

THE CONCEPT OF FIT: INTERSECTIONS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

by

Scott Vaughn Smith

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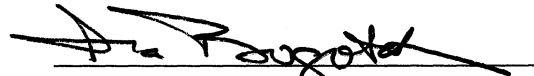
THE CONCEPT OF FIT: INTERSECTIONS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

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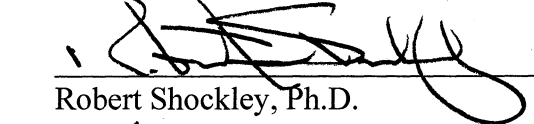
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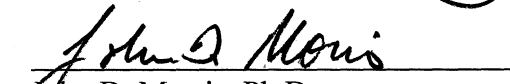
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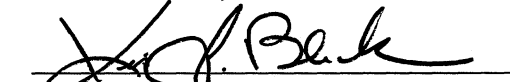
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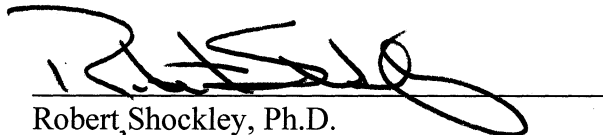
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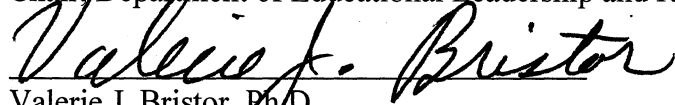
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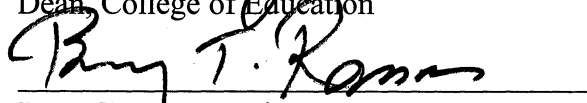
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ABSTRACT

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The purpose of this mixed method study was to understand how demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit influenced secondary school assistant principal (AP) selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the Paradise School District (pseudonym) leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The statistical results suggested that demographic fit (gender and race/ethnicity) was not related to AP selection. However, the results indicated that Hispanic candidates were selected at a higher rate than other groups of candidates. The results also indicated that Black candidates were selected at the same rate as the average for all candidates; however these results may be misleading because Black candidates were disproportionately over-represented in the study sample.

Regarding organizational fit, the study results suggested that candidates who indicated one of three specific Myers-Briggs personality types (ESTJ, ENTJ, or ENFP) were selected at higher rates than candidates of the other 13 personality types. The

suggested personality traits for secondary school APs found in this study included (a) Extroversion (E), (b) Feeling (F), and (c) Judging (J). The results also indicated the only category statistically related to selection was group fit or the references the candidates used in the hiring process. Candidates who referenced more than one hiring administrator, at or above the level of principal, were selected at higher rates than candidates who referenced only one principal.

The interviews suggested balancing the demographics of a school's administrative staff, using gender and race/ethnicity, to the the community the school serves was related to selection. The interviews also disclosed that Black, Hispanic, and candidates with expertise in operations and curricula might be suggested over other candidates. The interviews also suggested that networking, sponsorship, interview impressions, and references were related to the selection processes.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to every educator who helped a student fullfill a dream.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Background

Personnel turnover among educators causes increased costs for school districts and instability for schools, communities, and students (Johnson, 2004). For this reason, improving the processes of recruitment, selection, and socialization related to *fit*, finding the right educator for selection and placement in the right environment, is important for educational systems. Conversely, selecting educators who do not fit the context in which they will work wastes valuable energy and resources (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992; Robinson, Lloyd, & Rowe, 2008).

The concept of fit has many definitions depending on how it is applied (Duke, 1986; Duke & Iwanicki, 1992; Tooms, Lugg, & Bogotch, 2010) and varies greatly from different viewpoints and perspectives; in each case context is the key. According to Duke & Iwanicki (1992), fit is “the extent to which a leader is perceived to be appropriately matched to a given context” (p. 26). Furthermore, “Fit [is] best understood as perception or attribution when all other qualifications are considered equal” (Tooms et al., 2010, p. 98). In this current study, fit is delimited to selecting and assimilating secondary school assistant principals (APs) into the proper context by those delegated the hiring responsibilities in a diverse urban school district. This mixed methods study utilized documents, surveys, and interviews for data collection and analyses.

Study Purpose

The purpose of this mixed method study is to understand how demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit influenced secondary school AP selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the Paradise School District (pseudonym) leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. It includes findings that address the probability of being selected as a secondary school AP using the variables of gender, race, personality types, personality traits, and professional relationships. While the data regarding the probability of being selected as secondary school APs in the Paradise School District come from the District's internal data sources, the probability of selection is not widely known by aspirants before they make career decisions and invest time and effort in the pursuit of an administrative position.

The three categories of fit; demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit, are discussed in each chapter. In brief, demographic fit refers to fitting a candidate's gender and race/ethnicity to context (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). Williams and O'Reilly (1998) reviewed more than 80 studies and defined two of the most influential and salient demographic fit factors as gender and race/ethnicity. Organizational fit refers to the compatibility of a candidate to the organization on a variety of dimensions including personality type and traits (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007; Judge & Cable, 1997). This study analyzed the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) across the samples of aspiring APs (Myers, 1962). A previous study by Wendel, Kilgore, and Spurzem (1991) revealed that 46% of surveyed administrators and aspiring administrators were concentrated in only three of the 16 possible Myers-Briggs personality types; (a) ESTJ (19%), (b) ENTJ (15%), or (c) ENFP (12%). Wendel et al. (1991) claimed, "Persons with any of these

personality types make good administrators” (p. 18). That previous study also revealed the diametrically opposed personality traits of the survey participants were; (a) Extroversion (E) (72%) versus Introversion (I) (28%), (b) Intuition (N) (57%) versus Sensing (S) (43%), (c) Thinking (T) (65%) versus Feeling (F) (35%), and (d) Judging (J) (66%) versus Perceiving (P) (34%) (Wendel et al., 1991). The last category, group fit, refers to a candidate’s professional relationships used to obtain administrative positions in an organization.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the concept of fit influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
2. How do demographic fit or gender and race/ethnicity influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
3. How do organizational fit or personality types and traits influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
4. How does group fit or professional relationships influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?

Hypotheses

1. Gender (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

2. Race/ethnicity (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
3. Personality type (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
4. Personality traits (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
5. Professional relationships (group fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

Conceptual Framework

The concept of fit is complex, contested, and socially constructed. A myriad of factors regarding demographics, organizations, and relationships affect the perception of fit (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). By identifying the differences between these key factors, more can be learned about fitting the right candidate to the proper context. The concept of matching leadership styles to situations has a long history written about by the seminal author Fiedler (1967). Northouse (2004) elaborates, "To understand the performance of leaders, it is essential to understand the situations in which they lead. Effective leadership is contingent on matching a leader's style to the right setting" (p. 109). By identifying key characteristics of a candidate who initially may be deemed

unfit, hiring supervisors may in fact find that there is a fit for a candidate in a different context (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992; Tooms et al., 2010).

There are dichotomous views within the published literature regarding how well candidates fit within an organization and the quality of their performance once hired (Kristof, 1996). One view points to the concept of best fit being when an employee looks the same and shares the same values as others in their workplace (Adkins & Caldwell, 2004; Judge & Cable, 1997). Similarly, “Teachers report their work is more difficult when they and their students do not share characteristics such as social expectations, race, ethnicity, and language” (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003, p. 584). Research has also demonstrated that individuals with specific traits, such as altruism, have greater job satisfaction and are less likely to leave organizations (Brewer, Selden, & Facer, 2000; Peck, 1993). Such individuals, in and of themselves, demonstrate good organizational fit.

Organizations can create a culture of stability and longevity by selecting employees who all envision a long-term career in the organization (Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). The concept of fit may change depending on the lens or perspective of who was selecting or placing a candidate (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Increased diversity and demographic heterogeneity results in conflict, higher turnover, and lower levels of satisfaction and performance (Milliken & Martins, 1996). “Increased similarity has positive effects and dissimilarity increases the likelihood of negative outcomes” (Elfenbein & O’Reilly, 2007, p. 13). An employee will be more likely to perform better, have a better attitude, and enjoy a longer tenure if they are a fit for their workplace (Hornig, Kalogrides, & Loeb, 2009).

A second perspective stresses demographic diversity to; employ a variety of perspectives to solve problems, provide role models for all students, and allow organizations to change (Powell, 1998). Many leaders believe that there is a social and moral responsibility to employ minorities and women. A diverse workforce is not something an organization should have, but rather something that every organization must have to change with the demographic and cultural trends of the overall population (Thomas, 1990). Hiring people who look and think alike leads to groupthink, a lack of creativity, and less flexibility to address changing needs (Janis, 1972). “A 1993 study of the Standard and Poor 500 companies revealed that firms that succeed in shattering their own glass ceilings racked up stock-market records that were nearly two and half times better than other-wise comparable companies” (U. S. Department of Labor, 1995, p. v).

The positive implications of hiring for diversity is demonstrated by the appointment of Justice Sonia Sotomayor to the United States Supreme Court in 2009. Sotomayor brought different life experiences, unlike those of her peer justices, to the bench even though nearly all of the Supreme Court justices, including herself, are products of Ivy League schools (Meyer, 2009). Although Sotomayor is demographically different, the Ivy League background she shares with her peers on the Supreme Court may mean that her views may not differ as much as might be expected. Demographic diversity is just the starting point in finding different perspectives and diverse points of view in a work group.

Demographic fit. Demographic fit is the easiest concept of fit to uncover because gender and race/ethnicity require little effort to identify (Elfenbein & O’Reilly, 2007). A study by Newton (2006) found that the racial/ethnic mix of our nation’s school

district superintendents was 75% White, 24% Black, and only 1% of another race/ethnicity. In 2005, the number of female district superintendents in the nation increased to 18% (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000; Kamler, 2009). This increase represents little change across the past century in a field dominated by women, most of whom remain in the classroom (Archer, 2003). The few women who ascend to the top of educational organizations are somewhat of an anomaly even though women make up approximately two thirds of the educational workforce (Brunner, 2000; Grogan & Brunner, 2005). Some estimates have shown that men are 40 times more likely to lead educational organizations than women (Skrla, 1999). Further, these female educational leaders are not demographically diverse. Brunner (2000) conducted a search of exemplary female leaders; the identified participants were White and almost all were between the ages of 45 to 60 years old. Still, educational leadership positions were and still are positions that are dominated by White males (Glass, 1992).

The many search processes for educational leaders that ultimately result in mostly male hires, implies that women are not perceived as having the personality for leadership positions (Grogan, 1996). If a woman is selected to lead a school district, it is most likely in a district either in financial duress or only a few hundred enrolled students (Tallerico & Burstyn, 1996). Women are not afforded the same equality as men during leadership searches because powerful gender-stereotyped contextual, structural, and social forces tilt toward men (Tallerico, 2000). Newton (2006) stated that women face the perception that they “are not assertive enough, do not want power, lack self-confidence, do not aspire to line positions, are unwilling to play the game and do not apply for the jobs” (p. 553).

However, research has shown that the common assumption that not as many women aspire to become leaders as men is false (Austin & Brown, 1970).

Tallerico (2000) wrote, “Some scholars have identified gender, race, or ethnicity as important factors in district executive search and selection procedures and outcomes” (pp. 18-19). In a recent study of school districts on Long Island, school districts employed search firms, recruiters, or headhunters about 18% of the time (Kamler, 2009). Recruiters usually control the early paper or pre-screening, while school boards exercise more control over a prescreened or semi-finalist list. Recruiters report that school board oversight can be constraining if they are too involved during the pre-screening process. One headhunter shared, “We don’t go into thinking we’ll bring the board a certain kind of candidate. But once experienced superintendents don’t emerge in the pool, then we go looking and recruiting. And that’s where the preferences for past experiences come in” (Tallerico, 2000, p. 31).

Grogan and Brunner (2005) also state that school districts with few minorities usually search out White candidates because there is little consideration or discussion of race or ethnicity. Minority districts are typically the only ones considering African-American or other minority candidates for leadership positions because their student populations are more diverse. The pendulum of hiring one type of candidate over another may also swing based on relationships with the school board and past leadership (Kamler, 2009). Kamler (2009) wrote, “Consultants registered another concern about women superintendents succeeding other women” (p. 134). In one instance where the exiting leader was a woman, a board member told the search consultant, “don’t give us another woman” (Kamler, 2009, p. 134). Women who leave leadership positions rarely return,

and simply drop out of consideration for future positions in other districts. Kamler (2009) asserts that strong women leaders encounter difficulty dealing with other strong women, while men seem to settle their differences, and this may be a factor. One recent employer stated, “Job hunting is a subtle skill. Every employer has 200 applications on their desk. They want to go with the option where you know you won’t have a problem” (Phelps, 2009, p. G1). If the previous leader exits because of conflict, the hiring board tends to default to traditional applicants, which are overwhelmingly White males (Newton, 2006). When you appoint, you tend to appoint one of your own; “Someone from a different ethnic background or with a disability might see things quite differently to you. Making the team more representative of society would make it much more difficult to manage” (Morrison, Lumby, & Sood, 2006, p. 286).

By the year 2040, no ethnic group will make up a majority of the population in the United States (Decker, Decker, & Brown, 2007). In the not so distant future, finding a homogeneous workforce may be hard to accomplish. Current trends tell us the workforce will become more diverse and employers will have to adopt to find qualified candidates that meet demographic fit (Decker et al., 2007). Linguistic diversity in schools is also accelerating as one-fifth of students speak another language other than English at home (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This forces an imperative onto educational leaders to learn to understand the viewpoints and needs of an increasingly diverse student population.

Justice Powell of the United States Supreme Court affirmed a stance for diversity when he decided that race could be used as one criterion in the college admissions process, but not the only criterion, in order to construct a more diverse student body

(University of California Regents v. Bakke, 1978). Racial quotas were therefore found to be unconstitutional. Justice Powell cited the admission process at Harvard as an example that took into account all qualities, including race, in a holistic review of applicants and led to affirmative action programs at that university (University of California Regents v. Bakke, 1978).

Increasing diversity can be positive for many organizations. “A diverse administrative staff signals to students and prospective teacher candidates that advancement opportunities exist for minority teachers, and that education can be a viable career for minorities” (Thompson, 1992, p. 7). Demographic fit, therefore, is an important concept for educational leadership.

Organizational fit. Organizational fit matches candidates to their organization on a variety of dimensions including personality types (Duke, 1986; Elfenbein & O’Reilly, 2007). Organizational fit can also be understood as the relationship between employee and employer with respect to personality as well as past work experiences. This perspective looks at leaders through the perceptions or lens of other stakeholders (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Each individual has a personality type, which may or may not match the duties and responsibilities of the different roles of a given position. Accomplishing these duties and responsibilities in an efficient and effective manner is essential for any organization to reach its goals and objectives. The required personalities and behaviors should fit the perception of what is required in the context by key stakeholders (Elfenbein & O’Reilly, 2007). The key is the perception of the stakeholders of what is required in the context of a position, versus actual behavior (Duke, 1986). If a candidate wants to fit in

organizationally, he or she should behave in a manner that fits a role, as perceived by stakeholders, as the right person for the job. Duke (1986) stated that what is important is that the perception of the behavior matches the context of the situation.

Group fit. Group fit focuses on the relationships between a candidate and other stakeholders who wield influence within an organization (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). These relationships are person-to-person, or in small groups within an organization. Co-workers commonly share a bond or working relationship through their shared work interest. Group fit goes beyond the socialization aspect of making friends at the workplace. A leader could be well liked in a social setting, yet not garner the respect of his or her peers and subordinates if irresponsible or ineffective behavior was displayed. Group fit and being able to socialize within a group are interrelated, but do not necessarily coincide (Goffman, 1963a). Given a choice, the community will want as a leader who they perceive to be one of their own. "It is more challenging to the team and to you individually to deal with someone who doesn't see things the way you do" (Morrison et al., 2006, p. 286).

A candidate who personally relates to hiring administrators inherits an advantage. "Fit derives from the continuing interaction that takes place between a leader, followers, and the culture in which they exist" (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992, p. 27). An individual not hired for a particular position may possess greater potential, but also may still be considered an unknown entity. People tend to hire someone who they know over an unknown entity when all other factors are equally weighted. Familiarity and friendships instill bias into the selection process (Lacey, 2002). Similarly, parents and teachers also

fall back on known entities that are perceived to fit instead of branching out to unknown entities (Boler, 1999; Evans, 1996).

Lumby and English (2008) challenge the notions of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit. Visible identities such as gender and race are fixed and labeled by society upon birth. An infant does not know what it means to be male or female, or born into one race or another. Identities and stigmas are attached by the values, cultures, and ideas of the dominant members in a society (Goffman, 1963b). The idea of what it means to be a male or female or born into a specific race are learned identities that are instilled through a society's cultures, values, and norms. Research by Elfenbein and O'Reilly (2007) confirms that demographic and other differences tend to attenuate among members as the amount of time spent together in an organization increases. Therefore fit can be shaped, and changes over time as a result of socialization.

While critics such as Goffman (1963b) and Lumby and English (2008) challenge the notions of demographic, organizational, and group fit, the author maintains the conceptual framework of this study that includes these notions' potential impact during the selection and assimilation process of new, secondary school APs. A graphical representation of the conceptual framework is offered in Figure 1. The figure demonstrates the notions of fit that are believed to impact the selection process (indicated by the arrow) all within a given school's organizational setting, which is complicated and somewhat ill-defined, hence the use of cloud imagery (see Figure 1).

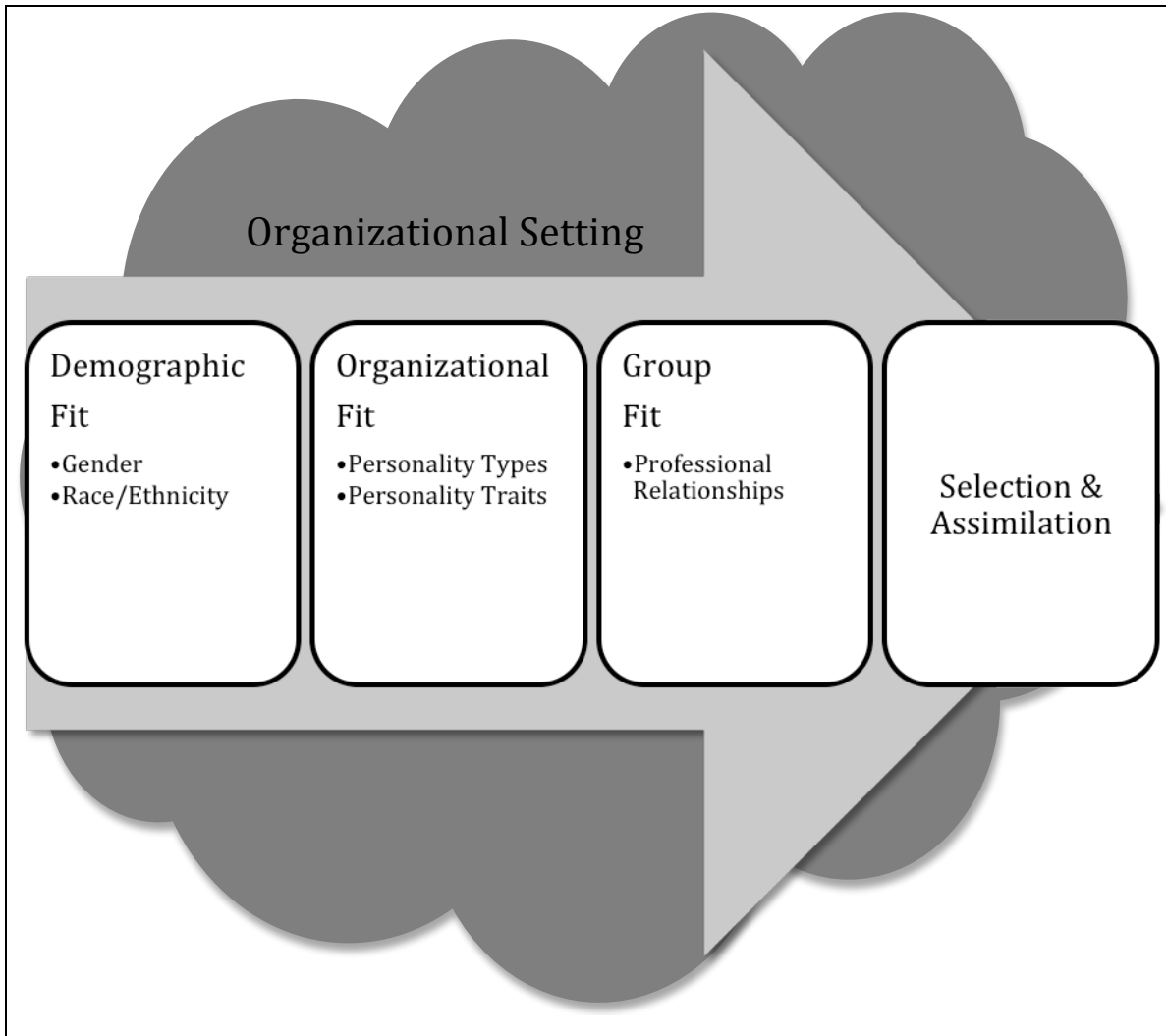


Figure 1. Conceptual framework for understanding the potential impact of demographic, organizational, and group fit on selection and assimilation of new secondary school APs.

Survey Participants

The survey participants were drawn from eligible secondary school based AP candidates who completed the leadership training program in the District. The District generated and provided a list of candidates who met the following criteria: (a) completed the District’s leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years; (b) worked in a high school or middle school while completing the leadership training program; and (c) still worked in the District when the data collection began on

October 1, 2011. District lists identified 197 participants who met these criteria and were sent the survey portion of the study via email. These survey participants were targeted so that the study might identify factors associated with secondary school AP selection and assimilation in the Paradise School District.

Interview Participants

The first sample of interview participants included four randomly selected candidates who were selected as APs. The second sample included four randomly selected candidates who were not selected as APs. The third sample included eight purposefully selected hiring administrators who possess knowledge of the process of selecting and assimilating new APs in the District. The fourth sample included four purposefully selected retired or ex-hiring administrators who possess past knowledge of the process of selecting and assimilating new APs in the District (see Table 1).

Table 1

Participant Sampling Table

Sample	Number of Participants	Type of Participant	Sampling Method	Data Collection
1	4	Selected AP candidates	Random selection	Interviews and survey
2	4	<i>Not</i> selected AP candidates	Random selection	Interviews and survey
3	8	Current hiring administrators	Purposeful selection	Interviews
4	4	Ex-hiring administrators	Purposeful selection	Interviews

Instrumentation and Data Analyses

This study employed a mixed methods approach to data collection and research. The data collection instruments included (a) District lists, (b) surveys, and (c) interviews. The data analyses utilized triangulation and multiple sources to increase the reliability and validity of the study (Creswell, 2009). All of the data collected were related to secondary school AP selection and assimilation within the concept of fit.

The researcher obtained a list of 197 eligible AP candidates who completed the leadership training program in 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years in the District. Eligible AP candidates were defined as candidates who completed the leadership training program within these five years. The District provided lists identifying the leadership training program completion year, current work location, gender, and race/ethnicity for each candidate. District lists were coded and analyzed to uncover patterns and trends

with respect to demographic fit (gender and race/ethnicity) and secondary school AP selection (Babbie, 1990).

The researcher emailed consent forms and invitations to complete web-based surveys to the 197 eligible AP candidates in the District provided lists (see Appendices A & B). These first two samples of participants completed the leadership training program and included eligible AP candidates who were and were not selected as APs. All of the data used to analyze organizational fit (personality types) and group fit (references) were self reported. These results were accurate only if the self reported data from the candidates were truthful. It is possible that some candidates had a different perception of themselves when reporting the personality types in the surveys. It is also possible that some candidates did not accurately remember their Myer-Briggs personality types from previous leadership training programs and reported inaccurate data. The data were analyzed to identify patterns and trends with respect to the process of selecting and assimilating APs in the District.

The researcher then conducted face-to-face interviews to triangulate the data (Creswell, 2009). All of the interview participants were sent introductory letters, consent forms, and were interviewed with the same pre-approved interview questions (see Appendices C, D, & E). The researcher utilized a randomization program to select four eligible APs who were selected and four eligible APs who were not selected, from the Districts lists of candidates, for face-to-face interviews (Urbaniak & Plous, 2010). A sample of eight current hiring administrators and four ex-hiring administrators were purposefully selected and interviewed using the same interview questions. The interview questions were used to evaluate each of the participants' perceptions on the concept of fit

in a standardized format (Creswell, 2009). Face-to-face interviews are important to round out the perceptions of fit in differing contexts in participants' own words (Maxwell, 2005). The 20 interviews were then recorded and transcribed for further analysis. The transcribed interviews were individually returned to each of the 20 interview participants via email for member checks (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004). The interview participants were given an opportunity to correct errors or omissions to their interview transcriptions and corrections were made. The interviews were then coded. "The goal of coding is not to count things, but to fracture the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). The coding, utilizing frequency counts, was used to analyze reoccurring themes related to the concept of fit (Seidman, 2006).

Limitations & Delimitations

This study analyzed only secondary school candidates who completed the leadership training program in one school district during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Some eligible participants were not willing to grant interviews or complete the surveys. Member checks were not conducted to verify the accuracy of the data results in the surveys or interviews and some data were also unavailable.

This study did not include charter or alternative schools that may have a different set of selection criteria. This study was only conducted in one school district and all but four interview participants (ex-hiring administrators) were current employees during data collection. The researchers also delimited the criteria to become an eligible survey and/or interview participant.

Chapter Summary

The concept of fit is complex, contested, and socially constructed (Tooms et al., 2010). Only through continued discourse and study can the influential factors of demographics, personality types, and professional relationships be understood in greater detail. This mixed method study dissected the application of these fit factors to select and assimilate candidates in one school district.

Chapter 2. Review of the Literature

The review of the literature presents a historical perspective on administrator selection and assimilation. The literature serves as the foundation upon which this current study is constructed. The purpose of this mixed method study is to understand how the concepts of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit influenced secondary school AP selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the District leadership training program in the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. This chapter reviews previous studies, reports, and findings as it relates to the selection and assimilation of administrators in education. This chapter also reviews the literature with respect to the selection variables of gender, race/ethnicity, personality types, and professional relationships.

