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Mentoring Women Principals

Cheryl Arthur
Trudy A. Salsberry

This review of the literature focuses first on the common reasons for the need for mentoring (professional development, changing roles, principal shortage, under representation of women, and barriers) and continues with a definition and description of mentoring. Finally, the current status of mentoring is summarized followed by a discussion of the implications for research.

In *Rock'N'Roll High School Forever* [movie], notwithstanding improvements in students' academic achievements, the school board is dissatisfied with student discipline. It conveys this message to the principal: "You're too soft for this job. You may know how to teach but you don't know how to discipline. We're going to find someone who does!" The board appoints a female vice-principal, Dr. Vader, who literally possesses an iron fist, wears a grey, Gestapo-like uniform, and encases the school in an electrified fence (Thomas, 1998, p. 96).

For those who have long argued that women are under-represented in the principalship, perhaps the school board's promotion of the female vice-principal signals the beginning of an era where entry, promotion, and retention of females in school administration can be expected. Others may see the movie's portrayal of the new female principal as disappointing in that women must exhibit "iron fisted" leadership styles, characteristics associated more with males, to be successful in administration.

So what is the current status of female school principals? Certainly, women have the dispositions and the credentials for administrative leadership. School districts require leaders who facilitate collaboration and build consensus for student achievement in a dynamic environment of change. This style of leadership reflects the interpersonal skills and concern for people that women principals consistently exhibit (Spencer & Kochan, 2000). Additionally, women principals have more years of teaching experience and tend to have higher academic credentials (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001; Kerrins, Johnstone, & Cushing, 2001).

Women continue to be under-represented in the principalship. Potentially, the issue of the under-representation of women rests in career immobility. Women may not see the principalship, as it currently exists in

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many parts of the world, as a position whose benefits outweigh the risks involved (e.g., family relationships, location, and health) (National Association of Elementary School Principals [NAESP] & Northeast and Islands Regional Educational Laboratory [NIREL], 2003).

The industrial model of school leadership, theoretically, has ended: leadership is not power. Rather, leadership is about serving others and supporting those within the community . . . Leadership through the eyes of women is very different from the old paradigm of efficiency, technology, and the bottom line . . . Women are finding that in order to survive the many roles in which they live, they need to nurture the environments in which they work. (Steele, 2002, p. 190)

Conceivably, potential women administrators do not see the principalship as a position from which they can facilitate change to nurture a better learning environment. If gender equity in school leadership is ever going to be achieved, educators need to consider strategies to address the immobility that confines potential women administrators to their classrooms as teachers. One strategy, mentoring, surfaces in *Coloring Outside the Lines*.

Mentors can greatly shape women's growth and potential in school leadership. As we have seen, it is not enough for women to be trying to "prove themselves" and "work harder" than anyone else. As their mentors can show, women also have to learn the rules and then bend them to their advantage, to be smart and have political savvy [in order] to change the face of educational leadership. (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000, p. 125)

Why Do We Need to Mentor Principals?

The literature reveals five themes associated with the need to mentor principals. In particular, female principals benefit from mentoring because it can address the needs for professional development, increase understanding of the changing role of the principal, provide new administrators to decrease the perceived shortage of principals, increase the number of women in administration, and remove some of the barriers for women in the principalship.

Professional Development

Several studies highlight the need for professional development of principals. Effective principals positively influence student achievement (NAESP & NIREL, 2003). Principals who feel competent and supported exhibit behaviors of effective principals (i.e., they remain at their principalships and encourage others into administration). To hire and retain principals, especially women and minorities, professional development for building administrators requires a strategic plan that includes the following elements:

1. A focus on effective practice that validates teaching and learning as the focus of schooling
2. Hands-on and on-the job training to encourage principals to be teachers of teachers
3. Access to resources that includes research on best practices and the impact of technology in schools
4. Time for reflection
5. Networking with others outside the school building or district, including professional conferences and mentoring. (Hopkins, Lambrecht, & Moss, 1998; McKay, 2001; Maryland State Department of Education, 2000; National Staff Development Council [NSDC], 2000; Tirozzi, 2001; Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998)

The Changing Role of the Principalship

Professional development for principals acquires greater urgency as the role of the school principal significantly changes. The changing role of the principal exposes several common threads: (a) issues of increased teacher and parental expectations for individualized problem solving (Casavant & Cherkowski, 2001); (b) role change from building manager to instructional

leader, requiring a skilled change agent in addition to supervision and curricular expertise (Andrews & Grogan, 2002; DuFour, 1999; Fullan, 2001; Hall & Hord, 2001; Portin, Shen & Williams, 1998); (c) increased diversity in faculty and student learning needs (DuFour, 2003); and (d) mandated legislative and educational reforms (Cline & Necochea, 1997; Copeland, 2001; Maryland State Department of Education, 2000; Peterson & Kelley, 2001; Rayfield & Diamantes, 2003; Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998).

International views of the role of the principalship are consistent with trends in role changes in the United States (U.S.). Although cultures and governments differ, the issues are similar worldwide for female administrators: under-representation in the field of school administration, lack of mentors, and the changing role of the principalship.

