The Changing Landscape of Principal Preparation: An Analysis of Statewide Longitudinal Program Component Survey Results

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This article examines comparative survey results for 16 principal preparation programs located in the Midwestern state of Missouri across a four-year time period from 2008 to 2012. The authors are founding members of a statewide Higher Education Evaluation Committee (HEEC), which has been meeting on a monthly basis since 2005, comprised of faculty representatives from all school leadership preparatory programs and Missouri Department of Education leaders. The mission of the HEEC is to improve all preparatory programs in order to positively impact K-12 student performance through the development of highly effective school and district leaders. This unique collaborative improvement effort resulted in a statewide initiative to administer a comprehensive program component survey to collect data from the 2007-08 and 2011-12 academic years to examine changes in preparation programs. The article explores the development of the HEEC, describes the multi-year processes for administration of the surveys, and shares recommendations to improve preparatory programs for educational leaders based upon the survey results. The dramatically changing landscape of principal preparation is apparent in the major findings: (1) online course offerings doubled in four years, (2) adjunct faculty increased 260% while full-time faculty decreased by 27%, and (3) the time to degree completion decreased as competition for student enrollment increased across the state.

Introduction

The current context for induction of new school leaders in the United States includes a variety of pathways such as graduate preparatory programs within higher education institutions, expanding alternative preparation and certification methods, and charter schools with no requirements for leaders' licensure. The demand for reform in higher education in the United States, particularly with regard to leadership preparation programs, is a call to action (Hess & Kelly, 2005; Levine, 2005; Wallace Foundation, 2008). In response to this call, colleges and universities strive to meet changing accreditation requirements at the state and national levels that include robust candidate and program assessment data to drive continuous improvement processes, while

operating within the context of competition with one another for quality leadership candidates and budgetary constraints in a recession economy.

Recent research studies support the critical importance of redesigning leadership preparation programs to support the development of effective educational leaders who have the knowledge, skills, and dispositions to positively impact student learning outcomes through their practices (Braun, Gable, & Kite, 2011; Cosner, Tozer, & Smylie, 2012; Reames, 2010). Leithwood and Seashore Louis (2011) conducted a five-year study that examined the influence of school leaders on instructional quality and student learning, finding "that leadership is second only to classroom instruction as an influence on student learning" (p. 3). In addition to research, national leadership standards also instigate program redesign in many states, such as the revised Educational Leadership Policy Standards (ELPS), which prompted a wave of educational leadership program re-design across states whose accreditation and licensure procedures were based upon the previous Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards (NPBEA, 2008).

In the Midwestern state of Missouri, the changing landscape of the preparation of school and district leaders resulted in a statewide collaborative effort that began in 2005 and that continues into 2014. The Higher Education Evaluation Committee (HEEC) meets on a monthly basis and includes faculty representatives from each of the 17 institutions in the state with educational leadership licensure programs, along with representatives from the state department of education. There is great diversity among the HEEC participants, who work within large and small preparation programs, and at public and private institutions. In an article describing changes in university educational administration programs, Orr (2006) stated that, "Collaboration seems to have been an important catalyst for schools of education and their programs" (p. 499). The collaboration among HEEC participants is focused on a common purpose: to support continuous improvement for educational leadership programs in order to graduate principals who positively impact student performance in preK-12 schools.

Missouri's education department requires leadership preparation programs to maintain both quantitative and qualitative data relevant to program delivery and evaluation, including: (a) admission criteria and acceptance data, (b) student demographics, (c) program attributes, including course syllabi, (d) evidence of academic progress, (e) number of completers by program area, (f) licensure examination results, and (g) graduate follow-up data. The purpose of this study was to examine the longitudinal results of a statewide program component survey. The primary research question was: How do leadership preparation programs vary across Missouri, and what program changes have taken place between 2008 and 2012? This paper examines the survey results, describes the activities of the HEEC, and concludes with recommendations based upon the findings from the program component survey.

