Perceived factors that impact the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two local metro school systems

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Clark Atlanta University

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ABSTRACT

EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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PERCEIVED FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE APPOINTMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS WITHIN TWO LOCAL METRO SCHOOL SYSTEMS

Advisor: Dr. Moses Norman
Dissertation dated December 2005

The differences in perceptions among African American male school leaders and the factors that led to their appointment were investigated. The differences were determined by the type of written responses given on surveys that were distributed and then collected by the researcher, which resulted in different correlations for each research question, along with oral responses that were given by subjects during interviews.

Results indicated that there was no perceived correlation between factors such as knowledge of curriculum, leadership experience, educational values and the appointment of African American males to their positions. However, there were perceived correlations between leadership skills and leadership style. Results also indicated that when individuals were interviewed, the two main commonalities that were shared were the unanimous agreement that appointment was based more on "who you know" than
“what you know,” and that in trying to yield honest and candid responses, individuals who were interviewed remained elusive with their answers. The findings are congruent with the rationale that principal and assistant principal appointments are based more on educational politics rather than by years of experience or leadership skills, and that when it came to fair hiring practices and policies within the educational arena, African-American males still have a long way to go regarding equal opportunity appointment.

Further research is warranted in order to determine significant differences in African American male principal and assistant principals’ perceptions of how and why they are considered for appointment. All research in this matter focuses on certain factors that affect these perceptions, namely the independent variables considered in the first part of this study.
PERCEIVED FACTORS THAT IMPACT THE APPOINTMENT OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE PRINCIPALS AND ASSISTANT PRINCIPALS WITHIN TWO LOCAL METRO SCHOOL SYSTEMS

A DISSERTATION

SUBMITTED TO THE FACULTY OF CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

BY

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DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ATLANTA, GEORGIA

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CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Our nation is simultaneously acknowledging the 20th anniversary of the landmark report of *A Nation at Risk*, and the widespread and bipartisan acceptance of the need for America’s schools to improve. At the same time, implementing the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 is forcing us to confront the weaknesses of contemporary school leadership and is making it impossible to ignore the escalating need for higher quality principals—individuals who have been prepared to provide the instructional leadership necessary to improve student achievement.

Laser-like attention is being focused on one of the variables to effective education: leadership. Today, school leadership—more specifically the principalship—is a front burner issue in every state. The systems that produce our nation’s principals are complex and interrelated, and governed by each state. Each state establishes licensing, certification and re-certification requirements for school leaders, and in most places, approves the college and university programs that prepare school leaders. State policy leaders and institutional leaders have therefore become key players in efforts to improve principal preparation programs and processes. Their goal: to promote lasting improvements in school leadership development systems by identifying and then adopting change processes that combine the required policy and program elements.
While the jobs of school leaders (superintendents, principals, teacher leaders and school board members) have changed dramatically, it appears that neither organized professional development programs nor formal preparation programs based in higher education institutions have adequately prepared those holding these jobs to meet the priority demands of the 21st century; namely, improved student achievement. All aspects of the school leadership issue—the art and the science of principal leadership, as well as the policy and regulatory frameworks in support of a state’s capacity to recruit, prepare and retain its educational leadership workforce—are on the table and are being scrutinized.

Recent studies and reports have sharpened our knowledge about the state of the principalship, but the news about the systems that prepare our educational leaders are in trouble comes as no surprise. In 1987, the education administration profession self-identified key trouble spots in Leaders for America’s Schools, prepared by the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) sponsored blue-ribbon panel, the National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration. The report identified several problem areas, including:

A. The lack of definition of good educational leadership

B. An absence of collaboration between school districts and colleges and universities

C. The low number of minorities and females in the field

D. A lack of systematic professional development

E. The poor quality of candidates for preparation programs
F. The irrelevance of preparation programs; programs devoid of sequence, modern content and clinical experiences

G. The need for licensure systems that promote excellence, and

H. An absence of a national sense of cooperation in preparing school leaders.

The report offered recommendations targeted to particular policy and decision-makers. Suggestions for improvement included: (1) Public schools should share the responsibility for preparing school leaders with universities, (2) Universities unable to support the report’s spirit of excellence should stop preparing school leaders, and (3) State policymakers should base licensure procedures on defensible claims about what equips an individual to effectively lead a school.

The Commission’s recommendations were both ahead of the times and beyond the capacity of the field to implement. To be successful, efforts to prepare school leaders in new ways require advocates who understand that school leadership is a multi-faceted issue that includes political and managerial as well as instructional and educational components. Acting alone, professional educators have neither the leverage nor the political capacity to conceptualize or implement the changes needed, to build the necessary broad-based coalitions or to attract the substantial human and financial resources required.

While the Commission’s sweeping recommendations failed to prompt action that might have changed the profession, the report spawned a number of smaller steps that have helped point the way to improvement. One such step was the development by the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) in 1996 of a set of standards for school
leaders by the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC, presently changed to the Educational leadership Constituent Council [ELCC] standards), a representative body of most of the major stakeholders in educational leadership, including national associations, states, colleges and universities.

At least 27 states have adopted the ELCC standards and use them to guide policy and practice related to principal preparations. But the ELCC standards have drawn criticism. Some suggest that the standards are not anchored in a rigorous research or knowledge base, that they unduly reinforce the status quo, and that they lack sufficient specificity or operational guidance to help school leaders figure out what to do.

Despite the criticisms, the ELCC standards are an important development in the field of educational leadership. They were never intended to be all-inclusive. Rather, they were intended as indicators of knowledge, dispositions and performances important to effective school leadership. They established a new vision for thinking in terms of standards-based policy and practice and made a new dimension of accountability possible. The standards confirmed the centrality of the principal’s role in ensuring student achievement through an unwavering emphasis on “leadership for student learning.”

Luba Chliwniak (1997) defined leaders as individuals who provide vision and meaning for an institution and embody the ideals toward which the organization strives. Traditional scholars like Birnbaum and Mintzberg (1992) viewed leaders as alike and genderless. If Chliwniak’s definition is an accurate and true description of leaders, then why are African American men having a difficult time gaining employment as
administrators in the educational arena? Do black women make better administrators than black men simply because they are female? Schools administered by women on the average were superior in performance to those managed by men. The quality of pupil learning and the professional performance of teachers appear to be higher, on the average, in schools with female administrators (Porat, 1991). Ryder (1994) described female principals as very effective and Hensel (1991) described them as capable and as productive as men in the academic arena. Some continue to hold to the belief that women are less capable, less competitive, or less productive than men.

Good school administration is more attuned to feminine than masculine modes of leadership behavior. Female attributes of nurturing, being sensitive, empathetic, intuitive, compromising, caring, cooperative, and accommodative are increasingly associated with effective administration (Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

Data on equality of opportunity in educational administration revealed that gender (more than age, experience, background, or competence) determines the role an individual will be assigned in education (Whitaker & Lane, 1990). African American men who hold leadership positions in the educational system face dual burdens of racism and competence and confront special challenges in promotion and tenure. Race more than gender is the major obstacle to career advancement (Allen, Jacobson, & Lomotey, 1995; Singh, Robinson, & Williams-Green, 1995).

Management seeks to fill its ranks, particularly at the highest level of management, with those persons that best fit the existing norm (Wesson, 1998). Case in point: The typical president of an American institution of higher education is Caucasian,
male, and 54 years of age (Phelps & Taber, 1997). Since gender is a hindrance to black male leaders, some feel compelled to lead in the manner that is considered the norm; that is, the way that white men lead. Utilizing white men’s method of leadership is the easiest way for a black male to be hired for administrative positions or any position of leadership, especially since this approach to leadership has repeatedly been established as acceptable to the public and successful in attracting promotion and recognition (Porat, 1991).

One reason so few African American males are hired for educational administrative positions is due to the opportunity gap. The opportunity gap may represent an impediment to potential institutional improvements (Chliwniak, 1997). Even though effective leadership is more behaviorally derived than gender-based, opportunity remains an obstacle to black males seeking and obtaining leadership positions.

The facts are this: the student population of the nation’s public schools is more ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse than it has ever been. In the near future, approximately 55% of the nation’s public school students will be African American or Hispanic. Numerous districts have schools where 90% or more of the students speak a first language other than English, usually Spanish.

Despite these shifts, the nation still has not seen this kind of change reflected in the appointments of principals, high-level district administrators, or superintendents. Only 16% of the nation’s principals are educators of color, and nearly 11% are African American (Fenwick, 2000). To put it lightly, the majority of school leadership positions
are held by white males, though they comprise less than 25% of the nation’s teaching force (from which administrators are recruited), and are generally less credentialed than African Americans and white female educators (Fenwick, 2000).

Comparison and Contrast

Since men and women have different leadership styles, the variances do not mean that one has dominance over the other. The difference may be due in part to men seeing leadership as leading, and women seeing leadership as facilitating (Schaef, 1985). Although male and female administrators perform many of the same tasks in carrying out their work, different aspects of the job are emphasized (Chliwniak, 1997). Women embrace relationships, sharing, and process, but men focus on completing tasks, achieving goals, hoarding information, and winning (Chliwniak, 1997). Women educational administrators focus on instructional leadership in supervisory practices and are concerned with students’ individual differences, knowledge of curriculum, teaching methods, and the objectives of teaching (Conner, 1992).

In the area of instructional leadership, women spend more years as principals and teachers, and have more degrees than men; they emphasize the importance of curriculum and instruction in their work (Tallerico & Burstyn, 1996). Women leaders focus on instructional leadership, while men more often emphasize organizational matters (Conner, 1992). Men in leadership positions tend to lead from the front, attempting to have all the answers for their subordinates. Women lean toward facilitative leadership, enabling others to make their contributions through delegation, encouragement, and nudging from behind (Porat, 1991). Men on the other hand stress task accomplishment
and they tend to lead through a series of concrete exchanges that involve rewarding employees for a job well done and punishing them for inadequate job performance (Getskow, 1996).

Many women support contributive, consensual decision-making, and emphasize the process, but men tend to lean toward majority rule and tend to emphasize the product, or goal (Porat, 1991). Men utilize the traditional top-down administrative style (Eakle, 1995), but women are more interested in transforming people's self-interest into organizational goals by encouraging feelings of self-worth, active participation, and the sharing of power and information (Getskow, 1996). Women spend more time in unscheduled meetings, being visible on school campus, and observing teachers considerably more than male principals (Ryder, 1994). Women principals are more likely to interact with their staff and spend more time in the classroom or with teachers discussing the academic and curricular areas of instruction. Women principals are also more likely to influence teachers to use more desirable teaching methods.

School principals often have to wear many hats today and need to be well equipped with a variety of skills to effectively manage schools and achieve good results. Some of the responsibilities of principals include:

1. Leading the instructional process and student achievement
2. Managing school budgets
3. Being knowledgeable about happenings in the school environment
4. Communicating with teachers, students, parents and the community, and
5. Guiding, motivating and evaluating teachers, among many other functions (Afolabi, 2003).

A report by Philip Hallinger and Ronald Heck (1996) synthesizing 15 years of research on how principals impact their schools found that principals influence school performance by shaping goals, direction, structure, and through organizational and social networks. Importantly, successful principal leadership guides the school policies, training procedures and practices that contribute directly to student learning.

Researchers in the social sciences have well documented the critical need for successful black males to serve as role models for inner city black youths. In the United Negro College Fund (UNCF) publication of Research Trends (1988-89), an article on black male college students noted that a “disproportionately high number of black males are raised in female-headed households with relatively few male role models present” (p. 3). Green (1991) confirmed that “one of the most crucial psychosocial deficits in the environment of inner city black male youth is the lack of consistent, positive and literate African American role models” (p. 12). As Gary Orfield, former head of the Metropolitan Opportunity Project at the University of Chicago, observed in Research Trends, “One of the problems is that young black males really don’t have any contact with successful black males who have been to college. They have more contact with those who have been successful in the underground economy” (Ross, 1998, p.1).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the lack of African American male representation of principals and assistant principals in two local public school systems in
metropolitan Atlanta. This study seeks to determine if certain variables (such as leadership experience and politics) have an impact on the appointment of African American males to these positions, and then make recommendations on hiring policies based on results of the study. The study also explores African American male school leaders’ perceptions that impact their appointment or position.

