Interns Perceptions of Administrative Internships: Do Principals Provide Internship Activities in Areas They Deem Important?

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The research reported in this article follows-up on a study conducted by Anast-May, Buckner, and Geer (2010). The 47 interviewed principals identified three types of experiences school leadership interns needed in order to prepare them to lead school improvement efforts. This study explores interns' perspectives on the efficacy of their internship and whether the mentor principals helped them design internship activities that address the earlier study's three themes. The findings indicated that collaboratively designed internship activities provided useful experiences for the interns and ample, yet varied opportunities to address the three areas principals had identified in the previous study.

Introduction

Effective schools research of the 1980s identified principal leadership as critical to school improvement (Berman & McLaughlin, 1978; Murphy & Hallinger, 1987; Restine, Milstein & Broboff, 1989). With an increased focus on student achievement during the 1990s, new accountability systems and demands for changes in the preparation of future educational leaders emerged (National Commission for the Principalship, 1990). According to Cunningham (2007), a key component of the reform movement was "greater emphasis on making the knowledge-to-practice connections and providing students opportunities to work on real-world problems in the most authentic settings possible under the guidance of university faculty and experienced practitioners" (p.3). As a result, reformers during the 1990s sought ways to strengthen internship programs in educational leadership (Bass, 1990; Foster & Ward, 1998; Milstein, Broboff & Restine, 1991). Cunningham's call for a more authentic internship experience for pre-service school leaders guided and informed the current study.

Purposeful engagement in authentic school leadership activities as a positive influence on the ability of principal candidates to perform administrative roles has been widely researched and accepted (Jean & Evans, 1995; Milstein & Krueger, 1997, Restine, Milstein & Broboff, 1989). In the vast majority of educational leadership programs the opportunity to practice leadership skills among pre-service candidates occurs during the internship. Some educational researchers have challenged the quality of school leadership internship programs and have proposed changes to strengthen professional preparation processes (Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, and Cohen, 2007; Levine, 2005). Numerous researchers (LaPlant, 1988; Milstein, et al. 1991; Wilmore, 2002) concluded that the internship should allow the candidate to translate theoretical concepts into practice and learn from the consequences. In so doing, the internship can change candidates' perceptions about the principalship (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; White & Crow, 1993) and assist in developing important skills and professional behaviors essential for success as an educational leader (Cordeiro & Smith-Sloan, 1995).

Clearly the internship is integral to effective administrator preparation (The National Policy Board, 2002). With school administrative practices deeply rooted in the theory and practice of management throughout the twentieth century, internships within educational administration programs emphasized managerial skills. Many educational leadership programs have been slow to adjust programming, including the internship, to emphasize the instructional leadership role of contemporary school leaders. As a result, many internship programs still do not offer the experiences that successfully prepare future leaders. Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, Meyerson, Orr, and Cohen (2007) concluded, "Efforts to provide field-based practicum experiences do not consistently provide candidates with a sustained, hands-on internship in which they grapple with the real demands of school leadership under the supervision of a well-qualified mentor" (p. 6). Cunningham and Sherman (2008) recommended that, "In the age of accountability, an emphasis must be placed on tasks that facilitate instructional leadership, school improvement, and student achievement – historically overlooked or nonexistent aspects of the internship" (p. 310). Engagement through the internship is indispensable to the socialization process that must occur for administrative leadership capacity building and transformation to follow (Browne-Ferrigno & Muth, 2004).

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) further emphasized the importance of real-world experiences for future educational leaders. The SREB concluded that field-based

placements must be a high priority and a central focus of principal preparation programs. SREB described its vision of the internship by saying that future principals need experiences working in teams to address the achievement gap. This would include practice in planning and implementing various changes in curricula, teaching, and other facets of school organization (2007).

Despite an increase in the number programs in educational administration and their attending internship components, there is little empirical data in the literature to provide direction as to the types of experiences and activities that future educational leaders should have during their internship. Research by Brown-Ferrigno (2003) however indicated that a key socialization activity for learners in educational leadership programs was working directly with practicing school administrators.