Although American principals face accountability for student achievement, outside the U.S., principals face the frequently concurrent issues of increased local management of schools; increased tension between management and school leaders; increased accountability for fiscal responsibility; and school choice (Whitaker, 2003). Perhaps other countries differ from the U.S. only in their failure to focus on increased student achievement in the competing issues they encounter. Regardless of the country, the similarity of the issues for principals suggests that research can be relevant for all women who seek positions in educational administration.

The importance of well-planned, continuous professional development for principals, particularly women, may reside in effective mentoring. A strong network of mentors and well-planned professional development appear to be critical for helping principals adapt to their changing roles in the educational process. The career path of mentored principals suggests that mentoring is especially critical for women and minorities. Mentored females appear to have a more direct route to the principalship, regardless of the gender of their mentors or whether the mentoring was formal or informal (Clark, Caffarella, & Ingram, 1999; Luebkekmann & Clemens, 1995; U.S. Department of Labor, 1992; Ward & Hyle, 1999).

Whether the principal experiences mentoring or not, superintendents and school boards expect superhero-like qualities from building administrators. This view reflects the changing role of the principal, highlights the perceived shortage of candidates applying for positions, and supports the need for mentoring principals once they are hired. The myth of the super-principal, "someone who is everything to everyone," suggests that districts provide support through mentoring, "to help principals deal affirmatively with high expectations" for performance (Copeland, 2001, pp. 6-7). Tirozzi (2001), in an article on the artistry of leadership, noted that with the changing demands

of 21st century school leadership, just under half of the school districts surveyed by Educational Research Service (ERS) reported formal mentoring programs for new principals (p. 5). Similarly, Peterson and Kelley (2001) suggested making careful decisions during hiring. In other words, not expecting to hire a super-hero and providing significant professional development are keys for attracting and retaining principals. Their recommendations for urban, suburban, and rural districts include a mentoring component for professional development.

Perceived Shortage of Principal Candidates

It is difficult to report on the changing role of the principal without establishing a connection to the perceived shortage of principals. “[Principals] are expected to work actively to transform, restructure, and redefine schools while they hold organizational positions [that are] historically and traditionally committed to resisting change and maintaining stability” (Yerkes & Guaglianone, 1998, p. 10). Although the reason for a shortage seems clear, “it’s the job, stupid” said Cushing, Kerrins, and Johnstone (2003, p. 28), statistics highlight the perceived shortage of principal candidates versus the actual number of certified candidates. Superintendents and school districts reveal an almost desperate need for principal candidates. However, the following points clarify the “shortage” situation:

1. The length of time typically spent serving as an assistant principal, before assuming a principalship, has changed from five to seven years to perhaps as little as six months (NAESP & NIREL, 2003, p. 7).
2. In a California study of recently certified administrators, 62% were neither serving as administrators nor seeking such positions: less than 1% said (geographic) mobility affected their job seeking. Forty-six percent of respondents reported that increased satisfaction in their current positions discouraged them from applying for a principalship when consideration was given to the time, stress, lack of support and salary involved (Adams, 1999, p. 9).
3. Women, 70% of the teaching force, now hold 35% of the principalships, nation-wide. African-Americans occupy only 11%. In contrast, white males, represent only 25% of the teaching force, are the least credentialed educators, and they occupy 50% of the

- principalships and more than 80% of superintendent and district office positions (Fenwick & Pierce, 2001, p. 28).
4. A California study found that between 1997 and 1999, the number of *new* administrative certifications was sufficient to fill 65% of the current principal positions (not vacancies, but actual positions) and the number of re-issued or renewed credentials was enough to fill almost 90% of the principal positions in the state (Kerrins et al., 2001, p. 2).
 5. Rural districts experience great challenges in attracting principal candidates. The difference between teacher and principal salaries is smaller in rural districts than in non-rural: rural administrators make about one-third less than their non-rural counterparts (Howley & Pendarvis, 2002, p. 2).

Perhaps the meaning of the terms “certified” and “qualified,” in referring to principal candidates, requires clarification, or at least, consensus. When the university/state department of education grants administrator certification, the implication is that the principal is qualified based on successful completion of certification requirements. When superintendents and school boards refuse to consider female and minority candidates as qualified for the principalship, although candidates hold the same certifications, these school districts essentially, reject university and state department claims regarding administrator preparation. This situation reflects an enormous disconnect that deprives schools of a large, untapped pool of qualified, competent, and motivated principals.

Under-representation of Women in the Principalship

The perceived shortage of qualified candidates appears to coincide with the under-representation of women and minorities in the principalship. Statistics from the United States Department of Education (USDE) for 1999-2000 stated that women and minorities occupy the greatest numbers of principalships when the student minority enrollment is 30% or more and when those principalships are in central city schools with a total enrollment of 500-749 students (U.S.D.E. & National Center for Education Statistics 2004).

There are more than adequate numbers of certified candidates. These candidates include women and minorities, under-represented in administrative positions and who face barriers in hiring and staying in

principalships (Hammond, Muffs, & Sciascia, 2001; Howley & Pendarvis, 2002; Tallerico, 1999; Tallerico & Tingley, 2001).

When asked to rank order five reasons given for the under-representation of women in administration, the statement, "insufficient role modeling, networking and mentoring among women," was ranked first or second by 70% of study participants, and first, second or third by 89% of the participants (Gupton & Slick, 1996, p. 68).

