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for nontraditional schools**

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Pepperdine University

Graduate School of Education and Psychology

PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE SKILLS NEEDED FOR THE
ADMINISTRATION OF NONTRADITIONAL SCHOOLS

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy

by

Bon Ike

July, 2012

Robert Barner, Ph.D. – Dissertation Chairperson

This dissertation, written by

Bon Ike

under the guidance of a Faculty Committee and approved by its members, has been submitted to and accepted by the Graduate Faculty in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my parents and family. Lifelong education is our absolute focus and I hope this dissertation will motivate us to be the best we can be. Therefore, this study will always remind us to keep our ways straight and educated.

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VITA

STATEMENT OF OBJECTIVITY

In pursuit of a lifelong education and advocacy of educational leadership to make a difference in peoples' lives

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Master of Arts in Education: Educational Administration

Bachelor of Science in Applied and Natural Science 1991

PROFESSIONAL CREDENTIALS

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Pupil Personnel Services Credential**PROFESSIONAL EXPERIRNCE**

Los Angeles Unified School District 2000 – present
Administrator, Adult Program Planning
 Coordinator, Crenshaw High School
 Counselor, Washington Preparatory High School

CONSULTATION

South of Los Angeles (SOLA) Development of Supplemental Education Services
 Saint Michael's School: Students and Teachers Educational Programs (STEP)
 Horace Mann Team for District Validation Review (DVR)

RESEARCH EXPERIENCE

Study and Creation of University Preparation Science program
 Flocculence Measurement of Yeast Strains Isolated from Palmwine
 Development and Implementation of Adult Education Pre-Employment Training
 Principals' Perceptions of the Skills Needed for Administration of Nontraditional Schools

PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATION AND AWARD

Changing Lives and Interests Through Education (CLITE)
 Honorable CLITE—Educational Excellence Award
 Educational Testing Service (ETS)
 National Education Association (NEA)
 STEMM—MESA/University of California, Los Angeles Award
 Western Association of Schools and Colleges (WASC)
 Educational Leadership, Administration, and Policy (ELAP)

ABSTRACT

In California, graduate-level school leadership degrees and credentialing programs prepare primarily K-12 traditional public school principals (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2012). The number and diversity of K-12 nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County, predominantly charter schools, have increased. Therefore, unique skills are necessary to continue serving and meeting the increasing needs in K-12 nontraditional schools.

The purpose of this study is to explore the skills needed to administer nontraditional schools, as “the role of the principal has become dramatically more complex, overloaded, and unclear over the past decade” (Fullan, 1991, p. 144). Two research questions guided this study. First, what skills do principals perceive to be needed for the administration of nontraditional schools? Second, what skills do principals perceive to be most difficult to acquire, thus requiring training and development?

Educational policymakers, members of credentialing commissions, leaders of non-profit organizations, and researchers have shown interest in the skills of principals as educational leaders (Kafka, 2009). Some studies shared that approximately 25% of student achievement has a direct relationship with educational leadership actions (Borsuk, 2010; Kafka, 2009). There are some efforts from state and federal levels to improve the skills of school administrators and leadership preparation programs such as the Race to The Top (R2T) Program. In addition, colleges, local educational agencies, non-profit organizations, and universities across the United States are improving educational leadership programs (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2008).

This study's methodology was qualitative grounded theory, which produced six skills sets needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as a substantive-level theory. The second emerged substantive-level theory is that the collaboration and decision-making skills sets are difficult skills sets to acquire. As a result, frameworks, implementations, dispositions, and adaptations of educational programs for the increasing needs of nontraditional schools should focus on enhancing these difficult skills sets. Theoretically, this study adds to the body of literature for individuals, institutions, education review boards, credentialing commissions, and accreditation organizations. Moreover, this study contributes to educational leadership programs, thus it is vastly recommended for further research, expansion, and implementation in its entirety.

Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Educational policymakers, members of credentialing commissions, leaders of nonprofit organizations, and researchers have shown interest in the skills needed to meet the increasing responsibilities of principals (Kafka, 2009). As well, the role of the principal in studies has shown tremendous expansion. Approximately 25% of student achievement relates directly to school leadership actions, and specifically principals contribute 5% (Borsuk, 2010; Kafka, 2009). Resultantly, there have been some efforts at the state and federal levels to improve the skills of school principals and leadership preparation programs for principals. However, the administration of nontraditional schools receives very little attention and efforts. Nontraditional schools with unique challenges need principals with unique skills to mitigate the increasing needs. For instance, accountability is a key aspect of the expanding role of the principal, more so in nontraditional schools, especially with respect to student achievement. Lashway (2000) indicated that accountability is yet a responsibility of principals that demands special skills and a new structure of principalship to maintain daily routines.

The federal government recently increased the accountability demand in the role of the principal in several ways. First, in a speech to a cross section of principals during his campaign for turning around the nations' worst public schools, U.S. Secretary of Education Arne Duncan called for principals to be more accountable for teacher improvement by fixing the broken teacher evaluation system . Second, the Race to the Top program is an accountability tool intended to give motivation to states, Local Educational Agencies (LEAs), and schools to implement intensive and extensive

transformations that should lead to improved student growth, reduced achievement gaps, and better graduation rates in career and college enrollments (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Although nontraditional schools have exemptions from many state laws and district bureaucratic policies such as staffing needs, their principals must still meet the accountability standards of student achievement and school improvement, even more than their counterparts do in traditional schools. Beyond accountability, the skills needed of a given nontraditional school principal are even more wide-ranging in scope because of nontraditional schools' needs and the expectations placed on principals (Lane, 1998).