Demographic Fit

Demographic fit involves evaluating how people look in terms of gender and race/ethnicity, and how others dissect these characteristics using preconceived notions (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). Great strides were made in the twentieth century to achieve equity and social justice for all. History has shown the inequities of the roles women and minorities have filled in the workplace (Tallerico, 2000). Even though progress has been made, these groups still lack widely accepted equity and access to salaries, benefits, working conditions, and strong leadership positions (Dana & Bourisaw,

2006). Many acts and laws were passed to attempt to close these gaps including the Fair Labor Standards Act of 1938, the Equal Pay Act of 1963, and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2012). Even though laws, acts, and substantial legislation have attempted to level the playing field for some sub-groups in the workplace, vast inequities still exist through blatant and more subversive means (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). Decades of studies have found that being of a specific subgroup can increase or decrease opportunities for obtaining specific positions (Shakeshaft, 1989).

The federal government formed the Glass Ceiling Commission in response to the modifications to Title II of the Civil Rights Act in 1991 (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). In 1995, this commission subsequently went on a fact-finding mission and examined the largest 2,000 U.S. companies (by revenue). The focus of the commission was to examine issues and information related to the advancement of women and minorities into leadership positions (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). The commission identified three key barriers that hinder the advancement of women and minorities.

The first barrier is societal and is defined as a lack of educational opportunities including conscious/unconscious prejudice and bias related to gender, race, and ethnicity. The second barrier is embedded in the internal structure of many organizations and includes recruitment practices that do not seek women or minorities, unwelcome organizational climates, and pipeline barriers that groom specific subgroups for future opportunities. The pipeline barriers were often defined as a lack of mentoring, training, career development, and networking opportunities. The third barrier is governmental and includes a lack of law enforcement, monitoring, collection of employment data,

aggregation of that data, and inadequate reporting with regard to glass ceiling issues (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995). Identifying these barriers is the key to exploring potential solutions to rectify the imbalances in the current system.

Emphasis is placed on perceptions because perceptions, true or not, perpetuate the existence of the glass ceiling barrier. Perceptions are what people believe and people translate their beliefs into behaviors, attitudes, and bias. Many judgments on hiring and selections are made on the basis of a look, the shape of a body, or the color of skin. (U.S. Department of Labor, 1995, p. 6)

Legislation is a good start in identifying and rectifying issues, but further discourse is required.

In 2005, the number of females who led public education organizations moved up to an all time high of 18% from 13% in 2000 (Glass et al., 2000; Grogan & Brunner, 2005). Leading a school district is one of the most coveted leadership positions in secondary education and is one of the pinnacles of the leadership hierarchy in this field. Although the rate of female leadership is increasing, it has changed little in the past century considering that the field of education is dominated by women, especially in the classroom (Grogan & Brunner, 2005). The few women who ascend to leadership positions are essentially an anomaly, even though women make up approximately 65% of the educational workforce (Brunner, 2000). Brunner (2000) conducted a search of the 12 most exemplary female educational leaders in the United States, and almost all of the participants had Euro-American backgrounds and their ages ranged from their mid 40s to their late 50s; they are, therefore, not a diverse group of female leaders. Many studies have shown that men are more likely to lead educational organizations than women (Skrla,

1999). Many leadership searches continue to imply that women do not have the personality for these positions and prefer a male fit (Grogan, 1996). If a woman is selected to lead a school district, she is most likely placed in a district either in financial duress or only a few hundred enrolled students (Tallerico & Burstejn, 1996).

The U.S. Department of Education (2007) regularly puts out a report on the condition of education. This report include a nationwide school and staffing survey. This survey noted trends and characteristics of the 80,600 public school principals in 2004, which was an increase from 72,000 in 1994 (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The study indicated 56% of elementary principals were women and 42% were men, while only 26% of high school principals were women and 74% were men (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The rate of female elementary school principals increased by 15% and the rate of female secondary principals increased 12% during the 10-year period from 1994 to 2004 (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The rate of White elementary principals decreased slightly from 83% in 1994 to 81% in 2004. The rate of secondary principals, who were labeled as non-minority, also decreased slightly from 88.2% in 1994 to 84.8% in 2004. The data indicated that in just the 10-year span of the study, school principals were increasingly becoming more diverse in terms of gender and race/ethnicity (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Even so, the data indicate that if women were chosen as educational leaders, it is more likely to be at a primary school than at a secondary school. Secondary school leadership positions continue to be dominated by men, and all of these positions continue to be led by more traditional White leaders than the student body they oversee (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010; U.S. Department of Education, 2007).

The U.S. Department of Education (2007) studied the 50 million students enrolled in public schools and contrasted the demographics of those students to the educators who were placed in their schools (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). About two-thirds of students were White (61.8%) and the other third was Black, Hispanic, or another race/ethnicity (38.2%). This compares to about four-fifths of public school teachers who are White (83.1%) and only one-fifth who are Black, Hispanic, or another race/ethnicity (16.9%). Student gender for all levels of public schools were evenly split at 50.1% male and 49.1% female, which contrasts to the uneven gender distribution of more than two-thirds of classroom educators (65%) who are female (Skrla, 1999). Public elementary school teachers are primarily female (83.3%), while a much smaller rate of elementary school teachers (16.7%) are male. Female teachers are also the majority gender in secondary schools, but the disparity is not as large (57.3% female versus 42.7% male) (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Again, the data indicates that the majority of students are being educated by a higher rate of White, primarily female, educators not representative of the overall student body.

Tallerico (2000) wrote, “Some scholars have identified gender, race, or ethnicity as important factors in districts’ executive search and selection procedures and outcomes” (pp. 18-19). Search firms, recruiters, or headhunters were employed about 18% of the time in a study of 124 Long Island school districts (Kamler, 2009). Hiring managers scrutinize the backgrounds, abilities, and skills of educational leaders with considerable effort because the stakes are high (Demoss, 2002; Ng, 2006). Recruiters control the early paper or pre-screening, but school boards exercise more control over prescreened or semi-finalist lists. Recruiters report that school board oversight can be constraining if the

board is too involved during the pre-screening process. Again, a recruiter shared, “We don’t go into thinking we’ll bring the board a certain kind of candidate. But once experienced superintendents don’t emerge in the pool, then we go looking and recruiting. And that’s where the preferences for past experiences come in” (Tallerico, 2000, p. 31). Glass (1992) stated that educational leadership positions continue to be one of the most male dominated executive level positions in our society. School boards continue to select “The same type of background and professional experiences as their predecessors” (Glass, 1992, p. 39). Demographics continue to be a significant factor when determining the fit of future leaders and administrators.

Women are not afforded the same equality as men during leadership searches because of powerful gender-stereotyped contextual, structural, and social forces that tilt toward men (Tallerico, 2000). Newton (2006) stated that women face a perception they are “not assertive enough, do not want power, lack self-confidence, do not aspire to line positions, and are unwilling to play the game and do not apply for the jobs” (p. 553). Many women observe different treatment from their male counterparts. One paper shared that a male administrator once told a female AP who aspired to someday be a principal, “I would never respect a woman as a leader” (Marshall, Mitchell, Gross, & Scott, 1992, p. 86). The authors noted a conversation between a female AP and this same male administrator who stated that women were just not considered for principal positions in the school district (Marshall et al., 1992).

Austin and Brown (1970) performed a study of 1,207 principals and 1,127 APs in all 50 states. The study determined that 20% of APs do not aspire to someday become a principal. The breakdown by gender revealed 13% of the female APs did not want to be

promoted, while 43% of the men stated they wanted to remain APs for the remainder of their careers (Austin & Brown, 1970). While the study was completed decades ago, it still highlights a critical misconception that many assume to be true; that all APs want to be promoted. The research demonstrates that this is not the case. The study also indicates that the desire for women to become leaders is present and may even surpass that of their men counterparts in many instances.

Dana and Bourisaw (2006) shared the response of a male candidate during an interview to highlight demographic fit in the selection process. A committee member asked the candidate why he should be the next superintendent. The candidate responded, “Most superintendents are White, male, and in their fifties. And in case you hadn’t noticed, I’m White too” (p. 105). As this example notes some candidates may use demographics, among other things, to give themselves an advantage over others when applying for a position.

The traditional role model for any leadership position is a mature White male. This group has always been the dominant role model in American society (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). The leaders of educational organizations are the most male dominated leadership positions of any profession according to the U.S. Census Bureau (2010). Male administrators tend to be younger, less experienced, and in earlier stages of their careers than women (Tallerico & Tingley, 2001). Secondary school experience is also valued more than elementary experience by many selection committees, and most secondary school principals just happen to be men (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Secondary school principals are offered more opportunities for public relations, higher levels of visibility, and are viewed as having strong leadership and management abilities

(Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Secondary school principals are also perceived as the *hero* of many communities when their school wins a high profile state athletic championship or if they diffuse a difficult matter, such as an incident of school violence. Elementary school principals on the other hand, who are much more likely to be women, are perceived as leading an easier to guide population (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006; U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Elementary schools usually garner less attention than secondary schools because they are smaller and there are more of them, thus diffusing opportunities for publicity and exposure in any given community.

A study by Glass et al. (2000) confirmed that the path for the non-traditional educational leader was daunting:

After examining the disaggregated data by ethnicity and gender, it can be seen that some of the responses from the full sample of superintendents are significantly different than the responses of women and persons of color. The responses from the full sample shape the discourse to include at least two strong messages for aspiring superintendents. First, if one wishes to be a superintendent, one must identify aspirations early and move into administration with the first five years of teaching. Second, if one plans to be a superintendent, one should have more administrative experience than teaching experience. Both of these messages generate discourse that does not support the access for women or persons of color to the superintendent, because most often they do not follow what is considered the normative or natural path. (p. 8)

Whatever the demographics of the aspiring administrator, the candidate should know the school district requirements for hiring a school-based administrator.

Many non-traditional candidates, such as women, still have the daunting challenge of climbing the leadership ladder. Loder (2005) argued that women are hindered from advancing into leadership positions when she stated that it “has more to do with institutionalized sexism that overburdens them with work-family conflicts than it has to do with other oft-cited explanations such as a lack of role models” (Loder, 2005, p. 744). Many women just do not want to navigate a field and invest in the process of becoming a leader when the average workweek has moved up from 53.2 hours in the 1980s to 60 to 80 hours in the 1990s (Loder, 2005; Lovely, 2004).

Stereotypes become barriers to equity in the workplace when they reinforce discrimination (Bolman & Deal, 2003). During the early 1900s, the number of managerial positions in schools expanded greatly with the increase in student enrollment. These managerial positions were almost always filled with men as Glanz (1994) notes:

By structuring jobs to take advantage of sex role stereotypes about women’s responsiveness to rules and male authority, and men’s presumed ability to manage women, urban school boards were able to enhance their ability to control curricula, students, and personnel. Rules were highly prescriptive. With few alternative occupations and accustomed to patriarchal authority they mostly did what their male superiors ordered. Difference of gender provided an important form of social control. (p. 39)

APs, principals, managers, supervisors, and leaders are widely accepted simply because they fit our society’s norm of the male role model.

Influential cultural stereotypes include women as the homemaker or caregiver. Society has culturally assigned the primary responsibility of caring for children and

ensuring that the home environment is organized to women (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). This responsibility is culturally supported, therefore many women wait until there culturally assigned responsibilities are addressed first before taking on roles away from home. Women delay pursuing careers in leadership for a decade or more, thus putting them at a competitive disadvantage versus many men who gain a decade or so advantage of experience (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Men on the other hand are labeled as the financial breadwinner and provider. This gender bias gives weight to the idea that the school or workplace is the secondary responsibility of women, but primary responsibility for men. Many organizations feel compelled to put leaders in charge who are more committed and can put more time into growing an organization and assume women cannot do so. This stereotype may impede women even when they may not have children at home or do and have a support system set up to relieve their traditional, culturally assigned family responsibilities. Glass (2000) studied 2,000 superintendents in a 10-year study for his book, *The Study of the American Superintendency*, highlighting an important perception about female superintendents; “43% of the male superintendents agreed that school boards tend to view women as incapable of managing a school district” (p. 31). This stereotyping leads to inherent disadvantages for women and minorities (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

Recent reports indicate there is no shortage of qualified administrative candidates. A study by Ringel, Gates, Chaung, Brown, and Ghosh-Dastidar (2004) stated there was a sufficient quantity and quality of candidates based on gender, race, and ethnicity. Ringel et al. (2004) studied the career paths of administrators in Illinois. During the time the study was conducted, the researchers noted that the demand for administrators increased

by 24%, the applicant pool increased by 70%, yet only 40% of the applicants were actually placed (Ringel et al., 2004). Another study by Roza (2003) confirmed these findings and garnered insight on the difficulty of landing a leadership position. In a study of 86 school districts in New York State, Roza (2003) found that the average district received 17 applications for each open position and nearly two-thirds of the studied districts reported little difficulty in finding administrators. The problem is not a lack of the supply of candidates or their qualifications, but rather the distribution of these candidates and how they are selected. While traditional barriers for women and minorities have been reduced and many have been placed in appropriate leadership positions, some research states that men are still more than two and a half times as likely to be chosen as APs or principals (Ringel et al., 2004).

This study indicates that the inflection point lies somewhere between selection and initial training. Obviously, the traditional male candidate has done or acquired something to gain an advantage. Candidates may have the proper social circles of influence or may have developed friendships that create an advantage. The perceived shortage of administrative candidates has also led to a wealth of alternative certification programs in traditionally male dominated fields, such as business and the military. The addition of these alternative certification routes has helped White males more than others (Tallerico & Tingley, 2001).

One strand of thought states that leadership positions in schools should be reserved for men to serve as male role models, thus reinforcing the stereotypes that keep women out of leadership roles in our nation's schools. The National Education Association (NEA) stated that schools, especially elementary schools, are filled with

female staff (National Educational Association [NEA], 2004). Many young boys lack proper role models and school is an area that can bridge the gap for these children. Male students who have male role models in school are more likely to see themselves as academically competent. The lack of male role models affects the career choices of young men who are looking ahead. Only 11.3% of elementary school aged boys who were surveyed in a study by Drudy, Martin, Woods, and O'Flynn (2005) said that teaching was a career choice for them. Many guidance counselors steer high achieving boys away from careers in education and into occupations that are more prestigious and financially rewarding (Drudy & Lynch, 1993). Thus, those in positions to guide the careers of male students often reinforce these stereotypes.

Other countries are facing a similar conundrum regarding the absence of men in education. Internationally, there has been a decline of male educators. The rate of women administrators continues to grow, but at the cost of displacing their male counterparts. The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization indicated that the rate of educators worldwide who were male fell from 30% in 1998 to 26% in 2003. This same study indicated that only 10% of new entrants to primary education were men and only 39% of secondary educators were men in 2002-2003. This gender imbalance is evident in many parts of the developed world (United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization, 2001). Many people feel that academically gifted boys should utilize their talents to the best of their abilities, yet being an educator was not making the greatest use of their abilities (Drudy et al., 2005). Leading young men away from careers in education continues to reinforce existing stereotypes that schools are primarily a place for women.

School-based administrators are very homogeneous. The typical principal is 50 years old, has worked in education for 20 years, and has 13 years of teaching experience (Hayes, 2004). Nearly half of all principals are employed in the same district where they previously taught and only 12% relocated to become a principal. Female principals are becoming more prevalent. Eighty percent of principals were men in 1988, but that number has decreased to 58% only 10 years later (Hayes, 2004). Recruiting qualified minority candidates is considered more difficult than finding qualified women.

The rate of males in administration is much higher than in the teaching ranks, especially in elementary schools. Helmer (2005) writes about males in schools:

There seem to be fewer than ever these days. Just 21% of the nation's 3 million teachers are men, according to the National Education Association (NEA). Over the past two decades, the ratio of men to women in the classroom has steadily declined. Today it stands at a 40-year low. "The teaching profession is definitely dominated by females," says Donald Washington, senior program analyst for the NEA. The shortage of male teachers is most pronounced in elementary school, where men make up just 9 percent of teachers, but middle schools and high schools also suffer from a male-female imbalance. Currently, in secondary schools, about 35 percent of teachers are men. (p. 1)

Males working in a female dominated profession face stereotypes or issues of whether or not they fit the role of a classroom teacher, and these concerns must also be battled (Helmer, 2005). The male teacher typically does not fit the demographic expectations of the typical classroom teacher, especially in the context of an elementary school. Many consider teaching a semi-profession, compared to law and medicine, with

its low social status and salaries. The perception that men do not belong in the classroom may even force some into occupations such as administration because society perceives this as a better fit for male educators. Educating children holds low status because some in society liken it to childcare or women's work (Hoffman, 1981). Further, Pollack (1998) states that schools do not have the curriculum and pedagogy to meet the interests and needs of boys. The lack of male educators sends a message to boys that education and learning is a female endeavor. Research has shown, however, that increasing the number of culturally diverse male educators is important and provides more role models for young males. Without proper male role models in schools, young men or boys view education in a feminine only context, and young male educators aspire to become principals primarily to increase their social status (Campbell-Whately, 2008).

Even religious organizations have contributed to keeping women and minorities out of leadership positions in the church, synagogue, temple, or other places of worship (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Religion is imbedded in the many cultures and its leaders can wield substantial community influence. Religions throughout the world deny some members positions as leaders because of gender, race, or ethnicity. Buddhist, Islamic, Catholic, Protestant Christian, and Jewish religions all place boundaries on who can and cannot be leaders using demographics. Schools originally started as religious organizations and this culture of male dominated leadership continues even today (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Stereotypes embed, in the fabric of many societies, where a candidate should or should not fit, just by looking at them.

“John Dewey dreamed of a dynamic democracy where gender, race, class, and territory were no longer barriers to participation” (Rusch, 2004, p. 14). The struggle to

demographically fit an administrator to every educational leadership position, thus fulfilling Dewey's dream, continues today. Administrators need to be skilled in addressing the integration of our overall population in terms of race and ethnicity in our schools. Minorities currently make up 36.6% of the U.S. population and this trend in diversity will continue as 50.4% of U.S. births in 2010 were in these families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). According to recent projections, non-Hispanic Whites will become the minority demographic group in the U.S. by the year 2040 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). Aspiring and current administrators recount few if any conversations or trainings about diversity. In fact, the findings confirm that there are no common understandings of diversity, and when that occurs it relates to race or ethnicity and not gender or disabilities (Morrison et al., 2006). One problem to consider is that most people view differences or diversity simply as "those different than themselves," but this is very broad and vague. Literature on managing change does focus primarily on issues of diversity, but rather in a more holistic or all encompassing way (Morrison et al., 2006).

Some minorities and females feel that their voices do not matter and feel marginalized, unheard, or erased from discourse (Morrison et al., 2006). Many administrators view diversity as a negative quality and are ill prepared to work in integrated communities.

I am aware that the data is collected but I am not aware that the results of the collation of that data are being used to achieve a specific aim or gender balance or ethnic balance or anything like that and the results which you don't see around which lead you to believe that, well, it's just a paper exercise. (Morrison et al., 2006, p. 287)

Many researchers even note that issues of race and gender are too powerful and sensitive to address. In a study of 53 faculty members of higher education, only about 54% of female participants and 41% of male participants stated that issues concerning race and gender were ever mentioned (Rusch, 2004). We do not lack laws or policies to reduce or eliminate barriers, but laws do not change hearts and minds. A common fear of discussing issues of inequity in terms of demographics is that the conversation will get out of control and someone might get hurt (Rusch, 2004).

Many educators call issues of race the elephant in the middle of the room that nobody wants to discuss (Rusch, 2004). Unfortunately, diversity has garnered less attention among researchers and practitioners than other less controversial topics (Morrison et al., 2006). Rusch's (2004) research also highlighted that suburban administrators were especially unaware of the inequities or issues concerning diversity and allocation of resources in an urban setting. Lewis (2001) studied the absence of racial awareness among parents, students, and staff in a yearlong ethnographic study of a suburban elementary school in an all White neighborhood. Lewis (2001) stated, "All community members consistently denied the local salience of race. Yet, this explicit color-blind race talk masked an underlying reality of racialized practices and color-conscious understandings" (Lewis, 2001, p. 781). Even though there were a handful of students of color enrolled in the school, the almost all White community did not address or discuss issues of race because they did not see it as a concern.

Continued discourse is one way to resolve these issues rather than pretending that they do not exist. According to one educator:

There's very little discussion about policies or procedures within the organization and attitudes. It's almost a ban on talking about race and culture and diversity, and you know, just bringing it all out and discussing it. I don't know why.

(Morrison et al., 2006, p. 289)

To tackle the issue of diversity, some institutions are making their faculties more diverse. Some now note that minorities and women may sometimes be the dominant group, but adding women and minorities is not a magic bullet. Rusch (2004) states that educating others about the issues and opening a discourse about the topic of diversity is the only way to make progress. Unfortunately many simply pretend inequalities no longer exist, which only hinders the process of integration.

Increased diversity within departments is a clear indication of professional commitment to diversity and equity; however, if these new faculty encounter tenured gatekeepers who have few skills, minimal knowledge, little understanding, and a tenuous commitment to multiculturalism, diversity, or equity, the richness of the conversation is thwarted for all. (Rusch, 2004, p. 39)

Individuals who are participants in the dominant member of society are especially averse to discussing such issues for fear that their views may not be accepted (Rusch, 2004).

The make up of educators in public schools does not reflect the diversity in the student population. The typical educator is White, female, married, religious, and average 43 years of age (NEA, 2004). About 40% of public schools do not have a single minority faculty member and less than half of schools have professional development related to diversity training (Thompson, 1992). Research also suggests that many students performed better when taught by someone from their own ethnic group (NEA,

2004). School districts should push for finding of more role models (Lomotey, 1989). South Carolina wanted to increase the placement of minority administrators and started the Minority Administration Program to identify and develop minority leadership candidates (Thompson, 1992). Such programs push the envelope considering U.S. Supreme Court rulings; organizations can take race and ethnicity into account, but using rigid racial quota systems to improve minority opportunities was ruled unconstitutional (*University of California Regents v. Bakke*, 1978). “A diverse administrative staff signals to students and prospective teacher candidates that advancement opportunities exist for minority teachers, and that education can be a viable career for minorities” (Thompson, 1992, p. 7). President Obama did not clarify the issue when he mentioned that having some Supreme Court hearing decisions to rely on, does not mean that organizations cannot consider race when hiring (*Ricci v. DeStefano*, 2009). Iverson (2007) suggests well-intentioned attempts to create inclusive organizations unwittingly reinforce practices that support exclusion and inequality. There clearly is conflict and ambiguity within organizations that wish to increase minority participation because they also want to avoid instigating a lawsuit by admitting to using demographics as a key criteria for candidate selection.

A higher rate of secondary school administrators are primarily male due to what Grogan and Henry (1995) term the “warrior, military, or business mentality” (p. 172). Other studies done by Skrla (1999) and Garn and Brown (2008) confirm the finding of incongruent leadership styles for many women and leadership positions. Both current and retired female superintendents agree that many leadership positions are modeled after male leadership styles. This style may be more dictatorial or transactional which may be

incongruent with transformational leadership or collaboration techniques used by most women (Bass, 1985; Brunner 2000; Burns, 1978).

The attainment of power means different things to different genders, races, and ethnicities (Shakeshaft, 1989). Most women view power as a collaborative means to get items accomplished; understood as *power with*. Most men view power as directive and authoritarian, understood as *power over*, to get their agendas passed (Brunner, 1999). If a woman steps out of the power with approach, others may view it negatively and consider it inappropriate for a female to use such a “masculine” power over approach (Lips, 2003). Women typically lead through shared ideas by taking turns and listening. Women tend to build consensus and use collaborative and transformational leadership styles (Bass, 1985; Brunner, 1999; Burns, 1978). Men are more likely to lead by dominance, power, and control (Brunner, 1999). Some may argue that in certain contexts some leadership styles may work, but that in others leaders would falter (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992).

Leadership styles vary between men and women and these differences have to be measured against the context of the position being filled. Transactional leadership styles can quickly drive a wedge between a new administrator and his or her new stakeholders (Burns, 1978). Brunner (1999) stated that the expectations for leadership styles vary dramatically between men and women. Women who try to act like men quickly get labeled in a negative manner. Men can get away with being direct and firm, but women cannot. Inquiring, probing, and nudging might be a more appropriate approach for all leaders especially when they enter a new domain (Badaracco, 2002). One of the biggest mistakes new leaders make is not connecting with the people and the situation, and not understanding the expectations put upon them as leaders (Pisapia, 2009). Authority and

power is something that may have to be measured and used sparingly considering the differing organizational contexts and concepts of who fits what style.

Although studies of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit have largely proceeded independently, research findings indicate that they are interrelated. Social interactions and likeability increases as time elapses between demographically different, but otherwise homogeneous, members (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). "Several studies show that the initial negative effects of demographic heterogeneity attenuate after time as people learn about the similarity in underlying values" (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007, p. 114). In a longitudinal study of 83 groups, the negative effects of differences in demographics can be offset once organizational members learn that they have similar personal values (Polzer, Milton, & Swann, 2002). The result of these studies indicates that increased familiarity increases the importance of organizational fit and group fit, but deemphasizes differences in demographic fit. As time increases, similar personalities, shared values, and personal relationships can overcome differences in demographics (Flynn, Chatman, & Spataro, 2001).

Organizational Fit

Organizational fit is matching individuals to the goals and objectives of an organization on a variety of dimensions including personality types (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007; Judge & Cable, 1997). This can also be seen as a set of shared beliefs and valued experiences between the candidate and the organization (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). The best fit intertwines the mission and vision of the organization together with the candidate as a cohesive set of beliefs. The candidate then becomes an agent of the organization, who in turn ensures that the organization's mission and vision become a

reality. Each candidate should behave, and have a personality, that should ideally match the duties, responsibilities, and different roles of a position. Accomplishing the responsibilities of a leadership role in an efficient and effective manner is essential for the organization to reach its goals and objectives. The proper organizational fit assumes that the objectives of the candidate will ideally line up to those of the organization. This approach looks at the behaviors and personality of a candidate through the perception or lens of organizational stakeholders (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Duke (1986) stated what is important is not the behavior, but rather the perception that the behavior matches the context of the situation. If a candidate wants to fit, he or she should behave in a manner fitting the role as perceived by stakeholders.

Important factors for organizational fit include the personality types that are perceived to fit into a current position and organizational context. Some notable job related standards were set forth in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) for school leaders in 1996. Many state boards of education adopted this modified set of standards using the ISLLC template. For example, School Administrators of Iowa created the Iowa Standards for School Leaders (School Administrators of Iowa, 2006). Using the six ISLLC standards, three to 11 indicators for each standard were created to guide Iowa administrators in the daily performance of their duties. The six standards and 36 indicators were used to evaluate and improve the performance of principals. The standards were also used as a template to create materials for selecting, hiring, and evaluating administrators. Each administrator should possess abilities and skills in instructional leadership, operational leadership, school leadership, and a

temperament matching a context in order to find a good fit (Schlueter & Walker, 2008; Thomas & Chess, 1977).

