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A Delphi Study of the Most Desirable Qualifications for Selecting Entry-Level School Site Administrators with no Prior Administrative Experience

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A Delphi Study of the Most Desirable Qualifications for Selecting Entry-Level School

Site Administrators with no Prior Administrative Experience

A Dissertation by

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ABSTRACT

A Delphi Study of the Most Desirable Qualifications for Selecting Entry-Level School

Site Administrators with no Prior Administrative Experience

by Toshimi J. Minami

Purpose: The purpose of this policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications

expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting

a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative

position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified

qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified

qualifications.

Methodology: The research design for this study used a Delphi approach which allowed

for data collection from a panel of experts in the field. The Delphi study collected both

qualitative and quantitative data during various rounds of electronic surveys. The

electronic surveys consisted of open-ended questions in Round 1 and Round 3, while

Round 2 was a Likert scale rating which returned quantitative data from the expert panel.

Findings: The initial round of data collection returned 26 desirable qualifications, which

then needed to be rated. The top four qualifications came by way of a tie between two

qualifications for first place and a tie between two more qualifications for third. The four

top-rated qualifications returned a total of eleven findings.

Conclusions: The study had three major conclusions. The first was associated with the

imperative need to be able to build relationships by leveraging interpersonal skills,

emotional intelligence, and effective communication. The second conclusion revolved

around ensuring an accurate way to measurable or evaluate a desirable qualification. The

final conclusion targeted a candidate's need to intrinsically desire to serve others.

Recommendations: Eight total recommendations for future research are provided to

further advance the body of literature and collective knowledge around the hiring of

inexperienced entry-level school administrators.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

According to De La Rosa (2020), nearly 50% of current United States school

principals considered leaving their positions. The national average turnover rate for

principals is roughly 20%. As the United States is home to over 90,000 principals, the

public education system will potentially need to replace between 18,000 and 45,000

principals within the next two years (Statistics, 2020). This substantial increase can open

the door for first-time administrators to enter these key leadership positions (National

Association of Secondary School Principals [NASSP], 2020).

Today, school site administration has grown to include both principals and

assistant principals. As the demands placed upon a school continued to change, the need

to add to these administrative ranks became apparent. During the 1940s, the assistant

principal position became more of a management and leadership role, leaving its original

roots as clerical support behind (Kindsvatter & Tosi, 1971). Both the principal and

assistant principal roles assume great responsibility at their sites and work collaboratively

to propel a school forward. Within California, both principals and assistant principals

need to possess the same administrative credential (California Commission on Teacher

Credentialing [CCoTC], 2017).

Districts continually plan how to staff their sites with the right administrative

personnel to ensure a successful school year (Atherton, 2019). Typically, this is a

responsibility assigned to the Human Resources administrator. The selection process

begins well in advance with recruitment, then applicant screening, followed by candidate

interviews culminating with selecting a candidate. Naturally, the first place to look for a

new principal is within the sizeable pool of assistant principals who have gained

experience and understand the principal role. Unfortunately, promoting assistant principals does not reduce the number of vacant school site administrator positions. Districts will then find suitable candidates to fill the vacant assistant principal positions (Turnbull et al., 2015). California, home to approximately 10,588 public schools, represents roughly 10% of the nation's principals, resulting in the potential need to replace between 1800 and 5,000 principals in the next two years (California Department of Education, 2020a).

Considering these staggering numbers, Human Resources administrators have an opportunity to flood their ranks with highly qualified leaders. The task falls on district Human Resource administrators to oversee the hiring process that will enable them to select the perfect candidate for the job. The right selection can yield significant benefits to a school and its community by reducing absenteeism and behavior incidents to positively influence the school's culture and increase student academic achievement (Ash et al., 2013).

Background

Principals and assistant principals have and will continue to serve valuable purposes in the public education system. Over the decades, with the need to consistently adapt to the change to meet their schools' and districts' needs, these educational leaders have developed into more than just school site managers. The school administrators' role can be a stressful yet gratifying opportunity for those who choose to serve (Teacher Certification Degrees, n.d.a).

Roles & Responsibilities of School Site Administrators

School site administration takes two typical forms; the role of principal and that of the assistant principal. Together, the principal and assistant principal work in tandem to ensure the successful operation of essential school functions (Oleszewski et al., 2012). It can be challenging to determine how the roles differ since their job descriptions mirror each other (Kindsvatter & Tosi, 1971; Tran et al., 2020).

Principal

The principal assumes responsibility for the school, including the physical site, staff, and students. The principal serves as the supervisor for all staff, including teachers, office workers, custodial, maintenance workers, assistant principals, and all other staff assigned to the site. The principal is responsible for all employees' safety and well-being and fills vacant positions with highly qualified candidates to help move the school forward. Furthermore, the principal is responsible and accountable for the school's performance, including, but not limited to, student achievement but also the successful implementation of site and district protocols and initiatives coupled with ensuring continuous improvement and compliance of Federal, State, and local mandates and regulations (EdSource, 1998; Teacher Certification Degrees, n.d.a).

The principal's role has needed to evolve continually; according to EdSource (1998), principals have become educational leaders to effectively juggle the increase in responsibilities associated with navigating, managing, and implementing the myriad of school reform initiatives. EdSource (1998) also indicated that the principal's role requires immense flexibility with their time and the ability to quickly shift directions to tend to many pop-up issues that arise during the day. Additionally, the principal serves as the

school's face, manager of the site's budgets, disciplinarian for both staff and students, an architect of professional development, and an analyzer of many data types. Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) added that school leaders need to be "educational visionaries; instructional and curriculum leaders; assessment experts; disciplinarians; community builders; public relations experts; budget analysts; facility managers; special program administrators; and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives" (p. 2).

Assistant Principal

According to the Teacher Certification Degrees (n.d.b.), the assistant principal role is to assist the principal in completing the school site's day-to-day operations. Kipp et al. (2014) added that the assistant principal needs to have the necessary skills and knowledge as they will need to assume the principal responsibilities in their absence. Powell (2010) added the assistant principal's involvement in hiring staff, organizing events and activities, developing a rigorous curriculum, devising and implementing positive school culture and conferencing with families regarding student behavior incidents, performance, and needs. The role and responsibilities of the assistant principal vary by the site as most of their duties will be appointed by the principal Teacher Certification Degrees (n.d.a.; n.d.b).

Principals and assistant principals serve as chief custodians over all aspects of a school site, including tangible assets like the buildings, walkways, books, furniture, and other school-related supplies. Additionally, administrators assume responsibility for all site employees, students, and visitors to the campus while accountable to their staff, students, parents, community, and district. Administrators make difficult decisions and

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continually evaluate the impact of their actions to ensure a quality educational

opportunity for all students (Lynch, 2012).

Impact of School Administrators

School site administrators have many responsibilities tying back to ensuring a

high-quality education for all students with an additional focus on increasing student

success in academic achievement, social, and emotional areas. Furthermore, Clifford

(2010) stated, "School leadership, after instructional quality, is the most significant

school-related contributor to what and how much students learn at school" (p. 2).

Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) determined that talented school leadership directly

impacts student achievement. Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) found no instances where a

school improved student achievement without a capable leader.

To help ensure and promote growth, Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) found that

good principals work to "attract, support, and retain high-quality teaching staff" (p. 4).

DuFour and Mattos (2013) found that leaders who successfully focused on improving

teacher instruction and student learning dedicate time, promote, and expect team

collaboration and collective responsibility.

Additionally, school sites turn to their administrators' guidance during uncertainty

and elevated stress (NASSP, 2020). During the 2019-2020 school year, the United States

experienced the beginning COVID-19 pandemic that shifted educational priorities and

expectations. Schools needed to quickly adapt to state and local government mandates

that disallowed many schools from operating as they traditionally had; classes moved

away from in-seat instruction to online instruction to limit the spread of the virus

(Bouchrika, 2020). The fallout of COVID-19 has yet to be determined, but what is

known is that over 124,000 schools across the United States suffered closures. These

schools look upon their leadership for direction and support through this pandemic

(Bouchrika, 2020; NASSP, 2020). With the uncertainty surrounding public education's

trajectory considering COVID-19, the need for quality school site leadership has never

been more crucial (NASSP, 2017). Devising ways to re-engage students, raise the quality

of online instruction, and allow for online teachers' development while focusing on

growing students academically remains a challenge for school administrators nationwide

(NASSP, 2017

Furthermore, the U.S. Federal Government has proven that education is a priority

by enacting the Every Study Succeeds Act (ESSA) and Individuals with Disabilities

Education Act (IDEA) to help ensure all students have access to high-quality education

(Bouchrika, 2020). Principals and their assistant counterparts are responsible for

ensuring their schools adhere to these federal acts (Kipp et al., 2014). School

administrators need to understand and ensure they provide high-quality education for all

students (Leithwood et al., 2004). School administrators give action to their vision;

however, Turnbull et al. (2015) discovered that principal turnover is incredibly disruptive

and can take school five years to recover.

Need for School Leaders

In California, principals face some of the harshest circumstances in the nation.

According to Sutcher et al. (2018), California principals face one of the highest students

to administrator ratios and staff to administrator ratios in the country. Grissom and

Sutcher (2018) determined that California principals' salary, when adjusted for the cost of

living, ranks second to last; only surpassing Texas. Moreover, Fuller et al. (2007)

indicated that California does not lack individuals with the necessary credential to be principal; it lacks individuals interested in taking on this role. The national annual turnover rate for principals is 20%. However, current conditions have influenced school principals to consider leaving their jobs earlier (Statistics, 2020). These rates and projections mean that California could need up to 5,000 new principals in the next two years (California Department of Education, 2020b; Statistics, 2020).

California's Requirements for School Administrators

Throughout the nation, states can determine what requirements are needed to possess an administrative credential or administrative license (Davis et al., 2010). The CCoTC is also the agency that oversees the administrative credentialing process, which qualifying universities, colleges, and other entities report to when providing a recommendation for administrative services credentials (CCoTC, 2017).

According to the CTC (CCoTC, 2017), California utilizes a two-tier credentialing system. The first tier is called a Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, which an administrator obtains upon receiving an administrative appointment. Before getting a preliminary credential, the CTC (CCoTC, 2017) requires individuals to possess a qualifying prerequisite credential, verify completion of basic skills, have five years of successful experience in one or a combination qualifying positions, and have completed an accredited administrative credential program or pass the California Preliminary Administrative Credential Examination (CPACE) and have an offer of employment in a qualifying administrative intern. If an aspiring school administrator has completed all administrative credential requirements but does not have an offer of employment, a Certificate of Eligibility is provided until a position is obtained (CCoTC, 2017). Once an

individual has accepted an administrative position in a qualifying setting, the five-year

preliminary credential must be 'cleared' by completing a two-year induction or intern

program while serving in a qualifying administrative capacity (CCoTC, 2017).

According to CCoTC (2017), a California Administrative Services Credential,

preliminary or clear, allows the holder of the credential to serve in grades preschool, K-

12, and for adults and responsible for services that include evaluating staff,

developing/evaluating instructional programs, administering discipline for students and

staff, and fiscal management. The typical process for earning the preliminary credential

is through an educational institution or county office of education. The added benefit of

accredited coursework and fieldwork further prepares the individual for an administrative

role (CCoTC, 2020). The second tier is a Clear Administrative Services Credential and is

issued when the credential holder completes all the outlined requirements of an induction

or intern program while serving in a qualifying position (CCoTC, 2017).

Hiring Process

School administrators serve as instructional leaders, operations managers, and

intermediaries between all stakeholder groups (Bartoletti & Connelly, 2013). Bartoletti

and Connelly (2013); DuFour and Mattos (2013); Lynch (2012) all agree that principals

and assistant principals impact student achievement and student success. With the

immense amount of literature on school administrators' impact on student achievement

and teaching and learning, it is doubtful that districts are unaware of these statements

(Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001). Knowing what is on the line, school districts seek highly

qualified candidates to fill their ranks.

According to Davis et al. (2010), only one credential, not counting prerequisite credentials, needed to serve as a school administrator in California. As such, school districts can hire any applicant they choose if they meet the credentialing requirements set forth by the CTC. Gips (1986, 1988) found that the process was the same for hiring principals and assistant principals. An oversimplified summary of these school site administrative positions' hiring process includes recruitment, application submission, application review, and initial screening leading to the final stages of secondary screening, interviewing, and candidate selection (Atherton, 2019). The secondary screening may be done by Human Resources administrators or site administrators, depending on the vacancy. From this screening come recommendations for a candidate interview. An initial round of interviews may consist of administrators in the same position serving various sites, certificated and classified school site representatives, members representing the different unions, and district office administrators. The initial interviews conclude when the interview panel selects candidates to progress further in the hiring process, which may include a second round of interviews with superintendents before selection (Atherton, 2019; Batchelor et al., 1987; Kwan & Walker, 2009; B. Palmer & Mullooly, 2015; B. G. Palmer, 2015; Rammer, 2007; Schlueter & Walker, 2008).

Statement of the Research Problem

A principal and assistant principal serve unique roles at the school site, managing daily activities, guiding instruction, providing professional development, and budgeting, to name a few (Turnbull et al., 2015; Tutt, 2017; Wallace Foundation, 2013). Regardless of what task they are engaging in, they serve as the educational leaders of the school. As

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leaders, they are the driving force behind the school's progress and the success the students are experiencing (DuFour & Mattos, 2013). Leithwood et al. (2004) found that no other factor impacted student success more than the school's leadership other than the classroom teacher.

With student success on the line, school districts work tirelessly to ensure that vacant leadership positions at the school sites are filled quickly with capable leaders ready to make the difference (Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood et al., 2004; Levin et al., 2019). Unfortunately, nearly 20 percent of our nation's principals leave each year (Statistics, 2020). Additionally, Farrace (2020) and NASSP (2017) determined that the number of principals nationally who could vacate their posts over the next two years could reach 45%. With the potential need to fill tens of thousands of principal positions, districts will rely heavily on their Human Resources departments to attract, screen, interview, and hire the right person for the job.

The most typical principalship progression is the direct experience as an assistant principal (Turnbull et al., 2015). However, Work (2019) shared that it is possible to serve as a principal without following the traditional steppingstone path of first serving as an assistant principal. Both the principal and assistant principal positions can be the starting point of an individual's administrative career (Morrison, 2009). If a candidate selected for principalship had no experience, they possessed other qualifications that influenced the selection committee that trumped the need for prior experience. Rammer (2007) determined that identifying previous job experience on an application is easy and many screeners rely on this as the first and most essential criteria outside of a completed application. Furthermore, Kwan (2012) shared that although experience is coveted and

easy to screen for, more desirable qualifications such as communication skills and problem-solving skills exist but cannot be evaluated, in the typical hiring process, until an interview.

Regardless of the role, principal or assistant principal, districts will continue filling vacant school site administrative positions with qualified individuals. Although every district is unique, Atherton (2019) indicated that there are crucial elements that districts look for in their school leaders. Prior research by Baker (2001); Kwan and Walker (2009); Lane (2008); and Rammer (2007) indicate that districts desire a myriad of skills, characteristics, traits, and qualities from their prospective school site leaders. With so many different iterations of desirable qualifications possible, applicants play a seemingly endless guessing game trying to prove they have the qualifications needed to serve as a school site administrator.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

<center>**Research Questions**</center>

Round 1

What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 2

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 3

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

<center>**Significance of the Problem**</center>

This Delphi research study aimed to determine which qualifications were most desirable when selecting an entry-level school site administrator who did not have prior administrative experience. Additionally, this study's secondary intention was to develop consensus around the meaning of each of the identified qualifications. These school site leadership positions' demands continue to evolve to meet their students' and communities' needs. As these roles continue to evolve, the qualifications of individuals filling these key roles are also evolving (B. Palmer, 2016; B. G. Palmer, 2015). Ensuring alignment

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between what districts need and what they look for is paramount. There was once a need for a principal who was a task-oriented manager who ran the school's day-to-day operations. There is now a need for a well-rounded leader who can tend to the social, emotional, behavioral, and economic demands of the school and its communities (B. G. Palmer, 2015). Consequently, B. Palmer and Mullooly (2015) indicated a need to eliminate the subjective aspects of the hiring process, which will allow screeners and interviewers to measure an applicant's capabilities more accurately.