All stakeholders hold high expectations for principals to improve schools and student achievement. Scherer (2010) noted,

If there has been a time to improve schools, the time is now; when both school insiders and school outsiders are calling for change, the unprecedented flow of funding for innovation makes it especially advantageous for schools and educators to identify and implement good ideas (p. 5).

There are obvious needs to improve schools, students' performance, and principals' skills. U.S. Secretary of Education Duncan claimed that, for the first time in history, the nation has the resources at the federal level to drive reform (U.S. Department of Education, 2010). Duncan was referring to the Race to the Top program, also known as the State Incentive Grant Fund, a \$4.35 billion fund created under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act. Nevertheless, there is great need at this time not just for the reforms stated but also to educate U.S. students, sustain U.S. society, and withstand international competition through sustained improvement of schools and principals. The

resultant effect of all the demands from society is the apparent overwhelming responsibilities placed on principals.

The national organizations representing different school administrators and principals are keenly involved in discussions on qualifications and skills for principals (National Staff Development Council, 2010). The National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP; 2010) and other principal organizations have been at the forefront of identifying qualifications and skills needed for the administration of schools. This study identifies needed principals' skills directed at the administrative skills that greatly affect principals' abilities to perform their duties. The NASSP Assessment Center outlined skills such as sensitivity, leadership, educational values, stress tolerance, sound judgment, problem solving, and oral and written communication (NASSP, 2010).

Other researchers have focused on identifying the standards and skills principals need for the administration of schools, including Portin, Schneider, DeArmond, and Gundlach (2003). The three key components of Portin et al.'s leadership skills are instructional development, a meaningful accountability system, and the school management process. In addition to emphasizing leadership skills, Portin et al. indicated how they should apply to training, policy, and professional development. Portin et al. suggested seven key skills needed by principals and other school leaders for the administration of schools in order to realize the mission and goals of the schools: instructional, cultural, managerial, human resources, strategic, external development, and micropolitical.

Although standards exist, the degree to which they are implemented and effective remains unknown, especially in licensing nontraditional school principals. A study is

necessary to understand the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. In addition to Portin et al.'s (2003) seven leadership skills, the national organization representing different school administrators and principals, the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC), conducted studies with emphasis on skills such as morality, good judgment, problem solving, organization, focus, dexterity, inspiration, decision making, values, and written and oral communication. All these skills identified for principals are synonymous to the skills that credentialing commissions and educational boards use for program standards.

In January 2010, the Professional Services Committee of the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing outlined a plan for a study on preparing leaders for California schools. The plan was in response to Assembly Bill 148 proposed in 2009, requesting the commission to look into how leaders are prepared for the changing needs of schools. In addition, the plan alluded to a reconsideration of program standards, which includes skills for preparing school administrators and was scheduled for 2013 (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2012). Program standards include the skills and quality of the requirements particular to a credential. Individuals meeting the referenced credential requirements for a particular credential such as an administrative credential need to have or acquire the requisite skills set similar to the skills identified in this grounded theory study.

Nontraditional schools, predominantly charter schools, are presently the face of school reform in the United States. The idea of charter schools in United States links to a paper written in 1974 by Ray Budde who receives credit for the charter school concept (Cobb & Garn, 2001). The key concept or alternative for LEA is educating students by

charter. It is simply the drive to high accountability with less bureaucratic control. In California, the number of charter schools has grown steadily since 1992. The 2010 national charter school and enrollment statistics listed students' enrollment in California as 348,686 in 941 charter schools (Center for Education Research [CER], 2011).

California has the most active charter schools in the nation. There are different kinds of charter schools in California: conversion, independent, start-up, and dependent. One outstanding difference between traditional schools and charter schools is the policies and programs outlined in the charter petition, which guides charter schools (Griffin & Wohlstetter, 2001). As a result, charter schools have the autonomy to make decisions different from the school boards of education governing LEAs. In addition, charter schools receive waivers from state laws and regulations that allow some independence in organizational decisions but places accountability requirements on nontraditional school principals (Buddin & Zimmer, 2005). One of the effects of the growth of nontraditional schools such as charters and the expanding role of principals could be many vacancies for principal positions.

An Education Research Services study on a principal shortage in 1998, supported in 2000 by the Institute for Educational Leadership report, indicated the candidate pool for filling principal positions is drying up. With the increase in principal responsibilities, fewer educators are motivated to become principals. DiPaola and Tschannen-Moran (2003) noted, "Those educators who hold administrative licenses are not applying for positions and few are pursuing licensure" (p. 48). Moreover, California does not require licensure or mentoring for principals of nontraditional schools, which makes the study of

principals' perception of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools important.