Stated briefly, there is a goodness of fit when the person's temperament and other characteristics such as motivation and levels of intellectual and other abilities, were adequate to master the successive demands, expectations, and opportunities of the environment. This formulation stems from the conviction that normal or pathologic psychological development does not depend on temperament alone. Rather, it is the nature of the interaction between temperament and an individual's other characteristics with specific features of the environment, which provides the basic dynamic influence for the process of development. (Thomas & Chess, 1977, pp. 15-16)

Increasingly there is a reflective consonance and dissonance between the environment, expectations, demands, and temperament of an individual.

Ideologies within organizational fit also come in the form of the sociocultural, political, and religious (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). These ideologies may or may not fit within an organization on topics such as curriculum content, textbook selection, and overall job responsibilities. The organization may have policies that reflect the underlying philosophy of the school district that are considered the rules of the game (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Learning the norms of the organization early on is critical to succeeding within an organization. Violating the written or unwritten rules of the game can be detrimental to the success of a candidate. This violation may garner hostility and resentment among other members of the organization (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

Billsberry and Gilbert (2008) discuss the dynamics of using organizational goals and vision as the baseline for recruitment and selection. This paradigm considers recruitment and selection from both the perspective of the organization and the applicant to reveal how good decisions are made to fit selection criteria. “Superintendents and boards of education are looking for a good fit – that is, a candidate’s apparent ability to mesh with the personalities, culture and needs of a particular site” (Hayes, 2004, p. 38). Legal issues in staffing, labor markets, recruitment, selection, orientation, internal placement and movement of employees, and retention are all interrelated in the process of organizational fit and selection. Employees are assessed against selection and recruitment criteria using personality, skills, and abilities considered to be required for a position (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008). Organizational fit considers the personality of the people and the surrounding environmental factors. “By looking for a fit between applicants and organizations, the PO fit approach,” (PO fit is also known as person-organizational, or just organizational, fit), “has the potential to treat the two sides of the recruitment encounter even handedly” (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008, p. 230). When a fit is found, a merger between the organization and the individual occurs and each party has something to offer the other.

Billsberry and Gilbert (2008) uncovered some common items to consider within organizational fit. Organizations are constantly changing, as are the relationships between employees and employers. It is impossible to predict future changes, therefore organizations need employees who can grow and develop along with the organization itself. The fit between employees and organizations influence how both grow together. A candidate’s fit is influenced by interactions within a large range of variables, so it is

impossible to isolate all of the specific variables of success. The interaction between people and work environments is the biggest single source of variability in performance, so the prime focus of selection for both parties is finding a relationship that is mutually beneficial. There is no fit between the parties if it is not in the best interests of either party (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008). Each organization should look at the context of where the applicant will be placed to identify the proper organizational fit.

Suggesting that one leader can fit all contexts, communities, or schools ignores context. “An idealized view of the principal’s [or administrator’s] role ignores the importance context plays in defining and influencing who principals [or administrator’s] are and what they do” (Hausman, Crow, & Sperry, 2000, p. 5). Good leaders understand the context of their position, their personality, behaviors, and the way they fill the role to focus on what is best for their school. Communities with lower socioeconomic status, for example, expect their school administrators to be more controlling than coordinating, whereas higher socioeconomic communities rely more on coordination (Hausman et al., 2000). The members within any community or organization can dictate acceptable values, norms, and cultures. The norms define what the school is and is not supposed to include, and how teachers and administrators are supposed to act. New urban principals are frequently placed in troubled schools with a less experienced faculty (Crow & Pounders, 1995). School administrators are evaluated and influenced by their district supervisors, so many conduct themselves as extensions of the central office and fit the perception of an agent of the district.

The once-held assumption and common practice that any licensed principal [or administrator] can be moved at will from school to school is no longer valid. It is

our belief that more than ever before, a single, ideal portrait of the principalship does not exist. (Hausman et al., 2000, p. 12)

Each candidate should also consider the roles of educational leaders, which have a different perception from the subsets of students, parents, faculty members, community leaders, or superiors at the district office or school board (Kahn, Wolf, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964). Fit can also be viewed from identity theory in any occupation as the roles we play (Stryker, 1980; Stryker & Burke, 2000). An educator should look and act the part of each of the many roles required of the position. Stakeholders do not perceive the educational leader as an individual, but rather as set of acceptable behaviors within a role or position. Identity relates to the many lenses people view the position from or the many roles that each educator fills (Bolman & Deal, 2003; Tooms et al., 2010).

Educators fill roles as motivator, disciplinarian, communicator, role model, mentor, visionary, personal counselor, and boss. Each leader actually does not have one identity, but many, based on the audience. An educator may fit or serve one role very well, or not possess or have the personality and ability to bridge across all of the roles that are required for a position. In fact, leaders may be presented with a problem where stakeholders view all of the roles of their leader with monism, that is, only viewing the person from one perspective or only having one role to fill (Firm, 1984, p. 217). In contrast, Lumby and English (2008) wrote, “Contemporary leaders must have multiple identities to work with increasingly differentiated clientele and to move within and across multiple groups within his/her spheres of work and influence” (p. 15). Role conflict (two or more expected behaviors) and role ambiguity (inconsistency in expectations) are two of the biggest culprits of educator burnout (Schwab & Iwanicki, 1982). Educators

transitioning into new roles find this process to be the most difficult aspect of their careers (Fullan, 1993).

School districts and hiring managers use several methods to gather data about leadership applicants including checking references, application forms, transcripts, resumes, interviews, and application tests. Through this process, the personality and background of the applicant begins to emerge. One method of data collection employs the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) to measure and categorize personality types. This method was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers in the 1940s, based on the work and theories of Carl Jung (1921/1971), and tested her theory of personality during the 1940s and 1950s. Briggs Meyers developed an instrument to measure individuals' personality type in 1962 that categories each person into 16 personality types using eight dichotomous personality traits. The first capital letter, either Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I), is to the preferred flow of energy from either the inner world or outer world. The second capital letter, Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), focuses on information gathering and whether the five senses or interpreted meaning was preferred. The third letter, Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), indicates how decisions are made considering either the facts or how people were influenced in the process. The last letter, Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), is how the external world was dealt with on a day-to-day by either coming to conclusions or leaving options open. Wendel et al. (1991) indicated that the dominant diametrically opposed personality traits in surveys of administrators and aspiring administrators were (a) Extroversion (E) (72%) versus Introversion (I) (28%), (b) Intuition (N) (57%) versus Sensing (S) (43%), (c) Thinking (T) (65%) versus Feeling (F) (35%), and (d) Judging (J) (66%) versus Perceiving (P) (34%).

These eight personality traits are combined into the diametrically opposed four letter combinations of the 16 MBTI personality types (see Figure 2).

	S	S	N	N	
J	ISTJ	ISFJ	INFJ	INTJ	I
P	ISTP	ISFP	INFP	INTP	I
P	ESTP	ESFP	ENFP	ENTP	E
J	ESTJ	ESFJ	ENFJ	ENTJ	E
	T	F	F	T	

Figure 2. MBTI-based personality types and traits matrix adapted from “MBTI Basics®,” by The Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2012a. Copyright 2012 by The Myers & Briggs Foundation.

About half (46%) of the 88 administrators and aspiring administrators who were surveyed in a study by Wendel et al. (1991) were either of type ESTJ (19%), ENTJ (15%), or ENFP (12%). Outlining the personality types, ESTJs are practical, decisive, get things done, detail oriented, results oriented, and forceful in implementing plans. ENTJs are decisive, assume leadership easily, logical, enjoy planning, well informed, and forceful in implementing plans. ENFPs are enthusiastic, make connections between events, resourceful, good at reading people, and get bored in routines. This current study was built under the premise, stated by Wendel et al. (1991), that school administrators possess specific Myers-Briggs personality types and traits (Myers, 1962).

While using a personality test to identify successful administrators is not foolproof, it can be useful when combined with other factors such as references, resumes, interviews, and other items used to select the right candidate. Most people have a particular style preference and tend to use regardless of the task, situation, or context

(Mitroff & Kilmann, 1975). Most administrators, policy makers, and researchers agree that there is not one personality or leadership type that fits all schools (Bossert, Dwyer, Rowan, & Lee, 1982). It is important to evaluate the strengths and weakness of each candidate and ensure a fit to the context. Organizations select candidates who will fit the current organizational context and needs (Duke, 1986). The existing context should be surveyed and the selection criteria for the proper personality fit to the organization should be established.

Personality types and self-reflection are very important to ensuring proper fit. “Effective principals are aware of their strengths and limitations” (Hausman et al., 2000). Effective principals surround themselves with others who possess the skills and talents they lack. They see leadership in an organizational sense versus and have enough self-confidence to empower others. Self-regulation enables leaders to control their emotions and reserve judgment before making decisions; the key being the ability to stay calm under pressure and make sound decisions in the face of adversity. Effective principals also have a passion for excellence with reasons that go beyond status, power, and money (Hausman et al., 2000). Leadership candidates should look at their own personalities and see if they have the skillset to be effective. Effective leaders can use self-reflection to grow personally and professionally and to understand the process of modeling their personalities to reflect positive outcomes and actions.

Many school districts do not have an internal process for training and hiring administrators, but rather rely on local universities to groom future administrators (Barker, 1997; Hayes, 2004). As accountability standards and the complexity of operating schools have grown, the mix for a more talented administrator has also grown.

Talent to meet this growing need should be nurtured and not merely assumed it is embedded within an organization. Teachers and counselors who sought administrative jobs in the past were not stepping up (Barker, 1997). They were disillusioned by the complex demands and higher expectations for a more diverse constituency.

Fewer advantages to taking leadership roles are viewed when considering the increase in parental concerns, execution of multiple roles, status, potential for pay increases, and control of personal time (Barker, 1997). Parents and students have become accustomed to seeing administrators at every school function, while administrators also recognize the importance of garnering support by attending (Vadella & Willower, 1990). “Through social interaction, the AP learns whether or not he or she has the proper fit for the district’s goal structure and image of a school administrator” (Marshall et al., 1992, p. 87). The APs who did not desire to become principals made a conscious choice to not give up time with their families and rejected the time commitment of being in charge of running a school. Common themes that discourage aspiring administrators include the level of compensation commiserate with increased responsibilities, job related stress, and too much time and evenings dedicated to the position (Hayes, 2004). Note everyone wants to be an administrator and in fact many tenured educators shy away from the responsibility for various reasons (Barker, 1997). The literature indicated that 20% of APs do not ever want to become principals because of the increased time commitments and responsibilities (Austin & Brown, 1970; Marshall et al., 1992). School administrators fill a specific role in their organization and the surrounding communities. It takes a very capable individual with unique talents to successfully fit the role.

Vadella and Willower (1990) interviewed 50 school-based administrators and asked them how they felt about their jobs and the responsibilities of the title. Nearly 80% said the pressure was either high or very high. One respondent said there were, “so many diverse responsibilities and accountabilities” (Vadella & Willower, 1990, p. 108). Another principal claimed, “I feel like I’m in a fishbowl all the time. I am always in the role. I never take off the principal’s hat” (Vadella & Willower, 1990, p. 108). Despite the high pressures of the position and feeling of always being on stage, almost all the respondents said they liked being a school administrator. The most enjoyable part of the job reported was interacting with the students, curriculum related improvement activities, and overseeing instruction. Student discipline, paperwork, and the managerial routines ranked low on the likeability of tasks (Vadella & Willower, 1990).

Another challenge within organizational fit has to do with structural bureaucracy and increased government accountability, but administrators have not been given the tools to make changes, thus making the position less desirable (Barker, 1997). Principals should ready themselves for a world of “(a) decentralized school structures, (b) increasing and changing environmental boundaries, and (c) a market-driven view of education” (Hausman et al., 2000, p. 11). Constraints of union contracts and legislative changes, including the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB), have decreased administrators’ abilities to implement changes (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). It was very difficult to fire ineffective teachers without a long and protracted fight with the teachers union. Many principals are simply unwilling to put their reputations and jobs on the line to go through the lengthy and contentious process (Johnson, 2002). Many school districts have shared decision-making and collective bargaining agreements, which takes

power away from school administrators to make changes. Many administrators simply run out of energy for the entire process and thus have to select issues that are easier and quicker to resolve. Administrators many times view school boards and the central office as additional bureaucracy hindering their ability to instill meaningful change (Lovely, 2004). School districts should look at their internal policies, mandates, and paperwork required, to help rather than hinder their school based administrators to implement policies to improve achievement for their schools.

The candidates should think about the position ahead of time and really consider potential pitfalls before applying to see if their personal goals, work ethic, and abilities really do fit the obligations of the position (Lovely, 2004). In the past few decades, an abundance of research has been conducted to find out why candidates were shying away from administrative positions. Deterrents include demographic stereotypes, time overload, stress, salary commiserate with increased responsibilities, and having limitations set on performance by the bureaucracy of union contracts, district rules, and federal guidelines, when performing the duties of the position (Lovely, 2004). School based administrators usually work between 54 to 80 hours per week (Lovely, 2004). One secondary school principal commented, “No matter how visible you are, you are not visible enough” (Dell’Angela, 2001, p. 5).

The reason administrators work so many hours has much to do with the amount of responsibilities on their plate. Administrators were responsible for everything that happens inside a school. This means very little falls out of their realm of duties. Government and district mandates and accountability reports take up a substantial amount of time that was as not present several decades ago (Barker, 1997).

Administrators by default take on the problems of society including drug use, teenage pregnancy, suicide, inadequate healthcare, and lack of daycare thus creating more programs to oversee (Lovely, 2004). These increases have led to more work related stress while salaries have not kept up with these increased demands and responsibilities (Educational Research Service, 2000). The daily rate for a new AP was barely 5% more than an experienced teacher (Archer, 2002). Principals and many APs also work 11 months per year, versus 10 months for teachers. Little financial incentive is provided for many experienced teachers to come out of the classroom and into administration (Archer, 2002).

The organization should seek to understand each individual and their needs to choose the best recruitment and selection methods for the given context (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008). While varying selection criteria may help in the recruitment process, it is important to reference the Uniform Guidelines on Employee Selection Procedures (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008). Having different selection criteria for separate candidates for the same position may constitute disparate treatment and could be classified as being illegal (Billsberry & Gilbert, 2008). Using consistent criteria to select candidates are very important in selecting the best fitting candidate.

Muhlenbruck (2000) performed a study completed by 44 members of the Iowa Association of School Personnel Administrators. The study focused on what was important when hiring school based administrators. The respondents mentioned four consistent themes for hiring; (a) relationship builder, (b) knowledge of how schools work, (c) licensure/experience, and (d) organizational fit. Van de Water (1987) also conducted a study of selection criteria in the state of New York. This study identified ratings for the

importance of selection criteria. The greatest weights were given to instructional leadership and commitment to academic goals, which fall under organizational fit. A secondary concern was being able to get along and have a good rapport with students, staff members, parents, and the community, which aligns with group fit. The last criterion was the administrator's personal background. "A candidates' sex, marital status, racial or ethnic group, and educational level were included in this function" (Schlueter & Walker, 2008, p. 8). Many of the items in a candidate's demographic fit by law, should not be used to make a decision. Even so, these items were noted as important factors in administrative selection process in the study.

Recruiting and selecting school leaders is one of the most important tasks facing school districts. Unfortunately, many districts overlook the most capable candidates because the process is completed in a haphazard manner. Taking a structured and thoughtful approach can increase a district's chances of hiring a quality principal. A lack of clarity on defining the criteria is reported to be one of the primary reasons that school districts do not hire the best candidates for positions. Rather than using criteria, districts rely on a feel of fit in determining which candidates to choose for positions. (Schlueter & Walker, 2008, p. 14)

Districts should spend time coordinating the hiring criteria and process.

When you appoint, you tend to appoint one of your own, to identify with someone with their demeanor. It is much more challenging to the team and to you individually to deal with someone who doesn't see things the way you do.

(Morrison et al., 2006, p. 286)

School districts should examine the roles and responsibilities of the position and review the criteria for the proper selection to occur. Knowledgeable and capable leaders should be sought out to ensure the school is utilizing its resources in the most efficient manner (Schulueter & Walker, 2008). Organizational fit and the perception of the hiring committee or personnel is critical to obtaining an administrative position.

Researchers investigating a decline of potential applicants in two Australian states highlight some of the same problems with administrator searches. The study found the selection process was too long, complex, personally intrusive, traumatic, demanding, time consuming, and overall just flawed (D'Arbon, Duignan, Duncan, & Goodwin, 2001; Lacey, 2002). Local communities were having greater input into the decisions and gender inequality reforms were having an impact on finding the right fit (Eisenstein, 1984; Yeatman, 1990). The administrative selection process in itself was biased, unpredictable, and discouraged many teachers from applying (Lacey, 2002). Selection of the principal should fit the identity the school hopes to portray to the greater community. Focusing on the wrong fit factors may eliminate candidates that are in better positions to lead future reform efforts and create sustainable change.

Both the hiring organization and candidates make decisions during the recruitment, selection, and employment process to see if the fit will be successful. It is imperative that the fit is right for both parties for the selection to be labeled a success. Fit is a dual lens approach from the perspective of the organization and the lens of the candidate (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Candidates need to observe the context and situation to see if there is a fit to an organization and a position. They can begin by researching district websites and making contacts. Even applicants who work inside the school

district need to do research to fill in gaps in knowledge and understanding. There may be specific reasons why there was an opening and the knowing the reason why may be important. The candidate should anticipate the interview questions and potential answers that the hiring committee is looking for. The candidate also needs to uncover any potential issues and expectations before the interview and ask questions to fill in any gaps (Hayes, 2004). Even when the candidate does his or her homework, all the planning and prep in the world may not help depending on context. Giving the same answers to the same questions may develop fit in one context, but not in another (Tooms et al., 2010). The concept of fit is multifaceted and encompasses many different variables, none of which can be isolated between candidates and the organizations.

The concept of fit is a dynamic entity that changes over time. Fullan (1993) states that in the process of working together, many educators change their beliefs and practices over time. While an educator may fit a role one year, the context may change or organizational goals may shift, and fit may be lost. Administrators may be brought into a school to stop the bleeding or the continued deterioration of a school, but a new set of skills may be needed once safety is instilled and the environment has stabilized. Kotter (1996) asserts that charismatic leaders excel at instilling loyalty and teamwork, but are typically not good managers. There are times when an educator is placed in the wrong environment to fill a gap or void. This gap or void can deepen or widen because the individual who previously held the post quit, was removed, or moved on for a promotion or transfer. Unfortunately, many times, an administrator who is deemed successful is moved to a newer and more challenging environment. Often, the perception is that any administrator can simply move a successful model from school to school, with little

consideration for context, preference, background, skills, or training. For example, the situational leadership style focuses on the fit between leadership style and the maturity of the organization (Hersey, Blanchard, & Johnson, 2007).

Some educational leaders believe that successful administrators are interchangeable and that context or situation does not matter. Context does matter a great deal, however, and what may work in one situation may or may not work in another (Bogotch, Roy, & Stack, 1993). One context may call for a charismatic leader to bring excitement and new energy to a deteriorating situation. Another school may be very successful and only need a manager for a short time. The fit between skillset and context is very important and the need for a specific type of leadership style may be short lived (Kotter, 1996). Further, the most qualified and capable administrator may find strong resistance with regard to fit in some contexts if influential stakeholders perceive a non-fit (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992).

Group Fit

Group fit focuses on personal relationships between the educational leader and other stakeholders (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992). These relationships are person-to-person, or in small groups within an organization. Co-workers commonly share a bond or working relationship developed through their shared work interests and activities. Group fit goes beyond the socialization aspect of making friends at the workplace. An administrator could be well liked in a social setting, yet not garner the respect of his or her peers if they are an irresponsible or ineffective educator.

Group fit and being able to socialize with a group are interrelated, but do not necessarily coincide (Goffman, 1963a). "Fit derives from the continuing interaction that

takes place between a leader, followers, and the culture in which they exist” (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992, p. 27). An individual not hired for a particular position may possess greater skills and abilities, but also may be the unknown entity. Parents and teachers continue to fall back on known entities that are perceived to fit rather than branching out to unknown entities for support (Boler, 1999; Evans, 1996). The known entity may appear to be the best fit, but in actuality holds reform efforts back and instead maintains a consistent path insisted on by the community and faculty.

Familiarity and friendships also instill bias into the selection process (Lacey, 2002). One aspect of group fit includes who you know in terms of perceived good fit (Elfenbein & O’Reilly, 2007). Leader-Member Exchange (LMX) theory attempts to frame such a perspective on leadership fit (Graen & Cashman, 1975). According to Graen and Cashman (1975), leaders and followers have a preferred or reciprocal relationship within an inner circle of trusted members. This trust is the embodiment of the mutual respect for members’ abilities and contribution to the group.

Behavioral norms or regularities occur when people interact in social or informal settings. Organizations have group norms for behavior in which all are expected to adhere. The newcomer must become cognizant of these norms in order to fit into the group and create successful relationships. Group related activities may strengthen the relational bonds or friendships in an organization (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Friday night poker games, Saturday golf outings, family trips together, and informal conversations outside of the normal workplace are critical to building these relationships. These critical networking opportunities are not afforded to all educational leaders. The way people

treat each other and react to change has a lot to do with how well they trust and know one another.

One key to building relationships and getting the most out of each personal contact is by learning to live with brevity (Lovely, 2004). Most administrator exchanges last less than two minutes and may face more than 30 activities per hour. More than 85% of an administrator's time is spent on tasks lasting less than nine minutes (Peterson, 1982). Faculty members may view each encounter with an administrator as important, so making sure that nobody feels slighted is important. Building relationships, and learning how to manage the time spent developing them even during brief hallway interactions, is equally as important. A school administrator cannot run the school on his or her own. There are dozens and sometimes hundreds of other staff members that also perform critical functions that ensure that a school runs properly and efficiently.

Ensuring that each person feels valued is an important skill for any leader to possess. Building relationships also helps to build trust within an organization (Lovely, 2004). Vadella and Willower (1990) performed a study of school-based administrators and asked about their strengths and how they feel about their work. More than two thirds of the participants said that interpersonal skills or interacting with others was their strongest personal quality. Eight percent of these administrators also confided that they shared and discussed problems and issues with other administrators or friends in the district.

The success of any leader involves navigating the political landscape. School leaders continue to be political figures and one way to immediately be at odds with stakeholders is to make a political miscalculation (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

Relationships, or lack of them, can quickly add to or end an otherwise successful endeavor. “Political ideologies raise their heads in a number of areas on decision making in public schools—often after the fact when decisions are announced or become evident and when controversy arises out of differences in ideology” (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006, p. 55). Politics, textbook selection, curriculum reform, school consolidation, and school improvement are all hotbeds of debate in various school districts.

Relationships are the keystone to group fit (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992). Who one knows, and the relationships one builds over time, can add or detract from their viability as a candidate. Personal interactions allow people to know how each person acts depending on the circumstances. Dyer (2001) is an advocate for creative leadership and stated:

Leaders who are arrogant, dictatorial in their approach, emotionally volatile, and who adopt a bullying style under stress, often leave a train of bruised people. By resisting input from others, ordering people around and making staff feel stupid and unintelligent; leaders set themselves and their organizations up for failure. (p. 29)

Leaders should use skills of delegation and provide opportunities for others. Subordinates respond favorably to being treated fairly and this behavior attracts other valuable employees (Bass, 1985; Burns, 1978). Relationships get stronger when compassion and sensitivity are put to use when resolving conflict. Good leaders use common sense and timing to get tasks accomplished without creating adversarial relationships. Building a consensus and empowering others works well toward using transformational leadership and building a team based approach (Bass, 1985; Burns,

1978). Group fit and relational leadership are about being in tune with the moods and feelings of others (Lovely, 2004). Leadership is situational and varies so effective leaders change their style or approach to match the specific context (Hersey et al., 2007). Schools are nested organizations that reach all stakeholders and have multiple connections. Teachers, staff, students, parents, parents, community members, district personnel, and other entities all have a stake in the success of the school.

Many search committees or hiring managers do not wait for the best applicants to apply, but rather search them out as someone they know (Tallerico, 2000). Many school boards employ search committees to find the best fitting candidates for their district. Most school boards do not take applications directly from candidates, but rely on search consultants to do this for them (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). These search committees act as a screen to shift out the most qualified candidates. In essence they act as gatekeepers to the selection process. School boards are inclined to seek out and select one of their own or someone who was familiar (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006). Who one knows often helps an administrator land a position. Strong references, therefore, are key to securing any highly competitive position (Viering, 1988).

Discrimination in the workplace is not as obvious as it has been in years past, but opportunities to network are still challenging for many subgroups. Discrimination is embedded in the culture of many organizations. Some may argue that not socializing in the same organizations where influential stakeholders congregate constitutes disparate impact. These groups are informal in nature and require an invitation to attend. Many non-traditional candidates, such as minorities and women, may have a different set of priorities outside of the workplace that hinder their participation in such groups, even if

invited. These conflicts, such as family obligations, automatically remove them from being offered future invitations. The lack of informal contacts also keeps guidance and mentoring opportunities reserved strictly for traditional leaders. The process of selecting and hiring administrators does utilize the concept of group fit and personal relationships. All things being equal, organizations revert to those they know or to whom their members can relate (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007).

Hegemony is the power dominance of some groups or individuals in society over others. Hegemony can also be classified under group fit. Tooms et al. (2010) define the notion of hegemonic fit as positions that favor certain groups and their cultures, customs, and attributes over others. The dominant or control group in society decides what is acceptable and what is not acceptable in a specific community. Something completely acceptable in one context may be viewed as inappropriate in another (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992; Tooms et al., 2010). School boards, superintendents, principals, and other community stakeholders ultimately decide who should and should not serve as the leaders and role models for the faculty and students. They determine who fits the role during selection and if one of their own will be selected.

