the Internet, four retired principals were able to be found at new addresses. Of the thirty-five respondents, nine did not reply to two separate mail requests. Out of the twenty-six that did reply, fifteen agreed to participate in the interviews. Some of the principals that chose not to participate indicated faulty memories, difficulty in hearing, the amount of time between retirement and the interview request, and poor health. Others simply checked "no" and did not indicate the reason. As a result a convenience sample was used. The fifteen retired principals who agreed to be interviewed were all included.

Design of the Interview Research

In his book InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Interviewing, Kvale discusses the seven stages of interview research: Thematizing, Designing, Interviewing, Transcribing, Analyzing, Verifying, and Reporting.[77] The interviews were conducted in this manner.

1. Thematizing: The purpose of this study was to describe the role that informal mentors played in the development of school principals. The information that retired principals shared will help to provide an understanding of the evolution of the mentoring process by means of historical documentation on informal mentoring.

2. Designing: The original data in this study already existed in the database of the Oral

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[77]Steiner Kvale, *InterViews: An Introduction to Qualitative Research Writing* (Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE, Publications, Inc.1996), 88.

History of the Principalship Project. The interviews were replete with information on
school administration, but did not emphasize mentoring. Thus, a follow-up telephone
interview was designed to elicit information on the role of mentors in the development of
the school administrators. The number of people to be interviewed was adjusted in
accordance with those available. Thus, the sample type was a convenience sample, "a
non-probability sample that includes whatever subjects happen to be readily available."[78]
The interview questions were designed to address the research questions and to provide
more information on the history of mentoring. In preparing the interview questions the
writer consulted with the Assistant Director of Institutional Research and Planning
Analysis at Virginia Tech to assure that the questions were appropriate for use in
telephone interviews. Letters were mailed to prospective interviewees with a copy of a
release form that was to be signed and returned prior to the interview.

3. Interviewing: Once disclosure statements were returned, interviews were scheduled.
At that time the researcher indicated that the interview was designed to consume between
thirty and forty-five minutes. A structured set of questions was designed for use during
the telephone interviews. With the permission of those being interviewed, the interviews
were taped. All of the interviews were based on the pre-developed questions; however,
the interviewer probed the responses and asked for clarification when needed. The
researcher met and applied the criteria for interviewers as prescribed by Kvale:

1. Knowledgeable: Has an extensive knowledge of the interview theme....

2. Structuring: Introduces a purpose for the interview, outlines the procedure in
    passing, and rounds off the interview by, for example, briefly telling what was
    learned in the course of the conversation....

3. Clear: Poses clear, simple, easy, and short questions; speaks distinctly and
    understandably. Does not use academic language or professional jargon.

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[78]Mark R. Leary, *Introduction to Behavioral Research Methods* (Pacific Grove,
CA: Brooks/Cole), 389.

4. Gentle: Allows the subjects to finish what they are saying, lets them proceed at their own rate of thinking and speaking.

5. Sensitive: Listens actively to the content of what is said, hears the many nuances of meaning in an answer....

6. Open: Hears which aspects of the interview topic are important for the interviewee.

7. Steering: Knows what he or she wants to find out: is familiar with the purpose of the interview....

8. Critical: Does not take everything that is said at face value, but questions critically to test the reliability and validity of what the interviewees tell.

9. Remembering: Retains what a subject has said during the interview, can recall earlier statements and ask to have them elaborated.

10. Interpreting: Manages throughout the interview to clarify and extend the meanings of the interview statements.[79]

4. Transcribing: The interview transcription began the interpretative process. The oral interviews were transcribed into written text. All transcriptions were completed by the same transcriber to insure that the same procedures were used for all interviews. The transcripts were prepared verbatim and with no editing.

5. Analyzing: Data from the interviews were stored in two forms, on hard copy and on the computer. The researcher followed Miles and Huberman's suggested approach by looking at the text, "trying out coding categories on it, then moving on to identify themes and trends, and then to testing hunches and findings, aiming first to delineate the 'deep structure' and then to integrate the data into an explanatory framework."[80] Data were displayed in a series of matrices in Chapter Four, as well as in narrative form. Individual

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[79]Kvale, 138-139.

[80]Miles and Huberman, 91.

comments are followed by an accession code. These codes were also employed during the telephone interviews. The codes contain the interview number. Information including the region of the country, the level at which one was principal, (elementary, secondary), race, gender, and the decade in which the principal retired can be found in Table 1.

6. Verifying: As stated in Chapter One, this study is not generalizable to the larger population of principals. Findings can be said to be characteristic only of the population constituting the original interview pool. Kvale notes that in postmodern approaches to the social sciences, the goal of universal generalizability is being replaced by an emphasis on contextuality and heterogeneity of knowledge.[81] Therefore, the goal was not so much to generalize but to describe the specifics within the context of this study. The issue of validity was addressed in two ways: the interview questions were crafted to answer the research questions and the original question on mentoring was restated during the telephone interview to provide triangulation. Patton states that "there are basically two kinds of triangulation that contribute to verification and validation of qualitative analysis: (1) checking out the consistency of findings generated by different data collection methods and (2) checking out the consistency of different data sources within the same method."[82]

7. Reporting: The findings of the study are communicated in matrices as well as narrative form. The quotes relate to the general text, were conceptualized, and names and places that violate confidentiality were altered.

Summary

This chapter explained the research methodology of the study, the nature of the database, the telephone interview, and the method of analysis.

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[81]Kvale, 232.

[82]Michael Q. Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation Methods* (Beverly Hills, CA: SAGE Publications, Inc. 1982), 329.

CHAPTER FOUR
RESULTS

Introduction

This study was undertaken to describe the role that mentors played in the development of school principals. This chapter contains an analysis of the data from the interviews conducted with the retired principals. All of the principals interviewed participated in the "Oral History of the Principalship Project" and indicated the presence of a mentor in their career or their participation in a formal mentoring program during their initial interviews. The data were designed to answer the research questions and the subsidiary questions following each research question.

Research and Subsidiary Questions

I. Did mentors affect the career development of former school principals? If so, in what way?

1. How did mentors help assistant principals in climbing the career ladder?
2. To what extent did mentors encourage the retired principals to earn advanced educational degrees?
3. To what extent did mentors introduce protégés to colleagues and friends who were helpful to their careers?
4. Did mentors serve as advisors to the principals in their daily work life? If so, how?
5. Did mentors help principals make key decisions in running their schools? If so, how?
6. Did protégés follow their mentors as they moved into different positions?
7. Did the protégés have different mentors throughout the course of their careers?
8. Were female protégés more likely to climb the career ladder at a more rapid pace with the assistance of a mentor?

II. How did the retired principals themselves contribute to the evolution of the mentoring process?

1. Had the retired principals served as mentors to aspiring principals or other principals? If so, how was their protégé selected?
2. Had the retired principals participated in the development of any formal mentoring programs?
3. Had the retired principals participated as mentors in any formal mentoring programs?
4. What perceptions did the retired principals have of formal mentoring programs?

III. What was the nature of the mentor network during the time that the subjects were serving as principals?

1. Were the mentors of the retired principals generally of the same gender?
2. Did any of their colleagues also have mentors?
3. Were the mentoring relationships more personal or more professional in nature?
4. Did the families of the mentor and protégé know each other?
5. Was the mentor also serving as direct supervisor of the retired principal?
6. How were the mentors selected?
7. Did the mentors have more than one protégé during their careers?
8. Did the protégés ultimately surpass the mentor in educational or career development?

Chapter Four has five sections. The first is the introduction. The next section includes information regarding the sample of retired principals used, as well as demographic information that will be helpful to the reader. Although this material was presented in detail in Chapter Three, a brief description is provided to help the reader in focusing on the data. The following three sections are based on the answers to the three main research questions and their subsidiary questions. These sections include descriptions and explanations of the information gathered. The descriptions are followed

by the collected data displayed in a series of quotes taken from the interviews, along with some thematic matrices.

Population and Sample

The population of this study was the thirty-five retired principals who participated in the initial interviews and who indicated the presence of a mentor or their participation in a formal mentoring program. Twenty-eight men and seven women were mailed an interview request. Twenty-six of the retired principals replied and fifteen of them agreed to participate in the interview. Thus, a convenience sample was used. Five women and ten men from six states constituted the sample.

It is important to note that two of the participants in this project did not have mentors, but participated in the development of formal mentoring programs. The information they shared was helpful in examining the evolution of the formal programs in research question two: How did the retired principals themselves contribute to the evolution of the mentoring process? In addition, these participants also had some general comments to share. However, they did not contribute information on how mentors affected their career development in research question one. Furthermore, although all of the participants were asked all of the interview questions, for one reason or another all of them did not choose to answer every question. On several occasions participants veered off on tangents when asked certain questions. Although the interviewer redirected the participants to the question being asked, some still elected not to answer. As a result, the number of responses presented varies.

As the readers review the data, they may wish to examine Table 1 which contains background information on each of the retired principals interviewed.

Table 1

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION ON RETIRED PRINCIPALS

Identification Code P-Principal	State	E-Elementary M-Middle S-Secondary	Race B-Black W-White	Gender M-Male F-Female	Decade Retired
P1	VA	E/S	W	M	1980
P2	VA	E	W	F	1980
P3	WI	S	W	M	1960
P4	NC	E	B	M	1960
P5	VA	S	W	M	1990
P6	VA	E	W	M	1990
P7	DC	S	W	F	1980
P8	PA	S	W	M	1990
P9	VA	M	W	M	1990
P10	VA	E	W	F	1990
P11	OH	E	W	M	1990
P12	NC	S	W	M	1980
P13	VA	E	B	F	1980
P14	VA	E	W	F	1980
P15	VA	E	W	M	1980
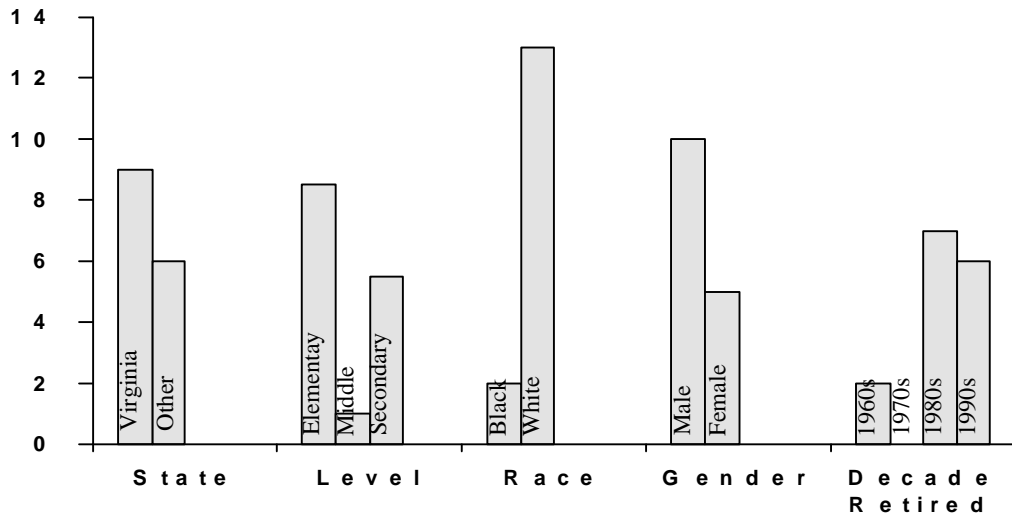
Research Question I: Did mentors affect the career development of former school principals? If so, in what way?

Subsidiary Question 1.1: How did mentors help assistant principals climb the career ladder?

Gail Sheehy, author of <u>Passages</u>, noted that roughly eighty percent of the "judgement jobs" are hidden in the unpublished job market that is reached only through the grapevine or the mentor system.[83] Although most studies of mentoring in business suggest that having a mentor is important to both men and women in career advancement, not all successful men and women in business report having had such a mentor.[84] Two of the retired interviewees did not respond to research question one, as they did not indicate the presence of a mentor in their career. The others felt that their mentors had helped their careers.

Nine of the retired principals were sure their mentors helped them climb the career ladder. Although two of the retired principals indicated the initial desire to become school administrators, the rest of the participants had decided on a career in teaching. Three of the retired principals were quite content in the classroom when their principals first initiated a discussion about following a career in school administration. In fact, those three retirees said they were quite reluctant to leave the classroom and that they were prodded by their mentors to take those steps necessary to become administrators. Although one of the retired principals had a mentor who had not pursued a career in education, the majority of the retired principals were supported by the principal of the school in which they first taught. At least four of the retired principals worked with mentors who spoke to the superintendent on their behalf. One of the retired principals

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[83] Sheehy, 190.

[84] O'Dell, 6.

mentioned was not sure if her mentor assisted her in climbing the career ladder. She mentioned that this individual might have supported her without her knowledge, as she herself has done for others on many occasions (see Figure 1).