Statement of the Problem

The initial requirement for the position now regarded as a principalship was a teaching credential, as principals were initially teachers. Schools then had single classrooms and single teachers. "As schools became larger in the early 1800s, grade-level classes were established, and the position of 'principal-teacher' was created" (Kafka, 2009, p. 321). Since then, the principalship has expanded such that all states require certification for principals; however, requirements for licensure or certification may vary from state to state (Matthews & Crow, 2003). Although there is a variance in principal certification requirements, it usually includes teaching experience, preparation through a program, and/or a valid score on a national licensure examination. In California, graduate-level school leadership degrees and credentialing programs prepare primarily K-12 traditional public school principals (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2012). The number of K-12 nontraditional schools, predominantly charter schools, in Los Angeles County has been increasing (CER, 2011). Therefore, unique skills are necessary to continue serving and meeting the increasing needs of K-12 nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as perceived by principals of nontraditional schools. This study also involved exploring the skills, which principals perceived to be difficult to develop or acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools. The outcome of the study may

lead to designs, implementations, dispositions, and adaptations of educational programs for the increasing needs of nontraditional schools.

Research Questions

1. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are needed for the administration of nontraditional schools?
2. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are most difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools, thus requiring training and development?

Theoretical Framework

Instead of starting with a theoretical framework like the other qualitative research designs, this study with grounded theory as a qualitative research method produced a substantive-level theory from the perceptions of principals in the field and some theoretical ideas. The theoretical ideas gleaned from several theories enabled the emergence of a substantive proposition (Creswell, 2007). The proposition then transformed into substantive-level theory at the conclusion of the study and became a theoretical framework. Specifically, this study involved a constructive grounded theory variant advocated by Charmaz (2006).

Constructive grounded theorists use a flexible framework to focus on the observations, beliefs, and perceptions of participants rather than on the research methodology (Charmaz, 2006). Charmaz (as cited in Creswell, 2007), “advocates for social constructivist perspectives that includes emphasizing diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions” (p. 56). Rather than starting with a theory, social constructivists develop subjective meanings of their

experiences through worldviews, interactions, and multiple realities. One of the worldviews or notions in this study was the changing roles of the principals, which led to the study. Orr (2001) inferred that the changing role of the principal may make the duties of principals “no longer tenable” (p. 11). Orr continued, “Greatly expanding demands and pressures for accountability overwhelm the principalship” (p. 12). In addition, Orr noted that the principals’ duties are “the largest deterrent to recruiting and retaining well-qualified school leaders” (p. 23). One of Orr’s recommendations to school district administrators was to “support principals in learning the knowledge and skills that these forms of leadership will require” (p. 26). The increasing and changing roles of principalship, as well as the increasing number of nontraditional schools, have resulted in principal shortage and varieties of school demands. As such, it is critical to ground the perspectives of principals in the field on the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Importance of the Study

This study is important for two major reasons. The first reason is the practical implications of the study. With the increasing principal responsibilities and need for principals, aspiring and relocating principals would benefit from knowing the special skills needed to perform the job in which they are interested. Nontraditional school administrators or management teams in California could benefit from knowing the skills needed for principal vacancies. Universities, colleges, and nontraditional institutions could provide training, principal professional development, and internship programs for the development of principals and potential leaders. Because the roles of the principal have evolved, principals’ perceptions of the skills needed for the administration of the

nontraditional schools would help to equip principals with the tools to manage the responsibilities bestowed on them.

Second, because this research is grounded theory in nature, it produced a substantive-level theory for nontraditional schools. The substantive-level theory will be available for further research (Creswell, 2007). The result is the theory and the opportunity to add to future studies. This study may contribute theoretically to the body of literature for individuals; institutions; and perhaps credentialing commissions, education review boards, and accreditation organizations. In California, this study could contribute to the quality of program characteristics that are peculiar to graduate-level leadership degrees and credential preparation programs. The fundamental aspect of this research was the focus on studying principals who had perceptions of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools and then developing a substantive-level theory, which provides a framework for training and professional development.

Delimitation of the Study

This study was limited to principals in Los Angeles County nontraditional schools in Grades 6 through 8 or Grades 9 through 12. Additionally, the sampling was not a representative sampling of any or all nontraditional schools. Hence, it was important not to characterize the study to a particular type of nontraditional school.

Study Limitations

This research was an exploratory study, which required self-reporting views. Therefore, the data collected and accepted for the study emerged from the self-reporting interview. In addition, the level of candor of the participants could be subject to limitations. As a result, generalization of the findings is subjective. The study may need

quantitative data because of its importance and in furthering the study. Finally, although experts reviewed the instrument used in this study, there could be some concerns or unforeseen circumstances with the questions, its administration, or response analyses.

Statement of Assumptions

The basic assumption was that interviews would extract honest responses from participants. As a result, the accuracy of the study, which depended on the perceptions of the principals who participated in the study, has produced honest responses in regard to the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. The assumption of accuracy or high level of candor of the responses was based on subjective perceptions. Also, the findings drawn from the analyses of data in this study may be undeniably correct in their entirety. Another assumption was that the interview questions designed for this study appealed to the respondents such that they gave the most reliable answers. Finally, the conclusion of the study may provoke discussions that may or may lead to further empirical studies.

