

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PREPARATION OF
ALTERNATIVELY AND TRADITIONALLY
CERTIFIED OKLAHOMA SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS

By

PAMELA NEWELL BRADLEY

Bachelor of Science in Language
Arts & Physical Education
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
1981

Master of Science in School Administration
Northeastern State University
Tahlequah, Oklahoma
1991

Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
in partial fulfillment of
the requirements for
the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
May 2006

THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PREPARATION OF
ALTERNATIVELY AND TRADITIONALLY
CERTIFIED OKLAHOMA SCHOOL
PRINCIPALS

Dissertation Approved:

Dr. Judith Mathers

Dissertation Adviser
Dr. Ken Stern

Dr. Ed Harris

Dr. Kay Bull

Dr. A. Gordon Emslie

Dean of the Graduate College

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I wish to thank Dr. Judith Mathers, for her persistent encouragement and critical advisement during the dissertation writing process; Dr. Ken Stern for his guidance and advice; Dr. Ed Harris and Dr. Kay Bull for their continued encouragement; Dr. Jane Varnecky for her continual assistance through all the “red tape;” John Bennett for information from the OSDE, Arrond Graham for his help with the on-line survey; Maudye Winget, my dear friend and professional “guru;” Derryl Venters, Carole McBride, Clay Blevins and James Eberts for providing their expertise as professional colleagues; my sisters, Hope, Phyllis, Paula, and Karen for always believing in me and loving me despite my sometimes challenging temperament; my wonderful children, Jeremy, Bekie, Cali, Archie and Alex, who have blessed my life with their love and constant faith in me; and last, but certainly not least, my best friend in the whole world, my husband Charles who constantly supports, loves, encourages, sees in me *and* challenges me to be my best. Without the good Lord and this “village” of supporters with whom I have been blessed, this undertaking would not have been possible. My love and thanks to you all!

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Chapter	Page
I. INTRODUCTION	1
Statement of the Problem.....	4
Purpose of the Study	4
Research Questions	4
Significance of the Study	5
Definition of Terms.....	5
Delimitations.....	9
Limitations	9
Organization of Study	10
Summary	11
II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE.....	12
The Role of Principals	13
Principal Shortage.....	15
Characteristics of Principals	16
Gender.....	16
Ethnicity.....	18
Age.....	20
Preparation of Principals.....	21
Certification of Principals.....	24
Traditional Certification.....	26
Alternative Certification	29
Experience.....	30
Summary	31
III. METHODOLOGY	33
Research Design.....	33
Instrument	33
Validity	34
Reliability.....	34
Population	34
Procedures.....	35

Ethical Considerations	37
Data Analysis	37
IV. FINDINGS.....	40
Presentation of Data.....	40
Research Question 1	41
Personal Characteristic: Gender.....	41
Personal Characteristic: Ethnicity.....	42
Personal Characteristic: Age.....	43
District & School Characteristic: District Student Enrollment.....	44
District & School Characteristic: Poverty Index	45
District & School Characteristic: Grade Levels of Schools.....	46
District & School Characteristic: Performance Levels of Schools.....	47
Research Question 2	48
Preparation: Principal Experience.....	48
Preparation: Teaching Experience	49
Preparation: Prior School Leadership Positions	50
Preparation: Degree Level	51
A Profile of the Findings.....	52
Summary	53
V. CONCLUSION.....	54
A Comparison of the Findings with the Literature	56
Conclusions.....	57
Recommendations.....	62
Summary	63
REFERENCES	65
APPENDICES	72
APPENDIX A: CORRESPONDENCE.....	73
Letter to Participants.....	74
Second Letter/E-mail to Participants	75
APPENDIX B: SURVEY INSTRUMENT	76
Oklahoma Principal Survey	77
APPENDIX C: IRB FORM.....	81
IRB Application.....	82

APPENDIX D: TABLES.....	83
-------------------------	----

LIST OF TABLES

<i>Number</i>	<i>Page</i>
1. Number of Certified Principals in Oklahoma in 2003-2004.....	25
2. Number of Coursework Hours Required of Principal Candidates	27
3. Data Analysis of Characteristics and Preparation of Participants	38
4. Gender.....	41
5. Ethnicity	42
6. Age.....	43
7. District Student Enrollment	44
8. Poverty Index of Participants School Districts	45
9. Grade Levels of Schools	46
10. Performance Levels of Schools	47
11. Principal Experience	49
12. Teaching Experience.....	50
13. Prior School Leadership Positions.....	51
14. Degree Level	52
15. Prior Leadership Positions Held	84
16. Admission Requirements for Principal Candidates	85

17. Number of Hours of School Administrative Coursework Required	86
18. Coursework Required for Principal Candidates	86
19. Gender and Age of Alternatively Certified Participants	87
20. Gender and Age of Traditionally Certified Participants	87
21. Ethnicity and Gender of Alternatively Certified Participants	88
22. Ethnicity and Gender of Traditionally Certified Participants	88
23. A Comparative View of the Gender of Principals	89
24. A Comparative View of the Ethnicity of Principals	89
25. A Comparative View of the Average Age of Principals	90
26. A Comparative View of Degree Level of Principals	90
27. A Comparative View of Grade Levels of Principals	91
28. A Comparative View of Experience of Principals	91
29. A Comparison of National and Oklahoma Principals	92
30. A Comparison of Oklahoma Principals and Survey Participants	92

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

To date, there is no real evidence which demonstrates a correlation between the credentials of school leaders and the results produced by their schools (Dawning and Henry, 2003). As such, few national studies have examined principals' characteristics or how their preparation and certification may influence the leadership position (NCES, 1997).

Traditionally, individuals interested in obtaining a principal's certificate had to complete a master's degree in school administration (NCES, 1993-1994). These individuals also had to serve no less than two years as a classroom teacher and pass state-mandated certification exams. This traditional route of certification allows the opportunity for candidates at the classroom level to move into the position of school administrators.

However, with the addition of more accountability mandates such as *No Child Left Behind*, the role of the school principal has become even more complex, difficult and unappealing (Farr, 2004). As a result, school districts across the nation are struggling with principal shortages and quality leadership (DaPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Fenwick, 2000, Hopkins, 1998). This problem is only worsening as current principals retire (Finn, 2005).

In January 1997, the Oklahoma State Department of Education (2005) allowed the requirements of a principal certificate to include an alternative route. Though this practice may allow more candidates to become certified in school administration, the concern remains as to whether these alternatively certified principals will be successful (Dawning & Henry, 2003).

Such a concern is not new to public education. Educational institutions across the nation battle with the reality that many of their schools do not have the caliber of leadership they need today (Finn, 2005). Numerous studies support the need for effective school principals (Duke, 2004; Engler, 2004; Fullan 1998; Newmann, 1996; Northouse, 2001; Peterson, 1999). In addition, the Rand Corporation (2004) found that student achievement depends on many factors, especially those relating to the characteristics and behaviors of school principals.

Many states are turning to alternative certification as a means of placing potential candidates in the principal position. Alternative certification may not only affect the shortage of school leaders, but may also change the face of the principalship as employment practices in school administration have historically favored older, white males (Black, 2002). With alternative certification, schools could see more ethnic minorities, females and younger people serving as school principals.

Critics claim that allowing alternative certification in lieu of traditional certification only perpetuates the problems now facing today's schools by placing ill-prepared leaders in those positions (Henry & Dawn, 2003). Others feel it may serve our schools in more ways than one.

First, it would provide more school leaders and a larger pool of candidates from which to choose (Fenwick, 2000). Secondly, it would provide a more diverse group of school leaders and allow for leaders with other experiences to step into the role. Finally, it may narrow the gaps between those school leaders who fall into specific ethnic, gender and age groups (Black, 2002).

Still others claim that ineffective leadership is simply a result of the ritual preparation and selection of candidates that fails to consider characteristics of effective leadership (DaPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Such practices are not systematic or reflective of the knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics needed to do the job (Rosse and Levin, 1997).

Dawning and Henry (2003) claim that the traditional way of finding principal candidates for leadership positions is not a promising path as it fails to encourage new talent or foster needed changes in school systems. They argue that people with solid experience in one setting can get the training and preparation they need to work in school leadership positions. Their argument concludes with this, “The solution is not to impose more requirements but to enlarge the talent pool, to welcome into leadership posts the best men and women who can be found wherever they are today, to provide relevant training, to offer them attractive and workable terms of employment, and to hold them to account for their school’s results” (p. 4).

The role of the school leader is an exceptionally challenging one for twenty-first century principals. From very little preparation required of school leaders a half-century ago, requirements increased relative to the complexity of the position into the latter part

of the twentieth century. Yet, because of perceived principal shortages, legislators in some states relaxed the requirements for principal certification (Fenwick, 2000).

Statement of the Problem

Many presume that relaxing the requirements for certification of principals may allow more leaders and more diversity in the principalship (DaPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; Fenwick, 2000; Hopkins, 1998). Yet, few studies have determined if and how alternative certification may be affecting the principalship. The problem studied here was to determine if the type of certification influenced the profile of characteristics of principals and how differences in preparation and certification affected those principals.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if differences exist in the characteristics and preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified school principals and to compare similarities or differences identified.

Research Questions

The following research questions were used to guide this study:

1. What differences exist in the personal characteristics of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals?
2. What differences exist in the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals?

Significance of the Study

This study adds to the literature that examines the certification of school principals. This study will specifically contribute to the limited literature relating to how alternative certification may be affecting the gender, ethnic and age gaps which exist in the principalship.

Descriptive information from this study may reveal if certification is influencing the diversity and placement of those principals, as well as the demographic information of the school districts in which these principals serve. Such data may help determine whether or not alternative certification is serving as an effective means of placing qualified and diverse leaders at the schools' helms.

Definition of Terms

Terms used in this study are clarified through the following definitions. An extended definition of principal certification in Oklahoma follows the general list.

Relevant Experience: Relevant experience is required by the Oklahoma law and is subject to interpretation by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (OSDE), the certificate-issuing agency.

Personal Characteristics: Personal characteristics are the gender, ethnicity, and age of individuals serving in the school principalship.

School Characteristics: School characteristics are the student enrollment, poverty index, grade levels of school, and performance levels of the school and/or district of individuals serving in the school principalship.

Poverty Index: Poverty index is defined as the percentage of students in a school district who qualify for the free or reduced lunch rate as determined by the annual income of a student's family and the number of family members living in that student's home.

Preparation: Preparation is the acquiring of related work, leadership and/or teaching experience *and* the acquiring of leadership knowledge, skills, and competencies through an accredited college and/or university or another relevant educational program to prepare and qualify one to serve in the capacity of a school principal.

Principal: As defined by 70 O.S. Section 716, "A principal shall be any person other than a district superintendent of schools having supervisory or administrative authority over any school or school building having two or more teachers. A teaching principal shall be a principal who devotes at least one-half the time school is in session to classroom teaching.

Certification: According to Section 180.9 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2005), regarding Competency-based Certification – Revocation Procedures effective January 1, 1997, the requirements for a standard or traditional certificate for principal shall include not less than completion of a standard master's degree, completion of a program in education administration approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction, such other professional education and requirements as may be fixed by the State Board of Education, a passing score on the subject area competency examination required in Section 6-187 of this title and a minimum of two (2) years' successful teaching, supervisory or administrative experience in public schools.

The standards for alternative certification for superintendents of schools and principals shall include the completion of a standard master's degree, two (2) years of relevant experience, a passing score on the subject area competency examination required in Section 6-187 of this title, and a demonstrable understanding of the fundamentals of school administration, including the following associated competencies:

1. Leadership and school district culture;
2. Policy and governance;
3. Communications and community relations;
4. Organizational management;
5. Curriculum planning and development;
6. Instructional management;
7. Human resource management;
8. Ethics of leadership; and
9. School law and finance.

Persons with a master's degree in an area other than educational administration shall demonstrate an understanding of the competencies listed in this subsection. Understanding of the competencies may be achieved through coursework from an approved administrative preparation program, relevant workshops or seminars approved by the State Department of Education, or through documented past work experience (p. 38).

According to House Bill 1438, and State Law 70 0.5, Section 180.9 effective July 1, 2003 (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2003): The requirements for a certificate for principals of schools may include one of three options for certification:

Approved or Traditional Program Certification; and two forms of Alternative Certification. The definitions for these certifications, as provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (2003), are as follows:

Alternative Certification: According to House Bill 1438, effective July 1, 2003, the requirements for Alternative Certification for principals shall include: 1) A master's degree; 2) A passing score on the subject area competency examination for school administrators; 3) two years of relevant experience; and 4) A demonstrable understanding of *fundamentals of school administration, including the competencies associated with the fundamentals of school administration.

