Motivation and Leadership: A Comparison of Motivation Factors for Pursing a Degree in Education Administration[*]

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Abstract

This manuscript presents findings from a mixed method study that sought to identify the factors that motivate graduate students to pursue a degree in the field of education administration. One hundred sixty-one graduate students from three universities located in Mississippi participated in the study. Participants completed a 10-item survey using a four-point Likert rating scale, ranked a list of motivation factors, and responded to an open-ended question to provide data for the study. Data were analyzed and disaggregated by age, gender, and race. Findings indicated that the top three reasons for pursuing a degree in education administration are (a) career advancement, (b) impact on students lives, and (c) self-efficacy—perception they can do a great job. Statistically significant differences were found between Black and White groups for two of the ten identified motivating factors—encouraged by others and seeking a pay raise.

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1 Introduction

There is little debate that a critical shortage of principals exists in the United States. During the last decade principals have been leaving the field of education in large numbers, while the pool of highly qualified applicants to replace those that have left has dwindled (Guterman, 2007). A national study conducted in 2003 revealed as many as 42% of elementary school administrators and 50% of secondary school administrators had left the field during the 10-year period of the study (Norton, 2003). More than one-half of the 403 school districts surveyed in this nationwide study also reported having trouble filling their administrative vacancies. This, coupled with the fact that 40% of principals in the United States will be nearing retirement by 2009 (Rodriguez, 1999), indicates that the availability of school administrators is in a state of crisis and the trend is expected to continue (Caldwell, 2000; Fullan, 2005; Guterman, 2007; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Pyke, 2002; Rodriguez, 1999; & Wallace, 2003).

Although the problem is pervasive throughout the nation, principal shortages vary by region, state, and district. For instance, New York City Schools lost half their principals between 2002 and 2006 (New York Times, 2006). It was predicted that student enrollment would increase in Minnesota creating more teachers positions, while at the same time 75% of individuals in principal positions would be lost through retirement or attrition by the end of the decade (Institute for Education Leadership, 2000). In California up to 90% of public school districts reported a serious shortage of candidates for secondary principal vacancies, while 73% reported limited candidate pools for elementary principal positions (The Recruitment and Retention..., 2006). With the exception of affluent districts, the number of applicants for principal positions declined in the state of Michigan by 50-67% (Cusick, 2003). These figures are staggering especially considering the fact that the pool of applicants has dwindled as fewer teachers are choosing to enter the field of education administration (Rayfield & Diamantes, 2004 a). As predicted by many researchers earlier in this decade, a study jointly commissioned by the National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals (Guterman, 2007), revealed 50% of participating school districts had difficulties filling vacant principal positions due to a limited pool of candidates.

While some individuals make the decision not to pursue eligibility requirements to become principals, such as administrative degrees and certification, there are literally thousands of teachers who hold administrative licenses but choose not to pursue careers as principals (The Recruitment and Retention..., 2007). Traditionally, assistant principals have been considered a good source from which to identify potential principal candidates. However, not all assistant principals aspire to move into the principalship. One study found 70% of secondary assistant principals indicated they would not pursue opportunities to become principals (Pounder and Merrill, 2001).

In 2001, Pounder and Merrill asserted there were enough certified individuals in education administration to fill all principal positions in the United States. Having enough was not the problem; rather, they determined the real issue was finding enough individuals who were *highly qualified and willing to serve*. Later, Fullan (2006) concurred that the distribution of highly qualified principals across the nation remained a challenge as the weaker principals usually worked at the most challenging schools. School districts with the fewest applicants were typically those with the most challenging working conditions, higher concentrations of poor and minority students, and lower salaries for principals.

Why is the education leadership shortage happening across the America? The purpose of this paper is to identify the motivation of individuals pursuing a degree in education administration. Perhaps the knowledge gained in this study will provide an understanding of why some educators continue to pursue the field of education administration while so many others are leaving the field.

2 Theoretical Framework

2.1 Job Satisfaction

General job satisfaction is a universal aspect of career development. Theorists and practitioners alike tend to accept the assumption that almost everyone seeks satisfaction in his or her work (Gruneberg, 1979; Jepsen & Sheu, 2003; & Maslow, 1954). J*ob satisfaction* can be defined as an individual's emotional reactions to a particular job (Gruneberg,1979), or described more specifically as an *attitude of liking or disliking a job* (Jepsen & Sheu, 2003). According to Jepsen and Sheu (2003) job satisfaction is highly important in the workplace as it contributes to job performance, influences emotional and physical well-being, and is necessary to ensure high quality performance. On the other hand, *job dissatisfaction* is associated with stress and burnout that can lead to a number of potentially damaging personal and professional symptoms. Since there is a definite link between job satisfaction and the propensity to leave a job; employers look at what can be motivating for employees to keep them employed with the organization and motivate them to excel (Stempien & Leob, 2002; & Fullan, 2005).