Protégés who indicated mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who thought that mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who were urged by their mentors to climb the career ladder, even though they had expressed no interest in administration.	Protégés who were unsure of their mentor's assistance in career development.
"The head of personnel came down and talked with my principal where I was assistant principal and he said I was ready to take on a school." (P2) "Mr. L. was instrumental in my having been appointed to that [assistant principal] position. He talked to the superintendent and told him he felt I was ready for that experience." (P4) "I'm sure they did. Both mentors that I mentioned did. This person, also a local county native, in fact we attended the same college, William and Mary. Yes, I'm sure the principal and the assistant principal heavily influenced my being able to move." (P9)	"Well, my guess is the superintendent asked him, 'Is this guy ready to move on?' I would imagine that happened." (P1) "I feel that she really did, but I wasn't privileged to that information." (P14)	"I was teaching. I made no application and hadn't thought of this, then he asked if I wanted to be one of the assistant principals. I said, 'I really don't like this. I'm very happy teaching.' I asked if I could have my job back [if I didn't like administration]. He told me that you can't hold onto teaching with one hand and reach up to the administration with another; you need to make a clean cut." (P6) "I never wanted to be an administrator. I thought that all of life was in a classroom; I enjoyed it immensely. One day he (the superintendent) called me in and said, 'You know, I have an assignment for you and I'd really like you to take this assignment. We just have a building principal and we need an assistant for him. We would like to move you up." (P8)	"If he did, I don't know about it. I don't know that he didn't say to somebody, you need to move this person, as I've done a hundred times and the person didn't know it." (P13)

Figure 1

Thematic Matrix for Mentor Assistance to Protégés in Career Development

Figure 1 (continued)

Protégés who indicated mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who thought that mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who were urged by their mentors to climb the career ladder, even though they had expressed no interest in administration.	Protégés who were unsure of their mentor's assistance in career development.
"I think that as I learned under her that became my style of administering and so that when the job became open then it was just that I moved right into it. (P11) "Well, she talked to the superintendent and recommended me and then when I had my interview with the superintendent I got the job." (P15) "As soon as I got my masters, Mr. D. came to me and said, 'As soon as a principalship opens, would you be interested?'" (P5) [also shown in column three]		"I think it was, frankly, it was both of these men promoting me, that really led to my being appointed, I would think." When he approached me about going into the assistant principal job, I said, 'I don't know, I don't think so. I'm really happy with what I'm doing.' I don't see where I could do anything differently with the good old boy's club thing, and athletics was huge in that school. I could just see me being a pail of cold water thrown at this club, and I said, 'I don't think so.' He said, 'You know what I want you to do? When I worked in the Norfolk area, there was a woman principal down there. I want you to go visit with her and shadow her for three days. I want you to talk to her; ask her all the things you need to ask her; try to get your questions answered, and watch her in action to see what she does, and then come back and tell me what you think.' It just seemed sort of a weird thing to do and, you know, the only other woman principal he could think of was in another state." (P7)	

Figure 1 (continued)

Protégés who indicated mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who thought that mentors helped them climb the career ladder.	Protégés who were urged by their mentors to climb the career ladder, even though they had expressed no interest in administration.	Protégés who were unsure of their mentor's assistance in career development.
		"I was very content with my coaching; I was very content with my teaching. But as a result of encouragement from the superintendent and the assistant superintendent, and I had his son on my basketball team, ironically, and he saw this same thing and encouraged me to go into administration." (P5)	

Subsidiary Question 1.2: To what extent did mentors encourage the retired principals to earn advanced degrees?

Furthering one's education is important to climbing the career ladder in education and in business. Principals who mentored protégés often encouraged them to seek advanced degrees:

> Because of the effect that the protégé can have on the mentor's career, participation in a mentor-protégé relationship is as important to the senior executive as it is to the junior manager. The junior manager who is not interested in furthering his own career probably has little interest in helping the mentor advance in his. Senior executives mention numerous methods of detecting ambition, including the junior's willingness to extend himself and make unsolicited presentations and his interest in acquiring the qualities and skills necessary to move up in the organization. A director of employee relations agrees that people who look as if they want to get ahead are identified as potential protégés.[85]

The primary mentor for the retired principals was most often the first principal for whom they taught. Influence exerted on the academic achievement of the retired principals by their mentors varied. Four of the retired principals interviewed sought advanced degrees on their own. One of the four chose to do so in order to achieve a higher rate of pay. Another knew that he wanted to become a principal and later a superintendent, so he planned his education accordingly. One of the retired principals indicated that he returned to college to get his masters degree once he became a principal because he said "it came with the territory" (see P1- Figure 2). The last of the four retired principals had earned his masters degree prior to meeting his mentor.

Eight of the retired principals were encouraged by their mentors to seek an advanced degree. The levels of encouragement varied from telling the protégé that they were pleased to see they were in graduate study to suggesting programs and telling them that, should they ever wish to be a principal, a masters degree would be required. One of the retired principals said that her principal brought a sabbatical application form to her

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[85] Zey, 182-183.

and advised her to sign and submit it. Another felt that her principal was responsible for her getting a masters degree. All eight of the respondents acknowledged that they had received encouragement (see Figure 2).

Mentor Encourages Protégé to Further Education	Protégé Decides on Own to Further Education
"He suggested that I might want to get my masters and that it would be difficult to be promoted to a principal without even being in a school working towards a masters." (P4)	"It [the masters Degree] sort of came with the territory, so once I became an elementary principal I went back for the degree." (P1)
"I was a teacher and a coach when I came there and they kind of drew me in and encouraged me really to go into the counseling field. So, I became, you know back in those days there weren't any women principals, particularly in this county, but he was influential in encouraging me to go to graduate school and train as a school counselor." (P3)	"I already had my advanced degree." (P2)

"When I was an undergraduate I knew I eventually wanted to become a principal and a superintendent, so I was tracking my classes accordingly. (P3) |
"He said that he was very pleased to have me in graduate study." (P8)	"Of course, I had my own motivation for seeking them [advanced degrees] because in those days, as I assume now, it meant a greater paycheck." (P9)
"She started visiting my classroom and bringing visitors in. She said, 'I'd like you to consider going ahead and getting administrative degrees.' I said, 'I'm not quite ready for that.' She said, 'Well, I really want you to go.' As luck would have it, we had some programs available at the local school level." (P10)	
"She encouraged me to then go and get some other schooling and then become the superintendent." (P11)	
"She was responsible for me getting my masters by encouraging me and suggesting classes that I take and so forth." (P14)	

Figure 2

Thematic Matrix for Mentor Influence on Achievement of Advanced Degrees

Figure 2 (continued)

Mentor Encourages Protégé to Further Education	Protégé Decides on Own to Further Education
"When I was a teacher my principal came into the classroom and brought a form. He said, 'Here, I want you to sign this. Next year for the first time our school system is going to give teachers sabbatical leave. Now you've been asking about it and I want you to sign this so you can take a sabbatical leave and become a principal.' You know, it just worked beautifully. He encouraged me every step of the way." (P13) "She told us that if we ever wanted to be a principal we had to start working on our masters degree. She said, 'Now if you just take one class that is all right, you just take that one class.' But, she encouraged us. Then we had extension classes and she encouraged her teachers to do that." (P15) "He kind of drew me in and encouraged me to start taking some secondary administration courses and going ahead and getting in the masters program at James Madison University, and I probably would not have done that on my own." (P5)	

Subsidiary Question 1.3: To what extent did mentors introduce protégés to colleagues and friends who were helpful to their careers?

Kram indicated that exposure-and-visibility is one of the functions that a mentoring relationship provides.[86] Levinson describes one of a mentor's actions as "welcoming the initiate into a new occupational and social world and acquainting him with its values, customs, resources, and cast of characters."[87] Following this line of thought, the retired principals were asked if their mentors introduced them to colleagues and friends who were helpful to their careers.

Ten of the retired principals agreed that their mentors introduced them to colleagues and friends who were helpful to their careers. This frequently took place at principals' meetings, conferences, and meetings of educational societies. The ten retired principals with this experience felt that their mentors made efforts to include them in professional matters. One participant indicated that his principal told him he was busy and would be unable to attend the principal's meeting, even though his principal was not busy. He did this so his protégé would have the opportunity to attend a principal's meeting and get to know other people in the county. One retired principal indicated that his mentor did not introduce him to colleagues, and another had no recollection of any such introductions (see Figure 3).

Subsidiary Question 1.4: Did mentors serve as advisors to mentors in their daily work life? If so, how?

Only three of the protégés maintained a daily contact with their mentors. One of them noted that this took place during the first several years prior to the time he felt a great deal of comfort and credibility in his work as a principal. Although others did not

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[86] Kram, 47.

[87] Levinson, 98-99.

contact their mentors on a daily basis, they indicated that the mentors were available when they needed to consult with them.

Not all of the retired principals served as assistant principals; however, those who did were more likely to consult their mentors on a daily basis during the time that they were serving as assistant principals. Three retired principals stopped asking for advice at the time they became principals. They shared with the researcher the view that once they became principals, they were in charge and needed to make their own decisions. One of the participants, who had frequently consulted her mentor when making key decisions as an assistant principal, found that she started seeking advice and help from people other than her mentor once she assumed the principalship (see Figure 3).

Subsidiary Question 1.5: Did mentors help principals make key decisions in running their schools?

In *Webster's New World College Dictionary* mentor is defined as: (1) a wise loyal advisor, (2) a teacher or coach. The retired principals were asked if they had sought advice from mentors on making key decisions in their schools. The retired principals who served as assistant principals tended to seek advice during that time. One retired principal noted that he made no key decisions without consulting his mentor. He did note that he contributed to the discussion prior to reaching a shared decision. Other protégés discussed key decisions with their mentors early in their career. As more administrative experience was gained by the participants, fewer consultations with their mentors on key decisions occurred (see Figure 3).

Mentors introduced protégés to colleagues and friends helpful to career.	Protégés sought advice from mentors on making key decisions in their schools.	Mentors maintained contact with protégés.
Protégés who experienced the above statement: "Well, it would happen at meetings or different things like that. I would be introduced to people I didn't know and we would form a bond." (P2) "He introduced me to other administrators, principals and so on….only a couple of them were helpful as I moved into the administrative role." (P4) "Yes, both in the community and in all levels of education circles he would make sure that I knew and he expected me to know, who the state department people were, who were the leading figures in education, university figures. He insisted on that and that was helpful not just for name dropping and political purposes, but for knowledge reasons." (P6)	**Protégés who sought advice:** "I think I made no key decisions without talking to him. I found out early on that I couldn't get any answers from him without having shared what my own thinking was. Usually, on key decisions, we would sort of reach it together." (P4) "I would come in there and suggest to him, Doc, I would like to do so and so. I'd laugh, he'd always say to me, 'All right, I'm going to play the devil's advocate.' And he would start, 'How about this, how about that?' When it was all said and done he would say, 'Well it seems to me that you really thought this through." (P8) "I consulted her about key decisions early on. They were consulted probably fifty percent of the time where I would say this is the decision that is going to need to be made and I am interested in your opinion." (P14)	**Mentors gave advice to protégés on a daily basis:** "We shared experiences almost on a daily basis." (P1) "Sometimes at the end of the day we would get together and discuss what had happened during the school day, if something had troubled me, or I had done something that I was not sure was the correct way to handle the situation." (P2) "The first several years, yes. Then I reached a place where I think he had a great deal of credibility. He trusted me implicitly." (P8) "Quite a bit. I would go to her to see how she would handle the problem. She gave me a lot of latitude, but I would go to her and see what she thought about it." (P11)

Figure 3

Thematic Matrix for Mentor Influence on Principal's Activities and Work

Figure 3 (continued)

Mentors introduced protégés to colleagues and friends helpful to career.	Protégés sought advice from mentors on making key decisions in their schools.	Mentors maintained contact with protégés.
"He introduced me to colleagues and friends who from time to time I was able to come into contact with. He really introduced me to the ones he felt were top-notch men and women." (P8) "Well, you would go to a meeting with the principal as the assistant principal and so introductions would follow and discussions would follow, and all those things were very productive. I don't think you can meet anyone, and talk of anyone, know anyone, work with anyone, without it exerting some kind of influence upon you." (P9) "She would take me with her to meetings and I would meet other principals through her. Then we would talk and she would encourage me to go to those types of things without her." (P11) "She did it through organizations such as educational societies, through conferences, through workshops, and things of that nature. She always included me with her friends and they were all more experienced than I was." (P14)	"One experience that I had that I really needed him, you have to know that during some of these years, say 1965 to 1968, we were just beginning integration and that was an uneasy time. The principal had hernia surgery and he could not come up the steps. After the busses left one afternoon about five members of the Ku Klux Klan came in to intimidate me. I needed him (the principal) but he could not come up the steps. We got through that." (P6) "I'm sure I did (consult her about key decisions) because we always communicated back and forth, but I guess as each year passed I became more confident in what I did and made them [the decisions] on my own." (P15) "If it was something over which there was a controversy in the PTA and I made a decision one way or the other, then I always consulted them or certainly let them know. They'd say, 'Well I'll support you,' you know, that kind of thing." (P13)	"I would say I talked to one of them on a daily basis. I frequently spoke to the principal. I would say it would be internal matters of decision-making and it would be a matter of philosophy, I guess, or about ethics, or you know simply which way you would go, what you would do, or keeping them informed." (P7) "To whatever extent I would allow them. I was and still am a highly opinionated person and I like to think for myself and make my own decisions, seeking advice and input along the way. But, if I disagreed with any of my colleagues, mentors or otherwise, I did not hesitate generally to say so." (P9) **Mentors gave advice as needed or requested:** "I consulted her sometimes but there were other people that I began to look to as well. She and I would still go to meetings and discuss things to and from the local district meeting. We didn't interact as much at that point as we did several years later. In fact, there was some degree of competitiveness, but she was always helpful when I asked her." (P10)