OR

Alternative Certification may be acquired through the following: 1) A master's degree; 2) A passing score on the subject area competency examination for school administrators; 3) two years of relevant experience; and 4) A demonstrable understanding of the *competencies associated with the fundamentals of school administration.

* The fundamentals and competencies associated with the fundamentals of school administration include:

- Leadership and school district culture;
- Policy and governance;
- Communications and community relations;
- Organizational management;
- Human resource management;
- Ethics of leadership; and
- School law and finance.

An understanding of the competencies may be achieved through course work from an approved administrative preparation program, relevant workshops or seminars approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Education, or through documented past work experience (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2003).

Traditional Certification: According to House Bill 1438, effective July 1, 2003, the requirements for Traditional Approved Program Certification for principals shall include:

1) A bachelors and a master's degree from an accredited college or university; 2) A passing score on the subject area competency examination for school administrators; 3)

The completion of a program in education administration approved by the Oklahoma Commission for Teacher Preparation with an emphasis on curriculum and instruction;

and, 4) A minimum of two years' successful teaching, supervisory or administrative experience in public schools. Persons with a master's degree in an area other than educational administration shall demonstrate an understanding of the competencies listed in the subsection of alternative certification.

Delimitations

The school principals in the population of this study are representative of school administrators belonging to the Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administrators in Oklahoma in the years 2004-2005. The statistics retrieved from the Oklahoma State Department of Education are indicative of those persons certified as principals during the 2003-2004 and 2004-2005 school years.

Limitations

This study was limited solely to the Oklahoma school principals who are members of the Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administrators. To prevent

external threats to this study, the researcher did not generalize beyond the participants completing the survey to other racial or social groups not in the study.

The number included in the population was limited to those who responded to the survey instrument. One problem that may exist with the generalization of this study, however, is that the list of participants drawn from the CCOSA principal membership list may not have provided as large a sample of participants as the Oklahoma State Department of Education list of principals. In addition, since the survey was sent out twice to yield a sufficient number of participants, some of the responses may have been from the same participant. Finally, those responding to the survey may not all be practicing Oklahoma school principals, but may serve in other administrative capacities.

Organization of Study

This study is divided into five chapters. The first chapter is comprised of the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, significance of the study, the definitions of terms, delimitations and limitations of the study. The second chapter imparts a review and discussion of related literature. Chapter III presents the research methods and procedures for determining the population, the sample and the analyzing of the data.

Chapter IV reports the statistical results of the survey related to the research questions posited in Chapter I. This chapter also presents the analyses of the data. Chapter V summarizes the overall study and presents conclusions, recommendations and discussions for future research.

Summary

School principals have highly complex jobs. Despite the many roles associated with this position, few would argue that school leaders are primary players in the improvement of school instruction (NCES, 1997). Though studies over the past 75 years have focused on students and teachers, much of the early research has ignored examining the characteristics of the leaders who influence student achievement (1997).

It is important to consider the characteristics of principals to determine if certification type is affecting a change in the nature of the individuals who serve as principals. It is also important to consider the criteria for principal preparation and certification.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This chapter presents a review and discussion of literature to relate to the certification of school principals. Topics discussed are: the role of school principals; an overview of the principal shortage; the characteristics of school principals; and the preparation of school principals.

In addition, sections concerned with the general findings related to the preparation and certification of school principals and the difficulties in acquiring strong candidates are included. These sections also examine the established practices for the preparation and certification of school principals.

In the present policy environment, the mission of school principals has become quite clear: “raise test scores, reduce the number of dropouts, and narrow the achievement gap separating white and minority students. The consequences are equally clear—denial of school accreditation, state takeover, school closure, and diminished hopes and dreams for struggling communities” (Duke, 2004, p. 13).

The advent of school reform began with the release of *A Nation At Risk* in 1983, demanding standards-based curriculum, school accountability and effective leadership (Enger, 2004). Educational reform initiatives have continued with the recent passage of *No Child Left Behind*. For the successful implementation of such significant reforms, the

knowledge of principals today matters more than ever (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

While states bear the responsibility of certifying public school principals, more attention is now being paid to the content of what principals are learning. Questions are being raised as to whether the course of studies is preparing principals for the rigors of accountable management (Elmore, 2003). Because of the complexities of the job, it is imperative that educational leaders be equipped with the knowledge, skill, experience and judgment to be effective leaders (2003).

According to Finn (2003), the field of education has developed a conventional wisdom that the traditional way of preparing school principals is the one and only route. Yet, it is believed that some of tomorrow's great leaders may be found on the path to deregulation...that despite the type of certification of a principal, school communities must consider and seek the best school leadership talent---wherever it can be found (Finn, 2003). Regardless, caution must be considered when determining who *is* prepared to take the lead in public schools.

The Role of Principals

As schools move into the decade of the twenty-first century, the role of school leaders has become increasingly critical (Murphy & Beck, 1994; Lyons, 1999).

According to the Institute for Educational Leadership (2000), the roles of principals and other educational leaders have expanded during the past decade to include a larger focus on teaching and learning, professional development, data-driven decision making and accountability.

The principal's job is not unlike that of a corporate executive (Hollar, 2004, p. 42). Principals are expected to manage the day-to-day activities in schools. They set standards and goals and establish the policies and procedures to carry them out. They not only supervise and train a number of employees, they serve the needs of numerous students, while juggling the political interactions involving parents and community organizations (U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2004).

Principals oversee multimillion-dollar facilities and develop academic programs. They take an active role in ensuring students meet national, state and local academic standards while developing programs for the rising number of non-English speaking and culturally diverse students. Principals establish programs to provide before and after school care for students of working parents. Principals combat increases in crime, drug and alcohol abuse and sexually transmitted diseases among students (Hollar, 2004; U.S. Department of Labor, 2004).

With such challenging job responsibilities, fewer applicants feel qualified for the position (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Additionally, the long hours, high stress and low pay pose frequent barriers to a position with such weighty responsibilities (Hopkins, 1998; *Rolling Up Their Sleeves*, 2003). Given the high expectations and requirements placed on school principals, it is no wonder that many are concerned that the role of principals is expanding beyond what is doable (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004).

As one Chicago principal noted, "It's actually easier to become CEO of an entire system than to become principal" (Lewis, 1997, p.1). His voice is just one of many. Principals, superintendents and school trustees across the nation have voiced concerns

about the standards, responsibilities and expectations of the school leader's job (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Principal Shortage

The Educational Research Service (ERS) was commissioned by the National Association of Elementary Principals (NAESP) and National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in January 1998 to conduct a survey to determine if there actually is a shortage of qualified candidates for the principalship. This survey and its resulting report pointed to a national shortage of school principals (ERS, 1998). Several other reports concur (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003; ERS, 1998; Fenwick, 2000; Hopkins, 1998; Jones, 2001; Konkol, 2001; McKay, 1999).

With an estimated 40 percent of the country's 93,200 principals retiring by 2008, the nation is expected to experience a 42 percent turnover in principals in just a ten year span (Doud & Keller, 1998). This turnover may be cause for concern as the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2004) projects a 44,826 increase in the number of *needed* education administrators by the year 2012.

Though retirement is one major cause of the turnover in the principalship, the stress and burdens of the profession are contributing factors as well (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004). Due to the unrealistic expectations of those serving in the principalship, many are reluctant to aspire to a position that sounds "impossible to perform" (p. 3). Additionally, a number of principals are choosing to retire at younger ages due to the demands of the job---a trend likely to continue in a new decade in the twenty-first century (Doud & Keller, 1998; Harris, et al., 2000; Hopkins, 1998).

In a recent national survey of school leaders, nearly half of all urban, suburban and rural school districts reported shortages (ERS, 2000; IEL, 2000). These findings confirm what many school districts have been concerned with for the past few years...fewer qualified people want the job and fewer teacher leaders are choosing career paths that will result in administrative positions (U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics [USBLS] 1996-1997, 2000-2001). Though Oklahoma appears to have a surplus of principal candidates (Bennett, 2004), the shortage of qualified personnel interested in administrative leadership is affecting many states. This shortage is forcing the hands of many school districts and state policymakers to consider other options (ERS, 2000).

Characteristics of Principals

Gender

Employment practices in education have historically followed a patriarchal system which typically favored men (Black, 2002). Reis, Jury and Young (2004) note that on a national scale, the number of females seeking and obtaining principal certification exceeds the number of males—yet male applicants were selected while female applicants have failed to attain the principalship. As Reis, et. al (2004) noted, “It is alarming to discover that female...populations are systematically overlooked or blocked from access to public school administrative positions by a restrictive recruitment and selection process” (p. 4).

Burgess (1989) revealed an underlying cause for this gender gap as a general attitude of educational stakeholders in the selection of females for the principalship. According to his research, many felt that “Teaching is a good job for women but a career

with prospects for men” (p. 90). Little has seemed to affect this attitude in the past 15 years.

By 1987, the percentage of female principals rose to 24 percent, and by 1994, females comprised only 35 percent of the total principalship (NCES, 1993-94). Fifty-eight percent of the female principals in 1993-1994 served at the elementary level, but only 24 percent of females secured secondary level positions (NCES, 1993-94, p.2). By 1999-2000, females comprised 44 percent of the nation’s principalships.

As indicated by previous research, males continue to dominate the principalship (NCES, 1997). In addition, research indicates that females must teach longer than males prior to becoming a principal (NCES, 1993-94).

When examining the average number of years of teaching experience prior to becoming a principal, females consistently had three more years of teaching experience than males. During the 1987-1988 school year, female principals had an average of 12.2 years of teacher experience and males had 9. In 1990-1991, females reported an average of 12.5 years of teaching experience while males had 9.6. And in 1993-1994, females reported an average of 13 years of teaching experience while their male colleagues had 10 (1993-94).

Females have fewer years principal experience than do males. Specifically, males had almost twice as many years experience as females. In 1987, males had 11.2 years while females averaged almost half that with 6.1 years of principal experience (NCES, 1997). In 1990-1991, females worked 5.8 years as a principal and males averaged 10.8 years of experience. By 1993-1994, females averaged 5.6 years and males 10.2 years of principal experience (1997).

Although there is still a great discrepancy in the number of male and female principals, the gradual increase in the percentage of female principals between 1987-88 and 1993-94 provides an encouraging sign for women (NCES, 1997). The percentage rose from 24 percent in 1987 to 35 percent of female principals in 1994 (1997). This increase is most prominent in elementary schools, however, where women occupied 30 percent in 1987-88 and 41 percent in 1993-94 (1997). Though not as significant at the secondary level, research indicates an increase in the percentage of female principals serving at this level as well (1997). This percentage grew from nine percent in 1987 to 14 percent in 1994.

NCES (1997) reports that the number of male principals still continues to exceed the number of females. Schools across the country reflect this trend. Still, the narrowing of the gender gap in the principalship is apparent. Such changes may be especially important since research suggests that characteristic traits may predict both the career paths and ultimate accomplishments of individuals who serve in the leadership field (NCES, 1997; Northouse, 2004).

Ethnicity

Though minority principals are increasingly holding public school positions, they continue to be underrepresented relative to the overall population (RAND, 2004). The National Center for Education Statistics (1993-94) reported that in 1987-88, only seven percent of all principals fell into the ethnic-minority group while 93 percent were white (NCES, 1997). By 1993-94, that number more than doubled as 16 percent of principals were of a minority group. By 1999-2000, 18 percent serving in the principalship were minorities, but that majority served predominantly at the elementary level (NCES, 1996).

This was true for all regions of the United States (NCES, 1997). Although the number of minority principals did increase from 13 to 16 percent from 1987-1994, the proportion of minority principals remained low in all types of communities (ERS, 1998; NCES, 1997).

Although nearly all principals serve as teachers prior to the principalship, studies show that minority administrators teach longer than whites (NCES, 1997). In 1987-88, minorities averaged 11 years while whites averaged just 9.6 years of teaching experience. By 1993-1994, that average grew. In general, minority principals averaged 12 years, while more specifically, African American principals averaged 13 years of teaching experience and white principals averaged 11 years (NCES, 1997).