Pearson (1998) found job satisfaction and leisure satisfaction to be significant positive predictors of psychological health, a serious implication for school leaders. If they do not have enough time, or take enough time to involve themselves in satisfying leisure activities to even out their stress from work, burnout may occur or psychological health issues may arise that affect job satisfaction and performance. Fullan (2005) suggested that *individual sustainability* concerns the ability of the person to keep on going without burning out. He recommended that leaders balance highly engaged periods of problem-solving and energized activities with periods or positive rituals or routines and time for energy recovery if they want to stay motivated, satisfied with their jobs, and leave lasting legacies. Failure to do so can lead to job dissatisfaction, burnout, and poor physical and mental health, often resulting in the school leader leaving the profession.

Unfortunately, many Americans are growing increasingly unhappy with their jobs (Jepsen & Sheu, 2003). The decline in job satisfaction appears to be widespread among workers of all ages and all income brackets (Gruneberg, 1979). Stress and job dissatisfaction are factors that cause individuals to change jobs, leave a profession prior to retirement, or abandon their careers. The realm of education leadership is no exception. The shortage of principals in school settings across the United States during the last decade has reached a critical stage as the applicant pool to fill principal vacancies has dwindled and so many practicing principals are retiring or changing their profession (Caldwell, 2000; Fullan, 2005; Guterman, 2007; Olsen, Maple & Stage, 1995; Pyke, 2002; Rodriguez, 1999; & Wallace, 2003). It has been suggested that one of the best ways to strengthen the education leadership profession would be to make it a less stressful and more satisfying career (Stempien & Loeb, 2002; Latham 1998; & Fullan, 2005). Understanding what motivates individuals to actively pursue a career in education administration could provide insight on job satisfaction and assist in the recruitment, training, and retention of highly qualified school leader candidates to address the vacancies that are plaguing American schools.

2.2 Motivation Theory

Some educators and psychologists believe that the source of motivation for individuals to behave a certain way may be an inner drive, desire, or energy focused on achievement and getting ahead in a social structure (McKee & Phillips, 2001). Maslow (1954) theorized that motivation and human behavior are based on the desire of each individual to reach the highest level of his or her capability. It is an individual's motivation that leads to job satisfaction and individual sustainability (Fullan, 2005).

According to behavior theorists (McKee & Phillips, 2001), behavior is increased or decreased by its consequences or that which immediately occurs after the behavior is demonstrated. If the consequence is positive (rewarded) the behavior is reinforced and tends to increase in frequency; however, if the consequence is negative (punished), the behavior is suppressed or extinguished. If a behavior is not rewarded or punished, it will, in time, no longer be emitted. For instance, discovering that we can do one thing well encourages us to try other things. As an outcome, we gain self-confidence and self-esteem and build self-efficacy. Each success experience builds momentum for continued success; thusly, such positive reinforcing events create

what we call *motivation*.

2.3 Intrinsic and Extrinsic Motivators

McKee & Phillips (2001) identified two types of motivators for human behavior—*intrinsic and extrinsic*. *Intrinsic motivators* are things that we do with no visible goal or particular reward in mind, instead we are motivated from within based on what is pleasurable to us. *Extrinsic motivators* focus on a tangible, external reward, such as food or money. Mortimer (1979) discovered it is the intrinsic aspects of work that lead to job satisfaction. While the presence of extrinsic motivators rarely leads to job satisfaction, the absence of extrinsic rewards can lead to job dissatisfaction.

Herzberg (1966) developed the *motivation-hygiene theory* to explain employee attitudes and motivation that lead to job satisfaction or dissatisfaction. The job satisfiers, referred to as *motivators*, represent man's relationship to *what he does*; while the dissatisfiers, called *hygiene factors*, describe man's relationship to the context or environment in which he does his job. The factors involved in producing job satisfaction are separate and distinct from the factors that lead to job dissatisfaction. Herzberg identified six motivators that stand apart as strong determiners of job satisfaction and achievement. Motivators include achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility, advancement, and growth – the last three being of greater importance for lasting change of attitudes. Hygiene factors are described as company policy and administration, supervision, salary, interpersonal relations, and working conditions. Hygiene factors are external factors that are not part of the work itself, such as incentives or threats of punishment to coerce one to do something, and result in short term compliance. Further, hygiene factors fail to provide for positive job satisfaction because they do not provide for an individual's sense of growth. Herzberg argued that continual job enrichment embedded in sufficiently challenging work designed to utilize an employee's full abilities with increasing levels of responsibilities provides the individual with opportunities that can positively impact intrinsic motivation and increase one's level of job satisfaction.