Figure 3 (continued)

Mentors introduced protégés to colleagues and friends helpful to career.	Protégés sought advice from mentors on making key decisions in their schools.	Mentors maintained contact with protégés.
"She did, one time when she was busy, I don't think she was busy, she sent me to one of the principals' meetings." (P15) "We would be looking through the literature and she would say, 'This is a great conference; let's go. I know some people there you might like to meet.' And she would also invite two or three to come to our school when she would go to these conferences and invite them to see what we were doing. At the division level, she was always there as a colleague and a friend, explaining to me the process we would go through." (P10) "I think my mentor did things to push. He came to my classroom and told me he wanted me to develop a radio program. After the program aired, people told him his teacher was by far the best. He said, 'Well, I told you she's good.' He did a lot of that to the supervisors and assistant superintendents. (P13) **Proteges who did not experience the above statement:** "He didn't." (P1) "I have no recollection of that." (P7)	**Protégés who didn't seek that advice:** "Once I had my own school, I ran it, to put it bluntly, not to be egotistical. I was given a school with the idea that I would operate it, that I would run it and they didn't want me representing anyone else, former mentor, employer, whatever. They wanted it to be my school and me to be solely responsible. That suited me to a T." (P9) "I kind of just did things on my own." (P5) "I did not at that point because I guess I sort of felt that my school was very different from hers, population wise, and I guess I sort of went on my good instincts at that time." (P2)	"I didn't have a daily kind of contact with him. If there was something I had a question about or I thought some problem was coming up or something, I could always call him." (P13) "She was always readily available. If she was out of the building or something like that I knew when she would be back and make time for me." (P14) "So many times when things would come up I'd say, listen, here is my problem. Her theory was she would always listen to you and she would listen and by the time you had finished talking you had solved your own problem." (P15) "Whenever there were things that I was uncertain about or if I developed….I recall having gone to him once and told him, this is the situation I've got and I really don't know how to handle it." (P4) "R. would advise me and we would consult" (P5) "If I ran into a problem I felt free to drop him a little note, stick it in his box, or call him on the telephone. He was always tied up." (P6)

Subsidiary Question 1.6: Did the protégés follow their mentors as they moved into different positions?

Five of the protégés followed their mentors as they moved into different positions. Others were appointed to positions similar to that of their mentor at another school. This usually took place as a teacher was appointed as an assistant principal or as a principal.

Subsidiary Question 1.7: Did the protégés have different mentors throughout the course of their careers?

Twelve of the thirteen retired principals who indicated the presence of a mentor in their lives had more than one mentor throughout the course of their careers. During some interviews participants used the terms mentors and role models interchangeably. When asked to identify their mentors, the retired principals were quick to name the mentor who had helped them throughout their career. When asked about additional mentors, many of the participants discussed people who had assisted them during their careers, perhaps serving more as a role model than a mentor in several circumstances. The retired principals had a variety of people who influenced their careers in school administration (see Figure 4).

Protégés had different mentors throughout the course of their careers.

"There were several people who influenced my life in that sense of the word and influenced my career as a public school employee." (P1)

"Oh yes, he helped me out quite a bit. Of course, I think she helped me more." (P2)

"Yes, another principal at another school who was also a good friend and somebody that my mentor, Mr. L., told me, he said, 'You know sometimes Mr. P and I talk and sometimes if you are uncertain about something or if you don't quite agree with something I say, tell me but also run it by Mr. P to see what he says. So, I had another excellent mentor who was principal over another school. He was very helpful." (P4)

"I kind of selected people on my own that I tried to get as close to as I possibly could or mirror them, or question them, or in many instances just try to identify with them. Regardless of what type of work setting that you are in, there are going to be individuals that you are drawn to that are outstanding in their endeavors, that you kind of magnetize to them." (P5)

"I would say primarily there were two main mentors in the course of my career." (P6)

"I would say I had two mentors who were my immediate supervisors. My high school principal and then the superintendent who hired me. I would also say that the woman I worked with when I began as a school counselor who eventually became my supervisor would fit into that category of being a role model and mentor." (P7)

"I called them mentors, they were people who had been in the business for a number of years who I trusted implicitly. I would question them, I would explain to them that I have problems in certain areas and tell them my concerns. You know, if things came up during my career it seemed like I always had somebody that I could ask, to tell me about this, and tell me about that. I was privy to some good honest instruction." (P8)

"Oh more than that because many of my own assistant principals, counselors, and teachers as those ten years of principalship went by also became mentors, particularly several of them who were my former elementary and high school teachers." (P9)

"Yes, there was also the superintendent as I was going after the superintendency, I looked to him for help also." (P11)

"I'd say there were two basic mentors, but you know I had, as I said before Dr. D who was an absolutely perfect mentor without being my personal mentor." (P13)

"Yes, but not really one person. I would go to someone that way maybe in their field of expertise." (P14)

"My first principal was my mentor, and she was one of the finest ladies that I think I have ever met, and I was principal because of her. I think my parents were also my wonderful mentors." (P15)

Figure 4
Evidence of Different Mentors Throughout the Careers of Retired Principals

Subsidiary Question 1.8: Were females more likely to climb the career ladder at a more rapid pace with the assistance of a mentor?

Women who have successfully gained employment in educational administration have generally had mentors.[88] All of the women selected for this study indicated the presence of mentors in their careers. Both the male and female retired administrators were asked about their perceptions of whether women climbed the career ladder more quickly with the help of a mentor. The retired principals responded with a variety of opinions. Four of the men interviewed felt certain that females were more likely to climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor. All of the women interviewed felt that a mentor was helpful to females climbing the career ladder. One woman indicated that a mentor was only helpful if the mentor were a man. Another respondent felt that mentors were helpful but not the primary factor in helping females secure a position (see Figure 5).

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[88] Shakeshaft, 116.

Retired principals who felt that females were more likely to climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor.	Retired principals who felt that a mentor had no great effect, or were unsure of the effect a mentor had on females climbing the career ladder.	Additional comments on females climbing the career ladder.
"I suspect that there was more sexism than anything else prevailing at that time and if you were a woman, a female aspiring to the principalship, there were certain hoops you had to jump through that men did not have to jump through. Now all of this was difficult to prove, but for those of us who saw it, we know. And you know, women unfortunately accepted that. They felt that they had to have some man pushing for them before they could ever make it to an administrative position. Keep in mind now that we are talking about the mid to late 50's and early 60's." (P4) "The other assistant was a lady. She went on to be a high school principal. I think she was maybe selected for what she did based on her experiences at the school with this principal. He was probably more of a mentor to her than to me. She was one of the earlier high school female principals and I think it was due largely to this mentor." (P6)	"No, [mentors did not have an effect on females climbing the career ladder more quickly], not unless it was a male mentor." (P2) "Well, I don't know if they would necessarily climb the career ladder more quickly but they might. The mentor would be more helpful in terms of their own particular job performance than in the career ladder. That of course there would be different situations, there might be people who would be in the position to be influential and recommend them where the recommendation would go a long way into securing a position, but I'm not sure the mentor, certainly wouldn't be primarily the person considered." (P3)	"I think a lot of it was discipline. The things that I did that made me successful as an administrator now would be unlawful. Now we have to do it verbally, and I think maybe female administrators might do it better verbally than a male administrator did physically. Women can do a lot more with words than, I think, than men." (P5) "I don't think we were fair with women who aspired to be administrators. I think that they were every bit as capable 25 years ago as they are now. They just never felt that they as women had a right to do what guys were doing. They just felt that there was a place for a man and yet, let me tell you something, one of the most dynamic writers in my building was Dr. A. If you needed something put together, programs, federal studies, go ask her. I found it hard to believe that it took her so long to work her way through the maze of bureaucracy, or goodness whatever you choose to call it, I'd look at her and think it just wasn't fair. She was capable of achieving much more in her career." (P8)

Figure 5

Thematic Matrix of Perceived Influences of Mentor Assistance on Females Climbing the Career Ladder

Figure 5 (continued)

Retired principals who felt that females were more likely to climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor.	Retired principals who felt that a mentor had no great effect, or were unsure of the effect a mentor had on females climbing the career ladder.	Additional comments on females climbing the career ladder.
"I think there was a period of time where they did need some help. Like I don't know how Mrs. H. would have moved along had I not really encouraged it because I felt that she could really help me out." (P5) "It was probably the only way. The answer is yes, a resounding yes. There were plenty of elementary administrators around but not the high school. My theory is that growing up and watching other districts, and being around lots of different high schools through my counseling activities and through my union activities and everything, most administrators back then had been coaches. I think the reason women didn't arrive in high schools was not because of the lack of availability of women in high school to achieve this, but the notoriety of the coaches. When they applied or their name came up as a possible administrator, they could be advanced. Community recognition, a successful high school basketball coach or football coach would readily be accepted in the community as an administrator." (P7)	"I don't know. I have no problem with female administrators so long as they do their job. In fact, one of my last assistant principals was a lady and she did a fabulous job." (P12)	"My former superintendent felt that the secondary principalship should belong to men." (P10)

Figure 5 (continued)

Retired principals who felt that females were more likely to climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor.	Retired principals who felt that a mentor had no great effect, or were unsure of the effect a mentor had on females climbing the career ladder.	Additional comments on females climbing the career ladder.
"They were able to move up the career ladder more quickly with the help of a mentor, but there were very few who did it in this part of the country." (P9) "Oh, absolutely. I think it's always good if you have one to speak a good word for you." (P15) "I just think that most people climb faster with a mentor because the mentor gives them helpful hints in terms of interviewing and all that kind of thing." (P13) "I think a mentor is able to spread the word about the new person and their skills. For example, central administration, or to other principals in other divisions about your skills and in that way open the road a bit for you." (P 14) "Yes, I think so." (P11)		

Research Question II: How did the retired principals themselves contribute

to the evolution of the mentoring process?

Subsidiary Question 2.1: Had the retired principals served as a mentor to aspiring

principals or other principals? If so, how was their protégé selected?

Four themes emerged regarding the selection of protégés by the retired principals.

The themes included the selection of a protégé as a result of professional contact with the

teachers in schools or universities, the selection of a protégé as a result of friendship, an

assistant principal automatically becoming a protégé to the principal, and a protégé

contacting the principal indicating interest in becoming a school administrator.

Five of the retired principals selected protégés as a result of professional contact.

They generally encouraged teachers who they thought were doing a good job in the

classroom to go into administration. Thus, the teachers in their schools became their

protégés. One of the five met his protégé when the protégé applied to participate in the

formal mentoring program.

Four of the retired principals became mentors to their protégés as a result of

friendship. They developed a rapport with the protégé, which evolved into a mentoring

relationship. One of the four noted that he and his protégé "just clicked." (P11-figure 6)

Two of the retired principals mentioned that their assistant principals became their

protégés. The participants described this as an automatic process. The retired principals

all considered it their responsibility to mentor their assistant principals.

Three of the participants noted that their protégés were seeking administrative

positions and thus encouraged the mentoring relationship to begin. One principal put it

bluntly: "They wanted a job!" (P8- Figure 6) The mentoring relationship in this situation

began as a result of a request for assistance in the career development plans of the

protégés (see Figure 6).