Although attrition and hiring contribute to changes in principal demographics, it is quite likely that nothing affected African Americans in education as did desegregation. Before desegregation, minorities served as school principals, especially in all-black schools. However, the desegregation resulting from the landmark decision in *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka* in 1954 caused a decrease in the number of African-American principals (NCES, 1997). The decision unintentionally caused the collapse of many African American schools and the loss of employment for many African American educators and administrators.

Since then, change for minorities has been slow. By 1987, only six percent of all principals in the nation were African American (NCES, 1997). Though little seems to affect an increase in minority principals, the ethnic ratio of a school district does seem to influence which minority candidates are hired to serve in the principalship in particular schools (1997).

In fact, many minority principals may have been appointed through application of special criteria to certain schools (NCES,1997). Subsequent school practices reveal that minority principals are more likely to be placed in schools with high proportions of students of similar ethnic groups (1997). In accordance, the percentage of minority principals increases with district size and with the percentage of free or reduced lunch eligibility. In schools where 50 percent or more students were eligible, as many as 32 percent of principals were minorities (1997).

Principals who are members of ethnic-minority groups are important to the profession as they may bring special insights, perspectives and talents to the position (NCES, 1997). They may also serve as role models for staff and students. Yet, hiring minority candidates appears to be more often a problem for districts than hiring female candidates (ERS, 1998).

Thirty-five percent of superintendents indicated that increasing the numbers of minorities in management positions was still an issue in their districts (ERS, 1998, p.4). As such, identifying promising minority candidates for the role of principal should be a high priority for all schools (ERS, 1998). After all, minorities serving in the principalship is just one measure of education's real commitment to the ideal of equal opportunity (Klauke, 1988).

Age

Nearly half of the nation's currently employed school principals who entered the field of school administration in the decade directly after World War II were between the ages of 55 and 65, (Neely, 1993). This average dropped by 1987-88, when the average

age of public school principals was 46.8 years (NCES, 1997). By 1993-94, that average rose slightly to 47.7 years and to 48.6 years in 1999-2000 (NCES, 2002)

A principal's age may have important implications in relation to career opportunities and accomplishments (Miklos, 1988). In fact, NCES (1997) found a correlation between age and school size. As the average age of the principal rose, so did the district size, pointing to greater opportunities for professional advancement. As previous research indicates, career norms favor candidates with a youthful entry. Thus, administrators assigned early in their careers are more likely to later serve in larger schools and to hold district level positions.

Preparation of Principals

The IEL report, by Hale and Moorman (2003), *Preparing School Principals: A National Perspective on Policy and Program Innovations*, conducted by the Institute for Educational Leadership and Illinois Education Research Council, found that all states control the entry into the field of educational administration by establishing policies on certification, licensure and program accreditation as well as standard processes to validate and accredit administrator preparation programs. Additionally, all states except Michigan and South Dakota currently require school administrators to be licensed.

Yet, there is a general consensus that most principal preparation programs are too theoretical and unrelated to the daily demands of contemporary principals (Hale & Moorman, 2003). Critics claim the course work is poorly sequenced and organized, making it impossible to scaffold the learning. Additionally, there are concerns that because clinical experiences are inadequate or non-existent, students do not have

mentored opportunities to develop practical understanding or real-world job competence (p. 9).

The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB, 2004), comprising sixteen states, including Oklahoma, suggests that local school districts become full partners with universities in the preparation of school leaders. In accordance with this partnership, the SREB advises state policymakers, universities and districts to develop a state policy that “defines the conditions that a leadership preparation program must meet if it is to continue preparing school leaders” (p. 1).

The National Commission on Excellence in Educational Administration and the National Policy Board for Educational Administration have called for reforms in principal preparation (ERS, 1998). These national groups encouraged the development of preparation programs oriented toward competencies judged critical to principal effectiveness resulting in the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996). After all, the role of administrator preparation programs is to develop school leaders who can provide instructional leadership to positively affect teaching and student learning (Hale and Mooreman, 2003, p.20).

“Schools of the 21st century require a new kind of principal, one who fulfills a variety of roles as a leader of instruction, community and vision” (Hale & Mooreman, 2003, p.10). Preparation programs must fulfill the vision embodied in the ISLLC Standards. Over 24 state education agencies and representatives from various professional associations concur (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

In response to principal preparation concerns, the ISLLC Consortium, a program of Chief State School officers, crafted a model of standards for school leaders that present

a common core of knowledge, dispositions, and performances to enhance effective leadership through educational processes. The ISLLC standards were developed as a result of the changing nature of society and as an attempt to upgrade the preparation of educational leaders (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

Although many states have encouraged strengthened licensing requirements and revised procedures for approval of university-based preparation programs, the ISLLC team focused on a standards approach to allow diverse stakeholders to drive improvement efforts in the areas of licensure, program approval and candidate assessment:

1. Shared Vision: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.
2. Learning Culture: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.
3. Managing a Learning Environment: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.
4. Community Collaboration: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with faculty and community

members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

5. Integrity and Fairness: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.
6. Political, Legal and Cultural Context: a school administrator is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Council of Chief State School Officers, 1996).

Certification of Principals

It seems that today, more than ever before, there is a heightened sense of scrutiny of all organizations, institutions and businesses that provide certification to individual professionals. Accrediting institutions are required to provide concise and clear guidelines regarding policies, processes and practices to professional licensing programs (Eaton, 2004). Since the purpose of certification is to indicate that individuals possess occupation-relevant knowledge and skills at the time of entry into their occupation or profession, certification should signify that the grantee has the necessary knowledge and skills to carry out their responsibilities in a competent manner (Waters, et. al, 2003).

Before 1955, few states had firm standards for certifying principals (Neely, 1993). In fact, with the post-war baby boom, districts began to expand rapidly, and thousands of principals were appointed first and certified later (p.5).

Currently, most states require some form of principal licensure. Yet, a large percentage of principals reports that the authenticity of principal certification is not a

guarantee that a principal has what it takes to be a good administrator (Neely, 1993; *Rolling Up Their Sleeves*, 2003). Thirty-eight percent say it's a minimum guarantee and another 36 percent state that it guarantees very little (2003, p. 40). The conventional procedures for certifying principals often fail to produce a sufficiency of leaders whose vision, energy and skill can successfully raise the educational standard for all children (Hale & Mooreman, 2003).

Table 1.

Number of Certified Principals in Oklahoma in 2003-2004

	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Number of Principal Certifications	2,505	32	5,274	68	7,779	100
Number Employed in Schools	1,950	49	2,042	51	3,992	100

As reported in Table 1, Oklahoma has no shortage of certified principals (NCES,2004). In fact, Bennett (2004) reports that Oklahoma is issuing more administrator certificates than they have positions. During the 2003-2004 school year, 68 percent of all Oklahoma principal certificates granted were for traditional certification. Thirty-two percent of these grantees were alternative certificates. Of the 7,779 certified

as principals, however, only a total of forty-two percent, or 3,992 were employed in some capacity in schools during the 2003-2004 school year.

Of those numbers of certified principals listed in Table 1, not all are serving in the principalship. Some are serving as classroom teachers, central office administrators, superintendents, or in other capacities.

Traditional Certification

In the national survey report, *Rolling Up Their Sleeves* (2003), 67 percent of school principals polled responded that typical leadership programs in graduate schools were not very effective in preparing them as school leaders. In contrast, 74 percent of those same principals noted that graduate training did help prepare them for some responsibilities of the job (p. 40).

Seventy-two percent of superintendents felt the traditional preparation of their principals was adequate, however (*Rolling Up Their Sleeves*, 2003). Another one-third of superintendents surveyed by ERS (1998) characterized the preparation of their school principals as excellent (p.6).

Still, administration training programs continue to be criticized for the ways in which men and women are prepared for the school leadership positions (Jones, 2001). The traditional preparation of school principals has been characterized as a “dismal montage” (Murphy, 1999, p. 84), “dysfunctional structural incrementalism” (Farquar and Piele, 1972, p.17), and “zombie programs” (Pitner, 1990, p. 13). Concerns surfaced that many principals had been trained and certified through programs that were irrelevant and inadequate for the work responsibilities found in the school principalship (Muse & Thomas, 1991).

Part of this problem may be that university preparation programs are pressured to take in adequate numbers of candidates to justify the program's costs and existence (Sarason, 1999). Such a condition may result in universities having inconsistent requirements for their administrative candidates. As a result, individuals with questionable quality are often admitted (1999).

An examination of the top ten Oklahoma institutions that offer graduate courses in school administration shows many components of the programs varied: admission, coursework, number of hours, internship requirements, and the fees for admission into those programs. All of these factors may affect not only who and how many are applying to a particular university, but which candidates are being admitted (Sarason, 1999).

Table 2.

Number of Coursework Hours Required of Principal Candidates

Coursework Hours	University
36 Hours	NSU; NWOSU; ORU; OSU; OU; SNU; SOSU
34 Hours	UCO
33 Hours	SWOSU
32 Hours	ECU

Two universities with the most stringent academic admission requirements for school administration candidates were Oklahoma State University and the University of Oklahoma. Conversely, universities with the least stringent admission requirements were

East Central University (ECU), Southeastern Oklahoma State University (SOSU), Southwestern Oklahoma State University (SWOSU), and the University of Central Oklahoma (UCO). (Appendix D, Table 16).

The number of credit hours required by each of the ten universities is presented in Table 2 above. With the exception of one, all universities required a minimum of 18 hours or more of coursework in school administration. Southern Nazarene University was the only institution requiring just 15 hours of coursework in school administration.

All of the universities required three school administration courses: a course in the legal aspects of education or public school law; a course in the fundamentals of school administration and/or leadership; and a course in the supervision of teachers and/or school personnel. The professional education courses required of the ten universities revealed only two common courses: a type of research course and a course relating to school curriculum (Appendix D, Table 18).

With such variation in the universities' admission, internship and coursework requirements, it is difficult to ascertain how well-prepared principal candidates may be upon completion of their masters' degrees. Such variation may be cause for higher learning institutions to undergo public scrutiny-- and often criticism---for the preparation programs offered to those seeking the principalship.

Much criticism has been aimed at the institutions which have historically prepared our nation's school leaders. Policymakers, journalists, and education association leaders contend that alternatives need to be found for the preparation and continuing education of a new generation of school leaders (American Association of Colleges for Teacher

Education, 2001, pp. 2-3). The question of *what* these alternatives should be still remains.

Alternative Certification

Currently, universities and colleges prepare the bulk of principals, but “the times, they are a-changing ” (Hale and Mooreman, 2003, p. 16). Because many school leaders give unenthusiastic reviews to formal administrator training programs, nontraditional providers have emerged in an attempt to meet the new demands of the 21st century leader through alternative routes (2003).

Yet, few states allow alternative certification routes for school administrators (*Rolling Up Their Sleeves*, 2003). To date, only 11 states report alternate certification routes for principals and superintendents (Hale & Mooreman, 2003).

The few studies that have been conducted to compare traditional and alternative certification programs have shown mixed results (Shephard, 1999). A Texas study revealed that the abilities of alternative teachers are similar or equal to traditional teachers (Shepard, 1999). Still, school leaders voice concerns about alternatively certified teachers not being adequately prepared to teach due to a lack of pedagogical skills (1999).

Not all states are reluctant to hire alternatively certified school principals, however. For example, in the fall of 2000, New York City hired 165 non-traditional principals (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2003). In the spring of 2001, Chicago followed suit by hiring administrators from outside the field of education to become school principals after completing just 13 months of intensive training (Konkol, 2001).

In considering the challenges to create better leaders for public schools, superintendents may be wise to consider hiring not just those principals with traditional certification, but those with alternative certification as well. After all, policy, district, and institutional leaders must remember that alternatives should be considered for the preparation and continuing education of a new generation of school leaders (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 2001, pp. 2-3).

Experience

Despite the type of certification options for principals, experience is an important consideration for those candidates seeking the principalship. Both teaching experience and prior leadership experience must be a considered requirement as states address certification issues in order to expand their pool of skilled leaders (Hale & Mooreman, 2003).

Prior teaching experience allows school principals to better understand, relate and practice the strategies of an effective instructional leader (p.8). Yet, before 1955, only a few states required that principals have any teaching experience at all before taking the reigns (Pharis & Zachariza, 1979).