Mentors are an excellent resource to help new hires orient themselves to the specific cultures, norms, and procedures of a given context (Jerry, 1968). Selection is the starting point for fit, but being able to grow or develop into a position and to prove one's fit, is equally important for future success (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992). Orientation of educators who are new to the school should start soon after being hired (Jerry, 1968). The new addition should be brought into the school weeks before the start of the school year and paired with a mentor. The mentor can also serve as a sponsor and should serve

as a sounding board and monitor the progress of the new addition. The mentor should serve as an intermediary between the new administrator and the next tier of administration. Any ongoing training or development during the school year should also help to assimilate the new administrator to their new context and role. Having a mentor helps navigate the ambiguity of roles and responsibilities and is key to improving performance and avoiding early burnout. Mentors are chosen to help newer educators based on their ability to teach, and their patience, understanding, intelligence, and other leadership qualities (Jerry, 1968).

The first year an administrator is hired is filled with optimism, elation, anxiety, and doubt as to whether or not they will fit a position. Research demonstrates that beginning administrators receive little pre-service or on-the-job training (Spradling, 1989). Mentors are an excellent stopgap to fill this void. Spradling (1989) wrote, “The superintendent gave me the keys to the school, a city map to help me find the building, and wished me good luck” (p. 68).

Any new leader should take the wait, look, and listen approach before making any rash or severe changes (Pisapia, 2009). This will give the administrator time to find out more about the culture and personalities of the school community before making important decisions. Many leaders make the mistake of implementing changes too quickly instead of consulting other stakeholders, and ignore efforts to collaborate or use team decision-making processes (Duke & Iwanicki, 1992). Spradling’s (1989) study also revealed that many administrators received no regular supervision or evaluation after being hired. A large portion of administrator turnover has to do with the lack of induction and orientation (Darling-Hammond & Wise, 1981). The obstacles facing new

administrators are no less daunting than that of a beginning classroom teacher and require significant training and a period of adjustment.

Mentors can help new administrators adjust to what is expected of them after they are hired and help them through the initial orientation phase to receive positive evaluations and to keep their jobs. Administrators should be evaluated on their ability to promote professional development and improve student performance (Duke & Stiggins, 1985). Unfortunately, many times evaluations are used to compare the perception of the purpose of the position to the perceptions of the school district or community. Instead of focusing on student performance, school districts too many times look at increasing accountability, ensuring uniform practices, and collecting data to identify flaws in educational practices for removals or changes (Duke & Stiggins, 1985).

Screening Protocols

There are many different types of screening devices to identify the best fitting applicant. “Administrators today may find the structured interview can effectively identify qualified candidates from a lengthy list of applicants” (Pawlas, 1995, p. 62). The premise of the selection process is that the best indicator of future performance is past behavior. The selection process also acts to reduce the costs of poor hiring decisions as each position costs an organization between 40-60% of a person’s annual salary (Johnson, 2004). Lastly, protocols reduce legal exposure related to uncovering illegal information and reduce the appearance of bias or prejudice during the hiring process. The hiring process also must comply with federal, state, and local laws. Fitting the right candidate to the position and the organization is the key to turning strategic plans into reality.

School districts use different protocols for identifying educational leaders depending on the circumstances and situation. One such method is targeted selection, developed in the early 1970s by Bill Byham of Pittsburgh based Development Dimension International. School districts have started to standardize their interview processes using targeted selection. Targeted selection aims to use a standardized set of procedures and questions to minimize bias in the interview and selection process. It aims to identify attitudes, behaviors, and skills characteristic of a position and screens for these characteristics at each stage of data collection. Targeted selection evaluates a candidate based on the STAR (Situation, Task, Action, and Result) protocol (Pawlas, 1995). The applicant describes a situation, the action taken, and the result. The structured interviews focused on four specific areas; (a) personality, (b) work history and background, (c) what the candidate can do for the organization, and (d) fit.

Gallup, Inc. uses another method for selecting educational leaders. Gallup, Inc. created *Principal Insight*, a web based set of questions that takes about 40 minutes for a candidate to complete at their own convenience. This process identifies applicants not only with the best fitting knowledge and skills, but also the best fitting talents, and can quickly narrow a talent pool. This web-based product relieves some of the burden usually placed on a human resources department or the hiring administrators and serves as a filtering device. Gallup, Inc. also provides a follow-up screening process with open-ended interview questions called FIT (Further Insight into Talent) (Gallup, Inc., 2007). The use of the FIT program was statistically relevant to increase the reliability and consistency of selecting candidates by “asking the same questions and in the same order” (Young & Delli, 2002, p. 609). The process of finding the right fit remains the same

whether school districts use targeted selection, *Principal Insight*, or one of many other methods. The process of identifying school leaders may vary, but the desired result of finding the best fit remains consistent.

Morality in Hiring Processes

Passing over more qualified candidates for less qualified candidates over issues concerning fit should be weighed carefully. The concept of fit is a dynamic theory and cannot be calculated with a high degree of precision. There are legal recourses for candidates and moral ramifications for hiring administrators who deliberately use the dynamics within the concept of fit to their own personal or professional gain. Candidates may be pre-judged by preconceived standards without consideration for the human condition, values, traditions, customs, or beliefs (Dewey, 1922). Dewey (1922) charged public educators to be deliberately moral. Burns (1978) and Bass (1985) both believe that transformational leadership is grounded in moral foundations. Sergiovanni (1996) states that schools are moral communities and that trust is an important part of school leadership. Fullan (2003) challenges all who work in education to act as moral leaders.

Starratt (1994) seeks a role for administrators whereby they can apply proactive measures in creating an ethical environment in their organization. In order to create an ethical environment, Starratt (1994) sees the need for the understanding of two conceptual frameworks. The first he terms foundational and includes the qualities of autonomy, identity, and individual responsibility. The foundational framework also includes connectedness which relates to the relationships that develop and are nurtured with others in order to discover individuals' rights and obligations. Transcendence,

which includes going beyond oneself in pursuit of higher goals and held in common with others, is also included in his foundational framework.

The second framework addresses ethical matters which are more explicit regarding justice (the universal application of justice under the law or in the rules of an organization), critique (speaking out against unjust laws that benefit some while subjugating others), and care (observing the preciousness of humanity and maintaining sensitivity of others). Starratt (1994) also proposes an interrelationship of elements within this framework of ethics, suggesting the need to balance the views offered by others in working to create a culture responsive to the needs of all of its members.

As professionals, school administrators should not seek routine responses to situations termed ethical dilemmas, but rather should engage in reflective practice that takes into account the known, the assumed, the good of the individual, and the group in arriving at a place that is caring and just (Starratt, 1994). In this time of burgeoning diversity in our schools often accompanied by a certain alienated restlessness among a number of children, a rich response by educational leaders to the problems of race, ethnicity, and ability differences is necessary if we are to ensure positive outcomes for those that will shape tomorrow. The selection of school leaders has a very strong ethical component that must ensure fairness and equality not only for AP candidates, but also for the schools in which they will be placed. “Perceptions of fairness and inclusion are therefore a public good that is inextricably linked to business and education imperatives” (Lumby et al., 2005, p. 140).

Future Legislation

Education is currently in a state of flux with decreased sources of funds created by recent economic woes. Real estate taxes are one of the primary vehicles for funding public education and many states and districts are searching for other sources to make up for the funding shortfalls due to the recent economic crisis (Fertig, 2009). One way the federal government has stepped in to plug the funding shortfall is through the \$4.35 billion Race to the Top grant (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Forty states submitted applications for increased federal funding dollars. Race to the Top included four main components: (a) adopting standards to prepare students for college and the workplace; (b) building data systems to measure student growth; (c) recruiting, developing, and rewarding effective educators at schools in need; and (d) turning around low performing schools.

These components include areas where both teachers' and school administrators' pay and job security will be determined in large part based on merit and of the results of standardized test scores (Brody, 2010). Certainly accountability has become a national trend. Former Washington, DC Education Chancellor, Michelle Rhee, fired 24 principals and 22 of the 60 APs in that school district not based on evaluations, but rather because they differed in the direction in which to take the schools (Haynes, 2008). Nationally, many teachers' unions oppose such programs because many states are now implementing laws and regulations to revamp the current system of tenure and job security in education (A Disappointing Race to the Top, 2010). Many states have either implemented or are in the process of implementing laws to abolish or rewrite tenure, tie teacher and administrator pay directly to student performance on standardized tests, and administer

end of course exams (Brody, 2010). The concept of fitting administrators to specific contexts may change under new and pending legislation requiring highly qualified administrators and teachers in all schools (U.S. Department of Education, 2010).

Chapter Summary

Failing to choose the most qualified candidate for any position over demographics, selecting APs depending on how a select few define organizational fit, or selecting APs solely based upon their professional relationships, calls into question the entire system of equality and fairness for all. The most qualified and capable candidates should be placed in leadership positions to benefit the students who may suffer the most by being assigned a sub-par leader. Equity is not an easy subject to talk about. Only through continued discourse and open conversations will the issue be resolved (Rusch, 2004). Clearly, the concept and definition of fit is an ambiguous term that garners further exploration and research under the context of educational organizations.

Chapter 3. Research Design, Procedures, and Methods

This chapter discusses the design, procedures, and methods that were used to conduct this mixed method study. This study utilized documents, surveys, and interviews to collect the data for the analyses. The purpose of this mixed method study was to understand how demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit, influenced secondary school AP selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the Paradise School District leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. It includes findings that address the probability of being selected as a secondary school AP using on the variables of race, gender, personality types, personality traits, and professional relationships.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the concept of fit influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
2. How do demographic fit or gender and race/ethnicity influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
3. How do organizational fit or personality types and traits influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
4. How does group fit or professional relationships influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?

Hypotheses

1. Gender (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
2. Race/ethnicity (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
3. Personality type (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
4. Personality traits (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
5. Professional relationships (group fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

Instrumentation and Methods

The study employed a mixed methods approach to data collection and research. These data collection instruments included (a) documents, (b) surveys, and (c) interviews. Triangulation and multiple methods of research were used that “reduces the risk that your conclusions will reflect only the systematic biases or limitations of a specific source or method, and allows you to gain a broader and more secure understanding of the issues you are investigating” (Maxwell, 2005, p. 94). A combination of techniques gave the

researcher an opportunity to view problems from different angles and to triangulate the data. “Triangulation involves checking information that has been collected from different sources or methods for consistency of evidence across sources of data” (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004, p. 106). All of the data were related to school based secondary AP selection and assimilation using the concept of fit within one large urban school district.

Survey participants. The survey participants were drawn from District lists of eligible secondary school based APs. The District generated and provided a list of candidates who met the following criteria: (a) completed the District required leadership training program to become APs during the school years from 2004-2005 to 2008-2009; (b) worked in a high school or middle school; and (c) still worked in the District when the data collection started on October 1, 2011. These lists identified 197 participants who met these criteria and who were sent the survey portion of the study via email. These participants were targeted so that this study might identify factors associated with AP selection and assimilation.

Interview participants. All of the interview participants either worked for the District as of October 1, 2011 (the data collection start date) or were retired hiring administrators who had previously worked in the District. The identities of all of the study participants are anonymous. The first sample of interview participants included four randomly selected eligible APs who completed the District’s required leadership training program within the five school years between 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 and were selected as APs. The second sample of interview participants included four randomly candidates who were not selected as APs. The third sample of interview participants included eight purposefully selected hiring administrators who possess knowledge of the

current process for selecting and assimilating new APs. These participants were current administrators in the District who hire and/or assimilate newly selected APs. The fourth sample of interview participants included four purposefully selected retired or ex-hiring administrators who were in charge of AP selection and assimilation for the District being studied (see Table 1).

Procedures for District lists of eligible assistant principal candidates.

Techniques in document analyses were used in this study to understand how the factors of demographic fit (gender and race/ethnicity) influenced selection. “Document analysis is a key skill in historical interpretation. It is not a mere summary or description of what happened, but rather analyzing the motivation, intent and purpose of a document within a particular historical context” (Australian National University, 2009, p. 1). The researcher first completed the process of applying for required Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval to conduct the study for both the sponsoring university and the school district in the study. The process of completing, submitting, and re-submitting the IRB approval documents for clarification took approximately three months. Several clarifications and modifications were required, but the study documents and procedures were finally approved.

The researcher then had to identify District employees who would be able to uncover the required list of eligible APs who completed the District’s leadership training program. Once these people were identified, the researcher scheduled face-to-face meetings to discuss the availability of data regarding the concepts of fit that could be used in the study. The researcher made several different requests but quickly found that much of the data was uncollected, incomplete, or unknown. It was a back-and-forth

learning process between the researcher and the District in trying to match the data that were available to what was needed to conduct this study. Some of the data were almost a decade old at the time of data collection (October 1, 2011). The difficulties of uncovering consistent data were increased as District personnel and the leadership training program requirements changed several times from when the data were originally collected.

After considerable efforts, it was discovered that the District did track the gender, race/ethnicity, and work location of each of the candidates who completed the leadership program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The candidates' in the lists were also categorized as being placed at elementary, middle, or high schools. Furthermore, district job postings listed the preference of three years of experience at the school level for the position at which candidates were applying. According to the literature, elementary schools employ significantly more females than males, so this study was constructed to eliminate this bias toward females and included only middle and high schools in the analyses (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The demographic data in the lists would have been different if these elementary school candidates were included. Eliminating elementary school candidates also ignored the possibility that some elementary school candidates were selected as secondary school APs. Even though the District's training department went to significant lengths to compile these data, several weeks and substantial efforts were still required by the researcher to sort, dissect, and code these data into a useable format for the study. Many of the candidate lists overlapped and the format of the lists changed from year to year. District lists were used to identify and analyze the gender and race/ethnicity of the candidates who completed the

leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Data tracking candidates were discovered to be incomplete or in undecipherable formats starting just before 2004, so the 2004-2005 school year became the starting school year for data collection. The original study proposal was defended on April 21, 2010, so 2008-2009 was the last complete school year before this date and thus became the ending point for data collection in this study.

District lists of eligible AP candidates identified 197 participants who met the study criteria. The lists were used in conjunction with the other data collection instruments such as school websites, District websites, and subsequent surveys to triangulate, fill in gaps, and confirm the data provided by the training department. Candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years had been given until October 1, 2011 (the data collection start date) to secure positions as secondary school based APs.

From these lists, the researcher was able to identify and segregate the eligible APs who were selected as secondary school based APs from those who were not selected. These methods employed document content analysis (Webber, 1990). "Content analysis classifies textual material, reducing it to manageable bits of data" (Webber, 1990, p. 5). This type of analysis uses research to make valid inferences using documents and text. Data from District lists were analyzed to see if there were differences between male and female candidates who were selected as secondary school APs. Data from District lists were also analyzed to see if there were differences between the race/ethnicities of the selected and not selected candidates. Patterns and trends using demographic fit were noted, categorized, and dissected further using statistical analysis techniques.

It should be noted the mood of the educational landscape changed dramatically during the time of data collection between 2004 and 2009. In 2004, the economic environment and educational landscape was booming. Toward the end of data collection, in 2009, the environment had a reversal of fortune. The economic environment was in a free-fall and the district started the process of contraction. The educational landscape has stabilized today, but the recent memories of budget cuts and pain continue to permeate the school district. The current future of the school district is in a state of flux and while there are signs of optimism, they are few and far between as the district is still in a stabilization mindset. The current landscape for hiring new APs may very well be consistent with the average of the boom-bust times of data collection between 2004 and 2009.

Procedures for surveys of eligible assistant principal candidates. District lists were only able to provide data with respect to gender and race/ethnicity (demographic fit). To fill in these gaps, a survey instrument was constructed and administered. In addition to gender and race/ethnicity, the surveys were also used to explore other portions of fit. The researcher added portions to the survey with respect to personality type (organizational fit) and the references each candidate used for selection (group fit). Cross-sectional surveys are used to gather information on a population at a specific period in time (Babbie, 1990; Creswell, 2009).

The surveys were administered to the same lists of candidates provided by the District. District lists of eligible AP candidates identified 197 participants who met the survey criteria. These participants included candidates who were selected and were not selected as secondary school based APs. The surveys were used to identify patterns and

trends in secondary school AP selection and assimilation using statistical analysis techniques. It took the researcher a few weeks to build a website and enter the pre-approved survey questions using demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit as guidelines.

The survey participants were sent introductory letters and consent forms via email to participate in the survey portion of the study (see Appendix A and Appendix C). Each candidate was offered a \$10 Starbucks© gift card for his or her efforts. If the survey participant wanted the gift card, he or she filled in the optional address portion at the end of the survey and a gift card was mailed out to them. The surveys included a standard set of questions in a web based data collection instrument (see Appendix B). The survey participants were also sent the original documents a second time to serve as a reminder one week after sending the initial set of documents via email. After giving the participants approximately one month to complete the surveys, the data was collected from the website.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) via an unofficial MBTI-based online instrument was used to measure and categorize the survey participants' personality types and traits in this study. This indicator was developed by Isabel Briggs Myers (1962) and is based on the work and theories of Carl Jung (1921/1971). Each of the 16 personality types is represented by four dichotomous capital letters of the eight personality traits. The first capital letter, either Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I), indicates the preferred flow of energy from either the inner world or the outer world. The second capital letter, Sensing (S) or Intuition (N), focuses on information gathering and whether the five senses or interpreted meaning is preferred. The third letter, Thinking (T) or Feeling (F),

indicates how decisions are made considering either the facts or how people are influenced in the process. The last letter, Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), reveals how the external world and tasks are dealt with on a day-to-day basis by either coming to conclusions or leaving options open.

A previous study by Wendel et al. (1991) indicated that administrators were concentrated into only three of the sixteen personality types, which were ESTJ, ENTJ, and ENFP. ESTJs are practical, decisive, get things done, detail oriented, results oriented, and forceful in implementing plans. ENTJs are decisive, assume leadership easily, logical, enjoy planning, well informed, and forceful in implementing plans. ENFPs are enthusiastic, make connections between events, resourceful, good at reading people, and get bored in routines (Myers, 1962). That study also indicated the diametrically opposed personality traits of the survey participants were (a) Extroversion (E) (72%) versus Introversion (I) (28%), (b) Intuition (N) (57%) versus Sensing (S) (43%), (c) Thinking (T) (65%) versus Feeling (F) (35%), and (d) Judging (J) (66%) versus Perceiving (P) (34%).

Each survey participant was asked to find his or her Myers-Briggs personality type, which was included in the organizational fit category, before beginning the survey. One workshop in the District's leadership training program required the participants to find out his or her MBTI by answering a series of questions. Any participant who did not remember his or her type from the previous coursework was asked to take an unofficial online Myers-Briggs personality type survey via, <http://humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp> (Humanmetrics, 2010). This five to 10-minute survey included self administered questions and allowed the participants to identify their personality types and

traits (Myers, 1962). Once a survey was completed, each candidates personality type was calculated and shown. Each participant then noted his or her personality type on the survey as one of 16 possible combinations (Humanmetrics, 2010; Myers, 1962).

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator was chosen for personality type because on retests in previous studies, 75% to 90% of the participants came out with the same four type personality types (The Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2012b). Consistencies were tested across different ages and ethnicities. The participants toward the lower end of the reliability scale on re-tests are children and students, who are not included in this study. Many validity studies of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator have proven the validity in three categories including (a) the validity of the four separate scales, (b) the validity of the four pairs are dichotomies, and (c) the validity of whole types of particular combinations (The Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2012b). All of the data used to analyze organizational fit (personality types) and group fit (references) were self reported. It is possible that the results were incorrect if inaccurate data were either deliberately or unintentionally reported. It is possible that some candidates had a different perception of themselves when reporting the personality types in the surveys. It is also possible that some candidates did not accurately remember their Myer-Briggs personality types from previous leadership training programs and reported inaccurate data.

The participants were then asked to provide the titles of the references or professional relationships used for the purposes of selection, which fall under group fit. Eligible AP candidates were required to provide lists of District employees as references when applying for positions as APs. The candidates' reference lists included hiring administrators who could vouch for their administrative proficiency and potential. The

surveys were analyzed to identify which eligible AP candidates referenced more than one hiring administrator with the title of principal or above.

The surveys were coded by personality type, personality traits, and references; and finally, whether or not the candidate had been selected as a secondary school AP. The data analyses compared the personality types, personality traits, and references of the candidates who were been selected as secondary school APs to those who were not selected as of October 1, 2011 (the data collection date). The surveys in the study were analyzed in the same fashion as the variables in the District lists. Statistical modeling was used to see if any of the variables from the surveys could accurately predict AP selection. Patterns and trends were noted, coded, categorized, and dissected further using statistical analyses. The surveys were used in conjunction with other data collection instruments such as school websites, District websites, and subsequent surveys to triangulate, fill in gaps, and confirm the data provided by the training department.

Procedures for interviews. Another method of data collection included interviews. Interviews gather data through telling stories and provide an understanding of common experiences (Clandinin & Connelly, 2000). Clandinin and Connelly (2000) noted, “Humans are storytelling organisms who, individually and collectively, lead storied lives. Thus, the study of narrative is the study of the ways humans experience the world” (p. 2). In other words, people's lives consist of stories and memories. Walking in the participant’s shoes adds depth, validity, reliability, and perspective to the study. Shank and Villeda (2004) define qualitative research and interviews as a lantern that sheds light on problems and issues. The interviews used in this study served the dual

purpose of storytelling and adding facts, which gave credence and depth to the processes and methods for selecting and assimilating school based administrators.

The study included a structured set of 11 structured interview questions for face-to-face interviews (Creswell, 2009) (see Appendix E). These interview questions were used to gauge participants' perceptions on the concept of fit using a standardized set of questions. Face-to-face interviews are important to round out the perceptions of fit in differing contexts in the study participants' own words. A \$10 Starbucks© gift card was offered to each interview participant for his or her efforts. The purpose of the interviews was to bring the study to the present, asking the participants about personal experiences and perspectives. The participants situated their experiences within the context of their current and past settings. Seidman (2006) confers, stating that he interviews because, "I am interested in other people's stories. Most simply stories are a way of knowing" (p. 7). The interviews also focused on integrating their views and on reflecting the meaning of their experiences about how the concept of fit applies today.

Once the District lists of eligible AP candidates were obtained, the researcher then coded these lists into two samples; (a) selected AP candidates, and (b) not selected AP candidates. The researcher input the numbered list into a web-based program that selects random numbers via <http://randomizer.org> (Urbaniak & Plous, 2010). The web-based program was used to sort and select the numbered participants on District lists to identify the interview participants in each of the two samples. This process of randomly identifying the interview participants was identical for the first two samples. Picking the interview participants from the District lists of eligible AP candidates at random was

chosen to reduce bias and increase validity (Creswell, 2009). The survey participants or AP candidates each had an equal chance of being selected as interview participants.

Introductory letters and consent forms were sent via email to the interview participants (see Appendices C & D). Phone calls were made to some interview participants if an email address was not available. If a potential interview participant did not respond to the interview request after three days or denied the request, the researcher moved down the list to the next randomly selected potential interview participant. Hard copy consent forms were also given to the interview participants in person (see Appendix D). This process continued until four participants in each of the first two samples agreed to and completed an interview. The interviews were completed either at the interview participant's place of employment or a neutral site (such as a library) that was mutually agreed upon. Each interview was recorded, transcribed, coded, and analyzed further. At the conclusion of each interview, the researcher reviewed and wrote down any thoughts, ideas, impressions, and hunches to reference later. The data was then coded for specific themes using frequency counts.

The interview participants in the third sample included eight purposefully selected current hiring administrators who were involved in or possessed knowledge of the process for selecting and assimilating newly secondary school APs. The number of hiring administrators in charge of selecting and assimilating secondary school-based APs was very limited, thus the need for purposeful selection. When the desired population is rare, purposive sampling may be required (Creswell, 2009). Maxwell (2005) states purposeful selection is needed to deliberately select individuals, "In order to provide information that can't be gotten as well from other choices" (p. 88). Additionally, non-

probability purposive sampling is used when the researcher wants to compare subgroups of a population (Babbie, 1990). The remaining two sample groups of current and ex-hiring administrators were contacted in the same manner and administered the same structured set of interview questions in the same face-to-face format as the first two samples of participants.

Purposeful selection was required because finding ex-hiring administrators with knowledge of hiring and assimilation practices proved to be a difficult task. The researcher purposefully sampled to find, “People who are uniquely able to be informative because they are expert in an area or were privileged witnesses to an event” (Weiss, 1994, p. 17). This sample group was very forthcoming, as the District in this study no longer employs them. This group proved to be one of the most relevant because they were no longer employed by the District and had little reason to hold back on revealing potential hidden agendas or procedures. These interviews were especially useful in triangulating the data and formulating conclusions.

Each transcribed interview was individually sent back via email, to each of the 20 participants who were interviewed for member checks. The participants first checked his or her individual interview transcripts for errors, omissions, or ideas used in the interviews. The researcher corrected any errors or made any modifications requested by the participants (Mertens & McLaughlin, 2004).

Participants may have felt a bit uncomfortable answering personnel questions about the District’s hiring policies, but the use of pseudonyms and the keeping of participants’ identities confidential mitigated this risk. Even so, the possibility does exist that the interview participants were not entirely truthful or forthcoming, thus skewing the

results. The researcher protected participants' responses to ensure confidentiality. Interview tapes and all electronic files are kept on a password-protected laptop in a locked cabinet in the researcher's home, and will remain there for a period of five years after the study is complete. The researcher has instituted several safeguards to protect the identity of the participants in this study. However, a breach revealing participant responses and information is a possibility. Any participant had the right to refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Five years after the study is complete the tapes, files, and surveys will be destroyed.

Quantitative Analyses

This portion of this study utilized statistical analyses to test existing *a priori* categories. The concept of fit states that gender, race/ethnicity, personalities, and professional relationships are important factors in terms of candidates' fit into a workplace context (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). This study examined these predetermined categories of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit. Statistical models were manipulated to see if various combinations of these variables could be used predict AP selection.

The variables for the statistical analyses are listed below.

Outcome variable.

1. Selection of secondary school AP candidates from the District lists and surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program in the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

Independent variables used to determine selection.

1. Gender: Male or Female from District lists (demographic fit).
2. Race/Ethnicity: Black, Hispanic, and White from District lists (demographic fit).
3. Personality Type: ESTJ, ENTJ, & ENFP; or did not suggest these three types from the surveys (organizational fit) (Myers, 1962).
4. Personality Traits: Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I); Sensing (S) or Intuition (N); Thinking (T) or Feeling (F); and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), from the surveys (organizational fit) (Myers, 1962).
5. Professional Relationships: Referenced more than one hiring administrator with the title of principal or above or did not reference more than one hiring administrator with the title of principal or above from the surveys (group fit).