Protégé Selection by Professional Contact	Protégé Selection as a Result of Friendship	Assistant Principals Automatically Became Protégé	Protégé Indicated Desire to Become Administrator
"Probably with this (formal) program. People applied for the position and then they were interviewed by a variety of people in the central office and building principals."(P3) "I tried to help all of the teachers. I did not select any person in particular. From those people that I had in that school, I would say one is maybe currently a supervisor, several are principals, several are assistant superintendents, and I can go on and on. Many of them have obtained administrative positions."(P6)	"From friendship. I had been the assistant principal at the school where she was teaching at the time and we sort of began that type of relationship."(P2) "One was one that was a friend of mine, and he was my best friend. He asked me if I would consider doing it. I told him yes I would, not only because he was my best friend, but because I also thought he had the potential to be an outstanding administrator. He asked me if I would on an informal basis; no structure from a given institution or anything like that, and I agreed to do it. We would meet once a week in my office, and then he was an assistant principal himself."(P4) "We just sort of clicked. We just sort of helped each other out. I sort of went to him and encouraged him." (P11)	"They were my assistants at one time and then went onto a principalship. Of course my whole bag was that I tried to get the best people that I could find and those that would not mind working. I would go to work at four and five o'clock in the morning and get rid of paperwork so that I would be free to work with teachers, assistant principals, or whoever, during the day." (P12) "I served as a mentor to people when they became my assistant principals and I did that for seventeen years. The only other way I was really a mentor was more on an occasional basis when I would be put in contact with someone."(P14)	"He wanted to become an administrator. We talked about it." (P1) "They wanted a job! Or there was already a personal respect or a kindredness of spirit, which led to the job. It's quite natural and altogether appropriate and proper that you gather around you the kinds of people you trust and like and work with. That makes for success." (P8) "She was a teacher in my building. We worked together fourteen years. She was in the classroom. She would interact with me frequently on many different topics and she decided that she wanted to go into administration."(P10)

Figure 6
Thematic Matrix for Protégé Selection

Figure 6 (continued)

Protégé Selection by Professional Contact	Protégé Selection as a Result of Friendship	Assistant Principals Automatically Became Protégé	Protégé Indicated Desire to Become Administrator
"I have mentored lots and lots of people. I chose them because I thought they were good and because I thought they should move up, or I thought they had special abilities." (P13) "I suppose we developed a professional relationship, and were also friends, so it was a matter of encouraging. And, well, there is one of the men who was my athletic director, I encouraged him to go into administration, he's a middle school principal now too." (P7) "He was a good teacher and I could see the possibilities of leadership there. I guess it was kind of mutual. He sought me out and I sought him." (P15)	I got to know her through coaching. We would share coaching techniques and going to clinics together, and eventually how we would discipline youngsters, what would be consistent and fair. I saw that she was a strong person, and I saw these traits when I went on to the principalship. I thought, golly day, you know, if I want somebody to reinforce, because I handled all the discipline, and it got to the point where I thought I needed to get to some other things." (P5)		

Subsidiary Question 2.2: Had the retired principals participated in the development of any formal mentoring programs?

Formal mentoring programs began to develop in the school districts around the time of their retirement. Ten of the retired principals indicated that they did not participate in the development of any formal programs. One retired principal began a program that gave prospective principals a total look at school administration, from central office positions to the school principalship. He described the program as follows:

> We thought that if we were to encourage and have people move into administrative positions that we ought to find some way to encourage people to do that. We thought that one way might be to have some kind of an intern program within our own district. And so we proposed that to our board of education, and they agreed with it. We had a program where we brought one teacher into our central office for a one year period. It was usually, not always, a person who aspired to some kind of administrative position and if that person, for example, was interested in elementary principalship then we had them spend a little bit of time with an elementary principal but most of the time they were at the central office. We felt that it gave them a different point of view of school operation, regardless of what type administrative position they wanted, to be in the central office for a year. They were part of our administrative council. There was nothing withheld in terms of their participation. (P3)

He then described how effective this program was for teachers who were interested in becoming administrators. Several of the teachers who participated in this formal program did become school principals. After having the year of experience in the central office this program offered, one person decided that administration was not a career he wished to pursue. The retired principal believed that the experience of the person who did not choose to go into administration was as beneficial as that of the people who did. He described the importance of teaching the protégé:

> I feel positive about it if it is set up in a way that encourages people to participate, and if they are made to feel that they are one of the group once they get into that position, rather than a peon or a gopher, then I think it's a good thing. If there is some kind of hierarchy about this thing where

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these people are considered on a lower level, then I think it doesn't work
and it's a travesty. (P3)

Another principal mentioned that his participation in mentoring programs was
limited. "To be honest about it, it was more like reacting than acting. They [the
universities] usually had their courses and their activities outlined for them before they
sent them out as interns. They would ask me you know, critique this, tell us what you
think, and that kind of thing. I don't know what they thought of my comments." (P4)

One retired principal indicated that a program was being developed during her last
year as principal, but that she did not have a lot of input into the planning. "It did start the
year after I left. It was a county program and it was in the developing stages when I was a
principal, but it was another assistant superintendent who helped get that stuff going."
(P7)

Other retired principals had some roles in the development of formalized
programs:

"I didn't participate in the initial stages, but I did after it was underway. Then I
was interactive with many of their sessions, for planning future sessions, and continuing
the program, and getting another one started and that kind of thing." (P10)

"Yes, I helped with that. It was like a buddy system. When I was the
superintendent, I paired up with the principals." (P11)

"I participated in the development of the principal, the staff development program
for principals, which had the kinds of things that mentor them." (P13)

One principal indicated that he went through a type of formal program where he
worked with a young lady as an administrative intern. She was a teacher who was
released to do administrative duties three hours a day and he was to supervise her. He
said that she just had to write a few papers and turn them in to the professors, "as usual."
He went on to say that the only formal program he worked with related to mentoring was
with "the school of hard knocks." (P12)

Subsidiary Question 2.3: Had the retired principal participated as a mentor in any formal mentoring programs?

The four retired principals who participated as mentors in formal programs gave brief explanations of their levels of involvement. The retired principal who helped develop the year long central office program for classroom teachers stated that he served as a mentor with that program. The other retired principals did not describe many differences between today's formal programs and those of the past:

"For people still pursuing their certification as administrators, the universities would ask certain people in their schools to accept people to mentor them in terms of their aspirations." (P4)

"Well, that was almost like the same thing we had been doing. I would meet with them every so often and discuss any problems." (P11)

"I had a number of people who were interns. They were getting their Masters or something they needed to have. Ours was a hands-on experience and they needed a school." (P13)

There was little differentiation between formal mentoring programs and internship programs as described by the participants. When the retired principals answered questions regarding formal mentoring programs, they often described university internships that did not appear to have a strong mentoring component.

Subsidiary Question 2.4: What perceptions did the retired principals have of formal mentoring programs?

Although only five of the retired principals participated in some form of formal mentoring programs, seven of them shared their opinions regarding such programs. One retired principal who had not experienced such a program had a negative opinion suggesting that mentoring programs paled in comparison to on-the-job experience.

Six other retired principals shared more positive views of formal mentoring programs. They felt that formalized programs helped prevent some from missing out on encouragement, that mentoring was a vital component of the training program, and that anything that brings people together for advice or support is good (see Figure 7).

All of the retired principals who participated in the interviews suggested the need for mentoring; however, the ways they experienced mentoring differed. The person who described his views regarding formal programs as negative also spoke about the benefits of the informal mentoring process. The attitude of support for mentoring is universally present. The retired principals varied in their level of knowledge of the formalized programs. Generally speaking, those who had experience with formalized programs tended to be more supportive than those lacking such exposure (see Figure 7).

Retired Principals with Positive Perceptions of Formal Mentoring Programs.	Retired Principals with Negative Perceptions of Formal Mentoring Programs.
"I think that it is one of the most valuable and promising activities that could be provided for the neophyte, and I suspect for the experienced administrator, because all knowledge never resides in one particular location." (P4) "I think it's a good idea that it has been formalized, that there are programs, because I think there are probably a lot of people out there with talent who miss encouragement." (P7) "I feel so strongly that this is such a vital part of the training process. I do think that a school division needs to look very carefully at the people who are asked to serve as mentors because they need to have someone who is going to promote the philosophy of that school district and someone who is going to provide a good interactive program. I think that sometimes it is very difficult to have someone shadow you for every minute of every single day for a long period of time and you have to have someone who is really committed to that. That is a problem, part of the problem that the program faces sometimes, and occasionally there are personality conflicts between the mentor and the intern, or the philosophical differences or whatever, so a good match is important. I can't think of a better way of preparing a person for the principal's role nor getting to know very well and in depth that person's capabilities as far as having an opportunity to place them in administrative positions. I am really an advocate of the whole process." (P10)	"Having not experienced it, my views would be very basic and somewhat negative. I've always preferred on-the-job experience. Now, all the classes I ever took high school, college, university, whatever, have had an impact and had an influence, but that impact and influence paled in comparison to first-hand experience. In my days of being an administrator we would hire someone, bring them on board, and then live with them and work with them, guiding and directing, and explaining as we go." (P9)

Figure 7

Thematic Matrix of Retired Principal's Perceptions of Formal Mentoring Programs

Figure 7 (continued)

Retired Principals with Positive Perceptions of Formal Mentoring Programs.	Retired Principals with Negative Perceptions of Formal Mentoring Programs.
"I think they are helpful and very good. I just think that it is like a pay back. I think that you have to give something back that you have gotten. It is like student teaching. You should help people along the way. Give your experience." (P11) "From what I have been able to tell, and I have attended some of their sessions and everything, I think they have been good. I think the classroom experience plus the on-the-job training has been beneficial and it has been beneficial to the mentor because if they have not been in a collegial relationship with their assistant principal or if they did not have an assistant principal, then when they had a trainee I think that they were expanded in their own knowledge base and their experience." (P14) "I think that anything that brings to people together to be advisor or a support is good." (P15)	

Research Question III: What was the nature of the mentor network during

the time that the subjects were serving as principals?

Subsidiary Question 3.1: Were the mentors of the retired principals generally of the same gender?

There were several reasons for asking this question. The literature shows that mentors tend to nurture people similar to themselves.[89] It has also been reported that males may be reluctant to serve as mentors to younger females because of sexual innuendoes that are frequently associated with such one-on-one relationships.[90] One study conducted with 381 professional women found that twenty-six percent of the women reported sexual encounters with their mentors.[91]

Six of the retired principals were males who were mentored by males. Three were women who were mentored by women. These data support the statement that mentors tend to select protégés who are similar to themselves.

Two participants were males mentored by women, and two other participants were women mentored by men. When asked if they experienced any discomfort as a result of colleagues' commenting on their mentoring relationship, the two women could not recall any comments of that nature. One of the women gave some additional information describing why this had not happened:

> Well, I never felt uncomfortable because I never let myself be in a (sic) position. In other words, I wasn't locked in an office with somebody. I guess I was always conscious of that kind of thing and I said before I try to do my work, my job, well so when somebody helped me, people around me knew why they were doing it. I never really felt comments and that kind of thing. I had some men that I mentored and you know, I didn't think, well lots of times they were younger than I was, I don't know what difference that makes. I don't think there was ever any kind of comment or snide remark or anything. I grew up with four brothers and no sisters, so I have always felt comfortable in a setting with men. I guess if people made that kind of remark ever, the men who were mentoring me were also very

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[89] Shelton, 52.
[90] Galbraith and Cohen, 12.
[91] Ragins, 9.

aware of those kinds of things and never had situations to come up you know, when they asked why did he choose her or something. (P 13)

One of the two male participants who had female mentors could not recall a single occasion where he was made to feel uncomfortable. His mentor served as a mentor to four other young men as well. Three of these men went on to become principals and the fourth became a supervisor. The second man noted that a couple of men with whom he worked could not relate to his principal, and asked why he would seek her advice. It is interesting to note that she was not only his principal when he was a teacher, but she was also his fifth grade teacher when he was a student. He stated that she served also as mentor to three other men. All four of them became school principals.

Although the two retired principals being discussed were comfortable being mentored by women, the women who mentored them did not appear to mentor females. They selected the men in their elementary schools to mentor. It appears that men entering the elementary school teaching ranks were almost automatically considered as future administrators.

Subsidiary Question 3.2: Were the mentoring relationships more personal or professional in nature?

Only one of the retired principals had a mentor who was not a member of the educational community. This mentoring relationship began in high school and was personal in nature:

"He was a young man who was a year ahead of me in high school and went to the same church that I did, we played on the same softball team, we played athletics together and I had the highest opinion of him. I guess it is one of those things that if you could mirror yourself, then I probably imaged him as much as I could." (P5)

This relationship continued over the years. In fact, the retired principal had just visited with his mentor several weeks prior to participating in the telephone interview with

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this researcher. The rest of the participants described mentoring relationships that were more professional in nature.

Subsidiary Question 3.3: Did any of their colleagues have mentors?

The retired principals talked about the significant effects that mentors had on their careers, yet the majority were not able to clearly identify mentors among their colleagues. One retired principal knew his colleagues were mentored because his mentor also supported three of his colleagues. Other participants thought that their colleagues had mentors, but they were not sure who mentored them.

One retired principal mentioned that mentoring relationships were not discussed. Another retired principal, who felt sure that everybody had a mentor somewhere, mentioned that it was hard to identify who had mentors, since the participant described mentoring as a "highly unstructured personal kind of affair." (P9-Figure 8) Five of the retired principals agreed that most of their colleagues had some type of mentor.

Four of the retired principals were not sure if their colleagues had mentors. One of them stated that if they did, he was not aware of it. Another participant stated that her colleagues expressed the desire to have the type of mentoring relationship that she had with her mentor. She indicated that her colleagues may have lacked this relationship because their principals may have wanted to do everything for themselves (see Figure 8).