To date, most principals are drawn from the ranks of teachers (NCES, 1993). In fact, the National Center for Education Statistics (1993) states that as many as 98.7 worked as a teacher for 10.6 years prior to becoming a school principal. A more current study revealed 99.3 percent of principals have prior teaching experience (Hale & Mooreman, 2003).

Teaching experience isn't the only type of experience to enhance the preparation of principals. Forty-four percent of principals point to on-the-job experience that helped prepare them most for the principalship (*Rolling Up Their Sleeves*, 2003).

Superintendents also point out the importance of prior leadership experience for principal candidates. A recent study revealed most superintendents prefer to hire principals who have both previous principal experience *and* teaching experience (Hooker, 2000). Additionally, when superintendents in a recent study were asked what qualities they valued most in school leaders, 83 percent chose experience in leadership as the most important, while another 14 percent chose classroom teaching experience (Lashway, 2003). As one principal concluded, experience is a must in school leadership as “the nitty-gritty of the job is not contained in coursework” (Lewis, 1997, p.3).

Summary

The job of a school principal is a highly complex one. With the high-stakes accountability environment brought on by mandates such as *No Child Left Behind*, many principals are beginning to reconsider the position. High stress and numerous responsibilities are causing many school leaders to retire early, leaving few qualified applicants to fill the opening positions.

Because of the great responsibilities facing principals, adequate preparation is considered a key component of quality leadership. In the struggle to determine which programs sufficiently prepare school leaders for the 21st century, traditional preparation programs and certification have come under greater scrutiny. Questions are being asked to determine which training is both relevant and effective for school principals.

Additionally, the question arises as to which traits are indicative of today's leaders. Much of the early research shows work environments are still primarily functioning within a masculine white model. Although the literature does not provide a comparison of the possible similarities and differences that may exist in the characteristics and preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified school principals, it does focus on the various characteristics that school principals in general possess.

The next chapter discusses the research methodology. It addresses the research design, instrument, validity and reliability, population, procedures, ethical considerations, and data analysis.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

A survey design was chosen because it provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population (Creswell, 2003). The survey was cross-sectional since the data were collected at one point of time and the instrument was self-administered.

Instrument

The survey instrument was designed specifically for this study. It was developed to gather data to determine the personal characteristics and preparation of Oklahoma school principals and the demographics of their school districts. Ten of the 16 survey questions were taken from the *Principal Questionnaire: Schools and Staffing Survey* (2003-2004), developed by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education.

The survey, allowing for an effective collection of data and convenience for participants, consisted of two sections with a total of 16 questions. Questions one through three related to the personal characteristics of the participants such as gender, age and ethnicity.

Responses were placed in categorical scales (e.g., male/female). Questions four through eight related to these schools' characteristics: student enrollment, poverty index, grade levels, and performance levels. The second portion of the survey, items nine through 16, related to the participants' preparation for the principalship in the areas of prior experience, prior leadership positions held, training, highest earned degree and type of certification.

Validity

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it claims to measure, allowing meaningful and justifiable inferences. The content validity for the survey was reasonably established as ten of the 16 questions were taken from the NCES *Principal Questionnaire*. Six additional questions relating to personal characteristics of principals were developed and added to the survey by the researcher.

Reliability

Reliability refers to the consistency of a measurement. For the purposes of this study, homogeneity or internal consistency was used.

Population

Alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals were selected as the population for this study. Because the survey instrument was offered online and e-mail addresses of building principals were not available from the Oklahoma State Department of Education, the sample was selected from principals who were members of the Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School (CCOSA) in the 2004-2005 school year. To ensure a large enough sample of alternatively certified principals would respond to the

survey, telephone calls were made to 50 of those principals on the 2003-2004 listing provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

In Oklahoma, there were 7,779 persons with principal or administrative certification for the 2003-2004 school year (Table 1). Of those 7,779 certifications, 5,724 or 68 percent were traditional certifications and 2,505 or 32 percent were alternative certifications.

Of the 5,724 traditional certifications, 2,042 of those persons were employed in schools in some capacity during the 2003-2004 school year. Of the 2,505 alternatively certified persons, 1,950 were employed in a teaching position, school office or administrative capacity during the 2003-2004 school year.

A total of 3,992 persons were employed in some educational capacity during the 2003-2004 school year. Of those principals employed in an administrative capacity, approximately 2,200 were members of the CCOSA. The numbers and percentage of principals provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education (2005) were compared with the percentages of alternatively and traditionally certified principals responding to the survey. This information was presented in Appendix D, Table 30.

Procedures

Upon approval by the Oklahoma State University's Institutional Review Board, 200 letters and envelopes were prepared for mail-out in July, 2006. Upon receipt of the materials, CCOSA staff selected a convenient sample of two hundred ($n = 200$) Oklahoma principals from a CCOSA population of approximately 2,200 ($n = 2,200$) to be a part of this study.

For confidentiality purposes, CCOSA personnel addressed the envelopes to the 200 selected members ($n = 200$) and mailed them August 1, 2005. Members of the sample received the letter (Appendix A) containing information regarding the survey (Appendix B) and a link to the survey website. The letter identified the researcher and explained the purpose of the study, assuring participants that they would remain anonymous and their answers would only be used for the purposes of research.

The survey was placed on the FrontPage server of the College of Education at Oklahoma State University. The survey was available for the first solicitation during the entire month of August, 2005. Because the first solicitation did not yield a sufficient number of responses for analysis from alternatively certified participants, a second solicitation was sent in the form of an e-mail in September, 2005.

An e-mail (Appendix A) from the researcher containing information regarding the survey and a link to the survey website was sent to the CCOSA office. This e-mail with the survey link was forwarded from the CCOSA office to all on-line 2004-2005 CCOSA members, approximately 200 ($n = 200$). The e-mail asked participants who had participated in the first survey to not complete the survey again. A telephone solicitation was made to a selection of 50 ($n = 50$) alternatively certified principals whose names were provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education's 2003-2004 list, encouraging them to complete the on-line survey so that the second solicitation might yield a sufficient number of alternatively certified principals for this study. Those alternative participants who were known to the researcher and thought to be willing to participate were contacted first. Twenty-five ($n = 25$) of the alternative participants were selected in this manner. Another 25 ($n = 25$) were selected by convenience.

Ethical Considerations

All responses that relate to or describe identifiable characteristics of individuals were used for statistical purposes only and were not disclosed or used in identifiable form for any other purposes. No individual data that linked the respondent's name, school, district or address was included in the statistical report. To assure participants of anonymity, no information in the survey instrument was specific to individual participants or their schools, nor was the survey designed in any way to track them.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical analysis was employed to summarize the quantitative data in the survey instrument which asked for descriptive information (age, gender, student enrollment, etc). Any non-numerical data was used to determine differences and/or similarities in alternatively certified school principals and traditionally certified school principals.

The researcher reported information regarding the number of members of the sample who did and did not complete the survey. The responses of the participants were statistically analyzed with the use of Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 13.0) utilizing frequency distributions (grouped and relative frequency), class intervals and percentiles. Reliability of the factors was established through Chronbach's Alpha.

Table 3.

Data Analysis of Characteristics and Preparation of Participants

Research Questions	Survey Item	Dependent Variable	Statistical Methods
1. What differences exist in the characteristics of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals?	1-8	Gender; Ethnicity Age Student Enrollment Poverty Index Grade Levels Performance Levels	Frequency Distributions Percentiles Class Intervals Means
2. What differences exist in the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school Principals?	9 -16	Principal Experience Teaching Experience Prior Leadership Positions Degree Level	Frequency Distributions Percentiles Class Intervals Means

Data were collected, organized and summarized using frequency distribution to detect differences among the personal and school characteristics variables, and the preparation variables of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals. Class intervals helped to characterize differences in the ages of the two groups, as well as the student enrollment numbers and the poverty index percentiles.

Grouped and relative frequency distribution provided a means for comparing variables of the two groups to determine differences that may exist. A cumulative proportion was used to translate the cumulative frequencies into percentages.

Chapter IV presents the analysis of statistical results of the data in relation to the two research questions posited in Chapter I. Chapter V summarizes the overall study and includes the conclusions, recommendations, and a summary.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to determine what differences existed in the characteristics and the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified school principals, and to compare similarities or differences identified. The survey used in this study requested the type of principal certification of participants as well as information from two categories: 1) information regarding the participants' personal characteristics (age, ethnicity and gender) and school characteristics (school enrollment, poverty index, grade levels of the school, and school performance level); and 2) the participants' preparation for the principalship (principal experience; teaching experience; prior school leadership positions, and degree level). The presentation and analysis of the data are reported as they relate to the research questions.

Presentation of Data

Of the 107 participants, responding to the survey, 104 cases were accepted and considered valid for analysis ($n = 104$). Three of the original 107 cases had missing values by participants failing to categorize themselves as alternatively or traditionally certified, thus invalidating the responses. Of the 104 responses used, 32 ($n = 32$) were from alternatively certified principals and 72 ($n = 72$) were from traditionally certified principals.

Of the survey items, some cases were rejected due to missing data in the cells. Therefore, the total number of participant responses for each survey question may vary. The limited number of participants did not allow for statistical analysis more complex than descriptive statistics.

Research Question 1

1. What differences exist in the characteristics of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals?

The data used to answer Research Question 1 were the personal characteristics: gender, age and ethnicity. Data collected on the districts and schools of participants were also included in the analysis. These characteristics are (1) student enrollment, (2) poverty index of the district (defined as the percentage of students in a school district who qualify for a free or reduced lunch rate as determined by the annual income of a student's family and the number of family members living in that student's home), (3) grade levels of the school, and (4) school performance level.

Personal Characteristic: Gender

The data concerning the gender of participants is presented in Table 4 below.

Table 4

Gender (n = 104)

Gender	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Male	7	22.6	35	48.5	42	40.4
Female	25	77.4	37	51.5	62	59.6
Total	32	100	72	100	104	100

The analysis showed that the predominate gender of participants was female. While approximately half of the traditionally certified participants were female, over three quarters of alternatively certified participants were female. The difference between the two groups helps explain the percentage of females for total participants (60%), a surprising result for a profession historically dominated by males.

Personal Characteristic: Ethnicity

Analysis of data showing the ethnicity of participants is shown in Table 5 below.

Table 5.

Ethnicity (n = 104)

Ethnicity	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Caucasian	22	69	63	88	85	82
African American	5	16	1	1	6	6
Native Hawaiian/ Pacific Islander	1	3	1	1	2	2
American Indian	4	12	7	10	11	10
Hispanic	0	0	0	0	0	0
Total	32	100	72	100	104	100

In general, though differences existed in the data regarding ethnicity, the differences were small. The majority of all participants were Caucasian, with only a small percentage falling into the minority categories.

When considering the traditionally certified and alternatively certified groups, alternatively certified participants showed a higher percentage in the minority ethnic

groups than did traditionally certified participants. Although limited response in the survey did not allow for complex statistical analysis, the higher percentage of African Americans in the alternatively certified group is worth noting.

Personal Characteristic: Age

The analysis of the data concerning age of participants is presented in Table 6 below.

Table 6.

Age (n = 104)

Age of Participants	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
30-39	3	9	10	14	13	13
40-49	7	22	31	43	38	37
50-59	21	66	28	39	49	46
59+	1	3	3	4	4	4
Total	32	100	72	100	104	100

In looking at percentages and the median age, there was a marked difference in the ages of alternatively and traditionally certified principals. Overall, Oklahoma principals averaged 49 years of age. Yet, alternatively certified principals were older—51 years of age compared to the traditionally certified sample, who were 48 years of age.

District and School Characteristics: District Student Enrollment

Other differences in alternatively and traditionally certified principals were revealed in the descriptive characteristics of their schools and districts. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 7 below.

Table 7.

District Student Enrollment (n = 99)

Student Enrollment	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
>500	6	19.4	17	25	23	23.2
500-1,000	5	16.1	14	20.6	19	19.2
1,001-5,000	7	22.6	18	26.5	25	25.3
5,001-10,000	12	38.7	7	10.3	19	19.2
10,000+	1	3.2	12	17.6	13	13.1
Total	31	100	68	100	99	100

Looking at the percentages, there was a noticeable difference in the district student enrollment of alternatively and traditionally certified school principals. The largest group of participants (25%) works in school districts with enrollments of 1,001 – 5,000. However, 39 percent of alternatively certified participants work in urban schools with an enrollment of 5,001-10,000 while traditionally certified participants work in districts with enrollments of 1,001-5,000. Possible reasons for this result are explored in Chapter 5.