Background of the Problem

The problem that led to this study was the noted small number of African-American males that held principal and assistant principal leadership positions within these two systems studied during the 2004-05 school year. In an analysis of a school district, it was found that at the elementary level, 11 of the 59 schools had appointments of African American male principals, giving a percentage of 18. At the middle school level, 7 of the 17 schools had African American male principals, giving a percentage of 41. At the high school level, 5 of the 10 schools were headed by African American male principals, which gave a percentage of 50.

In the System D school district, it was found that at the elementary level, 13 of the 83 elementary schools had appointments of African American principals, giving a percentage of 15. At the middle school level, 5 of the 16 schools were headed by African American male principals, giving a percentage of 31. At the high school level, 8 of the 17 schools were headed by African American male principals, giving a percentage of 47.
Statement of the Problem

This study examines the perceived factors that impact the appointment of African-American male principals and assistant principals in two local public school systems in metropolitan Atlanta. In particular, the study sought to find any particular correlation between leadership experience, knowledge of school curriculum/instruction, educational values, leadership skills, leadership style, educational politics, and the small number of African-American males being appointed to these positions.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in the study:

1. What is the perceived relationship between knowledge of curriculum/instruction, and the selection and appointment of African-American male principals and assistant principals?

2. What is the perceived relationship between leadership skills and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

3. What is the perceived relationship between leadership style and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

4. What is the perceived relationship between educational values and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?
5. What is the perceived relationship between leadership experience and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

6. What is the perceived relationship between educational politics and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

Significance of the Study

The purpose of this study is to examine the lack of African American male representation of principals and assistant principals in two urban school systems. The underlying issue that gives this study significance is that the study is baseline data on a phenomenon that has yet to be explored. More specifically, reasons why the lack of African American males being appointed to principals or assistant principals within the two school systems that are studied is a phenomenon that has not been properly researched in order to make significant determinations and conclusions. Therefore, results of the study will be useful to policymakers in urban school districts in the area of changing practices and procedures in future recruitment of these individuals.

Summary

This chapter introduced the problem of recruiting and adequately preparing school leaders for the role of principal, and also focused on factors or efforts that may affect African American males from being appointed more readily for a principal or assistant principal position. The purpose of this study was to explore African American male
school leaders' perceptions that impact their appointment and/or position. Six research questions were posed that guided this research project.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to examine relevant, empirical literature in support of this study. This literature was used in order to examine the variables of principal qualifications and selection.

Research shows that principals can influence the quality of a school’s educational effort (Tucker & Codding, 2002; Chubb & Moe, 1990). This indicator examines the distribution of principals by various demographic and professional characteristics, including their perceived influence over issues of school governance, using data collected in 1999-2000.

The majority of principals in U.S. elementary schools are female; the majority of secondary school principals are male. At both levels, principals are most likely to be white and to have a master’s degree, to be between the ages of 50 and 54, and to have taught between 10 and 19 years before becoming a principal, relative to other age and experience groupings, respectively (Tucker & Codding, 2002). At both the elementary and secondary levels, principals in public and private schools differ by their demographic characteristics and teaching experience. At both of these levels, private schools were more likely than public schools to have principals age 55 and over and more likely to employ principals with three or fewer years of prior teaching experience (Tucker & Codding, 2002).
In a census conducted in 1993-94, a total of 79,618 principals worked in public schools across the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 1995). Of that total, 52,114 were men and 27,505 were women. Almost 85% were white, 10% were African American, and only 4% were Hispanic. Additionally, 53,688 principals served in elementary schools, 23,187 worked in secondary schools, and 2,743 were assigned to combined schools. On average, each had been a principal for at least 8.5 years.

The most common feature that principals share is their classroom experience. Fiore and Curtin (1997) found that nearly every principal (99%) had been a classroom teacher before becoming a principal. Fiore and Curtin found a number of differences between the educational backgrounds of male and female principals. In the 1993-94 school year, 71% of male principals and 58% of female principals had degrees in educational administration. Female principals were as likely to hold degrees in elementary education (58%) as in educational administration, and a smaller percentage of male principals (29%) held elementary education degrees.

During the 1987-88, 1990-91, and 1993-94 school years, athletic coaching remained a common experience for more than one-third of the male principals each year and a rare experience for women (4%, 4%, and 6%, respectively). Female principals were more likely to have been curriculum specialists or coordinators compared with male principals (30% vs. 11%). In 1993-94, female principals had more years of teaching experience before becoming principals than did males (13 vs. 10 years). White principals averaged fewer number of years in the classroom (11 years) than minority principals in general (12 years) and African American principals in particular (13 years).
Fenwick (2000) revealed that African American educators who ascend to the principalship are more likely to hold a master's or doctoral degree, have more years of teaching experience, and have higher participation rates in district-sponsored principal aspirant programs than their white peers. Yet, they continue to be underrepresented in the ranks of the principalship and other key school leadership positions. “Minority” and female principals also receive their first principal appointment later in life than their white male colleagues. This trend (coupled with the increased appointment of females to the principalship), is dramatically affecting the average age of principals at their first appointment.

Riehl and Byrd (1997) found that male and female teachers differed in terms of family backgrounds and argued that this may affect their socialization into administration. More male than female teachers were married, and fewer male teachers were divorced, separated, or widowed. Male teachers were more likely to have children under the age of 12.

The researchers also discovered that female and male teachers possessed different levels of aspirations and qualifications for school administration. Women were not as likely to want to leave teaching, to have administrator role models of the same gender, or to have advanced training in educational administration. But they were equally as likely to have had recent training in administration and were somewhat more likely to have had recent part-time experience in administration. According to Riehl and Byrd (1997), these
findings indicate that women possess a growing degree of career socialization toward school administration. The average female teacher however is less likely to become an administrator than the average male teacher.

The lack of proportional representation of black men combines with an even greater lack of representation by people of color in administration. This makes the picture for black men even more disparate. A U.S. Department of Education survey released in 1988 showed that principals are 76% male and 90% white. All of these statistics stand as evidence of a system that works against the advancement of those candidates who are not white males.

Historical Background

An examination of certification history in Georgia in 2002 revealed that most principals began their education career as teachers. Over three-quarters (79.9%) of Georgia principals were issued the regular Teaching certificates, while only 13.8% received Leadership certificates when they joined the educator workforce. Other types of certification received were Provisional (2.0%), Service (1.9%), and Conditional (.7%) certificates. This confirms that principals in Georgia are mostly “home-grown.”

 Principals’ earliest certificates were issued in the following fields in order of incidence: Elementary Grades (P-8)-18.1%; Early Childhood Education (P-5)-10.5%; Educational Leadership (P-12)-10.2%; Middle Grades (4-8)-9.4%; Health and Physical Education (P-12)-8.5%; and Social Science (7-12)-5.3% (Afola, Nweke, & Stephens, 2003).
Regional comparisons of demographic data are as follows:

- The North Central region employs the largest percentage of female principals with 60.9%, followed by the Central region with 59.3%, both higher than the percentage of female principals hired by the state as a whole (55.1%).
- There are more male principals in the North and the Southwest regions (55.9% and 51.2%, respectively). This is dissimilar to the pattern that exists in the other regions and in the whole state (44.9%).
- Across the state of Georgia, whites constitute the majority of this personnel group. The North region, however, has an overwhelming majority of white principals (90.6%).
- The highest percentage of Multiracial and Hispanic principals is found in the North Central region with 1.2% and 0.4%, respectively.
- The racial composition of principals in the Southwest region is exclusively white (64%) and black (36%).
- The average years of experience was highest among principals in the Southwest region (24.16 years). The state average stands at 23.47 years.
- The Southeast region has the youngest principal workforce with an average age of 49.5 years. (Afolabi, 2003)

As of FY02, there were a total of 2,048 principals in Georgia, with 71.2% being white and 27.9% being black. Half (55.1%) were female, continuing the rise in the number of female principals from a total of 850 in FY97 to 919 in FY02. It is expected that this
trend will continue given that females dominate the assistant principal pool from which the position of a principal is filled (Afolabi, 2003).

The local school metro systems of Atlanta and DeKalb are different. In an analysis of these systems, the researcher found that in Atlanta at the elementary level, 11 of the 59 schools had appointments of African American male principals, giving a percentage of 18. At the middle school level, 7 of the 17 schools had African American male principals, giving a percentage of 41. At the high school level, 5 of the 10 schools were headed by African American male principals, which gave a percentage of 50 (Table 1).

Table 1

*System A - Demographic Breakdown by School Levels (Includes Principals and Assistant Principals Combined), 2004-05 School Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Level</th>
<th>Number of Black Male Administrators</th>
<th>Number of Black Female Administrators</th>
<th>Number of White Male Administrators</th>
<th>Number of White Female Administrators</th>
<th>Total Number of Administrators Per Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>14 (19%)</td>
<td>51 (70%)</td>
<td>2 (2%)</td>
<td>6 (9%)</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>14 (42%)</td>
<td>17 (52%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>22 (67%)</td>
<td>8 (24%)</td>
<td>2 (6%)</td>
<td>1 (3%)</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>50 (36%)</td>
<td>76 (55%)</td>
<td>5 (3%)</td>
<td>8 (6%)</td>
<td>139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In the DeKalb county school system, the researcher found that at the elementary level, 13 of the 83 schools had appointments of African American principals, giving a percentage of 15. At the middle school level, 5 of the 16 schools were headed by African American male principals, giving a percentage of 31. At the high school level, 8 of the 17 schools were headed by African American male principals, giving a percentage of 47 (Table 2).

Table 2

*System D - Demographic Breakdown by School Levels (Includes Principals and Assistant Principals Combined), 2004-05 School Year*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>System Level</th>
<th>Number of Black Male Administrators</th>
<th>Number of Black Female Administrators</th>
<th>Number of White Male Administrators</th>
<th>Number of White Female Administrators</th>
<th>Total Number of Administrators Per Level</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>30 (17%)</td>
<td>99 (55%)</td>
<td>13 (7%)</td>
<td>39 (21%)</td>
<td>181</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>19 (37%)</td>
<td>24 (47%)</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>51</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>21 (45%)</td>
<td>20 (43%)</td>
<td>2 (4%)</td>
<td>4 (8%)</td>
<td>47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Totals</td>
<td>70 (25%)</td>
<td>143 (51%)</td>
<td>19 (7%)</td>
<td>47 (17%)</td>
<td>279</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Principals must articulate a vision and values that they can use to transform or revitalize a school’s atmosphere, according to the Office of Educational Research and Improvement’s Principal Selection Guide (1987). They should be determined, creative,
and enthusiastic—willing and able to confront problems and seek out opportunities to inspire their school communities toward beneficial change. This growth needs to occur through empowerment rather than coercion, and by delegating, stretching the ability of others, and encouraging educated risk (DuFour & Eaker, 1987). The principal must be the catalyst and champion of school improvement.

Early identification and encouragement of potential candidates, especially teachers who show promise of administrative ability, according to Ihle (1987), would reduce the tendency for self-selection or the hiring of “good paper.” To ensure greater consistency of recruitment goals and practices, a written policy should be developed by a trained search committee. According to researcher Mark Anderson (1988), applications, transcripts, references, interviews, and assessment data can help determine an applicant’s level and range of competency. Broadening the search committee to include parents, teachers, students, and community members, and circulating surveys for input on desirable principal traits would give everyone a sense of participation in the selection of a new principal (Figure 1).

Innovative Steps

To expand their pools of qualified applicants, school districts are resorting to inter-district training programs, career ladders, and internships, as well as outside recruitment. For example, in 1987 Oregon’s David Douglas School District began its Selecting and Training Administrative Recruits (STAR) program, which identifies and trains “prospective principals from within the district’s teacher corps,” according to Anderson (1988). Instructional units, taught by experienced district administrators,
Job vacancy is posted listing availability of position

Applicants submit application letters of interest

Application is reviewed by human resources/personnel department

Non-qualified applications are discarded

First interview applicants are questioned, ranked, and scored

Interview committee is selected

Candidates selected for premier interview process

Qualified applicants are placed in “eligible” pool

Top three candidates are interviewed by the superintendent

Final appointment by superintendent

Figure 1: The Principal Selection Process within Two Local Metro-Atlanta School Systems
precede a weeklong practicum designed by each participant. Interested candidates then complete internships that are interspersed with workshops in educational leadership.