Key Terms

Accountability: Accountability is about a school's obligation to society, so it will never be just an internal matter (Lashway, 2000).

Coaching: Coaching is "the practice of providing deliberate support to another individual to help him or her to clarify and/or achieve goals" (Bloom, Castagna, Moir, & Warren, 2005, p. 5).

Mentoring: Mentoring is support from a knowledgeable collaborator to aid a struggling person or anyone new to a situation to learn and function at a higher level of effectiveness (Villani, 2006).

Principal: A principal is an important person who acts in an important role in setting the direction of a school for a productive teacher workplace and a positive student learning environment. Principals' knowledge, skills, and abilities are important for building successful schools that advance good teaching for teachers and education for students (Davis, Darling-Hammond, LaPointe, & Meyerson, 2005).

Superprincipal: Superprincipal is a principal who accomplishes a seemingly impossible number of principal responsibilities (Copeland, 2001). Researchers may use the term to elaborate that it is difficult to begin to imagine the regular everyday duties of any given principal.

Vision: Vision is "a realistic, credible, attractive future for an organization" (DuFour, DuFour, & Eaker, 2008, p. 472).

Voucher: A voucher is "any system of certificate or cash payments by the government that enables public school students to attend schools of their choice, public or private" (Sergiovanni, Kelleher, McCarthy, & Wirt, 2004, p. 36).

Operational Definitions

Administration: "Administration is generally defined as a process of working with and through others to accomplish school goals effectively and efficiently" (Sergiovanni et al., 2004, p. 58).

Charter schools: Privately or "publicly sponsored autonomous schools that are substantially free from direct administrative control by the government but are held accountable for achieving certain levels of student performance and other specified outcomes" (Sergiovanni et al., 2004, p. 36). Charter schools are renewable every 3 to 5 years based on student growth and charter objectives.

Nontraditional schools: Schools not traditionally K-12 government and fully funded public schools are classified in this study as nontraditional schools. There are numerous nontraditional schools. Any school not solely or publicly funded and operated by the government, such as private, charter, religious, cultural, and parochial schools, are regarded as nontraditional schools for this study (Ike, 2012).

Principal preparation program: As used in this study, a principal preparation program provides training for future and novice principals to gain varied tools and knowledge to face the difficulties and challenges that characterize career transition and the early years in the post both effectively and successfully (Crow, 2006).

Principals' perceptions: According to Creswell (2007), principals' perceptions are the ideas, beliefs, values, views, and lived experiences of the persons leading a community of learners.

Skills: "Skills involve complex sequences of actions that have become so routinized through practice and experience that they are performed semi-automatically" (Guskey & Huberman, 1995, p. 239). Skills include abilities cultured and attained with experience to carry out actions and achieve desired outcomes.

Substantive-level theory: The main operational definition of the study is simply a theory "written by a researcher close to a specific problem or population of people" (Creswell, 2007, p. 67). This is a theory that is applicable to immediate situation (Creswell, 2007). In this study, the substantive-level theory is the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Position to the Study

Schools and students should not fail if they have highly skilled principals. Unfortunately, government and educators are not providing enough resources and attention to prepare and license all principals. This study in its design deliberately extends experience, knowledge, and skills toward a meaningful substantive proposition for all schools, especially nontraditional schools. Leaders matter and using this opportunity to add a study and theory to the body of literature is important for supporting both schools and students. As an educator, the researcher has seen good principals bring the best out of their schools and some principals who struggled. What leaders do and how they interact with others have profound effects on the level of performances of the organizations in which they work. In addition, the unique position a principal holds as a pivotal person in a vantage position allows a principal to direct the school-wide vision. Therefore, the researcher's position was to focus on the skills that principals need for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1, this chapter, included an introduction of the study. The chapter included key aspects of the research, such as the background, problem statement, purpose of the study, and research questions. Also included were the importance of the study, study limitations, delimitations, assumptions, key terms, operational definitions, researcher's position, and this organization of the study.

Chapter 2 contains a review of the literature on principalship and charter schools (representing nontraditional schools) as two variables in the study of principals' perceptions of the skills needed in the administration of nontraditional schools. The

review includes analyses of the two variables, principalship and charter schools, with histories, theories, and themes. The chapter closes with a summary of the literature reviewed.

Chapter 3 includes an explanation of the method used in the study. Since the readers' understanding of the study is still of essence, the chapter recasts brief background information, the purpose of the study, and the research questions. In addition, Chapter 3 includes discussions on instrumentation, approach, participants, procedure, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter 4 contains the results and shares the findings from the analysis of the data collected for the study. The chapter includes a discussion on the findings.

Chapter 5 is the study conclusion and contains a general summary of the study. The chapter also provides the recommendations and conclusions.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Overview

The role of a principal has expanded since the inception of the position. Fullan (1991) wrote, “The role of the principal has become dramatically more complex, overloaded, and unclear over the past decades” (p. 144). The exponential growth of nontraditional schools in California has added more challenges to the complexities of the role of principals of nontraditional schools. As a result, principals’ acquisition and improvement of leadership skills for the administration of nontraditional schools have become a necessity. Educational policymakers, members of credentialing commissions, leaders of nonprofit organizations, and researchers have shown interests in the skills of principals as leaders (Borsuk, 2010; Kafka, 2009). There are some efforts at state and federal levels to improve the skills of school administrators and leadership preparation programs. In addition, colleges, LEAs, nonprofit organizations, and universities across the nation have improved educational leadership programs (Borsuk, 2010; Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2008). However, very few of these efforts are geared toward the certification of principals of nontraditional schools.