District and School Characteristics: Poverty Index

The poverty index is defined as the percentage of students in a school district who qualify for a free or reduced lunch rate as determined by the annual income of a student's family and the number of family members living in that student's home. Results of the analysis of data for the poverty index of participants' schools are presented in Table 8 below.

Table 8.

Poverty Index of Participants' School Districts (n = 99)

Poverty Index	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
Scale (Percent)	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0-20	0	0.0	6	8.8	6	6.1
21-30	0	0.0	6	8.8	6	6.1
31-40	0	0.0	13	19.1	13	13.1
41-50	3	9.7	7	10.3	10	10.1
51-60	1	3.2	4	5.9	5	5.1
61-70	5	16.1	10	14.7	15	15.2
71-80	12	38.7	9	13.2	21	21.2
>80	10	32.3	13	19.1	23	23.2
Total	31	100	68	100	99	100

The results of the analysis show a marked difference in the poverty index of the two groups of participants' school districts. Although a majority of participants worked in schools with a poverty index greater than 60 percent, alternatively certified school participants were more likely to serve in high poverty schools than traditionally certified school participants. No alternatively certified participants worked in buildings with less

than 41 percent of students at the poverty index level as determined by the district's free and reduced student lunch rate. In addition, 71 percent of alternatively certified participants served at schools with a poverty index of 71+ percent, while only 32 percent of traditionally certified principals did.

District and School Characteristics: Grade Levels of Schools

Data were also analyzed by grade level of participants' buildings. The results are presented in Table 9 below.

Table 9.

Grade Levels of Schools (n = 99)

Grade Level	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Early Childhood	0	0.0	1	1.5	1	1.0
Elementary	11	35.5	37	54.4	48	48.5
Middle Level	6	19.4	10	14.7	16	16.2
Secondary	4	12.9	7	10.3	11	11.1
Multi-Level	6	19.4	7	10.3	13	13.1
Other	4	12.9	6	8.8	10	10.1
Total	31	100	68	100	99	100

Noticeable differences existed in the grade levels of the schools in which the two groups of participants worked. A large percentage of all participants (48%) work in elementary schools, with a higher percentage of traditionally certified participants than alternatively certified participants at the elementary level. However, a higher percentage of alternatively certified participants served at the secondary or multi-level buildings.

District and School Characteristics: Performance Levels of Schools

Data concerning the performance levels of participants' schools are presented in Table 10 below. The performance levels used are defined in the left-hand column of the table.

Table 10.

Performance Levels of Schools (n = 99)

Performance Levels	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Passed All	11	35.5	43	63.2	54	54.5
Passed Most	12	38.7	17	25.0	29	29.3
Passed Some	8	25.8	7	10.3	15	15.2
Passed None	0	0.0	1	1.0	1	1.0
Total	31	100	68	100	99	100

A marked difference exists in the performance levels of the districts in which the two groups worked. The school districts of traditionally certified participants performed almost twice as well as the districts of alternatively certified participants. Only 35 percent of alternatively certified participants' districts passed all performance standards as determined by the Annual Yearly Progress Report (AYP) which is based on students' test scores, the student attendance rate, and at the secondary level, the student drop out rate. Yet, traditionally certified principals' schools had 63 percent pass all performance standards.

Looking at a more comprehensive picture, 74 percent of schools served by alternatively certified participants passed all or most of their school performance standards, while 88 percent of schools served by traditionally certified participants passed all or most of the standards. Overall, however, 54 percent of Oklahoma school principals responding passed all of the school performance standards.

Research Question 2

2. What differences exist in the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals?

The variables used to answer Research Question 2 were (1) number of years of principal experience; (2) number of years of teaching experience; (3) number of school leadership positions prior to becoming a principal; and (4) degree level of the participant. Results of the analysis for Research Question 2 are reported in the tables which follow.

Preparation: Principal Experience

The results of the data analysis for prior experience as a principal are presented in Table 11. Traditionally certified principals had more principal experience than did alternatively certified principals with an average of six years. The majority of traditional principals had 6-10 years (32 %) of principal experience. Alternatively certified principals only had an average of two years experience. Predominantly, alternative principals had 1-5 years experience as a principal (37 %). However, the overall majority of all participants had 1-5 years experience as a principal (32 %).

Additional analysis revealed a substantial difference in the number of years of principal experience between the two groups with alternatively certified principals

Table 11.

Principal Experience (n = 99)

Years of Experience	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
Scale in Years	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
<1	9	33.4	3	4.1	12	12.2
1-5	10	37.0	22	30.6	32	32.6
6-10	4	14.8	23	31.9	27	27.6
11-15	4	14.8	18	25.0	21	21.4
16-20	0	0.0	2	2.8	2	2.0
21-25	0	0.0	2	2.8	2	2.0
25+	0	0.0	2	2.8	2	2.0
Total	27	100	72	100	99	100

averaging just 3 years experience as a principal while traditionally certified principals averaged 6, twice the number of years experience as that of the alternative group. The overall mean of the two groups revealed the responding Oklahoma principals averaged 5 years experience in the principalship.

Preparation: Teaching Experience

The results of the data analysis for teacher experience are presented in Table 12. There was no marked difference in the number of years of teaching experience between alternatively certified participants and traditionally certified participants. Both groups had 6-10 years of teaching experience.

Table 12.

Teaching Experience (n = 100)

Years of Teaching Experience	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
Scale in Years	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
1-5	2	6.3	14	19.7	16	16.3
6-10	15	46.8	21	29.5	31	31.6
11-15	6	18.7	19	26.8	25	25.5
16-20	3	9.4	10	14.1	13	13.3
21-25	4	12.5	6	8.5	10	10.2
25+	2	6.3	1	1.4	3	3.1
Total	32	100	71	100	103	100

Looking at the overall picture, however, alternatively certified principals had less total educational experience with predominantly 6-10 years of teaching experience and only 1-5 years experience as a principal. Traditionally certified principals had 6-10 years of teaching experience and 6-10 years of principal experience, making them the more experienced of the two groups.

Preparation: Prior School Leadership Positions

The data for the number of leadership positions that participants held before taking a position as principal are presented in Table 13. The disaggregated data by type of position is presented in the Appendix D, Table 15.

The results of the data analysis show no real difference in the number of prior leadership positions of alternatively and traditionally certified participants. Sixty percent of all participants were likely to have held at least one to two leadership positions prior to becoming a principal. Alternatively certified participants averaged 2.2 positions while

traditionally certified participants averaged 1.6. Of the prior leadership positions held, the majority of participants had served as an assistant principal (20%), a student club sponsor (19%), or an athletic coach or director (17 %). (See Appendix D, Table 15)

Table 13.

Prior School Leadership Positions (n = 99)

Number of Prior Positions	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
0	1.0	3.2	13.0	19.1	14.0	15.4
1	11.0	35.5	25.0	36.8	36.0	39.6
2	8.0	25.8	15.0	22.0	23.0	25.3
3	5.0	16.1	9.0	13.2	6.0	6.6
4	4.0	12.9	6.0	8.9	10.0	10.9
5	2.0	6.5	0.0	0.0	2.0	2.2
Average	2.2	---	1.6	---	1.9	---

Preparation: Degree Level

The data for the degree level of participants are presented in Table 14. Overall, there was little difference in the degree level of the two groups of principals. The majority of participants had a master's degree. Yet, approximately six percent of the traditional principals held doctorate degrees while none of the alternatively certified principals did. Additionally, 10 percent of the traditional principals held other professional diplomas while only 7 percent of alternatively certified principals did.

Table 14.

Degree Level (n = 103)

Degree Level	Alternative Certification		Traditional Certification		All Participants	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Bachelors	1	3.2	0	0.0	1	1.0
Ed Spec/ Prof. License	2	6.5	7	9.7	9	9.0
Masters	28	90.3	61	84.7	85	86.0
Doctorate	0	0.0	4	5.6	4	4.0
Total	31	100	72	100	103	100

A Profile of the Findings

As a group, Oklahoma principals are white females, 49 years of age, with a master's degree. These principals have 6-10 years of teaching experience and 1-5 years of experience as a principal. Most of the principals serve in elementary schools with enrollments of 1,001-5,000. Although the majority of their schools have a greater than 71 percent poverty index, their districts are passing most or all of the school performance standards.

Alternatively certified principals are predominantly white females, aged 51 years of age working in urban elementary schools with enrollments of 5,001-10,000. These principals possess a master's degree and have an average of 6-10 years of teaching experience and 1-5 years experience as a principal. The majority of their schools fall at the 71+ percent poverty index, yet the greatest percentage of their school districts are passing most or all of the standard requirements.

Traditionally certified Oklahoma school principals are white females, age 48 years of age with a master's degree. They are more experienced than alternatively certified principals, with 6-10 years of teaching experience and 6-10 years experience as a principal. These principals work mostly at the elementary level in school districts with enrollments of 1,001- 5,000. Although the majority of traditionally certified principals' districts fall below the 50 percent poverty index, their schools are passing most or all of the standard requirements.

Summary

Because the survey results were limited to those members of CCOSA willing to respond to an on-line survey, the data results are not an accurate depiction of all Oklahoma principals. Nor are the data results an accurate depiction of the demographics of all Oklahoma school districts.

Still, the results of the data provide two important findings. First, alternative certification appears to be affecting the profile of the principalship. Though the age and ethnicity of the principalship has changed little in the past years, the predominant gender is surprisingly female.

Secondly, traditionally certified participants are more experienced and their schools performed better on the performance standards than did alternatively certified principals. Although the differences presented in the analysis could indicate that alternative certification may provide more leadership opportunities for gender and ethnic minorities, caution is urged. Alternatively certified principals may be disproportionately assigned to inner city, low performing schools.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS

The purpose of this study was to determine what differences exist in the characteristics and the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified school principals, and to compare similarities or differences identified. The study was guided by two research questions which examined the personal and school characteristics, preparation, and type of certification of Oklahoma school principals.

Included in this final chapter is a review of the findings with a comparison to the literature. The analysis of data was used to draw conclusions and to develop recommendations for future studies.

The online survey instrument, specifically designed for use with this study, requested information from participants regarding the personal and school characteristics, preparation and certification of school principals. Ten of the 16 questions were patterned from the *Principal's Questionnaire* of the Schools and Staffing Survey, an instrument developed by the National Center for Education Statistics of the U.S. Department of Education.

The staff of the CCOSA selected a convenient sample of two hundred Oklahoma principals from a CCOSA population of approximately 2,200 to be a part of this study. Members of the sample received a letter (Appendix A) containing information regarding the survey (Appendix B) and a link to the survey website. The letter identified the

researcher and explained the purpose of the study, assuring participants that they would remain anonymous and their answers would only be used for purposes of research.

Because the first solicitation did not yield a sufficient number of responses from alternatively certified participants, a second solicitation was sent in the form of an electronic mail (e-mail) from the researcher, containing information regarding the survey and a link to the survey website was sent to the CCOSA office. The insufficient number of responses to the first mail-out may be due to the timing. Many principals may not be readily available during the month of August.

The second solicitation which was sent in the form of an e-mail was forwarded from the CCOSA office to all on-line 2004-2005 CCOSA members, approximately 200. The e-mail asked that participants who had participated in the first survey to not complete the survey again. A telephone solicitation was made to a selection of 50 alternatively certified principals whose names were provided by the Oklahoma State Department of Education's 2003-2004 list of public school principals, encouraging them to complete the on-line survey so that the second solicitation might yield a sufficient number of alternatively certified principals for this study. Responses from 107 participants were received, resulting in a return rate of 26.8 percent.

Data analysis involved the use of descriptive statistics which included frequency distributions and percentiles. This analysis determined personal and school characteristics of the participants, as well as any preparation differences between alternatively and traditionally certified school principals.