Barriers to Women in the Principalship

The barriers to women entering and staying in the principalship are varied, however there does seem to be agreement that barriers exist for women in administration both in the U.S. and internationally (Berman, 1998; Clark et al., 1999; Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Gardiner, Enomoto & Grogan, 2000; Gupton & Del Rosario, 1998; Hudson & Rea, 1996; Orem, 2002; Ragins, Townsend, & Mattis, 1998; Shepard, 1998; Tallerico & Tingley, 2001). For example, an international study of women administrators (China, Commonwealth of Dominica, Cyprus, Gambia, Greece, Indonesia, Iraq, Kuwait, and Zambia) found women in these countries did not experience:

uniform "glass ceilings" or "glass walls" . . . [barriers] were not consistent across societies and cultures, nor were they homogenous within each society or culture. The barriers experienced by the women . . . [were] by specific cultural and religious belief and values, as well as socio-economic and political factors. (Cubillo & Brown, 2003, p. 8)

Amid all the confirmation of barriers and inhibitors to women seeking administrative positions, Smith, Smith, Cooley, and Shen (2000) gave a fair summary of the under-representation of women and minorities. When men are hired for the principalship, they are expected to grow into the role and culture of administration; women are hired with the expectation that they already excel in all facets of the position.

Glass (2000), in a study for the American Association of School Administrators, addressed the barriers to women in administration by noting that more than 50% of graduate students in educational administration programs are female. Women received doctorates at about the same rate as men, but only 10% of the female doctoral candidates earned leadership credentials, in other words, 90% of female doctoral candidates did not attempt building principal or central office certification (p. 29).

Additionally, Glass (2000) revealed that women in leadership positions have a less developed mentoring system when compared to men. Along with

suggesting that states provide incentives for women entering administration, Glass stated that carefully choosing mentors could attract women into leadership. Similarly, several authors stated the importance of mentoring for attracting and retaining principals, although only half reported the specific importance of mentoring for women in administration (Adams, 1999; Cushing et al., 2003; Hammond et al., 2001; Hopkins et al., 1998; Howley & Pendarvis, 2002; Lovely, 2004; NAESP & NIREL, 2003; Orem, 2002; Portin, Schneider, DeArmond & Gundlach, 2003; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Ragins et al., 1998; Shipman, Topps, & Murphy, 1998).

So, do school districts need to mentor potential women principals as well as those who are already in the position? Yes, unless school districts do not mind missing half the market of qualified, competent candidates (Glass, 2000).

What Does Mentoring Look Like?

The concept of mentoring incorporates a plethora of examples and nomenclatures. Historically, the poet/philosopher Homer, circa eighth or ninth century B.C., is credited with the term, "mentor." Mentor is the name of the character chosen by the Goddess Athena, in *The Odyssey*, for helping Telemachus to "mature, to learn courage, prudence, honesty and a commitment to serving others" (Woodd, 1997, p. 333). The task was to be accomplished through Mentor's wisdom and moral teachings to the much younger protégé. The continued use of the term, mentor, indicates the importance of the mentoring relationship for the emotional, social, and intellectual growth of the protégé.

One best definition of mentoring, because the word is used frequently in common speech, may not exist. There does seem to be agreement on the common use of the word mentor to describe a relationship between a senior adult and a junior protégé for the purpose of teaching the junior needed skills and attitudes for success at work and in life. In the field of educational administration, the term mentor previously defined a relationship promoting the inculcation of the status quo through what was, and continues to be, identified by some as the "good ol' boys network." Mentoring relationships developed so that the new principal would understand "how things are done around here" in terms of personnel and curriculum. Although the relationships described in educational literature still use the terms mentor and protégé, Homer would probably recognize few of the functions and outcomes of mentoring.

Perhaps a strict definition of the word mentoring is not as important as clarifying the process of mentoring as it currently exists and what it could become in the future. To make the definition of mentoring women in school administration align with other processes of professional development, a working definition of a mentoring relationship may be more appropriate. For the purposes of this discussion, the process of mentoring has some or all of the following characteristics:

1. A symbiotic relationship where both mentor and protégé benefit intrinsically and extrinsically, although not necessarily to the same degree.
2. Changes in behavior occur as a result of frequent communication between mentor/protégé.
3. The relationship, an evolutionary process of interdependence ultimately establishing peer collaboration, develops according to phases using Kram's phases (initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition) as a framework (Chao, 1997; Kram, 1983, p. 614, 621).
4. Mentors may be from inside or outside the district, they may be of any appropriate age, and they may or may not have successful experience in the position.

Principals who have mentors and coaches as part of an extensive, career-long network of relationships for career and psychosocial enhancement may experience greater satisfaction, or less dissatisfaction, as the role of the principalship changes. To perceive that job satisfaction will encourage potential administrators to enter the field and will encourage those already in the field of educational administration to remain there is a logical conclusion.

A working definition sheds light on the necessity and the process of mentoring. However, the structures and functions of mentoring, when mentoring occurs, and the relationship between those involved in mentoring reveal a vein-like network of overlapping experiences all streaming toward hiring and retaining principals, especially women.

Types of Mentoring

Almost as varied as the interpretations of the term mentoring are the different types of mentoring that occur. The significance for educational administration is highlighted in the impact on attracting teachers to the principalship, as well as the impact on the growth and continued development for retention of experienced administrators.