2.4 Hierarchy of Motivational Needs

Maslow (1954) contended that people are not merely controlled or motivated by mechanical forces and life should not be controlled by stimuli or reinforcement. He believed that human behavior is motivated by the *desire* of each individual *to reach the highest level of his or her capabilities*. He believed that human motivation is based on an individual's desire to reach the highest levels of his or her capabilities. To explain his theory, Maslow developed a hierarchy of needs that consisted of several different motivational needs. The model can be represented by a pyramid with the most basic needs at the bottom and the higher-level needs at the top of the pyramid. Beginning at the bottom of the pyramid, the most basic and most powerful needs are *biological*, such as the needs for oxygen, food, water, warmth, and shelter. Before one could move up the hierarchy of motivational needs, the *biological* needs would have to be met first. This pattern would continue as the bottom rungs of the pyramid of motivation needs would have to be met at any level before one could move to the next higher level. The second motivation was the need for *safety* and freedom from fear, followed by *belongingness and love* or the need to obtain and give affection and to be a contributing member of society. The fourth level was then the need for *esteem* or self-worth characterized by a high level of self-respect and respect from others resulting in feeling valuable and self-confident. The fifth level as the top rung was the need for *self-actualization* or a state of self-fulfillment where one reaches his or her highest potential. Maslow believed that all humans strive to reach the highest levels of their capability along the pyramid of needs.

Although, Maslow's theory of motivation has been difficult to measure, it has provided a model for understanding personal growth and emphasizes that if humans are struggling with hunger and thirst, they will probably be less concerned about *belonging* or *esteem*. This information has implications for understanding the factors that motivate individuals to pursue or to leave a career as a school principal. When principals are stressed, constantly "under fire" from stakeholders, or continuously engaged in high energy demanding activities, they may feel they are functioning at the level of *safety* or *survival* rather than the level of *self-actualization*.

2.5 Burnout

Job satisfaction and organizational commitment are the most immediate determinants of *turnover*—leaving a position for one that appears to be better suited to the individual (Mortimer, 1979; Tang, Kim, &Tang, 2000; & Mortier, 1979). According to Huttunen and Heikkinen (2004), burnout in the work place usually originates with the lack of recognition. Recognition is a basic human need. Positive recognition in the workplace creates a feeling of solidarity and increases job satisfaction; where the lack, thereof, can erode the working community and lower job satisfaction. Peskin (1973) defined job dissatisfaction as the dehumanizing elements in the organization's culture that ignore or contravene the worker's values and needs. When the stresses and pressures of a job become too great or there is a poor fit between the employee and the working environment, burnout usually occurs, resulting in low job satisfaction and high rates of turnover (Cooley & Shen 2000; Olsen, Maple; & Stage, 1995).

    Worker burnout is evidenced by increased levels of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced work goals, taking less personal responsibility for work outcomes, greater emotional detachment, work alienation and heightened self-interest (Hughes, 2001). Escape from the situation is a resultant outcome with the *thinking of quitting* as one component of the *climax of burnout*. "Only by aggressively intervening in the burnout process is it possible to prevent the potential negative impact of burnout on both the teacher and the education process" (Hughes, 2001, p. 297). Many of those suffering from burnout may wish to change jobs or leave the profession for a variety of reasons (family, personal reasons, waiting for retirement, or mobility issues), or they may choose to stay at the job suffering even further.

3 Why Do Individuals Choose Not to Pursue the Principalship?

Job satisfaction greatly influences teachers and administrators' career paths (Cooley & Shen, 2000). According to Pounder and Merrill (2001), individuals are drawn to the position of high school principal due to a desire to achieve, influence, and improve education. Other influencing factors include salary and benefits. Negative factors of the principalship include time demands, ethical dilemmas, student discipline problems, termination of unfit employees, and union negotiations. Less than one-third of those surveyed saw the principalship as part of their career plans. Pounder and Merrill (2001) summarized that only those who find the position highly desirable are likely to actively pursue attainment of the position. Those candidates who are only marginally interested in the position may need stronger incentives or encouragement to seek the role of high school principal.