Study Framework

The examination of leadership preparation program features is informed by the literature on effective preparatory programs and theories that undergird this work. The U.S. Department of Education (2005) published a case study of six innovative programs, identifying effective program components such as: (a) beginning and operating the

program guided by a distinct vision of effective school leaders, (b) exacting criteria for selecting and recruiting candidates, (c) a rigorous curriculum, (d) field-based experiences with project-based learning, and (e) an accelerated timeline for program completion (p. 9, 12). Orr and Orphanos (2011) found that four collective program features affected graduate leadership practices, including "instructional leadership-focused program content, integration of theory and practice, knowledgeable faculty, and a strong orientation to the principalship as a career" (p. 50). Teitel (2006) affirmed the need for connections between the courses that students are required to complete and the field experiences in which they are engaged.

There are also program features that support diversity and social justice among leadership candidates. Teitel (2006) described alternative processes for recruiting future school leaders as including "members of traditionally underrepresented groups, such as women and people of color, as well as proven leaders from other sectors" (p. 501). A study by Gajda and Militello (2008) found that districts with higher percentages of students from poverty backgrounds and students of color were more likely to lack skilled and knowledgeable leaders:

> National reports indicate that a great number of schools and districts are experiencing a shortage of a qualified pool of principal candidates. The dearth of principals is particularly endemic in districts perceived to have challenging working conditions, large populations of impoverished or minority students, low per pupil expenditures, and urban settings. (p. 14)

In addition to seeking to diversify the pool of leadership candidates, many preparatory programs adopt a conceptual framework that supports a curriculum that prepares future school leaders to be reflective practitioners and social activists in diverse educational contexts (Diem & Carpenter, 2012; Furman, 2012; Jenlink & Jenlink, 2012).

The theoretical lens through which to examine Missouri's program component survey results and the HEEC's long-standing collaborative efforts includes two elements: (a) the concept of *co-opetition* from the information technology field, and (b) neo-institutional theory. The first theoretical element, co-opetition, resulted from the merger of competition and collaboration in the field of computer technology, whereby businesses work together to promote innovation and improvement (Brandenburger & Nalebuff, 1997). Collaboration within a competitive environment has also been documented in descriptions of organizations functioning in a globalized world, as Friedman (2005) stated in *The World is Flat*:

> The best companies are the best collaborators. In a flat world, more and more business will be done through collaborations within and between companies, for a very simple reason: The next layers of value creation – whether in technology, marketing, biomedicine, or manufacturing – are becoming so complex that no single firm or department is going to be able to master them alone. (p. 352-53)

This concept is applicable to the dramatically changing landscape of principal preparation and the inter-institutional work of the HEEC to create more exemplary preparatory programs for educational leadership.

The second component of the framework for this article involves neo-institutionalism as a theoretical lens to explore the "institutional environment" within the state and within the peer interactions of the different institutions with educational leadership preparatory programs (Powell, 2007). A definition of neo-institutionalism within the field of sociology was provided by DiMaggio and Powell (1991):

> The new institutionalism in organization theory and sociology comprises a rejection of rational-actor models, an interest in institutions as independent variables, a turn toward cognitive and cultural explanations, and an interest in properties of supra-individual units of analysis that cannot be reduced to aggregations or direct consequences of individuals' attributes or motives. (p. 8)

This theory provides a lens through which to view the HEEC collaboration and communication between the preparatory program representatives from the higher education institutions, organizational changes within the institutions, and how external factors such as state policy revisions affected these programs over time.

Co-opetition in the Higher Education Evaluation Committee

The HEEC monthly meetings among the higher education institutional representatives and leaders in the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) began in 2005. Because many of the programs vied with one another for students, HEEC meetings were tinged with an element of competition. Within the first year, the HEEC members began to identify a shared purpose and understanding related to the importance of the roles that graduates would fill as principals, regardless of their choice of preparation program. The power dynamic changed as time passed, transforming competitors into collaborators through the common goal which united the participants to approach program improvement statewide in order to inspire and develop highly effective school leaders who have a positive impact on K-12 student performance in Missouri.