The researcher built a database, coded the data, and analyzed the results using Microsoft Excel© and a Texas Instruments TI-84 Plus graphing calculator. The researcher identified which eligible AP candidates were selected and not selected as secondary school based APs. The selected and not selected AP candidates were identified by (a) gender, (b) race/ethnicity, (c) personality types, (d) personality traits, and (e) references used for selection. The demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit data were analyzed to identify the differences between candidates who were selected and the candidates who were not selected as APs.

The coding in the District lists were used to identify which candidates were selected and which candidates were not selected as secondary school based APs. District lists of candidates were coded by gender and race/ethnicity (demographic fit). The data analyses compared the gender and race/ethnicity of the candidates who have been

selected as APs to those who were not selected. The statistical tests for the study were calculated using chi-square (χ^2). The quantitative phase of the analyses was used to identify which variables could best predict selection.

Chi-square utilizes non-parametric tests, or distribution free statistics, that help answer questions when sample sizes are too small to use techniques that require normal distributions. Chi-square testing was used for the statistical analyses because the number of participants and sample sizes in the study were not large enough to create normal distribution data. “Chi-square is a non-parametric test that allows you to determine if what you observe in a distribution of frequencies would be what you would expect to occur by chance” (Salkind, 2007, p. 382). Chi-square compares what is observed, which in this study is secondary AP selection during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years, to what would be expected by chance from the lists and surveys. Once the hypotheses were rejected or accepted with an alpha set at .05, the results reveal whether or not the factors of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit influenced AP selection in this study. The data in the District lists and surveys were also presented and manipulated in a table format to reveal selection patterns and trends.

Qualitative Analyses

Coding is the process by which the qualitative data is quantified. This study utilized the predetermined categories of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit prior to fieldwork for first cycle coding (Saldana, 2009). Each word, phrase, or number was given a code within the existing framework of fit. Each of the three fit categories was subsequently subdivided further into the respective sub-categories. Coding the qualitative data allowed the researcher to discover hidden meanings of numbers, words,

and phrases that contributed to key findings and of the conveyed concepts (Strauss & Corbin, 1990).

The interviews were dissected line-by-line from the typed transcripts. Applicable words, phrases, sentences, or paragraphs of each interview were identified from transcripts. The interviews were spliced into themes of words, sentences, paragraphs, or ideas into the first column of the Microsoft Excel© or Microsoft Word© database. Each cell in the center columns within the database contained a single idea for open coding, which was color coded and numbered. The left section of the database was used to label the source of the coded information. Furthermore, interview participant cells included pseudonyms, genders, races/ethnicities, Myers Briggs' personality types, and the number of references at or above the level of a principal. Each category had a quantity or word count listed at the bottom of the spreadsheet to note frequencies. The database was constructed to count, sort, and identify specific words and consistent or re-occurring themes. Qualitative research implements coding and, "The goal of coding is not to count things, but to fracture the data and rearrange them into categories that facilitate comparison between things in the same category and that aid in the development of theoretical concepts" (Maxwell, 2005, p. 96). The coding within the interviews was used to analyze reoccurring themes related to the concept of fit (Seidman, 2006). The researcher did not utilize an independent auditor to verify the accuracy of the coding of the interview transcripts.

Once the initial first cycle coding was completed, the researcher utilized second cycle coding to further identify emerging themes. The purpose of second cycle coding is to "Develop a sense of categorical, thematic, conceptual, and/or theoretical organization

from your array of First Cycle codes” (Saldana, 2009, p. 149). The categories were assigned themes by analyzing patterns and trends in the data. Second cycle coding can also be called pattern coding. “Pattern codes not only organize the corpus but attempt to attribute meaning to that organization” (Saldana, 2009, p. 150). Word counts, phrase counts, and other types of frequency counts were all utilized during the analyses of the data. The data were also analyzed by evaluating frequency counts, patterns, trends, and embedded themes using frequency counts with respect to demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit.

The researcher also utilized observations when analyzing the transcripts when indirect responses were given to direct questions. The researcher viewed body language and other indirect means of communication to decipher some of the responses where the interview participants answered direct questions in an indirect manner. Comments by only one interview participants were discounted and did not qualify as consistent themes. Only responses that were consistently heard by more than one participant without counter arguments were be labeled as themes. The researcher looked for responses without counter-arguments or inconsistencies no matter the number in the frequency counts. Once the threshold of more than one count was recognized, a theme was established as long as there wasn't an equally compelling overriding counterargument. The researcher followed qualitative research coding and protocols, reviewing the interview data until themes emerged.

Chapter Summary

This mixed method study utilized documents, surveys, and interviews to collect data on the concepts of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit. Statistical

analyses techniques using χ^2 were used to analyze the data in the District lists and the study surveys. Frequency counts were used to analyze the data in the interviews. The same interview questions were used for all of the interview participants to increase the consistency and reliability of participants' responses.

Chapter 4. Findings

This chapter presents the findings in the data analyses of the documents, surveys, and interviews. The purpose of this mixed method study was to understand how demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit, influenced secondary school AP selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the District leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Statistical analyses were utilized to analyze the data in the District lists and surveys, while frequency counts were used to analyze the interview data. The findings are presented in both table and narrative forms.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. How does the concept of fit influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
2. How do demographic fit or gender and race/ethnicity influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
3. How do organizational fit or personality types and traits influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?
4. How does group fit or professional relationships influence secondary school AP selection and assimilation?

Hypotheses

1. Gender (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
2. Race/ethnicity (demographic fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
3. Personality type (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
4. Personality traits (organizational fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.
5. Professional relationships (group fit) influenced secondary school AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

Survey and Interview Participants

The surveys were sent to the 197 participants in District lists of eligible secondary school AP candidates during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The first two samples of interview participants were randomly selected from this list of eligible AP candidates (four selected APs and four not-selected APs). The third and fourth samples of interview participants were eight purposefully selected hiring administrators and four

ex-hiring administrators who possessed knowledge of the process for selecting and assimilating new APs in the District (see Table 1 earlier, and Table 2 below).

Table 2

Paradise School District Interview Participants

Role	Gender	Race/Ethnicity
Selected AP	Male	White
Selected AP	Female	White
Selected AP	Female	Black
Selected AP	Female	Black
Aspiring AP	Male	White
Aspiring AP	Female	White
Aspiring AP	Male	White
Aspiring AP	Male	White
Current hiring administrator	Male	White
Current hiring administrator	Female	Black
Current hiring administrator	Male	Hispanic
Current hiring administrator	Female	Black
Current hiring administrator	Male	White
Current hiring administrator	Male	White
Current hiring administrator	Male	Black
Current hiring administrator	Female	Hispanic
Ex-hiring administrator	Male	White
Ex-hiring administrator	Male	White
Ex-hiring administrator	Female	White
Ex-hiring administrator	Male	White

Instrumentation and Methods

This study employed a mixed methods approach to data collection and research. The data collection instruments included documents, surveys, and interviews. The data collection and analyses utilized triangulation and multiple sources to increase the reliability and validity of the study (Creswell, 2009). All of the data were related to school based secondary AP selections and assimilation using the concept of fit within a large urban school district.

The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was used to measure and categorize the survey participants' personality types and traits in this study (Myers, 1962). Each of the 16 personality types is represented by four dichotomous capital letters of the eight personality traits. This previous study by Wendel et al. (1991) indicated that administrators were concentrated into only three of the sixteen personality types (ESTJ, ENTJ & ENFP) and also indicated specific personality traits within these types (Extrovert-E, Intuition-N, Thinking-T, & Judging-J).

District Lists of Eligible Assistant Principal Candidates

The District lists of 197 AP candidates were akin to looking at an x-ray of the internal organs of a large institution and its administrative processes. In this study, the focus was on the expensive, arduous, and complicated process of selecting and assimilating secondary school APs in the District. The District lists revealed selection data on secondary school AP candidates that have not been seen before, nor made available to the general public. Speculation, rumors, hunches, and intuition are usually used to answer questions of how secondary school APs are selected and assimilated. District lists answered these previously asked questions through data. The findings from

the District lists are extremely valuable to any educator who aspires to become a secondary school AP. The career aspirations of thousands of educators might be altered if the information in the District lists were made available to aspiring APs before starting the multi-year process of training and selection. Unfortunately, as the data here demonstrated, many candidates only realized these results after investing several years, hundreds of training hours, and thousands of tuition dollars on their careers.

What is the probability of successfully being selected as a secondary school AP by District hiring administrators? This seems to be a fairly straightforward and simple question to answer before an educator embarks on the extensive and costly process of selection and self-sacrifice. These educators were “tapped” and trained as aspiring administrators for years before earning the titles of eligible AP candidates (Myung, Loeb, & Horng, 2011, p. 697). Only after years of training and preparation were these eligible AP candidates allowed to apply and interview for open positions.

AP candidates must navigate various and arbitrary tests established by the District, universities, and the state. These tests must be navigated with precision, and all of the 197 secondary school AP candidates in this study completed the requirements to be selected. These barriers include gaining his or her principal’s recommendation, completing a graduate degree in education administration (or equivalent), pass a state administered test, and finally spend another one to two years completing the District’s leadership training program. In the end, only one-fifth of these candidates were ever selected as secondary school APs. The remaining candidates who are not selected as APs were labeled as unqualified and rejected as being unfit.

Surveys of Eligible Assistant Principal Candidates

The surveys of aspiring APs are akin to looking at smaller selective samples in order to better understand the personnel processes and their effects on the candidates for administration. The surveys added new perspectives regarding organizational fit (personality types) and group fit (professional relationships). This new lens viewed a wider range of data with about a third of the participants in the District lists having responded to the surveys (66/197). The surveys were used to answer questions about organizational fit (personality types) and group fit (professional relationships). However, District lists were only able to provide data with respect to gender and race/ethnicity (demographic fit). To fill in these gaps, a survey instrument was constructed and administered to explore organizational fit (personality types) and group fit (professional relationships).

There were differences between the participants in the District lists and the surveys. The rate of candidates who were selected as APs and participated in the surveys was higher (34.8%), than the selection rate of candidates from the District lists (19.8%). This suggests that the selected candidates may have been more likely to participate in the survey portion of this study. The survey response rate of one third of the participants in the District lists can be considered fairly low. These two differences contributed to not being able to compare the results in the demographic fit categories (gender & race/ethnicity) between the District lists and the surveys as bias may have been introduced. As a result, the survey data collected on demographic fit (gender & race/ethnicity) were excluded in the data analyses. Even though there were disparities between the samples of participants in the District lists and the surveys, the surveys still

uncovered valuable findings that contributed to this study. While the survey data were analyzed independently from the data in the District lists, the section on Integrated Findings at the end of this chapter summarizes all of the findings in this study.

The surveys were coded by (a) personality types (organizational fit), (b) personality traits (organizational fit), (c) references (group fit), and (d) whether or not the candidates were selected as secondary school APs. The data analyses compared the 16 Myers-Briggs personality types, eight personality traits, and references of the candidates who were selected as secondary school APs to those that were not selected as of October 1, 2011 (the data collection date). The survey variables in the study were analyzed in the same fashion as the variables in the District lists to see if secondary school AP selection could accurately be predicted.

Interviews

Interviews were used to uncover a deeper understanding of the selection and assimilation process than what could be revealed by the findings in the District lists and surveys. The interview samples included ex-hiring administrators, current hiring administrators, selected AP and aspiring APs. As the researcher conducted and transcribed these 20 interviews, many themes continued to resonate with consistency. Six of the 11 interview questions (5, 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10) directed the participants to the predetermined, or a priori, categories of demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit (see Appendix E). The remaining five open ended interview questions (1, 2, 3, 4 & 11) were used to evaluate overall fit and were used not only to confirm the pre-determined categories, but also to uncover new themes. The interview portion of the study was

constructed to include several perspectives to AP selection and assimilation in the District.

Quantitative Analyses

Document content analysis and surveys were used to uncover a deeper understanding of the selection and assimilation process than what was revealed using only the findings in the interviews. District lists and surveys included secondary school AP candidates who were selected and others who were not selected. The findings from the District lists, surveys, and interviews were also compared and contrasted in the section on Integrated Findings.

The variables for the statistical analyses are listed below.

Outcome variable.

1. Selection of secondary school AP candidates from the District lists and surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years.

Independent variables used to determine selection.

1. Gender: Male or Female from District lists (demographic fit).
2. Race/Ethnicity: Black, Hispanic, and White from District lists (demographic fit).
3. Personality Type: ESTJ, ENTJ, & ENFP; or did not indicate these three types from the surveys (organizational fit) (Myers, 1962).
4. Personality Traits: Indicated Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I); Sensing (S) or Intuition (N); Thinking (T) or Feeling (F); and Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), from the surveys (organizational fit) (Myers, 1962).

5. Professional Relationships: Referenced more than one hiring administrator with the title of principal or above or did not reference more than one hiring administrator with the title of principal or above from the surveys (group fit).

Demographic Fit - Gender

Table 3 reveals that there were 197 eligible candidates in the District lists. Table 3 also indicates which candidates were and were not selected as secondary school APs in the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years using gender as the independent variable (see Table 3).

Table 3

Assistant Principal Selection by Gender in District Lists

Gender	Selected	Not Selected	Total	Gender Selected (%)
Male	16	59	75	21.3
Female	23	99	122	18.9
Total	39	158	197	19.8

Note. $\chi^2(1) = 0.18, p > .05$

The results from Table 3 suggest that gender was not related to secondary school AP selection in the District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. District lists contained 197 candidates and the results of the 39 selected candidates and 158 not selected candidates using gender within demographic fit were noted. The rate of male candidates who were selected was 21.3% (16 of 75), the rate of female candidates who were selected was

18.9% (23 of 122), and the selection rate of all candidates in District lists was 19.8% (39 of 197).

Demographic Fit - Race/Ethnicity

Table 4 suggests which candidates were and were not selected as secondary school APs during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years using race/ethnicity (Black, Hispanic, and White) as the independent variable (see Table 4).

Table 4

Assistant Principal Selection by Race/Ethnicity in District Lists

Race/Ethnicity	Selected	Not Selected	Total	Race/Ethnicity Selected (%)
Hispanic	6	19	25	24.0
White	12	61	73	16.4
Black	21	78	99	21.2
Total	39	158	197	19.8

Note. $\chi^2(2) = .92, p > .05$

The results from Table 4 suggest that race/ethnicity was not related to secondary school AP selection in the District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. There was only one candidate who indicated a race/ethnicity other than Black, Hispanic, or White in the surveys. Subsequently, these other race/ethnicity categories and this one candidate were eliminated in the data analyses. District lists contained 197 candidates and the results of the 39 selected candidates and 158 not selected candidates using race/ethnicity within demographic fit were noted. The rate of Hispanic candidates who were selected was 24.0% (6 of 25), the rate of White candidates who were selected was 16.4% (12 of 73),

and the rate of Black candidates who were selected was 21.2% (21 of 99). These selection rates differed from the overall selection rate of all candidates in the District lists which was 19.8% (39 of 197).

Organizational Fit - Personality Types

Table 5 suggests which candidates were and were not selected as secondary school APs during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years using personality types as the independent variable (see Table 5).

Table 5

Assistant Principal Selection by Personality Type in Surveys

Personality Type	Selected	Not Selected	Total	Personality Type Selected (%)
ENFP, ENTJ, & ESTJ	8	11	19	42.1
Other 13 types	15	32	47	31.9
Total	23	43	66	34.8

Note. $\chi^2(1) = .62, p > .05$

The results from Table 5 suggest that personality types was not related to AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The surveys contained 66 candidates and the results of the 23 selected candidates and 43 not selected candidates using personality types within organizational fit were noted. The rate of candidates with the three Myers-Briggs personality types of ENFP, ENTJ, and ESTJ who were selected was 42.1% (8 of 19) and the rate of candidates with one of the other 13 Myers-Briggs

personality types who were selected was 31.9% (15 of 47). These rates contrast the overall selection rate of all candidates in the surveys, which was 34.8% (23 of 66).

Organizational Fit - Personality Traits.

Table 6 suggests which candidates were and were not selected as secondary school APs during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years using personality traits as the independent variable (see Table 6).

Table 6

Assistant Principal Selection by Personality Trait in Surveys

Personality Trait	Selected	Not Selected	Total	Personality Type Selected (%)
Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I)	14	19	33	42.4
Sensing (S) or Intuition (N)	9	24	33	27.3
Feeling (F) or Thinking (T)	6	9	15	40.0
Judging (J) or Perception (P)	17	34	51	33.3
	12	17	29	41.4
	11	26	37	29.7
	22	39	61	36.1
	1	4	5	20.0
Total of traits in each of the four categories	23	43	66	34.8

Note. E/I trait $\chi^2(1) = 1.67, p > .05$; S/N trait $\chi^2(1) = .23, p > .05$; F/T trait $\chi^2(1) = .97, p > .05$; J/P trait $\chi^2(1) = .53, p > .05$

The results in Table 6 suggest that the Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I) personality traits were not related to AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school

years. The surveys contained 66 candidates and the results of the 23 selected candidates and 43 not selected candidates using personality traits within organizational fit were noted (Myers, 1962). The rate of selected candidates with the Myers-Briggs personality trait of Extroversion (E) was 42.4% (14 of 33) and the rate of selected candidates with the Introversion (I) trait was 27.3% (9 of 33). The overall selection rate of all candidates in the surveys was 34.8% (23 of 66).

The results in Table 6 suggest that the Sensing (S) or Intuition (N) personality traits were not related to AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The rate of selected candidates with the Sensing (S) trait was 40.0% (6 of 15) and the rate of selected candidates with the Intuition (N) personality trait was 33.3% (17 of 51). The overall selection rate of all candidates in the surveys was 34.8% (23 of 66). However, it is worth noting the number of selected candidates who indicated the Intuition (N) personality trait was almost three times as many as the candidates who indicated the Sensing (S) personality trait (17 versus 6).

The results in Table 6 suggest that the Feeling (F) and Thinking (T) personality traits were not related to AP selection in the surveys of candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The rate of selected candidates with the Myers-Briggs personality trait of Feeling (F) was 41.4% (12 of 29) and the rate of selected candidates with the Thinking (T) trait was 29.7% (11 of 37). The overall selection rate of all candidates in the surveys was 34.8% (23 of 66).

The results in Table 6 suggest that the Judging (J) or Perception (P) personality traits were not related to AP selection from the surveys of candidates who completed the

leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The rate of candidates with the personality trait of Judging (J) who were selected was 36.1% (22 of 61) and the rate of candidates with the Perception (P) trait who were selected was 20.0% (1 of 6). The overall selection rate of all surveys candidates was 34.8% (23 of 66). It is also worth noting that all but one of the selected candidates indicated the Judging (J) personality trait versus the Perception (P) personality trait (22 versus 1).

Group Fit - References

Table 7 suggests which candidates were and were not selected as secondary school APs during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years using the number of references as the independent variable (see Table 7).

Table 7

Assistant Principal Selection by References in Surveys

Number of References	Selected	Not Selected	Total	References Selected %
More than one	17	18	35	48.6
One	6	25	31	19.4
Total	23	43	66	34.8

Note. $\chi^2(1) = 6.18, p > .05$

The results in Table 7 suggest that references did influence AP selection from the District lists of candidates who completed the leadership training program in the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The surveys contained 66 candidates and the results of the 23 selected candidates and 43 not selected candidates using gender within group fit were noted. The rate of candidates who referenced more than one hiring administrator at or above the level of principal who were selected was 48.6% (17 of 35), the rate of

candidates who referenced only one hiring administrator at or above the level of principal who were selected was 19.4% (6 of 31), while the overall selection rate of all candidates in the surveys was 34.8% (23 of 66).

Qualitative Analyses

Interviews were used to uncover a deeper understanding of the selection and assimilation process than what were revealed with the findings from the District lists and surveys. The interview samples included ex-hiring administrators, current hiring administrators, selected AP candidates, and not selected aspiring APs. The interview portion of the study was constructed to include several perspectives to AP selection and assimilation in the District. It is important to note the researcher also utilized observations in the data analyses. The researcher attempted to capture the themes in the most efficient method, while still presenting the data in a format the reader could decipher. Lastly, member checks were not utilized in the coding procedures, so the themes were unverified and the possibility of inaccuracy in data collection and analyses could occur. To be considered a theme, an item had to be suggested by more than one of the interview participants. However, themes with only a handful of suggestions that had equally opposing viewpoints would cancel each other out and would not be reported. The researcher followed qualitative research protocols and reviewed the data until themes emerged.

Demographic Fit - Gender and Race/Ethnicity

The first category, demographic fit, is defined as fitting the candidate's gender and race/ethnicity to the context of the organization (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007).

Williams and O'Reilly (1998) reviewed more than 80 studies and defined two of the most

influential and salient demographic fit factors as gender and race/ethnicity. Table 8 summarizes the interview participant's comments of what demographic fit categories were important to selecting and assimilating APs in the District (see Table 8).

Table 8

Number of Participants Who Suggested Demographic Fit Influenced Selection

Fit Category	Sample 1: Selected APs (4)	Sample 2: Aspiring APs (4)	Sample 3: Current Hiring Admin. (8)	Sample 4: Ex-Hiring Admin. (4)	Total (20)	% of Total
Black & Hispanic suggested	1	1	1	3	6	30.0
Gender balance	3	2	7	4	16	80.0
Race / ethnicity balance	4	4	8	3	19	95.0

By an overwhelming majority, almost every interview participant mentioned that balancing the gender of the school's administrative staff to the student population and surrounding communities was important in selecting APs. The researcher did not do a statistical analyses of this balance as the demographic data with respect to the other administrators and student body at each school, and the surrounding communities, were unknown. The researcher did not have access to this demographic data so a statistical analysis was not possible. Furthermore, the interview participants also suggested that a gender balance was desired to address specific female and male issues encountered in secondary schools. Several interview participants stressed the importance of having

female APs speak to young women about gender sensitive issues or topics. The inverse was also true between male APs and young male students. A selected AP shared a bit more about this balance with respect to gender when she said:

You have to balance that out because there will be safety issues, there will be issues in the PE locker room and things like that. You've either got a male or a female, but you can't have all males or all females.

A hiring administrator expanded on the topic of diversity related to gender when she shared, "I think you want to have a balance in your administrative staff of men and women generally speaking. You can't have a guy search a girl for something, so you have to have that balance." Clearly, a gender balance was suggested as extremely important in any administrative team. Most of the other interview participants suggested that a gender balance within the school's administrative team was one of the most important factors to consider in selection. Both genders were in fact viewed as equal in importance by most of the current hiring administrators.

Balance was by no means isolated to gender and was also applied to race/ethnicity. A current hiring administrator suggested that it was a moral obligation of the District's hiring administrators to use diversity in race/ethnicity in selecting APs when he said, "I believe a moral obligation to ensure that the adults that surround children as a group are indicative or reflective of the children that they surround. We are also under moral obligation to expose children to diversity." An ex-hiring administrator thought race/ethnicity balances were informally mandated because of politics:

Ethnicity wise, schools have to be reflective of the communities they sit in. I think the district may be to a fault has responded to that picture, which may or

may not reflect what is best for kids in terms of level of experience of the potential candidate. The level of sophistication of working with children and that sort of thing. I think that it's important to understand that school districts are political. School board members are politicians. They only stay in office if they reflect the wishes of their constituents.

Another hiring administrator said that some candidates might gain an advantage if "you meet a demographic need the school is missing or lacking." An aspiring AP was more blunt when she made the claim that some candidates gain a competitive advantage "because of your gender and your race." Even though she made this claim, she did not specify which gender or race/ethnicity held a competitive advantage. The researcher surmises that this may in fact change with respect to each position, the demographic makeup of the school's current administrative team, the student population, and the surrounding community. Demographic fit was one of the important pillars that Elfenbein & O'Reilly (2007) explored and the interview participants also picked up on it as being a competitive advantage for some candidates, therefore it cannot be discounted. Whenever the topic of race/ethnicity and gender came up, the same response was almost always given. District's hiring administrators suggested that they consistently try balance the demographics (gender and race/ethnicity) of each school's administrative team to the school's student population and the surrounding community.

Some interview participants mentioned that when race/ethnicity was applied to select APs, the most qualified candidate may be passed over. This limited the ability of some candidates to be selected because they do not fit the predetermined demographic profile for a specific position. "We want to ensure that since we are a very diverse school

district that there is diversity represented in the applicants” (hiring administrator). One aspiring AP expressed his concern that inferior candidates may be selected due to demographics when he shared, “From what I have figured out people hit the criteria of male, female, Black, White, Spanish or whatever it is. It doesn’t seem to me that it’s always the most qualified person.”

Five interview participants suggested that Black and Hispanic candidates sometimes have an advantage over other candidates. This possibility may not apply to all positions and may only be considered in only some instances. An ex-hiring administrator suggested that race/ethnicity was especially influential at some schools with a majority-minority student body:

Many times the Black parents come in there and they expect to talk to an African American. On your staff you are going to have some African-Americans if that is the majority of your student body and your parents. You are looking for some men, some women, and you certainly want some people of color whether men or women. You would like to get an even mix if you can.

One current hiring administrator also made this observation that race/ethnicity was considered to mirror the school’s student body and the surrounding community when she suggested:

At a high minority school the administrative racial makeup is a lot different than schools with a lower percentage of minority students. It’s more prevalent with the African-American or Black community. Although, even at another school I remember a parent was asking why doesn’t someone speak Spanish when the majority of the people who go to school here are Hispanic.

It is important to note that White candidates were never mentioned as being suggested candidates by any of the interview participants. It is also important to note who were making these comments. As Table 8 revealed, all but one of the ex-administrators suggested Black and Hispanic candidates had some advantages in getting selected. This participant sample had nothing to hide and were very forthcoming during the interviews because they were no longer employed by the District. The other samples of current hiring administrators and AP candidates still work for the District, and the possibility does exist that these interview participants did not reveal the entire story. There were several instances during the interviews where these current employees paused, used metaphors and innuendo when explaining if these candidates held some advantages. One interview participant used the race of “spotted dog” while another used “purple” when discussing the subject of how race/ethnicity was applied to selection. Some other candidates also suggested some “races” held advantages, but did not define the race/ethnicity so it was left up to the researcher to interpret these non-specific comments. The researcher used reasoning and the process of elimination to interpret these comments as White candidates were not mentioned as being suggested by even one interview participant. It is important to note these results are not conclusive as the possibility of inaccurate interpretation of these comments does exist.