Another district described by Anderson provides a full-time internship as an assistant to the superintendent in order to expose prospective principals to real-life administrative situations. Extended internships (six months to one year) provide valuable experience for candidates and additional information for selectors. Long-term internships also enable both parties in the selection process to make a more informed decision.

Fair and Comprehensive Selection

In the selection process, a trained diverse team should consider information gathered from many sources (Anderson, 1988), and ask every candidate the same, predetermined, and well-thought-out questions. Anderson adds that effective interviews include simulations, written exercises, and situational questions. One school district asks applicants to compose half-page essays answering challenging, pertinent questions, including *What processes will you employ in moving a school organization toward your envisioned change?* and *What are some key descriptors of leadership and management?*

In the local metro-Atlanta system, the interview process is quite different. The recent experience of a Georgia publisher “helping” to hire a new school principal for the local metro school district indicates that it was not only the teacher hiring process that left much to be desired. As a member of the Local School Council for the John Hope Elementary School, S. Richard Gard, Jr. (2003), editor and publisher of the *Fulton County Daily Report*, had a seat at the principal-search table when the school needed to
replace its retiring principal. The process for selecting a new principal, he found, was unlike any process used to select top managers in business.

Gard (2003) discovered that during the interview process, he was not allowed to view the candidates' resumes either before or during the interview, because that would violate their privacy; he was not allowed to ask different questions to different candidates, because that would be deemed unfair; he was only allowed to read one of the nine questions written by school staff that were asked of all candidates—but only if the candidate did not use up too much of the allotted 30 minute interview time with extended answers. Finally, to rate each candidate's "depth of knowledge," he was given a list of 44 words and phrases to listen for in grading their responses (buzz words).

Gard was assured the same procedures for the talent search were used throughout the school system. He was hardly comforted by that fact, noting that "The village idiocy...is systemic" (p. A19). After the interview, he offered free advice to the local metro superintendent in the newspaper, informing her not to waste people's time. His recommendation was to either involve parents and local business people in the selection process or not. He also stated that if the school lawyers were informing them (human resources) that this was the correct way to run interviews, then the system should find better lawyers; and finally focus the hiring procedure on finding the best and brightest, not on avoiding claims of unfairness.

At assessment centers sponsored by the National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP), participants engage in activities designed to simulate typical school situations. Exercises may include leaderless groups, fact-finding, stress tests, and
personal interviews. Assessment center results not only guide potential employers, but also help prospective principals select internships and graduate courses based on a greater awareness of their personal strengths and weaknesses. Later, follow-up orientation and evaluation procedures could assist new principals in becoming increasingly proficient at their jobs.

Greater Representation of Minorities

David Coursen (1990) and others assert that the extent to which women and minorities participate in administering the schools is one measure of education's real commitment to the ideal of equal opportunity. Children identify with role models of their same sex and race who hold leadership positions. Moreover, negative stereotypes begin to break down when a variety of persons assume influential roles. Thus it is crucial to ensure the participation of underrepresented populations in high-level positions.

A 1987-88 survey by C. Emily Feistritzer revealed that as few as 6% of principals are African American, that 24% are women, and that these individuals typically lead marginal or troublesome schools. The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration recommends identifying promising minority and women candidates; providing scholarships, fellowships, and financial aid; and monitoring affirmative action compliance more closely. Establishment of affirmative action as a high priority could lead to greater numbers of African American men filling the role of principal and assistant principal.

In a 1985 report, Bagenstos (1985) reports that both minorities and women are underrepresented in school administration when compared to either the number of
minority and women educators or to the number of minority and female students. In 1978, 8.1% of public school administrative positions were occupied by minority men, but only 3.4% were occupied by minority women. At present, African Americans are the predominant minority group represented in administration. While minority women administrators (such as white female administrators) are largely concentrated in positions as consultants and supervisors of instruction, minority men are highly represented among assistant principals, comprising one of every seven assistant principalships. This difference is important because assistant principals and athletic directors are most likely to move upward within administration while consultants and instructional supervisors are seldom in the career advancement path in administration.

In Haven’s (1980) report, the position of minority groups in administration (particularly the principalship), is examined. It examines the way many present barriers restrict qualified minority candidates from entering and progressing in the field. The report begins with a statistical picture of minority educators and then describes how institutional response to minority member underrepresentation in administration influences career paths and aspirations, explores the difficulties minorities may face when they attain administrative positions, and cites intervention strategies designed to open the system to all qualified candidates. The report concludes with descriptions of some programs for training minority administrators and with recommendations for areas of further research. Haven argues that minority principals with significant input into policy decisions and with control over the implementation of those policies can use their
insights and experience to meet the educational demands of a culturally pluralistic society.

Jones and Montenegro (1985) note in their study that the representation of women and members of racial and ethnic minorities among the United States' public school administrators increased between the years 1982 and 1985, according to a survey conducted by the American Association of School Administrators' Office of Minority Affairs. Following the same procedure used in a 1981-82 survey, the researchers sent letters and survey forms to all chief state school officers in the United States in 1984 requesting information on the percentage of minority group members among school superintendents, assistant superintendents, and elementary and secondary school principals. The results indicated that minority superintendents increased from 2 to 3 percent, minority assistant superintendents decreased from 11% to 9%, and minority principals increased from 12% to 17%.

In U.S. schools, approximately 30% of the enrolled students in 1990-91 were racial-ethnic minorities. Principals must be skilled in incorporating this diversity into supportive climates for learning. Principals who themselves are members of racial-ethnic minority groups may serve as role models for staff and students in schools with high or low proportions of minority pupils. This report by Rossi and Daugherty (1996) documented overall numbers of minority principals and the types of schools in which they are working. Data are from the 1990-91 Schools and Staffing Survey (SASS), conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES). The results were as follows: In 1990-91, there were 12,600 minority principals in the nearly 105,000 schools
in the United States. Findings indicate that proportionally, more minorities worked as
principals in public versus private schools. Minority principals in both public and private
schools were concentrated in central cities and in schools with high percentages (50% or
higher) of minority enrollments. Minority public school principals were slightly
overrepresented in elementary schools.

The male stereotype continues to dominate in part because the notion of “fit” is a
critical criterion often used in the selection of school administrators. Both schools and
communities have held deeply rooted ideas of what a principal should be. A successful
candidate has to fulfill this vague criterion, which, in many instances, outweighs more
specific criteria such as credentials and instructional leadership skills. This criterion has
worked heavily against African American men, who typically do not embody the
traditionally held ideas about what a leader should look or act like (Baltzell & Dentler,
1983).

Some recent approaches to management style seem to favor “feminine”
characteristics rather than “masculine” ones. “Theory Z” and participatory approaches to
management emphasize qualities that are associated with the female stereotype.
Research has exhibited findings that are either neutral towards or more favorable to a
“women’s” style of management. J. M. Frasher and R. S. Frasher (1979) have collected
data going back 30 years to indicate that there has been no difference in the
administrative performances of men and women, and G.N. Powell et al.’s data shows that
women have been more effective. At the University of California, L. Khantak’s (as cited
in Anderson, 1988) early findings in a California study indicate that women are now
being appointed more frequently to principalships because the desired approach to management has shifted away from the traditional male stereotype to a more people-orientated, curriculum-centered, consensus-driven style more typical of women. However, statistics also show the continued dominance of the male stereotype in management. In spite of a growing preference for female approaches to school administration, African American men continue to be selected in very few cases.

A leader with an emerging, inclusive style of leadership could provide an institution with new values grounded in cooperation, community, and relationships within the community (Chliwniak, 1997). Black male leaders possess an inclusive style, which is to improve the institutions while centered around discipline. The educational system continues to be structured as a traditional home in which men manage the schools and women nurture the learners (Whitaker & Lane, 1990).

Summary

The majority of principals in U.S. elementary schools are female while the majority of secondary school principals are male. At both levels, principals are most likely to be white and have a master’s degree, to be between the ages of 50 and 54, and to have taught between 10 and 19 years before becoming a principal, relative to other age and experience groupings.

In a census conducted in 1993-94, a total of 79,618 principals worked in public schools across the United States. Of that total, 52,114 were men and 27,505 were women. Almost 85% were white, 10% were African American, and only 4% were Hispanic.
The most common feature that principals share is their classroom experience. Fiore and Curtin (1997) found that 99% of principals had been a classroom teacher before becoming a principal. Female principals were as likely to hold degrees in elementary education (58%) as in educational administration, and a smaller percentage of male principals (29%) held elementary education degrees.

Athletic coaching remains a common experience for more than one-third of male principals, but is a rare experience for women. Instead, female principals were more likely to have been curriculum specialists or coordinators. White principals averaged fewer number of years in the classroom as compared to minority principals in general and African American principals in particular.

Fenwick (2000) revealed that African American educators who ascend to the principalship are more likely to hold a master’s or doctoral degree, have more years of teaching experience, and have higher participation rates in district-sponsored principal aspirant programs than their white peers. However, they continue to be underrepresented in the ranks of the principalship and other key school leadership positions. Fenwick also noted that minority principals also receive their first principal appointment later in life than their white male colleagues.

The lack of proportional African American males shows an even greater lack of representation by people of color in administration. A U.S. Department of Education survey in 1988 showed that principals are 76% male and 90% white. All of these statistics stand as evidence of a system that works against the advancement of candidates who are not white males.
Khoutak's early findings (as cited in Anderson, 1988) indicate that women are now being appointed more frequently to principalships because the desired approach to management has shifted from the traditional male stereotype to a style more typical of women (curriculum-centered, people-oriented). However, statistics still show the continued dominance of the male stereotype in management. In spite of this, African American males continue to be selected in very few cases.
CHAPTER III
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework focuses on the dependent variable of the selection process of African American male principals and assistant principals.

It is proposed that the principal selection process might be influenced by the following independent variables: Knowledge of curriculum, educational values, leadership skills, leadership style, leadership experience, and the educational political arena, which are dominated by women. These variables are demonstrated in Chapter Two (Figure 1) for the purpose of defining the variable and deriving research questions.

Definitions of variables are presented and research hypotheses are stated. The theoretical relationship between variables is diagrammed.

This study investigated the impact of perceptions that African American males had upon their appointments as school leaders. The purpose of this study was to examine the lack of African American male representation of principals and assistant principals in two local metropolitan Atlanta urban school systems. A figural representation of the variables studied is shown in Figure 2.

Presentation and Definition of Variables

*Dependent variable*

The dependent variable is the appointment of African American males to principal and assistant principal positions. The term principal refers to the building level
Figure 2. Relationship Among the Variables
administrative manager of a school. The term assistant principal refers to the assistant building level administrative manager of a school.

**Independent variables**

There are six independent variables in this study. The independent variables are educational values, leadership skills, leadership experience, leadership style, knowledge of curriculum/instruction, and educational politics. The moderator variables are age, race, gender, and number of years in the systems being studied.

**Educational values.** The term refers to personal beliefs and philosophy about the importance of educational ideas, goals, and curriculum within the school systems being addressed. The term also refers to how strongly the principal or assistant principal feels that individuals within the school building should have an input in making decisions that affect them.

**Leadership skills.** The term refers to the type of traits that principals and assistant principals use to influence their subordinates in accomplishing goals. These traits include but are not limited to the following: being adaptable to situations, alert to the social environment, ambitious and achievement oriented, assertive, cooperative, decisive, dependable, dominant (desire to influence others), energetic, persistent, self-confident, tolerant of stress, willing to assume responsibility, being intelligent, conceptually skilled, creative, diplomatic and tactful, fluent in speaking, being knowledgeable about group task, organized, persuasive, and socially skilled.

**Leadership experience.** The term refers to any type of administrative or supervisory experience while placed in a principal or assistant principal position.
Leadership style. The term refers to the leader’s personal traits and characteristics, which influences the leader’s behavior. For the purposes of this study, styles will be classified into four different types: authoritarian (very direct leadership which allows zero participation in decision making. Leaders take full authority and assume full responsibility from initiation to task completion, and structure the complete work situation for their subordinates), democratic (where the leader encourages group discussion and decision-making. In this type of leadership, subordinates are informed about conditions affecting their jobs and are encouraged to express their ideas and make suggestions), laissez-faire (where the leader gives complete freedom to the group and leaves decision-making to the subordinates. Leaders provide zero leadership), and inclusive (where the leader improves the institution while centering around discipline).