Retired Principals Who Thought or Knew that Colleagues had Mentors	Retired Principals Who Were Not Sure Colleagues Had Mentors
"I guess they did. It was a subject that we never did really talk about that much." (P2) "Oh yes, I think that everybody has a mentor somewhere. Mentoring is a highly unstructured personal kind of affair." (P9) "I think perhaps the majority of assistant principals have their principal as a mentor because they assist them in the employment process and usually it is someone they have decided that they can already work well with and want to promote." (P10) "There were four men, those were like the first elementary men that came through. There were four of us and we were all going to become principals so she took the four of us under her wing." (P11) "I'm sure most people had mentors, I mean somebody they knew. I'm not sure of the relationship all the time and who the mentors were, but I am sure there were a lot of people who had mentors." (P 13) "I think that probably a lot of them did that I didn't even know." (P15)	"No, I don't (know if my colleages had mentors)." (P4) "They may have, but I was not aware of it. I think many of them could have benefited from having the mentorship that I had. I don't think they had it, but it is hard for me to say whether or not they did." (P6) "You know it is hard to say. I think that they [my colleagues] reached the pinnacle of success based upon politics and not ability." (P8) "My colleagues didn't all have mentors the same way. They would say to me that they wished they had the relationship that I had. They would say things like, 'You come up with really fantastic ideas and I wish I had that situation.' You know, I can't speak to why they did or didn't. It could be that the senior administrator wanted to do everything for himself or herself." (P14)

Figure 8

Thematic Matrix for Perceptions of Mentored Colleagues

Subsidiary Question 3.4: Did the families of the mentor and protégé get to know each other?

Seven of the retired principals had mentoring relationships that became friendships. Consequently, their families and those of their mentors got to know each other. The other retired principals had mentoring relationships that existed primarily at work.

Subsidiary Question 3.5: Was the mentor also serving as direct supervisor of the retired principals?

Nine of the retired principals had a mentor who was a direct supervisor at the time the mentoring relationship began. Three participants had mentors who were not direct supervisors but who were in the field of administration. One had a mentor who was a colleague, another principal, but an individual with far more experience.

Subsidiary Question 3.6: How were the mentors selected?

Six of the retired principals were selected by their principals as protégés. One of the retired principals was a first year teacher, while his principal was a first year principal. He was also the only man in the building. As a result, his principal often called upon him for help. Another principal talked about being a teacher and a coach and being drawn in by administrators with whom he worked. He noted that his superintendent was a fantastic man who searched for traits of leadership in young men and women. He also noted that he gained visibility from his coaching position and that he was able to get to know some of the administrators he might not have connected with otherwise as a result of his coaching experiences.

One of the retired principals said that she was selected as a protégé because she was in the same school as her mentor. Her mentor encouraged her to get her Master's degree and then enter administration. Another participant stated that she worked directly across from the office and that her principal and mentor was frequently in teachers'

classrooms observing. Because her classroom was near the office, she received greater visibility than her colleagues.

Three of the retired principals stated that their mentor relationships were established by mutual interests. One participant said that she chose to work at her mentor's school because she thought it was a good school with a good leader. Once she began working at that school, the principal selected her as a protégé because she wanted her to go into administration. Another retired principal mentioned that he and his mentor initially felt quite comfortable with each other, but their mentoring relationship wasn't established until their second or third year of working together.

While one retired principal was serving as a new principal, her mentoring relationship was established.   Because the county was in the process of building a new elementary school, the building housed two principals in one school until the other school was completed. As a result, the more experienced principal who was stationed in her school became her mentor.

One retired principal indicated that there was no selection process. He noted that when his principal gave him the assistant principal position, he automatically became his mentor. University professors of educational administration were identified as the main mentors for another retired principal. This retired principal said that he was committed to learning as much as possible from the professors and took what he learned back to his day-to-day work. He said that the men he emulated were really great and that he saw things in them that he had not seen in other individuals reputed to be specialists in school administration (see Figure 9).

The selection process for mentors occurred in a variety of ways, the most prominent being the building principal's selecting a protégé from the teaching force. One of the retired principals stated strongly that the mentoring process begins as the assistant principal is hired and that the principal serves as the mentor. This type of mentoring certainly did occur; however, most of the retired principals indicated that their first mentoring relationship began while they were teaching. Regardless of how the mentoring

relationship began, all of the retired principals with mentors believed that their mentors had a profound influence on their careers.

Retired Principals Were Selected by Principals as Protégés	The Mentoring Relationships Were Established by Mutual Interest	Mentoring Relationships Established by Other Means
"I think that regardless of the work setting that you are in there are going to be individuals that you are drawn to that are outstanding in their endeavors that you kind of magnetize to them. In this county, I would never have dreamed that I would have stayed in this little rural county, but our superintendent was a fantastic man who evidently saw traits of leadership in young men and women that came to this county and would king of draw them. I was a teacher and a coach when I came here and they kind of drew me in and encouraged me to start taking some secondary administration courses and going ahead and getting in a masters program." (P5)

"It was his first year as principal and my first year as teacher. There were a lot of things that the principal called upon me to do." (P1)

"She was the principal of the school where I taught and she was responsible for me getting my masters. I guess I was selected because we were in the same school." (P14) | "Well, I guess it was sort of a mutual thing. I think after he felt comfortable, my first year teaching was with him and after a while, I think after two or three years, he felt fairly comfortable with me. Of course, it didn't hurt anything that we were members of the same Greek fraternity, but I didn't know that about him, nor he me, until we had worked together for about two or three years." (P4)

"She and I shared a building together because her school was not ready. So she came down and we enjoined everything in the school because her kids were in one section of the building and mine were in another. I knew her beforehand, but when we were sort of thrown together in the situation of having two schools in one, we became quite close." (P2)

"Well it was just a natural outgrowth of the situation I was in. It was kind of a mutual thing. I selected to go to her school and then when I got there she wanted me to go into administration, so it was a mutual process." (P10) | "I don't know which came first, admiration for that other individual or for that individual interests in you as a possible developing leader or both." (P7)

"He wasn't selected. He gave me my job, he automatically became one." (P9)

"I have never had a formal mentor, but I was probably bright enough, if not mature enough, to recognize that there were certain characteristics in these men (university professors) that I think one could readily say were great. I think sometimes you use the term fine and great, I think we use them loosely, but I saw things in these fellows that I had never seen in other individuals who were reported to be specialists in school administrations. Therefore, I almost committed to the idea that I have to learn as much from these guys as humanly possible and take it back to my own day-to-day work." (P8) |

Figure 9

Thematic Matrix for Mentor Selection

Figure 9 (continued)

Retired Principals Were Selected by Principals as Protégés	The Mentoring Relationships Were Established by Mutual Interest	Mentoring Relationships Established by Other Means
"She mentored all of her teachers. A lot of them didn't have any aspirations to be a principal. They were happy with their jobs, and didn't have any aspiration, but those that wanted to be, she certainly advised them and guided them in that direction." (P15) "It was odd because she was my fifth grade teacher. Then when I went back to school she was the principal and I became then a teacher under her and I was her assistant principal and she was still the principal. There were four men, those were like the first elementary men that came through. There were four of us in her building and we were all going to become principals so we were all going to school. It was great." (P11) "Well, he visited our classrooms and evaluated us, and he saw me on a daily basis almost. I was right across from his office, he was the kind of person who did come to your classroom, who did observe, who did pay fairly close attention. He encouraged me every step of the way." (P13)		

It was noted by one retired principal that most principals were mentors to their assistant principals. The principals guided them in the employment process, and the assistant principals they selected were usually people with whom the principals had established a positive working relationship and wanted to assist in their professional careers. In fact, throughout the study people made mention of their principals' serving as a mentor. One retired principal noted that she also learned from a principal who was a negative role model:

> You might consider this, you are studying only mentors and role models, you know you do learn from negative role models. In fact, that's why I decided I wanted to go into administration, because I had such a horrible principal. I thought, surely a school can be a happier place than this, and it can. I also think that they have an effect on your life. I learned a lot of things from negative role models as well, people who I would not emulate. I learned that if they did things a certain way, it didn't work. (P7)

Subsidiary Question 3.7: Did the mentors have more than one protégé during their careers?

All mentors who participated in this study had at least one protégé during their career. As the interviews progressed, the participants remembered more people that had considered them mentors. All but two of the participants mentioned mentoring more than one aspiring administrator (see Figure 10).

Evidence that Mentors had More than One Protégé During Course of Career	
"I became her mentor when I was the assistant principal at the school where she was teaching at the time. We sort of began that type of [mentoring] relationship. Then when she became principal she called on me daily……I tried to mentor a lot of my teachers." (P2) "For persons who were still pursuing their certification as administrators the universities would ask certain persons in the schools to accept interns to mentor in terms of their aspirations. Another [protégé] was a friend of mine. He was my best friend and asked if I would consider doing it [mentoring him]. I told him yes because not only was he my best friend, but I thought that he had potential to be an outstanding administrator. He asked me if I would meet on an informal basis; no structure from a given institution or anything like that, and I agreed to do it. I would do [mentor] him pretty much the same way Mr. L did me." (P4) "I saw that she [my protégé] was a strong person and I saw these traits when I went on to the principalship and I thought……if I want somebody to reinforce…" (P5) "I tried to help all the teachers." (P6) "Well, one…who is a woman, there's one more woman. I suppose we developed a professional relationship and were also friends, so it was a matter of encouraging. And there is one of the men who was my athletic director. I encouraged him to go into administration, he's a middle school principal now too." (P7)	"When I was in the business I really had, I knew that these people were being referred to me, they'd say, 'Mr. K, could you spend an hour with me or would you sit and talk with we about this, that and the other?' I would do it and I felt pleased to do it." (P8) "Yes [I served as mentor to aspiring administrators]. They wanted a job! There was already a personal relationship and a kindredness of spirit, which led to the job. It's quite natural and appropriate and proper that you gather around you the kinds of people you trust and like and work with that makes for success." (P9) "I did [mentor] two or three before we started the formal mentoring program and then I worked with several as the program was underway, worked with one who was a student for two years, and then another who had gone into the second phase of the program. I worked with some who were independently getting their degrees and then one person who is now an assistant principal at one of our elementary schools. She and I are still working very closely together." (P10) "There was a young man who was a middle school principal who I encouraged and then he became a high school principal, at every opportunity that I had I would give him an opportunity to come with me and do superintendent type things." (P11)

Figure 10

<u>Evidence that Mentors had More than One Protégé During Course of Career</u>

Figure 10 (continued)

Evidence that Mentors had More than One Protégé During Course of Career	
"My whole bag was to get the best people that I could find [as assistant principals] and those that would not mind working because I would work at four or five in the morning, get rid of paperwork, so that I would be free to work with teachers, assistant principals, whoever, during the day. I'm rather proud of the fact that I had five of my assistant principals go onto principalships in junior high schools and elementary schools. I felt good about that." (P12) "I served as a mentor to people when they became my assistant principals and I did that for seventeen years. Then the only other way that I was really a mentor was more on an occasional basis when I would be put into contact with someone." (P14) "Yes, the one who interviewed me [in the original Oral History of the Principalship interviews]. He is now assistant principal at one of the largest schools in the county and I hope I did something to help him. He was a good teacher and I could see the possibilities of leadership there and then I guess it was kind of mutual. I guess he sought me and I sought him." (P15)	

Subsidiary Question 3.8: Did the protégés ultimately surpass the mentor in educational or career development?

Seven of the retired principals surpassed their mentors in career or educational development. One gained roughly the same status as the mentor, and eight reported that they did not surpass their mentors in career or educational development. Of all the questions asked, this seemed to be the most intrusive. People were reluctant to discuss surpassing their mentors. When one retired principal indicated that he surpassed one of his mentors in career development and not the other, the researcher asked him to elaborate. This was his response:

"I really don't want to do that. There's nothing wrong or whatever, I just, it's my, I see people going where their spirits are and their talents, and their wish to do well….Some people move and some don't." (P9)

Retired Principals' Final Thoughts on Mentoring

At the conclusion of the interviews the participants were asked if they would like to share any final words on mentoring. Their words encapsulate the importance of mentoring to them and to their careers, and how they felt compelled to contribute to the field of school administration by passing on their knowledge to both new and aspiring school administrators.