Organizational Fit - Personality Types, Personality Traits, and Expertise

Organizational fit involves matching candidates to the goals and objectives of an organization on a variety of dimensions, including personality types (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007; Judge & Cable, 1997). The Myers-Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI) was applied via an unofficial, online instrument to measure the survey participants'

personality types in this study. Each of the 16 personality types is represented by four dichotomous capital letters of the eight personality traits. None of the interview participants' responses could be accurately coded using all four capital letters, into any one of the 16 Myers-Briggs types. All of the interview participants gave responses that included either missing, mixed, or conflicting data with respect to categorizing the ideal candidate into any one of the 16 MBTI personality types. To compensate for these inconsistencies, the researcher coded the participants' responses into one of the eight dichotomous personality traits symbolized by their respective capital letter pairs (E/I, S/N, T/F, & J/P). The data on personality types and traits originated from the surveys and were self reported. The survey participants indicated his or her personality types and traits and these results were not independently verified.

Expertise was another part of organizational fit that emerged in the interview portion of this study. The interview participants suggested that the two most important aspects of expertise were in operations and curriculum. Expertise in operations involves knowledge of school rules, procedures, and routines that are required to run a school on a day-to-day basis. Expertise in curriculum is defined as being able to plan and modify academic programs to address needs as they relate to improving student achievement. The two most critical curriculum areas mentioned were reading and math, which requires state mandated testing per NCLB in 2001 (U.S. Department of Education, 2001). Table 9 summarizes the interview participants' comments regarding which organizational fit categories are important in selecting and assimilating APs in the District (see Table 9).

Table 9

Number of Participants Who Suggested Organizational Fit Influenced Selection

Fit Category	Sample 1: Selected APs (4)	Sample 2: Aspiring APs (4)	Sample 3: Current Hiring Admin. (8)	Sample 4: Ex-Hiring Admin. (4)	Total (20)	% of Total
Expertise: curriculum	4	1	6	1	12	60.0
Expertise: operations	4	2	7	3	16	80.0
Personality trait: Extroversion (E)	0	2	2	1	5	25.0
Personality trait: Judging (J)	1	0	4	2	7	35.0
Personality trait: Thinking (T)	1	1	4	2	8	40.0
Personality trait: Feeling (F)	4	4	8	4	20	100.0

Expertise in operations was mentioned by 16 of the 20 interview participants as being influential to selecting and assimilating APs. Some participants suggested expertise in operations and curriculum were the best predictors of future performance. A selected AP suggested that the duties of the position were overwhelming when he shared:

Some of the things a new AP can be in charge of may include maintaining bulletin boards, dealing with cafeteria, distributing customer surveys, facilitating

the discipline and/or dress code committees, managing safety emergency protocol, managing morning duty, leading parent involvement programs, coordinating transportation, and coordinating volunteers.

A current hiring administrator spoke of some other aspects to consider during selection, “Safety, security and facilities is a need that you have in your school. If your current assistant principals don’t have experience doing that, it’s important when you go ahead to hire to find someone who fills that role.”

Aspiring APs can secure this expertise in operations in many different fashions. Some experiences are thrust upon the aspiring APs during their normal duties as classroom instructors. Other experiences are requests from the candidate’s current supervising administrator for assistance with one program or another. The last way to gain experience is for the candidate to proactively seek out opportunities for knowledge growth in outside-of-the-classroom activities. These candidates must seek out opportunities or be assigned these duties to learn the roles of the AP before being viewed as qualified to interview for positions. These experiences were reported as especially valuable in areas where candidates had limited knowledge or expertise. They helped the aspiring APs learn how to take on new responsibilities and served as internships or transitions into the position. In essence these aspiring APs became “unpaid interns” or “understudies” in learning the roles of the AP. One hiring administrator shared that some expertise in operations takes time outside of the classroom to learn and are important:

Being able to intelligently speak about school safety, scheduling, coverages, dealing with discipline, dealing with difficult parents, things of that nature.

Things that you have done outside of the classroom where you have volunteered

your own time. Being able to run drills, being able to organize parent nights, being able to do things in the community.

Another hiring administrator shared that gaining expertise in operations gets candidates selected when she said, “Generally it’s the person who has a varied experience based in extracurricular things outside of their classroom and things that they don’t necessarily get paid for.” A current hiring administrator added to this when he suggested:

The advantages for an assistant principal to be selected for me are their experience in doing tasks and being a leader in the school that they’re currently in. Not necessarily classroom, just experience, although curriculum is extremely important. What they have done beyond the classroom after school at the leadership level is probably the most important thing that I can see as a determining factor in one potential assistant principal competing against another for a position.

An ex-hiring administrator summed it up when he said, “Running a school requires many different skill-sets and having an administrative team that is competent in the procedures of running a school is critical.”

Eight selected APs and hiring administrators also suggested that expertise in curricula is an influential factor in selecting and assimilating APs. One participant suggested:

Right now I am going to say in 2011, you are at an absolute disadvantage if you don’t come from the core academic background as far as instruction is concerned. You need someone who can carve out a niche in that school and become your

academic driver for the math department or for the language arts department (current hiring manager).

On the other hand, only one of the aspiring APs and one of the ex-hiring administrators mentioned expertise in curricula or lack of it as a challenge to being selected or assimilated.

The curricula areas that were mentioned most often during the interviews were reading and math. These two areas were found to be “high stakes” because the results of state mandated tests that impact not only the students, but also each school, and many faculty members. A current hiring manager stressed this when he said, “Now, being an assistant principal you need to know some curriculum somewhere. If you know reading and math then you will be fine because those are the most critical areas.” Another current hiring administrator said that starting programs to increase student achievement are important, “Implementations of programs that you are have from start to finish and what are the results of said programs on student achievement.” One ex-hiring administrator mentioned the emerging importance of expertise in curriculum when she shared, “You saw more of a need for curriculum based when standardized tests became vital. Test scores became so critical that there was a shift from the good old boy situation to more curriculum and research based kinds of folks.”

Feeling (F) is the personality trait that aligns with the portion of the brain that forms conclusions in an attached form and its impact on others. All of the interview participants suggested Feeling (F) as the ideal personality trait that would mesh with the other school administrators, the student body, and the surrounding community. Getting along with others and keeping harmony were mentioned several times as being the most

challenging aspect to being a new AP. One hiring administrator suggested, “People who have difficulty dealing with different kinds of people,” will not succeed in the position. “Fitting in means you have to try to get along with everybody, the other assistant principals and certainly the principal,” suggested one ex-hiring administrator. Another ex-hiring administrator said, “I think warmth and caring are critically important to the job.” A selected AP added to this theme when she shared, “I also think you also need to have that sensitivity aspect to you as well. Be sympathetic and compassionate.” All of the 20 interview participants said maintaining harmony in relationships and being tactful, considerate, and warm were important to cultivate in oneself.

Thinking (T) is a decision-making personality trait that prefers to use facts and data and was suggested as being important by eight interview participants (Myers, 1962). Even though the Thinking (T) trait was mentioned as being influential, it is important to note it is opposite to the dichotomous trait of Feeling (F), which was also mentioned. Even though the competing theme of Feeling (F) would normally be canceled out by the opposing Thinking (T) trait in an analysis, it was noted as a theme because it was indicated by more than a third of the candidates which was too high to discount.

Candidates with the Thinking (T) trait realize that there are some decisions where nobody will be happy. Candidates who possess the Thinking (T) trait also view the world in a somewhat detached fashion as compared to those with the Feeling (F) trait. Many participants mentioned both the Thinking (T) and Feeling (F) traits as being important, even though they are diametrically opposed and either could be applied depending on a given situation. One hiring administrator suggested that the Thinking (T) trait is suggested over the Feeling (F) trait in specific circumstances when he said, “You are not

there to be liked. You are going to be the bad guy more times than not if you are doing your job correctly.” One ex-hiring administrator also operated under this premise when he suggested harmony is not always possible and said APs need to have, “Thick skin. I also operate under the premise that 50% of the people are going to like you, 50% of the people are not going to like you and that 50% will change.” It may be difficult for a new AP to find the proper balance between Thinking (T) and Feeling (F), as both are were suggested as desired traits, and both require a considerable amount of skill to implement with moderation.

Judging (J) is the ability to hit deadlines and create closure on tasks and was suggested as a challenge to fitting in by seven interview participants. Using the Myers-Briggs personality traits, candidates who possess the Judging (J) trait are more likely to hit deadlines, view the world as logical, and like to have things settled (Myers, 1962; The Myers & Briggs Foundation, 2012b). This personality trait is conducive to positions as APs because meeting a plethora of deadlines, managing multiple tasks, and being proactive in completing tasks were all found to be very desirable. One hiring administrator added, “An area that first year APs have a lot of trouble is completing the tasks. Some of them are good at organizing them, but they just don’t complete any of them.” Once the aspiring candidate gets selected as an AP, there are many more challenges than just learning the new responsibilities of the position. A selected AP shared some challenges to creating closure with tasks:

The training program for newly selected APs is probably equal to your doctorate. The new assistant principal training program is just so grueling that many people have a hard time keeping up with it and on top of having a new job. You really

have to balance about 15 to 20 different things and the training program is on that list of things to do. You think once you get in it will be ok, but it's not because it gets harder.

One hiring administrator expanded on this desirable trait to finish tasks and move onto the next problem for AP's when she said, "You want to take the initiative. They see what needs to be done and do not wait for the principal to do something. It's kind of rare." Settling items and staying ahead of these multiple responsibilities were suggested as being very important to assimilate successfully into the role of the AP.

Candidates with the Extroversion (E) personality trait are "outgoing" and those with it prefer to and draw energy from interacting with people (Myers, 1962). Five interview participants suggested that candidates with this trait have an advantage in being selected and assimilating as secondary school APs. One ex-hiring administrator suggested that the best APs are those who thrive on person-to-person interaction and possess the personality trait of extroversion. He thought that the best new APs should follow his lead when he said, "I would have an office wherever people gathered in the morning. I would put my desk – and I really would put a desk, where parents drop their kids off." An aspiring AP suggested that the District's hiring administrators prefer selecting APs who possess the trait of Extroversion (E), "They want people who are very outgoing and social. You have to converse with people in all different groups."

Group Fit - Networking, Sponsors, and References

Group fit, includes the candidate's professional relationships with others in the organization as it relates to selection and assimilation (Elfenbein & O'Reilly, 2007). The interview portion of this study revealed three different categories within group fit: (a)

networking, (b) sponsors, and (c) references. Table 10 summarizes the interview participants' comments of what group fit categories influenced in selecting and assimilating APs in the District (see Table 10).

Table 10

Number of Participants Who Suggested Group Fit Influenced Selection

Fit Category	Sample 1: Selected APs (4)	Sample 2: Aspiring APs (4)	Sample 3: Current Hiring Admin. (8)	Sample 4: Ex-Hiring Admin. (4)	Total (20)	% of Total
References	1	1	4	1	7	35.0
Sponsors	2	3	5	1	11	55.0
Networking	4	2	4	2	12	60.0

Networking is defined as cultivating productive relationships for employment purposes. To have the best opportunity to be selected, eligible secondary school AP candidates should meet as many hiring administrators as possible. Twelve interview participants suggested that networking influenced selection and assimilation. One ex-hiring administrator backed this up when he said, "I think it's all about professional relationships. I think networking, that is the phrase or word that is currently used for it, is critically important." A selected AP stressed the importance of networking when she added, "It is very important to network. You certainly are not going to make an impact by staying in a corner and doing your thing and not being out there and mingling and conversing with people." This selected AP suggested that without networking, a candidate will never get an interview much less be selected as an AP. She suggested that

relationships are critical because, “In the process of selection they matter a lot because you are not going to go to the table if somebody doesn’t know about you or nobody has heard of you.” One aspiring AP suggested that “who” is in the network is also important, “If you know somebody higher above the principal, that helps even more.” Another selected AP candidate said that candidates who network with other hiring administrators in the District can identify openings that other candidates may miss:

If you are networked properly, you know where there might be openings. You’ve got to start making friends with everybody on the planet, everybody outside of your school, and within your school. While the professional relationship with the candidate’s current principal is critical, it may be even more to be known by other hiring administrators.

Networking is not only important for AP selection, but also for assimilating into a new position. Professional relationships built through networking were found to be very important in utilizing the expertise of others as related to both operations and curricula. A selected AP does not know it all and knowing individuals who can answer questions can be instrumental to succeeding in the position. A current hiring administrator stated it the best, “Fitting into the position comes in more once you are in the position with the network of people you built now. If you have a network of people you could call and ask, how I should handle this?”

Eleven interview participants suggested that having a sponsor proactively market an aspiring AP influenced selection. Sponsors are current hiring administrators who are making phone calls, sending emails, or otherwise making contact with other hiring administrators on the candidate’s behalf. Candidates, who cannot get someone of

influence to make calls or contacts on his or her behalf to other hiring managers, will fight an uphill battle toward being selected. “The first obstacle becomes, what gets you to the interview table. Generally that is your principal doing some marketing for you. Speaking up, pushing you, and selling you to his or her colleagues,” shared one hiring administrator.

For several participants, an important professional relationship for aspiring APs was believed to be with his or her current principal. “I think the most important relationships for becoming an assistant principal is for aspiring administrators to have that relationship with their principal” (hiring administrator). One hiring administrator said, “When it’s all said and done the principal is the one who signs your evaluation and grades you. Those grades lead to interviews.” A selected AP shared her thoughts on aspiring APs not only having a professional dialogue with his or her current principal, but also needing their support when she said, “If you don’t have your principal’s backing, then you’re not going anywhere.” An aspiring AP expanded on the importance of sponsorship when he suggested, “If someone out there isn’t advocating out for you either, you are going to have a real hard time seeing if they pick you. Your name probably won’t get selected a whole lot.”

References were the last group fit category that influenced selection and were mentioned by seven interview participants. References differ from sponsors in that references may or may not proactively market candidates. References also differ from networking as there are only a handful of references on each candidate’s application, while networking could include potentially hundreds of hiring administrators. It is important to note that references that are given on a candidate’s application are about the

right people saying the right things about a candidate. “For the selection piece, we have a lot of schools in this district. As much as we try to get around and meet people, you have to rely in some extent on references. So that means something,” suggested one hiring administrator. Another hiring administrator also suggested that she felt that references were important, “You are always going to call someone to maybe vouch for that person’s expertise and I think that is just human nature.” One current hiring administrator stressed this point, “Of course all things being equal, if someone is highly recommended by someone you respect then obviously they are going to be given strong consideration for a position.”

An Emerging Theme - Interview Impressions

While demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit were the pre-determined categories used for this study, it is also important to note that another influential theme emerged in the interview portion of the current study. The emerging theme of *interview impressions* could not be categorized into any one of the three original fit categories. This theme could be encompassed in all of the original categories depending on the perspectives of the interview participants. Table 11 summarizes the interview participants’ comments of the emerging theme that was suggested as being important in selecting and assimilating APs in the District (see Table 11).

Table 11

Number of Participants Who Suggested Interview Impressions Influenced Selection

Fit Category	Sample 1: Selected APs (4)	Sample 2: Aspiring APs (4)	Sample 3: Current Hiring Admin. (8)	Sample 4: Ex-Hiring Admin. (4)	Total (20)	% of Total
Interview impressions	4	4	8	2	18	80.0

Interview impressions were an influence on selection for all but two of the 20 interview participants. A hiring administrator and a selected AP also revealed that there was a process and sequence of interviews to conquer in order to be selected. “There is an application process and an interview process to get in, or to be qualified as an eligible assistant principal candidate,” suggested this hiring administrator. “First of all the interview is grueling. That interview can go any which way and you got to be ready for every direction. Each interview has different questions and the format can also be different,” stated a selected AP candidate. Another selected AP mentioned the grueling process when she said, “So it may seem like you are interviewing and interviewing and interviewing and no one is seeing what is happening.”

Integrated findings. The study included data from District lists, surveys, and interviews. Categories of influence were used so the data and results could be deciphered in a consistent clearly between manner. These influences vary from neutral (i.e., no influence), moderate, and too strong (see Table 12). Rates and chi-square (χ^2) were used to analyze the statistics in the data contained in District lists and surveys of eligible AP candidates. The interview findings focused on the number of interview participants who

mentioned each fit category as frequency counts. It is important to note the researcher applied considerable judgment and interpretation to label the categories as neutral, moderate, and strong. The researcher grouped consistent themes in a manner which would decipher the results in the most efficient manner. None of these labels were conclusive because the researcher used judgment in their application.

Categories labeled strong revealed overwhelming evidence the category was related to the process for selecting and/or assimilating secondary school APs in this study. Data in the District lists and surveys that were strongly related to specific categories had rates that varied more than five percentage points (+ or - 5% or significant differences) above or below the expected mean values. The strong label was also given to the interview categories that were suggested by more than half (11 or more) of the interview participants.

The label of moderate meant that the category might be related to the process of selecting and/or assimilating secondary school APs, but not with the same power as strong. Data in the District lists and surveys indicating moderate evidence contained category rates that were two to five percentage points (+ or - 2 to 5% or some differences) more or less than the expected mean values. Interview data in moderate categories suggested consistent themes, but were suggested by only half or less (10 or fewer) of the interview participants as being related to selection and/or assimilation.

Neutral evidence (i.e., no influence) suggested the category was not related to secondary school AP selection and/or assimilation. Categories in the District lists or the surveys that suggested neutral evidence varied no more than two percentage points (+ or - 2% or almost equal) from the expected mean values. Neutral influence in the

interviews meant that these data were not mentioned by more than one of the interview participants without an equally opposing or neutralizing viewpoint.

These categories also include direction for the power weightings of strong and moderate. *For* meant that these data suggest that the category positively influenced selection and/or assimilation as secondary school APs. *Against* meant that these data suggested that the category negatively influenced selection and/or assimilation. Selecting APs was a zero sum process. If a category revealed that candidates with specific traits were suggested or selected at higher rates, this meant that candidates without those traits were not suggested. Candidates that did not have the suggested traits were selected at lower rates to make up for the selection imbalance. If there were suggestions for selecting or assimilating candidates with traits in specific categories, it suggests that candidates who did not possess these traits were pre-judged to be unqualified or taken action against for purposes of selection and assimilation. Any conflicting data within the same category, such as higher selection rates that contain a lower quantity of selected candidates, was also considered when labeling strength and direction. If conflicting data was overwhelming, the category strength or direction was re-analyzed and re-labeled.

The integrated findings in Table 12 include results from the District lists, surveys, and interviews and were combined into a single finding per category. The labels were assigned per category using the strongest data that were suggested (see Table 12).

Table 12

Integrated Results from District Lists, Surveys, and Interviews

Independent Variable	District Lists	Surveys	Interviews	Overall Findings	Comments
Gender: male or female candidates balance	NA	NA	Strong for	Strong for	Suggestions given to filling gender gaps
Race / ethnicity: Black candidates	Neutral	NA	Moderate for	Moderate for	Black candidates were suggested
Race / ethnicity: Hispanic candidates	Moderate for	NA	Moderate for	Moderate for	Hispanic candidates were suggested
Race / ethnicity: White candidates	Moderate against	NA	Neutral	Moderate against	White candidates were not suggested
Race / ethnicity balance	NA	NA	Strong for	Strong for	Suggestions given to filling race / ethnicity gaps
Personality types: ESTJ, ENTJ, & ENFP	NA	Strong for	Neutral	Moderate for	Extroversion included in all suggested types
Personality types: 13 types not ESTJ, ENTJ, & ENFP	NA	Moderate against	Neutral	Moderate against	Introversion types never suggested
Personality trait: Extroversion (E)	NA	Strong for	Moderate for	Moderate for	Extroversion candidates more likely to network
Personality trait: Feeling (F)	NA	Strong for	Strong for	Strong for	Mentioned the most in interviews
Personality trait: Judging (J)	NA	Moderate for	Moderate for	Moderate for	Completing tasks is important
Personality trait: Thinking (T)	NA	Strong against	Moderate for	Neutral	Candidates can have problems getting along
Group fit: references	NA	Strong for	Moderate for	Moderate for	Referencing multiple principals or above suggested
Group fit: sponsor	NA	NA	Strong for	Strong for	Current principal or higher
Group fit: networking	NA	NA	Strong for	Strong for	Most broadly defined group fit category
Expertise: operations	NA	NA	Strong for	Strong for	More experience / knowledge was critical
Expertise: curriculum	NA	NA	Moderate for	Moderate for	Increased importance
Interview impressions	NA	NA	Strong for or against	Strong for or against	Could include many categories

Revised Conceptual Framework

Based on the findings of this study, the conceptual framework was found to be an appropriate model for approaching an understanding of secondary school AP selection and assimilation processes. Candidate expertise was found to be a factor in the level of organizational fit that a candidate may have with their new school environment. In addition, the professional relationships that factor into a candidate's group fit were defined specifically as networking, sponsors, and references. Refinements could be made, however. The revised conceptual framework includes the findings from this study (see Figure 3).

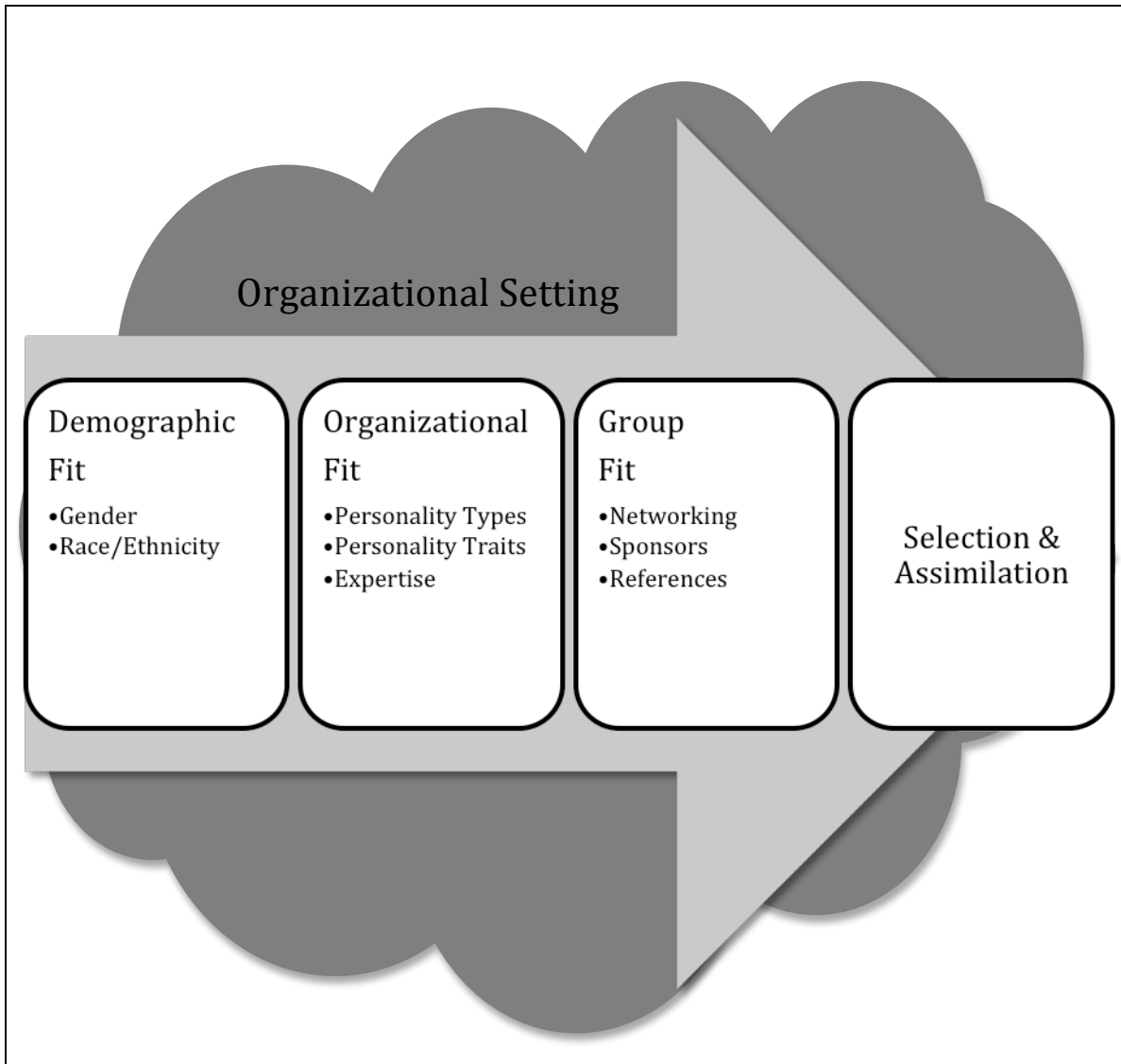


Figure 3. Revised conceptual framework for understanding the potential impact of demographic, organizational, and group fit on selection and assimilation of new secondary school APs.

Chapter Summary

Data from District lists suggest that a candidate’s gender and race/ethnicity were not related to selection. However, the interview participants suggested a candidate’s gender and race/ethnicity did influence selection and assimilation when each was balanced to the demographic mix of the administrative team at a specific school. The

results from the surveys suggest that personality types and personality traits were not related to selection, but that the references did influence selection. The interview participants suggested that personality types and traits did influence selection and the suggested traits were Extroversion (E), Feeling (F), and Judging (J). The interview participants also suggested that the references, sponsors, and networks each candidate used also influenced selection and assimilation. The candidates' expertise in operations and curricula were also found to be influential factors in selecting and assimilating secondary school APs by the interview participants. Lastly, the candidates' impressions made during the interviews were an emerging theme that influenced the selection process.

Chapter 5. Discussions and Conclusions

This chapter provides a discussion of the study findings in the District lists, surveys, and interviews. The purpose of this mixed method study is to understand how demographic fit, organizational fit, and group fit, influenced secondary school AP selection and assimilation for candidates who completed the District leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. The chapter also discusses the winners and losers in the current process, recommendations for policy changes, and recommendations for future research. The chapter ends by restating the original limitations and delimitations of the study along with a conclusion.

Discussion of Educational Landscape Changes During the Study

It should be noted the mood of the educational landscape changed dramatically during the time of data collection between 2004 and 2009. In 2004, the economic environment and educational landscape was booming. Local property values were increasing at double digit rates, new students were enrolling in the district by the thousands, and funding was plentiful. The school district was in an expansion mode and new schools were being built and opened almost every school year as student enrollment was on the rise. The school district also employed hiring forums where hundreds, if not thousands, of employees at all levels were being hired each school year. Finding quality employees was difficult and many schools were competing with each other for the few available candidates at all levels. Many candidates at all levels had multiple job offers

from competing schools and employees had significant leverage in getting hired.

Optimism was at its peak just after the data collection started in 2004.