Principalship and nontraditional schools (charter schools) are two variables in this literature review. Nontraditional schools also include private, religious, cultural, parochial, and private online schools, but this review involves only charter schools. The review also includes analyses of principalship and charter schools with histories, theories, and themes of the variables. In addition, this review intended to show readers that the role of principals in traditional schools has expanded, more so in nontraditional schools, and requires unique skills for the schools administrative needs and principal certifications.

Challenges were encountered during the search for literature on the topic because the initial searches were limited to peer-reviewed studies from 2007 to 2011, and the primary databases for education research such as Academic Search Elite, Business Source Premier, dissertations and theses, Education Full Text, ERIC, SCOPUS, and Research Library yielded very little literature. In addition, Google Scholar, other electronic databases, journals and periodicals, and the Ask a Librarian service used did not reveal much relevant literature. An expansion in search parameters yielded few more published studies related to principalship and nontraditional schools. A combination of parallel literature produced additional published studies for this review.

Principalship

The term principal as used in the review refers to the point person leading a school. Lashway (2000) indicated that a principal is the key individual who addresses school community concerns while championing the cause of the school. In some cases, two persons lead a school as co-principals. Davis et al. (2005), described a principal as an important person who plays an important role in setting the direction of a school for a productive teacher workplace and a positive student learning environment. Principals' knowledge, skills, and abilities are important to building successful schools to support good teaching for teachers and student growth. In 2000, Institute of Educational Leadership, an inquiry institution located in Washington, DC, outlined three categories of a principal: instructional, visionary, and community leaders. The Institute of Educational Leadership (2000), past characterization of a principal indicated:

For the past century, principals mostly were expected to comply with district-level edicts, address personnel issues, order supplies, balance program budgets, keep

hallways and playground safe, put out fires that threatened tranquil public relations, and make sure that busing and meal services were operating smoothly (p. 2).

Principals complete all the tasks stated above in addition to other expectations.

The goal for attaining positive student achievement demands that principals possess great skills since “A growing body of literature suggests that there is a discernible relationship between school leaders’ actions and students’ achievement” (Kafka, 2009, p. 318).

Leadership accounts for approximately 25% of the changeable factors affecting student achievement, with 5% directly relating to principals (Leithwood & Reihl, 2003). School leaders such as principals are point persons in effecting changes and progress. Orr (2001) added that the changing role of principals might make the duties impossible to accomplish and that “Greatly expanding demands and pressures for accountability overwhelm the principalship” (p. 12). Orr noted that the principal duties are the largest contributing factors to principal shortage and turnover. One of Orr’s recommendations to school district administrators is to “support principals in learning the knowledge and skills that these forms of leadership will require” (p. 26).

History of Principalship in Administration of Schools

At the beginning of the literature review, searching the history of principalship yielded very little published historical research. Most of the studies on the principalship were on the management of schools (Blount, 1998; Tyack & Hansot, 1982). Three explanations for this development are first, the focus of most historical studies on principalship is on the improvement of the role of a principal written by non-historians without deeply looking into the histories of principalship. Second, different labels such as

school leadership and administration replaced principalship in most of the studies, which then influenced the direction of the history of principalship. Third, historians have not taken great interest in school principalship (Rousmaniere, 2007). A fourth and current possible reason is the social history and politics of principalship (Kafka, 2009). However, there are still a handful of histories of American principalship (Brown, 2005; Cubberly, 1934; Kafka, 2009).

Dating back to the 15th century, teachers in England occupied positions similar to the modern principal in the United States. In 1537, also the Germany Strasburg Magistrate requested a secondary school boy's organizer similar to the role of a principal. Johanna Sturm organized the secondary school boys and supervised teachers, similar to the role of a principal in the United States (Matthews & Crow, 2003). In the period between the 15th and the 19th centuries, schools had single classrooms and teachers (or head teachers), or masters (or headmasters), who then reported to elected leaders in the school areas. As schools changed, from having one classroom to having many classrooms, the term principal-teacher was used to describe the school principal (Kafka, 2009). Online etymology analysis showed principal as a noun and used in 1827 for a person who oversees a public school, deriving its origin from the Latin word *Principalis*, meaning first in importance. The term principal-teacher meant that this person, in addition to being first in importance, performed some administrative and classified duties and was a teacher who still maintained teaching assignments. As schools continued to grow in student enrollment and faculty employed, principal-teachers delegated teaching assignments and became principals whose primary responsibilities were management, supervision, and administration (Brown, 2005; Cuban, 1988; Rousmaniere, 2007).