The researchers address the perceptions of aspiring leaders as to the types of experiences and activities in the areas of planning change, school culture and data informed school improvement that were prevalent during their internship. More specifically, the authors examine linkages between the types of activities principals recommended in previous research and what the interns perceived they experienced during the internship. The researchers explored what happened when intern site supervisors and students were empowered to construct internship experiences they identified as most important in the context of their specific setting. Using the 2002 Educational Leadership Constituent Council (ELCC) Building Level Standards as a framework, the principals serving as interns' site supervisors worked within an internship structure that allowed them latitude in constructing the internships' activities. The research questions guiding the study were: 1) Did interns perceive their internship activities as effective and useful? 2) From the interns' perspective, did the supervising principals address the three themes they had previously identified as essential when designing internship activities with interns?

Background to the Study

The educational leadership program examined in this study was established in 2009. With about a year to accomplish the task, the design of a two-semester, administrative internship experience was assigned to the article's first author. The design process began by reviewing the literature on educational leadership programs with a special focus on the sparse research base on the internship (Fry, Bottoms & O'Neill, 2005). Meanwhile, research that comprised the Anast-May (2010) study was being conducted. Using the interviews with practicing principals from this study and the 2002 ELCC Standards, the internship design evolved and was implemented, evaluated, and revised through a pilot program during the spring semester of 2011.

The Anast-May (2010) Study

Anast-May, et al. (2010) conducted a descriptive, case study through structured interviews with 47 practicing principals exploring the activities that these principals perceived to be important to include in the internship experience of school leadership students. The researchers found that three themes were prevalent in the principals' recommendations: (a) leading change initiatives, especially in the areas of curriculum and teaching; (b) building school cultures centered on and conducive to student learning and professional growth; and (c) using data to support school improvement, especially in the areas of curriculum development, teaching practices, and

professional development. Principals reported a disconnect between the theory students were learning in their course work and the actual practice of school leadership. Principals also identified a need for collaboration between university and school personnel to design hands-on, real world internship activities that provide opportunities for future educational leaders to lead reform efforts. These findings provided guidelines regarding the types of experiences pre-service, school leadership interns should have in order to be adequately prepared to lead school improvement initiatives.

Theoretical Frameworks

To better understand these findings the researchers used several theoretical frameworks based on well-known theories that addressed the three themes. The researchers consulted theoretical works addressing organizational change, organizational culture, and addressing the school improvement process with a focus on data driven decision making. These frameworks, in turn, served as a foundation for the survey questions of this study.

Organizational Change Theory: A Key for Leading Change Initiatives

Understanding the change process in organizations is critical for school leaders. Recognizing that change is often a slow process, organizational leaders must determine how to best navigate the context of the desired change effort in order to insure long term effectiveness. Leaders' participation in planning for change is instrumental in order for leaders and other stakeholder groups to identify with and feel ownership in the change process and to buy into the proposed change.

Because change is such an integral part of school life, Lewin's (1951) three-step theory on organizational change was foundational to the authors' thinking about the change process. Lewin conceptualized organizational change as a dynamic balance of forces working in opposing directions. Some of these driving forces facilitate change because they push employees in a direction different from the status quo. To analyze these forces Lewin used a three-step model to understand the shift in balance in the direction of planned changed. These steps include: (a) *unfreezing*, or overcoming the strains of individual resistance and group conformity when change is introduced into the organization; (b) *movement (or confusion)*, persuading organizational members that the status quo is no longer adequate and encouraging openness to new information; and (c) *freezing*, or reestablishing a new status quo, incorporating the planned change.

Lippitt, Watson, and Westley (1958) extended Lewin's three-step theory of organizational change, emphasizing the role and responsibility of the change agent in the evolution of the change itself. According to Lippitt et al. information is continuously exchanged throughout the process and leaders must engage in seven crucial steps in order to ensure that changes are firmly rooted within the organization. These theorists implied that organizational leaders must understand these roles and responsibilities in order to effectively plan and implement organizational change.

Components of change theory were applied to contextual aspects of this study. For example, the internships took place in schools, notoriously conservative and change resistant organizations. As Lippett et al. (1958) pointed out, in order to be a successful educational leader, one must skillfully navigate this politicized environment. It is important that school leaders

understanding the dynamics of the Lewin model and of Lippett et al.'s thinking on change agency in order to deal with the dissonance that change can foist upon schools as they adapt to external and internal pressures.