Toward the end of data collection, in 2009, the environment experienced a reversal of fortune and the economic bubble burst. The economic environment was in a free-fall and the district started the process of contraction. Student enrollment dropped by thousands each school year, employees at all levels were let go, and many employees were happy simply being able to keep any job. School funding dropped off significantly and morale was very low. Discussions of closing schools was a hotly debated topic and many communities began the fight to keep some local schools open. Hiring was non-existent, and if an opening occurred at any level, existing employees were shuffled or moved laterally between schools, instead of new candidates being hired for these openings.

The educational landscape has stabilized today, but the recent memories of budget cuts and pain continue to permeate the school district. While student enrollment is no longer dropping, it also is not increasing and new threats to the local public schools loom in the background. Charter schools recently started making inroads into the communities previously served only by the local public schools. While these charter schools are relatively small compared to the local school district, their student enrollment and influence continue to grow each year. The District is currently making attempts to combat these recent competitors. The current future of the District is in a state of flux and while there are signs of optimism, they are few and far between as the District is still in a stabilization mindset. The current landscape for hiring new APs may very well be

consistent with the average of the boom-bust times of data collection between 2004 and 2009, which was 19.8%.

Discussion of Demographic Fit - Gender

Statistical analysis revealed that the gender of eligible secondary school AP candidates was not related to selection from District lists of 197 candidates during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. However, almost all of the 20 interview participants confirmed that gender did influence AP selection when there was a “missing element” in the demographic “balance” of a school’s administrative team. The interview participants suggested that the District went to great lengths to ensure that an equal balance of male and female APs worked in each school. The interview participants suggested that there were no gender suggestions between men and women, but rather suggestions for selecting candidates who filled or rounded out missing gender imbalances in each school’s administrative team.

Data tracking candidates were discovered to be incomplete or in different formats starting in 2004, so the 2004-2005 school year became the starting school year for data collection. The original proposal was defended on April 21, 2010, so 2008-2009 was the last complete school year before this date and thus became the ending point for data collection. According to the literature, elementary schools employ significantly more females than males, so this study was constructed to eliminate this bias toward females and included only middle and high schools in the analyses (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). Eliminating elementary school candidates also ignored the possibility that some elementary school candidates were selected as secondary school APs.

The current study indicated that 41% (16 of 39) of the candidates who completed the leadership training program were men. The rate of AP candidates was somewhat consistent with the ratio of male to female secondary school educators on a national basis where, “Currently, in secondary schools, about 35 percent of teachers are men” (Helmer, 2005, p. 1). The fact that there were more women than men entering the leadership training program is a huge step forward with respect to women’s rights (i.e., gender equity) because the U.S. Department of Education (2007) stated men led 74% of public high schools. The study results suggested that the District bucked this national trend of male hires for secondary school based APs.

Discussion of Demographic Fit - Race/Ethnicity

Statistical analysis suggested that the race/ethnicity of the eligible secondary school AP candidates was not related to selection in District lists of eligible AP candidates during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Even so, trends emerged in the selection rates when the race/ethnicity categories were examined further. These data from District lists suggested for selecting Hispanic candidates and suggestions against selecting White candidates, while the selection of Black candidates was shown to be neutral.

The race/ethnicity mix of the communities served by the District was 25.7% Black, 25.1% Hispanic, and 43.5% White (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). More than 50% of the candidates who completed the leadership training program were Black, or almost double the rate of the Black community members in the District (50.3% versus 25.7%). While the data in the District lists suggested that Black candidates were selected at rates nearly equal to the selection rate of all candidates (21.2% versus 19.8%), these results

were skewed because there were twice as many Black candidates to choose from than their “balance” in the District. Black candidates were competing against other Black candidates in higher numbers for their “balanced” share of secondary school AP positions. Unfortunately, this study did not explore the factors related to this phenomenon where Black candidates were trained at such a high rate. The rate of Hispanic candidates who completed the leadership training program was lower than the rate of Hispanic community members in the District (12.6% versus 25.1%). However, Hispanic candidates who completed the leadership program were selected at a higher rate than the selection rate of all candidates (24.0% versus 19.8%). White candidates completed the leadership training program in lower rates than White community members in the District (36.9% versus 43.5%). These candidates were also selected at a lower rate than the selection rate of all candidates (16.4% versus 19.8%).

The interview participants confirmed that race/ethnicity did influence AP selection. The interview participants mentioned that there were suggestions for selecting Black and Hispanic candidates instead of White candidates. Almost all of the 20 interview participants suggested that race/ethnicity mattered more when there was a “missing element” in the demographic “balance” of a school’s administrative team compared to the community the school served. “Formally, what I see is that if you meet a demographic need the school is missing or lacking that’s helpful,” shared a current hiring administrator. The results of the study suggest that the District was following the overall demographic trends in the U.S.; that of increased diversity when selecting secondary school APs (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). These integrated findings suggested that the District selected Black and Hispanic candidates over Whites as APs. These

findings run counter to the literature that indicate that White males are historically the preferred demographic (Glass, 1992; Newton, 2006).

Discussion of Organizational Fit - Personality Types

Statistical analysis revealed that the personality types of the secondary school AP candidates were not related to which candidates were selected in the 66 surveys. Even so, trends emerged in the selection rates when the personality type categories were examined further. The survey data suggests selecting candidates who indicated the three Myers-Briggs personality types of ESTJ, ENTJ, and ENFP (Myers, 1962). These candidates were selected at higher rates (42.1%) than candidates with the other 13 personality types (31.9%) and the overall selection rate of the survey candidates (34.8%). The current study agreed with the results of a previous study that administrators and aspiring administrators were concentrated in three of the 16 personality types (Wendel et al., 1991). While the interview participants suggested that personality traits influenced selection, there was little consistency or agreement on the best type. Each context or situation was different and determined the best personality fit. All of the data used to analyze organizational fit (personality types & traits) and group fit (references) were self reported. It is possible the results were incorrect if inaccurate data were either deliberately or unintentionally reported. It is possible that some candidates had a different perception of themselves when reporting the personality types in the surveys. It is also possible that some candidates did not accurately remember their Myer-Briggs personality types from previous leadership training programs and reported inaccurate data.

Discussion of Organizational Fit - Personality Traits

There were differences between the participants in the District lists and the surveys. The rate of candidates who were selected as APs and participated in the surveys was higher (34.8%), than the selection rate of candidates from the District lists (19.8%). This suggests that the selected candidates may have been more likely to participate in the survey portion of this study. The survey response rate of one third of the participants in the District lists can be considered fairly low. These two differences contributed to not being able to compare the results in the demographic fit categories (gender & race/ethnicity) between the District lists and the surveys, as bias may have been introduced. This bias may be evident in the statistical results of these survey data, which analyzed personality types, personality traits, and references.

A previous study by Wendel et al. (1991) surveyed 88 administrators and aspiring administrators and noted the percent of participants who indicated these diametrically opposed personality traits; (a) Extroversion (E) (72%) versus Introversion (I) (28%), (b) Intuitive (N) (57%) versus Sensing (43%), (c) Thinking (T) (65%) versus Feeling (F) (35%), and (d) Judging (J) (66%) versus Perceiving (34%). A lower rate of survey participants indicated the suggested personality trait of Extroversion (E) for the “attitudes category” in this current study than in the previous study (50.0% versus 72.0%). Statistical analysis suggested these two personality traits, Extroversion (E) or Introversion (I), were not related to which candidates were selected. Even so, trends emerged in the selection rates when the personality trait categories were examined further. The rate of candidates who indicated the Extroversion (E) personality trait were selected at higher rates (42.4% versus 27.3%) and in greater number (14 versus 9) than

candidates who indicated the Introversion (I) trait. These results indicated Extroversion (E) was the suggested personality trait between these two diametrically opposed traits.

Statistical analysis suggested that two personality traits, Intuition (N) or Sensing (S), were not related to which candidates were selected. The second personality trait, Intuition (N), was indicated by a higher rate of participants for the “information gathering category” in this current study than in the previous study (77.3% versus 57.0%). The Intuition (N) personality trait was also indicated by almost than three times as many selected candidates as the Sensing (S) trait (17 versus 6). Even so, trends emerged in the selection rates, which indicated Intuition (N) was not the suggested trait for selection. In this study, candidates who indicated the Sensing (S) personality trait were selected at higher rates than candidates who indicated the Intuition (N) trait (33.3% versus 40.0%). These conflicting findings eliminated, or cancelled each other out, with respect to identifying suggestions between these two diametrically opposed personality traits, therefore neither trait was suggested.

Statistical analysis suggested that these two personality traits, Thinking (T) or Feeling (F), were not related to which candidates were selected. The third personality trait, Thinking (T), was indicated by a lower rate of candidates for the “decision making category” in this study than in the previous study (56.1% versus 65.0%). Trends also emerged in the selection rates when the personality trait categories were examined further, which resulted in Thinking (T) not being the suggested personality trait. Candidates who indicated the Feeling (F) personality trait were selected at higher rates (41.4% versus 29.7%) and in greater numbers (12 versus 11) than candidates who

indicated the Thinking (T) trait. These results indicated that Feeling (F) was the suggested personality trait between these two diametrically opposed traits.

Statistical analysis indicated that these two personality traits, Judging (J) or Perceiving (P), were not related to which candidates were selected as APs. The last personality trait, Judging (J), was indicated by a higher rate of participants in this current study for the “task completion category” than in the previous study (94.2% versus 66.0%). Even so, trends emerged in the selection rates when the personality trait categories were examined further. Candidates that indicated the Judging (J) trait were selected at higher rates (36.1% versus 20.0%) and in higher numbers (22 versus one) than candidates who indicated the Perceiving (P) trait. These results indicated that Judging (J) was the suggested personality trait between these two diametrically opposed traits.

The interview participants suggested the prevalent personality traits in secondary school APs were; (a) Extroversion (E) was suggested to Introversion (I), (b) Sensing (S) and Intuition (I) had no suggestions, (c) Feeling (F) was suggested to Thinking (T), and (c) Judging (J) was suggested to Perceiving (P). In summary, the integrated findings for the suggested personality traits that were indicated in both the surveys and interviews were (a) Extroversion (E), (b) Feeling (F), and (c) Judging (J).

Discussion of Organizational Fit - Expertise

The interview participants uncovered two other important organizational fit themes; expertise in operations and curricula. Most of the 20 interview participants mentioned that expertise based on experiences, such as supervising student activities or starting school-wide programs, were the best predictors of future performance. While expertise in operations and curricula were not investigated in the District lists and

surveys, the importance in the selection process was evident. Expertise in curricula was suggested as being an influence to selecting APs by a handful of interview participants.

One hiring administrator suggested that academic areas related to reading and mathematics was the most valuable. “Now, being an assistant principal, you need to know some curriculum somewhere. If you know reading and math then you will be fine because those are the most critical areas,” suggested one hiring administrator. Another hiring administrator stressed the importance of these same two subjects, “You need someone who can carve out a niche in that school and become your academic driver for the math department or for the language arts department.” Schools and educators are evaluated on the results of state required standardized tests and English and math are considered core subjects. The integrated findings indicated expertise in operations was a suggested influence while expertise in curricula moderately influenced selection and assimilation.

Discussion of Group Fit - References, Sponsors, and Networking

Statistical analysis revealed that the references secondary school AP candidates used for hiring purposes did influence which candidates were selected on the 66 surveys. Additional trends emerged in the selection rates when the references were examined further. The survey data suggested selecting candidates who referenced more than one hiring administrator at or above the level of principal. Candidates who referenced more than one hiring manager at or above the level of principal were selected at a higher rate (48.4% versus 19.4%) and in greater numbers (17 versus 6) than candidates who only referenced one hiring administrator.

The findings from the interviews were consistent with the survey results and suggested that professional relationships with hiring administrators influenced secondary school AP selection. Almost all of the interview participants agreed that professional relationships influenced selection and many participants also suggested that professional relationships were important to assimilate into positions once selected. Networking was found to be the most influential group fit finding, followed by having a sponsor, and finally references. One ex-hiring administrator suggested that networking influenced selection when he said, “I think it’s all about professional relationships. I think networking, that is the phrase or word that is currently used for it, is critically important.”

Some participants suggested that a requirement for selection was for a candidate to have a sponsor or “cheerleader” to the other hiring administrators. Some interview participants suggested that candidates required “sponsors,” or hiring administrators contacting other hiring administrators to promote candidates, in order to get selected. Many interview participants suggested that there are hundreds of candidates for each position and being “sponsored” is required just to get noticed. Some of the interview participants also suggested that not only does it matter how well the candidate is known outside of his or her school, but also who sponsored the candidate.

Recommendations were found to moderately influence AP selection in the interview portion of this study. “Of course all things being equal, if someone is highly recommended by someone you respect then obviously they are going to be given strong consideration for a position,” shared a current hiring administrator. Possessing professional relationships simply raises a candidates profile and enables the candidate to distinguish themselves from the other “300 to 500 people” who are competing for the

same limited number of positions. The integrated findings indicated networking, sponsors, and references were suggested to be an influence on selection and assimilation.

Discussion of an Emerging Theme - Interview Impressions

An emerging theme was candidates' impressions on the interviews during the selection process. While the interview participants suggested these impressions influenced AP selection, the direction was not categorized as *for* or *against* because these interviews could either help or hurt candidates. During the interviews, the hiring administrators were searching for specific demographic types, personality types/traits, expertise, professional relationships, or something else. Years of training and preparation were at stake during these interviews, even for the most talented and prepared AP candidates. Some candidates suggested it ultimately came down to how candidates performed in one or more interviews to get selected. One hiring manager highlighted how strongly the interview impressions influenced selection when he said, "To realize that if you are sitting there and you can't come in and make somewhat of an impression, you may not get back to another interview." The remaining candidates who were not selected as APs were labeled as "unqualified" and rejected as unfit. The integrated findings suggested interview impressions influenced selection.

The sources for the data on interview impressions came from personal communications based on only one of the thousands of school districts. It should be noted that this information is not conclusive as this study included only one school district (N = 1). There are thousands of other school districts to study and their data may or may not agree with the findings of the interviews in this study.

Further, many federal, state, and local laws restrict the types of interview questions that can be asked (U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2012). Federal laws primarily prohibit asking questions concerning race, color, religion, gender, national origin, age, or disabilities. None of the participants hinted that any laws were compromised in the interview questions that were asked to select candidates. In fact, a few participants stated that the same two or three interview questions related to the state educational leadership standards were asked of each candidate for each open position. One recently hired AP reflected on the process, “You are asked three questions. The questions are taped to your desk. There is no interaction between the people asking the question. There is no follow-up question. You just answer the question.” This indicates the hiring committee is making every attempt to keep the process consistent between the five to six candidates who interview for each open position.

Winners and Losers

Not all educational processes or procedures can be characterized by the terms “winners” and “losers.” This is not the case with respect to fit. You are either selected to become an administrator or not. It is not uncommon in many large districts and in all states to have a much higher number of program completers in educational administration than those selected. The phrase “drowning in the candidate pool” seems apt, as applicant pools are not filtered for years at a time.

In this study, the winners were the Black and Hispanic AP candidates because the District lists suggested that candidates from these demographic groups were selected at a higher rate than White candidates. The interview participants also confirmed these data

results. The number of Black candidates in which to choose from was also more than the number of Hispanic and White candidates combined.

Another group of winners were the schools and current administrators where the AP candidates worked. The 197 AP candidates completed summary capstone projects to fulfill the requirements of the leadership training program. Most of these projects were directed at improving student achievement at either a specific school or elsewhere in the District. The District had 197 research projects developed and delivered to the training department and to these schools at no additional cost to the District.

In addition to completing a capstone project, each aspiring AP is encouraged to seek out any and all opportunities for gaining expertise in operations and curricula. These candidates seek this expertise by participating in programs or by volunteer hours. Almost all of these projects or programs occur during non-instructional times or after school hours. Most, if not all, of these hours were not compensated. As one hiring administrator suggested, “Generally it’s the person who has a varied experience base in extracurricular things outside of their classroom and things that they don’t necessarily get paid for.” The number of candidates volunteering to gain expertise would be reduced if the number of candidates were reduced. Many of these aspiring APs volunteered to take on these extra duties because an area of expertise was being developed. Many current secondary school administrators and APs rely on aspiring APs to “fill-in” or share the responsibilities on many time consuming tasks. These requests to “volunteer” or “help out” were also directed at other classroom teachers who were void of any aspirations of ever becoming administrators. However, aspiring APs were expected to volunteer to gain separation from hundreds of other candidates competing for only 39 positions that were

filled during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. One selected AP suggested that candidates cannot:

Excuse yourself from pushing yourself almost to the edge of exhaustion. To not only teach in the classroom, but also to get all the assistant principal experience you can. If you are not willing to push yourself like that, you have no business getting in this job.

Four-fifths of the candidates spent many years developing expertise, but were never selected as APs.

The school district wins when more educators are trained and take on leadership roles. Successful schools require leadership not only from the principal and the APs, but also from the other employees, volunteers, parents, students, and associated stakeholders. Successful school districts distribute leadership throughout the organization. While the structures, responsibilities, and titles may be different, the concept of distributive leadership remains the same in successful organizations. Some of these leaders are given official titles or assigned specific duties, while many are not. Successful organizations need stakeholders, at all levels, to proactively take on leadership roles and step-up when a void appears or opportunities become evident.

The leadership training program is an opportunity for educators who want to do more to step-up. While these data revealed that only one in five of these candidates will ever become secondary school APs, the District still had an opportunity to train the other four-fifths of these candidates to become better leaders. Additional leadership training only enhances the abilities of the leadership training program participants, regardless of whether or not they were selected. The District currently has hundreds of candidates who

completed the leadership training program who will never become APs. Even so, these ex-leadership candidates continue to be valuable resources for the District.

Conversely, the losers in the process of selecting and assimilating secondary school APs were all of the candidates who were not selected. Some of these rejected AP candidates decided to stay in the District as classroom teachers. Many candidates who were not selected may suffer from decreased morale for being labeled as unqualified and unfit to become APs in the District. The AP candidates each spent thousands of tuition dollars, completed one to two years in the leadership training program, and invested hundreds of training hours all to become APs. The frustrated tone and body language of this rejected sample group was evident during the interviews. Several mentioned the process of selection was already decided before the interviews started. One aspiring AP suggested, "I was always led to believe that these jobs are already spoken for anyways." A selected AP confirmed this believe when he shared, "They already know everything about you beforehand. It can be kind of skewed or manipulated a little bit, but when the interview comes it's pretty much set." The process of selection analyzed in this study allowed candidates to compete for positions where four-fifths of the candidates failed and were labeled as unqualified and unfit.

When race/ethnicity was examined in the District lists, these data suggested that White candidates were selected at lower rates than either Black or Hispanic candidates. The results of the interviews agreed with the findings in the District lists that White candidates were not suggested. Not one interview participant stated there were suggestions for selecting White candidates, but the results instead suggested selecting Black and Hispanic candidates. A few interview participants suggested the most

qualified candidates were “passed-over” or not selected because the District suggested candidates with other demographic traits. One aspiring AP shared thoughts on this topic:

It doesn't seem to me that it's always the most qualified person. They need someone to put in a category of whatever category your school is lacking to reflect the demographics or to have a more balanced kind of staff. When you look at who is being hired. If you look at the new APs, they seem to be a big percentage of minorities and females.

The next groups of losers in the process were the mentors for these aspiring APs. The District continued to train hundreds of candidates above and beyond the needs of a District during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. One hiring administrator suggested that candidates face an uphill battle because, “The first challenge they face is just getting to the interview table because there are approximately 300 to 500 people.” District's administrators spent time and made significant efforts to mentor these candidates to ultimately become APs. Four-fifths of this time, efforts, and resources were ultimately wasted on candidates who were never selected as APs.

Full Disclosure

The career aspirations of thousands of educators might be altered if the information in the District lists were made available to aspiring APs before starting the multi-year process of training and selection. While revealing that four-fifths of the candidates failed may or may not alter the decision of the next generation of aspiring leaders, access to this information should be made available to those looking to take that next step. Unfortunately, as the data suggested, many candidates only realized these results after spending many years, hundreds (if not thousands) of training hours, and

thousands of tuition dollars. Aspiring APs should have been told the probability of successfully being selected before starting the leadership training program. Even so, not a single candidate mentioned that he or she was informed by the District of the remote chances of being selected as an AP at the end of the journey. Many AP candidates are sponsored and groomed as aspiring APs for years, yet four-fifths were rejected and labeled as unfit (Myung et al., 2011). While there is no evidence that aspiring administrators would make a different decision on starting to the long and expensive process of becoming an assistant principal, the candidates should still gain access to the most recent selection data to make informed and educated decisions. Aspects of individualism and optimism are part of the American psyche and culture and many see themselves as different or special.

These data suggest that demographics were used and considered when selecting and assimilating secondary school APs in the District. Even the District lists classified each AP by gender and race/ethnicity. If these demographic traits were unimportant, there would be no reason to label the AP candidates by gender and race/ethnicity. The findings of this study suggest that the District implemented policies and procedures to increase the number of Black and Hispanic secondary school APs and had suggestions for selecting candidates from these demographic groups. Minorities currently make up 36.6% of the U.S. population and this diversity trend will continue as 50.4% of U.S. births in 2010 were in these families (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). According to recent projections, non-Hispanic Whites will become the minority demographic group in the U.S. by the year 2040 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010). This study suggests that the District

was following the increased diversity demographic trends in the U.S. and the surrounding communities when selecting secondary school APs.

Recommendations for Policy Changes

The District spent substantial time and money to train 197 AP candidates during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Each aspiring AP invested hundreds of hours in training workshops and thousands of tuition dollars. Many of the District employees spent precious time, money, and other resources to train 197 aspiring APs, yet four fifths of these candidates were rejected as APs. From District lists of candidates, the District selected 39 trained candidates. That meant that 158 candidates who were trained by the District and completed the District required training program were not selected as APs. These 158 candidates who were not selected are not the only aspiring APs in the District. This number does not include candidates who completed the leadership program before the 2004-2005 or after the 2008-2009 school years included in this study. One hiring administrator estimated the number of aspiring APs to be between “300 to 500” candidates, while another hiring administrator guessed it was in the “hundreds.”

Many of these candidates completed the leadership training program years ago and are listed by the District as aspiring APs, yet have not applied for positions in years. The objective of the District for selecting APs during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years was to train as many APs as possible and let them compete with each other for any positions that became available. These data suggested that this training and selection process was used so that the District could choose from more candidates, but at the high cost of labeling four out of five candidates as unqualified and unfit.

The first recommendation would be to reduce District lists of eligible AP candidates. This would give the District a clearer understanding of who really are the aspiring AP candidates from those who are no longer striving to become APs. The District could implement policies that require aspiring APs to re-apply at specific time intervals (e.g., yearly, etc.) or risk being dropped from the District lists of eligible AP candidates. The District would also require candidates to complete refresher packets of new rules and regulations to keep up with the changing educational landscape. Lastly the District could implement a time frame for aspiring APs who completed the leadership training program to be selected and still be considered eligible AP candidates. For example, if candidates were not selected as an AP within a specific time frame (e.g., three years) after completing the leadership training program, the candidates would be dropped from the District lists. Many candidates would not meet these requirements and candidates that were still aspiring APs could emerge from the lists of hundreds. The District would then have a better idea of who really are the eligible AP candidates. This would also serve the dual process of keeping the trained candidates up to date and current with respect to recent changes and policies through professional development.

The second recommendation would be to reduce the number of candidates who are trained as APs in the future by school districts and university preparation programs. The number of candidates who completed the District leadership training program greatly exceeded the current hiring needs of 39 APs for the five-year time frame of the study. The District has already begun to implement program changes to make the entrance requirements into the leadership program more stringent. These modifications should continue until equilibrium occurs between the numbers of candidates being trained

compared to the number of candidates who are being selected as APs. This imbalance resulted in a loss of valuable time, money, and resources from both the District and the aspiring APs. Many interview participants mentioned the imbalance between the number of candidates and the number of openings as a challenge to being selected as APs.

The third recommendation would be to make the process of AP selection by school districts more transparent. The views on the process of selection and assimilation were very different from the perspectives of the interview participants. Many hiring administrators gave inconsistent statements on the current process of selection in the District. One hiring administrator said, “You used to interview at a specific school and the principal selected you. In this new process you don’t know what school you are interviewing for.” Another hiring administrator suggested this is not true because, “Sometimes there is only one advertised or one interview for one school that takes place at one time.” Even during the interviews, a participant suggested the District has a preferred resume format listing experiences instead of past positions. Very little with respect to the selection procedures were clear or accessible other than items that were required in an application packet.

The frustration level brought on through failed efforts by the four-fifths of these not selected aspiring APs was evident during the interviews. The District has an obligation to each of the AP candidates before, during, after completing the leadership training program about the probability of ever being selected. Many of these 300 to 500 candidates are asked to “volunteer” to start up programs, fill in for absent APs, and other tasks to help a school’s administrative team. All of this occurs inside a process where the likelihood of being selected is one out five. One hiring administrator suggested while

there are hundreds of candidates who completed the leadership training program, the hiring administrators conduct approximately, “six interviews per position” and only focus on a handful of candidates for each opening. One hiring administrator said, “Honestly, most principals talk enough about the pool of assistant principals that are out there that you do get to know the people pretty well.” One selected AP summed this “game” or keeping the candidates waiting when she said:

The challenges of being selected would be clearly the availability of positions. Sometimes you just really have to wait for people to get promoted. Either those people are retiring or the district does shifting with those positions to create availabilities. So it’s really a matter of timing and the disadvantages if your higher ups that have seen your work feel you are a certain fit for the school. It will be a calculated process on the administrative side for a replacement to make that space available so that you can actually fit into that slot. So it may seem like you are interviewing and interviewing and interviewing and no one is seeing what is happening, but they have an idea of where they want you. It’s just they haven’t done the chess game yet. They haven’t moved to pieces so that you can slide in.

Today as in the past, none of the interview and selection procedures are written down in a place where candidates, or the general public, can view the process. The following interview procedures follow, with the understanding that these processes are unverified. The processes come via first hand accounts and the researcher made genuine efforts to compile these procedures as accurately as possible to increase understanding of the process for selection.

The District used many different methods and processes for selecting APs from 2004 to 2009, or the time of data collection. There were primarily two different situations where different formats were applied for interviewing candidates from 2004 to 2013. The first situation is when there is one opening occurs at a specific school. The second situation occurs when there are multiple openings at mutiple schools. This situation usually occurs around the summer break, between school years, when personnel turnover is the highest.