Informal Versus Formal Mentoring

Informal mentoring relationships may be described as moving through Kram's four phases of "initiation, cultivation, separation, and redefinition" (1983, p. 621). Each phase of the mentoring relationship, independent of terminology employed, consists of cognitive and affective experiences shaped by the protégé's "individual needs and by organizational circumstances" (Kram, 1983, p. 621).

Informal mentoring relationships develop spontaneously, whereas formal mentoring relationships—with organizational assistance or development—are usually in the form of voluntary assignment or matching of mentors and protégés . . . Formal relationships are usually of much shorter duration than informal. (Ragins & Cotton, 1999, p. 529)

Informal and formal mentoring relationships differ in how the initiation of the relationship transpires: informal relationships form based on perceived similarities between the mentor and protégé (e.g. similar attitudes toward interactions with staff); formal programs usually assign mentors. The structure of formal mentoring relationships delineates meeting times, agendas, the goals, and the duration of the relationship. In contrast, informal mentoring lasts over a period of up to six years, has goals that respond to the current environment, and meet flexibly and spontaneously (Allen, Russell, & Maetzke, 1997; Blake-Beard, 2001).

Several authors note the importance of formal and informal mentoring for women seeking leadership positions (Ehrich, 1995; Hubbard & Robinson, 1998; Ragins, Cotton, & Miller, 2000; Reyes, 2003; Russell & Adams, 1997). The under-representation of women in school administration, especially at the secondary level, influences the ability of women to mentor other women based on sheer numbers of available mentors (National Center for Education Statistics, 2001). Perceived similarities between mentor and protégé, so important in the initiation of informal mentoring relationships, becomes an obstacle when few women occupy leadership positions from which to mentor (Burke & McKeen, 1997a; Ragins, 1997). Women administrators are consequently forced to participate in formal mentoring programs for career advancement. Since these formal relationships are matched, short in duration, and have pre-arranged agendas and times, they may become barriers to the advancement of women and other minorities (Blake-Beard, 2001; Dreher & Dougherty, 1997; Friday & Friday, 2002; Gardiner, Enomoto, and Grogan, 2000; MacGregor, 2000; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Ragins et al., 2000). In referring to formal mentoring programs as organizational interventions attempting to replicate informal relationships,

Ragins et al. (2000) supported earlier findings (Ragins, 1997) with discussions of power in the mentor/protégé relationship. Minority mentors are viewed as having less power in the organization and are avoided by majority protégés. A summary of this study revealed that homogeneous mentor/protégé relationships have more mentoring functions than majority mentor/minority protégé. For example, minority mentor/minority protégé pairings promoted the psychosocial and role modeling functions of mentoring; majority mentor/majority protégé experience career development, psychosocial, and role modeling functions in their mentoring relationships (Allen, Poteet, Russell, & Dobbins, 1997; Hite, 1998; Ragins, 1997). Ragins et al. (2000) reported that the quality of the mentoring affects participants' work attitudes and satisfaction with the relationship, regardless of whether the mentoring is formal or informal.

Peer Mentoring

Mentoring metamorphosed from an authoritarian, parent/child relationship to one more congruent with the changing role of the principal. The traditional parent/child relationship, the functionalist perspective of mentoring, occurred predominately in educational systems in adult/student mentoring and new teacher/master teacher relationships. Much of the current practice in *principal* mentoring reflects the Radical Humanist perspective: mentoring is collegial and promotes co-learning (Darwin, 2000; MacGregor, 2000). The evolution of the mentoring process emphasized the need to include alternative mentoring relationships that encompass women in the administrative network. Indeed, mentoring now includes peer and peer-group mentoring, critical friends, and coaching (Conyers, 2004; Holbeche, 1996; Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Knouse, 2001; Robertson, 1997; Russell & Adams, 1997). All include the elements of the working definition of mentoring. For example, the symbiotic and evolutionary nature of the relationship and the use of frequent communication are particularly important in peer mentoring, coaching, and in the development of critical friends.

Hansen and Matthews (2002) made a strong case for peer mentoring, although not as an informal, one-on-one relationship. Barth (as cited in Hansen and Matthews, 2002) promoted the development of collegial networks that, "improve the quality of life and learning in schools" and "clarify operating assumptions, establish opportunities for shared problem solving and reflection, and create mutual support and trust for personal and professional relationships" (p. 30). A parallel, although one-on-one, process of professional development is described by Robertson (1997) in a study of "critical friends," a pairing of principals that combined coaching and peer

data gathering (p. 2). Coaching, described as a short, skill-intensive mentoring process, has its impact through the high level of knowledge and skill of the mentor or coach (Hopkins-Thompson, 2000; Yerkes, 2001). Lovely (2004) discussed the importance of both instructional and facilitative coaching. Facilitative coaching builds the emotional intelligence of the new principal above the blame and defensiveness levels to encourage transformational leadership (Bloom, Castagna, & Warren, 2003; Lovely, 2004). Another form of cognitive coaching, called peer coaching, differed in that the peers developed a collegial relationship for the specific purpose of reflecting on problem solving, with the added benefit of reducing isolation (London & Sinicki, 1999; Barnett, 1995).

Mentoring Relationships

Studies of the mentoring relationship focus on a number of issues. These issues are being discussed under three general themes: (a) outcomes and functions, (b) costs and benefits, and (c) characteristics of mentors, their training and selection.