Organizational Culture: Building School Focus on Student Learning and Professional Growth

Organizational culture has been defined as "the way we do things around here" (Deal & Kennedy, 1982, p. 98). To effectively lead change, an understanding of the school culture is essential to the change agent. To address this reality, researchers considered elements of organizational culture provided by Schein (1988) to inform the research. Schein's work gives a framework for working with, leading, and shaping school culture.

Schein explained that organizational culture exists on three levels: (a) *artifacts*, which may be observed by individual entering the culture; (b) *espoused values,* or the ideals, norms, standards, and moral principles written down or spoken by organizational members; and (c) *underlying assumptions,* which are beliefs about the organization, deeply held by members, but that typically remain unexamined and unexplained when insiders are asked about the values of the organization. Schein asserted that individuals attempting to promote change in organizations must be aware of and carefully analyze all three levels of organizational culture to understand the cultural elements that need to be addressed. Schools, like other organizations, have cultures that are an important factor in its success or shortcomings. Principals understand and live with this fact every day. Leaders must focus school culture improving student achievement and fostering efforts to develop professional skills and dispositions essential for learning.

Continuous School Improvement: Using Data to Fuel Initiatives

The use of data to support and inform continuous school improvement aimed at enhancing student achievement in its many forms has permeated the culture of contemporary educational institutions. Data driven decision making is a tool introduced through the standards movement to address expectations for more accountability for student achievement. Contemporary educational leaders must be adroit in understanding and using many forms of data. Now essential to the work of educational leaders is the ability to access and analyze data and use data in the development and implementation of school improvement plans. Implementation of these plans then generates new data that is analyzed to evaluate the effort's success or failure. If efforts improve conditions new areas for improvement are identified and subjected to this process. If unsatisfactory results emerge, the data informs revisions of the plan.

Schools are inarguably complicated organizations that exist in complex social contexts (Orton & Weick, 1990). To gain a better understanding of the process of continuous school improvement within such a complicated context, researchers examined the Complex Adaptive Systems (CAS) theory developed by Axelrod and Cohen (1999). These theorists claimed that the objective of a human CAS is to improve performance, which they viewed as the equivalent to self-adaptation or self-organization as a response to changing context. When a CAS resists change, it is often forces from the external context that impose change on the system. In many ways, this is exactly what has happened to schools. Pressures from outside agents, ranging from the federal government to local business leaders, sparked change resulting in the establishment of

adaptive structures and practices coalescing into what educators now call continuous school improvement. In essence, school leaders can establish and facilitate the school improvement process but, as Axelrod and Cohen imply, they are not the direct source of large scale policy changes.

Halverston, Grigg, Prichett, & Thomas (2007) developed a framework to describe a data-driven, instructional improvement system. These authors asserted that schools must possess cultures that support the continuous improvement of student learning. This improvement is fueled by measuring and analyzing student achievement metrics. These data in turn informs efforts to improve educational programming. School principals play a key role in this process by focusing school staff on the disaggregation and interpretation of this student achievement data and using it to inform various instructional and curricular practices. All these efforts are aimed at continually improving the components comprising a school. Whether the information is instructional in scope or fosters an improvement in other areas that support student learning, their shared goal is contributing to support the primary mission of the school, educating its students. Indeed, these data can serve as a foundation for rational discourse and provide direction for the change agent and other school stakeholders in order to decrease resistance to change.

The Study

Research Questions

The two research questions that guided this study were:

- Did interns perceive their internship projects and experiences as effective and useful in preparing them for educational leadership roles?
- From the interns' perspective, did the supervising principals address the three themes they had previously identified as essential when designing internship activities with interns?

Participants and Setting

The participants of this study were members of the inaugural cohort of a newly established Master of Education degree program in educational leadership at a medium sized, public institution of higher education in the southeastern United States. The internship was implemented for the first time during the summer and fall of 2011.Students completed two semester-long internship placements in one of four area school districts serving several diverse communities ranging from schools serving small, rural communities to schools serving a small city. The PK-12 students in these four school districts were ethnically and economically diverse.

Thirty-seven of the 44 interns completed the survey yielding a return rate of 84%. Ninety-two percent of respondents were classroom teachers, 6% were curriculum coaches, and 3% were school counselors. Table 1 presents demographic characteristics of survey respondents.