The first and most outdated interview process the district followed during the time of the study, and as early as 2004, were for specific openings. The rules were very loosely followed and school specific. The school principal with the AP opening decided who would sit at the table and what and how many questions would be asked. Other than the principal and his or her immediate supervisor, there might be a handful (or up to 10 to 15 other key stakeholders) invited to sit on the other side of the interview table from the candidates. These key stakeholders, who were selected to be at the interview table by the principal included department heads, tenured teachers, team leaders, other APs, or any other school district employee the principal wanted to include. The school principal controlled almost every aspect of the interview and selection process with the approval of his or her direct supervisor. A scoring rubric was utilized, but its influence was negligible. The decision was really made by the hiring principal using the input from the other district employees at the table and finally approved by his or her immediate supervisor.

The second interview process for specific openings was much different toward the end of data collection in the study in 2009 and continues today. In this process there are

only three or four hiring administrators at the table. The hiring principal with the opening, his or her immediate supervisor, and one or two other hiring administrators most likely who were principals at other schools. There are only two or three questions asked from the state leadership standards and a scoring rubric was used. The candidates are given approximately 10 minutes to answer these questions. After the interviews are conducted, the hiring principal makes a decision using the input from the other people at the table, again with the approval with his or her immediate supervisor.

The third interview process, which was applied during the early years of the study in 2004 and continues today, was used when there were multiple openings at multiple schools. As in the second interview process, only two or three questions are used. Sitting at the interview table are almost all of the principals in the district with an opening at a specific level (high school, middle school, or elementary). There could 10, 20, or even more principals sitting on the other side of the interview table at the same time. The candidates enter one by one and are given approximately 10 minutes. A scoring rubric is used, but as in the previous processes the highest score means very little and it is just one of the many tools used to make a decision. Amazingly, after all of the candidates complete the interview, each principal is given a turn to select his or her ideal candidate. There may be infighting between the principals over the more desirable candidates and in this case a supervisor makes the decision. Once that candidate is no longer available, the next principal is given his or her choice, and the process continues. This is not unlike picking players for professional sports teams in a draft or the picking of players, one-by-one, for a pick-up game on a local playground.

The one item principals did not control in the past, and still do not at present, is who the candidates are who are offered interviews. When there is an AP position available, the principal or principals with an opening are given a list of eligible candidates, along with the appropriate resumes and other criteria in a packet for each candidate, from the instructional staffing or central District office. Even though there might be several hundred eligible candidates who meet the requirements, the hiring principals are only given hiring packets on pre-screened candidates for each open position. This process then places a substantial amount of influence and weight on the discretion of the human resources staff as they theoretically could eliminate hundreds of the eligible candidates during this pre-selection process for each open position.

Obviously, this is a huge flaw in the system because many qualified and trained candidates were being discounted or ignored by the human resources staff and may never get to the interview table with any principal. In summary, there are candidates who are written off and don't even stand a chance to secure a position, nor are these candidates ever told of their deficiencies which could have been useful to them in increasing their future prospects. While it is each candidate's responsibility to proactively search for constructive criticism if he or she really wants to increase the chances for selection, the District should reciprocate these efforts with clear and concise feedback. This process should change so that qualified candidates are at the very least given an opportunity to find out what he or she can do to improve their future prospects.

Policy makers at the state level have licensed school based administrators through the passing of a state administered test and the earning of a masters degree, or equivalent, in educational leadership. When granting administrative licenses, the state considers

whether or not a candidate completed the other requirements required by each school district, which varies. Having an administrative license from the state does little good unless the AP candidate has fulfilled all of the other requirements to obtain a position in the Paradise School District or any other school district. Therefore, these state licensing requirements for school based administrators should be removed. State licensing adds additional costs and layers to an already complicated and cumbersome process for training and selecting of school based administrators. The state should relinquish more control to each school district, which are likely more stringent than the current state requirements, regarding who to select as school based administrators. Many school districts already circumvent state licensing procedures for administrators by reassigning teachers to special assignments on a full or part-time basis. These teachers take the load off of current administrators and perform many of the day-to-day duties minus an administrative title. These special assignment teachers perform most, but not all of the AP responsibilities. The main responsibilities that are not taken over include supervising fellow teachers and other school employees.

The last recommendation relates to personality types. Many of the hiring administrators who participated in this study suggested that personality types were important to selection and assimilation, yet the District did not utilize any type of assessment to evaluate the personality types of the candidates. Eighty percent of Fortune 500 companies utilize personality types when interviewing and selecting new employees, yet at no point in the selection process did the District use this valuable tool to select APs (Dattner, 2008). There are inexpensive and effective ways to evaluate the personality types and traits of each aspiring AP to see if he or she is entering the leadership training

program with the suggested personality type. Candidates that did not possess the prerequisite tools or personalities to be selected should not be allowed entry into the leadership training program.

Recommendations for Future Research

Further study is recommended to compare the demographic components (gender and race/ethnicity) of the candidates to the current administrative staff and the surrounding community of the school with an opening for an AP. The statistical analyses in this study suggested gender and race/ethnicity were influential components to selecting APs on a District-wide basis. Almost all of the interview participants also suggested that gender and race/ethnicity were not relevant for positions on a District-wide or an absolute basis; rather, these traits were relevant to positions on a school-by-school or position-by-position. Almost all of the interview participants suggested that the hiring administrators of the District tried to balance the demographics of each school's administrative team to the demographics of the study population and the surrounding community. The high number of Black candidates that were present in the District lists is also a finding that requires further research. The next study should analyze the demographics of the administrative staff and the community the school serves with an open position. The gender and race/ethnicity of the selected APs could then be analyzed using this comparison to see if demographics influence selection.

Expanding the study outside of the District to state or national levels, and expanding the scope to include elementary school administrators and principals, is warranted. The population for future research could also be concentrated in similar urban areas within the same or other states to compare and contrast results. This study

concentrated on secondary AP selection in one school district and only included 209 participants.

The researcher interviewed the participants using one script with a set of prepared questions. The researcher purposefully asked the same questions to each interview participant, at all levels, to increase consistency in the responses. The responses from the interview participants varied greatly, but especially between the samples of hiring administrators (ex and current) and aspiring APs (selected and not selected). The perspectives were very different among the hiring administrators and the aspiring APs. The interview questions should be re-written with these differences in mind. For future study, a researcher might use separate sets of interview questions that are targeted to the interview participants' experience levels and perspectives in the process of selection and assimilation.

The survey instruments also require some refinement. Some of the survey questions had to be discounted because the results were inconsistent or a participant's responses were too few to analyze. The results suggested that some of the survey participants did not fully understand what the survey was asking, thus the responses to these questions could not be used. The survey had too many options and it should be simplified to get more consistent responses.

Expertise in operations and curricula were also suggested as important factors in selecting and assimilating APs. Expertise in curricula has gained more attention in the past decade since NCLB was passed in 2001, as has mandated testing of students and increased accountability. Students must be able to successfully pass these assessments to graduate from high school and the results also hold the school district employee, schools

and each school's faculty accountable. While expertise in operations was mentioned as being more important than expertise in curricula, these claims should also be explored further.

Lastly, the study focused on AP selection and assimilation. Even though these processes were inter-related, they were also very different. Combining both of the processes of selection and assimilation together in the same study was not the most efficient method to explore the different factors of fit. The next study should focus on selection or assimilation, but not both, to streamline the process of data collection.

Limitations

The study analyzed the concept of fitting eligible secondary school APs who completed the leadership training program in the District during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years. Candidates who were selected as secondary school APs were considered to fit for the purposes of this study. This process of selection or fit meant that there were openings that were filled from the District lists of eligible AP candidates. If there were limited or no positions to be filled, then none of the eligible APs would be considered a fit for the purposes of this study. The eligible AP candidates that were selected filled or fit the openings more than the other candidates who were not selected. The eligible AP candidates, who were not selected, were considered unfit and unqualified.

Another limitation was some participants were unwilling to grant interviews or complete surveys. The researcher dissected the data in the District lists and identified 197 candidates who completed the leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years and still worked in the District. The researcher sent email

invitations and reminders for the candidates to complete the five to ten minute surveys. The researcher also gave an extra incentive of \$10 Starbucks© gift cards for candidates who completed the survey. Even with the incentives and reminders, only about one out of three candidates completed the surveys (33.5%). Some interview participants denied requests for interviews for a variety of reasons. “Interviewing requires that researchers establish access to, and make contact with, potential participants whom they have never met” (Seidman, 2006, p. 12). The researcher required participation from specific samples in order to conduct the study and their availability and willingness to participate was a limitation.

When participants did participate in the interviews or surveys, another limitation was whether or not the participants answered the questions truthfully and accurately. Participants may not want to answer some questions or participate in the study if they fear doing so may endanger their livelihood or cause some undue harm. Furthermore, the survey data was self reported with respect to personality types, traits and references. Member checks for the data were also not conducted to verify the accuracy of the results in the surveys or interviews.

Many hiring administrators selected and placed secondary school APs without the input of other stakeholders. As a result, many concepts of fit applied only the first time a candidate was selected, with limited perspectives or outside input (Tooms et al., 2010). Some hiring administrators were not permitted to select his or her first choice for an AP, but rather were at the mercy of more senior level hiring administrators who determined AP selection and placement. This took the determining factors of selection and

assimilation out of the hands of many of the school principals and included input from other hiring administrators.

This study analyzed data from candidates who completed leadership training program during the 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 school years and some data were inaccessible or unavailable. These unknown data were unavailable mainly due to the amount of time that had elapsed, differences in the format the District collected the data, and staff changes that had occurred since the program's inception more than a decade ago. Longitudinal data were unavailable with respect to the demographics of the school administrators, other than the selected candidates, and the surrounding communities from 2004 to 2009.

The last delimitation was eliminating the elementary school candidates, however the way the candidates were categorized using school levels made this a limitation. The lists were categorized as at elementary, middle, or high school candidates. Furthermore, district job postings listed the preference of three years of experience at the school level for the position at which candidates were applying. According to the literature, elementary schools employ significantly more females than males, so this study was constructed to eliminate this bias toward females and included only middle and high schools in the analyses (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The demographic data in the District lists and selection of participants would have been different if these elementary school candidates were included. Eliminating elementary school candidates ignored or limited the possibility that some elementary school candidates were selected as secondary school APs. Even though the District job postings stated candidates were preferred to have three years of experience at the level (elementary, middle, and high

school) of the position at which they were applying, the possibility still existed that an elementary candidate was selected at a secondary school.

Delimitations

These data were collected on regular public secondary schools within a large and diverse urban school district in the United States. The study did not include charter or alternative schools that may have a different set of selection criteria. This large and diverse school district was atypical of many school districts that may be more homogeneous. The District includes students and faculty from hundreds of countries and is diverse with respect to demographics, languages, religions, and cultural backgrounds. The study focused on the selection of secondary school (middle and high school) based APs because the concept of fit varies between adult education, primary, and secondary levels (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). The study was only conducted in the District and all but four interview participants (ex-hiring administrators) were current employees during data collection.

The researchers also delimited the criteria for the survey participants who; (a) completed the District required leadership training program to become secondary school APs during the school years from 2004-2005 to 2008-2009, (b) worked in a high school or middle school, and (c) still worked in the District when data collection started on October 1, 2011.

Final Conclusion

The results found in the analyses of the District lists and surveys suggested that demographics (gender and race/ethnicity) and organizational fit (personality types) were not related to AP selection of secondary school APs (Myers, 1962). The District lists

suggested selecting Hispanic candidates as APs. However, half of the candidates in the District lists were Black and this group was over-represented with respect to their balance compared to their community populations. The survey results suggested selecting candidates who had specific Myers-Briggs personality types (ESTJ, ENTJ, or ENFP) (Wendel et al., 1991). The survey results also indicated that the suggested personality traits for secondary school APs were (a) Extroversion (E), (b) Feeling (F), and (c) Judging (J). The last surveys results suggested that candidates who referenced more than one hiring administrator at or above the title of principal were selected at higher rates than candidates who reference only one principal.

The interview results suggested balancing the demographics of a school's administrative staff to the demographics of the community the school served. The interview results also suggested Black and Hispanic candidates over White candidates. The interviews agreed with the survey results and suggested the personality traits for APs were (a) Extroversion (E), (b) Feeling (F), and (c) Judging (J). The interview results suggested that candidates with expertise in operations and curricula influenced selection. The group fit or professional relationships that were suggested as important to selection and assimilation included networking, sponsors, and references. The emerging theme that was found to influence selection was interview impressions.

This study was unable to fully verify the three pillars of demographic fit, organization fit, and group fit with consistency. It is clear that what the research describes as fit and what administrators define as fit may not be what is important at all. The deliberate vagueness of fit is used as a cover for organizational leaders to select and assimilate the candidates they desire under the illusion of fairness and equity for all

involved. The concept of fit coming out of this study is politically charge and includes the desires of hiring administrators to select whoever they wish without the undue uncumberances of rules, regulations, and procedures. Hiring administrators realize school districts are very visible public domains and these leaders apply the concept of fit in their personnel practices at their convenience not only to further the goals of the organization, but also to serve their own career aspirations and ideologies. The researcher encourages further study on the concept of fit with respect to AP selection to promote the most effective hiring practices for all involved.

Appendix A: Assistant Principal Selection and Collegiality Survey Consent Form

You have been selected to represent aspiring and selected administrators in the district who completed the leadership program from the school years in 2004-2005 to 2008-2009. Participants in this study will receive a Starbucks gift card for the amount of ten dollars. As aspiring or selected administrators, you are aware of the unique obstacles and demands of being selected and if selected, fitting into the new position. Your experience and insight are sought in this study.

1) Title of Research Study: The Concept of Fit: Intersections in Educational Leadership

2) Investigator: Scott V. Smith - Doctoral Candidate, Florida Atlantic University

3) Purpose: The purpose of this study is to understand how secondary school based assistant principals are selected and once selected how he or she performs in the position.

4) Procedures: If you are willing to participate in this study, you are asked to complete a survey. You will be asked about your post leadership training experiences of being selected as an assistant principal or if selected, fitting into the position. The electronic survey will take approximately 10 minutes to complete. At the end of the survey, you will be asked whether or not you would like to receive a ten dollar Starbucks© gift card. If you said yes, you will be asked to provide a name and address in order to be sent the gift card in the mail.

5) Risks: The researchers have instituted several safeguards to protect the confidentiality of your information in this research. However, a confidentiality breach revealing a participant's information is a possibility. You may, however, refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

6) Benefits: Benefits to the participants are anticipated to be positive. By reflecting on past experiences and sharing them with the researchers, the participants may find satisfaction in knowing that they have contributed to a better understanding of administrator selections and collegiality. Furthermore, participating in this study will help provide useful information about the conditions that affect the persistence of aspiring and selected administrators to expand their influence and improve the educational environment for all students.

7) Data Collection & Storage: All of the results will be kept confidential and secure and only the dissertation committee and researcher working with the study will see the data, unless required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained and will involve storing all data in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer for the duration of five years after the study is completed and then destroyed.

8) Contact Information: For related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777. For other questions about the study, you should contact the principal investigators, Dr. Ira Bogotch at Ibogotch@fau.edu or Mr. Scott V. Smith at ssmit230@fau.edu.

9) Consent Statement: I have read or had read to me the preceding information describing this study. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and freely consent to participate. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. I have received a copy of this consent form. **Please print this letter and keep it for your records. By clicking on the link below and answering the following survey questions, you are consenting to participate in this study and agree to the above.** Both your time and effort are greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,
Scott V. Smith
FAU Doctoral Candidate

Link: <http://www.quia.com/sv/536441.html>

Appendix B: Assistant Principal Selection and Collegiality Survey

Florida Atlantic University

Department of Educational Leadership

Name of Investigator(s): Dr. Ira Bogotch and Scott V. Smith

Title of Project: The Concept of Fit: Intersections in Educational Leadership

Completed leadership program in the school years from 2004-2005 to 2008-2009.

You are being sent this survey because you finished the leadership program between the school years of 2004-2005 to 2008-2009 to become an assistant principal in this school district. You are one of only a select few who can contribute to this study and your contribution is invaluable. Benefits of contributing to the study include learning about your own Myers-Briggs personality type. Another benefit is you will receive a ten dollar (\$10) Starbucks© gift card for participating in the study.

The purpose of this study is to understand how assistant principals are selected and how he or she subsequently performs in the position. It should take no more than five minutes if you already know your personality type and ten minutes if you need to identify your personality type. Several safeguards to protect your information and responses have been installed. However, a confidentially breach revealing participant responses and information is a possibility. You may, however, refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. You may skip any questions that make you feel uncomfortable, and you are free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Your responses will be reported confidentially to protect your identity.

If you experience problems or have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (516) 297-0777. For other questions about the study, you should contact the principal investigators: Professor Ira Bogotch at ibogotch@fau.edu or Mr. Scott V. Smith at ssmit230@fau.edu. By completing the attached questionnaire/survey, you give consent to anonymously participate in this study. Five years after the study is complete, the surveys will be destroyed.

As part of the study, you need to know your well-known Myers-Briggs Personality Type Indicator (MBTI). If you did not learn your personality profile as part of your administrative training or do not remember the results, you can quickly find it out now and learn something about yourself in the process. You can take the personality assessment, which is hot linked and provided by Human Metrics (2011) by clicking on the link below. If for some reason your browser does not launch the website, please copy and paste the link to find out your personality type before beginning the study:

<http://humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp>

Once you have your personality type, please start the survey below.

1. Did you complete the district required leadership program between August 2004 and June 2009?

a. Yes b. No

2. What year and month did you complete the leadership program?

2004

h. August i. September j. October k. November l. December

2005

a. January b. February c. March d. April
e. May f. June g. July h. August
i. September j. October k. November l. December

2006

a. January b. February c. March d. April
e. May f. June g. July h. August
i. September j. October k. November l. December

2007

b. January b. February c. March d. April
e. May f. June g. July h. August
i. September j. October k. November l. December

2008

c. January b. February c. March d. April
e. May f. June g. July h. August
i. September j. October k. November l. December

2009

a. January b. February c. March d. April
e. May f. June

Other month and year (please fill in) _____

3. What is your current status as a school based administrator?
 - a. Assistant Principal
 - b. Completed leadership program, but not yet an assistant principal
 - c. Other administrative position (please fill in) _____

4. If you are an Assistant Principal, what year and month were you selected?

2005

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2006

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| b. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2007

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| c. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2008

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| d. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2009

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2010

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| a. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

2011

- | | | | |
|--------------|-------------|-------------|-------------|
| b. January | b. February | c. March | d. April |
| e. May | f. June | g. July | h. August |
| i. September | j. October | k. November | l. December |

Other month and year (please fill in) _____

5. What is your gender (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)?

- a. Female
- b. Male

6. Please select the race or ethnicity you identify with the most (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010)?
- Black
 - Spanish/Hispanic/Latino
 - White
 - American Indian or Alaska Native
 - Asian (Chinese, Filipino, Indian, Japanese, Korean, Vietnamese or Other)
 - Pacific Islander (Native Hawaiian, Guamanian, Samoan, or Other)
 - Other race or ethnicity (please fill-in) _____
7. What was the four-letter designation for your personality type when you took the Myers-Briggs assessment via: <http://humanmetrics.com/cgi-win/jtypes2.asp> (Please pick only one)?
- | | | | |
|---------|---------|---------|---------|
| a. ENFJ | e. ESFJ | l. INFJ | p. ISFJ |
| b. ENFP | f. ESFP | m. INFP | q. ISFP |
| c. ENTJ | j. ESTJ | n. INTJ | r. ISTJ |
| d. ENTP | k. ESTP | o. INTP | s. ISTP |
8. What were the references you used when applying for administrative positions/hiring pool (Please select all that apply totaling up to four people)?
- 1 School Board Member
 - 2 School Board Members
 - 3 School Board Members
 - 4 School Board Members

 - 1 District Superintendent

 - 1 Area Superintendent
 - 2 Area Superintendents
 - 3 Area Superintendents
 - 4 Area Superintendents

 - 1 Area Director
 - 2 Area Directors
 - 3 Area Directors
 - 4 Area Directors

 - 1 Principal
 - 2 Principals
 - 3 Principals
 - 4 Principals

 - 1 Intern Principal
 - 2 Intern Principals
 - 3 Intern Principals

- u. 4 Intern Principals
 - v. 1 Assistant Principal
 - w. 2 Assistant Principals
 - x. 3 Assistant Principals
 - y. 4 Assistant Principals
 - z. Other administrative position(s) [please fill in title(s)]
-

aa. Did not applied to the hiring pool or any administrative positions

9. If you have been selected as an assistant principal, did you ever work at the same school/location with any member of your current administrative before being selected?

- a. Yes
- b. No

Each participant will be sent a ten dollar (\$10) Starbucks© gift card in the mail. In order to receive your gift card, please provide an address (home or work) to send it.

Name:

Street Address:

City/State:

Zip:

Again, anything you wrote on the survey will remain confidential.

Thank you for participating in this study.

Appendix C: Interview Request Sample Email/Letter

Date

FROM: Scott V. Smith
Doctoral Candidate, Florida Atlantic University
Educational Leadership Department

RE: Request for Interview

Dear Name:

I am in the process of conducting a dissertation study at Florida Atlantic University. As part of the dissertation, I am required to conduct twenty (20) separate thirty-minute interviews. You have been identified as a participant for this study and your contribution and perspective would be invaluable. The purpose of the study is to gain an understanding of how secondary school based assistant principals are selected and once selected how he or she subsequently performs in the position.

If you agree to participate all of your responses will be confidential, your identity will remain confidential, and all cooperating institutions will be given pseudonyms. After the interview, you will be sent a copy of the transcript to check for accuracy and for your approval. You have the right to withdraw your participation for this study at any time without penalty.

I will be following up to this email with a phone call so we can arrange a mutually convenient time and location to meet. I can also be reached at ssmit230@fau.edu.

Thank you for your consideration and I look forward to meeting with you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Scott V. Smith
FAU Doctoral Candidate

Appendix D: Interview Consent

1) **Title of Research Study:** The Concept of Fit: Intersections in Educational Leadership

2) **Investigator:** Scott V. Smith - Doctoral Candidate, Florida Atlantic University

3) **Purpose:** The purpose of this study is to understand how school based assistant principals are selected and once selected how he or she performs in the position.

4) **Procedures:** If you are willing to participate in this study, you are asked to complete one interview. You will be asked about your unique perspective in the process of selecting and fitting assistant principals into the position. The interview will take approximately 30 minutes to complete. The interview transcript will be sent to you to approve or modify before being used in this study. At the end of the interview, a ten dollar Starbucks© gift card will be given to you for graciously agreeing to participate in this study.

5) **Risks:** The researchers have instituted several safeguards to protect the confidentiality of your information in this research. However, as with all data that is collected, a confidentially breach or unauthorized access to this information is a possibility. You may, however, refuse to participate, refuse to answer any questions, or withdraw from the study at any time without penalty.

6) **Benefits:** Benefits to the participants are anticipated to be positive. By reflecting on past experiences and sharing them with the researchers, the participants may find satisfaction in knowing that they have contributed to a better understanding of administrator selections and collegiality. Further, participating in this study will help provide useful information about the conditions that affect the persistence of aspiring and selected administrators to expand their influence and improve the educational environment for all students.

7) **Data Collection & Storage:** All of the results will be kept confidential and secure and only the researcher working with the study will know the identity of the participants, unless required by law. Confidentiality will be maintained and will involve storing all data in a locked file cabinet and password protected computer for the duration of five years after the study is complete and then destroyed. The researchers have instituted several safeguards to protect the confidentiality of your information in this research. However, a confidentiality breach or unauthorized access to this information is a possibility.

8) **Contact Information:** For related problems or questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact the Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777. For other questions about the study, you should contact the principal investigators, Dr. Ira Bogotch at Ibogotch@fau.edu, or Mr. Scott V. Smith at ssmit230@fau.com.

9) Consent Statement: I have read or had read to me the preceding information describing this study. All my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I am 18 years of age or older and freely consent to participate. I understand that I am free to withdraw from the study at any time without penalty. Agreeing to this interview is your consent to participate. I am now giving you this consent form for your records.

Appendix E: Administrator Selection and Collegiality Interview Protocol

Interview Number:

Date:

Time:

Leadership Program Completers, Hiring Administrators, & Ex-District Administrators:

My name is Scott Smith, a Florida Atlantic University graduate student in the educational leadership department working on my doctoral dissertation. I am conducting a research study on the concept of fit. The purpose of this study is to understand how secondary school based assistant principals are selected and once selected how he or she performs in the position.

Today you will be participating in an interview, which should take approximately thirty minutes. Your participation is voluntary. If you do not wish to participate, you may stop at any time. Responses will be completely confidential and pseudonyms will be used to protect the identity of all entities. The researchers have instituted several safeguards to protect the confidentiality of your information in this research. However, a confidentially breach or unauthorized access to this information is a possibility.

I am giving you a copy of the consent forms for your records. If you have any questions regarding the research, you can contact Professor Ira Bogotch in the Educational Leadership Department at irbogotch@fau.edu or Mr. Scott V. Smith at ssmit230@fau.edu. Professor Bogotch serves as my dissertation advisor and also is one of the principal investigators for this study. If you have any questions regarding your rights as a research subject, please contact Florida Atlantic University Division of Research at (561) 297-0777.

This interview will be recorded and transcribed. I will email the transcription back to you for corrections and your approval. The interview tapes and transcripts will be kept in a locked file cabinet and on a password protected computer and will be destroyed five years after the study is complete. Lastly, using recent examples is especially helpful to understand the concept of fit as it pertains to this study. May I record the interview?

Overall Fit

1. How are assistant principals selected in your school district?
2. What do you see as the biggest competitive advantages to a person being selected as an assistant principal?
3. What challenges do candidates face in being selected as assistant principals?
4. Once selected, what challenges do newly selected assistant principals encounter in the process of fitting into the new position?

Demographic Fit

5. In your opinion, please explain to what extent does a person's gender and race/ethnicity play in the assistant principal selection process? Let's start with gender first and then move onto race/ethnicity.
6. What about fitting into the new position. How do gender and race/ethnicity matter? Let's start with gender first and then move onto race/ethnicity.

Organizational Fit

7. What personality traits are important for candidates to be selected as assistant principals?
8. What about fitting into the new position. What personality traits are important?

Group Fit

9. How do professional relationships matter in the selection process?
10. What about fitting into the new position. How do professional relationships matter?

Overall Fit

11. What should aspiring administrators know about the "behind the scenes process" of selecting assistant principals?

Thank you for your time and contributing to this study.

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