    Principals participating in the 2000 Principal's Leadership Summit (Institute for Educational Leadership, 2000) were asked to identify major reasons individuals were not pursing careers as principals. The top five reasons were: changing demands of the job; compensation; time commitment; lack of community/parent support and negative media attention; and lack of respect.

3.1 Changing Demands of the Job

The term "principal" is actually the shortened form of the title "principal teacher." Originally, the principal's role was more closely aligned to that of a lead teacher but years of added responsibilities shifted that role from principal teacher to principal manager, disciplinarian, supervisor, fund-raiser, problem-solver, public relations director, chaperone for after-school events, parent complaint resolver, and community relations coordinator (Recruitment and Retention, 2006)). The modern principal must deal with "school improvement, annual reports, accountability, core curriculum, student safety, gender and equity issues, mission statements, goals and outcomes, staff development, curriculum alignment... accreditation and special education" (Cusick, 2003). Principals are expected to spearhead the efforts of school reform, to raise student test scores and lead schools to success (Tschannen-Moran and Gareis, 2004). Such accountability issues have been identified as the most critical issues facing school leaders (Roberson, Schweinle & Styron, 2003), and, therefore, a major part of the principal's day. It is not surprising that "large majorities of school leaders feel overworked" (Stricherz, 2001).

It has been well established that good school leadership is important and that the school leader is seen as the key element in establishing a successful school climate (Marzano, 2003; Norton, 2003; & Koll, 1996). A recent meta-analysis of research conducted on effective leadership practices (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2005) showed that leadership has a direct impact on student achievement. The findings of the study suggested that schools and teachers can have a tremendous impact on student success. The study also revealed 66 leadership practices that do have a direct impact on student achievement. Identifying and recruiting "motivated" potential leaders and training them to demonstrate these practices should help to fill the many principal vacancies across our nation. The operative word here is *motivated*. We must have motivated potential leaders that are attracted to the principalship.

So what does make a principal's job attractive to an applicant? Pounder and Merrill (2001) cited individual psychological needs and different schools, districts and/or administrative positions may meet different needs depending on the individual. Most of the aspects of the job an individual may find satisfying are intrinsic such as seeing students succeed or achieve at a new level. Great effort will be needed to attract, train, and retain individuals to keep pace with the number of principals that will be leaving the position in the next few years due to retirement and other reasons (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003). Future school leaders must be provided with the tools needed to be able to cope with the demands placed on them by a wide variety of tasks they will be required to fulfill once they enter the role of an education administrator (Browne-Ferrigno, 2003; Koll, 1996; Rayfield, 2004). Education administrator preparation programs must prepare these individuals to not only deal with the managerial issues of the principalship, but also the tools needed to deal with instructional leadership, time management, and community relations.

Education World asked principals to comment on aspects of their job. Gary Cardwell noted, "Being a principal is not one job; it is a hundred jobs wrapped up into one" (Hopkins, 2008, n.p.). Principal Tim Messick explained, "A principal needs to have the power and strength of Superman, the intelligence of Albert Einstein, the popularity of Princess Diana, the political savvy of a presidential candidate, the care and compassion of Mother Teresa" (Hopkins, 2003). Similarly, Cushing (2004) compared the modern principal to a superhero or religious icon able to be in several places at once, multi-tasking and performing miracles along the way.

Fullan (2005) reported that individual sustainability is based on the school leaders' ability to keep on going without burning out. For school leaders to sustain, "the key is not an all-out marathon, but rather a cyclical energizing" (p. 35). In other words, leaders should seek situations that push the limits of their energy and engagement, coupled with rituals or periodic breaks that are energy recovering. However, the present-day school leaders' roles and responsibilities are not clearly defined (Fullan, 2005). The problem becomes "discontinuity of direction" with high levels of continual engagement and few periods of routines or breaks for recovery leading to leadership turnover.

3.2 Compensation

Teacher salaries have increased at higher rates than education administrators and the salary gap continues to narrow. It is not uncommon for veteran teachers to receive annual pay equal to or close to that of their principals and in some cases, they earn more. Hopkins (2003) reported that a principal from Pennsylvania and a teacher started working at the same time, yet now as a principal, she earns about $2,000 less than the teacher and the teacher works 20 fewer days than she does. This scenario holds true for many states as teachers across the country have received teacher pay increases while principals' salary has been overlooked. Considering that principals work more hours per day and more days per year, principals can earn as little as $1 to $2 more than if they were serving as classroom teachers (Guterman, 2007) or even less. Many believe the pay differential is not enough, especially considering quality of life issues. In an NAESP study (Guterman, 2007), 58% of superintendents indicated teachers were discouraged from becoming principals because compensation was insufficient for the responsibilities assumed as principal.