The study explored the entry-level school site administrative role of the principal and assistant principal. The study also investigated the minimum qualifications required by the CCoTC to serve as a school administrator, current hiring practices, and the impact prior job experience has on candidate selection. Lastly, the study explored the need to develop concrete language surrounding the identified qualifications.

This study's benefits lie in several parts. First, school districts and county offices of education will have access to a current compilation of the most desirable qualifications for selecting school site administrators. Cappelli (2019) found a significant problem currently exists in large organizations that traverse all industries; "employers continue to hire at a high rate and spend enormous sums to do it. But they don't know whether their approaches are effective at finding and selecting good candidates" (Cappelli, 2019, p. 50). Complimenting Cappelli (2019), Kwan and Walker (2009), and Work (2019) noted that the reasons leading to an individual's selection to serve as a school site administrator remain understudied. Furthermore, Work (2019) indicated that the body of literature regarding principal and assistant principal selection remains virtually unstudied. Administrative preparation programs that desire to produce highly trained and qualified

individuals prepared to assume the leadership role upon completion would also benefit from this study's results. Administrative preparation programs will have access to current and relevant information from an expert panel of Human Resources administrators, which details which qualifications are most desirable. Additionally, the explicit language that describes each of these qualifications will also prove useful to help administrative preparation programs tailor their students' learning to align with what districts are looking for in school site administrative candidates in Southern California following COVID. Finally, individuals desiring to venture into educational administration at the school site level will know with a greater degree of certainty what districts value in their school site leaders and if they have prepared enough for the positions which they seek. These individuals will have firsthand knowledge of what is expected of them when applying for these coveted educational leadership positions (Palmer & Mullooly, 2015).

Definitions

Administrative Candidate. Any individual who has applied for and meets the position's minimum requirements and has passed the initial screen resulting in the individual's possible selection to fill a vacant entry-level school site administrative position (Cornett, 2017).

Assistant Principal. An entry-level school site administrative position which assists the site's principal in executing their duties. Typically, this position is a steppingstone position to prepare for a future role as a principal (University of Massachusetts Global, 2021).

Entry-Level School Site Administrator. A school site educational leadership position, namely the principal or assistant principal. Most typically, this is an assistant

principal role but can also include the role of principal (University of Massachusetts Global, 2021).

Experience. Prior positions of employment that a person has had (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2021).

Hiring Process. A model of selecting an individual to fill a vacant position typically includes the marketing of the position, screening of applications, candidate interviews, and selection (Gips, 1986, 1988).

Human Resources Administrator. The administrator who manages the hiring process of school district employees, including entry-level school site administrators. Examples could include a Director of Human Resources, Executive Director of Human Resources, Assistant/Associate Superintendent, or Superintendent (Staff, 2010).

Principal. The educational leader of a school; responsible for the school site, staff, students, and the district office and community. This may be an entry-level position but more commonly follows prior service as an Assistant Principal (University of Massachusetts Global, 2021).

School Culture. This term refers to the physical and emotional safety of the staff and students at a school. It also encapsulates the tidiness of the classrooms and public spaces and the school's ability to embrace and celebrate diversity in its many forms. School culture is either positive or negative. School culture can also refer to the attitude of the school students and staff while also integrating the collective beliefs, values, and perceptions. It includes the written and unwritten rules that influence or govern how the school operates (Edglossary, 2013).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to expert K-12 Human Resources administrators in Southern California. One expert K-12 Human Resources administrator was selected from three school districts in San Diego County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Los Angeles County to make up the expert panel. Data were collected from this panel of experts between June 2021 and July 2021.

Organization of the Study

This research study is comprised of five chapters, a reference list, and appendices. Chapter I is the introduction to the study, which includes the background, research problem, the research study's purpose, research questions, and the significance of the study. Chapter II is a literature review that synthesized the existing literature surrounding the hiring of individuals to fill school administrative positions, the typical hiring process used by districts to select a candidate for an entry-level school administrative position, the purpose of school site administrators, and what is known about the desirable characteristics of applicants that are being used to screen applicants. Chapter III outlines the study's methodology, including the research design, population, sample, instrumentation, and procedures used for the collection and analysis of data. Chapter IV reveals the results of the study and presents the significant findings. Chapter V serves as the conclusion of the study and includes a summary, findings, conclusions, and recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Literature Review Outline

The literature review explores the current research to date about the process used to hire school administrators, qualifications for school administrators, and the role of school site administrators, namely principal and assistant principal, in California's public school system. This study is multifaceted and brings several components of education into a single study. To better prepare for this study, the researcher broke the review of literature into six sections: understanding of the role of the school site administrator, the process and minimum requirements to become a school site administrator in California, the historical process for becoming a school administrator, the hiring process of assistant principals and principals, desired qualifications for prospective principals, and the gap in the literature for the study. A synthesis matrix is included as Appendix A which helps to show the alignment between the various themes and corresponding literature.

Role of School Administrators

Schools are places where students learn about academic topics, social behaviors, and emotional regulation with assistance from teachers. School site administrators are selected to serve at the schools to ensure the greatest opportunities exist for the students and staff (Garcia, 2013). In short, school leaders, namely the principal, are expected to transform lower-performing schools by addressing deficiencies, inequities, and refining systems that will lead to more significant student outcomes (Garcia, 2013).

DuFour and Mattos (2013) determined a link between improvements in student learning and the effectiveness of the instructional leader. DuFour and Mattos (2013) further indicated that instructional leaders could influence student learning to a

substantial degree, while Ash et al. (2013) added that the influence of the instructional leaders extends beyond student achievement but also includes overall success, including the social, behavioral, and emotional success of the developing student.

Instructional Leader

Once focusing on discipline and basic operations, the school leader's role is continually shifting as federal policies alter the landscape and high-stakes assessments command the attention and time of the school site leaders (Dorning, 2019). The new role forces school site leaders to address concerns around their inadequate or antiquated curriculum, inefficient teaching practices, and the school's culture, all of which should remain focused on providing high-quality educational opportunities for all students (Dorning, 2019). With such transformational shifts in educational policies, Dorning (2019) reported that 69% of principals believe the position has changed significantly over the past five years, while 75% indicated that the job has become too complex.

Principals and assistant principals serve as the instructional leaders of the school and, as such, play a significant role in improving the existing teaching and learning practices by implemented researched bases strategies (Bartoletti & Connelly, 2013; DuFour & Mattos, 2013; J. M. Lynch, 2012; Stewart, 2006; Wallace Foundation, 2013). Additionally, Davis et al. (2010) stated that school leaders needed to provide the conditions and support "to engender powerful teaching and learning for all children" (p. 67). Seeing the impact of the instructional leader as paramount in the overall success of a school, Davis et al. (2010) emphasized the need for high-quality public-school administrators to be leading our school sites. The instructional leaders at the site level help to improve the quality of teaching through offering feedback from classroom

observations, delivering meaningful professional learning, establish a culture of encouragement and support, and provide the space for the school's stakeholders to engage in collaborative discussions as a community focused on learning (DuFour & Marzano, 2011; DuFour & Mattos, 2013).

As the school's leader, the principal ensures that all students have a rigorous educational experience and continually make strides towards greater educational achievement. DuFour and Mattos (2013) shared a correlation between schools that engaged in a collaborative culture around professional learning and increased student achievement. DuFour and Mattos (2013) outline that a community focused on continually learning and collaboration, which they call a Professional Learning Community (PLC), can dive deep and begin addressing how to support and extend learning opportunities for the site's students.

Branch et al. (2013) studied the relative effects teachers and principals had on student achievement and found that the overall impact of a single principal exceeds the overall impact of a single teacher when scaled to the impact at a site level. Branch et al. (2013) concluded that a single teacher could make a significant impact on their student, which is typically limited to a small proportion of the total students in the school, while a principal could affect all students in the school.

School site leaders are strategically positioned at school sites to help the site meet their various goals and realize their vision; more simply, administrators serve their sites by ensuring effective instruction, further maximizing student achievement (Knoeppel & Rinehart, 2008). Garcia (2013) found that instructional leaders need to work alongside their teaching staff to implement new systems that reinforce collective values and

increase efficiency. Furthermore, the leadership of a school is responsible for inspiring

and influencing the faculty to continually evaluate their teaching practices to guarantee

they are meeting the changing needs of all students on an individual level, regardless of

how impossible this task may feel (Garcia, 2013). The principal and assistant principal

need to develop a system to support teachers, including providing timely feedback

aligned to personal growth goals, ensuring time for teachers to communicate and analyze

data, and establishing and leveraging a system of accountability (Garcia, 2013; Knoeppel

& Rinehart, 2008). DuFour and Mattos (2013) clarified that merely providing educators

with time to communicate with no direction is neither practical nor efficient. Instead,

principals and other school site leaders need to provide teachers with a framework that

serves as a consistent guide for the collaborative process, which directs discussions and

ensures focus around achieving at higher levels (N. A. Clark, 1981; DuFour & Mattos,

2013; Kearney, 2003; Leithwood, 1994; Leithwood et al., 2004; Pounder & Young, 2011;

Stewart, 2006; Turnbull et al., 2015).

Operations and Logistics Manager

Dorning (2019) indicated that the principal, and their assistants, need to manage

the increasing student achievement expectations while addressing budgetary shifts and

reductions, rising class sizes, and increasing safety concerns. The principal position

demands intentional planning, systematic implementation, and methodical analysis data

to assist in determining the site's direction (Allensworth & Hart, 2018; Bartoletti &

Connelly, 2013; Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001; Clifford, 2010; Sebastian & Allensworth,

2013; Wallace Foundation, 2013).

Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) stated that the role of principal expands well beyond just the teaching and learning but also encompasses being "educational visionaries; instructional and curriculum leaders; assessment experts; disciplinarians; community builders; public relations experts; budget analysts; facility managers; special program administrators; and expert overseers of legal, contractual, and policy mandates and initiatives" (p. 2). The principal's leadership role does not end there; Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) concluded that principals, including their assistants, also needed to play intermediary or negotiator to manage the conflicting interests of stakeholders, including the various levels of county, state, and federal governments. While playing mediator between the stakeholders, school site leaders need to remain focused on providing for their school sites and the varying needs of their students.

Assistant Principal

Kindsvatter and Tosi (1971) and Marshall (1985) found that the assistant principal position has an ambiguous job description that is not well defined and serves as a catch-all supporting the principal. All the school site responsibilities are those of the principal, but a single person cannot manage this alone in many cases. Principals, in turn, delegate and entrust specific responsibilities, tasks, or activities to their assistant principals to ensure that the school site's needs are met (Pierson, 2014). Typically, principals delegate tasks and responsibilities related to students to the assistant principals, including but not limited to attendance, safety, discipline, activities, and assessments, while the principal takes on tasks and responsibilities which seem further removed from the students, such as budgeting, curriculum development, and liaison between the school and its stakeholders (Bolin & Panaritis, 1992; Fulton, 1987; Oleszewski et al., 2012; Pierson, 2014).

Marshall (1985) researched the enculturation of the assistant principal position and concluded that this role is unique in that it requires the individual to morph to meet the situation. Rather than supporting the principal in the day-to-day operations, they are left to their own devices to determine how to best support the school while staying aligned to its vision, but often without explicit guidance or direction. Marshall (1985) determined that successful assistant principals had frequent interactions with their principals, were supported when making difficult decisions, and had opportunities to develop as school site leaders. Brewer et al. (2020); Clifford (2010); Mitchell (1990) found that the success of school sites was contingent on the relationships made between the school administrators and their constituents and stakeholders. Marshall (1985) found that in addition to school leaders building connections with stakeholders, successful schools have administrative teams that work together and act as a single, unified partnership or unit.

California's Requirements for School Administrators

Throughout the nation, states determine what requirements are needed to possess an administrative credential or administrative license (Davis et al., 2010). The CCoTC is the agency that oversees the administrative credentialing process, which qualifying universities, colleges, and other entities report to when providing a recommendation for administrative services credentials (CCoTC, 2017). Additionally, administrative applicants from out of state can apply with the CTC to have their out-of-state preparation reviewed to grant authorization in California (CCoTC, 2017).

California Administrative Services Credentials

California utilizes a two-tier credentialing system for school administrators. The first tier, called a Preliminary Administrative Services Credential, is issued after obtaining an administrative position and expires five years after issuance. The second tier is a Clear Administrative Services Credential and is issued when the credential holder completes all the outlined requirements, which typically requires two years of supervised experience, course work, and coaching from an experienced administrator (CCoTC, 2017). However, before an individual begins this process, they need to obtain a Certificate of Eligibility by completing prerequisite coursework from an accredited university or a county office of education or by passing the California Preliminary Administrative Credential Examination (CPACE). Upon completing coursework or passing the CPACE, the individual can apply for a Certificate of Eligibility with the CTC. The CTC will review the individual's application and ensure all prerequisites before issuing desired authorization (CCoTC, 2017).

The CCoTC requires prospective administrators to possess a qualifying prerequisite credential before obtaining administrative authorization. In most cases, the prerequisite credential is one of several clear teaching credentials; however, alternative credentials exist, but all require a bachelor's degree, a preparation program, and field experience. The CTC recognizes a California Pupil Personnel Services Credential, Teacher Librarian Services Credential, Speech-Language Pathology Services Credential, Clinical or Rehabilitative Services Credential, or a School Nurse Services Credential (CCoTC, 2017). Lastly, individuals seeking an administrative credential need to have a

minimum of five years of successful experience serving in a position using one, or a combination, of the credentials listed above (CCoTC, 2017).

Once an individual has obtained an administrative position in a qualifying setting, the CTC grants the individual a five-year preliminary administrative credential, at which point the credential holder will need to *clear*. Individuals clear the California Preliminary Administrative Services Credential by completing a two-year induction program while serving in a qualifying administrative capacity (CCoTC, 2017). According to the CCoTC (2018), the purpose of the induction program is to provide "a strategy for novice principals that not only […] supports individual transition and growth but also […] enables the district to validate the quality of novice school principals" (p. 24). The CTC (CCoTC, 2017) continues by stating that when novice administrators improve and widen their skill set, they are then in a position of influence where they can begin to make a difference and strengthen their leadership skills and expertise to impact successful teaching and learning positively. According to CCoTC (2017), any California Administrative Services Credential, preliminary or clear, allows the holder of the credential to serve preschool, adult education, and K-12 and can provide services that include evaluating staff, develop/evaluate instructional programs, provide discipline for students and staff, and fiscal management (CCoTC, 2020).

Historical Process for Entering Administration

Over the years, the hiring process for school site administrators shifted away from whom you know to what you know and can do. In previous decades, many individuals were handpicked from the teaching ranks to serve as school administrators based upon whom they knew in the community or district and their influence on those seated in a

position of power. What was simply called the *Good Old Boys Club* or *Old Boys Club*

referred to a group of people, almost exclusively men, who were social elites and

typically in seats of power and desired to keep their power by incestuous promoting

members of the club to higher positions and were selective in introducing new members

(Cullen & Perez-Truglia, 2019). The once British term has become a common term in

the United States and within most public and private organizations. The Old Boys Club

now refers to a collective group of individuals, predominantly male with select females,

who are members of the same social circle and provide opportunities for one another,

typically without the use of a formal process allowing this united group of people to hold

prominent positions and preserver their power and control (Cullen & Perez-Truglia,

2019). In education, this has included handpicking individuals to serve as lead teachers,

department chairpersons, and school and district administrators without holding a formal

hiring process and regardless of if the individual is less qualified than other potential

individuals (Lin, 2013). Cullen and Perez-Truglia (2019) found that this system handed

out positions based on friendly relationships centered around social norms like smoking,

drinking, or other hobbies, including sports, rather than an individual's prior success,

current ability, or future potential (Cullen & Perez-Truglia, 2019).

  As time passed, the Good Old Boys Club began to dissolve from the public eye as

increased attention to gender equality began to surface (Kohler, 2021). Members of the

Good Old Boys Club desired to maintain their power and control and devised a new way

of controlling the ranks through what is known as tapping. Duckett (2007) describes a tap

as referring to tapping someone on the shoulder to let them know they are next in line for

a promotion. In many instances, this tapping, done by high-ranking individuals in the

organization, often had clout in the hiring and selection process. Although Myung et al. (2011) found that tapping the next generation of leaders could promote sustained growth within the district, knowledge of the current systems, loyalty to the organization, remnants of the Good Old Boys Club remains in that the candidates which were tapped were provided extra consideration throughout the hiring process.