Outcomes and Functions of Mentoring

Ragins is the most prolific author of studies that address the outcome and functions of the mentoring relationship. Although her research is not taken from the educational environment, much of Ragin's work provides empirical support for Kram's (1983) phases and speaks especially to gender issues. Several of Ragin's ideas are replicated in other studies. The findings of her studies include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. There were no significant differences between men and women in mentoring experiences, intentions to mentor, or the benefits/costs associated with mentoring relationships. (Ragins & Scandura, 1994)
2. Female protégés with a history of male mentors received significantly more promotions than male protégés (regardless of the gender of their mentors); however, female protégés did *not* receive more compensation. Female mentors with male mentors received significantly greater compensation than female protégés with a history of female mentors (Ragins & Cotton, 1999). Additionally, protégés with informal mentors reported greater satisfaction with mentoring and significantly more compensation than protégés with formal mentoring relationships (Burke & McKeen, 1997b; Ragins & Cotton, 1999).

3. Individuals in highly satisfying mentoring relationships reported more positive attitudes than non-mentored individuals, but the attitudes of those in dysfunctional or marginally satisfying relationships were equivalent to, and in some cases lower than, those of non-mentored individuals (Ragins et al., 2000).
4. Ragins' research, and that of others, showed that for career advancement and mentoring relationship satisfaction, informal mentoring relationships are better, especially for women (Ragins, 1997; Ragins & Cotton, 1999; Ragins et al., 2000; Ragins & Scandura, 1994; Schwiebert, Deck, Bradshaw, Scott, & Harper, 1999).
5. Scandura (1998) provided a framework for identifying marginally satisfying mentoring relationships and those that are considered dysfunctional, ultimately ending in termination of the relationship (Ragins & Scandura, 1997; Scandura, 1998). The framework consisted of two good-intention and two bad-intention types of dysfunctional mentoring. The good-intention behaviors were: (a) difficulty (conflict, a psychosocial function), and (b) spoiling (betrayal, a vocational or career function of the mentoring relationship) (Scandura, 1998). Bad-intention mentoring behaviors were: (a) negative relations (bullies, a psychosocial function), and (b) sabotage (a vocational function) (Scandura, 1998). Because dysfunctional mentoring relationships were harmful to the mentor, the protégé, and the organization, Scandura's (1998) framework offered an expanded view of Kram's (1985) work on organizational mentoring.

Benefits and Costs

Several studies addressed the benefits and costs of participation in a mentoring relationship. Benefits to mentors included the following: (a) greater reflection of mentor's own professional practice through sharing (Allen & Eby, 2003; Bush & Coleman, 1995; Harris & Crocker, 2003; Playko, 1995); (b) reduced feelings of isolation/increased teamwork feelings (Allen & Eby, 2003; Playko, 1995); and (c) opportunity for self-renewal and continued learning (Bush & Coleman, 1995; Harris & Crocker, 2003). Benefits to protégés included: (a) practical knowledge and skills not studied in university preparation courses; (b) positive, pertinent feedback; (c) support for isolation and socialization to the position; and (d) career advancement (Playko, 1995). Although the benefits and costs of a mentoring relationship may vary with the individuals and the environment, Ragins and Scandura's

(1999) study suggested that protégés were more likely than non-mentored individuals to consider the benefit per cost ratio to be greater than one. In other words, it was reasoned that the benefits of being mentored would exceed the perceived negative aspects of a mentoring relationship (e.g., time).

Characteristics of Mentors

Successful mentoring programs have three common elements: (a) release-time for the mentor to be available to the protégé; (b) guidelines defining the role of the protégé in meaningful activities; and (c) training for mentors (Allen & Poteet, 1999; Barrett, 2002; Crocker & Harris, 2002; Holloway, 2004). Training for the principals who become mentors is so important that it is a mandatory element in the Potential Administrator Development Program (PADP), promoting the collaboration between Halifax County Schools in North Carolina, the National Association of Secondary School Principals, and Eastern Carolina University (Peel, Wallace, Buckner, Wrenn, & Evans, 1998). Additionally, the National Association of School Principals (NAESP) has recently developed the National Principals Mentoring Certification Program as part of the organization's Principals Advisory Leadership Services (NAESP, 2004).

How do school districts or university preparation programs select principal mentors? Geismar, Morris, & Lieberman's (2000) study revealed that there are two characteristics that separate mentors from non-mentors: (a) cognitive skills (interpersonal search, information search, concept formation, conceptual flexibility); and quality enhancement (achievement motivation, management control, developmental orientation). "Principals with high levels of these two characteristics make excellent mentors," said Geismar et al. (2000), who recommended using the Mentor Identification Instrument (Malone, 2001).

What is the Current Status of Mentoring?

Principal mentoring occurs across the world (e.g., North America, Asia, Africa, Europe, and Australia.) The opportunities traverse a continuum from pre-service to early career to life coaching. Additionally, Higgins and Kram (2001) revisited the concept of one individual having multiple mentors in his or her career, thus setting the stage for a potentially large network of mentoring relationships. Although cultures and governments differ internationally, the issues are similar for female administrators: (a) underrepresentation in the field of school administration, (b) the lack of qualified

and available mentors, and (c) the changing role of the principalship. Knowledge of mentoring programs in many parts of the world accentuates the experiences of mentoring women administrators through shared successes and barriers.