Knowledge of curriculum/instruction. The term refers to the principal or assistant principal being aware of the type of plan of action for the school or school system which includes strategies for achieving desired instructional learning goals or ends.

Educational politics. The term refers to the type of politics or unspoken rules within the system which directly influences or hinders an individual’s chance of being appointed to a principal or assistant principal position.

Moderator Variables

Moderator variables included in this study were (a) age, (b) race, (c) gender, and (d) number of years in the system.
This study sought to discover what kind of perceptions that African American male administrators may have had regarding their appointment of a principal or assistant principal position.

Perceptions of the six subsets of the selection process were measured rather than the actual subsets themselves. No effort was made to distinguish perception from actual data. Again, this study seeks to discover what kind of perceptions that African American male principals may have had regarding their appointment to the principalship and assistant principalship within two local metropolitan Atlanta school systems.

Null Hypotheses

For the purpose of this study, six null hypotheses were tested. They are as follows:

1. There is no perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
2. There is no perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
3. There is no perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
4. There is no perceived correlation between educational values and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
5. There is no perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
6. There is no perceived correlation between educational politics and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

Limitations of the Study

1. As this study collected data through survey research and individual interviews, it is limited in that self-report responses reflect the attitudes and beliefs of school leaders at one specific point in time.

2. Mail-out surveys have limitations that affect sample size (100% return is rarely achieved), response accuracy (no one to clarify unclear questions), and response clarification (due to the primary selection of fixed versus open-ended response options).

3. This study focused on perceived factors that influence and impact the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two local metropolitan Atlanta school districts. The results may not be generalized to other schools and school districts in other geographic areas.

Summary

The assumption in this study was that there were certain perceived factors that African American males have regarding their appointment of principal or assistant principal. This chapter provided the theoretical framework as the basis for this research. The definitions of variables and terms were given. The null hypotheses and limitations were also presented.
CHAPTER IV
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study investigated the perceived factors that impacted the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two selected local metropolitan Atlanta school systems. The study attempted to investigate that objectively. This chapter describes the research design, the population, and sample that was selected and surveyed as well as the instrumentation that was used. The data collection and administrative procedures and data analyses procedures conclude the chapter.

Research Design

The study utilized a descriptive, non-experimental research design, with both a written survey and a focus group interviewed in order to determine the perceptions of African American male school leaders regarding factors that affect their appointment to the principal or assistant principal position. Rea and Parker (1992) state that:

If the researcher needs information that is not available elsewhere and if generalization of findings to a larger population is desired, then sample survey research is the most appropriate method. Furthermore, survey research can be considered an appropriate technique when enough general information is known or can be conveniently obtained about the subject matter under investigation to formulate specific questions. (p. 3)
A survey design provides a means by which a quantitative description of a vast sample population could be obtained by the researcher. It provides the researcher the opportunity to obtain general findings from a sample population so that conclusions can be made about general attributes of a larger population (Orlich, 1978). Additional benefits of survey design include speed of data collection and the economy of design (Orlich, 1978). Isaac and Mitchell (1995) noted:

Surveys are the most widely used technique in education and the behavioral sciences for the collection of data. They are a means of gathering data that describes the nature and extent of a particular specified set of data ranging from physical counts and frequencies to attitudes and opinions. This information, in turn, can be used to answer questions that have been raised, to solve problems that have been posed or observed, to access needs and set goals, to determine whether or not specific objectives have been met, to establish baselines against which future comparisons can be made, to analyze trends across time, and generally to describe what exists, in what amount, and in what context. (p. 136)

In addition, the design included a qualitative element that involved open-ended interviews with four African American males who were presently serving in the principal and assistant principal positions.
Description of the Setting

This study was conducted within two large school districts in local metro-Atlanta in Georgia. School district A has an active enrollment of 51,000 students attending 85 schools total, with 11 out of 59 elementary schools, 7 out of 17 middle schools, and 5 out of the 10 high schools headed by an African American male. There are also 3 African American males at the elementary school level in the system, 12 at the middle school level, and 17 at the high school level which hold the title of assistant principal within this system.

School district D has an active enrollment of 100,000 students attending 124 schools total, with 12 out of 84 elementary schools, 6 out of 19 middle, and 10 out of 21 high schools headed by an African American male. There are also 9 African American males at the elementary level, 20 at the middle school level, and 20 at the high school level which hold the title of assistant principal within this system.

Sampling Procedures

The target population for this study was African American males who were in a school leadership position of either principal or assistant principal within both school districts. The total target population consisted of 132 administrators, at all educational levels (elementary, middle, and high). For the purposes of this study, grades K through 5 were considered elementary school level, grades 6 through 8 were considered as middle school level, and grades 9 through 12 as high school level.
Six principals and assistant principals representing both Systems A and D were interviewed. These principals were selected in order to gain a more comprehensive perspective of issues raised by the survey.

Working with Human Subjects

The public school systems used in this study both required in their guidelines that permission had to be secured and then granted only if the survey instrument was distributed within their school systems. Appropriate administrative approval was secured prior to the project initiation. This research was conducted using employees of both school systems. Neither schools, administrators, nor school districts were revealed in the context of this study.

The study involved full anonymity and confidentiality, therefore causing no risks or danger to the participants, and also no implementation of deceptive tactics. Participation in the study was strictly voluntary. All potential subjects had the right to refuse participation at any time. As previously stated, confidentiality and anonymity of participants was maintained, and no names were attached to the *Survey of the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals.*

Instrumentation

The instruments used for this study were a self-developed survey, and four interview questions that were examined by professors within the Clark Atlanta University Department of Education whose expertise was in the field of the principalship, leadership, and research. The survey and interview questions focused on perceptions of
African American male administrators that impacted their appointment of principal and assistant principal at the elementary, middle, and high school levels. Permission was granted by both the department and school districts to utilize the questionnaire.

The Survey of the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African-American Male Principals and Assistant Principals (Appendix A) was used in the study in order to collect data about perceptions about appointment and position across five subscales: (a) educational values, (b) leadership skills, (c) leadership experience, (d) leadership style, and (e) knowledge of curriculum/instruction. The interview questions were used in this study in an attempt to gain an honest opinion regarding educational politics within each school system.

The instrument contained 38 questions related to leadership and knowledge of curriculum/instruction. It used a five-point Likert scale. Statements were given a score of 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 and corresponded to Not Applicable, Strongly Disagree, Disagree, Agree, and Strongly Agree.

Validity and Reliability

The developmental efforts included writing and rewriting, as well as having questions examined and reexamined by the dissertation committee, establishing face and content validity, and obtaining reliability estimates (item analysis) for each questionnaire item.

The Survey of the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals as well as the interview questions had adequate internal consistency. Content validity had been established. It is believed that
the instruments were adequate in providing information on self-reported attitudes of African American male school leaders towards factors that affect perceptions of appointment and position.

Data Collection Procedures

Permission to survey African American male school leaders was requested and obtained from the Department of Research, Planning and Accountability in both systems (Appendix B). Data were collected from elementary, middle, and high school leaders regarding their perceptions of factors that influenced or impacted their appointment.

The school leaders were identified by both Departments of Research. During the month of May 2005, surveys were mailed to each school via school mail, with a cover letter explaining the purpose of the study, assuring anonymity, confidentiality, and encouraging participation (Appendices C and D). An approval letter to conduct research from both Departments of Research was also included, along with a return, self-addressed stamped envelope. All African American male principals and assistant principals within Systems A and D were asked to complete the instrument after verbal instructions had been completed. A list was compiled and a specific number was given to all principals and assistant principals within each system in order to determine who returned the survey. School leaders were given two weeks to return the survey. Follow-up telephone calls were made at the end of two weeks. Interviews were collected from six random subjects during a focus group.
Administrative Procedure

Permission was obtained from the directors of Department of Research and Accountability within each school system to survey the specified school leaders within each district. Permission was also obtained from the directors of the Departments of Research within each system to distribute packets of materials via school mail. Confidentiality and anonymity was assured.

Statistical Applications

The questionnaires were coded and data was entered into the computer and calculated using the version 12.0 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A frequency distribution model was used to present the descriptive demographic data (position, age, ethnicity, leadership style, and degree) of the assistant principals and principals used in the study. A Pearson $r$ Correlation will be used to ascertain the relationship between the perceived factors (knowledge of curriculum, leadership skills, educational value, leadership experience) that impacted the appointment of African-American male principals and assistant principals within two selected local metropolitan Atlanta school systems. A level of significance of 0.05 was used to ascertain whether to accept or reject the null hypotheses. The research null hypotheses for this study are as follows:

**HO$_1$:** There is no perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

**HO$_2$:** There is no perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
HO3: There is no perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO4: There is no perceived correlation between educational value and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO5: There is no perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

The interview questions were tested as described below:

*Interview Question 1* was asked to determine and then report if being an African American male made a difference in the timeliness of being appointed to the principal or assistant principal position.

*Interview Question 2* was asked to determine and then report if gender played a significant role in how and why principal/assistant principal appointments are made.

*Interview Question 3* was asked to determine and then report the importance of the educational and work experience in the appointment to the principal or assistant principal position.

*Interview Question 4* was asked to determine and then report the participants' view of when it came to the principal or assistant principal position, was it more of “who you know” rather than “what you know.” Responses were recorded on tape, and each participant’s interview was summarized.
Delimitations

1. The scope of the study focused on 14 elementary, 13 middle, and 9 high schools in System A, and 19 elementary, 18 middle, and 17 high schools in System D.

2. Perceptions of African American male school leaders regarding factors of appointment were measured by the *Survey of the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals*, as well as by interview questions regarding educational politics.

3. The study was limited to all African American males employed as school leaders in both systems during the 2004-2005 academic school year.

Summary

This chapter provided specific information on the research design, description of the setting, sampling procedures, working with human subjects, instrumentation, data collection procedures, administrative procedure, and limitations. The purpose of the study was to explore perceptions of African American male school leaders regarding their appointments of principals and assistant principals. The population consisted of a total of 132 administrators selected from 33 elementary, 31 middle, and 26 high schools. Data analysis, including tables and supporting narratives, are presented in Chapter Five. A summary of the findings, conclusions, and recommendations are presented in Chapter Six.
CHAPTER V
ANALYSIS OF RESEARCH DATA

This study investigated the perceived factors that impacted the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two selected local metropolitan Atlanta school systems. In this chapter, the data analysis will be presented for the investigation and measurement of the research null hypotheses regarding the factors that will impact the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals. The demographic profile data for the survey population is presented in Table 3.

Table 3

*Survey Population Demographic Profile Data*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Assistant Principal</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>53.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principal</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>46.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Race</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caucasian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>96.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Answered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age Range</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 – 35</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36 – 45</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>24.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46 – 55</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56 – 65</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Not Answered</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Leadership Style</strong></td>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>79.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authoritarian</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laissez-Faire</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Inclusive</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>14.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographics</th>
<th>Count</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Masters</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>40.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Specialist</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>37.0%</td>
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<tr>
<td>Doctorate</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>100.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis of Research for the Null Hypotheses

Following are the analysis for the five research null hypotheses for the study examining the perceived factors that impacted the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two selected local metro-Atlanta school systems. Descriptive statistics for the research null hypotheses are presented in Table 4 and the Pearson r Correlation Coefficient data are presented in Table 5.