Gornitzka (1999) conducted a study that examined the relationship between legislative policy changes and organizational change in higher education. One of the premises of this research was that, "Organizational choice and action are limited by various external pressures and demands, and the organizations must be responsive in order to survive" (p. 7). The influence of peer institutions on one another, and the complex external and internal factors that impact survival of programs are relevant to the analysis of the program component survey results gathered through this study.

During the monthly HEEC meetings, representatives from DESE shared policy updates and provided opportunities to ask questions and provide feedback regarding changes to policies, standards, and regulations. This work led to a greater understanding of the different programs across the state, to identification of common elements found at each institution, and to connections with relevant research regarding program innovations and best practices. Ideas generated during HEEC meetings informed the fall and spring professional conference agendas for Missouri's Chapter of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration (NCPEA), including keynote speakers and concurrent breakout sessions with professional development opportunities for faculty members, adjunct faculty, and graduate students in educational leadership programs.

One of the most important results of the co-opetition during HEEC monthly sessions was the opportunity to have a place at the table during the development of state board of education policies that impacted leadership preparatory programs. Viewed through the lens of a neo-institutional framework, the institutions within the state were not merely responsive to external changes in the institutional environment, but had a role in the creation of this environment. Throughout these ongoing developments and tensions, the existence of the HEEC provided a voice for higher education faculty in the development of new standards and assessments at the state level. The representatives from competing institutions continue to work together to support the overall success of preparatory programs statewide in order to produce school and district leaders who are well-prepared to meet the challenges of 21st Century education.

Methods

The HEEC administered the 60-question program component survey to all of the state's institutions with educational leadership preparatory programs in 2008 and 2012. The program component survey was developed by Dr. M. T. Orr and members of the University Council for Educational Administration (UCEA) Taskforce to Evaluate Educational Leadership Preparation Effectiveness in alignment with the UCEA / Learning and Teaching in Educational Leadership Special Interest Group (LTEL-SIG) graduate follow-up survey to provide parallel questions for the graduates' preparatory program to answer (see Pounder, 2012). During the first online survey administration, institutional data were self-reported for the 2007-08 academic year, and 15 out of the 17 institutions in the state completed the survey. The survey was administered a second time with 16 out of 17 institutions reporting data for the 2011-12 academic year. The program component survey requested data such as candidate and faculty demographics, degree and licensure opportunities offered by the institution, and characteristics of course content, instruction, and internship experiences. Data from the online surveys were maintained in a manner that provided confidentiality and anonymity for the preparatory programs by assigning a random numeric code to represent each institution.

Data were analyzed by faculty from two participating institutions who were founding members and former Chairpersons of the HEEC. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and visual representation of the data to assist in comparative analysis. Qualitative data were collected from open-ended survey responses and an analysis of the minutes of the monthly HEEC meetings. Qualitative analysis utilized an emergent category analysis process. "'Emergent' designs in the tradition of qualitative research suggest a process that is not predetermined" (Suter, 2012, p. 343). The purpose of the initial coding of the open-ended response survey data was to utilize pattern coding to identify categories and preliminary themes. Themes were refined through a second coding pass through the data that involved combining some categories and identifying codes as either descriptive or interpretive. Miles and Huberman (1994) stated, "Pattern codes are explanatory or inferential codes, ones that identify an emergent theme, configuration, or explanation" (p. 69). Once the within-case analysis was complete for each program, a cross-case analysis identified common themes across the programs in the state. Creswell (2007) stated that cross-case analysis involves, "examining themes across cases to discern themes that are common to all cases" (p. 245).

The final stage in analysis was to conduct a cross-case analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data from the first and second survey responses.