The research on tapping someone for an administrative position divides into two branches that have allowed for two different definitions. The first is that the tapped individual is prepared and ready for the next level of challenges and responsibility (Asrani, 2010). Districts across the nation use tapping to train and develop leaders inside the organization, as Myung et al. (2011) found that leaders are actively looking to begin developing the organization's future leaders early on so they are prepared for future vacancies. Myung et al. (2011) found that tapping and developing from within has produced results that sustain current district progress and allow future leaders to develop to meet the organization's current needs. The second is more aligned with the Good Old Boys Club in that when an individual was tapped for a position, the hiring process is more of a show or formality (Alleyne, 2016; Kohler, 2021).

Presently, the hiring process for entry-level school administrators has moved to a more equitable system for all applicants; however, traces of the Good Old Boys Club and tapping remain evident. The Good Old Boys Club and tapping influence is still present in aiding applicants through initial screening and into the interview phase. Shifting hiring practices away from whom you know to a candidate proving what they know, their ability, and their worth to the organization has allowed a rote system to take its place where subjectivity remains in play but in a different form. The most common system

used for hiring, detailed below, attempts to take a deeper look at an applicant's skills, abilities, qualifications, experience, and competencies as it attempts to winnow down a large candidate pool to a manageable few who will undergo several rounds of interviews which will allow the interview panel to select the best candidate to fill a vacant position.

Hiring Process for Entry-Level School Administrators

School administrators serve as instructional leaders and operations managers for all stakeholder groups (Bartoletti & Connelly, 2013). Bartoletti and Connelly (2013), DuFour and Mattos (2013), and Lynch (2012) all stated that principals and assistant principals impact student achievement and student success through leadership and influence. With the depth of literature on the impact of school administrators on student achievement and teaching and learning, it is doubtful that districts are unaware of these statements (Bottoms & O'Neill, 2001).

According to Davis et al. (2010), only one administrative credential exists, CA Administrative Services Credential, and allows the credential holder to serve in any administrative role in a public school in California. School districts can hire any credentialed applicant of their choosing for a school site administrative position, including both the principal and assistant principal jobs. Clifford (2010) found that, although school districts know the importance of their school site leaders, it is not easy to recruit and select influential, efficient, and promising school leaders who can propel a school and district towards their goals. Atherton (2019), Rammer (2007), and Work (2019) found that regardless of the differing roles and the significance a quality school leader can bring to a site, most use the same ineffective hiring process. Kwan and Walker (2009), Rammer (2007), and Work (2019) and found that the process is

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inherently flawed as many hiring organizations have a disconnect between what they desire in a candidate and the screening and interviewing processes.

The hiring processes, including recruiting, screening, interviewing, and selecting are nearly identical for the assistant principal and principal roles (Gips, 1986, 1988). A simplified summary of the hiring process for many administrative positions begins with the applicant completing the initial application; it is then reviewed and screened by the organization, typically a Human Resources Technician (Atherton, 2019). After the initial screening process, district-level and site-level administrators review the previously screened applications in greater detail to determine how well each applicant fits the needs of the vacant administrative positions. The screening process provides a list of applicants selected for the initial round of interviews. The initial interviews may consist of administrators from various sites, certificated and classified school site representatives, and representatives from the district office. The initial interviews conclude when the interview panel selects candidates to progress further in the hiring process, which may include a second round of interviews with higher-level district administrators, typically superintendents, before selection (Atherton, 2019; Batchelor et al., 1987; Kwan & Walker, 2009; B. Palmer & Mullooly, 2015; B. G. Palmer, 2015; Rammer, 2007; Schlueter & Walker, 2008).

Research has proven how effective and influential school leaders can increase student achievement, improve school culture, and increase teacher retention. With so much at stake, districts attempt to select the best person for each of these vital positions. To further assist in the hiring process, namely the screening aspect, districts, and school sites determine their needs so that those screening can attempt to weed through all the

applicants to determine who the most desirable candidates are. Turnbull et al. (2015)

found that most districts do not take the time to define what they are looking for in school

site leaders. Instead, they rely on the potential job applicant to review available

information about the district and school along with the job description and hope that

unqualified applicants will screen themselves out and not apply.

School Administrator Qualifications

To serve as a school site administrator in California, an individual needs to

possess a Certificate of Eligibility or an Administrative Services Credential, preliminary

or clear, issued by the CCoTC or another state with reciprocity (CCoTC, 2017).

However, obtaining a Certificate of Eligibility or an Administrative Services Credential

requires a prerequisite credential, advanced education, and a certain number of years of

qualifying experience (CCoTC, 2017)). Although possessing only the minimum

qualification will technically grant an individual the ability to apply for an administrative

position, districts look for additional qualifications that differ significantly from one

locale to another (Clifford, 2010; Cotton, 2003; Wallace Foundation, 2013).

Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) stated that "principals are in the hot seat to

improve teaching and learning" (p. 2). Clifford (2010) reported that the school district's

responsibility was to ensure that the correct leader can make the most meaningful

changes to positively impact student achievement while developing teaching and learning

practices at the school site. With so many responsibilities on the plate of the school

administrators, it is critical for the long-term wellbeing of the school to ensure that a

quality administrative team is in place. Bartoletti and Connelly (2013) indicated that one

of the reasons leadership is so crucial is that leaders could reignite the fading passions

and capabilities of the staff while unleashing dormant or undiscovered talents. Leaders help align the vision and provide direction to their staff; "There are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader" (Leithwood et al., 2004, p. 5). Leithwood et al. (2004) indicated that the leader acts as the system or organization's catalyst for change, positive or negative. Branch et al. (2013) discovered that the effectiveness of the principal could determine the gains or losses the site endures. A highly effective and efficient principal can expedite student learning and achievement up to seven months in a school year, while a principal who is considered ineffective can set the students back by a similar amount (Branch et al., 2013).

Additionally, Krasnoff et al. (2015) noted that schools with a highly effective principal have standardized test scores five to ten percentile points higher than schools whose principals are considered average. Krasnoff et al. (2015) also indicated that effective principals could attract and retain effective teachers while replacing the ineffective ones. Lastly, Krasnoff et al. (2015) discovered that highly effective principals reduced the absence rate of both staff and students and increased the chance of serving as the site's principal for at least three years.

Desirable Qualifications for School Principals

Identifying the desired qualifications, traits, or experiences valued in school administrators enables prospective administrators to prepare for these future roles while meeting the expectations of district office administrators (Clifford, 2010). Although qualifications for each position may vary by district and role, many traits, skills, and characteristics are universal. According to Atherton (2019), candidate selection

characteristics were numerous, but the most desired characteristics for applicants to possess, as determined by reviewing job postings, were leadership skills followed by experience and the ability to manage tasks and operations. Baker (2001), Garcia (2013), Kwan (2012), and Rammer (2007) concluded that management, communication, and problem-solving skills are the most valued qualifications followed then by experience and knowledge of administrative duties.

According to Lynch (2012), knowledge of special education law should be a priority for all principals and other school leaders. M. E. Anderson (1991), Cotton (2003), DuFour and Mattos (2013), and Turnbull et al. (2015) indicate that principals needed to be well versed in providing evaluative feedback and promoting collaboration within a Professional Learning Community (PLC) framework. Bartoletti and Connelly (2013), and Cotton (2003) indicated a need for school administrators to communicate effectively with all stakeholder groups and work as a peacekeeper as the varying priorities of each stakeholder group often collide or contradict with one another. Baker (2001), Kwan (2012), Kwan and Walker (2009), and Rammer (2007) support this as they indicated that having good communication skills is highly desired in principal candidates.

Numerous studies have indicated that the desired qualifications differ significantly beyond the minimum legal license (Baker, 2001; Bartoletti & Connelly, 2013; DuFour & Marzano, 2011; DuFour & Mattos, 2013; Kwan, 2012; J. M. Lynch, 2012; Rammer, 2007). Consequently, different districts prioritize or desire distinctive qualities, skills, and experiences that align with their specific needs (D. L. Anderson, 2017; Baltzell & Dentler, 1983). The desirable qualities and skills will continue to change as the district's needs, staff, and students continually change (Lynch, 2012).

Krasnoff et al. (2015) found that effective principals can help shape a vision that addresses academic success for all students, develop and maintain a school climate that is inviting, safe, cooperative, and serves as a basis for positive interactions between all members of the school. Krasnoff et al. (2015) also shared various essential qualities a principal should possess. These include developing other leaders at the school site to assist in fulfilling the vision and improve instructional practices, which will empower teachers to teach at high levels, thereby granting students significant opportunities to maximize their learning. Finally, school principals need to ensure that the management of limited resources, data is collected and analyzed and ensure the site's systems and processes align with school goals which remain focused on school improvement (Krasnoff et al., 2015).

Knowing that selecting the right school principal can have immediate impacts on student achievement, districts look to employ individuals who fit the needs of a site and build the necessary relationships to sustain the school site's growth. Since the individual needs of a school and district vary, the list of desirable qualifications is widespread and inconsistent. Regardless of which exact qualifications an individual possesses as a principal, the research remains consistent in that those skills lead to a school site with a positive climate and culture that further increases student success.

M. E. Anderson (1991), Atherton (2019), Normore (2004), and Turnbull et al. (2015) indicated that hiring the right person for the job is just the beginning and further stated that continual coaching, mentoring, and professional development is necessary for high functioning, influential educational leaders to effect change continually. The educational leader of a school, principal or assistant principal, needs to be willing and

able to continue learning and growing to further assist their teachers in becoming

proficient educators that are keeping up with the quickly evolving times (Baker, 2001;

Morrison, 2009).

Desirable Qualifications for Assistant Principals

As stated earlier, there are significant differences between a principal and

assistant principal; however, many of the same qualifications are also desirable for this

position. Garcia (2013) stated that the assistant principal, alongside the principal, is

responsible for cultivating and sustaining an educational atmosphere that promotes high

levels of learning. Additionally, assistant principals who aspire to assume a principalship

need to exude a willingness to take calculated risks, demonstrate patience, and explore

opportunities to develop into a principal (Garcia, 2013; Tripken, 2006).

As with the principal role, Beach (2010), Farr (2004), Garcia (2013), Kindsvatter

and Tosi (1971), Kipp et al. (2014), J. M. Lynch (2012), M. Lynch (2017), Oleszewski et

al. (2012), and Work (2019) all found that the assistant principal needs to communicate

effectively and efficiently as they are responsible for interacting with various

stakeholders, including the students and parents as they manage many of the daily

operations of the school. The assistant principal position is overflowing with mundane

activities like student discipline investigations, improving daily attendance, student

engagement, and contacting families related to student concerns (Beach, 2010; Fulton,

1987; Glanz, 1994; Kindsvatter & Tosi, 1971; Oleszewski et al., 2012; Work, 2019).

Oleszewski et al. (2012) reported that assistant principals in Maine spent 90% of their

time managing student disruptive behaviors or on supervision duty. Fulton (1987),

Kindsvatter and Tosi (1971), Marshall (1985), Scott (2011), Winter and Partenheimer

(2002), Work (2019), and Young and Sever (2011) found that assistant principals across

the United States spend large portions of their days on student management.

Beach (2010), Holman (1997), Noodle (2018), Turnbull et al. (2015), Winter and

Partenheimer (2002), and Young and Sever (2011) found that successful assistant

principals tend to be well organized, manage their time well, and are willing to play a

supportive role while maintaining a positive attitude towards school policies. Site

principals cannot do it all on their own and need to entrust specific responsibilities,

typically lower level and student-directed, to their assistant principals regardless of their

career ambitions while the principal manages the interactions with the staff, district, and

the community outside the school (Winter & Partenheimer, 2002; Work, 2019). Garcia

(2013) shared that some assistant principals do not desire a principalship and find

comfort in supporting forward-thinking and proactive principals.

Since the assistant principal will act in place of the principal in their absence,

Buckman et al. (2018), Holman (1997), and Work (2019) shared that assistant principals

will need to have at least a surface-level understanding of the principal's responsibilities;

including budgeting, planning and delivering professional learning, evaluating staff,

conducting staff investigations, and administering staff discipline. Garcia (2013) found

that those who desired a principalship did not mind learning more about these additional

responsibilities, while those content with remaining assistant principals did not actively

seek further opportunities to develop these areas.

Entry-Level School Site Administrator Selection

Regardless of the sector, public or private, hiring organizations look to fill their

ranks with highly qualified individuals who can make an immediate impact and add long-

term value. Public education is no different. The selection of a future school leader is not as simple as just picking a name out of a hat; an arduous process endured by both the hiring districts and candidates alike must occur (Schmitt & Schechtman, 1990).

To be selected to serve as a school site administrator, applications are screened, candidates interviewed, and appointments made. To progress beyond the application phase, a screener reviews applications for several components, the easiest three things to determine: application completion, verification of minimum requirements, and prior experience. The fundamental screening criterion for an administrative interview is experience, even for the assistant principal, the most basic entry-level administrative positions. Turnbull et al. (2015) found that between 84% and 87% of principals, in their study, served as assistant principals or similar positions to gain practical experience. Turnbull et al. (2015) discovered that principals in their study had between 2 and 6.5 years of experience as assistant principals, with the median being 5 years. Therefore, about 10% of the principals skipped the initial administrative position and assumed a principalship with no formal experience. Other factors played into the selection of these individuals since formal experience did not exist.

When experience is absent in an application, recruiters, screeners, and interviewers need to determine if the individual is highly qualified, but this becomes subjective (Baker, 2001; Rammer, 2007); therefore, those with experience have an advantage in getting past the initial screening and to the interview phase. However, once past screening, a candidate's experiences are worthless if their interview skills cannot highlight the correlation between experience and future performance (Asrani, 2010;

Baker, 2001; Baron, 1990; Batchelor et al., 1987; D. W. Clark, 2003; Clifford, 2010;

Cruzeiro & Boone, 2009; Hooker, 2000; Lane, 2008; Shields, 2018).

Baron (1990) referenced how the fit of an individual carries significant weight in

the selection process. Baron (1990) found that superintendents cared greatly about the

candidate's professional references, followed by verification of credentials, teaching

experience, and the compatibility and alignment of the candidate's goals with those of the

hiring organization. Baltzell and Dentler (1983) and Baron (1990) found that the

candidate most often selected to serve as the school's principal had personal goals,

values, and philosophy that mirrored the site and district. Continuing with the topic of

being a good fit, a candidate needs to be knowledgeable of the community and accepted

by it (Baron, 1990).

The notion of choosing a candidate based on how well they fit into a particular

organization or position has many worried as this then places a greater emphasis on who

the candidate is rather than how capable or how well a candidate will perform (Baltzell &

Dentler, 1983). Hiring based upon fit also carries other unintended outcomes throughout

the hiring process as marketing and recruiting for school leadership positions may

become too subjective or political (Baker, 2001; Baron, 1990; Cappelli, 2019; Morrison,

2009; B. Palmer et al., 2016; Tran et al., 2020).

Research Gap

The literature on the hiring process identified several gaps and in the selection of

entry-level school site administrators. The assistant principal and principal roles exist as

entry-level administrative roles throughout most districts across California; however,

little remains known about what qualifications districts desire most in prospective school site administrators.

Like all other industries, education desires highly qualified candidates with experience, even for the most entry-level positions (Russo, 2004). Cappelli (2019) found that hiring based upon experience presents a problem for many younger individuals who desire to climb to the top earlier in their careers. Many ambitious, energetic, and transformational candidates get screened out before any consideration.

Regarding hiring, Farr (2004) and Gips (1986, 1988) indicated that the hiring process for principals and assistant principals mirrors one another, but their roles and responsibilities are uniquely different and suggest that the implementation of a different process to ensure the best candidates for each unique position can be determined. Delving deeper, Gips (1986, 1988) provided explicit examples of virtually identical screening and hiring processes in many districts to hire these positions. Gips (1986) found that the screening process filtered out individuals using the same frame of reference based on years of experience, followed by positive recommendations by current and past supervisors. Gips (1986) also found that most districts used the same interview questions for the principal and assistant principal positions in the initial interviews. Research by Normore (2004, 2006) indicated the differences between the two positions and how they need to select individuals to fill these roles should be differentiated based upon the position's unique responsibilities and how the individual will need to fit into an existing system.