HO1: There is no perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

A Pearson r Correlation was used to determine if there was any perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a Pearson r Correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.369 \) and sig. = 0.006 between knowledge of curriculum and the
Table 4

*Descriptive Statistics for the Research Null Hypotheses*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev.</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appointment</td>
<td>3.6376</td>
<td>0.44550</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>4.3364</td>
<td>0.46071</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Skills</td>
<td>4.6173</td>
<td>0.41793</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Style</td>
<td>3.3856</td>
<td>0.33856</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational Value</td>
<td>3.4907</td>
<td>0.48067</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Experience</td>
<td>3.5957</td>
<td>0.60881</td>
<td>54</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5

*Pearson r Correlation Data Analysis Results*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Appoint</th>
<th>Know</th>
<th>Skills</th>
<th>Style</th>
<th>Value</th>
<th>Exp</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appoint</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.369**</td>
<td>.090</td>
<td>.177</td>
<td>.461**</td>
<td>.715**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Know</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.115</td>
<td>-.049</td>
<td>.100</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skills</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.039</td>
<td>.140</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Style</td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.108</td>
<td>.158</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Value</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td>.195</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exp</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1.000</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)**
appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The significant level was less than the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, there is no perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO2: There is no perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

A Pearson r Correlation was used to determine if there was any perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a Pearson r Correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.090 \) and sig. = 0.516 between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The significant level was greater than the 0.05 level, the null hypothesis is accepted. Therefore, there is a perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO3: There is no perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

A Pearson r Correlation was used to determine if there was any perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a Pearson r Correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.117 \) and sig. = 0.401 between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The significant level was greater than the
0.05 level, the null hypotheses is accepted. Therefore, there is a perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO4: There is no perceived correlation between educational values and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

A Pearson r Correlation was used to determine if there was any perceived correlation between educational value and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a Pearson r Correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.461 \) and sig. = 0.000 between educational value and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The significant level was less than the 0.05 level, the null hypotheses is rejected. Therefore, there is no perceived correlation between educational value and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO5: There is no perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

A Pearson r Correlation was used to determine if there was any perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a Pearson r Correlation coefficient of \( r = 0.715 \) and sig. = 0.000 between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The
significant level was less than the 0.05 level, the null hypotheses is rejected. Therefore, there is no perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

**HO6:** There is no perceived correlation between educational politics and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

Six randomly chosen African American male administrators were individually interviewed regarding research question #6. The interviewees were from both Systems A and D. Four questions were given in order to determine if there was any perceived correlation between educational politics and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals. The analysis yielded a varied number of responses with each question. The following is a summary of each participant’s responses to each question.

**Question 1:** Do you think that being an African American male made a difference in the timeliness of your being appointed to a principal or an assistant principal?

*Subject A:* No, because the system is an equal opportunity employer, the job and it took one month for me to be appointed to my position.

*Subject B:* No. In looking at the present administration and learning about them, I feel that they really recruit the best possible person. In the case of my hiring and appointment to principal, I believe that being a male did not make a difference. In
looking at who the administration placed in certain positions, they were very mindful and careful of who was appointed.

Subject C: I believe that race did have an effect on my appointment. At the time I was hired, the number of African American males being hired as assistant principals (being moved up from certain positions) was really dictated more so by the ‘who you know’ factor. Most of the people promoted to assistant principal in this school district were African American males. This also made a difference in the timeliness in being hired. In terms of timeliness, I waited approximately two years just to be considered.

Subject D: Being an African American male had nothing to do with the timeliness of my appointment. It was preparation and years of experience really aided me in helping to become an administrator.

Subject E: At the time I was appointed, it probably did have an impact on the timeliness in which you received an appointment or promotion. That was in 1990. Back then, African American males had some advantage to promotions in reference to appointments of principal or assistant principal. However, I don’t think that exists in present day 2005.

Subject F: I don’t think that being an African American male had anything to do with the timeliness of my appointment. I think that because of perception, preconceived, and predestined roles for African American males in this system
(particularly of those in the classroom and of the administrative position) was predisposed or filling a void because of that reason. In my position, there was a vacancy. I was paper-ready, and central office needed to fill that position with someone of the male agenda. It just happened to be a school where the student population was predominantly African American, so I'm certain that had it not been me, I was sure that they would have filled this position with a qualified African American male. My predecessor was an African American male, his predecessor before him, so it was almost a shoe-in that the successor in this line would be an African American male. That's the reason why I believe I fit. I was next in line, a favorite in the system, already towards this goal, and I had the qualifying criteria. At this particular school, they (the central office) needed another male. I just happened to fit the 'prototype' of what the central office was looking for.

Summary: Four of six interviewees did not believe that being an African American male had anything to do with their appointment. Factors ranging from qualifications of the prospective individual, to looking at the present administration with the belief that they recruit the “best and brightest,” to preparation and years of experience without regard to gender had more of an impact on appointing people for these positions rather than just being an African American male.

The remaining two interviewees agreed that being an African American male did have a major impact in their appointment of a principal/assistant principal, citing reasons such as the “who you know” factor and the advantage of being a male in the past decade,
when males tended to dominate principal and assistant principal positions, because of the ability to control students, along with the stamina to manage and run schools above the elementary level. To summarize, the majority of the interviewees did not believe that being an African American male had anything to do with their appointment or the timeliness in which they were appointed.

**Question 2: Do you feel that gender plays a significant role in how and why principal/assistant principal appointments are made?**

**Subject A:** Yes, gender definitely has something to do with it, especially for the assistant principal position if there is a need for male or female role models within a school setting. In terms of the appointment of principal, I’m not one hundred percent sure if gender plays a part as much as qualifications and experience. However, in the appointment of assistant principal, gender does play a significant role, particularly when dealing with middle school. This could also apply to high school, where not only is fair hiring needed to keep balance, but also to have evenly distributed role models.

**Subject B:** No. The system was looking for the best possible person that could do the job, and also with the proper background based on twelve years of experience in school. No matter what the gender, if the person has the background and qualification to work as an administrator, they should be appointed and given the job to do. If I had stayed in the assistant principal position, I would not have known entailed information about doing and understanding budgets, along with
the ins and outs of school policy. I would not understand how all of the pieces fit together. I feel that in the assistant principal position, it does not matter what gender you are, because you would still not be exposed to the ins and outs of the system, and you would be stuck in that assistant principal mode.

Subject C: In this system, for the majority of African American males who are assistant principals, duties largely consist of discipline, and that says a lot by itself. A lot of the males are given disciplinary-oriented duties; a lot of females who are appointed to the same position are given instructional-based duties (African American females).

Subject D: I feel that gender has no bearing on appointment. The main thing is your own preparation and experience has more to do with your appointment than your gender.

Subject E: At this time, in reference to levels, at the high school level, males have a slight edge over females in terms of principal appointment in reference to gender aspect, because central office believes that at this level, males have more stamina (in reference to handling and managing a high school). However, I feel that there is no impact at the middle or elementary school levels.

Subject F: Yes. I believe that the African American male is perceived, presumed, prejudged and predestined to become an administrator in the capacity of discipline. The numbers in this system speak for themselves. There is a
disproportionate number of African American males being appointed to the position of assistant principals that are being assigned duties and responsibilities in the area of discipline, and attendance. That is across the board, and can even happen in schools where that African American male is the minority.

The downside is this: if the pipeline or ascension to principal is the instructional or curriculum side, then those that have been afforded to work this side (which are made up primarily of African American females, white females, and white males) puts them in a position where they are more likely to be promoted to the level of principal. With that said, here you have this African American male diligently serving in the capacity of discipline, and attendance, and the principal or instructional leader is very pleased or content with the job that this African American male is doing in maintaining discipline and order of the school.

To think that he/she is going to remove this person or reassign the assistant principal and give this male an opportunity to learn other facts of administration is miniscule-totally obsolete. So that limits their chances of ascending to the level of principal appointment, because they are not viewed as the ‘brains’ behind the operation. African American males are automatically slated for the positions of attendance or discipline.

African American males tend to do this job so well that others won’t be willing to give them other opportunities. As a result, the question comes up of ‘Has this person had experience in instruction?’ The rebuttal to that should be, ‘Has
anyone given this person the opportunity to experience that side?’ So it will take
the principal to recognize that and offer the opportunity for that African American
male so that they can grow into all facets of administration and not leave any
stones unturned.

Summary: Four of the six interviewees believed that gender was a definite
influence on their appointment to their current position. These subjects cited beliefs that
African American males are predestined only for the role of disciplinarian, therefore
assigning them disciplinarian-oriented roles, and not giving them instruction-based roles
and duties; that at levels higher than elementary school, more men are appointed in these
same roles as disciplinarian, but the only difference is a title that goes along with it (i.e.,
principal or assistant principal), along with the reasoning that males can handle and
manage a school much more effectively (i.e., control older students more effectively)
than a female, due to the stereotype that females are weak at those higher levels. The
interviewees also noted that if succession to a principal position is determined a lot of
times by a knowledge of curriculum, then African American males will not have the
same opportunity for appointment as readily as African American women, white women,
and white males, because they simply aren’t trained in that area, and no one will see fit to
give them an opportunity to be trained.

Two of the six interviewees believed that gender did not play a factor, citing
reasons as the school system was looking for the best prepared candidate, with proper
experience and qualifications to be considered for appointment. To summarize, the
majority of interviewees believed that gender did play a critical factor in their appointment to principal/assistant principal.

Question 3: How important has your educational and work experience played in your appointment to the principal/assistant principal position?

Subject A: Education and work experience was very important, because the principal who hired me knew nothing beforehand about me. This principal was not a friend or associate of mine, just an individual who went strictly outside of the building and did the hiring. I am sure that there were several people within the building who were qualified or who could have been seen as qualified, but when they looked for a particular applicant, in terms of their qualifications (i.e., experience as chairperson, one who was capable of managing other teachers, one who was capable of doing both formal and informal observations of teachers) all that experience definitely increased my chances of being appointed.

As far as educational experience goes, in terms of undergraduate school, and then attaining my master's and leadership certification, I believe that education was important. Working in a mentorship program during my undergraduate years also helped me prepare for my position. Gaining experience by working hands-on with youth really helped. Moving on to teach, coming into the educational arena as a paraprofessional, and then coming back to get certification in middle school teaching, completing my program and becoming a full-time teacher, then after
seven years going back to complete a master’s degree...all that experience definitely helped prepare me education-wise.

Subject B: Getting the elementary school experience was the most important thing that ever happened to me. Education was important, but only to a point, because what is discussed in school is really all theory not put into practice. In graduate school, the courses I took gave a lot of background, but once you went into the real world and started dealing with people and real-life situations, it became a totally different experience. Again, the best thing for me was elementary school experience, because it really showed me the nature of how children learned, and also helped me learn and understand the core program, which consisted of reading excellence, guided reading practice, reading comprehension, etc.

Subject C: When I first started working in education, I was a counselor. However, my principal at that time really pushed me towards a leadership role of assistant principal by assigning me to different leadership duties, as far as discipline, but little instruction. That experience really pushed me and played a role in my hands-on-training. I received my educational background in the graduate leadership program, where I learned certain theoretical points, such as educational leadership platforms (which I use everyday, but can’t quote). It was important, but not in real-life situations. My most valuable experience-to-date has been that of hands-on training, which definitely had the most influence with the
job, rather than the educational background. In short, rather than putting theory into place, I put more hands-on training into place.

Subject D: I feel that both education and work experience has everything to do with it. I believe that both education and work experience are what you have to draw upon in your interview for appointment. Everyone can have the same education, but not the same experiences. Those individual experiences and the individual themselves (in which the individual is made and seasoned through their own experiences) is key. That is the determining factor in which you get the job or not.

Subject E: When I was appointed to the position, I did not have a doctorate, so that was not a major element in reference to my appointment. I believe that education does have some role in appointment. I believe that the central office looks at hardcore science or math people are looked upon in a different light when it comes to appointment. With this school being largely a science and math academy, I think that my background as a science teacher definitely had a major impact or played a major point in my selection to be appointed to this position.

Subject F: Education had nothing to do with it whatsoever. Having been a principal at another school for four years and having some successes there, I think that experiences at my previous school had something to do with the appointment to open this new school. I really don’t think that my appointment would have happened had I been principal at another high school for a year or two. But
education had nothing to do with it, because you don’t need a doctorate nor a specialist to become a principal. Again, education had nothing to do with it. Attaining a doctorate was strictly personal.

For some, the doctorate sends a message to many that this person is an expert, that they are research-based, and have the knowledge and the training and experiences to go along with what they have encountered. It sounds good for the public and community, because it instills a certain degree of confidence. When people hear ‘doctor,’ they think professional. They can endure all of what it takes to taking students to that academic pinnacle, and that looks good for anybody in a leadership position. In my experience, I feel that education had nothing to do with my appointment.

Summary: All of the interviewees believed that work experience was very influential in their appointment. Interviewees cited work experience, or “hands-on” as the most important facet of gaining their appointment. From chairing and managing other teachers, to gaining experience as a principal at the elementary school level before going to high school, to being pushed by the former principal to become an assistant principal, experience was the number one factor which all interviewees agreed upon had the most influence between that and education. Five out of the six interviewees agreed that education came secondary, due to the fact that the interviewees felt that it was good to attain degrees and learn theory in graduate programs, but the real learning came from hands-on, real-life situations.
There was only one interviewee who believed that education had no bearing at all in his appointment. For this person, it was important only to have work experience. Attaining a degree and getting the education from graduate programs was secondary, and the decision to attain a higher degree was personal. To summarize, the majority of interviewees believed and agreed that both work experience and education played a pivotal role when it came to their present appointment.