Comparison of the Findings with the Literature

For Research Question 1, the characteristics of principals were examined and compared between alternatively and traditionally certified participants. Although previous studies show that males once dominated the principal position, the survey revealed that over half of the participants were female. In 1987-1988, females comprised just 24 percent of the principalship (NCES, 1990). That percentage rose to 44 percent in 1999-2000. The data from this study show that the percentage of females serving in the Oklahoma principalship may be as high as 60 percent. (See Appendix D, Table 23)

Regarding ethnicity, previous research shows that the majority of the nation's principals were Caucasian (NCES, 2002). The data results are consistent with the research as 82 percent of all participants fell into that ethnic group. (See Appendix D, Table 24)

The average age of principals has fluctuated through the years. Following World War II, the average age of a principal was 60 (Neely, 1993). In 1987-1988, however, the average age dropped to age 47 (NCES, 1990). In 1993-1994, the average age of principals rose to 48, and in 1999-2000, the national average rose again to 49 years---an outcome consistent with this research (NCES, 2002). (See Appendix D, Table 25)

Of the school characteristics examined, the results were similar to those found in the literature. The majority of principals serve at the elementary level, a finding consistent with the national data and the previous studies conducted by the NCES (2002). (See Appendix D, Table 27)

In Research Question 2, the preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified participants was examined and compared. As used in this study, preparation is defined as 1) the acquiring of related work, 2) leadership and/or teaching experience and, 3) the acquiring of leadership knowledge, skills, and competencies through an accredited college and/or university or another relevant educational program to prepare and qualify one to serve in the capacity of a school principal.

Previous studies show that the nation's principals are more experienced than those participants responding to the survey. Across the United States, principals averaged 14 years of teaching experience and nine years of principal experience (NCES, 2002). Those responding to this survey had 11 years of teaching experience and just seven years of principal experience. (See Appendix D, Table 28)

Conclusions

Based on the results of this study, the following conclusions were drawn concerning the characteristics and preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma principals.

- Alternative certification appears to be affecting the profile of the principalship as it allows for a larger percentage of gender and ethnic minorities to serve in that capacity. This group is also older than the traditionally certified group. This could indicate that these populations are *choosing* an alternative route to the principalship for different reasons.

The predominant gender of alternatively certified participants is female. This is a surprising result since employment practices in education have historically followed a patriarchal system, characteristically favoring males.

Additionally, the survey showed that alternatively certified participants are three years older than traditionally certified participants. Yet, those participants had fewer years' experience as a principal, indicating that many of these principals apparently decided later in life to enter the principalship.

The combination of predominant characteristics (age and gender) in alternatively certified participants may indicate that many older females are choosing the alternative route. This may be due to the fact that most participants were educators with a master's degree in something other than school administration. Since the participants averaged 51 years of age, it is likely that any children in the home were grown, providing an opportunity at this stage in their lives to consider the demands of a leadership position.

In addition, working in this capacity allows those females to retire with a more sufficient income. Rather than going back to school to get a second master's degree which may take 1-3 years to complete, alternative certification may present a more viable option.

Another way that alternative certification appears to be affecting the profile of the principalship is in providing more opportunities for ethnic minorities---specifically African Americans---to serve in a role that, since desegregation, has been historically populated by whites. The analysis showed that in comparing the ethnicity of traditionally and alternatively certified participants, the latter had a higher percentage of ethnic minorities serving in the principalship.

This may be because there has been an intentional effort on the part of schools to increase the number of minorities serving in the principalship. Since legal implications encourage a greater sensitivity in school districts to provide equal opportunities for ethnic

minorities, schools are now more likely to select minority candidates than in previous years.

Additionally, many districts are seeking out those ethnic minority principals to serve in schools with a high percentage of students of the same ethnicity. It is thought that minority principals may relate better to the needs of those school communities, and those principals may serve as positive role models for the students (NCES, 1997). Since it appears that ethnic minorities are being recruited to fill the existing voids in school leadership positions, many of the minority candidates may be encouraged to complete the requirements for the principalship through the quickest route possible, which before
*July, 2005 was alternative certification.

*In July, 2005, the Oklahoma State Department changed the requirements for alternative certification of school principals. According to Section 180.9 Section 70 O.S. Supp. 2005, 6-189, alternative certification of principals now includes along with the previous requirements as stated in the Definition of Terms in Chapter I:

A declaration of the intention to earn standard certification through completion of an approved alternative administrative preparation program in not more than three (3) years. Participants shall have on file with the director of teacher of education at an Oklahoma accredited institution of higher education a plan for meeting standard certification requirements within (3) years. For the plan, relevant work experience and coursework may be considered and applied to reduce the number of hours needed to earn standard certification.

An alternative certificate for...principals shall not exceed three (3) years and shall not be renewable.

Upon successful completion of an alternative administrative program by a participant, the director of teacher education of an Oklahoma accredited institution of higher education shall make a recommendation for standard certification to the State Board of Education (Oklahoma State Department of Education, 2005, pp. 2,891-2,892).

Based on the results of this study, a second conclusion was drawn concerning the characteristics and preparation of alternatively and traditionally certified Oklahoma principals.

- Alternatively certified participants are more likely to work in large, urban, secondary schools with a high poverty index (71+ percent) than traditionally certified participants.

This finding may indicate that a larger percentage of traditionally certified candidates are more likely to be employed in their job of choice. That is, they may choose *not* to work in those schools that may be considered to have greater challenges. Such challenges often include a large student population with a high ethnic minority and a high poverty index.

It has already been well-established that the role of the principal is a complex one (Murphy & Beck, 1994; Lyons, 1999). The duties of the principal have expanded to include a larger focus on instruction, data-driven decision-making, establishing policies and procedures, and juggling the political interactions of the school community, to name a few. When principals consider these responsibilities in addition to the stress of high-stakes testing, they may choose not to take on the added pressure of being accountable for a large school with a high poverty student population.

A possible cause for more alternatively certified participants to serve in urban schools can be found in the literature. ERS (2000) found that nearly half of all urban schools reported principal shortages. Though Oklahoma may not be experiencing principal shortages, the research indicates that fewer qualified people want the position of principal (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004). If this is the case, alternatively certified principals may be recruited to serve in this capacity.

NCES (1997) found that ethnic minority principals are often recruited to serve in schools with a high percentage of students of the same ethnic background. In this study, alternatively certified participants were also more likely to be from an ethnic minority, indicating they may have been specifically recruited to work in the larger, high poverty schools with an ethnically diverse student population.

The research also showed that more alternatively certified participants are serving at the secondary level than are traditionally certified participants. This too, may be due to choice. Besides managing the day-to-day activities in schools, principals must also assist in combating crime, drugs, alcohol abuse, and sexually transmitted diseases (Hollar, 2004). Since these social issues are more prevalent in students at the secondary level, many traditionally certified principals may choose to serve at the elementary level.

Additionally, considering the long hours, high stress and low pay already imposed on school principals, many may decide that the time commitment required of secondary principals to supervise after school and extracurricular activities is more than they desire to accept.

Despite these explanations, it is evident that those schools with the greatest challenges need the most experienced, the most prepared and the most capable leaders at

the helm (DiPaola & Tschannen-Moran, 2004; Elmore, 2003) and the survey results are contrary to this. Traditionally certified participants averaged twice the number of years of principal experience (six) than alternatively certified participants (three).

Additionally, the schools led by traditionally certified principals fared better, performing almost twice as well on the school performance standards as those schools led by alternatively certified principals. Because alternatively certified principals may not have the instructional coursework relating directly to the responsibilities of the school principal, they may be less equipped to deal with the complex tasks of such a demanding role.

Recommendations

The data presented in Chapter Four and the implications presented in this chapter leave the following unanswered questions. These are recommended for future research relative to the findings and conclusions of this study:

1. How can school districts and universities attract promising gender and ethnic minorities to serve in the principalship?
2. How may states and universities work together more effectively to ensure that both traditionally and alternatively certified principals have the necessary coursework, skills and experience to be successful in such a complex position as the principalship?
3. Does the type of principal certification influence the effectiveness of that school leader as determined by the school's performance standards?

Summary

The analysis indicates that alternative certification may provide more opportunities for gender and ethnic minorities to enter the principalship. However, the findings also indicated that not only were traditionally certified participants more experienced, but the schools led by traditionally certified principals outperformed those schools led by alternatively certified principals. This may be an indication that traditional principals are more likely to have the necessary training and preparation skills to bring about the best in student performance.

Yet, because of the nature of this study, caution must be considered when interpreting the results. Although factors relating to the characteristics and preparation of participants appear to have significance as to the type of certification (alternative or traditional), other variables for which there were no means of control could have played significant roles in influencing the outcomes of this study.

First, principals with a membership in CCOSA were solicited to be a part of this study. Yet, not all CCOSA principals chose to participate in the on-line survey. Therefore, the data results may not be an accurate depiction of all CCOSA principals.

Secondly, a selection of alternatively certified principals identified by the Oklahoma State Department of Education as well as a second solicitation of on-line CCOSA principals were asked to be a part of this study. Therefore, the data may not be an accurate depiction of all Oklahoma principals.

It is essential that continued research be conducted relating to the preparation and certification of school principals since effective leadership is vital to the success of our students and our schools. Such results may affect the way policymakers determine the

licensure of principals in the future. Additionally, those who influence the requirements and criteria for preparation programs and licensure standards may want to focus their initiatives on the responsibilities and practices of the most current research since leadership appears to have the largest affect on student achievement than any other factor.

REFERENCES

- American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. (2001). *PK-12 Educational Leadership and Administration* [A White paper of the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education], 1-7.
- Black, L. J. G. (2002). Personal and professional challenges faced by women who are administrators in higher education (Doctoral dissertation, Pepperdine University, 2002). *Dissertation Abstracts International*. (UMI No. 3053295)
- Burgess, H. (1989). A sort of career: Women in primary schools. In *Whatever happens to Little Women*. Milton Keynes: Open University Press.
- Council of Chief State School Officers. (1996, November 2). *Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium: Standards for School Leaders*. Washington, D.C.
- Dawning, P., & Henry, J. (2003). The power to perform. *Thomas B. Fordham Institute & the Broad Foundation*. Retrieved October 18, 2004 from <http://www.fordhaminstitute.org/institute/publication/publication.cfm?id=1>.
- Doud, J.L. (1989). The K-8 principal in 1988. *Principal*, 68(3), 6-12.
- DiPaola, M. & Tschannen-Moran, M. (2003). The Principalship at a crossroads: A study of the conditions and concerns of the principals. *NASSP Bulletin*, 87(634), 43-65. Retrieved October 18, 2004 from www.principals.org/publications/bulletin/bulletin_principal_crossroads.cfm.

- Duke, D. L. (2004, September, October). The turn-around principal: High-stakes leadership. *Principal*, 12-24.
- Eaton, J. (2004, March). Balancing competing goods: Accreditation and information to the public about quality. Council for Higher Education Accreditation. Retrieved March 15, 2005 at http://www.chea.org/pdf/PresLtr_InformPublic_0304.pdf.
- Elmore, R. (2003). *Knowing the right thing to do: School improvement and performance-based accountability*. Washington, DC: NGA Center for Best Practices.
- ERS (Education Research Report). (1998). *Is there a shortage of qualified candidates for openings in the principalship? An exploratory study*. Arlington, VA: Author.
- Engler, C. (2004). *The ISLLC Standards in Action: A Principal's Handbook*. New York, NY: Eye on Education.
- Farquhar, R. H., & Piele, P. K. (1972). Preparing educational leaders: A review of recent literature. *ERIC/CEM State of the Knowledge Series*, 14(1).
- Farr, D. T. (2004). School principal recruitment and selection in Montana (Doctoral dissertation, Montana State University, 2004). *Dissertation Abstracts International*, 141, (UMI No. 3127707).
- Finn, C.E. Jr. (2003). Foreword in *Better leaders for America's schools: A manifesto*. The Thomas B. Fordham Institute. Retrieved April 26, 2005 at <http://www.edexcellence.net/foundation/publication/publication.cfm?id=1>.
- Fenwick, L. T. (2000). The principal shortage: Who will lead? *The Principal's Center*. Harvard Graduate School of Education, Cambridge, MA.

- Fullan, M. (1997). *What's Worth Fighting for in the Principalship?* Columbia University, NY: Teachers College Press.
- Hale, E. L. & Moorman, H. N. (2003). *Preparing school principals: A national perspective on policy and program innovations*. Washington, DC: Institute for Educational Leadership and Illinois Education Research Council. Retrieved October 13, 2004 at www.iel.org/pubs/PreparingSchoolPrincipals.html.
- Harris, S., Lowery, S., & Crocker, C. (2000). A study of motivators and inhibitors for men and women deciding to become a principal. *Education Leadership Review*, 1(3), 30-37.
- Hollar, C. (2004, September, October). The Principal as CEO. *Principal*, 42-44.
- Hopkins, G. (1998). Help Wanted: Qualified Principals. *Education World*. Retrieved October 13 at http://www.educationworld.com/a_admin/admin067.shtml.
- Institute for Educational Leadership. (2000, October). *Leadership for student learning: Reinventing the principalship* [A report on the task force on the principalship]. Washington, DC: Author.
- Jones, T. C. (2001). *Selection or self-selection? How rigorous are the selection criteria in education administration programs*. Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration.
- Kirkpatrick, S. A., & Locke, E. A. (1991). Leadership: Do traits matter? *The Executive*, 5, 48-60.
- Klauke, A. (1988). Recruiting and selecting principals. *ERIC Digest*, EA27, 3-4. ERIC Digest, EA27.