While Work (2019) indicated the assistant principal role is typically a stepping stone to a principalship, and the demands of each position provide different challenges

and often require different skills; therefore, a considerable amount of development and learning needed to take place to allow for an individual to move from the assistant principal position to a principalship. Work (2019) determined that the assistant principal role revolved around the two main areas of student discipline and attendance. Lynch (2012) stated that the principal role was more focused on instructional development of the staff, budget management, and student achievement. These fundamental differences in the responsibilities of each position help to reiterate that although one may be a natural training ground for the other, the responsibilities are different, and the desirable qualifications for these two entry-level school site administrative positions should be different. However, nothing delineates any differences in desirable skills, traits, experience, or desirable qualifications. Dedicated research surrounding the assistant principal role could further support individuals and organizations training and developing teachers and other prospective school site administrators.

Furthermore, school sites and district leaders attempt to procure the best possible candidate for a vacant administrative position through a hiring system. Districts attempt to provide a system of hiring that is both fair and equitable for all applicants. However, Atherton (2019), Baker (2001), Batchelor et al. (1987), Clark (2003), Cruzeiro and Boone (2009), Kwan (2012), Kwan and Walker (2009), Schlueter and Walker (2008), Turnbull et al. (2015) and U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board (2017) found many districts leverage the same hiring process and screening criteria to screen and hire many management positions with slight variation regardless of the specific responsibilities of the position. Steiner and Barrett (2012), and Work (2019) shared that hiring districts need to provide a system for reviewing applications through an intentional screening and

interview process, which is unique to the positions they are hiring. Once a candidate is selected, implementation of a rigorous onboarding process needs to provide support to the newly hired administrator, which is aligned to the position's responsibilities so that the chances of long-term success can increase (Work, 2019).

While reviewing the literature, the assistant principal position was referenced as a steppingstone position, and applicants with this as a prior experience were provided more significant opportunities to interview for a principal position. However, just over 10% of principals will never have served in this capacity. An individual can achieve either position with no prior administrative experience; therefore, determining which skills, traits, attributes, or qualifications to develop while serving as an assistant principal in preparation for a principalship is currently unknown. The difference between a principal and assistant principal is in the nature of the relationships. Assistant principals dedicate their time and attention to dealing with matters directly involving the students, such as discipline, attendance, and site safety. On the other hand, principals develop a vision for the school while developing and maintaining relationships with stakeholders. Principals improve the quality of instruction provided by the teachers and continually evaluate the effectiveness of programs, curriculum, and staff in achieving the site and district's goals. Research indicates virtually no difference in what districts look for regardless of the unique responsibilities at the foundation of each position.

Lastly, the reliance on experience as a screening criterion leaves many concerned about missing young, energetic, eager-to-learn, capable applicants that may be lacking traditional experience (Craig, 2016; Maurer, 2018; Weed, 2018). Sneed et al. (1987) cautioned that prior experience is based on individual perspectives and is typically self-

reported, unverified, and filled with inconsistencies as different districts and organizations may have different job descriptions for the same position. Although an applicant may have prior experience, not all prior experiences are transferable to other organizations, even within the same industry.

Powell (2010) indicated that interviews are the most widely used method for hiring; however, initial screening of applications needs to ensure it can procure a qualified group of candidates for interviews. As indicated by Baker (2001), Kwan and Walker (2009), and Rammer (2007), districts look for administrative candidates who have management, communication, problem-solving skills in addition to experience but note that skills related to management, communication, and problem-solving are broad and open to interpretation. Kwan (2012) also revealed that although districts value management, communication, and problem-solving skills above experience, experience is the easiest to screen for and evaluate on a typical application and resume and therefore relied upon too often or given too much weight in the application screener's decision. Kwan (2012) added that only the experience component could be certified with documentation while evidence of the more highly desirable skills remain ambiguous, vague, and superficial upon examination by screeners as they are reviewed applications during the initial screening process.

<center>**Summary**</center>

Historically, around the United States, school principals serve as instructional leaders and managers of the site, balancing various duties and responsibilities. To support the principal, many schools employ assistant principals to help carry out many of the school's day-to-day operations, thereby freeing the principal to tend to other

responsibilities. Together the administrative team divides and conquers so that they are greater than the sum of their parts.

As an assistant principal, an individual enters administration in the great unknown having a job description that is hard to decipher, ambiguous, and all-encompassing. In short, the assistant principal will need to serve under a site principal and help bring to fruition the principal's vision. Often, assistant principals are left to manage student discipline, site safety, facilitate routine drills, and address student absenteeism and engagement while walking a think line when communicating with families about student-related concerns. The assistant principal, to some, does the dirty work so the principal can focus on implementing change. Like police officers on patrol, assistant principals work hard to enforce rules and policy while ensuring the safety of others. Principals routinely work more with the staff than with the students. A principal needs to continually assist the teachers in becoming more proficient and efficient in their teaching practice. Additionally, principals primarily oversee the site's limited fiscal and human resources while developing professional learning opportunities. Furthermore, the principal routinely interfaces with stakeholders to build relationships and align the school's goals and vision, the district, and the greater community.

Although each position has its differences, the same minimum qualifications exist for both positions. The CCoTC is responsible for reviewing applications and issuing various tiers of credentials to teachers and administrators across the state. A single administrative credential will allow its holder to serve in many administrative positions ranging from preschool to adult education in California's public school system. Since both the principal and assistant principal positions can be considered an entry point into

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educational administration, the vast majority seek assistant principal positions to gain skills and experience that will allow them to become proficient principals. There are numerous instances when an individual can bypass the assistant principal steppingstone position to assume a principalship immediately following their time as a classroom teacher. Whether an assistant principal or principal, the most desirable qualifications remain virtually unknown as each site or district may desire different things depending on the vacancy. This literature review uncovered an extensive list of essential skills or job-related activities related to qualifications but a consensus could not be determined.

Since districts vary in what they desire when selecting school site administrators, the system used to entice applicants to these leadership positions does not always allow for precise identification of the top candidates. Finding meaningful ways to screen applications while removing bias and subjectivity remains a need in the hiring process. Most district job postings advertise school site leadership positions and denote prior experience as a requirement; however, no explicit language around what constitutes experience was discovered. Presently, screeners rely heavily on the applicant's prior related experience in direct contradiction to what hiring superintendents value: professional recommendations for an applicant and the alignment between a candidate's personal goals, vision, and values and those of the district school site. The literature review did not uncover a screening system that accounted for what hiring superintendents desired most. If the Good Old Boys Club or tapping as a form of selecting school site administrators is to yield to a legitimate and equitable hiring process, districts need to determine the most desirable qualifications for the positions while also developing a system to reduce the subjective nature of screening these undetermined qualifications.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Overview

This research study investigated the qualifications of administrative candidates with no prior administrative experience who were selected to serve as school site administrators. Since each school district differs in what they seek in their school site leaders, this study helped narrow and identify the most desirable administrative candidates' qualifications. This chapter elaborates on the study's framework, starting with the purpose statement followed by the research questions and research design. Next, further detail regarding the population, target population, and sample utilized for this study are explored. Then, the study's instrumentation, including the process and procedures used to collect and analyze data are examined. Chapter III concludes with the study's limitations and a summary. Included in the appendices are the Invitation to Participate letter (see Appendix B), the participants Informed Consent and Confidentiality (see Appendix C), the Researcher Participants Bill of Rights (see Appendix D), IRB Approval to conduct research (see Appendix E), along with a copy of the researcher's certificate to conduct research provided by CITI (see Appendix F).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

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Research Questions

Round 1

What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 2

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 3

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

Research Design

This study used the policy Delphi method to collect data from K-12 Human Resources administrators regarding the important qualifications administrative candidates with no prior experience should possess to be selected for an entry-level school site administrative position. Furthermore, the policy Delphi allowed the researcher to determine which qualifications were most desirable to hiring K-12 Human Resources administrators in the counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and San Bernardino. The Delphi method leverages various rounds of questioning, typically in the

form of a survey or questionnaire, where multiple iterations aid in obtaining feedback and opinions from the experts in the field related to topics with limited information or increased complexity (Hsu & Sandford &, 2007; Skulmoski et al., 2007; Yousuf, 2007).

The study's purpose was to identify the most desirable qualifications an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience could have to be selected as a school site administrator by hiring school districts. Furthermore, the experts identified, ranked, and described each of the top-rated qualifications. It was determined that a policy Delphi method would yield the most significant results due to the intentional focus on generating opposing views. Policy Delphi studies are not focused on coming to a consensus; instead, they intend to explore contrasting opinions and divergent thinking to gain a more holistic understanding (Skulmoski et al., 2007). The Delphi method's iterative nature allows the experts to examine their original opinion after seeing the panel's collective anonymous responses. The researcher explored qualitative and quantitative methods during the selection process and found that this study would benefit by combining elements from both. Depending on the round's questions, the data could return in either form. Additionally, the researcher considered the population and sample design to ensure an adequate representation of experts could be obtained to complete the study's multiple rounds of questioning.

A core element of the Delphi method's multiple rounds of questioning allows the expert panel members to reassess and change their opinions after examining the feedback provided by the rest of the panel members. Additional benefits of the Delphi method include the ability to participate remotely as the rounds of questions can be facilitated electronically through survey platforms and electronic mail, giving the expert flexibility

in when they respond. Also, the expert panel members remain anonymous, providing a platform for equal participation, mitigates the potential influence of others on one's thinking and opinions, and removes the aspect of groupthink.

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) referred to a population as the "total group to which results can be generalized" (p. 129). The total population for this study included all Human Resources administrators in California's public-school districts. In many districts, this role is the Assistant/Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, while in others, typically smaller districts, this administrator may be a director (Atherton, 2019). California Department of Education (2021) indicated 1,090 public school districts in California during the 2019-20 school year. The total population of this study was a Human Resources administrator in each of the 1,090 public school districts in California.

Sampling Frame

According to Taherdoost (2016), "A sampling frame is a list of the actual cases from which the sample will be drawn" (p. 20). The sampling frame for a research study is the collective group for which the study's data and findings can be generalized. As California encompasses a vast geographical area and includes 58 counties and a total of 1,090 public school districts, with 344 of those being public K-12 school districts, a smaller subset of this population was utilized (California Department of Education, 2021). The counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego were chosen and collectively represent 111 of the state's public K-12 school districts (California Department of Education, 2021). Three school districts randomly selected

from each of the five counties will make up the study's Delphi panel, resulting in a total of 15 members (*N*=15; see Table 1).

Table 1

School Districts in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Diego, and San Bernardino Counties

	County	Number of Public K-12 School Districts
1.	Los Angeles	48
2.	Orange	12
3.	Riverside	18
4.	San Bernardino	20
5.	San Diego	13
		Total 111

Note. Adapted from "Public School and Districts Data Files," by California Department of Education 2021. https://www.cde.ca.gov/ds/si/ds/pubschls.asp

Sample

Patton (2015) indicated that studying an entire population is not realistic or feasible because of the size; therefore, a smaller subset of the population needs to be selected to represent this larger population. Nworie (2011) suggested that Delphi studies need to elicit input from a panel or array of experts in the field, typically consisting of 12 to 40 individual participants, while Skulmoski et al. (2007) shared that depending on the type of Delphi study the number of participants can range from single digits into the hundreds. This Delphi study's sample population was 15 Human Resources administrators representing the five selected counties in Southern California: San Diego County, Orange County, Riverside County, San Bernardino County, and Los Angeles County. Skulmoski et al. (2007) shared that using a homogeneous group of 10-15 experts

can yield sufficient results. It was the intent of the researcher to choose three experts

from each of the five counties.

Sample Selection Process

The criteria used to select each panel expert were:

1. Currently serve as a district-level Human Resources administrator that

    oversees the hiring of entry-level school site administrators. This could

    potentially include a Director, Executive Director, or Assistant/Associate

    Superintendent of Human Resources in addition to a District Superintendent.

2. Currently serve in a qualifying role, as indicated in number one, in a public

    school district in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, or San

    Diego County during the time of the study.

3. A minimum of two years of service in a qualifying role as outlined in number

    one.

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Sample Size

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The researcher used chain sampling to identify potential experts to participate in

the study. Nworie (2001) clarified that an exact number of participants for a Delphi study

does not exist but referenced a typical range of 12-40. The number of participants was

decided upon based upon the range which Nworie (2001) found to be acceptable while

also considering a balance of the five selected counties and the ability to obtain willing

participants from these demanding positions. Patton (2015) describes chain sampling,

also known as snowball sampling, as a method of identifying additional individuals based

on a referral. This allows the researcher to start with a smaller pool of individuals and

leverage their contacts to locate other potential participants. The researcher sent inquiry

emails to potential participants regarding the study's purpose, the expectations of the participants, expected timeline and included a statement by which the participant's privacy and confidentiality will be preserved. The researcher continued this process until the desired sample, three qualifying individuals from different districts in each of the five identified counties, totaling fifteen, was achieved.

Instrumentation

The research study employed an online survey tool, SurveyMonkey, in conjunction with electronic mail as a method for data collection and to communicate with the expert panelists; see Appendix G to Appendix J for proposed surveys. The Delphi study included three rounds of questions where the expert panel responded individually before the researcher returned the coded results to the panel of experts in the subsequent round's question. Initially, the expert panel was asked to indicate the desirable qualifications sought when selecting an entry-level school site administrator with no prior experience. This was presented as an open response question where the results were reviewed and provided back to the panel in the second round, where each expert individually rated each of the identified qualifications. The final round of questioning allowed the panel to describe what they looked for in each of the top-rated qualifications identified in the second round.

Round 1

The first question provided to the expert panel via the survey instrument was an open response to the question: What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

The individual responses from this question were reviewed, coded, and placed into a list which served as the foundation for the second round of questioning.

Round 2

Again, the survey tool was used to elicit responses from the expert panel. The survey instrument provided an exhaustive list of qualifications the participants developed during round one. The survey instrument employed a Likert scale rating system for each qualification. The ranges found on this instrument were: *Extremely Important*, *Very Important, Moderately Important, Slightly Important, Low Importance, Not at all Important.* The four qualifications with the highest importance ratings were used in the third round.

Round 3

The survey instrument that was used in this final round of questioning provided an open response opportunity for the expert panel to describe what they looked for in each of the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. The instrument provided the following question four times, where the only difference is the qualification identified at the conclusion of Round 2: The responses from Round 2 indicated that (qualification) was a top-rated qualification. Please describe what you look for in this qualification when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position.

Reliability

The reliability of a research study is rooted in the dependability, neutrality, and consistency by which the study was developed and executed (Golafshani, 2003). While the Delphi process keeps all parties unknown, the researcher needed to ensure their neutrality and objectivity while engaging with the data. The integrity of the study lies in the reliability and dependability of the researcher and the study's findings. Briggs et al. (2012) shared that reliability is connected to the probability that the study could be replicated with similar findings. By leveraging an array of highly qualified experts in the field, this study should provide results that would remain relatively consistent if this study, or a comparable one, were used to replicate the findings.

Field Test

Field testing of the instrument was done to ensure the tool's reliability. Two Directors of Human Resources engaged with the survey instrument to ensure functionality and ease of use. The two individuals used for field testing did not participate in the study but did meet all criteria for selection. The field test included three rounds of questions. The first one was an open response to the question: What qualification do you identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position? Upon completing this question, the two field test participants provided feedback regarding the question, including the directions/instructions, their ability to understand what the question was asking, and the question's design. The second round used responses from question one and provided a Likert scale to rate the importance of each identified qualification. Following this round, the field testers were provided the

same questions regarding the clarity of the instructions and question and the question's design to provide feedback to the researcher. The final round asked the field testers to describe what they look for in each of the top-rated qualifications. Like the previous rounds, the field testers provided feedback regarding this question's clarity and design. The researcher adjusted the instrument based on the field testers' feedback after each round of questioning.