**Question 4:** When it comes to the principal/assistant principal appointment, do you feel it is more of "who you know" and not "what you know?"

**Subject A:** This question could be looked upon as a loaded question. Yes, it's important who you know, because personally, I don't know of any person who has gotten anywhere all by themselves. I feel that because of my work experience, work ethic, work habits, I had someone at the administrative level at my previous school to vouch for my experience as a hard worker and a team player, and in that regard, people who knew about me at school were able to give a positive response to the school that I was applying at. The people on the administrative end were a mixture of people, but I was only well-known within the building. I don't know exactly who was called at my building, but I knew that the recommendations did not come from the county office or higher.

My recommendation was strictly on the level of building supervisors who gave excellent references, and who may have known other colleagues in their position. Of course, any intelligent supervisor who is looking for somebody to work for
them is going to ask for references. Personally, it was not who I knew, but who my principal knew.

Subject B: With the new people in charge in the system, I honestly believe that they don’t care who you know. With my appointment, I went through the interview process at least four times before I was appointed. By the time I got to the third level, the interview committee was not impressed with who I was, just if I knew enough about curriculum and instruction to be appointed. If it depended strictly on who I knew, I would have gotten the appointment during the first go-round.

Subject C: In this system, it is definitely about who you know. If you are not in the so-called ‘right pool,’ then you are and will be left out. With being appointed to assistant principal in the district, you must literally be in the right place at the right time, getting the right training in order to attain this position. If you are working with a principal whose school is not performing well on test scores, or who is not liked by the system, or who may believe in speaking freely, then when it comes time for an appointment, you may not be considered, due to your former acquaintance (working relationship with that principal). So it’s all about association. In short, you have to be around a principal considered to be ‘in the limelight,’ i.e., someone who has proven themselves through test scores, leadership…someone who has really been productive in the system. Right now, there are people coming in the system with more experience than what I have, and
more education than I have, but since I am more well-known in the system, the
powers that be will be more apt to give a principal appointment to me in the
future, simply because I am well-known. To put it simply, you have to be known
in order to receive an appointment. You are simply a piece of paper until
someone brings you alive by saying 'I know him.'

In the case of 'outsiders' coming into the district, I have a problem with that,
because you already have people in the system that are qualified and can do the
job as well or better than that person who is recruited from outside of the district.
But that is also a factor of who you know, because I believe that outsiders are
recruited based on insiders' recommendations who work at the central office.
I also believe that your destiny is already predetermined within this system. The
higher-ups already know how far they want you to go, and once you get to that
plateau, you are locked in and can't move, unless they want you to, or unless your
next move is out the door.

Subject D: It's always good to know people. It always helps to have someone
who knows you. It may have had an impact on my appointment. The central
office and the powers that be already knew that I was qualified, and also knew
that I could handle the position. I would like to think that it was those factors that
determined my appointment, rather than having me believe I was appointed just
because they knew me, and not knowing my qualifications. Again, it is good to
know people, and those people who knew me also knew I could handle the job. In
short, knowing people was important, but what you know is definitely more important, because getting the job is one thing, but keeping it is another.

Subject E: At this day and age, it is definitely not who you know. This present administration really does not care anything about who you are or who you know in reference to making appointments. I believe that the central office is now going strictly on ability, how well you carry yourself, your educational background and experiences, and overall, what you know. I don’t think that it’s a ‘who you know’ piece. It is definitely what you know and the skills you bring to the table.

Subject F: Three individuals interviewed for this position, but I believe that I was handpicked for it. However, I had to go through the formal process of the interview. I also knew that I was the person already chosen to take over this position. Again the interview process was just a formality. I doubt very seriously that they would have given this position to someone who had never been a principal before to open up the largest high school in the system. So yes, there were those in the central office looking for the ‘right fit.’ They were looking for the person where (as it was told to me by my immediate supervisor) it was stated, ‘You are the only one out here who could handle this.’

When another person comes from another system, then it is strictly about who you know. It happens, but is also very rare that someone comes from outside the system and into it as an administrator. In that case, there was a network or
communication somewhere in order to bring that person in. And to bring this person in from the outside, there was someone that had to be a prevalent individual beyond the level of principal; someone with authority. The outsider doesn’t get in any other way. That is probably consistent throughout the entire metropolitan Atlanta school districts. Even in my case, it would be very difficult for me to leave my system and assume a position at a central office level from outside of the system. It tends to happen more at that level, but many times and historically, promotion comes from within.

Our central office is the clear example that we promote from within, so it is certainly a matter of who you know. Had it been based on prior successes, experiences, and knowledge, I wouldn’t be a principal right now. I would be in a position beyond the level of principal. If it mattered more of what you know and not who you know and who you owe, I wouldn’t be principal right now. But because of the ‘who you know and who you owe’ factor, I’m still a principal.

Summary: Five of the six interviewees believed that when it came to their appointment, it was more important to know someone that could assist in elevating them to their present position rather than what they knew regarding the amount of knowledge, and years of experience that they already possessed. Some subjects stated that they didn’t know of any person (male or female, black or white) that got to a certain position all by themselves. For them, it is definitely about ‘who you know.’ Another subject made the observation of having to be in the “right pool” of applicants at the right time in order
to be considered. It was also noted (from the assistant principal position) that if you are linked to a principal whose school is not performing well, or who is very outspoken and not well-liked by the central office or by their peers, then that limits your opportunity for advancement simply because of association. In addition to proper training and being in the right pool in order to gain an appointment, you must also be linked to a principal that has been very productive within the system.

The issue of outsiders coming in to work in the system as principals and assistant principals was also discussed. Most of the interviewees had issues with that, stating that if there are already qualified African American males working within the system, then they should be considered first. The interviewees considered this to be a form of favoritism at its best from the central office, because of the clout factor of someone at the top level just giving a recommendation and bringing a person in. That is the only way that an outsider gets in, and most of the interviewees stated that is more than consistent throughout all metropolitan Atlanta school districts.

Two of the six interviewees disagreed and believed that it is not about who you know, but rather what you know and what you bring to the table that determines your appointment. One interviewee felt that it didn’t matter who you knew, because the present administration in his system didn’t care about who you were or who you knew when it came to being appointed. The other interviewee agreed on both points, stating that yes, it was important to know people, but also felt more strongly on what you may know, stating that getting the job is one thing, but keeping it is another. Therefore, his belief was that what you knew was way more important. To summarize, the majority of
interviewees agreed that when it came to an appointment in their school system, it is definitely about who you know. What you know is only secondhand. A summary matrix of questions, themes, patterns, and findings is shown in Table 6.

Table 6

Summary Matrix of Research Question 6

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 1</strong></td>
<td>Factors ranging from qualifications of each individual to present administration, to preparation and years without regard to gender have had an impact on appointment.</td>
<td>Four out of six subjects interviewed did not believe that gender had anything to do with appointment while the other two subjects did, citing the “who you know” factor</td>
<td>The majority of the interviewees did not believe that gender had anything to do with appointment or the timeliness of appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Question 2</strong></td>
<td>African American male subjects interviewed believed that African-American males are pre-destined only for the role of disciplinarian.</td>
<td>Four out of six subjects interviewed believed that gender was a definite influence on appointment, while the other two subjects did not, citing reasons that the system was only looking for the best</td>
<td>The majority of the interviewees believed that gender was a definite critical factor of appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>Emergent Themes</td>
<td>Patterns</td>
<td>Findings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 3</td>
<td>African American male</td>
<td>prepared candidate, with proper experience and qualifications.</td>
<td>The majority of the interviewees believed and agreed that both work experience and education played a pivotal role when it came to their appointment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How important has educational and work experience played in the appointment to a principal/assistant position?</td>
<td>Five out of six subjects believed that work experience and education was very influential in gaining their appointment. One out of six stated that education had no bearing in the appointment.</td>
<td>The majority of the interviewees agreed that it is definitely about who you know rather than what you know.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Question 4</td>
<td>Four out six subjects interviewed believed that when it came to their appointment, it is definitely about who you know rather than what you know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 6 (continued)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Research Questions</th>
<th>Emergent Themes</th>
<th>Patterns</th>
<th>Findings</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>about being in the right pool at the right place and time.</td>
<td>position, rather than the amount of knowledge or number of years of experience. Two out of six disagreed and believed that it is more of what you know.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Summary

In this chapter the demographic data for the survey population and the results of the Pearson r Correlation were presented in tabular form. The responses for the questions in Research Question 6 were recorded and transcribed. After analyzing data in Chapter Five, some questions that have been raised and are addressed in Chapter Six include higher correlation, and subjects' candidness, with regard to answering both survey and interview questions. In Chapter Six, the research findings, conclusions, implications, and recommendations are presented.
CHAPTER VI

FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents the findings of the study, conclusions, implications, and recommendations. The purpose of the study was to explore perceived factors that impact the appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals within two local metro-Atlanta school systems.

The research was guided by the following research questions:

1. What is the perceived relationship between knowledge of curriculum/instruction, and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

2. What is the perceived relationship between leadership skills and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

3. What is the perceived relationship between leadership style and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

4. What is the perceived relationship between educational values and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?
5. What is the perceived relationship between leadership experience and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

6. What is the perception of educational politics and the selection and appointment of African American male principals and assistant principals?

The target population for this study was African American male elementary, middle, and high school leaders (principals and assistant principals) within two school districts. The final sample consisted of 132 administrators.

The study utilized the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals self-developed survey to determine school leaders' perceptions of factors that affect the hiring process. The Pearson $r$ Correlation was employed in order to answer five research questions. Interview questions were employed to answer research question six.

Findings

$\text{HO}_1$: There is no perceived correlation between knowledge of curriculum and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

$\text{HO}_2$: There is a perceived correlation between leadership skills and the appointment of African American principals/assistant principals.

$\text{HO}_3$: There is a perceived correlation between leadership style and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.
HO4: There is no perceived correlation between educational values and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

HO5: There is no perceived correlation between leadership experience and the appointment of African American male principals/assistant principals.

Conclusions

The researcher found similar views in African American male school leaders' perceptions of factors that affect the appointment of principals and assistant principals within two school systems (Research Question 6). School administrators had higher levels of agreement with survey questions leadership skills, leadership style, and interview questions regarding educational politics (significant correlations), and less agreement regarding questions knowledge of curriculum, educational values and leadership experience (no significant correlation). This information did not support the researcher's ideas that all of the factors listed would give a higher significant correlation, due to the fact that the researcher determined that it was these factors that the administrators perceived would have a definite impact on their appointment. Rather, responses to the administrators surveyed showed that the overall perception was that many of the factors listed had nothing to do with appointment, thus giving a higher rate.

Initially, there was "no perceived correlation" with the subjects, because the researcher found that in sending out and collecting the survey, administrators' perceptions of their appointment would have them believe that the factors listed on the survey made no difference on their appointment to their present position. Moreover, the researcher determined that even if these administrators answered the survey questions
completely, very few would answer honestly, for fear of reprimand against them by their system being studied.

Surprisingly, African American male school leaders were more than willing to go “off the record” to discuss educational politics in an anonymous setting. By individually interviewing each subject regarding questions of educational politics, candid but honest perceptions about how African American male school leaders viewed the appointment process in their system was obtained. Though (at present), there are a small number of African American males currently serving in the roles of principal and assistant principal, there is still a long way to go regarding equal opportunity appointment.

It appeared to the researcher that subjects interviewed would answer more honestly and candidly than if they were being surveyed. However, through body language during the interviews, it was apparent that the subjects were uncomfortable with some questions, even with regard to anonymity, and as a result, “held back” by being hesitant and changing responses in mid-sentence. It also appeared that the most honest responses came from interview question number four, which stated that it was more important for “who you know” rather than “what you know” in order to ascend to a higher position. Here the subjects gave concise and full responses without fear of reprimand regarding that specific question.

The researcher determined that the research supports the findings in the study. Administrators in their responses on both survey and interview questions were very specific in their perception about how they acquired their appointments. The widespread belief among the individuals for this study is that none of the factors listed had anything
to do with their appointment. The researcher concludes that as African American males ascend to higher ranks of administration within education, they are put under an ever-watchful "microscope," in which they have to be more conscious and more careful about their actions, including perceived confidentiality as it relates to their livelihood, out of fear of reprimand and job release by the school districts they work for.