Survey Results

Educational Leadership Faculty Characteristics

Faculty demographics in the preparation programs in Missouri changed greatly during the four-year period. The number of full-time faculty working in educational leadership programs declined while the number of adjunct faculty reported a significant increase. In 2008, there were 98 full-time tenured, tenure-track, and clinical faculty and 73 adjunct faculty members, and in 2012 there were 71 full-time faculty and 264 adjunct faculty members facilitating coursework in preparation programs (see Figure 1). The change in the number of adjunct faculty represents a 260% increase occurring within the four-year time period. The increase in adjunct faculty was associated with an increase in the percentage of faculty of color and an increase in the percentage of male faculty. Overall faculty demographics in 2008 were reported as being 90% White, 7.6% African American, 1.2% Latino/a, and 1.2% Asian, and 36% female and 64% male. In 2012, faculty demographics in the administration programs at the state's institutions were reported as being majority White (~78%) and male (70%).

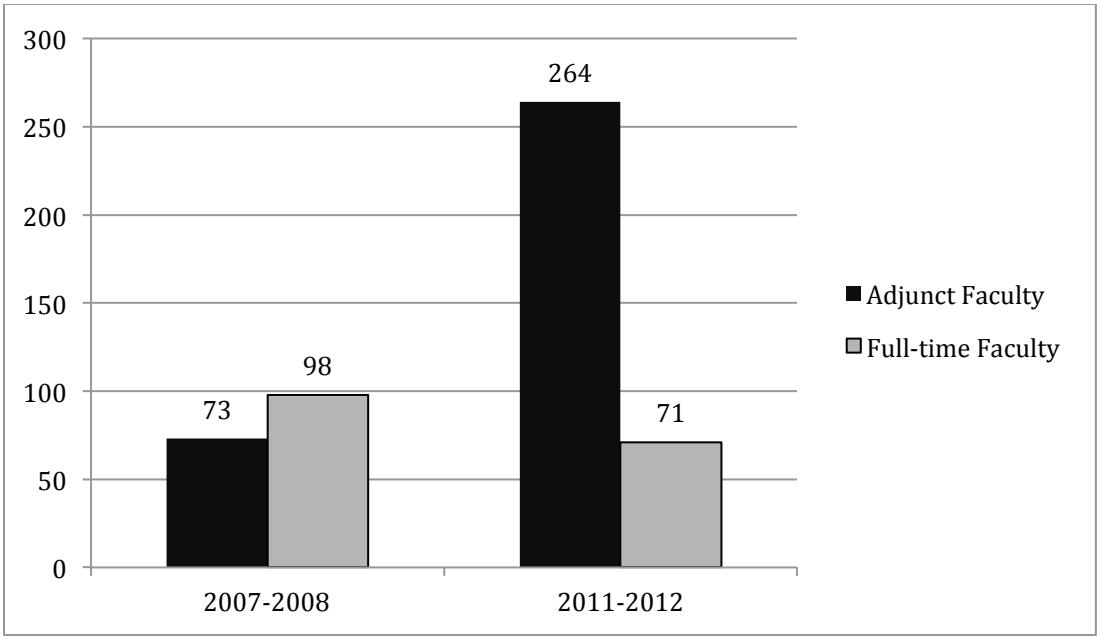

Figure 1. Total number of adjunct and full-time faculty in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012.

Degree Program Curricula and Requirements

The required course credit hours for the Master's programs for initial school-level administrator licensure varied from 30- to 39-credit hours in 2008, and from 30- to 38-credit hours in 2012, with a mode of 36-credit hours (See Figure 2). While the range of required credit hours between 2008 and 2012 remained fairly constant for degree programs leading to initial principal certification eligibility, there was a reduction in the

number of semesters for program completion. Eighty percent of programs took six to eight semesters to complete in 2008, while 83% of programs took five or six semesters in 2012. This could be attributed to the use of cohort-based models that use enrollment management and course sequencing to decrease the amount of time to degree completion.