Validity

According to Biddix (2015), the validity of a study is the confidence in which the instrument will work as designed to collect the desired data. Validity was established by adhering to strict timelines during the data collection portion of the study. Additionally, providing an open response for the initial round of questioning gave the participants the ability to inform how subsequent rounds would unfold. Furthermore, validity was established in the coding of the first-round responses so that an exhaustive list was provided to the participants in the second round for their rating. Finally, an open response was used in the final round to gather individual descriptions of the top four identified qualifications.

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Data Collection

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To obtain consent to conduct this study by the University of Massachusetts Global Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher needed to complete proper coursework and obtain certification from the National Institutes of Health. Upon receiving IRB consent to proceed with collecting data, the researcher reviewed the study's population, target, and sample while remaining focused on the selection criteria for individuals to participate in the study. The researcher leveraged online databases to determine the

districts located in the five counties the research will be conducted: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego. The researcher pre-identified Human Resources administrators who met the selection criteria outlined earlier in this chapter, contacted them regarding the study, elicited their participation, and asked for other contacts of individuals interested in participating in the study. The researcher engaged in this process until three individuals from each of the five counties were identified and agreed to participate in the three rounds of the study. Upon developing the expert panel, the researcher e-mailed each participant individually, thanked them for their willingness to participate in the study, and provided them with the Informed Consent document and information related to confidentiality and how the individual and group responses will be utilized to formulate conclusions. Once all 15 members of the expert panel returned their Informed Consent, the panel was ready to begin their three rounds of questions. Each of the three rounds of the study was designed similarly. The researcher sent an e-mail to all participants with an embedded link to the particular round's survey questions which were developed using SurveyMonkey. Each survey included directions, clarifying information, response due date, and the researcher's contact information so that participants could reach the researcher to gain additional clarification.

Round 1 Data Collection

The first round provided each member of the expert panel the opportunity to respond to a free-response or open-ended question to extract as many qualifications as possible from the panel of experts regarding the study's topic. After each expert provided their response to Round 1's question, the researcher reviewed and created an exhaustive

list of responses provided by the collective group. The researcher used this list to

develop the basis for the second round's survey question.

1. Distribute Round 1 email containing embedded instrument link.

2. Obtain responses from the experts.

3. Review responses and create an exhaustive list of desirable qualifications.

4. This list created was used to develop the Round 2 instrument.

Round 2 Data Collection

Round 2 provided another survey to the expert panel, which asked the experts to

rate the importance of each identified item from the previous round. The instrument

provided a six-point Likert scale to collect responses for each item. After obtaining all 15

round two responses, the researcher compiled, reviewed, and determined the mean score

for each item. The data were imported into a table and then sorted by mean, from highest

to lowest. The researcher used the table to identify the four items with the highest mean

which was used as the basis of the final round's question.

1. Distribute Round 2 email containing embedded instrument link.

2. Obtain responses from the experts.

3. Compile, review, and determine the mean for each item on the instrument.

4. Import data into a table and sort by mean from highest to lowest.

5. Identify the four qualifications with the highest mean to be used in Round 3.

Round 3 Data Collection

The final round instrument provided another free-response opportunity to the

expert panel related to the four items with the greatest mean. After the participants

responded to this final round, the researcher organized all responses into a single

document. The researcher analyzed and coded each item's responses to determine themes using frequency tables.

1. Distribute Round 3 email containing embedded instrument link.

2. Obtain responses from the experts.

3. Organize all responses into a single document.

4. Analyze/code responses regarding the four qualifications determined during Round 2.

5. Generate frequency tables to depict the expert panel's responses.

Data Analysis

This policy Delphi study leveraged both qualitative and quantitative approaches throughout the study and it could be considered a mixed-method study. This Delphi study used three rounds of questioning where the findings from the previous round informed the following round's question. The first round provided the expert panel the chance to respond to an open response question which provided the researcher with qualitative data. The second round used the qualitative data and required the experts to rate each item, resulting in quantitative data. The third and final round provided the expert panel members an opportunity to respond freely to an open-ended question, resulting in qualitative data. The researcher used mean and median to analyze quantitative data to determine which items had the greatest collective rating. The qualitative data will be analyzed to determine similarities or themes.

Round 1 Data Analysis

1. Review, analyze, and develop lists based on the respondent's free response submissions.

2. Code the data for more straightforward analysis and reference.

3. Design and analysis matrix to display collected data.

4. Use coded data to develop the Round 2 Instrument question.

Round 2 Data Analysis

1. Input collected data into a table.

2. Compute the mean and median for each identified qualification.

3. Sort table by mean to identify the qualifications with the highest collective

   rating.

4. Identify the top four rated qualifications.

5. Use the top four rated qualifications to finalize the Round 3 Instrument

   question.

Round 3 Data Analysis

1. Organize responses into a single document sorted by question.

2. Analyze and code responses for each of the four top-identified qualifications.

3. Track frequency of themes using frequency tables.

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Limitations

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There were several limitations to this policy Delphi study. First, the Delphi

methodology requires an expert panel, and determining the qualifications of an expert

bears some level of subjectivity. Additionally, the study focused on entry-level school

site administrators, which could have varying definitions. Similarly, the study also

related to the selection of an administrative candidate with no prior administrative

experience, which also had some degree of variance depending on the district, county,

state, region, or country. Furthermore, this study was limited to K-12 public school districts in five Southern California counties; Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego. In addition, the instrument, while field-tested to increase reliability, may lack clarity and/or specificity in some of the language. Lastly, the researcher's ability to make inferences and draw conclusions was limited by the limited sample size.

Summary

Chapter III provided a detailed account of the study's methodology and processes outlining how the study was conducted. The chapter begins with the purpose statement and research questions, followed by an explanation of the research design and methodology. Hsu and Sandford (2007) shared that the Delphi method can collect information from experts in a given field to help inform on policy development, determine consensus, or guide decisions related to resource allocation or program development. The chapter continues with an explanation of the study's population, target population, and sample, then transitions to the study's instrumentation, reliability, and validity. The chapter concludes with data collection and data analysis, followed by the limitations of the study.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Chapter IV begins with a brief introduction providing the reader with a frame of reference and understanding of the material to be covered in this chapter. The overview includes the major categories of the chapter and serves as a simplified summary of chapter content. The purpose, research questions, methodology, data collection procedures, and population and sample are summarized prior to the presentation of data. Chapter IV includes a detailed report of the findings of the research study as clearly and succinctly as possible.

Overview

Chapter IV presents the data which were collected during the various rounds of the Delphi study, accompanied by analysis. The study aimed to identify the qualifications expert Human Resources administrators feel are most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level position. Furthermore, the student sought to rate the importance of each qualification so that the four qualifications with the highest ratings could be explored in greater detail, whereby the expert panel described what they look for in each of the top qualifications. Chapter IV restates the study's purpose and research questions along with the methodology, population, and sample prior to presenting data. Finally, Chapter IV concludes with a summary.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative

position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

Research Questions

Round 1

What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 2

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 3

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

The research methodology chosen for this study was a mixed-method policy Delphi. The method was selected due to the necessity to gather both qualitative and quantitative data throughout the study. The study aimed to leverage the collective knowledge of experts in a given field, to develop a greater understanding of a

phenomenon (Patton, 2015). This collective knowledge, the study's data, was gathered

during three rounds of surveys; the initial round was qualitative, followed by a

quantitative round, and culminated with another qualitative round. Since both qualitative

and quantitative data were utilized, a mixed-method methodology was required.

Additionally, mixed-method studies have added values as they incorporate base elements

of qualitative and quantitative methodologies into one, helping to provide stronger

results.

It was determined that a Delphi study would yield the most significant results due

to the intentional focus on generating multiple perspectives. Policy Delphi studies are not

focused on coming to a consensus; instead, they intend to explore contrasting opinions

and divergent thinking to gain a more holistic understanding (Skulmoski et al., 2007).

The Delphi method's iterative nature allows the experts to examine their original opinion

after seeing the panel's collective anonymous responses.

A core element of the Delphi method's multiple rounds of questioning allows the

expert panel members to reassess and change their opinions after examining the

responses provided by the rest of the panel members. As such, the researcher composed

a panel of experts who were given an opportunity to respond to an initial qualitative

research question where the response would be used to inform subsequent rounds of

questioning. Also, the expert panel members remained anonymous, providing a platform

for equal participation, mitigates the potential influence of others on one's thinking and

opinions, and removes the aspect of groupthink that can sway opinions, distract from

divergent thinking, and can inhibit an individual's ability to answer freely.

Population

McMillan and Schumacher (2010) referred to a population as the "total group to which results can be generalized" (p. 129). The total population for this study included all Human Resources administrators in California's public-school districts. In many districts, this role is the Assistant/Associate Superintendent of Human Resources, while in others, typically smaller districts, this administrator may be a director (Atherton, 2019). California Department of Education (2021) indicated 1,090 public school districts in California during the 2019-20 school year. The total population of this study was a Human Resources administrator in each of the 1,090 public school districts in California.

Sample

According to Taherdoost (2016), "A sampling frame is a list of the actual cases from which the sample will be drawn" (p. 20). The sampling frame for a research study is the collective group for which the study's data and findings can be generalized. As California encompasses a vast geographical area and includes 58 counties and a total of 1,090 public school districts, with 344 of those being public K-12 school districts, a smaller subset of this population was utilized (California Department of Education, 2021). The counties of Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego were chosen and collectively represent 111 of the state's public K-12 school districts (California Department of Education, 2021). To participate in the study, the Human Resources Administrator needed expert knowledge associated with the selection of entry-level school site administrators. The sample population comprised 15 Human Resources administrators who met the selection criteria outlined in Chapter III and were

subsequently identified as highly knowledgeable or expert Human Resources administrators as required by the Delphi methodology.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

This section details the data collected for each research question along with an analysis. Tables have been included to help display the data. The research data are presented in the order in which they were obtained as outlined by the research methodology.

Research Question 1

What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 1

The researcher began the study by creating then sending an electronic survey using Survey Monkey, which asked the following open-ended question: What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position? This initial round was intended to create an exhaustive list of desirable qualifications candidates could possess to be selected to serve as an entry-level school administrator with no prior experience. The survey was sent out to 14 participants.

There were 13 experts, Human Resources administrators, who provided responses to this question. After the responses were received, the researcher reviewed the responses and organized them into a table to begin the coding process to determine any

themes. Most of the 13 respondents provided multiple desirable qualifications, aside

from the one participant who shared only a single qualification; the remaining responses

ranged from three to 12. Some of the responses were vague such as "resume" or

"attitude," while others were more detailed, like "examples of serving in a leadership

role." The researcher coded the data to identify themes prior to developing the survey for

the second round.

Analysis of Round 1

Thirteen out of the 14 expert panel members participated during this initial round

of the study. The responses were coded, and the group compiled 26 unique qualifications

for which they feel are desirable when selecting an entry-level school administrator with

no prior experience. Sixteen of the 26 qualifications had a frequency of one, seven had a

frequency of two, while the final three qualifications had a frequency of three, four, or

six. The panel's list of desirable qualifications is outlined in Table 2, beginning with the

most frequent and ending with the least frequent. Items with the same frequency were

added at random.

Table 2

List of Desirable Qualifications

	Desirable Qualifications for Entry-Level School Site Administrators	Frequency
1.	Prior Leadership Experience / Roles Serving Others	6
2.	Quality of Recommendations & References	4
3.	Knowledge of Instructional Strategies	3
4.	Ability to Build Relationships	2
5.	Success in Current Position/District	2

	Desirable Qualifications for Entry-Level School Site Administrators	Frequency
6	Willingness to Continue learning/Growing/Developing	2
7.	Excellent Written and Verbal Communication Skills	2
8.	Appropriate Credentials	2
		(continued)
9.	Prior Teaching Experience	2
10	Longevity in Current Position/District	2
11	Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense	1
12	Equity Minded / Belief that Every Child Can Learn	1
13	Values of Integrity and Service	1
14	Ability to Problem Solve	1
15	Love of Children	1
16	Positive Attitude/Energy	1
17	Emotional Intelligence	1
18	Open-Minded	1
19	Culturally Proficient	1
20	Currently Viewed as a Leader	1
21	Knowledge of Curriculum	1
22	Innovative	1
23	Knowledge Associated with Student Discipline & Attendance	1
24	Resume	1
25	Advanced Degrees	1
26	Budget Knowledge/Experience	1

Note: Total respondents = 13

Research Question 2

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the

qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative

candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site

administrative position?

Round 2

The researcher used the 26 unique, desirable qualifications identified in Round 1 to

develop the Round 2 instrument. The instrument asked: "How do expert K-12 Human

Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research

Question 1 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative

experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?" Round 2 provided a

six-point Likert rating scale based on how important each identified qualification was.

This second round was quantitative, and the mean for each identified qualification

needed calculating. The researcher assigned a point value for each of the six possible

options. The Likert responses point values were: Extremely Important = 6, Very

Important = 5, Moderately Important = 4, Slightly Important = 3, Low Importance = 2,

and Not at all Important = 1. Therefore, according to the expert panel, the identified

qualification with the highest mean would be the most important qualifications. Table 3

displays each of the identified qualifications and their mean score.

Table 3

Identified Qualifications and Mean Score

	Identified Qualifications	Mean Score
1.	Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense	5.77
2.	Ability to Build Relationships (student, staff, families)	5.77 (continued)
3.	Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn	5.69
4.	Values of Integrity and Service	5.69
5.	Ability to Solve Problems	5.62

	Identified Qualifications	Mean Score
6	Success in Current Position/District	5.46
7.	Love of Children	5.46
8.	Positive Attitude/Energy	5.38
9.	Willingness to Continue Learning/Growing/Developing (Leadership Disposition)	5.38 (continued)
10	Excellent Written and Verbal Communication Skills	5.31
11	Appropriate Credentials	5.23
12	Prior Leadership Experiences/ Roles Serving Others	5.23
13	Emotional Intelligence	5.23
14	Open-Minded	5.15
15	Culturally Proficient	5.08
16	Recommendations & References	4.92
17	Currently Viewed as a Leader (Formal or informally)	4.85
18	Knowledge of Curriculum	4.54
19	Knowledge of Instructional Strategies	4.54
20	Innovative	4.54
21	Prior Teaching Experience	4.46
22	Knowledge Associated with Student Discipline & Attendance	4.31
23	Resume	4.15
24	Advance Degrees	3.62
25	Longevity in current Position/District	3.62
26	Budget Knowledge/Experience	3.54

Note: Total respondents = 13

Analysis of Round 2

The top-rated identified qualification for selecting an entry-level school administrator with no experience was a tie between Uses Good Judgement/Common

Sense (see Table 4) and Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families; see Table 5), with a mean of 5.77. Both of these identified qualifications have the exact same participant breakdown, with each having ten experts rating it as Extremely Important and three experts rating them as Very Important. No experts rated these qualifications as Moderately Important, Slightly Important, Low Importance, or Not at all Important.

Table 4

Desirable Qualification: Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Extremely Important	10	76.92%
Very Important	3	23.08%
Moderately Important	0	0.00%
Slightly Important	0	0.00%
Low Importance	0	0.00%
Not at all Important	0	0.00%

Note: Total respondents = 13; Mean score = 5.77

Table 5

Desirable Qualification: Ability to Build Relationships (Students, Staff, Families)

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Extremely Important	10	76.92%
Very Important	3	23.08%
Moderately Important	0	**0.00%**
Slightly Important	0	0.00%
Low Importance	0	0.00%
Not at all Important	0	0.00%

Note: Total respondents = 13; Mean score = 5.77

The following highest-rated qualification was also a tie. The third and fourth most desirable qualification based upon the mean scores of the expert panel was Equity

Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn (see Table 6) and Values of Integrity and Service (see Table 7). Both of these qualifications had a mean score of 5.69. The qualification of Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn had nine experts rate it as Extremely Important, with the remaining four experts rating it as Very Important. The Values of Integrity and Service qualification received the same mean score but achieved it by having ten experts rate it as Extremely Important, while two experts rated it as Very Important, and one rated it as Moderately Important.