Table 1
Respondent Demographics as a Percentage of the Sample

Gender		School Level			Years Teaching		Highest Degree Obtained	
Male	Female	Elem.	Middle	High	1-5	>5	Bachelors	Masters
33	67	39	17	44	32	68	51	47

Method

The Survey

Using the three themes from the previous study, and the theoretical framework as a foundation, the research team for the current study designed a survey consisting of 34 questions. The survey included 20 question Likert-type questions and 14 open-ended response questions. In order to gain insight into the interns' perspectives on the internship, initial survey questions gathered demographic information and perceptions about the structure of the internship (i.e., internship duration and settings), interns' career aspirations in educational leadership, and interns' perceptions of the efficacy of the internship in preparing them for school leadership.

In the second section of the survey, separate questions focused on interns' perceptions of each of the three themes. For example, one question read, "To what extent were you involved in planning and leading change in curriculum and instruction?" Participants responded to a four-point, Likert-type scale providing options as follows: 4 = *Frequent Involvement*, 3 = *Some Involvement*, 2 = *Limited Involvement* and, 1 = *No Involvement*.

Interspersed between the Likert-type scale questions was a third section of the survey consisting of open-ended response questions allowing participants to enter text describing the specific activities and experiences they gained regarding the three themes and the perceived impact the experiences had in preparing them as future school leaders.

Procedures

After review and approval by the University's Internal Review Board (IRB) the survey was loaded into a commercial software product designed for anonymous administration and convenient data collection and disaggregation. A web site link to the questionnaire was disseminated electronically to all educational leadership students who were completing their second semester of internship placement. Students were given approximately two weeks to complete the questionnaire.

Responses to this administration were coded and entered into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software. A split-half test for reliability of the instrument was conducted. The resulting Guttman Split-Half Coefficient for instrument reliability for the teacher assessment survey was .892, well above the accepted coefficient level of .700 (Mason and Bramble, 1997, p. 276).

Survey results were compiled using the software tools which summarized the questionnaire's Likert-type scaled responses into bar graphs and compiled narrative responses to each question. Responses to the Likert-type scaled questions were analyzed using descriptive statistics to report on the magnitude of agreement among respondents on the scale category. Answers to the open-ended type questions provided additional anecdotal evidence relative to each of the research questions. Answers to the survey's Likert scale categories were often combined to better understand the interns' perspectives. This is an accepted manipulation of this scale as long as the items combined are related by a single common factor (Lester & Bishop, 2000).

Results

Efficacy of Internship Activities

The survey indicated that 70.3% of respondents perceived that internship activities left them well prepared to assume leadership experiences, with another 24.3% feeling somewhat prepared. In general terms the interns saw the internship experiences as effective and useful.

Planning Change in Curriculum and Teaching

Overall, the respondents reported that the internship activities provided them with experiences that addressed planning and leading change in curriculum and teaching, with 85% reporting frequent or some involvement in this area. Most likely participating in such activities contributes to 97% of respondents reported that they felt somewhat prepared or very well prepared in planning change.

When given the opportunity to elaborate upon their experiences in leading and planning change, respondents described internship experiences that were meaningful to them. Repeatedly the respondents said that projects they designed with their site supervisors emulated the type of work that leaders do in schools every day in leading change initiatives to improve teaching and learning. For instance, some students reported gaining experience in gathering and disseminating data relative to their school moving from a traditional schedule to a block schedule. One student reported leading instructional changes utilizing technology.

Another student commented on how the internship helped her gain exposure to operationalized planning and leading change by serving as a member of the administrative team. She wrote, "I had an instrumental role in the school's leadership team and was engaged in curriculum-focused meetings as a member of the school's administrative team."

One respondent student described an experience reported by many of the interns that practice in leading change often took several different forms during the internship. The student stated:

> [Helping to implement] data teams is one way that I am trying to make change within my building for better instructional practices. For students, I am leading the way in trying to implement our PBIS [Positive Behavior Intervention System] program on buses. By doing this we are encouraging positive behavior on the buses.

Supporting Cultures of Learning

Ninety-one percent of the study's respondents reported that their internship provided them with frequent or some involvement in experiences designed to nurture a positive culture for learning. Ninety-seven percent of the respondents reported that these activities made them feel very well prepared–or somewhat prepared to assume educational leadership in leading or supporting a positive culture for learning.