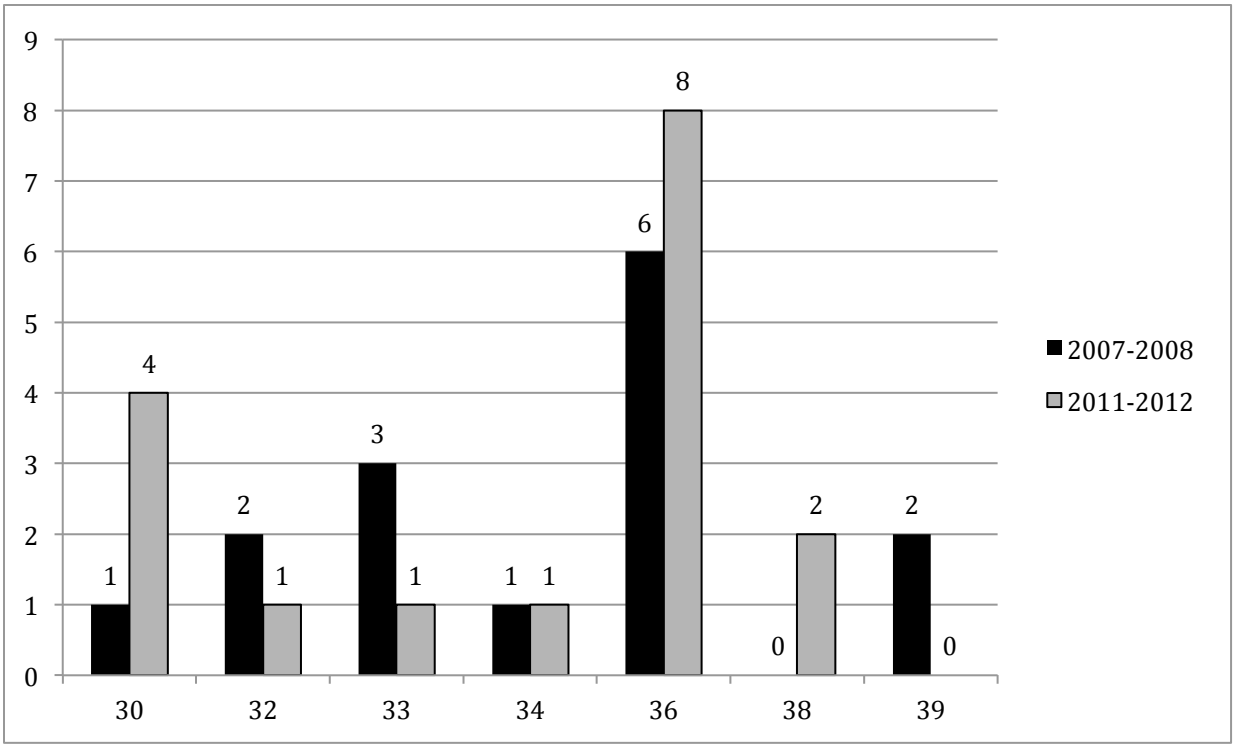

Figure 2. Number of required credit hours in Master's Degree programs in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012.

These data suggest that programs were responding to the need to be competitive with other institutions by reducing the time needed to complete the degree leading to initial principal licensure eligibility, and in some institutions by reducing the number of required credit hours.

Another changing program element was an increase in the use of defined cohorts for the entire program. A trend from 2008 to 2012 suggests that more institutions began utilizing a cohort model, which may be associated with research-supported best practices and the need for more efficient enrollment management in the declining revenue budgetary context for institutions within Missouri. In 2008, 40% of programs reported using cohorts, while 94% of programs using defined, partial, or informal cohorts in 2012 (see Table 1).

Table 1

Cohort Usage of Program

Type of Cohort	2008	2012
Defined Cohorts	13%	31.3%
Partial Cohorts	--	31.3%
Informal Cohorts	27%	31.3%
Did not use Cohorts	47%	--
Unknown	13%	6.3%

The program component survey asked institutions to report the degree that candidates earn in the educational leadership preparation program. The 2008 and 2012 data were somewhat consistent, with the exception that there were no reported earned doctorates leading to initial principal licensure in 2012 (see Table 2). This is an area that needs additional investigation to explore whether doctoral degrees leading to principal certification continue to be offered in Missouri. The survey data also indicated that certification/licensure earned within degree programs offered by institutions did not change for most of the certification/licensure areas (see Table 3).