Table 6

Desirable Qualification: Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Extremely Important	9	69.23%
Very Important	4	30.77%
Moderately Important	0	0.00%
Slightly Important	0	0.00%
Low Importance	0	0.00%
Not at all Important	0	0.00%

Note: Total respondents = 13; Mean score = 5.6

Table 7

Desirable Qualification: Values of Integrity and Service

Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents
Extremely Important	10	76.92%
Very Important	2	15.38%
Moderately Important	1	7.69%
Slightly Important	0	0.00%
Low Importance	0	0.00%
Not at all Important	0	0.00%

Note: Total respondents = 13; Mean score = 5.77

The study sought to determine the four top-rated qualifications to be used in the final round of the study. A full breakdown of all 26 identified qualifications by mean score (see Appendix L) shows that 15 of the 26 identified qualifications had a mean score >5.00. The lowest three rated qualifications, from highest to lowest, were *Advanced Degrees* with a mean of 3.62, *Longevity in Current Position/District* 3.62, and *Budget Knowledge or Experience* with a mean score of 3.54.

When looking at the data as a whole, no qualification was rated as *Not at all Important*. Only five qualifications had any ratings in *Low Importance*. Additionally, only one qualification in the top sixteen, *Appropriate Credentials*, sitting at number eleven, had any ratings lower than *Moderately Important*.

Research Question 3

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

Round 3

The final round of the study took the four top-rated qualifications from the previous round and provided the expert panel the opportunity to answer the following open-ended question for each of the top-rated qualifications: How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position? The four top-rated qualifications were: Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense, Ability to Build

Relationships (students, staff, families), Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn, and Values of Integrity and Service. The panel was asked to describe what they look for in each of the qualifications pertaining to selecting an entry-level school administrator with no prior administrative experience.

Analysis of Round 3 Qualification 1: Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense

As stated, there was a tie for the top-rated spot. This qualification was considered extremely important to ten of the 13 respondents. As such, the responses that were received showed great detail as to what is sought by hiring Human Resources administrators when selecting an administrative candidate for an entry-level school site position with no prior experience.

Numerous responses helped to complete a collective thought that the best way to demonstrate or prove good judgment or common sense is to describe past experiences. The expert panel shared that this could be through interview questions where the candidate would share past decision-making situations or experiences. However, the experts indicated that this information could also be gathered from the candidate's professional references and or letters of recommendation to a lesser degree.

Regardless of where the information comes from, the expert panel determined they were looking for things in two main categories or themes; what the candidate considers and the candidate's process (see Table 8). The expert panel looked for candidates that consider multiple perspectives when thinking through a decision or problem. Additionally, they would look for individuals who would ask clarifying questions and seek to understand the larger picture. They would expect the school site administrator to remain focused on what is best for the students while staying positive.

Furthermore, the experts valued the candidate having a process for making decisions that would demonstrate a logical progression of thought and considerations, which leads to decisive action. The experts shared that school site administrators would need to be ready to make decisions on the fly and often without consulting colleagues. The panel determined the best way to get a clear picture of a candidate's decision-making process is through scenario-based situations or sharing prior experiences during an interview.

Table 8

Desirable Qualification #1: Uses Good Judgment/Common Sense Themes

Themes Associated with "Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense"	Frequency
What the candidate considers when making decisions (Multiple perspectives, asking clarifying questions)	5
System for informing decision making (Seeks guidance when appropriate and takes action)	4
Have strong values (Caring, compassion, and a concern for others)	2
Willing to stand by decisions/judgments (does not backpedal when encountering resistance, not easily swayed once an informed decision was made)	2

Analysis of Round 3 Qualification 2: Ability to Build Relationships (Students, Staff, Families).

This qualification was tied as the highest-rated qualification for entry-level school site administrative candidates to possess to be selected for a position with no prior administrative experience. The expert panel determined there were many ways that a candidate could show their ability to build relationships. The experts once again shared that this qualification could be determined through the candidate's references or letters of

recommendation but would be more effective if there was a scenario-based question during an interview or an opportunity for the candidate to share personal experiences.

The panel shared that through interviews, they would have an easier time determining the candidate's interpersonal skills, including a candidate's Emotional Intelligence (EQ), their ability to communicate effectively, and their willingness to seek to understand, were the common themes for building relationships. Seven of the 13 respondents indicated that a candidate's Emotional Intelligence (EQ) was of great importance in building relationships. Six respondents indicated that effectively communicating was imperative, and four respondents indicated administrators need to seek to understand. The expert panel also shared other components related to interpersonal skills and included being empathetic, kind, honest, active listening, and authentic. All of these were nested under Emotional Intelligence or communication skills based upon the context the respondents indicated. Table 9 shows the frequency of each of the themes.

Table 9

Desirable Qualification #2: Ability to Build Relationships

Themes Associated with "Ability to Build Relationships"	Frequency
Emotional Intelligence (Empathy, Honesty, authentic)	7
Communication (Verbal & written communication and Listening Skills)	6
Seeking to Understand (taking the time to ask questions, get to know the situation, understand the culture, find how to support stakeholders)	4

Analysis of Round 3 Qualification 3: Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn.

This qualification was rated as the third most important qualification for school site administrative candidates with no prior experience to possess to be selected for an administrative position. The panel's responses indicated that the best way to determine this qualification was through candidate responses during an interview where they shared past experiences related to equitable practices for the students. The experts shared that candidates needed to have an equity mindset, which could be determined by prior experiences providing equitable opportunities for students to learn and achieve at high levels or have been part of successful equity initiatives. Additionally, the candidate needs to "have an awareness that inequities exist" and be willing to "champion equity." The experts shared that the candidate's past practices and experiences can inform the candidate's equity mindset. Table 10 displays the frequency of both identified themes.

Table 10

Desirable Qualification #1: Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn

Themes Associated with "Equity Minded/Belief that Every Child Can Learn"	Frequency
Equity Mindset	11
Awareness of inequities in the system	4

Analysis of Round 3 Qualification 4: Values of Integrity and Service

This qualification was presented in the first-round survey as a single element and advanced to subsequent rounds as such. The expert panel's responses indicated they look for different things when considering the two elements of this qualification. Table 11 shows the frequency of each related theme.

The expert panel looked for leadership opportunities where the candidate demonstrated how they authentically served others. Furthermore, the expert panel shared that they also look for indicators that the candidate values "team over self" and shared leadership. The experts found that the best way to account for this was through the candidate's resume, letters of recommendation, and professional references.

Regarding the value of integrity, the panel used the word ethics or ethical in eight different responses and was identified as the central theme followed closely by a candidate's trustworthiness with five respondents. However, this was nested under ethical due to how the respondents used the word. The expert panel shared that they review letters of recommendation and professional references to measure integrity.

Table 11

Desirable Qualification #1: Values of Integrity and Service

Themes Associated with "Values of Integrity and Service"	Frequency
Demonstrated leadership service activities (Shared leadership, team over self)	8
Mention of Ethical decision making or a core value related to ethical decision making (Trustworthy, accountable, dependable)	6

Summary

Chapter IV shared the qualitative and quantitative data and associated analysis of this mixed-method policy Delphi study. The purpose of this policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. The purpose was also to have the experts rate the

importance of the identified qualifications then have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

2. How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

3. How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

The first round of the study was qualitative. It used the first research question to create an exhaustive list of desirable qualifications Human Resources administrators looked for when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience to serve as a school site administrator. This Delphi study's sample size comprised 15 expert Human Resources administrators, of which 13 experts responded to the Round 1 electronic survey in Survey Monkey. The information retrieved from this initial round answered the first research question and was reviewed, charted, and coded before creating the Round 2 survey.

The second-round survey of this mixed-method policy Delphi study was quantitative and asked each expert panel member to rate the importance of each of the identified qualifications found from the results of the Round 1 survey. The rating scale was a six-point Likert scale ranging from Extremely Important to Not at all Important. There were 26 identified qualifications that each expert panel member needed to rate. Thirteen expert panel members responded to this Survey Monkey rating survey. The ratings of each of the identified qualifications were charted so that the mean could be calculated. After each qualification's mean was calculated, they were listed in a table which allowed the researcher to sort the qualifications by mean to determine a rank order so that the top four could be identified. The four top-rated qualifications were then used to develop the Round 3 survey.

The third-round survey was qualitative, allowing the participants to describe what they look for in each of the top-rated qualifications identified by mean in Round 2. Thirteen responses were collected during this third and final round of the mixed-method policy Delphi study. The responses from the 13 experts were analyzed, charted, then coded, allowing the researcher to determine themes for each of the four top-rated qualifications. The data retrieved from this round provide school districts, administrative preparation programs, and aspiring administrators insight into what Human Resources administrators look for in the most desirable qualifications for selecting an entry-level school administrator with no prior experience.

The purpose of Chapter IV was to present the pertinent information regarding the data collected in this study. This chapter also provided an analysis of the data which were collected during three rounds of electronic surveys. Chapter V will present the

researcher's conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future

research to finalize this study.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Chapter V provides a review of this mixed-method policy Delphi study's purpose statement, guiding research questions, methodology, and the study's population and sample. Additionally, this chapter provides the researcher's findings, conclusions, implications for action, and recommendations for future research. The chapter culminates with the researcher's final remarks and reflections of the research study in its totality.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

Research Questions

Round 1

What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 2

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative

candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 3

How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position?

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Research Methodology

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The methodology employed for this research study was a mixed-method policy Delphi methodology. This methodology was selected due to the researcher's desire to infuse both qualitative and quantitative, at different points during the data collection phase, to gather a more detailed and complete understanding of the associated phenomena. The above research questions were asked to an expert panel of Human Resources administrators representing different public-school districts in Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego counties.

The initial round presented the expert panel with an open-ended question which yielded qualitative data. These qualitative data were reviewed and coded to determine the themes associated with the desirable qualification for selecting an entry-level school administrator with no prior administrative experience. These themes were then used to create a second-round survey where a six-point Likert rating scale was used to rate the importance of each of the identified qualifications. This second-round survey provided quantitative data, which was used to determine the four top-rated qualifications. These four top-rated qualifications were used in a final round survey where the expert panel

responded to an open-ended question that has them each describing what they look for in each of the four top-rated qualifications.

Initially, 15 Human Resources administrators were identified to participate in the study, but one dropped out as the first-round survey was sent out, leaving our expert panel at 14 members. During the first round, a total of 13 responses were collected, representing a response rate of approximately 93%. These 13 respondents created a coded list of 26 desirable qualifications. The second-round survey also saw an approximate response rate of 93% as 13 of 14 members of the panel completed the Likert rating for each of the 26 identified qualifications. These ratings allowed the researcher to determine the four qualifications with the highest rating, as determined by calculating the mean used, which were used in the third-round survey. The third-round survey, like the previous two, had an approximate response rate of 93%. Using the responses from the third-round survey, the researcher analyzed and coded the expert panel's responses, revealing eleven themes that represent what the expert panel looks for when selecting an entry-level school site administrator with no prior administrative position for a school site administrative position.

Major Findings

Research Questions

Research Question 1

The first research question of this mixed-method policy Delphi study was: What qualifications do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 1. The major finding associated with this initial round was the 26 desirable qualifications that the expert panel identified. Below is a summary of all 26 identified qualifications ranked in order from the most frequent to the least frequent.

1. Prior Leadership Experiences/ Roles Serving Others

2. Recommendations & References

3. Knowledge of Instructional Strategies

4. Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families)

5. Success in Current Position/District

6. Willingness to Continue Learning/Growing/Developing (Leadership Disposition)

7. Excellent Written and Verbal Communication Skills

8. Appropriate Credentials

9. Prior Teaching Experiences

10. Longevity in Current Position/District

11. Uses Good Judgement/ Common Sense

12. Equity Minded/ Belief that Every Child Can Learn

13. Values of Integrity and Service

14. Ability to Solve Problems

15. Love of Children

16. Positive Attitude/Energy

17. Emotional Intelligence

18. Open-Minded

19. Culturally Proficient

20. Currently Viewed as a Leader (Formal or informally)

21. Knowledge of Curriculum

22. Innovative

23. Knowledge Associated with Student Discipline & Attendance

24. Resume

25. Advanced Degrees

26. Budget Knowledge/Experience

Research Question 2

The second research question of this mixed-method Policy Delphi study was:
How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators rate the importance of the
qualifications identified in Research Question 1 when selecting an administrative
candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site
administrative position?

Round 2. The major finding associated with this round was the mean calculation
of each identified qualification from Round 1. Calculating the mean for each
qualification allowed the researcher to sort the qualifications from high to low. This
further allowed the researcher to identify the four highest-rated qualifications to be used
in the final round. Below are the top four in rank order. However, it is noted that the
first and second were tied for the top spot while the third and fourth qualifications listed
were tied for the number three spot.

1. Uses Good Judgement/ Common Sense (Tied for Number 1)

2. Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families) (Tied for Number 1)

3. Equity Minded/ Belief that Every Child Can Learn (Tied for Number 3)

4. Values of Integrity and Service (Tied for Number 3)

Research Question 3

The third and final research question for this mixed-method policy Delphi study
was: How do expert K-12 Human Resources administrators describe what they look for
in the top-rated qualifications identified in Research Question 2 when selecting an
administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level
administrative position?

Round 3. The major finding in this final round of the study were the descriptions
provided by the expert panel as they related to what they look for in each of the four top-
rated qualifications, which were identified earlier in Round 2. There were 11 themes
identified, each classified as a unique finding. These findings are organized by their
correlating qualification.

Qualification 1: Uses Good Judgement/Common Sense. The responses found
four findings associated with this first qualification. The findings are listed in rank order
from the most frequent to the least. The expert panel's collective responses indicated the
following:

1. What the candidate considers when making decisions (Multiple
    perspectives, asking clarifying questions)

2. System for informing decision making (Seeks guidance when appropriate
    and takes action)

3. Have strong values (Caring, compassion, and a concern for others)

4. Willing to stand by decisions/judgments (does not backpedal when encountering resistance, not easily swayed once an informed decision was made)

Qualification 2: Ability to Build Relationships (Students, Staff, Families). The expert panel shared, through their collective responses, three elements that are sought in building relationships with either students, staff, or families. These three elements are listed in order from most to least frequent:

1. Emotional Intelligence (Empathy, Honesty, Authentic)

2. Communication (Verbal & Written Communication and Listening Skills)

3. Seeking to Understand (taking the time to ask questions, get to know the situation, understand the culture, find how to support stakeholders)

Qualification 3: Equity Minded/Believe That All Students Can Learn. The responses of the expert panel described two things which they look for associated with this qualification. The two items are listed below in rank order based on frequency from most to least:

1. Equity Mindset

2. Awareness of inequities in the system

Qualification 4: Values of Integrity and Service. The responses of the expert Delphi panel indicated two items to look for associated with this qualification. The qualification had two elements, integrity and service, and there was one finding for each. The findings, although aligned to different values, are listed below based upon frequency from most frequent to least frequent.

1. Demonstrated leadership service activities (shared leadership, team over self)

2. Mention of Ethical decision making or a core value related to ethical decision making (Trustworthy, Accountable, Dependable)

Unexpected Findings

There were five unexpected findings associated with this mixed-method policy Delphi study. First were the data unearthed surrounding the desirable qualifications sought in an entry-level school site administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience. Second, the discrepancy between the frequency in Round 1 and the ratings in Round 2. Third, the large number of desirable qualifications with a high rating from the expert panel. Fourth, the unexpected omission of a particular qualification came up during field testing associated with Social-Emotional Learning. Finally, the evolving nature of the two most frequent qualifications from Round 1 failed to rate high enough to make it to Round 3, but both became instruments to measure some of the top-rated qualifications.

When considering the most desirable qualifications a prospective school site administrative candidate could possess, one would need to stretch their thinking to develop a list of 26 desirable qualifications. The intent was not to create an exhaustive list of all qualifications that a candidate could have but a list of the most desirable. With 16 qualifications having a frequency of one, this showed that each of the panel members values different qualifications.

During Round 1, three qualifications had a frequency greater than two. However, none of these qualifications were rated in the top 10 during the Round 2 survey. The

qualification with the highest frequency was "Prior Leadership Experiences/Roles Serving Others," which had a frequency of six but finished in 12th place in the final ratings. This qualification made it into the findings as what the experts look for when determining the candidate's values associated with integrity and service.

Of the four top-rated qualifications used in the final round, three had a Round 1 frequency of one, while the last qualification used in Round 3 had a frequency of 2. The three qualifications with the greatest frequency in Round 1 failed to make the Round 3 survey as their ratings ranked them in 12th, 16th, and 19th place, respectively. The notion of commonly known qualifications versus the qualification's perceived importance played a decisive factor between the rounds.