"It [mentoring] was the kind of thing, I guess I felt, that at some point in my career, my life, that I was trying to pass on to others some things that had been passed on to me." (P1)

"I think that I worked with a very informal type of mentoring and there was nothing written in stone or concrete, and I think that people do need the mentoring." (P2)

"I think I've pretty well covered it. I feel positive about it and I think if it's set up in a way that encourages people to participate…that it is a good thing." (P3)

"I think that [mentoring] is one of the most promising activities that could be provided for the neophyte, and I suspect for the experienced administrator as well. All knowledge never resides in one particular location. I think there are

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certain things a neophyte could bring to a situation with an experienced mentor and there are obviously certain things that the neophyte could learn from the experienced administrator. I think that can be extremely valuable." (P4)

"I think that as an administrator you are what you are. The mentoring and the people that you are around are examples. You get to see how different individuals deal with problems. I think you basically have your attitudes and your morals and your outlook on how to deal with people and that type of thing. But I think these [mentoring] associations are what is really important." (P5)

"I'm glad that you are doing the study. I hope from what you come up with that you will be able to share with others and that will encourage more sharing and mentoring because I think that in all facets of our life it is very important. Not just in school, but in our communities, churches, and all the organizations for which we need to prepare other people and with your own family, with your children, you need to have some good models. You may not always call it that, but helping others to grow is needed in just everything we do." (P6)

"I think that it is a good idea that it [mentoring] has been formalized, that there are programs, because I think that there are probably a lot of people out there with talent who miss encouragement. Instead of it being a chance happening or a chance meeting, or a coincidence of events, you know, people's lives change, instead of just depending on that, encouraging people to develop is a good idea, particularly if it is an organized thing." (P7)

"I can gather as much knowledge as I can, tap into your experience and pick your brain, but I think the ultimate key becomes applying it in our way, and our way is sometimes, believe it or not, better than theirs …What I'm saying is it's great to have a mentor. It's great to learn from these mentors, you can learn well and apply it, but apply it in your own way." (P8)

"He wouldn't have remained one [a mentor] if there hadn't been this kindredness of spirit, and this professionalism, and this respect for him on my part or on his part for me. You don't just say, okay, I'm going to mentor. It won't work that way unless all the other ingredients fall into place. For me, personally, I can say that with a great deal of conviction that personalities of a certain type, warm and sharing and giving and understanding, but strong and firm, have an influence on me. I just like to be with and work with people, now I go back to a previous phrase that I use whenever there is a great deal of warmth and humanity, personal integrity and conviction, that's when things
flower." (P9)

"I just feel so strongly that it this is such a vital part of the training process. I do think that a school division needs to look very carefully at the people who are asked to serve as mentors. They need to have someone I think who is going to promote the philosophy of that school district and someone who is going to provide a good interactive program. I think that sometimes it is very difficult to have someone shadow you every single minute of every single day for a long period of time, and you have to have someone that is committed to that…and that is the problem, part of the problem that the program faces sometimes. Occasionally there are personality conflicts between the mentor and the intern, or philosophical differences or whatever, so a good match is important. But I can't think of any better way of preparing a person for the principal's roles, nor getting to know very well and in depth that persons capabilities as far as having an opportunity to place them in administrative positions, because once you put someone in a position it is more difficult to change the direction, than if you know in advance, hey, our philosophies do not gel. I am really an advocate of the whole process, I thoroughly enjoyed it, I don't know of anything that I enjoyed more than this interactive process, and it's made some lifelong friends for me." (P10)

"I just think that it is like a pay back. I think that you have to give something back that you have gotten. It is like student teaching. You should help other people along the way. Give your experience." (P11)

"I felt that giving the assistant principal the responsibility and having him answer one of those decisions he makes, well, it was my responsibility to see that that person was exposed to all facets of the school administration, and that I tried to do as much as possible." (P12)

"I think you have got to recognize good people. When I saw them I offered whatever help I could. If they needed to do an internship and needed to have somebody do it, I said, you can always do it here, you can always do it with me. I think you have to offer all those kinds of things to encourage people to go back to school, to get the degrees they need, to take the step of applying, to help them with the kinds of things they need in the interview process, that sort of thing. I just think as a mentor I have done that with lots of people who were teachers in my school, who were not teachers in my school, and people who I met who were talented." (P13)

"I think that it [mentoring] is terribly important. I think that first of all it is effective, second, I think that the new administrator can gain so much in perhaps a shorter amount of time, in other words, the new administrator can make more progress more quickly. They can be able to make the kinds of decisions that

administrators have to [make]. It is just a quicker way to learn, in my opinion, it is learning by doing." (P14)

"I think it [mentoring] is fantastic and I had several [protégés] over the years when I was principal. I think these people pick up and copy, well not exactly copy them, but get ideas from the principal. The principal just serves as a good role model and I think all the wisdom that the principal has, through many, many years of [working] that this new person coming in could at least evaluate and benefit from it. I enjoyed working with and helping them, and hopefully they benefited from working with me." (P15)

The final words of the retired principals were all positive. They described the importance of mentoring, passing what they have learned on to others, and helping to develop other administrators. They felt strongly that mentoring, formal or informal, was an important aspect of career development which should be encouraged and continued.

Summary

This chapter outlines the findings of the interviewer based on telephone interviews with fifteen retired principals. The participants shared information on how their careers were affected by mentors, and how their actions affected the careers of their protégés. Both the informal mentor network and formal mentoring programs were discussed.

The majority of the retired principals interviewed had participated in an informal mentoring relationship; however, some had taken part in the development of formal mentoring programs. The participants' thoughts and feelings about mentoring and its importance to the growth and development of school administrators were discussed in detail. The data from the interviews indicated that mentors played a significant role in the development of those former school principals who were interviewed for this study.

CHAPTER FIVE

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe the role that mentors played in the development of school principals. This chapter includes information regarding the conclusions of the study as well as recommendations for practice and further research.

Conclusions

Effects of Mentors on Career Development of Retired Principals:

The mentors of the retired principals contributed significantly to their career development. The effects on their career development included helping them make career decisions, assisting in the transitions from teaching role to that of school administrator, and giving encouragement and advising the protégés as they became school administrators.

All retired principals began their careers as teachers, and without the intervention of a mentor, five of the retired principals would have ended their careers in the classroom, having never aspired to administration. Some of the principals made no application for the principalship. Instead, they were invited to serve in that position by administrators in their school system.

This invitation to serve as administrators was also found by another researcher, Barbara Cooper, who noted in her dissertation on careers of women in administration that "the respondents did not apply for their jobs but were encouraged to apply or offered their jobs prior to making application."[92]

Milstein, Bobroff, and Restine, authors of *Internship Programs in Education*, noted that it is increasingly important for educators to examine the ways in which both individuals who will lead our schools and those who prepare them to lead our schools are chosen. He advises current planners of internship programs not to wait for a natural flow of self-selected students into the program, but to activate proactive recruitment. He

asserts that this proactive recruitment enhances the likelihood that the most competent candidates will apply.[93] Indeed, his statements reflect the procedure by which most of the retired principals were recruited for their positions.

Mentors had different influences on the participants they mentored. Their influences ranged from vital day-to-day contact and fellowship to brief conversations once the protégés had launched their careers as principals. Even after retirement the protégés still acknowledged the important contributions their mentors made to their careers. Phillips notes this in her research:

"More often than not, unless the relationships have been extremely close, the individuals go their separate ways. Protégés are often forgotten -- at least by name -- by their mentors. On the other hand, mentors are generally remembered by their protégés indefinitely. In fact, many mentors seem to take on new importance to the once protégés as the latter reflect back upon their lives."[94]

The participants had different mentors throughout the course of their careers. They typically met their first and most influential mentor while in the teaching field. These were the mentors who encouraged them to enter the field of school administration. Many of the retired principals were motivated by their mentors to earn advanced degrees. Some of the participants noted that they probably would not have sought advanced degrees without the encouragement of the mentor. Zey notes career guidance as one of the teaching functions of the mentoring relationship: "The mentor provides a protégé with a picture of career paths available inside and outside the corporation. This often involves redirecting the protégé from his chosen specialty into a field more suited to the protégés'

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[92] Barbara O. Cooper, 49.

[93] Milstein, Bobroff, and Restine, 28.

[94] Linda Lee Phillips, "Mentors and Protégés: A Study of Career Development of Women Managers and Executives in Business and Industry." (Ph.D. diss, University of California, Los Angeles, 1977), 99.

skills."[95] In these cases, the mentors redirected the participants from the teaching field to careers in school administration.

As the participants became administrators, they continued their relationships with their first mentors, especially when they became assistant principals. When the participants assumed the principalship, they were less likely to maintain frequent contact with their mentors. Once they had their own schools, some of the participants felt that they should rely on their own judgement when it came to decision making. Other participants looked to people different from their mentors for advice, some of whom also became their mentors. Of course, some of the mentoring relationships continued throughout the careers of the participants. Their mentors became lifelong friends.

In his discussion of the principles and practice of mentoring Carruthers notes that mentoring does not go on forever:

> To put it very simply, when the mentoring dyad is formed, there is always a difference, in, say knowledge and/or experience, the higher level resting with the mentor. In the course of time this gap diminishes, as it should, for this is one of the fundamental purposes for forming the relationship. The protégé is becoming more independent and is approaching a collegial relationship with the mentor. The mentor-protégé relationship has run its course, but a frequent outcome is a lifelong friendship between the two colleagues. Sometimes a breakup does not occur because the purposes of the relationship have been achieved.[96]

This was the same pattern followed by the retired principals as they described their mentoring relationships. Of course, none of the mentoring relationships described by the retired principals were relationships in which a breakup occurred. The mentoring portion of the relationship may have come to an end in a variety of situations; however, the participants maintained contact with and respect for their former mentors.

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[95] Zey, 14.

[96] Caldwell, 18.

Many participants thought that females were more likely to climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor. All of the female respondents agreed that women were more likely to successfully climb the career ladder with the help of a mentor. The participants agreed that at times it was difficult for women to climb the career ladder. Some of them commented that at the time they were serving as principals, corporal punishment was still practiced. Because of this practice, women were less likely to be selected as principals of middle and high schools. One woman who did become the first female principal of a high school in her district noted that when her mentor encouraged her to become a high school administrator, he asked her to spend several days observing another female high school principal. She found it ironic that the only female principal at the high school level known to her mentor was in another state. She made the journey to observe this principal, and shortly thereafter she became the first female principal of her high school.

A longitudinal study of 199 female managers at AT&T also found that women with mentors experienced more rapid advancement than did women without mentors.[97] In a survey of the top executives listed in the "Who's News" column of the Wall Street Journal in 1977, all of the female respondents reported having had a mentor.[98] Both of these studies support the beliefs of the retired principals regarding a more rapid climb up the career ladder for females with mentors.

Contributions by the Participants to the Mentoring Process:

The retired principals contributed in various ways to the evolution of the mentoring process. All of them served as mentors, and thirteen of them had mentors of their own. As their careers were nearing an end, several of the principals participated in the development of formal mentoring programs.

Several of the retired principals participated in formal mentoring programs. These programs were typically designed for people who wanted to become principals. The

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[97] Ragins, 3.
[98] Roche, 24.

retired principals who participated in such programs described them in favorable terms. All of the participants described mentoring as an important process. Notwithstanding, some of the participants who had not participated in formal mentoring programs were somewhat skeptical as to whether assigned mentors could achieve the same positive results obtained through the informal mentoring process.

The programs in which they participated were designed for teachers aspiring to administrative roles. The programs varied from administrative internships operated by universities, which required the intern to accomplish a number of administrative tasks and to write a paper; to a more intensive mentoring program wherein the protégé shadowed a principal day in and day out for extended periods of time, to a program in which teachers were given a year to work in the central office, participating in various administrative duties.

One of the principals who participated in the development of formal mentoring programs with a university thought that his input was more reactive than developmental. He was not quite sure about the degree of impact made by his suggestions. Another principal, who worked with a university program, felt that she had a lot to contribute after the program was in place. The professors asked for her suggestions and feedback and appeared to take her thoughts seriously. The principal who developed a program in his district believed that he had a great deal of input and that the program had been successful.

Whether engaged in formal or informal mentoring processes, all of the participants made contributions. Those participants who had mentors all chose to mentor others. Some of the participants mentored only one or two people, while others had many protégés.

The Nature of the Mentoring Network During the Time the Participants Were Serving as Principals:

During the time that the participants were serving as principal, the nature of the mentor network was primarily informal. The mentoring relationships varied, in that some

men were mentored by men and some by women. Some of the women were mentored by men and some by women. It was interesting to note that the men in the elementary schools were mentored by female principals. In one case, the female mentor of one participant mentored all of the men in her elementary school and encouraged them to become school principals. It was interesting to note that this mentor did not include any women from her staff in the group she mentored.

Although occasionally aspiring administrators sought mentors, frequently the retired principals did their own selecting when it came to identifying protégés. They selected their protégés among the members of their teaching staff. The participants were mentored by their first principals and, in turn, they mentored their teachers. They considered their primary mentoring responsibilities to be to their assistant principals, and they were proud to tell how many of their assistants had subsequently become principals of their own schools.

The mentoring relationships were primarily professional in nature, although some retired principals indicated that their mentors had become life-long friends. The participants all spoke fondly of their mentors. Many of their mentors were deceased, and the participants were almost reverent as they discussed the impact that these role models had on their lives.

Ultimately, the retired principals felt that they owed a great deal to their mentors. They considered themselves fortunate to have benefited from this experience. They described mentoring as having made an important contribution to their development as school principals.

Implications and Recommendations for Practice

A number of today's university-based principal preparation programs include mentoring components. The retired principals taking part in this investigation described two such programs. One was an internship program that required prospective

administrators to observe a principal, to perform various administrative duties, and to file a brief analytical report. In addition, the supervising administrator was required to provide a written analysis of the intern's performance. Although such a program is better than no internship at all, the second program was more extensive and came highly recommended by the retired principal. This was the Danforth RP3 program, in place at Virginia Tech during the principal's period of active service. The retired principal who participated in this formal program described it as outstanding. Continued use of such programs should be encouraged whenever possible.

Joseph Murphy comments on the present day lack of high quality post-employment training opportunities for principals and superintendents.[99] Whatever post-employment training received by the retired principals came largely through contact with their mentors, who encouraged, advised, and helped the participants throughout their careers. The participants in this study also noted that they received help through monthly principals' meetings, during which they discussed issues and challenges with their colleagues. In this study some of the participants felt that they had to stop consulting their mentors when they became principals of their own schools. Although seeking less assistance as one progresses further in one's career may be viewed by some as appropriate, it is clear that new principals certainly could benefit from the advice of seasoned professionals. By creating a program that formalizes this informal network and provides new principals with experienced mentors operating at the same level (elementary, middle, or high), newly hired principals would feel more comfortable seeking advice from other administrators as they enter a new stage of their careers with no fear of criticism for doing so.