3.3 Time Commitment

Principals seem to be on call 24 hours a day. They are expected to be present during the school day and attend district-wide meetings, community events, PTA meetings, professional development, and after-school activities. Often they are first to arrive and last to leave. On average, principals' work from 7:00 a.m. to 7:00 p.m.; 54 hours per week; 240 days per year (Hinton & Kastner, 2000). Though this may seem a huge time commitment, some researchers have estimated the average work week to be even longer, as much as 62 hours per week (Cooley & Shen, 2003; & Foster, 2002). Such time commitments leave little time for other activities and can prevent principals from finding time to care for their own personal needs (Foster, 2002) which may lead to the level of burnout described in a North Carolina study that found principals in that state left the job after only four years.

The stress load of principals often interferes with their personal lives and interests. Because of the dawn-to-dusk hours that principals must spend addressing school-related concerns, they tend to let personal interests take a back seat to school work, when in fact, personal interests can provide opportunities for formal and informal connections to students and faculty members and can help reduce stress (Foster, 2002). Any process that reduces stress and at the same time addresses issues at hand may help to prevent burnout.

At least 25% of superintendents surveyed across the nation indicated that excessive time commitments were a deterrent to teachers wanting to pursue a career as a principal (Guterman, 2007). This was consistent with a study of 400 lead teachers in Arkansas who listed excessive time commitments as one of the top reasons for not pursuing an administrative position even though they had been identified as having leadership skills (Hewitt & Stambuck, 2008). "It's a job that is very demanding on time, time away from family, and we're finding across this country that more and more people are really not interested in going into the principalship," Gerald Tirozzi, Director National Association of Secondary School Principals (Bowser, 2001).

3.4 Lack of Community/Parent Support and Negative Media Attention

Public opinion of public education in the U.S. has been low in recent years and the 2007 *Pi Delta Kappan* Gallup Poll indicated that only 16% of adults rated the nation's schools an "A" or "B" to describe their effectiveness (Rose & Gallup, 2007). More recently results from the 2008 **Education Next** –PEPG (Program on Education Policy and Governance) Survey of Public Opinion found, "a public that takes an increasingly critical view both of public schools as they exist today and, perhaps ironically, of many prominent reforms designed to improve them" (Howell, West, & Peterson, 2008).

These results are not surprising considering negative media attention afforded to public education. With headlines like "Do Away With Public Schools" appearing in major US newspapers (Goldberg, 2007) and an education series in the Post that berated school leaders in Washington Public Schools because, "Fifty-six cents out of every dollar goes to administrators who, it's no secret, do a miserable job administrating" (n.p.). It is no mystery that fewer individuals are seeking a career in education administration. Not only does a lack of support deter potential candidates from seeking principal positions, but lack of parent support was cited as a contributing factor in why principals leave their jobs (Pounder & Merrill, 2001).

3.5 Lack of Respect

As indicated, the role of the principal has shifted, public scrutiny of schools has increased and public support has decreased. This and societal changes and increased disciplinary problems has lead to a decline in prestige and respect for the school's leadership. As the leader of the school, the principal often takes the brunt of criticisms when things go wrong. Where staff and/or student morale is low, respect for the principal can wane.

When asked what inspired women in the workplace, 94% of women indicated *respect* was extremely important (Career Women, 2003). Respect is a highly motivating factor in the workplace. A lack of respect for the principal can lead to low job satisfaction and is a deterrent to those who may otherwise consider entering the field of education administration. As explained by Principal Bill Myers, "Esteem needs are near

the top of Maslow's pyramid of human needs. People want to feel valued and confident. People, including principals, want and need respect from others" (Career Women, 2003).

4 The Study

4.1 Problem

Despite high attrition rates, low pay, the demands of the job, pay scales and other deterrents to becoming a school principal, some individuals continue to enter graduate programs in Educational Administration. Understanding what attracted these individuals to the field became the focus of a study undertaken by the authors of this paper.

4.2 Purpose of the Study

Insert paragraph text here.

The purpose of the study was to identify factors that motivated graduate students to pursue degrees in education administration when so many veteran school leaders are currently leaving the field (Guterman, 2007).

The principal shortage has been compounded by large numbers of school leaders eligible to leave the field of education administration in the near future. A national study conducted by Wallace Foundation (2003) revealed 40% of the principals in the United States would be eligible to retire by 2009. During the last decade there has been a 42% turnover in elementary school administration and a 50% turnover at the secondary level in the United States.