When reviewing the Likert ratings from Round 2, the panel was clear that all of the qualifications listed were important to some degree. Of which, 15 of the 26 had a mean greater than 5.00 out of a possible 6.00. Additionally, the top seven had, rounded to the nearest tenth, had a mean of 5.5 or higher. The study's methodology stated that the researcher would take the four top-rated qualifications to the final round. However, it is worth noting that the qualification that came in fifth was only two-hundredths behind the tie for third place.

It was surprising to see no mention Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) throughout the study. SEL has been at the forefront of public education for quite some time now, and with the adverse impacts of COVID, attention on building relationships, and the focus on social-emotional well-being, it was a surprise to see no mention of this from the expert panel. A candidate's ability to build relationships did make it to the final round;

however, again, there is no mention of Social Emotional Learning or Social-Emotional Health, or Social-Emotional Well-being.

The two qualifications with the highest frequency in Round 1 ended up not making it to the final round as they were rated in 12th and 16th place, respectively. However, both found their way to the findings sections as what they look for or how the panel can determine certain measurable aspects of a candidate. When considering the values of integrity and service, the panel indicated that reviewing the candidate's resume, letters of recommendation, and references provides greater insight into the candidate's willingness and ability to serve others. The expert panel highly values the candidate's references and recommendations to determine all of the top-rated qualifications.

Conclusions

The purpose of this mixed-method policy Delphi study was to determine what qualifications were the most desirable in prospective entry-level school administrative candidates with no prior administrative experience to be selected for a position. In addition, rate the qualifications so that the top-rated qualifications could be described by an expert panel of Human Resources administrators representing public K-12 school districts in five counties in Southern California.

Conclusion 1

After reviewing the study's findings, the first conclusion is the importance of administrative candidates building relationships with different stakeholder groups. Aspiring administrators need to have interpersonal skills that will guide them through difficult conversations and tough choices. The aspiring administrator will also need to develop their Emotional Intelligence (EQ) to assist in developing the different

relationships within the diverse layers of an educational community. Furthermore, communication skills, verbal, non-verbal, and written, need to be refined. Too often, aspects of communication seem to go undiscussed. In order to communicate effectively, a school leader will need to listen actively while considering the perspectives of others.

Additionally, the administrator will need to ask questions, not to poke holes, instead to seek information that will aid in understanding and enriching the dialogue. Seeking to understand allows the administrator to value others, validate their perspective, and ensure that careful consideration is provided. As an educational leader, the actions and words that are shared or perceived carry a great deal of weight. These words and actions can inspire, motivate, and encourage, or they can be used to negate, discredit, or humiliate.

Conclusion 2

Determining how to evaluate any of the qualifications remains a subjective element in the hiring process. However, the expert panel has indicated the relevance and importance of quality letters of recommendation and professional references. Regardless of the qualification, the expert panel shared that a candidate's ability to build relationships, use good judgment, integrity, service to others, and equitable mindset may be presented by a prior or current supervisor in the form of a professional reference or letter of recommendation. Although this information may be available in these forms, some qualifications are best evaluated during a formal interview by engaging the candidate in a scenario-based question. Ultimately, knowing what qualifications are valued can allow the hiring district to evaluate a candidate more efficiently.

Conclusion 3

  Moving into the administrative arena of public education is a service-oriented position. The expert panel was clear when selecting an entry-level school administrator with no prior administrative experience, and they seek candidates who have integrity, possess an intrinsic desire to serve others, and hold an understanding of the team over self. Although these elements may manifest in different ways, administrative candidates must find ways to demonstrate proficiency related to each of these areas.

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Implications for Action

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  School site administrators play an integral role in our public education system. As stated in the literature review, the responsibilities of these positions are numerous, and determining the best person for the position will continue to remain a subjective and challenging part of the hiring process. To assist in the selection process for an entry-level school site administrator who has had no prior administrative experience, the researcher provides the following implications for actions for districts to consider.

Implications for Action 1

  The study focused on determining the most desirable qualifications a prospective administrative candidate could possess to increase the likelihood of being selected to fill a vacant entry-level school site administrative position. The findings and conclusions of this study indicated that there are many desirable qualifications and hiring districts need to assess themselves internally to ensure they know what their districts deem to be the most desirable qualification for any given position. Public K-12 school districts need to think about the vacancy and determine what qualifications an applicant could possess that would help the school site achieve to a greater degree. Identifying desirable

qualifications will enable the district to effectively screen applicants to ensure the best individuals are advanced in the screening process.

Implications for Action 2

Public K-12 school districts need to also to ensure they have formulated a means to evaluate their most desirable qualifications. The expert panel indicated many ways to evaluate the various qualifications; some can quickly and accurately be done by reviewing candidates' letters for recommendation or contacting their professional references. On the other hand, some are best evaluated by engaging the candidate in a scenario-based question during a formal interview. A district that knows how they intend to evaluate or measure each qualification is poised to find the best candidate to fill their vacancy as there is a consistent method to account for and potentially mitigate bias and subjectivity.

Implications for Action 3

Public K-12 school districts need to continually revise their desirable qualifications while also adjusting and aligning how they measure the desirable qualifications. For many decades, public education has been slow to keep up with the fast-paced American society. However, with the impact of COVID-19 and the immediate shift needed in public education, what is desirable and necessary today may not be as relevant tomorrow. Districts will need to continually monitor their school sites, determine what services and supports are needed, and ensure alignment between these needs and the qualifications of their leaders.

Recommendations for Further Research

The following areas for further research are reflective of the findings and limitations associated with this study. There are many aspects of this study that present more questions than they provide answers. The following research ideas may assist in helping to identify the best possible candidates to serve as a school site administrator.

- Replicate this study in different counties or states. This study was limited to five Southern California counties: Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego.

- Recreate this Delphi study but focus on the specific position of Assistant Principal.

- Recreate this Delphi study but focus on the specific position of Principal.

- Conduct a similar Delphi study where the first round is limited to a certain number of qualifications per respondent, forcing the participant to consider what is genuinely the most desirable. This study did not have a limit.

- Conduct a similar Delphi study where the second round is not a Likert scale rather a forced ranking of each qualification.

- Recreate this Delphi study but use District Superintendents rather than Human Resources administrators.

- Replicate this study using private schools.

- Replicate this study with representation from only high performing districts.

- A study investigating potential differences in assessing a candidate's hard and soft skills.

- A similar study which identifies any differences between desired qualifications for elementary, middle, and high school candidates.

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

Selecting a school site administrator is a difficult task for any district. Knowing the stresses and demands of the position, a particular part of me wonders if we are looking at this all wrong. As far as I could determine, none of the qualifications would indicate how well a potential administrator will perform as it relates to the measurables that matter most; student achievement, suspension rate, attendance, and closing the achievement gap. I contemplate if these qualifications point to an administrator that will survive in the current system rather than thrive. This study has opened my eyes to the subjective nature to which hiring an employee can be. It has also allowed me to understand why one individual may be selected to interview in one district but not in another.

As I continue to reflect on this study, it takes me back to what I experienced when trying to buy a home. My wife and I sat down and listed all the things we wanted in our next home. We created a list of the things that were important to us, then we both went through the list individually to determine what mattered the most to each of us. Next, we sat down again and reviewed our lists to find that we had several things in common but many things that differed. We eventually agreed on what mattered most to both of us and went out to find our home. As we viewed homes, we assessed them against our screening criteria and found that some of our items that mattered the most actually mattered far more than some of the others. Finally, we decided on a house to buy; we moved in and began to make it our home. Skipping forward several years, we now have kids and jobs

in different locations, and we have found that our needs and wants have changed. I share this analogy as I see it as a parallel to the hiring of school administrators at present. Currently, the belief is that we know what we need and what we want. This study has proven that what we want is a lot; moreover, not all our wants are equally valued.

The findings of this research study will allow future academics to account for this moment in time as part of the historical journey educational administration has undergone. Hiring entry-level school site administrators with no prior experience will continue to be the reality for many public-school districts. The desirable qualifications of today are just that, desirable today. What will be desirable in the coming years as our society attempts to escape the clutches of COVID-19 remain undetermined, but hopefully, this study will shine a light on a process by which districts can leverage to determine and measure the most desirable qualifications used to select an entry-level school site administrator with no prior administrative experience to lead a school into the future.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Synthesis Matrix

Literature Matrix	Themes	Credential Process	Hiring Process & Selection	Roles of site administrators	How the role of the Instructional leader has changed	Impact of the instructional leader	Desired qualification, qualities, and skills of site administrators	Experience	Methodology: Delphi	Problem (Need for change) GAP	Need for the study GAP	Framework	Data
References													
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Anderson, M. E. (1991).			x										
Ash, R., Hodge, P., & Connell, P. (2013).			x	x		x							
Asrani, F. (2010).			x	x			x						
Atherton, D. (2019).			x	x									
Baker, L. L. (2001).			x										
Baltzell, D. C., & Dentler, R. A. (1983).			x										
Baron, M. A. (1990).			x	x			x						
Bartoletti, J., & Connelly, G. (2013).				x	x								
Batchelor, M. R., Bedenbaugh, E., Leonard, R., & Williams, H. (1987).			x										

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Beach, G. M. (2010).		x	x	x								
Biddix, J. P. (2015)												
Bolin, F. S., & Panaritis, P. (1992).			x									
Bottoms, G., & O'Neill, K. (2001).		x	x						x			
Bouchrika, I. (2020).												x
Branch, G. F., Hanushek, E. A., & Rivkin, S. G. (2012).						x	x					
Branch, G., Hanushek, E., & Rivkin, S. (2013).						x	x					
Brewer, C., Okilwa, N., & Duarte, B. (2020).											x	
Briggs, A. R., Morrison, M., Coleman, M. (2012)												
Buckman, D. G., Johnson, A., D., & Alexander, D. L. (2018).		x										
Burkhauser, S. V. (2013).			x									
Cappelli, P. (2019).		x										
Clark, D. W. (2003).		x	x				x					
Clark, N. A. (1981).											x	
Clifford, M. (2010).		x	x	x	x							
Cornett, L. M. (1983).	x	x										
Cotton, K. (2003).				x	x							
Craig, R. (2016).							x					
Credentialing, C. C. o. T. (2017).	x		x									
Credentialing, C. C. o. T. (2018).	x											
Credentialing, C. C. o. T. (2020).	x											
Cruzeiro, P. A., & Boone, M. (2009).		x										
Cullen, Z. B., Perez-Truglia, R. (2019)												
Davis, S., Erickson, D. E., Kinsey, G. W., Lindsey, D., Moore-Steward, T., Padover, W., . . . Wise, D. (2010).			x	x	x				x			
De La Rosa, S. (2020).											x	x
Dorning, J. (2019).		x		x								
Duckett, B. (2007)												

DuFour, R., & Marzano, R. J. (2011).			x		x							
DuFour, R., & Mattos, M. (2013).			x		x							
EdSource, (1998).			x	x								
Education, C. D. o. (2017).												x
Education, C. D. o. (2020).												x
Education, C. D. o. (2020).												x
Farr, D. T. (2004).		x										
Farrace, B. (2020).											x	x
Foundation, W. (2013).			x		x							
Fuller, B., Loeb, S., Arshan, N., Chen, A., & Yi, S. (2007).			x	x								
Fulton, O. K. (1987).			x			x						
Garcia, E. E. (2013).			x	x	x							
Gips, C. J. (1986).		x										
Gips, C. J. (1988).		x										
Glanz, J. (1994).			x									
Golafshani, N. (2003)												
Grissom, J. A., & Sutcher, L. (2018).												x
Holman, L. J. (1997).		x	x									
Hooker, K. O. (2000).		x	x			x						
Hsu, C.-C., & Sandford, B. A. (2007).							x					
Kearney, K. (2003).			x			x						
Kindsvatter, R., & Tosi, D. J. (1971).			x									
Kipp, G., Quinn, P., Lancaster, S., Malone, G., Lashway, L., Lochmiller, C., & Sharratt, G. (2014).			x	x		x						
Knoeppel, R. C., & Rinehart, J. S. (2008).				x	x							
Kohler, L. (2021).		x										
Krasnoff, B., Leong, M., & Siebersma, M. (2015).			x		x							
Kwan, P. (2012).		x										
Kwan, P., & Walker, A. (2009).		x										
Lane, J. W. (2008).			x			x						

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Leithwood, K. (1994).				x	x							
Leithwood, K., Seashore, K., Anderson, S., & Wahlstrom, K. (2004).					x							
Levin, S., Bradley, K., & Scott, C. (2019).		x							x			
Lin, Y. (2013).		x										
Lynch, J. M. (2012).	x		x	x								
Lynch, M. (2017).			x									
Marshall, C. (1985).			x									
Maurer, R. (2018).		x					x					
McMillan, J. H., Schumacher, S. (2010)												
Mitchell, D. (1990).										x		
Morrison, S. D. (2009).		x	x									
Myung, J., Loeb, S., & Horng, E. (2011).		x										
Noodle, (2018).		x	x									
Normore, A. H. (2004).		x	x									
Normore, A. H. (2006).		x	x									
Nworie, J. (2011).							x			x		
Oleszewski, A., Shoho, A., & Barnett, B. (2012).												
Palmer, B. (2016).		x		x		x						
Palmer, B. G. (2015).		x										
Palmer, B., & Mullooly, J. (2015).		x										
Palmer, B., Kelly, J., & Mullooly, J. (2016).		x										
Patton, M. Q. (2015)												
Pierson, A. (2014).			x			x						
Pounder, D. G., & Young, I. P. (2011).		x	x	x				x	x			
Powell, J. O. (2010).		x										
Principals, N. A. o. S. S. (2017).									x			x
Principals, N. A. o. S. S. (2020).									x			x
Rammer, R. A. (2007).		x		x		x						
Russo, A. (2004).				x								
Schlueter, K., & Walker, J. (2008).		x										
Schmitt, N., & Schechtman, S. (1990).		x										
Scott, V. M. (2011).		x				x						

Source											
Sebastian, J., & Allensworth, E. (2013).			x	x	x						
Shields, C. B. (2018).	x			x							
Skulmoski, G. J., Hartman, F. T., & Krahn, J. (2007).							x				
Sneed, J., Vivian, V., & D'Costa, A. (1987).						x					
Statistics, N. C. f. E. (2020).					x						
Steiner, L., & Barrett, S. K. (2012).		x	x								
Stewart, J. (2006).				x							
Sutcher, L., Podolsky, A., Kini, T., & Shields, P. M. (2018).		x			x						
Taherdoost, H. (2016)											
Tran, H., Buckman, D. G., & Johnson, A. (2020).	x										
Trilling, B. (2009).		x			x						
Tripken, P. M. (2006).				x	x						
Turnbull, B. J., Riley, D. L., & MacFarlane, J. R. (2015).	x	x	x		x	x					
Tutt, D. V. (2017).						x					
Wallace, F. (2013).			x	x							
Weed, B. (2018).						x					
Winter, P. A., & Partenheimer, P. R. (2002).	x	x									
Work, J. (2019).	x										
Young, I. P., & Sever, W. R. (2011).	x								x		
Yousuf, M. I. (2007).							x				

APPENDIX B

Invitation to Participate

STUDY: A Delphi Study of desirable qualifications for selecting entry-level school site administrators with no prior administrative experience.

September 11, 2021

Dear Prospective Study Participant,

You are invited to participate in a research study to identify the most desirable qualifications a candidate could possess in order to obtain an entry-level school site administrative position. Furthermore, you will be asked to describe in detail each of the top-rated qualifications. The main investigator for this study is Toshimi Minami, Doctoral Candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Global (UMass Global) Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program. You were selected to participate in this study because of your expertise and experience in hiring entry-level school site administrators.

PURPOSE: The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

PROCEDURES: If you decide to participate in this study, you will receive three rounds of electronic surveys via Survey Monkey, with each survey taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The Round 1 survey will contain an open-ended question. The Round 2 survey will utilize a Likert scale survey where participants will rate the recommendations that were identified from the first-round survey. The Round 3 survey will contain open-ended questions about each of the strategies that were rated highest.