Implications

The research implies that African American male administrators who are in the principal or assistant principal position have a certain conviction about how their position was attained. Research showed that administrators surveyed perceived that it was more important to have leadership skills or a certain type of leadership style in order to be selected or appointed to a position, rather than being knowledgeable about curriculum, having certain educational values and having prior leadership experience. These candidates' perceptions were strong in thinking that politics in the central office as well as in the school building they worked at predetermined who was to be a candidate for promotion, rather than just being knowledgeable and qualified with years of experience on the job. The research also implied that administrators perceived it was just not important enough to be knowledgeable about curriculum, stress educational values, or have leadership experience when it came to factors of appointment.

Today, most African American males who serve in the capacity of principal do so at the middle and high school levels. The reason for this is that at those levels, strong discipline with regard to stamina is needed to control the school in order to make it a conducive learning environment. African American males who serve in the assistant
principal position do so at all three levels (elementary, middle, and high schools) within both systems, but are only seen as purveyors of discipline and not instruction. As a result, they become trapped in that position due to an unwillingness to be trained in other administrative matters by either the building administrator or by upper-level management (human resources, superintendent's cabinet) who seem to have predetermined roles of the disciplinarian already, without regard for level of degree obtained or years working within the system.

If there is to be true equality of appointing school leaders within the two school systems studied, then the stereotypes need to be disbanded and diluted regarding African-American males and the discipline factor. These individuals who are aspiring to either a level of principal or assistant principal should also be properly trained in matters of curriculum, instruction, school policy, and finance; either by another African American male already appointed in this position, or by a program specifically designed for African American males by African American males in the position already and approved by the school system. If African American males are to be fairly appointed, then the present systems must first be challenged on the front lines of their own merit in order to justify themselves as truly an “equal opportunity” employer.

Recommendations

- It is recommended that school districts A and D thoroughly investigate and reinterpret their so-called “fair” hiring practices before interviewing eligible African American males for appointments or placement.
• It is recommended that school districts A and D offer training or mentoring programs designed specifically for African American males which focuses on adequately training and preparing African American males who aspire to the principalship or assistant principalship in all aspects and job responsibilities of these positions.

• It is recommended that school districts A and D revamp their system; that is, systems should promote the most qualified individual based on knowledge and experience, and at the school building level, administrators should promote or recommend the most qualified male individual at their building who shows promise of being a leader.

The finding of significant differences in African American male principal and assistant principals' perceptions of how and why they were appointed suggests that further research is warranted.

A pilot study might be appropriate before a full research study in order to design, adapt, and modify questions, as it was very difficult to capture the breadth of factors that an African American male administrator might feel regarding their appointment. Further research should expand the sampling frame; that is, surveying school leaders from a larger geographical area.

Summary

The findings of the present study have been summarized in Chapter Six. Conclusions and implications based on the present study have been given.

Recommendations for additional and future research have been outlined.
APPENDIX A

Survey Instrument

Survey of the Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals

Administrators:

This survey is designed to obtain your honest opinion about the attainment of your position. Your responses will be kept totally confidential. Please answer each item based on your experiences in this school and within your school system, except where noted in the survey. Thank you for your cooperation in this matter.

DIRECTIONS: Please circle the number (1-5) that best represents your thinking about each of the following statements.

Key: 1 = Not Applicable  2 = Strongly Disagree  3 = Disagree  4 = Agree  5 = Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>I. Educational Values</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. My educational values had no impact in my appointment of principal.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. My educational values coincide with the system's values.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. My educational values support the system's mission, vision, goals, and objectives.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. My educational values are constantly being challenged by others (faculty, executive directors, deputy superintendent, superintendent).</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. I am criticized in a negative manner when trying to implement my educational values at my school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Staff sometimes don't support or see &quot;the big picture&quot; of what I am trying to accomplish at the school.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. My educational values are grounded in cooperation and relationships with the community.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. My educational values are important in keeping me &quot;grounded&quot; and focused in order to accomplish the school's goals and objectives.</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A (continued)

Key:  1 = Not Applicable  2 = Strongly Disagree  3 = Disagree
      4 = Agree                5 = Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>II. Leadership Skills</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>9. Leadership skills were an important factor in my appointment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Leadership skills are important to give direction, vision, and support to my staff</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. My leadership skills help to give teachers and staff members a clear definition of my expected goals and objectives at my school.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. My leadership skills are an effective communication tool for disseminating information towards my teachers and staff.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. My leadership skills are important for my own self-motivation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. My leadership skills successfully guide policies, procedures, and practices that contribute directly to student learning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>III. Leadership Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15. My previous leadership experience was an important factor in my appointment as principal.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. The leadership experience I had prior to my appointment was in administration (counseling, lead teacher, department chair).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. My previous leadership experience helped me to develop my present educational values and leadership style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Before I became an administrator, I was a participant in my district-sponsored leadership training program.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Becoming a participant in my district-sponsored leadership training program was a crucial factor in helping me to attain a position as an administrator.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. My formal college and/or university graduate program was influential in helping prepare me to meet the high-priority demands of an administrator.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>IV. Leadership Style</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>21. My leadership style directly affects student performance in a positive manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. My leadership style directly affects student performance in a negative manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23. My leadership style directly affects staff performance in a positive manner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. My leadership style directly affects staff performance in a negative manner.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. I would classify my leadership style as democratic (encouraging group discussion and shared decision-making).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. I would classify my leadership style as laissez-faire (giving freedom to the group and leave decision-making to the group).</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix A (continued)

Key: 1 = Not Applicable  2 = Strongly Disagree  3 = Disagree  
      4 = Agree    5 = Strongly Agree

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27. I would classify my leadership style as authoritarian (very directive leadership where leaders take full authority and assume full responsibility from initiation to task completion).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. I would classify my leadership style as inclusive (improving the institution, but having discipline control as the main goal).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. My leadership style is more people-oriented than curriculum-centered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. My leadership style is more curriculum-centered than people-oriented.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31. My leadership style is more consensus-driven than people-oriented.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. My leadership style is more consensus-driven than curriculum-centered.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

V. Knowledge of Curriculum/Instruction

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>33. I have a strong background and awareness of the type of instruction that is used at my school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Knowledge of curriculum/instruction is considered a crucial factor in the operation and management of a school.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Knowledge of curriculum/instruction is important when working with a school system’s vision, mission, goals, and objectives.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Knowledge of curriculum/instruction is important when trying to offer support to faculty and staff</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. I feel that knowledge of curriculum/instruction was an important factor that was used in determining my appointment as principal/assistant principal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Overall, in attaining my position, I felt that I had to confront special challenges regarding competence and knowledge of curriculum/instruction in order to receive an appointment of principal or assistant principal.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please provide your demographic data (please check one):

39. Present Position: _____ Principal _____ Assistant Principal

40. Race: _____ African American _____ Caucasian _____ Hispanic
    _____ Asian _____ Other

    _____ 56 – 65 _____ Over 65
Appendix A (continued)

42. Leadership Style:  _____ Democratic  _____ Authoritarian  _____ Laissez-faire  _____ Inclusive

43. Public School Experience: (Complete if applicable)
   _____ Teacher  _____ Counselor  _____ Reform Facilitator  _____ Curriculum Specialist

   Years as a Public School Teacher/Instructional Service Support:
   (a) _____ 1 – 5  (d) _____ 16 – 20  (g) _____ Over 30+
   (b) _____ 6 – 10  (e) _____ 21 – 25
   (c) _____ 11 – 15  (f) _____ 26 – 30

44. Years as a Public School Administrator (Principal/Assistant Principal) – (Complete if applicable)
   (a) _____ 1 – 5  (d) _____ 16 – 20  (g) _____ Over 30+
   (b) _____ 6 – 10  (e) _____ 21 – 25
   (c) _____ 11 – 15  (f) _____ 26 – 30

45. Which school level do you presently work in?
   _____ Elementary  _____ Middle  _____ High

46. What type of school do you work in?
   _____ Urban  _____ Suburban

47. Number of free or reduced lunch students _____

48. Student Demographics (Please indicate the percentage of students per race)
   _____ African American  _____ Caucasian  _____ Hispanic
   _____ Asian  _____ Indian  _____ Other

   Percentage of Males (total) _____  Percentage of females (total) _____

   Total Number of Students _____
Appendix A (continued)

49. Staff Demographics (Please indicate the percentage of staff/faculty members by race)
   
   _____ African American  _____ Caucasian  _____ Hispanic
   _____ Asian

   Percentage of Males _____  Percentage of females _____

   Total Number of Faculty/Staff Members _____

50. Is your school under a reform program? _____ Yes*  _____ No

   *If you answered “Yes,” what is the name of the reform? _________________________________

51. Level of Education Completed

   _____ Bachelor’s  _____ Master’s  _____ Specialist

   _____ Doctorate  _____ Post-Doctorate
APPENDIX B

Letters Requesting Permission to Conduct Research in School Districts A and D

REQUEST FOR DISTRICT PERMISSION

Dr. Nancy Emmons  
Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation  
Atlanta Public School System  
130 Trinity Avenue, S.W.  
Atlanta, Georgia 30303

Dear Dr. Emmons:

My name is Ryan Shropshire and I proudly serve the students of Atlanta Public Schools at D.H. Stanton Elementary as counselor. I am also a doctoral candidate at Clark Atlanta University. In an effort to expand the knowledge base of our profession, I am currently proposing to study an issue affecting African-American male principals and assistant principals, thereby possibly influencing hiring practices and policies.

I am currently writing a dissertation entitled "Perceived factors that impact the appointment of African-American male principals and assistant principals within two local metro Atlanta school systems." This letter is intended to seek permission to conduct my study within Atlanta Public Schools.

Enclosed you will find:

✓ Approval letter to conduct research from Clark Atlanta University.  
✓ 6 copies of my research proposal as approved by a panel of professors at Clark Atlanta University with 6 copies of the proposed survey instrument (Appendix B).  
✓ The list of schools in the sample (Appendix C)

Please note that this study does not involve students or parents. Therefore, no parental permission letter is included.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (678) 358-3434 or email me at rsxman@aol.com.

Regards,

Ryan Shropshire

Contact Information:  
7548 Broadhurst Drive, Riverdale, Georgia 30296  
770-909-9750(h) 404-627-3843(c)
Appendix B (continued)

REQUEST FOR DISTRICT PERMISSION

Dr. Steve Pemberton
Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation
DeKalb County School System
3770 North Decatur Road
Decatur, Georgia 30032

Dear Dr. Pemberton:

My name is Ryan Shropshire and I proudly serve the students of Atlanta Public Schools at D.H. Stanton Elementary as counselor. I am also a doctoral candidate at Clark Atlanta University. In an effort to expand the knowledge base of our profession, I am currently proposing to study an issue affecting African-American male principals and assistant principals, thereby possibly influencing hiring practices and policies.

I am currently writing a dissertation entitled "Perceived factors that impact the appointment of African-American male principals and assistant principals within two local metro Atlanta school systems." This letter is intended to seek permission to conduct my study within DeKalb County Public Schools.

Enclosed you will find:

✓ Approval letter to conduct research from Clark Atlanta University.
✓ 6 copies of my research proposal as approved by a panel of professors at Clark Atlanta University with 6 copies of the proposed survey instrument (Appendix B).
✓ The list of schools in the sample (Appendix C)

Please note that this study does not involve students or parents. Therefore, no parental permission letter is included.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at (678) 358-3434 or email me at rsxman@aol.com.

Regards,

Ryan Shropshire

Contact Information:
7548 Broadhurst Drive, Riverdale, Georgia 30296
770-909-9750(h)
404-627-3843(c)
Dear Survey Participant,

Attached is an opinion survey. An opinion survey is a survey that is designed to gather your beliefs about a subject. In this case the subject is teacher absenteeism and school climate.

Although there may be questions on this study that some may controversial, your most honest opinions are needed. All responses will strictly be kept confidential, so that you will feel comfortable in freely answering with your most candid responses. Responses will be destroyed upon completion of the research project. If you are unsure of an answer please choose one of the responses that best fits your belief if that question did apply to you. PLEASE TRY NOT TO LEAVE ANY RESPONSES BLANK!