The experiences that respondents categorized as supporting a positive culture of learning varied greatly, however, in both complexity and degree of responsibility. For instance, one student described her experience in serving as co-chair of the School Improvement Council. She stated, "We are meeting with parents, community members, and stakeholders to improve student's learning. (sic) [I] serve on the students and faculty morale team to maintain a positive school climate." Another intern served as the Sexual Harassment Liaison for the school and another worked as a mentor with a first-year teacher on classroom management. One intern researched the PBIS model, evaluated the process of implementation in their school and then prepared and submitted to school leaders recommendations as to how to improve the student behavioral management system.

An important component of building a positive school culture is the involvement of the business community and other stakeholders. Eighty-four percent of the respondents reported that they had some or frequent contact with stakeholders groups. Respondents described many activities that involved businesses and other community stakeholder groups in building a positive school culture. For example, several students reported spending time soliciting financial support from the community. One respondent explained, "I coordinate with our business partners for donations of gifts to our students for academic achievement. They also donate school supplies for our students' learning needs."

Another intern served as a school representative in attending social functions in the community. Another student worked with local ministers and business owners to promote funding and developed programs and seminars designed to educate parents about various types of parenting resources available within their community.

Developing relationships with students' parents is a key aspect of building school culture. Parents comprise one of the most important stakeholder groups external to the day-to-day operations of any school, and encouraging parent involvement is crucial to nurturing a positive school culture. Fifty percent of respondents reported frequent involvement and another 38% reported some involvement in activities promoting parent involvement. Students reported assuming leadership roles in activities that were, for the most part, already established routines or structures within the school, such as parent-teacher organizations, school improvement councils, open houses, and parent educational meetings on topics like college finances or school bullying.

Using Data to Support Continuous School Improvement

Ninety-seven percent of respondents reported having frequent or some involvement in using data to support continuous school improvement during their internship experience. Ninety-one percent reported frequent or some involvement in activities that required the use of data to lead initiatives designed to improve teaching practice. Only nineteen percent reported limited or no involvement in this area.

       In response to an open-ended question regarding the type of activities they engaged in using data to support continuous school improvement, 76% of respondents described activities that involved working with data either individually or in teams. Interns used various forms of data to improve different aspects of the school such as school-wide discipline, curriculum, and understanding student achievement on standardized assessments.

       Thirty-three percent of respondents described leading colleagues as members of school level data teams. Two respondents described experiences analyzing and illustrating student achievement through the use of building data walls. One of these respondents summarized her experience that could serve as a model for using data to support continuous school improvement when she shared the following description of her work:

> [I] Analyzed and compiled data to determine an assessment schedule, a professional development PDSA [Plan Do Study Act] plan, a structure for using data to complete "data dialogues" during data teams, and I processed the notes from leadership [team] collaboration focused on data.

Another intern reported a similar comprehensive experience using data to inform school improvement efforts. The respondent described analyzing student achievement data to determine strengths and weaknesses in student learning and trends in student discipline. She also gained experience using data that led to the creation of two professional development sessions for faculty members and a separate program for school bus drivers. Finally, the intern described using data to create and administer a faculty survey about the use of e-readers for the teachers' professional library which culminated in her development of a cost-benefit analysis for the proposed purchase of two types of electronic readers.

Discussion

Implications for Practice

The findings from this study provide a contribution to the literature on school administrative internships due primarily to the strong match between the recommended internship experiences previously provided by practicing principals and the actual internship activities in which the school leadership students participated. It is not unexpected, however, that the experiences the interns described in this study paralleled the recommendations given earlier from the practicing principals. Many of the principals providing the recommendations served as internships site supervisors in the current study. It is reassuring that practicing principals, when given the opportunity through flexible internship designs, did indeed collaborate with their interns and university supervisors in order to build meaningful, real life experience for interns. Evidence from this study suggests that principals serving in the role of site supervisors will assist interns in

areas they deem essential for success in school leadership given the internship structures to do so.

Rather than prescriptive measures written by university faculty, site supervisors and interns framed the internship projects within the context of the six ELCC Standards. Coupling this framework with the flexible internship design; activities managing and leading change, building a culture committed to improving student learning and teacher efficacy, and the use of data to fuel a drive for continuous improvement, all identified as important by the practicing principals were built and executed by the majority of the interns. This suggests that programs using more prescriptive educational leadership internships should consider redesigning their internships to give interns and site supervisors more latitude in creating the actual internship activities. This has important implications for the university faculty serving as internship supervisors. This process decentralizes their role and allows for the principal serving as a site supervisor to play a more active role in the internship design process. And as reported by the respondents to this study, they believe a more realistic and authentic internship experience is built.