RISKS, INCONVENIENCES, AND DISCOMFORTS: This study involves no more than minimal risk. There are no known harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in everyday life. There is no cost to you for participating, and you will not be compensated in any way for your participation. The survey will be completed anonymously, and the researchers will not know your identity.

POTENTIAL BENEFITS: Your participation in this study does not yield any direct benefits to you. However, analysis of the data generated from your participation in this study is intended to provide current information on the most desirable qualifications an entry-level school administrator could possess that could increase their ability to be selected to serve as a school site administrator.

ANONYMITY: All surveys and research data collected will be stored securely and confidentially on a password-protected server. Records of information that you provide for the research study, and any personal information you provide, will not be

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linked in any way. It will not be possible to identify you as the person who provided any specific information for the study. Because you will complete the survey anonymously, your name or other identifying information will not be used in reports or publications. Only the research team may have access to study records to protect participants' safety and welfare.

If you have any questions, comments, or concerns regarding this study, you may contact me at (760) 717-1618 or by email at tminami@mail.umassglobal.edu. You can also contact the study's Dissertation Chairperson, Dr. Phil Pendley, by email at pendley@umassglobal.edu. If you have any further questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, please contact UMass Global's Office of Institutional Research, UMass Global, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618. BUIRB@umassglobal.edu.

Respectfully,

Toshimi J. Minami
Doctoral Candidate, UMass Global

Informed Consent and Confidentiality

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE: A Delphi Study of the most desirable qualifications for selecting entry-level school site administrators with no prior administrative experience.

UMASS GLOBAL
16355 LAGUNA CANYON ROAD
IRVINE, CA 92618

RESPONSIBLE INVESTIGATOR: Toshimi J. Minami, Doctoral Candidate

TITLE OF CONSENT FORM: Consent to Participate in Research

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY: This study is being conducted for a dissertation for the Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program at the University of Massachusetts Global (UMass Global). The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

PROCEDURES: In participating in this research study, I agree to either partake in three rounds of electronic surveys via Survey Monkey. The First-Round survey will contain open-ended questions. The Second Round will utilize a Likert scale survey where participants will rate the recommendations that were identified from the first-round survey. Round 3 will contain open-ended questions pertaining to each of the strategies that were rated highest.

I understand that:
   a) No known major risks or discomforts are associated with this research.

   b) I will not be compensated for my participation in this study. However, the information including the findings and recommendations generated from your participation will help to add to the body of literature associated with hiring entry-level school site administrators who have no prior administrative experience. The findings and recommendations from this study will be made available to all participants.

   c) Any questions I have concerning my participation in this study will be answered by Toshimi J. Minami, UMass Global Doctoral Candidate. I understand that Mr. Minami may be contacted by phone at (760) 717-1618 or by email at tminami@mail.umassglobal.edu. The dissertation chairperson may also answer questions: Dr. Phil Pendley at pendley@umassglobal.edu.

d) I understand that I may refuse to participate or withdraw from this study at any time without any negative consequences. I also understand that the investigator may stop the study at any time.

e) The study will utilize electronic surveys. All surveys and research data collected will be stored securely and confidentially on a password-protected server.

f) No information that identifies me will be released without my separate consent, and that all identifiable information will be protected to the limits allowed by law. If the study design or the use of the data is to be changed, I will be informed, and my consent re- obtained. If I have any questions, comments, or concerns about the study or the informed consent process, I may contact: UMass Global's Office of Institutional Research, UMass Global, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA 92618, BUIRB@umassglobal.edu.

I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this form and the Research Participant's Bill of Rights.

I have read the above and understand it and hereby voluntarily consent to the procedure(s) set forth.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant or Responsible Party   **Date**

_____   _____

Signature of Principal Investigator   **Date**

UMASS GLOBAL

A nonprofit affiliate of the University of Massachusetts

UMASS GLOBAL INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Research Participant's Bill of Rights

Any person who is requested to consent to participate as a subject in an experiment, or who is requested to consent on behalf of another, has the following rights:

1. To be told what the study is attempting to discover.

2. To be told what will happen in the study and whether any of the procedures, drugs or devices are different from what would be used in standard practice.

3. To be told about the risks, side effects or discomforts of the things that may happen to him/her.

4. To be told if he/she can expect any benefit from participating and, if so, what the benefits might be.

5. To be told what other choices he/she has and how they may be better or worse than being in the study.

6. To be allowed to ask any questions concerning the study both before agreeing to be involved and during the course of the study.

7. To be told what sort of medical treatment is available if any complications arise.

8. To refuse to participate at all before or after the study is started without any adverse effects.

9. To receive a copy of the signed and dated consent form.

10. To be free of pressures when considering whether he/she wishes to agree to be in the study.

If at any time you have questions regarding a research study, you should ask the researchers to answer them. You also may contact the UMASS GLOBAL Institutional Review Board, which is concerned with the protection of volunteers in research projects. The UMass Global Institutional Review Board may be contacted either by telephoning the Office of Academic Affairs at (949) 341-9937 or by writing to the Vice Chancellor of Academic Affairs, UMASS GLOBAL, 16355 Laguna Canyon Road, Irvine, CA, 92618.

UMass Global IRB   Adopted   2021

APPENDIX E

IRB Approval

University of Massachusetts Global Mail - IRB Application Approved As Submitted: Toshimi J. Minami

Toshimi Minami <tminami@mail.umassglobal.edu>

IRB Application Approved As Submitted: Toshimi J. Minami
1 message

Institutional Review Board <my@umassglobal.edu>   Fri, Oct 22, 2021 at 7:46 AM
Reply-To: webmaster@umassglobal.edu
To: tminami@mail.umassglobal.edu
Cc: pendley@brandman.edu, vsmithsa@brandman.edu, irb@umassglobal.edu

Dear Toshimi J. Minami,

Congratulations, your IRB application to conduct research has been approved by the UMass Global Institutional Review Board. This approval grants permission for you to proceed with data collection for your research. Please keep this email for your records, as it will need to be included in your research appendix.

If any issues should arise that are pertinent to your IRB approval, please contact the IRB immediately at IRB@umassglobal.edu. If you need to modify your IRB application for any reason, please fill out the "Application Modification Form" before proceeding with your research. The Modification form can be found at the following link: https://irb.umassglobal.edu/Applications/Modification.pdf.

Best wishes for a successful completion of your study.

Thank you,
Doug DeVore, Ed.D.
Professor
Organizational Leadership
IRB Chair
ddevore@umassglobal.edu
www.umassglobal.edu

APPENDIX F

Certificate of Completion of Training by Collaborative Institutional Training Initiative (CITI)

Participation in Delphi Study Survey

Participation In Delphi Study

Participation in Delphi Study

Thank you for your interest in this study and your willingness to learn more about how you can support the researcher in obtaining vital information that will add to the body of literature regarding hiring first-time school administrators in a public K-12 setting. Below is a bulleted outline of the research study, what would be expected of a participant, notice of risk and benefits, and will conclude with some basic questions to selection criteria.

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE: A Delphi Study of the most desirable qualifications for selecting entry-level school site administrators with no prior administrative experience.

Lead Researcher
Toshimi Minami, Doctoral Candidate
UMass Global
Department of Education
760-717-1618, tminami@mail.umassglobal.edu

Faculty Sponsor
Dr. Philip Pendley
UMass Global
Department of Education
951-712-2065, pendley@umassglobal.edu

* 1. You are invited to participate in a research study to identify the most desirable qualifications a candidate could possess to obtain an entry-level school site administrative position. Furthermore, you will be asked to describe in detail each of the top-rated qualifications. The main investigator for this study is Toshimi Minami, Doctoral Candidate at the University of Massachusetts, Global (UMass Global) Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership program. You were selected to participate in this study because of your expertise and experience in hiring entry-level school site administrators.

Public K-12 School districts in five Southern California Counties, Los Angeles, Orange, Riverside, San Bernardino, and San Diego, were targeted. Participation should require 45 to 60 minutes in total, which will be broken up into three 15-20 minute intervals spread over three weeks. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may discontinue your involvement in this study at any time without any consequences.

The purpose of this Policy Delphi study was to identify the qualifications expert K-12 Human Resources Administrators identify as most important when selecting a candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level administrative position. It was also the purpose to have the experts rate the importance of the identified qualifications and have the experts describe what they look for in the top-rated identified qualifications.

If you decide to participate in this study, you will receive three rounds of electronic surveys via Survey Monkey, with each survey taking approximately 15 to 20 minutes to complete. The Round 1 survey will contain open-ended questions. The Round 2 survey will utilize a Likert scale survey where participants will rate the recommendations that were identified from the first-round survey. The Round 3 survey will contain open-ended questions pertaining to each of the strategies that were rated highest.

This study involves no more than minimal risk. There are no known harms or discomforts associated with this study beyond those encountered in normal daily life. There is no cost to you for participating, and you will not be compensated in any way for your participation. The survey will be completed anonymously, and the researchers will not know your identity.

Your participation in this study does not yield any direct benefits to you. However, analysis of the data generated from your participation in this study is intended to provide current information on the most desirable qualifications an entry-level school administrator could possess that could increase the ability to select the most desirable candidates.

All surveys and research data collected will be stored securely and confidentially on a password-protected server. Records of information that you provide for the research study, and any personal information you provide, will not be linked in any way. It will not be possible to identify you as the person who provided any specific information for the study. Because you will complete the survey anonymously, your name or other identifying information will not be used in reports or publications. Only the research team may have access to study records to protect participants' safety and welfare.

Do you agree to participate in this study?

○ Yes

○ No

* 2. Are you currently a K-12 Human Resources Administrator responsible, solely or in part, for hiring entry-level school site administrators?

○ Yes

○ No

* 3. Please indicate your years of experience as a K-12 Human Resources Administrator.

○ Less than one year

○ At least one year, but less than two years

○ At least two years, but less than five years

○ Five years or more

* 4. Please indicate the size of your school district.

○ Less than 5,000

○ 5,000 to 9,999 students

○ 10,000 to 19,999 students

○ 20,000 to 29,000 students

○ More than 30,000 students

* 5. Please indicate the County in California that your school district is located.

○ Los Angeles County

○ Orange County

○ Riverside County

○ San Bernardino County

○ San Diego County

* 6. Your initials

[   ]

APPENDIX H

Round 1 Survey Question

Round 1 Policy Delphi Study - Minami

Round 1 Survey

RESEARCH STUDY TITLE: A Delphi Study of the most desirable qualifications for selecting entry-level school site administrators with no prior administrative experience.

For the purposes of this study, Qualifications can be related to prior experiences, skills, or traits which the participants can describe aspects of which make the qualification desirable.

1. What qualifications do you, a K-12 Human Resources administrator, identify as important when selecting an administrative candidate with no prior administrative experience for an entry-level school site administrative position?

Round 2 Survey Question

Round 2 Policy Delphi Study - Minami

* 1. Based upon the first survey, the below are the qualifications which were identified as desirable in candidates who were applying for an entry-level school site administrative position with no prior administrative experience.

Please rate the importance of each qualification listed below as it pertains to selecting a candidate for an entry-level school site administrative position who had no prior administrative experience.

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Low Importance	Not at all Important
Advanced Degrees	○	○	○	○	○	○
Appropriate Credentials	○	○	○	○	○	○
Uses Good Judgement/ Common Sense	○	○	○	○	○	○
Positive Attitude/Energy	○	○	○	○	○	○
Willingness to Continue Learning/Growing/Developing (Leadership Disposition)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Prior Teaching Experiences	○	○	○	○	○	○
Knowledge of Curriculum	○	○	○	○	○	○
Knowledge of Instructional Strategies	○	○	○	○	○	○
Innovative	○	○	○	○	○	○
Culturally Proficient	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Ability to Solve Problems	○	○	○	○	○	○
Resume	○	○	○	○	○	○
Knowledge Associated with Student Discipline & Attendance	○	○	○	○	○	○
Prior Leadership Experiences/ Roles Serving Others	○	○	○	○	○	○
Longevity in Current Position/District	○	○	○	○	○	○
Success in Current Position/District	○	○	○	○	○	○

	Extremely Important	Very Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important	Low Importance	Not at all Important
Recommendations & References	○	○	○	○	○	○
Equity Minded/ Belief that Every Child Can Learn	○	○	○	○	○	○
Values of Integrity and Service	○	○	○	○	○	○
Excellent Written and Verbal Communication Skills	○	○	○	○	○	○
Currently Viewed as a Leader (Formal or informally)	○	○	○	○	○	○
Love of Children	○	○	○	○	○	○
Emotional Intellignece	○	○	○	○	○	○
Open-Minded	○	○	○	○	○	○
Budget Knowledge/Experience	○	○	○	○	○	○

Round 3 Survey Question

Round 3 Policy Delphi Study - Minami

FINAL Round Survey (Round 3)

Based upon the second survey, below are the rated strategies that K-12 Human Resources Administrators determined as the top four qualifications a candidate for an entry-level school site administrator with no prior experience should possess to be selected for a position.

* 1. "Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families)" was a high-rated qualification for candidates to possess to be selected for a position as an entry-level school site administrator. Describe the aspects of this qualification that you look for which make it so desirable.

* 2. "Uses Good Judgement/ Common Sense" was a high-rated qualification for candidates to possess to be selected for a position as an entry-level school site administrator. Describe the aspects of this qualification that you look for which make it so desirable.

* 3. "Values of Integrity and Service" was a high-rated qualification for candidates to possess to be selected for a position as an entry-level school site administrator. Describe the aspects of this qualification that you look for which make it so desirable.

* 4. "Equity Minded/ Belief that Every Child Can Learn" was a high-rated qualification for candidates to possess to be selected for a position as an entry-level school site administrator. Describe the aspects of this qualification that you look for which make it so desirable.

Identified Qualifications by Mean Score

Identified Qualification	Extremely Important		Very Important		Moderately Important		Slightly Important		Low Importance		Not at all Important		Total	Mean Score
	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count		
Uses Good Judgement/ Common Sense	76.92%	10	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.77
Ability to Build Relationships (students, staff, families)	76.92%	10	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.77
Equity Minded/ Belief that Every Child Can Learn	69.23%	9	30.77%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.69
Values of Integrity and Service	76.92%	10	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.69
Ability to Solve Problems	61.54%	8	38.46%	5	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.62
Success in Current Position/District	53.85%	7	38.46%	5	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.46
Love of Children	61.54%	8	23.08%	3	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.46
Positive Attitude/Energy	38.46%	5	61.54%	8	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.38
Willingness to Continue Learning/Growing/Developing (Leadership Disposition)	46.15%	6	46.15%	6	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.38
Excellent Written and Verbal Communication Skills	30.77%	4	69.23%	9	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.31
Appropriate Credentials	53.85%	7	23.08%	3	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.23
Prior Leadership Experiences/ Roles Serving Others	30.77%	4	61.54%	8	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.23
Emotional Intellignce	38.46%	5	46.15%	6	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.23
Open-Minded	30.77%	4	53.85%	7	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.15
Culturally Proficient	23.08%	3	61.54%	8	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	5.08
Recommendations & References	30.77%	4	46.15%	6	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	13	4.92
Currently Viewed as a Leader (Formal or informally)	23.08%	3	46.15%	6	23.08%	3	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.85
Knowledge of Curriculum	15.38%	2	38.46%	5	30.77%	4	15.38%	2	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.54
Knowledge of Instructional Strategies	15.38%	2	30.77%	4	46.15%	6	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.54
Innovative	15.38%	2	30.77%	4	46.15%	6	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.54
Prior Teaching Experiences	15.38%	2	46.15%	6	15.38%	2	15.38%	2	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	13	4.46
Knowledge Associated with Student Discipline & Attendance	23.08%	3	7.69%	1	46.15%	6	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.31
Resume	7.69%	1	30.77%	4	30.77%	4	30.77%	4	0.00%	0	0.00%	0	13	4.15
Advanced Degrees	0.00%	0	7.69%	1	53.85%	7	30.77%	4	7.69%	1	0.00%	0	13	3.62
Longevity in Current Position/District	0.00%	0	23.08%	3	38.46%	5	23.08%	3	7.69%	1	7.69%	1	13	3.62
Budget Knowledge/Experience	0.00%	0	15.38%	2	46.15%	6	15.38%	2	23.08%	3	0.00%	0	13	3.54