Pre-service Administrator Programs

The programs used by school districts to encourage aspiring principals reflect variations in delivery and in the acronyms for the titles. For example, BELL (Building Education Leaders Locally), GOO (Grow Our Own), and SLI (School Leadership Initiative) represent programs that may inspire participants to pursue administrator certification (Bloom & Krovetz, 2001; Oregon School Board Association, 2001; Zellner, Jenkins, Gideon, Doughty, & McNamara, 2002). The programs specifically address the “grow your own” idea by encouraging assistant principals and lead teachers to experience the principalship as a mentored observer. Frequent conversations with experienced principals support the daily observations. Similarly, some school districts refer to their programs as internships, providing release time and a more intense experience as the interns participate in the daily activities of the mentoring principals (Calder, 2001; Cottrill, 1994; Erickson, 2001; Geismar et al., 2000). As with all of the aspiring principals’ academies, the school districts, private organizations and/or universities work collaboratively to provide mentoring experiences that encourage educators who may want to proceed into university degree programs (Restine, 1997; Tracy & Weaver, 2000).

Reyes (2003) reported on the importance of pre-service mentoring to movement into administration. The study found that participants who received pre-service mentoring by principals were more likely to be placed as an assistant principal within one year of completing the certification requirements. Additionally, minority and women participants who did not receive pre-service mentoring, “were still in the classroom as teachers after one year of successfully completing” the same preparation requirements (Reyes, 2003, p. 59).

Principal Preparation Programs

Internationally, principal pre-service programs often reflected the culture of the country, especially as it pertained to women in leadership positions. A comparison of principal preparation programs in China and the United States (Su, Adams, & Mininberg, 2000) found that American principal preparation

programs were two-year, university degree-based, and covered a variety of curricular, management, and community issues. Americans primarily self-selected to participate. As recently as 1995, the Chinese National Ministry of Education required, after appointment to the principalship, a certificate of training (several months of courses) prior to job placement (Su et al., 2000). Significantly, both Chinese and American administrators placed highest priority on the need for mentoring and coaching by practicing administrators as part of the preparation process. Bush and Chew's (1999) study compared the preparation programs for principals in Singapore and in England and Wales. Mentoring for school heads in England and Wales voluntarily occurred during their first year, provided mostly psychosocial support, and constituted the only required training to be a school head. Unlike their counterparts in the study, Singapore's aspiring principals completed a one-year course of study that included a mentoring internship of eight weeks. During the eight weeks, the protégé (released from teaching duties) accepted a full-time position in a mentor principal's school (Boon, 1998).

Studies of aspiring principal mentor programs found in other parts of the world may energize principal preparation programs in the U.S. by illustrating how and when mentoring occurs. Current practice for U.S. universities appears to be project-based experiences in the employing school. These experiences encourage extensive structured observation, but contain few of the elements contained in the working definition of mentoring. The Regional Principal Preparation Program (RP3) was an attempt by the College of Education at Virginia Tech to alter radically its administrator preparation programs (Gordon & Moles, 1994). In developing what would now be identified as a field-based internship, RP3 focused on the mentoring relationship between the intern and the practicing principal. An unintended result of the mentoring relationship that was closely tied to the university program was the professional development benefits for the mentor principal.

If mentoring is recognized as a viable strategy for improving the careers of women principals, university programs will need to make changes in terms of the curriculum (expand the range of guiding leadership theories) and in the delivery of programs (collaborative programs with school districts that encourage co-mentoring). Suggestions for changes to university programs include: changing leadership theories, clarifying the requirements of effective preparation programs, establishing collaborative programs in school districts, and promoting co-mentoring among graduate students.

In a study of leadership theories taught in principal preparation programs, Irby, Brown, Duffy, and Trautman (2002) found that the male-based leadership theories promote five problems.

1. Leadership theories frequently taught do not reflect currently advocated leadership practices or organizational paradigms.
2. The theories most commonly taught in leadership preparation programs are not applicable to all learners.
3. The male-based leadership theories advanced in coursework, texts, and discussions perpetuate barriers that women leaders encounter.
4. The theories promote stereotypical norms for organizations. This indirect discrimination results in organizational norms that do not allow for diversity.
5. Male-based leadership theories fail to give voice to a marginalized group (women and minorities) in the population of chief executive officers in education. (p. 307-308)

In promoting an expanded curriculum of leadership theories for principal preparation programs, Irby et al. (2002) stated that including the Synergistic Leadership Theory in graduate studies would provide a relational and interactive theory that applies more appropriately to both males and females.