The importance of addressing the types of experiences and activities that an intern receives to insure that the experiences are authentic and reflect the actual daily practice of school principals is a contemporary theme (Pounder & Crow, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2012; Wilmore, 2002). Respondents in this study described numerous internship activities that they felt were authentic and that emulated the work of educational leaders. An analysis of the survey data suggest that interns do in fact believe that programs for aspiring school leaders can provide real-world learning opportunities for students desiring to become effective school leaders who are focused on changing school practices and structures and who are capable of nurturing continuous school improvement. Pounder and Crow (2005) asserted that designing school internship activities that are authentic will contribute "to a stronger pipeline of effective school administrators" (p.57).

Another outcome of the internship experiences' flexible structure allowed practicing principals to work collaboratively with interns to design and implement specific internship projects that were often a function of the needs of the school where the intern was assigned. This is unique in as much as the internship experience became an organic and collaborative experience specific to the site where the interns worked coupled with the interns' learning needs.

If principals are to share the responsibility of meeting the educational needs of students and their communities, interns aspiring to this position must be provided with the types of experiences and activities that facilitate instructional leadership, school improvement and consequently, student achievement. It appears from the interns' perspectives that the principals serving as their site supervisors provided those types of experiences as they worked with the interns in this study. It is interesting to note that many of the principals interviewed during the Anast-May, et al. (2010) study served as the site supervisors whose role was integral to the design of the various internship activities as they supervised the interns. Evidence from the study suggests that, even without specific prompting from external sources (i.e., university supervisors) that coupling of the role of principal as site supervisor with the opportunity to have significant input into the design of internship activities resulted in interns thinking they had practical and useful and meaningful activities.

Recommendations for Future Research

The internship was designed to address contemporary criticisms of administrative internships as checklists of activities that do not capture the essence of educational leadership and administration (Darling-Hammond et al., 2007; Elmore, 2002, 2006). In order to provide coherence and reliability to the structure of the internship, university faculty members used the research based ELCC standards as guidelines in the design of the internship described here. These standards were coupled with design elements of flexibility in order to meet the needs of the intern and of the school site where interns were placed. Further research is indicated in order to understand the perceptions of the site supervisors, administrative interns, and university supervisors regarding the efficacy of this flexible model for internships. The initial findings of this research should also be reexamined with data from future administrations of the survey to subsequent program graduates, which the researchers plan on implementing. Further mining a more expansive and longitudinal database obtained from subsequent administrations of this data for correlations between variables in the survey may provide insight into a number of areas, e.g., influence of grade levels of intern experiences, gender differences or similarities, discipline backgrounds of candidates.

Additional research into the relationship of the flexible structure of the internship and its effects on the intern perceptions of how well the internship addresses the themes of the Anast-May et al. (2010) study is indicated. Studies comparing and contrasting the perceptions of site supervisors, administrative interns, and university supervisors regarding interns in more traditional internships to those involved in a more flexible model would provide additional information to support or refute various criticisms of many of the so called, "checklist" administrative internships. Longitudinal studies of the effects on leadership practices and student achievement of graduates comparing various internship models would also inform the practices of institutions providing credentialing of future educational leaders.

Conclusion

Based on the survey results, interns perceived that in the majority of cases the activities resulting from their collaborative process of planning internship activities with site supervisors provided realistic experiences that benefited their development as educational leaders. School leadership interns participating in this study perceived that, given the opportunity, the principals, serving in the role of site supervisor helped interns design and participate in internship activities that addressed the three themes of managing and leading change, building a culture committed to improving student learning and teacher efficacy, and using data to fuel a drive for continuous improvement. By exploring and understanding the connection between the experiences principals say interns need and what interns perceived they experienced during their internship, this study informs the process of designing meaningful internships at the university level. It gives insight into the question of when principals are given the latitude to design activities with interns together they address skills principals deem important for educational leaders. Additionally, the research bridges the divide between theory and practice in areas articulated by principals as essential to effective educational leadership.

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