Understanding why some educators continue to pursue the field can be important to recruitment and retention of future school leaders and has implications for both K-12 schools and university Educational Administration (EDA) programs in addressing the critical shortage of principals in schools.

4.3 Research Questions

1. *Why* do graduate students pursue degrees in education administration when so many veteran school leaders are currently leaving the field?
2. What impact does the *gender* of the graduate students participating in the study have on their responses to the 10 reasons for entering the education leadership programs of study at institutions of higher education in the State of Mississippi?
3. What impact does the *race* of the graduate students participating in the study have on their responses to the 10 reasons for entering the education leadership programs of study at institutions of higher education in the State of Mississippi?

4.4 Participants

Participants for this study were graduate students enrolled in education administration programs in three state-funded universities in Mississippi. Of the participants (N = 161), demographic data were collected by *gender*, *race*, and *age*.

For *gender* 32% (n = 51) reported they were male, 67% (n = 108) female, and 1% (n = 2) did not respond. For *race*, 21% (n = 34) indicated Black Non-Hispanic; 0.6% (n = 1) Black Hispanic; 75% (n = 20) White Non-Hispanic; 3% (n = 5) White Hispanic; and 0.6% (n = 1) did not respond. For analysis purposes, Blacks and Black Hispanics were considered *Black*, and Whites and White Hispanic were considered *White*.

Data collected for *age*, shown in Table 1, were reported by Age-range Category reflecting increments of five years for ages 25 to 60. The mean age range for the sample was 35.9 years (SD = 7.75). One respondent did not report age. Table 1 reports the frequency and percent of participants for each Age-range Category.

Age-Range Category	Frequency(n)	Percent (%)
25 − 29	33	20.5%
30 − 34	54	33.5%
35 − 39	24	14.9%
40 − 44	24	14.9%
45 − 49	14	8.7%
50 − 54	10	6.2%
55 − 60	1	0.6%
No Response	1	0.6%

Table 1: Frequency and Percent of Participants By Age Range Category (N = 161)

4.5 Methods

A faculty member teaching in the education administration program at each respective university administered the survey during a regular class meeting and returned questionnaires to the researchers in a sealed envelope. Researchers analyzed data using qualitative and quantitative methods and used SPSS to run statistical tests.

Ratings. Participants were asked to rate 10 statements related to possible reasons they chose to enter the field of education administration using a 4-point Likert-type scale with 1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=agree, and 4=strongly agree. The data reflected in Table 2, show the top five responses were

1. *I wanted to advance my career ($M = 3.68$, $Mdn = 4.00$);*
2. *I felt I would do a great job ($M = 3.61$, $Mdn = 4.00$);*
3. *I believe it will allow me to more greatly impact children's lives ($M = 3.53$, $Mdn = 4.00$);*
4. *I have been encouraged to do so by others ($M = 3.49$, $Mdn = 4.00$); and*
5. *I thought it would be a more challenging position ($M = 3.29$, $Mdn = 3.00$).*

Statement	N	Mean	Median	Mode
Advance career	145	3.68	4.00	4
Do great job	144	3.61	4.00	4
Impact children's lives	144	3.53	4.00	4
Encouraged to do so	144	3.49	4.00	4
Challenging position	143	3.29	3.00	4
Can provide teachers instructional supervision	145	3.17	3.00	3
Wanted pay raise	145	2.98	3.00	3
Can do better job than current administrators	143	2.57	3.00	2
Get out of classroom	143	2.27	2.00	2
Administrator shortage	145	2.26	2.00	2

Table 2: Ratings of Ten Reasons to Pursue the Field of Education Administration

Rankings. The second part of the survey prompted participants to rank their top five reasons for becoming an administrator. Participants wrote-in responses on blank lines numbered 1 through 5, indicating the rank order of each reason. Most participants wrote-in reasons rated in section 1 while others wrote-in responses that did not appear in section 1. Each response was assigned a weighted score; the higher the rank the higher the point value assigned. In this sample, Reason 1 received 5 points, Reason 2 received 4 points, Reason 3 received 3 points, Reason 4 received 2 points, and Reason 5 received 1 point. Data for rankings of top five reasons to become an administrator based on the weighted scores are shown in Table 3.