Clark and Clark (1997) also revealed concerns for the needs of women and minority leaders in restructuring a university educational administration program. Their task force for restructuring developed five elements of an effective leadership preparation program, including the following:

... instructional practices that facilitate involvement ... in project-based learning objectives; ... [have] field-based experiences; ... and increase the quality of mentoring and internship experiences ... Cohort groups have been found to be especially beneficial to women in addressing their needs and preferences for affiliation during the learning experience. ... (building a knowledge base, p. 21)

Similarly, Mann (1998) and Aiken (2002) reported that principal professional development should be collegial and should include job-embedded, authentic tasks, not only as part of preparation programs, but as an attempt to retain principals in the field of educational administration. Mullen (2000a) took the collegial nature of mentoring to a new level in a relationship called, co-mentoring. The premise of co-mentoring is a break from the traditional model of mentoring. Traditionally, “university faculties are grounded in theory while school faculties are grounded in practice, but neither group has established a process with which to mentor one another and to be co-researchers and co-authors” (a collaborative mentoring model, p. 4). Co-mentoring helps the school administrators become researchers and university faculty to become collaborators: “co-mentoring encourages

professional learning among partners that enables (both) organizational cultures to be reworked” (Mullen, 2000b, energizing school-university walkways, p. 4; Mullen & Lick, 1999). Educational administration programs could encourage collaborative instructional leadership by focusing on field-based problems in administration and by requiring collaboration with field-based practitioners (Andrews & Grogan, 2002; Daresh, 1997; Kochan & Trimble, 2000; Mullen, 2000b).

Some authors suggested potential changes to university educational administration programs to ensure that “certification” equates with “qualified” in the minds and perceptions of school districts. These stakeholders require confidence that principals have the knowledge, dispositions, and performance abilities (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996) to meet the challenges of the changing role of the principalship. If there is a shortage of “qualified” candidates for principal vacancies, then principal candidates, preparation programs, and school districts must collaborate on the following:

1. The changing role of the principalship and how to make the position more attractive
2. Why women and minorities do not seek principal positions or, worse, are not given the opportunity to apply for the position
3. Mentoring women into, beginning, and during the principalship

In summary, school districts perceive a shortage of qualified candidates for principal positions. State Departments of Education certify more than enough candidates each school year to fill vacancies: approximately half of these newly certified candidates are women. Additionally, women and minorities are under-represented in principalships: some are not being considered as qualified candidates by school districts, other qualified women may not accept the negatives aspects of the role. Women who are mentored, either into the principalship or during service, consider mentoring beneficial to their careers (Gardiner, Enomoto, & Grogan, 2000; MacGregor, 2000; Ragins & Scandura, 1999).

Beginning Principals and Early Years Programs

Krajewski, Conner, Murray, and Williams (2004) offered the results of a study conducted by Farkus, Johnson, and Duffett as follows:

A recent survey found that 67% of principals believe that school of education leadership programs are out of touch with what it takes to run a school district; only 4% praise their graduate studies, and a majority say that mentoring and guidance from people they work with has the greatest benefit for them. (p. 2)

This view of principal preparation programs hails from principals just starting their careers and who may be experiencing the isolation that will likely happen throughout their administrative tenure. Perhaps these lessons of isolation are un-teachable and un-learnable in university preparation programs. Establishing mentoring relationships may alleviate the sense of isolation and provide opportunities for career advancement, collegiality, enculturation, and professional development (Holloway, 2004; Kritek, 1999; Lashway, 2003a, 2003b).

Daresch and Male (2000) compared British and U.S. first-year induction programs for principals/heads and reported three findings. First, U.S. administrators have extensive university preparation for the principalship while the British heads have no training or certification for leadership. Second, Great Britain legislated a formal induction program for new leaders, funded it for one year, and then dropped the program as an unfunded mandate. Third and more importantly, is the similarity between U.S. and British training systems regarding isolation. Both British and American beginning principals experienced isolation and a lack of support from the organizations that hired them (Daresch & Male, 2000).

The early career occurrences of principal mentoring seem to vary state-to-state in structure and in funding, but appear to be based on a 1985 Danforth Foundation Program (Monsour, 1998) or are developed in conjunction with universities. Career advancement may be a value-added element of mentoring new administrators (Limerick & Andersen, 1999); however, psycho-social support and enculturation that address the isolation felt early in a principal's career are critical components of many formal and informal programs (Bloom, 2004; Bolam, McMahon, Pocklington, & Weindling, 1995; Brock & Grady, 1996; Bush & Coleman, 1995; Dukess, 2001; Lovely, 1999; Monsour, 1998; Norton, 2001; Robertson, 1997; Shevitz, 1998; Southworth, 1995; Weingartner, 2001). This need to address isolation and to address career advancement may be a greater need for women, as fewer numbers of women administrators currently hold positions from which they can mentor (Hansen & Matthews, 2002; Samier, 2000).

An interesting twist on the mentor role is found in the University of Santa Cruz, CA, partnership programs with school districts in central California. With "professional coaching at the heart" (Bloom, 1999, p. 14),

of the new principal programs, mentors cannot be full time administrators. They are, instead, retirees or New Teacher Center employees with extensive administrative experience and are highly competent professional coaches. Additionally, Bloom (1999) reported that new principals had to learn how to participate, as protégés, in the coaching/mentoring process. Some principals were resistant to the developmental aspect of mentoring and sought out other new principals as peer-coaches. In Singapore, beginning principals continued their professional learning by primarily using peers or “fellow principals” as mentors (Lim, 2002, p. 2). As in the U.S., using peer mentoring helped expand the principals’ network beyond the school district to include professional organizations and cohort university groups.