Table 2

Number of Beginning Principal Programs by Degrees Candidates Earned upon Graduation

Degrees	2008	2012
Master of Arts/Science	3	4
Master of Education	11	11
Education Specialist	10	12
Doctor of Education	9	--
Doctor of Philosophy	3	--
Other	--	2

Table 3

Certification/Licensure Attained by Candidates across Programs

Certification/Licensure	2008	2012
Initial/provisional school building leadership	11	13
Professional or permanent school building leadership	12	10
Special education leadership	8	8
District leader	12	10

In the 2008 survey, the preparatory institutions were asked the extent to which course content emphasized programmatic elements; the greatest extent included supervision, along with organizational change, instructional improvement, curriculum and instruction, school law, social justice, and management. With regard to course content, institutions reported less emphasis on facilities, budgeting, community engagement, and research methods. In the 2012 survey, emphasis was placed on vision, using data to improve instruction, and instructional leadership, while the course content reported to have the least extent in programs included child development, adult learning, and family involvement (See Table 4).

Table 4

Selected Course Content Emphasis in Programs in 2007-2008 and 2011-2012

To what extent does course emphasize the following:		Not at all	A little	Some-what	To some extent	Extensive
Instructional leadership;	2008	5	0	1	3	5
Supervision	2012	0	1	5	3	5
Management and operations	2008	9	0	2	4	2
	2012	0	0	9	4	2
Ethical leadership	2008	8	1	0	3	1
	2012	1	0	8	3	1
Budgeting and finance	2008	13	0	2	2	0
	2012	0	0	13	2	0
Community engagement	2008	10	1	2	2	0
	2012	1	2	10	2	0
Special education and special needs students	2008	8	0	1	4	0
	2012	0	2	8	4	0
Leadership for diversity and social justice	2008	3	0	3	5	1
	2012	0	3	3	5	1
Curriculum and Instruction	2008	8	0	2	3	3
	2012	0	1	8	3	3
Educational vision	2008	6	0	1	0	4
	2012	0	1	6	0	4
Organizational change	2008	7	1	1	2	4
	2012	1	1	7	2	4
Research methods	2008	10	0	1	2	3
	2012	0	0	10	2	3
Family involvement	2008	7	2	3	2	0
	2012	2	3	7	2	0

The use of online education and hybrid class models that blend face-to-face and distance education sessions greatly increased between 2008 and 2012. The number of institutions providing coursework through distance education doubled, and the percentage

of classes offered online or through hybrid models changed from 0-50% in 2008 to 25-75% in 2012. The type of technology also changed during this four-year period. Technology use as part of program delivery saw an increase from 2008 to 2012 in the use of SMART Boards from 47% to 75%, and a slight increase in the use of online portfolio management from 33% to 37.5%. The 2012 survey included additional selections related to technology used as part of course instruction, including programmatic use of digital video (25%), online case studies (37.5%), web-based course support such as Blackboard (81.3%), and online discussion forums (62.5%).

The learning strategies and instructional pedagogies reported in program course work suggested that all areas were utilized to some extent in both 2008 and 2012 (see Table 5).

Table 5

The Learning Practices/Instructional Strategies used in Program Coursework

Strategies		A little	Somewhat	To some extent	To a great extent
Field-based projects	2008	--	--	2	13
	2012	--	--	7	9
Analysis & discussion of field-based problems	2008	--	--	5	10
	2012	--	--	9	7
Action research or inquiry projects	2008	2	--	5	8
	2012	1	3	6	6
Analysis & discussion of case studies	2008	--	--	6	9
	2012	--	--	9	7
Lecture	2008	8	--	7	--
	2012	4	7	2	2

The program survey also asked institutions to report the type of assessments used to determine the candidates' readiness for graduation from the program. The most commonly used assessment strategies were portfolio assessment and culminating projects (see Table 6 and Table 7).