Reason	Frequency	1 st Reason	2 nd Reason	3 rd Reason	4 th Reason	5 th Reason	Wt Score
Advancement career	75	20	17	20	13	5	259
Have impact on children's lives	62	35	7	12	6	2	253
Receive pay raise	66	9	12	16	8	21	178
Obtain challenging and rewarding job	40	5	12	9	7	7	121
Encouraged by others	37	9	5	5	8	10	106
Can do a great job	23	2	8	4	7	2	70
Improve Instructional supervision	18	2	9	3	3	1	62
Get out of classroom	23	1	4	4	9	5	56
Demonstrate leadership skills[a]	14	5	4	1	1	3	49
continued on next page							

More qualified than current administrator	13	4	2	2	3	2	42
Initiate change[a]	13	4	2	2	2	3	41
Influence field of education[a]	10	3	5	1	0	1	39
Make a difference[a]	7	4	2	1	0	0	31
Encourage teachers[a]	4	2	1	1	0	0	17
Influence others on larger scale[a]	4	1	2	0	1	0	15
Address administrator shortage	4	1	0	1	1	1	11

Table 3: Rankings of Top Five Reasons to Become an Administrator by Weighted Score

[a] reason was not included among reasons rated in section 1.

Qualitative data. Participants were prompted to write a brief paragraph explaining why they planned to enter the field of education administration. Of the 145 participants only approximately 33% ($n = 48$) provided written responses in this section. The researchers looked for verbiage that could be attributed to the any of the reasons provided in section 1. Statements that could not be attributed were considered new themes and were also included in the analysis. Most responses (paragraphs) contained more than one theme; therefore, the total number of themes that emerged (N = 107) was greater than the number of participants ($n = 48$) who provided written responses. Table 4 summarizes the data extracted from the qualitative analysis of the respondents' paragraphs.

Themes	Frequency	Percent
Impact children/students lives	26	24.3
Make a difference	20	18.7
Challenging and rewarding job	11	10.3
Think I could do a great job	10	9.3
Provide teachers instructional supervision	9	8.4
Career advancement	9	8.4
Pay raise	6	5.6
Encouraged by others	3	2.8
It's a calling	3	2.8
Can do better job than current administrator	2	1.9
Address shortage of administrators	1	0.9

Table 4: Qualitative Data: Frequency of Responses by Theme for Entering the Field of Education Administration

The qualitative analysis of the data shown in Table 4 identified the top five reasons for entering the field of education administration as:

1. Having a impact on children's lives (n= 26),
2. Making a difference (n = 20),
3. Seeking a challenging and rewarding job (n = 11),
4. Doing a great job (n = 10), and
5. Providing teachers with instructional supervision (n = 9) and advancing my career (n = 9).

The research methods used in this study allowed for triangulation of the data. Table 5 lists the top reasons for entering education administration based on the input of the participants (N = 161) in this study through their rating, rankings, and themes of reasons for entering the study of education leadership.

	Order	Order	Order
Reason	By Ratings	By Rankings	By Themes
Advancing career	1	1	5
Doing a great job	2	6	4
Impacting children's lives	3	2	1

Encouraged to do so	4	5	8
Challenging position	5	4	3
Can provide teachers instructional supervision	6	7	5
Wanted pay raise	7	3	7
Can do better job than current administrators	8	10	10
Get out of classroom	9	8	0^a
Administrator shortage	10	16^b	11^b
Want to make a difference	NA	NA	2^c
It's a calling	NA	NA	9^c
Leadership skills	NA	9^d	NA
Note. The first 10 reasons were provided in section 1 rankings. The remaining reasons were added because they emerged among top ten reasons from rankings and themes.			
^{a} did not emerge as a theme			
^{b}was not among the top ten by rankings or themes			
^{c}was only among the top ten by themes			
^{d}was only among the top ten in rankings			

Table 5

It was observed that responses in Table 5 were fairly consistent and that at least 3 reasons appeared among the top five in all three areas. These included *advancing career*, *impacting children's lives*, and *seeking a challenging position*. There was also consistency on the other end of the scale as the data indicated that *filling an administrator shortage*, *wanting to get out of the classroom*, and *feeling they could do a better job than their current administrator* were not as important to participants' decisions to enter the field of education administration.