It was noted by one retired principal that some of her colleagues were envious of her strong mentorship experience. This was during the time that she and her colleagues were serving as assistant principals. Her colleagues had principals who did not share and

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[99] Joseph Murphy, *The Landscape of Leadership Preparation: Reframing the Education of School Administrators* (Newbury Park, CA: Corwin Press, Inc., 1992), 108.

teach as they performed their duties, keeping the administration of their schools very much to themselves. The assistants assigned to such principals noted this behavior and expressed the desire for the opportunity to learn more. Establishing a program with formal guidelines for mentoring should help the principals to more effectively mentor their assistant principals and to assist them in learning those skills needed to become effective principals. Districts might consider establishing formal procedures through which assistant principals are provided the opportunity to confer with principals from throughout the district on a regular and formal basis. Such an approach would provide the assistant principals access to a variety of administrative styles and philosophies.

Some of the retired principals indicated that no program could replicate the informal mentoring connections with which they were familiar. Their belief is that such processes are likely to continue for the foreseeable future. The retired principals sought dynamic members of the teaching staff to become candidates for administrative positions. As a result, they were able to identify many subsequently successful administrators. Informal mentoring of the type described is a valuable process, one that should be continued. One of the participants of this study noted that during his early years he sought people that he would like to use as models. Aspiring administrators who are not a part of a formal mentoring program should be encouraged to seek mentors on an individual basis.

As some of the participants of this study indicated, mentoring allows one to "give something back" to one's profession. Mentoring has influenced the careers of many school administrators is likely to do so for many years to come.

In summary, the following are recommendations for practice:

1. Continued use of programs such as Virginia Tech's RP-3 Program.
2. Creation of post-employment mentoring programs which;
   a) pair new principals with mentors at the same level;
   b) give principals formal guidelines to use as they mentor their assistant principals.

3. Continued employment of the informal mentoring network;

      a) Administrators should seek dynamic members of their teaching staff and encourage them to go into administration.

      b) Aspiring administrators should be encouraged to seek mentors on an informal basis.

Recommendations for Further Research

During the course of the interviews and without prompting, certain participants suggested that they would be interested in knowing more about several related topics:

1. The Role of Mentors in the Development of Female School Administrators:
The participants' responses to the research subsidiary question about whether females climb the career ladder more quickly with the help of an administrator were very interesting. The respondents went far beyond simply answering the question. Further study concentrating on the roles mentors play on behalf of women in administration, and comparing the careers of female administrators with mentors to those of female administrators without mentors, would be useful.

2. The History of the Principalship:
Further use of the database titled <u>The Oral History of the Principalship</u>, compiled by Dr. Patrick W. Carlton, is encouraged. This database presently consists of more than twenty-three volumes of interviews with retired K-12 school principals whose careers span the period from the early 1930's to the present. These interviews contain valuable information on the evolution of school administration. Various topics are covered, including philosophies of education, the process of school integration, changing curriculum, and school-community relations. Detailed information about this data-base is given in Appendix B and Appendix C. The retired principals spoke freely about many topics that are of interest to today's administrators. It is believed that the database can readily support a variety of additional research projects, and that students should be referred to this valuable source of information.

3. The Role of Mentors in Principal Preparation Programs:

None of the participants participated in a program that provided mentors as they prepared for the principalship. Universities presently offer a variety of models of principal preparation programs. With the help of the Danforth Foundation, many universities have instituted programs that include mentoring components. A study of the effectiveness of the mentoring components in principal preparation programs would be beneficial to both aspiring administrators and to those planning and operating these programs.

4. The Role of Negative Role Models:

Three of the retired principals interviewed for this study indicated that they had learned a great deal from negative role models. One negative role model inspired a participant to become a principal. Another participant indicated that he had learned a lot from a negative role model and said that, when he assumed the principalship, he would never employ some of the methods being used by that individual. Since it is apparent that a number of administrators learned a great deal from negative role models, it is suggested that a study be done on the role of such negative role models in the development of school principals.

5. The Connection between Coaching and School Administration:

A number of the male participants in this study mentioned their coaching experience prior to becoming school administrators. They talked about getting to know the community through that venue prior to becoming administrators. One of the female participants mentioned that she felt excluded from the informal network because of her lack of coaching experience. She inferred that high school coaches definitely were a step ahead in being hired as school administrators. She went on to state that at the time she served as principal, she was one of the few principals who did not have a coaching background. An interesting topic for research would involve an assessment of the traits and number of athletic coaches who move from coaching into school administration and how these practices have changed during the last twenty years.

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APPENDICES

The Telephone Interview

Name of Retired Principal: _____

Date of Interview: _____

Interview Questions

Hello, this is Theresa Doherty calling to interview you regarding mentoring relationships as discussed in our earlier conversations. I'd like to begin by thanking you again for taking part in this interview. The questions I will ask you have been designed to help me gather historical data on both informal and formal mentoring. There are no right or wrong answers to the questions. Any information that you would like to share is of interest. Please feel free to stop me at any time if you need clarification or have any other questions. With your permission I would like to tape this conversation.

I'd like to begin by asking you the questions which were asked on the original interview that you completed with one of Dr. Carlton's graduate students in education:

What is your view on the "mentoring" program for new administrators, in which an experienced administrator is paired with a neophyte?

What experiences have you had with such an approach?

Was there a mentor in your life? (Who, when, how long?)

Thanks, now I'd like to move on to some other questions on mentoring.

Please describe how your mentoring relationship was established.

Was your mentoring relationship established prior to the beginning of your career? When was it established and how long did it last?

Did you serve as assistant principal? If so, for how long?

Did your mentor influence your promotion to the principalship in any way? If so, to what extent? Could you please describe?

To what extent did your mentor encourage you to seek advanced degrees? How?

To what extent did your mentor introduce you to colleagues and friends who were helpful to your career? If so, how was this accomplished?

To what extent did your mentor serve as an advisor to you in your daily work life?

To what extent did you consult your mentor about any key decisions that were made at your school?

Was your mentor your supervisor? What was his or her job title?

If so, did you follow your mentor as he/she moved into different positions?

Was there more than one mentor in the course of your career? Could you identify these mentors?

What influence did the assistance of a mentor have on the ability of female administrators to climb the career ladder?

Was your mentor male or female? If your mentor was of the opposite gender, did other colleagues ever comment on your relationship or make you feel uncomfortable about it?

Did your colleagues have mentors as well?

Did your mentoring relationship begin more as a professional or personal relationship?

Did your family and the family of your mentor get to know each other?

How was your mentor selected?

Did your mentor have more than one protégé?

Did you ultimately surpass the mentor in educational or career development?

Have you served as a mentor to an aspiring principal or other school administrators?

If so, how was your protégé selected?

Did you participate in the development of any formal mentoring programs for administrators? Could you please describe that program?

Did you participate as a mentor in any formal programs?

What is your opinion of the formal programs?

This concludes the interview questions. Do you have any other comments on mentoring that you would like to share?

Thanks so much for your time.

by

Dr. Patrick Carlton

Introduction to the Oral History of the Principalship

Oral History is defined as the preservation, normally through the use of audio recordings, of the recollections of those who have experienced important social occurrences or events. In a sense, this technique is perhaps the oldest form of information transmission, dating to periods well before Man could write. Indeed, the oral tradition in cultural transmission has held a prominent place in virtually all known human groupings. For example, Herodotus, the Greek chronicler of the Persian Wars of the Fifth Century, BC, utilized oral history data collection techniques in preparing his research notes.

This tradition continues to function in many parts of the modern world. Rather than qualifying as a "Johnny come lately" approach to data transmission and analysis, oral history deserves respect and veneration based upon its persistence and proven utility over time.

Oral history captures life information, the bits and pieces of data that would otherwise be lost to posterity. It serves to fill in the inevitable gaps in formal learning, often providing "the rest of the story," to quote a well-known radio personality. Use of the aural approach provides a sense of the respondent's inner thoughts and motivations. Intonation, voice timbre, and delivery can be surprisingly helpful here.

The project which generated this collection of transcripts began as a result of a happy pair of intellectual coincidences which occurred in 1986. The first was the exposure of the editor to the ongoing oral history project currently being conducted at the US Army Military History Institute at Carlisle Barracks, Pennsylvania. The writer had the opportunity to serve at the facility for several weeks, gaining an appreciation for and understanding of this important collection effort. Soon after returning from this tour, the writer met Dr. Roland Barth of Howard University, well known for his work on the Principal's Center in recent years. Dr. Barth indicated, during a formal presentation to a Phi Delta Kappa Chapter in Northern Virginia, that there was need for more in-depth and less superficial research in professional education generally, and on the principalship in particular. The writer characterizes Dr. Barth's remarks as raising questions concerning the utility of research which is "a mile wide and inch deep"– like the Platte River in Michener's *Centennial*. The obvious conclusion was that research capable of being characterized a "a foot wide and mile deep" was indicated.

School principals, as is true with many other busy public officials, are subject to constant pressures, inadequate time for decision-making, the requirement to be responsive to a constant parade of internally - and externally-based individuals, all of whom have a claim on their attention, and a lack of time for reflection and contemplation. Under such circumstances, it is not surprising that so few of these persons record their experiences, thought, and dreams in written form. In most instances, the insights of these participant-observers in the great social and educational events of the 1940s through the 1980s are in imminent danger of being lost, for the ravages of time continue to take their toll within their graying ranks. Thus, immediate action designed to preserve the treasure trove of information processed by these dedicated educators seemed to be indicated.

Having come to this conclusion, the writer determined that the most effective **-** if not the most efficient **-** way in which to collect such data was through in-depth interviews with those whose long-term experiences and wisdom rendered them capable of providing assistance to generations of educational administrators yet to come. Thus, the Oral History of the Principalship was born with data collection beginning in early 1986 and continuing to the present time.

From the outset, the purpose of the project has been to gather the recollections and wisdom of veteran building principals, most of whom have never before been invited to contribute to the literature of educational administration. These dedicated men and women of constitute a "national informational treasure" of immense proportions. It has been the aim of the project to capture, in an organized and scholarly manner, information on a wide variety of educational topics from those who experienced the events of the past forty to fifty years. The audio taped interviews, conducted by the writer and by advanced graduate students in Educational Administration, vary in length from one to three hours. Transcripts lengths vary between fifteen and 100+ pages.

The interviews are based upon a standard question set, or protocol, with modifications designed to suit the interests of the person interviewed as well as those of the interviewer. Thus, there is some variation in content, although a substantial degree of commonality is subject matter does pervade the collection. Some of the topics covered in the interviews deal with decision-making in education; ethics in administration; the characteristics of effective schools and of effective principals; philosophy of education and of administration; teacher evaluation and discipline; instructional leadership; school-community relations; teacher dismissal; grievances; relations with the school board and the superintendent of schools; career ladders and merit pay; training of administrators; and views on testing and curriculum. The standard interview protocol which has evolved during the nine years of the project's life, is included as an appendix to this document.

Due to the modest level of funding available, collection has so far been limited almost exclusively to the four state area around Washington, DC (Maryland, Virginia,

West Virginia and North Carolina), with a few from other parts of the United States. Of note is a set of 16 interviews from Colorado collected while the editor served briefly at the University of Northern Colorado, in Greeley; and a set of 25 interviews from Ohio, collected while the editor served at Youngstown State University. Respondents were elementary, middle and secondary school principals who retired during the decades of the 1950s, '60s, '70s and '80s. They vary in age from the mid-50s to the '90s. They are male and female, black and white. The academic training varies from the baccalaureate to the doctorate.

Participants also vary significantly in degree of articulateness, knowledge of current educational issues, responsiveness and general attitude toward education and the principalship. While most respondents seemed to have enjoyed and valued their administrative experiences, some are quite bitter about the conditions under which they labored and are outspoken in their criticisms. The comments of some black principals who served before, during, and after segregation in Virginia and Ohio are particularly impressive, filled with unusual insights into the "separate but unequal" school setting in which these men and women were forced to serve during the early years of their experience. The sense of hopefulness coupled with a recognition of and resignation to political realities of the day presented in these transcripts is noteworthy. Current and future generations of educators can learn important lessons in humility and steadfast dedication from these outstanding individuals.

The average American has a speaking vocabulary of only a few thousand words, far fewer than the average written vocabulary. Furthermore, most individuals do not speak in totally grammatical format, often to their embarrassment and chagrin when confronted with the recorded or transcribed efforts of their efforts. Consequently, the question of degree and type of editing during interview transcription is of salience in any project of this nature. In many projects, the interview subject is given the opportunity to review the final manuscript upon completion and to make any necessary emendations prior to the document's being placed in the project archive. Due to the pressures of time under which this project's interviewers labored, it was not convenient to engage in this practice. Consequently, those adjustments and corrections which were handled by the project typists and interviewers themselves.