In the 19th century, the role of a principal was similar to the headmaster role in English public schools (Matthews & Crow, 2003). Pierce (1935) offered an early clarification of the role of a principal, indicating that principals took attendance, taught, conducted discipline, had authority over the school personnel, and assigned classes. Pierce also noted that the principals' acquisition of authority varied from city to city. Principals in some cities gained authority in middle of the century and in other cities, the authority came decades later. In 1830, the Board of Education in Cincinnati received an inquiry by the Ohio Teachers Association to establish the duties of a principal (Pierce, 1935). The resultant highlights of the duties of principals were as follows:

- Lead a school
- Schedule classes
- Maintain grounds
- Report to the supervisor as necessary
- Motivate school personnel
- Safeguard students and properties
- Seek assistance of employees and assistants

In 1884, the Chicago superintendent of schools declared that a principal is of main importance in public schools (Pierce, 1935). The superintendent indicated that no amount of spontaneous supervision could substitute for a principal position. These types of statements consistently indicate that principals are keys to effective schools. In addition, the vantage point a principal occupies as an authority and the leader is important to the school community. Kafka (2009) noted based on comments by the superintendent of public schools in St. Louis made in 1841 that many cities received some central office

responsibilities when student enrollment increased more than the central office could handle. Pierce (1935) wrote that principal authorities grew rapidly from the 18th century.

The redefinition of the role showed a principal as a person who:

Gave orders and enforced them. He directed, advised, and instructed teachers. He classified pupils, disciplined them, and enforced safeguards designed to protect their health and morals. He supervised and rated janitors. He requisitioned all educational, and frequently all maintenance, supplies. Parents sought his advice, and respected his regulations (p. 39)

As the role grew, principals virtually delegated all teaching tasks to teachers and became more of professional administrators of their schools and taught fewer or no classes (Cuban, 1988). Instead, principals became more of the supervisors of teachers, established more independence, and gained authorities over their schools. These characteristics upgraded the status of principals leading up to the beginning of the 20th century when principals acquired more authority for the position through their role as supervisors of teachers. The idea that principals supervised teachers lent the position an added advantage (Kafka, 2009). Principals did not stop at gaining more independence, prestige, and authority; they worked to professionalize the position. The development of associations for those in the profession of principalship served to address the problems of the principalship and to promote growth of the profession. Pierce (1935) documented that the formation of professional bodies opened doors for more scholarship on principalship. In addition to the professional associations, principals need unique knowledge and skills for the administration of their schools.

English (2001) labeled the periods of changes in educational administration from 1875 to 1900 as the pre-scientific era, 1900 to 1921 as the scientific management period, 1925 to 1950 as the management duration, 1950 to 1966 as the administrative science phase, and from 1966 as the stage of psychology and administration of education. Kafka (2009) indicated that the role of principal currently includes politics.

The current market environment may place more emphasis on the political aspects of the principalship than in the past, but the notion that principals are accountable to, and somewhat dependent upon, public opinion is not new. Indeed, the history of the American school principal suggests that today's focus is on individual leaders as enactors of building-level change may yield mixed results. On one hand, principals have often been central to efforts to improving schooling and enact educational change. On the other hand, principals have historically acted as both part of and in response to existing structures and systems (p. 329)

Professional studies and practices showed that bureaucracy and instruction are core factors in defining the role of a principal. However, since 1990 initiatives on school reform have transformed the role of principals, further redefining principals as collaborative leaders (Sergiovanni et al., 2004) and politicians (Kafka, 2009).

The National Policy Board for Educational Administration (2001) also reviewed the role of the principal and brought together leaders of nine leadership groups. The groups are the American Association of School Administrators, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development, and the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO). Also in the group are the National Association of Elementary School Principals, the NASSP,

the National Council of Professors of Educational Administration, the National School Boards Association, and the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education. The nine leadership groups comprise the Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC). The CCSSO developed a set of six skills standards for school leaders. The CCSSO led ISLLC to identify the six skills standards listed below for principals and administrators (ISLLC, 1996).

Standard 1: An education leader promotes the success of every student by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning shared and supported by all stakeholders.

Functions:

- Collaboratively develop and implement a shared vision and mission.
- Collect and use data to identify goals, assess organizational effectiveness, and promote organizational learning.
- Create and implement plans to achieve goals.
- Promote continuous and sustainable improvement.
- Monitor and evaluate progress and revise plans.

Standard 2: An education leader promotes the success of every student by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

Functions:

- Nurture and sustain a culture of collaboration, trust, learning, and high expectations.
- Create a comprehensive, rigorous, and coherent curricular program.

- Create a personalized and motivating learning environment for students.
- Supervise instruction.
- Develop assessment and accountability systems to monitor student progress.
- Develop the instructional and leadership capacity of staff.
- Maximize time spent on quality instruction.
- Promote the use of the most effective and appropriate technologies to support teaching and learning.
- Monitor and evaluate the impact of the instructional program.

Standard 3: An education leader promotes the success of every student by ensuring management of the organization, operation, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

Functions:

- Monitor and evaluate the management and operational systems.
- Obtain, allocate, align, and efficiently utilize human, fiscal, and technological resources.
- Promote and protect the welfare and safety of students and staff.
- Develop the capacity for distributed leadership.
- Focus teacher and organizational time on support for quality instruction and student learning.