- Konkol, K. A. (2001, March 27). Schools face matter of principals: Shortage has city looking to pilot program for help. *Daily Southtown*, p. 1.
- Lashway, L. (2003, December). Finding leaders for hard-to-staff schools. *Clearinghouse on Educational Policy Management*. College of Education: University of Oregon. Retrieved on November 13, 2004 from <http://eric.uoregon.edu/publications/digests/digest173.html>.
- Lewis, L. (1997, February). Master principals find some fault with job criteria, *Catalyst Chicago*. Retrieved October 13, 2004 at www.catalyst-chicago.org/02-97/027upd81.htm.
- Lord, R. G., DeVader, C. L., & Alliger, G. M. (1986). A meta-analysis of the relation between personality traits and leadership perceptions: An application of validity generalization procedures. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 71, 402-410.
- Lyons, J. (1999, Winter). How school principals perceive their roles, rewards and challenges. *ERS Spectrum*, 18-22.
- McKay, G. (1999, August 22). Back to school: A matter of principals. *Post-Gazette News*.
- Murphy, J. & Beck, L. (1994). Restructuring the principalship: Challenges and possibilities. In J. Murphy and K. S. Louis (Eds.) *Reshaping the principalship: Insights from transformational reform efforts*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, Inc.
- Muse, I., & Thomas, G. J. (1991). The rural principal: Select the best. *Journal of Rural and Small Schools*, 4(3), 32-37.

- National Center for Education Statistics. (1990). Selected characteristics of public and private school administrators. Retrieved April 26, 2005 at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs90085>.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (1993-94). *Principal questionnaire: Schools and staffing survey 2003-04*. Retrieved May 2, 2005 at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs/survey/sass>.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (1997). *Public and private school principals in the United States: A statistical profile 1987-88 to 1993-94*. Retrieved May 2, 2005 at <http://nces.ed.gov/pubs/ppsp/97455-7.asp>.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2002). *Public and private school principals in the United States: A statistical profile 1993-94 and 1999-2000*. Retrieved May 2, 2005 at http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d02/ch_2.asp.
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2004). *The condition of education 2004: Indicator 26, characteristics of school principals*. Retrieved May 2, 2005 at <http://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/2005/section4/table.asp?tableID-77>.
- Neely, S. (1993). *Personnel, selection, induction in small/rural schools* (Report No. 019 419). Manhattan, KS: 15th Annual Rural and Small Schools Conference. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED 364 397)
- Newmann, F., & Associates. (1996). *Authentic Achievement*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Northouse, P. G. (2001). *Leadership Theory and Practice* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

- Northouse, P. G. (2004). *Leadership Theory and Practice* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.
- Oklahoma Law Book. (2005). Retrieved April 7, 2005, at <http://sde.state.us>.
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2003). House Bill 1438, 2003 Legislation. Retrieved October 14, 2004 at <http://sde.state.us>.
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2005). Retrieved February 11, 2005 from <http://sde.state.us>.
- Oklahoma State Department of Education. (2005). Retrieved March 21, 2005 from http://sde.state.ok.us/lawbook/chapter_1/c_1-a_vi.htm.
- Peterson, K. (1999, March). The role of the principals in successful schools. *Reform Talk* (3). Comprehensive Regional Assistance Center Consortium.
- Pitner, N. J. (1990, September). *Reinventing school leadership*. Working memo presented at Reinventing School Leadership Conference.
- Rand Education. (2004). The careers of public school administrators; Policy implications from an analysis of state-level data. Retrieved March 21, 2005 from www.rand.org.
- Reis, S. B., Jury, C., & Young, I. P. (2004). Female administrators: A crack in the glass ceiling. Retrieved October 13, 2004 from http://personal.ashland.edu/~sbon/Female_Administration.htm.
- Rolling up their sleeves: The principal difference. (2003). *Public Agenda*.
- Rosse, J. & Levin, R. (1997). *High-impact hiring: A comprehensive guide to performance-based hiring*. California: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Sarason, S. B. (1999). *Teaching as a Performing Art*. New York: Teachers College Press.

- Shephard, T. (1999, Fall). A retrospect and introspect of an alternative method of teacher certification. *Educational Horizons*, pp. 18-22.
- Southern Regional Education Board. (2003). *Are SREB states making progress? Tapping, preparing, and licensing school leaders who can influence student achievement*. Atlanta, GA: Author.
- U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (1996). *Occupational Outlook Handbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (1997). *Occupational Handbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (2000). *Occupational Handbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (2001). *Occupational Handbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- U. S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (USBLS). (2004). *Occupational Handbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Waters, T., Marzano, R. J., & McNulty, B. (2003). *Balanced leadership: What 30 years of research tells us about the effect of leadership on student achievement*. Aurora, CO: Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning. Retrieved January 16, 2005, from <http://www.mcrel.org/topics/productDetail.asp?topicsID=7&productID=144>.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A
CORRESPONDANCE

Letter to Participants

August 1, 2005

Dear Principals:

The link below is a survey of Oklahoma school principals. The survey is designed to gather data for my dissertation entitled *Preparation and Personal Characteristics of Alternatively and Traditionally Certified Principals*.

If you are willing to assist in this research effort, please access the link below, to access the online survey. Completion of this survey takes approximately 10 minutes.

By accessing the website and completing the survey form, you are providing your consent to participate in this study. No information in the survey instrument is specific to individual Participants nor is the survey designed in any way to track Participants.

The link will only be active until August 31. The address link to the survey is:

<http://fp.okstate.edu/aks9445/bradleyresearch>

If you would like any additional information before completing this survey, I may be contacted using the information below. My advisor's contact information is also listed.

Once again, your participation and assistance with this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Pam Newell Bradley, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership
Oklahoma State University
(918) 684-3775 or (918) 687-0003
pam-bradley@mpsi20.org

Dr. Ken Stern
311 Willard Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
(405) 744-8929
aks9445@okstate.edu

Second Letter/E-mail to Participants

September 13, 2005

Dear Principals:

The link below is a survey of Oklahoma school principals. The survey is designed to gather data for my dissertation entitled *Preparation and Personal Characteristics of Alternatively and Traditionally Certified Principals*.

If you are willing to assist in this research effort, please access the link below, to access the online survey. Completion of this survey takes approximately 10 minutes.

By accessing the website and completing the survey form, you are providing your consent to participate in this study. No information in the survey instrument is specific to individual participants nor is the survey designed in any way to track participants.

The link will only be active until October 4. The address link to the survey is:

<http://fp.okstate.edu/aks9445/bradleyresearch>

If you would like any additional information before completing this survey, I may be contacted using the information below. My advisor's contact information is also listed.

Once again, your participation and assistance with this study is greatly appreciated.

Sincerely,

Pam Newell Bradley, Doctoral Candidate
Educational Leadership
Oklahoma State University
(918) 684-3775 or (918) 687-0003
pam-bradley@mpsi20.org

Dr. Ken Stern
311 Willard Hall
Oklahoma State University
Stillwater, Oklahoma 74078
(405) 744-8929
aks9445@okstate.edu

APPENDIX B
SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Oklahoma Principal Survey

By accessing the website and completing the survey form, you are providing your consent to participate in this study. No information in the survey instrument is specific to individual participants nor is the survey designed in any way to track participants. All participants will remain anonymous.

The purpose of this research is to study the preparation and personal characteristics of Oklahoma school principals. **This survey will only be active until August 31, 2005.** Completion of this survey takes approximately 10 minutes.

1. Are you male or female?
 - 1 ☐ Male
 - 2 ☐ Female

2. What is your race?
 - 1 ☐ White
 - 2 ☐ Black or African American
 - 3 ☐ Asian
 - 4 ☐ Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
 - 5 ☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
 - 6 ☐ Hispanic or Latino

3. What is your age?
 Years of age

4. Which of the following best describes the student enrollment of your school district?
 - 1 ☐ Fewer than 500
 - 2 ☐ 500-1,000
 - 3 ☐ 1,001-5,000
 - 4 ☐ 5,001-10,000
 - 5 ☐ More than 10,000

5. Which of the following best describes the poverty index (free/reduced rate) of your school or district?
- 1 ☐ 80% +
 - 2 ☐ 71-80%
 - 3 ☐ 61-70%
 - 4 ☐ 51-60%
 - 5 ☐ 41-50%
 - 6 ☐ 31-40%
 - 7 ☐ 21-30%
 - 8 ☐ 0-20%
6. Which of the following best describes the grade level of the students with whom you are currently working?
- 1 ☐ Early Childhood
 - 2 ☐ Elementary
 - 3 ☐ Middle Level
 - 4 ☐ Secondary
 - 5 ☐ Multi-Level
 - 6 ☐ Other
7. IF you selected "Other" on question 6, please describe the grade level of students with whom you are working.
-
8. Which of the following best describes this school's performance last year? *Mark only one box.*
- 1 ☐ Passed all district and state performance standards
 - 2 ☐ Passed most district and state performance standards
 - 3 ☐ Passed some district and state performance standards
 - 4 ☐ Passed no district and state performance standards
9. PRIOR to this school year, how many years did you serve as the principal of THIS OR ANY OTHER school? *Count part of a year as 1 year. If none, please mark 0.*
- ☐☐
10. PRIOR to this school year, how many years did you serve as the principal of THIS school? *Count part of a year as 1 year. If none, please mark 0.*
- ☐☐

11. Before you became a principal, how many years of elementary or secondary teaching experience did you have? Count part of a year as 1 year. If none, please mark 0.
- ☐☐
12. BEFORE you became a principal, did you hold the following school positions? Please select ALL that apply, including temporal positions.
- a. ☐ Department Head
 - b. ☐ Curriculum Specialist or Coordinator
 - c. ☐ Assistant Principal
 - d. ☐ Program Director
 - e. ☐ Guidance Counselor
 - f. ☐ Library Media Specialist/Librarian
 - g. ☐ Athletic Coach/Athletic Director
 - h. ☐ Sponsor for Student Clubs, Debate Teams
13. Before you became a principal, did you participate in a district or school training or development program for ASPIRING school principals?
- 1 ☐ Yes
 - 2 ☐ No
14. What is the highest degree you have earned? Check only one box.
- 1 ☐ Associate Degree
 - 2 ☐ Bachelor's Degree (B.A., B.S., B.E., etc.)
 - 3 ☐ Master's Degree (M.A., M.A.T., M.B.A., M.Ed., M.S., etc.)
 - 4 ☐ Education Specialist or Professional Diploma (at least one year beyond a master's level)
 - 5 ☐ Doctorate or First Professional Degree (Ph.D., Ed.D., M.D., L.L.B., J.D., D.D.S.)
 - 6 ☐ Do Not Have a Degree

15. What type of certification do you have as a school principal?
- 1 ☐ Alternative (Master's degree NOT in school or educational administration)
 - 2 ☐ Traditional (Master's degree IN school or educational administration)
16. Please list any prior relevant supervisory experience:
-

APPENDIX C

IRB APPROVAL FORM

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: IRS Tuesday, July 05, 2005
Application No ED05125
Proposal Title: The Preparation and Personal Characteristics of Alternately and
 Traditionally Certified School Principals
Reviewed and Exempt
Processed as:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved Protocol Expires: 7/4/2006

Principal

Investigator(s)

Pam Newell Bradley 7630
River Ridge Road
Muskogee, OK 74403

Ken Stern
311 Willard Stillwater,
OK 74078

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this study will be respected. and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with the IRB requirements as outlined in section 45 CFR 46.

The final versions of any printed recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRS approval stamp are attached to this letter. These are the versions that must be used during the study.


As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:

1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be submitted with the appropriate signatures for IRB approval.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period of one calendar year. This continuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any adverse events to the IRB Chair promptly. Adverse events are those which are unanticipated and impact the subjects during the course of this research; and
4. Notify the IRB office in writing when your research project is complete.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRS office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions about the IRS procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact Beth McTernan in 415 Whitehurst (phone: 405-744-5700, beth.mcternan@okstate.edu).