An alternative to peer mentoring is offered by the National Association of Elementary School Principals (NAESP) at the organization’s website, www.naesp.org/mentorcenter (Malone, 2002, p. 6). At the Mentoring Center, fellow principals offer advice through scenarios of typical dilemmas experienced by new principals. Online mentoring for principals continues to develop in a variety of formats. The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) has the Virtual Mentor Program for secondary principals at www.principals.org/CPD/self/mentors.cfm (McC Campbell, 2002). “Technology-mediated leadership development” (Webber, 2003, p. 201) guided an effort by the University of Calgary, Alberta, Canada. Started as an email discussion group, this listserv now performs the function of international leadership development through online courses, resource materials, and increasingly available face-to-face online interactions between leaders. The only limit, says Webber (2003), to the online informal and formal mentoring that occurs is the access to technology for participants. Knouse (2001) added that the instant feedback and information found in virtual mentoring are cost-effective. The anonymity of online mentoring opens doors for women and other minority principals to gain access to mentoring relationships.

Other attempts to provide online professional development for new principals have met with tougher obstacles. Northeast Ohio’s Principal’s Academy Entry-Year Program (EYP) based its program objectives on extensive use of the program’s website including functions such as a bulletin board, mail, and chat, in addition to electronic resource links (Beebe, Trenta, Covrig, Cosiano, & Eastridge, 2002). Although the program developers recognized the need to lessen new principals’ feelings of isolation through instant access to supportive networks, they failed to anticipate the amount of time new principals had to commit to learning how to work the software. Much more successful and enduring is the formation of electronic journaling

triads as described by Riede (2003). Riede, a superintendent in New York, described the relationship as a formal mentoring program as he wrote daily advice and support to his two protégés—a new high school and a new elementary principal—who are literally hundreds of miles apart in the state of New York. The mentoring relationship is as strong as any face-to-face mentoring with all participants reaching the ultimate mentor/protégé level: collaboration as peers. That the three have become close friends points to the emotional level attainable through mentoring, even if the contact is online.

Career Mentoring

The mentoring needs of experienced principals differ from those of new administrators in several aspects. For example, new principals need support for the transition to practice and for the potential isolation. The mentoring needs of experienced administrators are, however, similar to those of new principals (Daresh & Playko, 1994). New and career principals communicate a desire to establish and expand professional networks. Additionally, both groups should experience professional development activities that enrich the leadership and learning opportunities for continuing success in the principalship.

Although few examples are found in the literature for mentoring career principals, what is presented is rich in stories of the impact of mentoring for continued principal collegiality and in its focus on student achievement and learning. By focusing on student learning and achievement, mentoring to acquire specific building-based skills can be enhanced by targeted learning or job-embedded learning (e.g., mentor and protégé doing walkthroughs together to improve the feedback for teachers, Barry & Kaneko, 2002; Dussault & Barnett, 1996; Lairon & Vidales, 2003). Programs to retain quality principals appear to embrace the collegial nature of mentoring (Willen, 2001) and highlight the need for a network of mentor support and professional development (Zellner et al., 2002). Additionally, some districts are employing life coaches to make the direct connection between school leadership and student achievement (Killion, 2002; Sparks, 2001).

Successful mentoring focuses on student achievement and develops professional collegiality through an expanding network of mentors. These programs manifest in a variety of ways and in a variety of settings throughout the world, but appear to be particularly effective in attracting and retaining women for careers in administration.

What are the Implications for Research with Respect to Mentoring?

The earlier questions in this review regarding mentoring women principals (Why do we need to mentor principals? What does mentoring look like? What is the current status of mentoring?) do not necessarily clarify the practice of mentoring. In fact, there has not been enough information gleaned through research to fully describe and predict the “best practice(s)” for mentoring principals. Until a body of research convinces superintendents and school boards of what is considered “best practice,” journals will continue to report a variety of efforts to mentor at a variety of career points with little confirmation these efforts will be successful.

It is important, then, that research continue. First, there is a need to investigate aspects of *formal* mentoring programs that could replicate or enhance the reported successes of informal mentoring relationships. Specifically, more research could clarify mentor training curricula (What should be in the curriculum? How should the curriculum be delivered? How long a time should this training occur?) for those who are to be mentors. Training for the protégé on how to benefit from mentoring, whether that mentoring is formal or informal, also needs clarity.

Another important issue for further consideration is how best to capture and assimilate the mentoring experiences from other cultures. Mentoring experiences around the world have similarities and important differences. However, if the body of research is to be large enough to influence the field of educational administration, an attempt must be made to share or report experiences in a manner that increases the opportunities for all voices to be heard (Megginson, 2000.)

Allen and Eby (2003) suggested that the duration of the mentoring relationship, shorter (up to 1 year) versus longer (up to 6 or 7 years) influences mentoring effectiveness, as do the perceived similarities between mentor/protégé and the learning and quality in the relationship (p. 481). The issue of duration of the mentoring relationship deserves continued investigation. This may be especially important for women seeking administrative positions and those who experience changing family commitments over time as primary caregivers for children and parents.

Furthermore, the impact of the changing role of the principalship and its relationship to mentoring necessitates further investigation. How do mentors recognize and assimilate their influence on protégés if the role of the principal continues to change? Is the increased demand for accountability for student achievement an issue that mentoring can address? If so, in what form

should the mentoring be and who should do the mentoring? How do universities accept the challenge of training mentors as the role of the principalship continues to change? The answers to these questions may reside in listening to more women's stories of their experiences seeking the principalship and to their stories of experiencing longevity in the dynamic environment of education and school administration and not by accepting images depicting the female principal as an iron-fisted version of her male counterpart.

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