Standard 4: An education leader promotes the success of every student by collaborating with faculty and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

Functions:

- Collect and analyze data and information pertinent to the educational environment.
- Promote understanding, appreciation, and use of the community's diverse cultural, social, and intellectual resources.
- Build and sustain positive relationships with families and caregivers.
- Build and sustain productive relationships with community partners.

Standard 5: An education leader promotes the success of every student by acting with integrity, with fairness, and in an ethical manner.

Functions:

- Ensure a system of accountability for every student's academic and social success.
- Model principles of self-awareness, reflective practice, transparency, and ethical behavior.
- Safeguard the values of democracy, equity, and diversity.
- Consider and evaluate the potential moral and legal consequences of decision making.
- Promote social justice and ensure individual student needs inform all aspects of schooling.

Standard 6: An education leader promotes the success of every student by understanding, responding to, and influencing the political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context.

Functions:

- Advocate for children, families, and caregivers.

- Act to influence local, district, state, and national decisions affecting student learning.
- Analyze and anticipate emerging trends and initiatives in order to adapt leadership strategies.

The standards entered university programs, as well as the development and assessment of principals and principal preparation programs (Van Meter & McMinn, 2001). In addition, a framework from the standards is helping principals to sharpen and improve their skills in the administration of schools.

Theories of the Administration of Schools

This study used grounded theory research methodology. Grounded theory research methodology does not start with a theoretical framework (Creswell, 2007). As a result, this study adds theory to the body of literature for individuals; institutions; and perhaps for credentialing commissions, review boards, and accreditation organizations. However, social constructivism, symbolic interactionism, theories of human nature, and theories of leadership provided some theoretical ideas for the study.

Social constructivism. Social constructivism theory emphasizes the use of local views, infinite possibilities, and individual beliefs as rooted in a lived experience for administration. Social constructivism fulfills the research method needs as well as assimilates participants' personal views, lived experiences, and ideas. Creswell (2007) explained, "Charmaz advocates for a social constructivist perspective that includes emphasizing diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions" (p. 65). Charmaz is a constructivism grounded theorist who

places “more emphasis on the views, values, beliefs, feelings, assumptions, and ideologies of individuals than on the methods of research” (Creswell, 2007, p. 65).

Social constructivism, when combined with interpretivism, highlighted the general opinion “where individuals seek understanding of the world in which they live and work” (Mertens, as cited in Creswell, 2007, p. 56). Social constructivists view the world through their experiences, interactions, and multiple realities. The basic tenets of social constructivism are, first, an understanding approach to issues with many possibilities. Second is using worldviews to analyze and resolve issues. Third is learning prevailing issues from multiple angles (Creswell, 2007). The earlier social constructivists purported that scientific methods are rational rather than causal. Kukla (2000) noted, “Scientific belief was thought to be rationally rather than causally determined” (p. 93). The earlier work on constructivism dates to 1915 by Durkheim (Kukla, 2000). In the administration of schools, principals who are effective in using the skills of social constructivism may have better opportunities to build successful schools through worldviews. Social constructivism is one of the ideas that this research leaned on to produce a substantive-level theory, along with the next theory symbolic interactionism.

Symbolic interactionism. The focus of this theory is learnable skills through beneficial and meaningful interactions of, for instance, principals and the school community. This is highly evident with the moves toward professional learning communities (PLCs) and collaboration in our schools. Guskey and Huberman (1995) elaborated on symbolic interaction with reference to teachers and declared, “In symbolic interactionism, teaching is more than a set of technically learnable skills. It is given meaning by teachers evolving selves, within the realistic contexts and contingencies of

their work environments” (p. 11). Principals, as instructional leaders, need to extend themselves and interact in a symbolic manner for the growth of their students and schools. Principals should be the main factor in school reform, and inheriting a shared culture approach is the basis of symbolic interactionism as well as school improvement. Principals need to learn technical skills and in combination with other skills form a relationship with the school community. The type of nontechnical skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools in the form of symbolic interaction is important in current school improvement. Additionally, these skills in principalship yield growth and principals need to start appreciating the length and breadth of their skills.

Another work on symbolic interactionism was by Woods (as cited in Guskey & Huberman, 1995), who noted “symbolic interactionism addresses how people’s selves are formed and transformed through the meanings and language (symbols) of human interactions” (p. 12). Also, symbolic interactionism is exemplified by the concept of the PLC (DuFour et al., 2008), which focuses on learning and student results rather than only teaching and working collaboratively as a means to developing high-quality educational programs. Educators who believe in the effectiveness of the PLC model have in mind the idea to work together to maximize learning. Principals skilled in symbolic interaction value interactions with stakeholders that center on student growth. Nontraditional school principals’ visions should focus on symbolic interactions throughout the schools, which afford staff the ability to understand the importance of their commitment to the schools. In addition, the theoretical ideas of symbolic interactionism discussed here and theories of human nature discussed in the next section led to producing a substantive-level theory for this study.

Theories of human nature. Human nature involves how we relate with people and how people relate with us. The theories of human nature would be beneficial to the administration of nontraditional schools because the administration of schools involves staff relationships. Sergiovanni et al. (2004) noted, “Theories of human nature are at the centre of the decisions we make about educational policies and about the management systems we use to implement them” (p. 37). Interactions, views, and relationships among participants in providing education to students in relation to the theories of human nature now make more sense. In addition, theories of human nature establish what is good and what is bad (Sergiovanni, 1997).