Sincerely,

~~~~~  
Sue C. Jacobs, Chair  
Institutional Review Board



## APPENDIX D

### TABLES

Table 15.

\*Prior School Leadership Positions Held

| School Leadership Position            | Number | Percentage |
|---------------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Department Head                       | 27     | 14.9       |
| Curriculum Specialist/<br>Coordinator | 20     | 11.0       |
| Assistant Principal                   | 36     | 19.9       |
| Program Director                      | 15     | 8.3        |
| Sponsor of Student Clubs              | 34     | 18.8       |
| Guidance Counselor                    | 19     | 10.5       |
| Library Media<br>Specialist/Librarian | 0      | 0.0        |
| Coach/Athletic Director               | 30     | 16.6       |

\* Some of these numbers may be duplicates as participants were asked to check any or all that applied.

Table 16.

## Admission Requirements for Principal Candidates

| Admission Requirements                                                                | University                                   |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------|
| GRE (Graduate Record Exam) 900+<br>(combined score on verbal & quantitative sections) | OSU                                          |
| GRE >900                                                                              | NWOSU; ORU; OU; SNU                          |
| MAT ( Miller's Analogy Test) 39+                                                      | OSU                                          |
| MAT >39                                                                               | NSU;ORU; SNU                                 |
| GPA of 3.0 +                                                                          | NSU; ORU; OSU; OU; SNU;                      |
| GPA >3.0                                                                              | NWOSU; SWOSU; UCO                            |
| Letters of Recommendation                                                             | OSU; OU;SNU; SWOSU; UCO                      |
| Undergrad/Grad Transcripts                                                            | ECU; NWOSU; OSU; OU; SOSU; SWOSU; UCO        |
| Essay/Writing Exam                                                                    | NSU; OSU; OU                                 |
| Interview                                                                             | OSU; OU                                      |
| Application                                                                           | ECU; NSU;OSU; ORU; OU; SOSU; SNU; SWOSU; UCO |
| Biography & Code of Honor                                                             | ORU                                          |

For the purposes of this study, the following abbreviations were used for the ten universities whose school administration programs were examined: East Central University-ECU; Northeastern State University-NSU; Northwestern Oklahoma State University-NWOSU; Oral Roberts University-ORU; Oklahoma State University-OSU; Oklahoma University-OU; Southern Nazarene University-SNU; Southeastern Oklahoma State University-SOSU; Southwestern Oklahoma State University-SWOSU; and University of Central Oklahoma-UCO.

Table 17.

Number of Hours of School Administrative Coursework Required

| Administrative Coursework Hours Required | University                                      |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------|
| 18                                       | ECU; NSU; NWOSU; ORU; OSU; OU; SOSU; SWOSU; UCO |
| 15                                       | SNU                                             |

Table 18.

Coursework Requirements for Principal Candidates

| Coursework Requirements               | University                                     |
|---------------------------------------|------------------------------------------------|
| School Law                            | ALL                                            |
| Fundamentals of School Administration | ALL                                            |
| Supervision of Teachers/Personnel     | ALL                                            |
| School Finance                        | ECU; NSU; NWOSU; SNU; SWOSU; ORU; OSU; OU; UCO |
| Public School Relations               | NSU; NWOSU SOSU; SNU; SWOSU; OU; UCO           |
| Program Design/Organization/Theory    | NSU; NWOSU SOSU; SNU; SWOSU; ORU; OSU; OU      |
| History/Philosophy                    | NWOSU; ORU;SOSU;SNU                            |

Table 19.

Gender and Age of Alternatively Certified Participants (n = 32)

| Gender | Age   |       |       |     | Total |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
|        | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 59+ |       |
| Male   | 1     | 1     | 5     | 0   | 7     |
| Female | 2     | 6     | 16    | 1   | 25    |
| Total  | 3     | 7     | 21    | 1   | 32    |

Table 20.

Gender and Age of Traditionally Certified Participants (n = 72)

| Gender | Age   |       |       |     | Total |
|--------|-------|-------|-------|-----|-------|
|        | 30-39 | 40-49 | 50-59 | 59+ |       |
| Male   | 5     | 16    | 11    | 3   | 35    |
| Female | 5     | 15    | 17    | 0   | 37    |
| Total  | 10    | 31    | 28    | 3   | 72    |

Table 21.

Ethnicity and Gender of Alternatively Certified Participants (n = 30)

| Gender | Ethnicity |                  |       |                                 |                 |          | Total |
|--------|-----------|------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|
|        | Caucasian | African American | Asian | Hawaiian/<br>Native<br>Islander | American Indian | Hispanic |       |
| Male   | 5         | 0                | 0     | 1                               | 1               | 1        | 8     |
| Female | 17        | 5                | 0     | 0                               | 0               | 0        | 22    |
| Total  | 22        | 5                | 0     | 1                               | 1               | 1        | 30    |

Table 22.

Ethnicity and Gender of Traditionally Certified Participants (n = 72)

| Gender | Ethnicity |                  |       |                                 |                 |          | Total |
|--------|-----------|------------------|-------|---------------------------------|-----------------|----------|-------|
|        | Caucasian | African American | Asian | Hawaiian/<br>Native<br>Islander | American Indian | Hispanic |       |
| Male   | 32        | 0                | 0     | 1                               | 2               | 0        | 35    |
| Female | 31        | 1                | 0     | 0                               | 5               | 0        | 37    |
| Total  | 63        | 1                | 0     | 1                               | 7               | 0        | 72    |



Table 23.

## A Comparative View of the Gender of Principals

| Gender | NCES<br>Survey<br>1987-1988 | NCES<br>Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES<br>Survey<br>1993-94 | NCES<br>Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal<br>Survey<br>2005 |
|--------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|        | Percentage                  | Percentage                  | Percentage                | Percentage                  | Percentage                              |
| Male   | 76                          | 65                          | 66                        | 56                          | 40                                      |
| Female | 24                          | 35                          | 34                        | 44                          | 60                                      |

Table 24.

## A Comparative View of the Ethnicity of Principals

| Ethnicity                     | NCES Survey<br>1987-1988 | NCES Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal Survey<br>2005 |
|-------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                               | Percentage               | Percentage               | Percentage               | Percentage                           |
| Caucasian                     | 93.0                     | 84.0                     | 82.0                     | 82.0                                 |
| African<br>American           | 4.0                      | 10.0                     | 11.0                     | 6.0                                  |
| Hispanic                      | 2.0                      | 4.0                      | 5.0                      | 0                                    |
| Asian/<br>Pacific<br>Islander | 0.3                      | 1.0                      | 1.0                      | 2.0                                  |
| American<br>Indian            | 0.7                      | 1.0                      | 1.0                      | 10.0                                 |

Table 25.

A Comparative View of the Average Age of Principals

| Average Age<br>of Principals | NCES Survey<br>1987-1988 | NCES Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal<br>Survey<br>2005 |
|------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------------|
|                              | 46.8                     | 47.7                     | 48.6                     | 48.8                                    |

Table 26.

A Comparative View of Degree Level of Principals

| Degree                                   | CES Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES Survey<br>Oklahoma<br>1993-94 | NCES Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal<br>Survey 2005 |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                          | Percentage              | Percentage                         | Percentage               | Percentage                           |
| Bachelor's                               | 1                       | NA                                 | 2                        | 1                                    |
| Education<br>Specialist/<br>Professional | 26                      | 3.9                                | 34                       | 9                                    |
| Master's                                 | 63                      | 71.6                               | 54                       | 86                                   |
| Doctorate                                | 9                       | 3.7                                | 10                       | 4                                    |

Table 27.

A Comparative View of Grade Levels of Principals

| School Levels | CES Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal Survey<br>2005 |
|---------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|               | Percentage              | Percentage               | Percentage                           |
| Elementary    | 72                      | 72                       | 50                                   |
| Secondary     | 24                      | 24                       | 27                                   |
| Multi-Level   | 4                       | 4                        | 13.1                                 |
| Other         |                         |                          | 10.1                                 |

Table 28.

A Comparative View of Experience of Principals

| Average Years<br>of Experience              | NCES Survey<br>1987-1988 | NCES Survey<br>1993-1994 | NCES Survey<br>1999-2000 | Oklahoma<br>Principal<br>Survey 2005 |
|---------------------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------------------|
|                                             | Percentage               | Percentage               | Percentage               | Percentage                           |
| Average Years<br>of Teaching<br>Experience  | 10                       | 11                       | 14                       | 11                                   |
| Average Years<br>of Principal<br>Experience | 10                       | 9                        | 9                        | 7                                    |

Table 29.

A Comparison of National and Oklahoma Principals

| Common Traits   | Nation's Principals   | Oklahoma Participants |
|-----------------|-----------------------|-----------------------|
| Gender          | Male                  | Female                |
| Ethnicity       | White                 | White                 |
| Average Age     | 47.7                  | 48.8                  |
| Degree Level    | Master's              | Master's              |
| Degree Emphasis | School Administration | School Administration |

Table 30.

A Comparison of Oklahoma Principals and Survey Participants

|                               | Alternative Certification |         | Traditional Certification |         | All Participants |         |
|-------------------------------|---------------------------|---------|---------------------------|---------|------------------|---------|
|                               | Number                    | Percent | Number                    | Percent | Number           | Percent |
| Number of Oklahoma Principals | 2,505                     | 32      | 5,274                     | 68      | 7,779            | 100     |
| Number of Survey Participants | 32                        | 31      | 72                        | 69      |                  | 100     |

## VITA

Pamela Jean Newell-Bradley

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Education Administration

Thesis: THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PREPARATION OF ALTERNATIVELY  
AND TRADITIONALLY CERTIFIED OKLAHOMA SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Major Field: School Administration

Biographical:

Personal Data: Born in Casa Grande, Arizona, on December 28, 1957, the sixth daughter of Charles E. and Nina Darland-Newell. Married to Charles G. Bradley. Mother of five children: Jeremy, Rebecca, Cali, Archie and Alex; and grandmother to three: Lilli, Annika and Atley.

Education: Graduated from Fort Gibson High School, Fort Gibson, Oklahoma, May 1976; received Bachelor of Science degree in Physical Education and a Bachelor of Science Degree in Language Arts from Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, December 1981. Completed the requirements for a Master of Science degree with a major in School Administration and Language Arts at Northeastern State University, Tahlequah, Oklahoma, May 1992. Completed the requirements for a Doctor of Education degree at Oklahoma State University, May, 2006.

Experience: Worked as teacher, coach and/or principal at the following Oklahoma schools: Hilldale Public Schools, Muskogee; Fort Gibson Public Schools, Fort Gibson; Warner Public Schools, Warner; and Muskogee Public Schools, Muskogee.

Professional Memberships: Oklahoma Association of Elementary School Principals: President-Elect, District Representative and National Distinguished Principal; National Association of Elementary School Principals; Oklahoma Middle Level Association; Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Name: Pamela Newell Bradley

Date of Degree: May, 2006

Institution: Oklahoma State University

Location: Tulsa, Oklahoma

Title of Study: THE CHARACTERISTICS AND PREPARATION OF  
ALTERNATIVELY AND TRADITIONALLY CERTIFIED  
OKLAHOMA SCHOOL PRINCIPALS

Pages in Study: 92

Candidate for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Major Field: School Administration

Scope and Method of Study: Quantitative Study with an On-line Survey

Findings and Conclusions: This study draws together survey results from an on-line instrument administered to Oklahoma principals who are members of the Cooperative Council of Oklahoma School Administrators. This study is one of the first to evaluate how alternative certification is affecting the profile of the principalship in Oklahoma. Following are some of the study's findings: (1) a larger percentage of females serve in the principalship than in previous years in comparison with national studies; (2) traditional principals have more administrative experience than do alternative principals; (3) traditional principals' schools have a larger percentage passing all of the performance standards than do alternative principals' schools; (4) alternative principals on the average are older than traditional principals; (5) alternative principals are more likely to work in larger school districts than traditional principals; (6) alternative principals are more likely to work in schools with a higher poverty level than traditional principals; (7) there were more minorities from the alternatively certified group of participants than from the traditionally certified group of participants when analyzing by gender and ethnicity.

ADVISER'S APPROVAL: Dr. Judith Mathers

---