Table 6

Assessment Strategies Used to Evaluate Students' Readiness for Graduation in 2008

Strategy	Not At All	A little	Somewhat	To some extent	To a great extent
Completion of a Capstone or Culminating Project	1	0	0	5	7
Final Examination or Assessment	5	0	0	7	1
Master's Thesis or Research Paper	4	1	0	6	4
Portfolio of Professional Work, Projects and Accomplishments	1	1	0	6	8

Table 7

Assessment Strategies Used to Evaluate Students' Readiness for Graduation in 2012

Strategy	Not At All	A little	Somewhat	To some extent	To a great extent
Completion of a Capstone or Culminating Project	1	0	0	0	14
Final Examination or Assessment	5	0	0	0	8
Master's Thesis or Research Paper	5	0	0	0	9
Portfolio of Professional Work, Projects and Accomplishments	0	0	0	0	15

Another finding from the survey was a significant decrease in the number of programs with formal partnerships with school districts. In 2008, 13% of program survey respondents reported no formal affiliation with school districts, while in 2012 there were 64% of programs that reported no formal affiliation with school districts (see Table 8). Institutions also reported a decrease in national accreditation affiliation, from 100% of programs NCATE or TEAC accredited in 2008 to 70% of programs engaged in national accreditation processes in 2012.

Table 8

The Number of Formal Affiliations between Programs and School Districts

Number of Programs	2008	2012
0	2	10
1	2	2
2-5	3	2
6-10+	8	0

The post-program support offered to graduates indicated a decrease in job referrals from 2008 to 2012, in addition to a decrease in job and interview assistance (see Table 9). In 2012, six institutions responded that networking with other graduates was used.

Table 9

The Post-Program Support Offered to Graduates

Support	2008	2012
Job referrals	13	7
New principal mentoring	8	8
Job and interview assistance	10	6
Other (non-specific)	1	--
Networking with other graduates	--	6

Discussion

Kottkamp and Orr (2003) stated the need to combat "deep and increasing skepticism that graduate leadership preparation programs could meet the challenge to prepare effective leaders" through comparative analysis and evaluation of programs, and connecting leaders' preparation to effective practices (p. 1). The HEEC developed and implemented a methodology for statewide data collection and evaluation of its educational leadership programs to examine the different approaches to program design and program delivery. The four-year comparison of survey results provided evidence of some remarkable changes, including: (1) online course offerings doubled in four years, (2) adjunct faculty increased 260% while full-time faculty decreased by 27%, (3) the time to degree completion decreased as competition for student enrollment increased across the state, (4) course content placed greater emphasis on leaders using data to improve instruction than on family involvement, and (5) the percentage of programs with formal affiliations with school districts declined from 87% to 36%.

Findings from the program component survey demonstrated that faculty and school leadership candidates were predominantly White and male. Research studies have addressed unique issues that females and people of color face in school leadership (Brown, 2005; Rusch, 2004). Several of the institutions are focusing on ways to address

issues of diversity through strategies related to the recruitment, interviewing, induction, and retention of faculty and students of color and female faculty and students. Additional marketing for programs has been instituted that focuses on attracting educational leadership candidates from underrepresented groups within many of the institutions. Faculty in preparatory programs are also reaching out to the local undergraduate programs, local school districts, and community leaders to find and contact potential candidates. Some institutions are also providing full and partial tuition scholarships to assist students of color and female students.

Based upon the minutes from the HEEC meetings, the collaboration and sharing of information on a monthly basis was highly valued by the faculty representatives from the different institutions. One representative stated, "We've learned so much from one another and each institution has benefitted." Another stated, "You could ask anybody in the room for anything." Although each institution has unique program components, the different institutions come together during the monthly HEEC meetings with one idea and one purpose. Yet, the findings from this study support previous research that leadership preparation programs are also influenced by their own institutional environments (LaMagdeleine, Maxcy, Pounder & Reed, 2009). Regardless of the supportive and collaborative atmosphere in the HEEC meetings that generated recommendations for program improvement, the program representatives had to adhere to the demands of their unique contexts, such as budgetary and hiring constraints, state accreditation mandates, and student preferences for program requirements and delivery.