However, the reader can rest assured that those corrections which have been made do not detract from the meaning of the text, and are usually cosmetic in nature. Repetitions of words or phrases; grunts and groans; and "uhs," "ums," and "you-knows" were all considered fair game for editorial excision and have, in most instances, been so treated. Every effort has been made, however, to avoid any change that would alter the originally intended meaning of the text.

As a way of assisting readers in finding particular written passages on the audio tapes from which the transcriptions were drawn, in certain instances, tape counter

numbers have been inserted in the text at intervals. Normally, but not always, these will be found in the left-hand margin of the paper.

Further assistance is provided to the reader/researcher in the form of transcriber-developed indexes. These indexes list those topics discussed and provide indications of tape numbers, counter numbers, and transcript pages. Unfortunately, however, the practice of including such indexes was not adopted until late in the project, with the result that these topical researching aids are unavailable in some transcripts.

The importance of historical documentation of this type cannot be overemphasized. The office of public school principal is among the most influential of local level public service positions. These unsung heroes come and go, but the position remains, a symbol of administrative continuity and commitment to excellence in public education, as well as to cultural continuity. The public schools have long served as a repository for American values and have served to transmit these values to succeeding generations of young people. As guardian of this process - keeper of the flame, as it were - the public school principal has long been an extraordinary influential - if relatively unknown - actor in our society.

Today's principal is bound by the silver cord of tradition and duty to those who have gone before, serving the children of successive generations of Americans both honorably and well. As such, the former incumbents of this position deserve great respect and gratitude. To those who have patiently donated hundreds of hours to the process of creating these important historical records, we must express heartfelt thanks on behalf of this and generations yet to come. Such generosity and public-spiritedness is truly noteworthy.

Patrick W. Carlton, Ph.D.
Series Editor

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL-ORAL HISTORY OF THE PRINCIPALSHIP

Developed by Patrick W. Carlton, Ph.D.
©1991

Would you begin by telling us about your family background-your childhood interests and development? (Birthplace, elementary and secondary education, family characteristics.)

Would you discuss your college education preparation for entering the field of teaching. How many years did you serve as a teacher? A principal?

I wonder if you would discuss those experiences or events in your life that constituted important decision points in your career and how you feel about them now?

Would you talk about the circumstances surrounding your entry into the principalship?

What motivated you to enter the principalship? How did your motives change over the years?

Would you take us on a walk through your school, describing its appearance and any unusual features of the building?

Would you describe your personal philosophy of education? How did it evolve over the years?

Would you describe the instructional philosophy of your school, telling how it was developed and how it evolved over time?

What experiences/events in your professional life influenced your management philosophy? Please discuss these events.

What techniques did you use to create a successful climate for learning? Would you describe successful and any unsuccessful experiments in climate building in which you were involved?

What kind of things do teachers expect principals to be able to do? Describe your views on what it takes to be an effective principal, describing the personal and professional characteristics of the "good principal."

As a follow up question, would you describe the expectations, both professional and personal, that were placed upon principals by their employers and the community during

your period of employment? How do these expectations differ from today's situation?
A great deal of attention has been given to the topic of personal leadership in recent years.
Please discuss your approach to leadership and describe some techniques which worked
for you-and an incident in which your approach failed.

Cultural diversity is a topic of great interest and concern at this point in time. Would you
discuss the nature of your student body (bodies) and comment on the problems, challenges
and triumphs in which you participated while serving as principal?

Would you discuss your participation in handling the Civil Rights situation (integration)
and describe your involvement with busing?

It has been said that the curriculum has become much more complex in recent years.
Would you comment on the nature of the curriculum during the time you were principal
and compare it to the situation in today's schools, citing positive and negative aspects of
the situation then and now?

There are those who argue that standardized testing can provide a way to improve
instruction. Please discuss your experience with such testing and provide us your views
on its effect on the quality of the instructional program.

Could you describe your work day? That is, how did you spend your time? What was the
normal number of hours per week you put in?

Would you describe some of the pressures you faced on a daily basis and explain how you
coped with them? Describe your biggest headaches or concerns on the job. Describe the
toughest decision or decisions that you had to make.

Would you tell us the key to your success as a principal? Please discuss your professional
code of ethics and give examples of how you applied it during your career.

Would you describe those aspects of your professional training which best prepared you
for the principalship? Which training experiences were least useful?

If you had to do it again, what kinds of things would you do to better prepare yourself for
the principalship? Would you describe your feelings, knowing what you know now, about
entering the principalship yourself if given the opportunity to start anew?

What suggestions would you offer to universities as a way of helping them to better
prepare candidates for administrative positions? Comment on weaknesses in traditional
programs of training for administrators.

What is your view of the "mentoring" program from new administrators, in which an administrator is paired with a neophyte? What experience have you had with such an approach? Was there a mentor in your life?

There are those who argue that, more often than not, central office policies hinder, rather than help, building level administrators in carrying out their responsibilities. Would you give your views on this issue? If you were king, what changes would you make in the typical system-wide organizational arrangements as a way of improving administrative efficiency and effectiveness?

If you were advising a person who is considering an administrative job, what would that advice be?

There are those who argue that the principal should be an instructional leader, and those who suggest that, realistically speaking, this person must be, above all, a good manager. Would you give your views on this issue and describe your own style?

Would you describe the ideal requirements for principal certification and discuss appropriate procedures for screening those who wish to become principals?

It is often said that the principal should be active in community affairs. Please discuss your involvement with and participation in civic groups and other community organizations. Which community organizations or groups had the greatest influence?

It has been said that there is a home-school gap and that more parental involvement with the schools needs to be developed. Would you give your view on this issue and describe how you interacted with parents and with citizens who were important to the well being of the school?

A good deal of attention has been given to career ladders, differential pay plans and merit pay in recent years. Would you give your views on these issues and describe any involvement you have had with such approaches?

Would you describe your approach to teacher evaluation and give your philosophy of evaluation?

A good deal is said these days about teacher grievances. Would you give your views on the desirability of such procedures and describe you approach to handling teacher dissatisfaction?

Would you discuss teacher dismissal and your involvement in such activities?

What, in your view, should be the role of the Assistant Principal? Discuss your utilization of such personnel while on the job. Would you describe the most effective assistant principal with whom you had the opportunity to serve? What became of this individual?

As you view it, what characteristics are associated with the most effective schools, and what features characterize the less successful ones?

During the past decade schools have become much larger. Discuss your views on this phenomenon and suggest an ideal size for a school in terms of optimal administrative and instructional activities.

In recent years more and more programs for special groups of students (LD, Gifted and Talented, Non-English speaking) have been developed. Please discuss your experience with special student services and your views on today's trends in this regard.

Salaries and other compensation have changed a good deal since you entered the profession. Would you discuss your recollections of the compensation system of your school system during your early years as principal and give your views on developments in this area since then?

Most systems presently have a ten year, or continuing contract system for teachers. Would you discuss the situation of the system at the time you entered the profession and comment on the strengths and weaknesses of such a system?

There has traditionally been a commitment in this country to the principal of universal free public education. Would you give your views on this concept and indicate your feelings on the practicality of such an approach in this day and time?

Administrators presently spend a good deal of time complaining about the amount of paperwork and the bureaucratic complexity with which they are forced to deal. Would you comment on the situation during your administrative career and compare the problems you encountered with the situation at this time?

Given the presence of administrative complexity, if there were three areas of administration that you could change in order to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of educational administration, what would they be?

As a follow up question, if you could change any three areas in the curriculum or overall operations of American schools, what would they be?

Would you describe your relationship with the Superintendent in terms of his general demeanor toward you and your school?

Would you discuss your general relationship, pro or con, with the Board of Education and comment on the effectiveness of school board operations in general?

Principals operate in a constantly tense environment. What kind of things did you do to maintain your sanity under these stressful conditions?

Since you have now had some time to reflect on your career, I wonder if you would share with us what you consider to be your administrative strengths and weaknesses.

Would you discuss the circumstances leading up to your decision to retire at the time you did, giving your reasons and the mental processes you exercised in reaching the conclusion to step down?

Would you give us an overall comment of the pros and cons of administrative service, and any advice you would wish passed along to today's principals?

Despite my best efforts to be comprehensive in my questioning, there is probably something I have left out. What have I not asked you that I should have?

APPENDIX D: LETTER TO RETIRED PRINCIPALS

Theresa M. Doherty
PO Box 3032 • Falls Church, VA 22043

April 20, 1998

[Name of Recipient]
[Address]
[City, State, Zip]

Dear [Salutation]:

In 19__ you were interviewed by _____ as part of the Oral History of the Principalship Project conducted by Dr. Patrick W. Carlton at Virginia Tech. I am currently using that database to complete my dissertation on the role of mentors in the development of school principals. During your interview you indicated that there were one or more significant persons in your career that served as mentors or role models.

After perusing the database it is evident that more information is necessary to understand the history of mentoring as applied to school principals. I will be conducting telephone interviews to gather this information. I am writing in hopes that you would be willing to continue your participation in this project and be able to spend between thirty minutes and an hour on the phone with me discussing mentor relationships.

As always, strict confidentiality will be practiced and your name will not be used in the study. Your knowledge is extremely valuable and will contribute a great deal to this historical study. The interview would be scheduled at your convenience. Please indicate if you are willing to participate by completing and returning the attached page in the envelope provided. Thanks for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Theresa M. Doherty

VITA

Theresa M. Doherty

Post Office Box 3032
Falls Church, VA 22043
Doherty7@aol.com

EDUCATION

1999	Doctor of Education (EdD) in Educational Leadership and Policy Studies Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia
1988	Masters of Arts in Educational Administration Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, Blacksburg, Virginia
1980	Bachelor of Arts in Liberal Studies with a Bilingual/Bi-cultural Emphasis California State University at Chico, California

EXPERIENCE:

1997-present Assistant Principal: Glasgow Middle School - Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia

Roles, tasks, and responsibilities include instructional supervision, student supervision, staff supervision, and operational duties.

1994-1996 Foreign Language Department Chairperson: Glasgow Middle School- Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia.

Teacher of eighth grade Spanish One and Spanish for Fluent Speakers. Participant in initiation of block scheduling and in pilot program to teach all eighth graders a foreign language. Member of eighth grade team. Participant in Glasgow's Administrative Exploratory Experience. Teacher of Spanish for Educators.

1993-1994 Lead Teacher: Middle School Learning Center - Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia
Planned and developed alternative program for middle school students. Taught math, civics and English. In charge of all discipline matters, enrollment, and contact with parents, base schools, area office, social workers, and probation/parole officers.

1992-1993	**Spanish Immersion Teacher: Rose Hill Elementary School - Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia**.

Taught fourth grade students both Spanish and English portions of the school day.

1988-1992	**George Mason Middle/High School - Falls Church City Public Schools, Virginia.**

Teacher: Taught math, English as a Second Language, and Spanish, seventh through twelfth grade. Extra duties included serving as sponsor of middle school student council, the school store, the homeless committee, and coaching the volleyball team.

Student Activities Director: Planned assemblies, coordinated fund raising efforts, prepared student activities budget, worked closely with student leaders, class and activities sponsors. Planned activities in conjunction with Athletic Director, Substance Abuse Counselor, PTA, and the Community of Falls Church. (1991-1992)

Grade Level Disciplinarian: Managed all discipline referrals for the eighth grade. (1989-1991)

1987-1988	**Teacher: Osbourn Park High School - Prince William County Public Schools, Virginia.**

Taught Spanish One and Two.

1985-1987	**Teacher: Warren County Junior High School - Warren County Public Schools, Virginia.**

Taught Spanish; sponsored Spanish Club; coached volleyball and cross-country teams.

1981-1984	**Teacher: Ressie Jeffries Elementary School - Warren County Public Schools, Virginia**.

Taught fourth and fifth grade.

WORKSHOPS CONDUCTED

"Student Self-Assessment in the Foreign Language Classroom," Fairfax County Public Schools, August 1995.

"Saving the Sanity of the Middle School Teacher," VEA Instructional Conference, October 1992.

Virginia Education Association Discipline Cadre - Planned and presented discipline workshops throughout Virginia, 1985-1987.

"Creative Teaching Ideas for Use in the Foreign Language Classroom", Warren County Public Schools, January 1986.

Member of Fairfax County Improvisational Troupe, presenting improvisation programs throughout Northern Virginia and Maryland.

ADDITIONAL COURSES AND TRAINING

Fairfax County Standards of Learning Training/SOL Cadre 1998-1999
Assistant Principals Leadership Institute 1998-1999
International Baccalaureate Middle Years Program Conference 1998
Skillful Teacher Class for Supervision of Instruction 1994
Peer Conflict Mediation Training - January 1994
Nonviolent Crisis Intervention Training - October 1993
UVA's Youth Violence Seminar - Summer 1994

AWARDS AND RECOGNITION

Kellogg Foundation Recipient - One of twenty-five U.S. teachers selected to participate in conference with Mexican counterparts on improving relations between Mexican and U.S. youth. Guadalajara, Mexico, 1992.

Outstanding Performance Commendation in Professional Responsibilities, Falls Church City Schools, 1990.

Outstanding Service Award, District F, Virginia Education Association, 1987.