Maslow (1956) believed that all humans strive to reach the highest levels of their capability along a hierarchical pyramid of needs. This would suggest that the outcomes of this study, *advancing career* and *seeking a challenging position,* could fall into Maslow's motivation hierarchy at the fourth and fifth levels of *esteem* and *self-actualization.* Esteem or self-worth is characterized by a high level of self-respect and respect from others resulting in feeling valuable and self-confident. The need for *self-actualization* or a state of self-fulfillment where one reaches his or her highest potential is the highest level of Maslow's hierarchy of motivational needs. These ideas can be correlated to other motivational theorists as well (Jepsen & Sheu, 2003; Herzberg, 1966; Hughes, 2001; Huttunen & Heikkinen, 2004; Pounder & Merrill, 2001; Roberson, Schweinle & Styron, 2003; Marzano, 2003; Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2005; and Fullan, 2005)

There were two areas that did *not* seem to fit the pattern and warrant further discussion. These are *seeking a pay raise* and *wanting to make a difference. Pay raise* was ranked 3rd in the rankings but 7th in both ratings and themes. Although *pay raise* had the third highest weighted score (wt score = 178) it was most frequently chosen as the 5th reason ($n = 21$) among respondents. This placement suggests that while pay was a factor, it was not the most important reason why individuals chose the field. This finding substantiates Hertzberg's (1966) theory of hygiene factors with regard to motivation. Specifically, he identified *salary* as a *dissatisfier*, not a motivator, in determining job satisfaction.

Making a difference was the 2nd most frequently listed theme. It was not listed as one of the ten reasons participants rated in section 1 which may have also influenced its omission from the rankings. However,

because it was found 20 times among 48 respondents who supplied a brief written statement, there is a strong indication it is an important reason. Future studies of this topic should include *making a difference* in the rating section for further analysis. *Making a difference* aligns with Maslow's (1956) third level of the hierarchy of needs, *belongingness and love*, or the need to obtain and give affection and to be a contributing member of society.

The researchers found the difference in responses for *race* of particular interest. As noted, Whites in this study rated *being encouraged to do so* significantly higher than Blacks as a reason they were pursuing the field. This could lead to inquiries of social justice and/or motivation. Another area of interest for future study was that at least 3 of 48 respondents indicated a *calling* to enter the field. This finding was not surprising considering the rich religious culture of the south. Future studies should further explore the spiritual context and may consider the ideas of servant leadership. Although the age of the participants was revealed in this study, further analysis of *age* with relation to gender, race, and region of study should be explored further.

Understanding the reasons prospective school administrators enter the field of education administration can have a positive impact on the recruitment, training, and retention of highly qualified administrators to address the dwindling pool of applicants and the critical shortage of principals across the United States.

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5.1 Administrative Rationale Query

Educational leaders are experiencing an increased amount of stress and many school administrators are leaving the field or returning to the classroom. We are interested in knowing the reasons you are pursuing a degree in educational administration and wish to become an administrator. Please answer the following questions openly and honestly. This survey is anonymous and your participation is strictly voluntary.

Demographic Information:

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Gender: M or F

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Age

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Race

USM ELR Program _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Master's

(check one) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Ed Specialist's

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Doctorate

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Non-Degree

What is your present job? _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Teacher

(check one) _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Counselor

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Asst. Principal

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Principal

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Other (Please Specify)

_ _

After graduation/completion of course work I plan to enter administration.

Yes _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

No _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

Undecided _ _ _ _ _ _ _

If you answered **yes** to the previous question, complete this sentence:

I would like to enter the field of administration as a/an:

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Asst. Principal

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Principal

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Central Office

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Other (Please Specify)
_ _
I do not plan to become an administrator; I am just pursuing an advanced degree. _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _Yes
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _No

If you answered YES, you have no future plans of entering administration you have completed your part of the survey. Please turn in your questionnaire.

If you answered NO, and you do plan on becoming an administrator please continue on page 2.

Please answer the following questions by circling your response using the scale:

4 strongly agree; 3 agree; 2 disagree or 1 strongly disagree

I decided to enter the field of Education Administration because I:

1. have been encouraged by others to do so. 4 3 2 1
2. wanted a pay raise. 4 3 2 1
3. wanted to get out of the classroom. 4 3 2 1
4. wanted to advance my career. 4 3 2 1
5. believe it will allow me to more greatly impact children's lives. 4 3 2 1
6. felt I would do a great job. 4 3 2 1
7. thought it would be a more challenging and rewarding position. 4 3 2 1
8. thought I could help fill the void since there seems to be a shortage 4 3 2 1
of qualified administrators.
9. believe I am more qualified than contemporary administrators. 4 3 2 1
10. believe teachers need strong instructional supervision, which I 4 3 2 1
will provide.

Please rank your top five reasons for becoming an administrator:

1. _
2. _
3. _
4. _
5. _

Please write a short paragraph on the back explaining why you are planning to enter the field of educational administration. Your comments are important to understanding why you chose this field.

You have completed the questionnaire. Thank you for your help and cooperation.