Participation in this survey is VOLUNTARY!
All data collected will be used to improve our profession.

Definitions for the Purpose of this Study

EDUCATIONAL VALUES are defined as: the personal beliefs and philosophy about the importance of educational ideas, goals, and curriculum within the school system being addressed.

LEADERSHIP SKILLS are defined as: the type of traits that principals and assistant principals use to influence their subordinates in accomplishing goals.

LEADERSHIP EXPERIENCE is defined as: any type of administrative or supervisory experience while placed in a principal or assistant principal position.

LEADERSHIP STYLE is defined as: the leader's personal traits and characteristics, which influences the leader's behavior.

KNOWLEDGE OF CURRICULUM/INSTRUCTION is defined as: the principal or assistant principal being aware of the type of plan of action for the school or school system which includes strategies for achieving desired goals or ends.

Rationale for the Study

The purpose of this survey is to determine what influence, if any, school climate has on teacher absenteeism. For the purpose of this study, principal and assistant principal selection is divided into 5 subsets: Leadership Style, Leadership Experience, Educational Values, Leadership Skills, and Knowledge of Curriculum. The rationale for the study is that the principal selection might in fact be influenced by the following variables, and that the results of the study could be useful to policymakers in urban school districts in the area of changing practices and procedures in the recruitment of African-American males for the principal and assistant principal positions.

Thank you so much for your support!

Ryan Shropshire

Ryan Shropshire
APPENDIX D

Letters Requesting Permission for Principal/Assistant Principal Participation

Dear Principal __________________:

My name is Ryan Shropshire and I proudly serve the students of Atlanta Public Schools at D. H. Stanton Elementary as counselor. I am also a doctoral candidate at Clark Atlanta University. In an effort to expand the knowledge base of our profession, I am currently proposing to study an issue affecting African American male principals and assistant principals, thereby possibly influencing future hiring practices and policies.

I am currently writing a dissertation entitled, “Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals within Two Local Metro-Atlanta School Systems.”

Enclosed you will find:

✓ An approval letter to conduct research from Clark Atlanta University
✓ A copy of the proposed survey instrument

Please note that this study does not involve students or parents. Therefore, no parental permission letter is included.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 678-358-3434, 770-909-9750 or email me at rsxman@aol.com. Upon prompt receipt of your survey, your name will be entered into a drawing for a $50 gift certificate at the Polo Shop, Lenox Square.

Regards,

Ryan Shropshire

Contact Information:
7548 Broadhurst Drive, Riverdale, Georgia 30296
770-909-9750 (H)
678-358-3434 (C)
Dear Assistant Principal: 

My name is Ryan Shropshire and I proudly serve the students of Atlanta Public Schools at D. H. Stanton Elementary as counselor. I am also a doctoral candidate at Clark Atlanta University. In an effort to expand the knowledge base of our profession, I am currently proposing to study an issue affecting African American male principals and assistant principals, thereby possibly influencing future hiring practices and policies.

I am currently writing a dissertation entitled, “Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African American Male Principals and Assistant Principals within Two Local Metro-Atlanta School Systems.”

Enclosed you will find:

✔ An approval letter to conduct research from Clark Atlanta University
✔ A copy of the proposed survey instrument

Please note that this study does not involve students or parents. Therefore, no parental permission letter is included.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration. If you should have any questions or need additional information, please contact me at 678-358-3434, 770-909-9750 or email me at rsxman@aol.com. Upon prompt receipt of your survey, your name will be entered into a drawing for a $50 gift certificate at the Polo Shop, Lenox Square.

Regards,

Ryan Shropshire

Contact Information:
7548 Broadhurst Drive, Riverdale, Georgia 30296
770-909-9750 (H)
678-358-3434 (C)
APPENDIX E

Letters of Approval from Systems A and D to Conduct Research

ATLANTA PUBLIC SCHOOLS

May 17, 2005

Mr. Ryan Shropshire, Counselor
D. H. Stanton Elementary School
970 Martin Street, S.E.
Atlanta, Georgia 30315

Dear Mr. Shropshire:

Your request to conduct research within the Atlanta Public Schools (APS) was reviewed by the Research Screening Committee in accordance with the guidelines. Your research study entitled "Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African-American Male Principals and Assistant Principals within Two Local Metro Atlanta School Systems" was approved under the following conditions:

1. Your study is confined in APS to 14 elementary schools, 13 middle schools, and 9 high schools with African-American male principals and/or assistant principals. (See attached list of schools.) Principals have the final approval on whether research studies are conducted in their schools. You must obtain the approval of the principals of each of the selected schools prior to distributing your survey. If any of the principals do not approve of your study or do not believe that it is in the best interest of their schools to participate, you must drop those schools from your sample.

2. Your research design involves a brief survey to be administered to African-American male principals and assistant principals related to their perceptions of leadership opportunities, values, and experiences. You plan to send the surveys to each principal and assistant principal through the U. S. Mail with an enclosed self-addressed, stamped return envelope. Your study includes another Atlanta metropolitan area school system along with APS.

3. No students or teachers will be directly involved in your research study.

4. Activities related to your research study must not interfere with the instructional program or with the state and local testing programs.

5. The confidentiality of students, teachers, administrators, other APS staff members, the schools, and the school system must be ensured. Pseudonyms for people and the schools, as well as references to APS as "a large urban school system," are required in the title and text of your final report before publication or presentation outside of APS.

6. Principals, assistant principals, and other APS staff members can participate in or assist with research studies only on a voluntary basis.

7. The data collection phase of your research study must be completed by the end of the 2005-2006 school year.

8. If changes are made in the research design or in the instruments used, you must notify the Department of Research, Planning, and Accountability prior to beginning your study.

This letter serves as official notification of the approval of your proposed research study, pending the above conditions. Remember that a copy of the results of your completed study must be submitted to the Department of Research, Planning, and Accountability. Please contact me at (404) 802-2708 or nemmons@atlanta.k12.ga.us if I can be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Nancy J. Emmons, Ph.D.
Research Associate

NJE:dd - #316
xc: Mr. Lester McKee
   Selected Principals (See Attachment)
Appendix E (continued)

June 2, 2005

Mr. Ryan Shropshire
7548 Broadhurst Drive
Riverdale, GA 30296


Dear Mr. Shropshire:

This letter is to advise you that your research proposal has been approved for implementation in the DeKalb County School System for the 2005-2006. When you contact the administrators by mail, you will need to use the school address and attach a copy of this approval letter to your own cover letter so that administrators will know the study has been approved.

Please note the following commendations:

• Your topic is original and represents salient research for our district.
• The subject is interesting and significant.
• The paper was quite informative and the topic worth researching.
• Some of the data within the topic are fascinating and revealing. The compilation of research is thought provoking, especially for those of us responsible for selecting and preparing principals. The selection process, as reported by Gard, pps. 20-21 is gripping and cause for serious reflection.

Please note the following recommendations:

• You will need to enclose a Letter of Informed Consent so that participants will know they have the right to examine any material related to the study upon request, it will have no effect upon their evaluations, and that they may withdraw at any time with no penalty. They also need to know why and how they were selected. See DCSS Research Guidelines, pg. 4.
• You will need to submit a final list of schools and administrators that you will be contacting.

Please be advised that this approval is given for one year from the acceptance date. Should there be any addendums, design changes, or adverse events to the approved protocol, they must also be submitted in writing to the Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation of the DeKalb County School System. Changes should not be initiated until written approval is received. Further, should there be a need to extend the time requested for the project, a written request must be submitted for approval at least one month prior to the anniversary date of the most recent approval and is the responsibility of the investigator. Should the time for which approval is given expire, it will be necessary to submit a written request for an extension and the reason(s) it is needed. Remember that the name of the school and the school system must not appear in your final report. Even though the Research Review Committee and the local site administrator have approved your study, all participation is entirely voluntary.

"THE SCHOOL CANNOT LIVE APART FROM THE COMMUNITY"
Please forward a copy of your results to me when they are completed. Also, please provide us with some feedback on the research approval process by completing the enclosed survey and returning it in the enclosed postage paid envelope.

Best wishes for a successful research project! Please call me at 678.676.0023 if I may be of further assistance.

Please call me at 678.676.0023 if I may be of further assistance.

Sincerely,

Steve Pemberton, Ed.D., Coordinator
Department of Research and Program Evaluation

Cc: File
Attch. (2)
acceptltrwcomm
APPENDIX F

Clark Atlanta University Letters of Request to Conduct Research
in School Districts A and D

Nancy J. Emmons
Atlanta Public Schools
Department of Research, Planning and Accountability
130 Trinity Avenue, S.W.
Atlanta, GA 30303

May 2, 2005

Dear Dr. Emmons:

I am writing as the chairperson of the Department of Educational Leadership requesting that you allow Mr. Ryan Shropshire to conduct dissertation research in the Atlanta Public Schools. Mr. Shropshire is at the dissertation stage in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership. The title of his study is “Perceived Factors that Impact the Appointment of African-American Male Principals and Assistant Principals within Two Local Metro Atlanta School Systems.” I believe that Mr. Shropshire study will be a significant contribution to the knowledge base and the world of school practice.

Mr. Shropshire’s dissertation advisor has worked closely with him in the development of his topic and in the preparation of his research instruments. I feel certain that he is ready to proceed with data gathering during this phase of his research.

If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to call me (404) 880-8503.

Thank you for your kind assistance.

Sincerely,

Melanie Carter, Ph. D.
Chair, Educational Leadership

Moses Norman, Ph.D.
Dissertation Chair
May 2, 2005

Dr. Steve Pemberton
Coordinator of Research and Program Evaluation
DeKalb County Schools
3770 N Decatur Road
Decatur, GA 30032-1099

Dear Dr. Pemberton:

I am writing as the chairperson of the Department of Educational Leadership requesting that you allow Mr. Ryan Shropshire to conduct dissertation research in the DeKalb County Schools. Mr. Shropshire is at the dissertation stage in the doctoral program in Educational Leadership. The title of his study is “Perceived Factors that Impact the appointment of African-American Male Principals and Assistant Principals Within Two Local Metro Atlanta School Systems.” I believe that Mr. Shropshire study will be a significant contribution to the knowledge base and the world of school practice.

Mr. Shropshire dissertation advisor has worked closely with him in the development of his topic and in the preparation of his research instruments. I feel certain that he is ready to proceed with data gathering during this phase of his research.

If you need additional information, please do not hesitate to call me (404) 880-8503. Thank you for your kind assistance.

Sincerely,

Melanie Carter, Ph. D.
Chair, Educational Leadership

Moses Norman, Ph.D.
Dissertation Chair

MC/GP/bc
APPENDIX G

School Sample Listing for Research – Systems A and D

School Sample Listing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM A</th>
<th>SYSTEM D</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Beecher Hills Elementary</td>
<td>Atherton Elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cascade Elementary</td>
<td>Briarlake Elementary</td>
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<td>Connally Elementary</td>
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<td>Continental Colony Elementary</td>
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<td>Cook Elementary</td>
<td>Eldridge Miller Elementary</td>
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<td>Fain Elementary</td>
<td>Fairington Elementary</td>
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<td>Fickett Elementary</td>
<td>Flat Shoals Elementary</td>
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<td>Gideons Elementary</td>
<td>Hambrick Elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Humphries Elementary</td>
<td>Kelley Lake Elementary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Miles Elementary</td>
<td>Knollwood Elementary</td>
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<td>Towns Elementary</td>
<td>Medlock Elementary</td>
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<td>Whiteford Elementary</td>
<td>Murphy Candler Elementary</td>
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<td>Williams Elementary</td>
<td>Oak View Elementary</td>
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<td>Shadow Rock Elementary</td>
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<td>Sky Haven Elementary</td>
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<td>Stoneview Elementary</td>
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<td>Stephenson Middle</td>
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<td>Stone Mountain Middle</td>
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### School Sample Listing

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SYSTEM A</th>
<th>SYSTEM D</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crim High</td>
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<td>Druid Hills High</td>
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<td>Washington High</td>
<td>Miller Grove High</td>
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<td>M. L. King High</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Redan High</td>
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<td>Towers High</td>
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<td>Tucker High</td>
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REFERENCES


Whitaker, K., & Lane, K. (1990). What is a woman’s place in educational administration? *Education Digest, 56*(3), 12-16.