Learning activities within the educational leadership classroom are enhanced through associated field experiences that provide candidates with the opportunity to apply learning in school settings. "Many administrative interns receive no real administrative practice at all through their internship, and yet upon completion of the internship, they are expected to be competent administrators" (Edmonson, 2002, p. 1). This logistical reality creates a situation where the classroom instructional environment may be the only forum for candidates to encounter certain elements of educational leadership. As Levine (2005) reported:

> Clinical experience tends to be squeezed in while students work full time and generally occurs in the school where the student is employed. For the most part, students described the experience as something to be gotten out of the way, not as a learning opportunity. (p. 40)

The majority of educational leadership candidates are engaged in full-time work as teachers or other educational professionals, which limits the length and nature of field experiences during preparatory programs. The program component survey results and analysis of the HEEC meeting minutes suggest future actions that educational leadership preparation programs can take to address these concerns.

Recommended Future Actions

1. Increase racial and gender diversity in educational leadership preparatory programs, and develop curricula and pedagogical techniques that support integration through "meaningful social and academic interactions among students who differ in their experiences, views, and traits" (Tienda, 2013, p. 467). Expand and strengthen formal partnerships between universities and school districts, and

maintain contact with teacher preparatory program graduates who demonstrate strong leadership characteristics to recruit educational leadership candidates from underrepresented groups. Create policies and hiring practices that encourage women and people of color to apply for faculty and adjunct instructor opportunities, and support these individuals through robust induction and mentoring programs.

2. Strengthen the requirements of the internship experience, and improve partnerships between university supervisors and district mentors to ensure that the internship in educational leadership preparatory programs provides every candidate with high-quality administrative experiences with principals who have a proven record of excellence. University faculty must provide professional development support to principals with regard to effective mentorship practices and the types of administrative activities in which candidates need experience.
3. Examine the relationship between preparatory program components (such as course content emphasis, cohort usage, and the internship experience), graduates' practices as school leaders, and the impact that graduates have with regard to increased student achievement and school improvement. There have been numerous studies since the Levine (2005) report that provide methodological models for leadership preparation programs to adapt as part of program evaluation through educational leadership graduate follow-up studies (Donmoyer, Yennie-Donmoyer, & Galloway, 2012; Orr & Orphanos, 2011; Pounder, 2012).

Conclusion

Assessing the preparatory program to determine its effectiveness in preparing educational leaders who have a positive impact on their school communities is critical to the process of program improvement. Higher education institutions increasingly must meet similar accountability practices of preK-12 school improvement efforts with our educational preparation programs. Faculty, higher education administrators, state education department officials, and other policymakers and stakeholders must work collaboratively to evaluate preparatory programs utilizing a systemic data collection and analysis process to continuously improve curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

In Missouri, all principal preparation programs are in the process of re-designing their admissions processes, candidate assessments, and program evaluation plans in preparation to meet new accreditation guidelines. The Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) teacher and leadership standards have been embedded in the evaluation model and piloted during the 2012-2013 school year. Effective September 2014, all educator preparation programs for teachers and school leaders will be required to collect data, evaluate classroom and instructional leadership practices, and conduct several classroom and field-based observations documented for the new statewide gateway assessment process. Several webinars have been developed to assist schools and universities in understanding the new standards and knowledge dispositions for effective school leaders and the tiered certification system that will be introduced with new licensure assessments.

As educational leadership preparation programs continue to adapt to a changing landscape, it becomes essential to develop relationships among stakeholders who

influence the preparation and development of principals and superintendents who can effectively lead efforts to improve student learning in PreK-12 education. Collecting and analyzing data across institutional environments on an ongoing basis will be an important mechanism in the continued statewide efforts to monitor and improve program content, delivery, and outcomes. The HEEC's unique collaborative model, bringing to the table representatives from diverse institutions, the state department of education, and other stakeholders, is recommended for other states to engage in continuous improvement to strengthen the preparation of educational leaders.

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