Human nature shows virtues and vices. Sergiovanni et al. (2004) referenced the work of Hobbes, who believed that human nature has virtues ingrained in good morals and vices entrenched in psychological egoism. When principals call on the virtuous aspect of human nature in dealing with the issues of the administration of their schools, they use the skills they believe are of good human nature to gain effective results for improving their schools. In contrast, the vicious aspect satisfies individual needs aimed at not the good of the public, but personal pleasure. The explanation is that human nature’s vicious aspects are inherent, whereas the virtuous aspects are acquirable. In exploring the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools, the second research question about which skills are difficult to acquire comes to mind. Graduate leadership programs should focus on teaching good-natured decision making. Interpersonal and motivational skills as discussed in the theories of human nature are administrative skills that bring about intended outcomes. Principals should endeavor to acquire virtuous skills, which include acquiring the ability to avoid the propensity for personal gratification.

Sergiovanni et al. cited Sowell's work on categorizing human nature into an unconstrained view whereby principals who appear good-natured have the will of good morals and are therefore given the freedom to operate efficiently within the school community. In contrast, principals who focus on personal needs and constrained views, which include discipline involving negative and inappropriate punitive measures, need leadership training is to enhance their positive human nature skills. These views hold for public traditional schools, more so in nontraditional schools whereby principals have more independence to achieve positive outcomes with their leadership skills. The next section includes a review of some of the theories of leadership.

Theories of leadership. Educational administration as in the earlier theories of leadership still ascribes to pyramid theory, railroad theory, and high-performance theory. Sergiovanni (1991) indicated that an impartial view of school reform evolved from the studies of high-performing schools. The pyramid theory presumes that the normal role to change has an individual leading the change or improvement to be responsible for the actions of other individuals through supervision and leadership (Sergiovanni et al., 2004). In the postmodern era, the responsibilities placed on the administration of nontraditional schools have increased. Resultantly, skills of delegation and motivation become a necessity in the administration of nontraditional schools. In addition, administration of nontraditional schools should approach rules and regulations with openness for positive results. Planning, motivation, and organizational skills are some of the skills acquirable in response to pyramid theory in the administration of nontraditional schools.

The railroad theory states that the way to change or reform schools is by regulating the work process into a predictable form (Sergiovanni et al., 2004). Educators

following the railroad theory expect to know or anticipate any problem and question because it has standardized work, instead of waiting for a single authority or leader. The idea is that in railroad theory, workers would follow the laid tracks to the outcome. The concern is that the administration of schools demands high-level skills and the railroad theory provides minimal skills, because the work is supposed to be standardized. The standardized work may produce standardized work by all. The reform provided by nontraditional schools requires accountability, but not through a delivery system that entrenches the administration into low-level skills through a rigid railroad format. In fact, the railroad theory is contrary to the concept of charter schools and would not be a good idea to achieve the desired outcome in modern school administration.

The high-performance theory prescribes decentralization, shared decision making, and collaboration, which is different from the pyramid-hierarchical leadership and railroad-scripted leadership (Sergiovanni et al., 2004). In nontraditional schools, educators and school communities are expected to make and own their decisions. The goal in collaboration and shared decision making is to provide workers with resources and authority to influence high productivity in a collaborative form, which is primarily a decentralized type of leadership whereby authority in making decisions shifts from the central office to the teachers and school leaders. Faculty and staff connect to the expected school-wide outcomes and results. Principals of nontraditional schools must develop the skills needed to provide their schools with goals, standards, and outcomes. The theories of pyramid and railroad contrast with the high-performance theory, although for the purpose of this review, principals should be aware of the theories of leadership to use them appropriately when necessary.

Themes of the Administration of Schools

Principals, as administrators, have had great influence in their schools regarding the process of getting work done through supervision. Several themes, such as collaboration, shared decision making, coaching, standards, and principal shortage, have emerged in the literature on principalship. The key focus of the themes is getting the work done in the form of school improvement, reform, or result. This review includes several themes and the relationships to the skills needed in the administration of schools.

Collaboration. In a different perspective, collaboration is a process embedded in ongoing school reform and it does not automatically equal improved results unless individuals are committed to a common goal (DuFour et al., 2008). “A collaborative team is the fundamental building block” (DuFour et al., 2008, p. 15) of an organization and PLCs are “collaborative teams, whose members work independently to achieve common goals—goals linked to the purpose of learning for all—for which members are held mutually accountable” (DuFour et al, 2008, p. 15). DuFour et al. (2008) defined collaboration as “a systematic process in which people work together, interdependently, to analyze and impact professional practice in order to improve individual and collective results” (p. 464). In the administration of schools, principals may need to accept the challenges of collaboration, especially directed to the right matters, particularly in educating students. In fact, collaborative skill has maintained its importance in the administration of nontraditional and traditional schools.

Shared decision making. Shared decision making involves the participation of every member of an organization in the decision making of an organization. DuFour et al. (2008) wrote, “This concept is based on the premise that expertise is widely distributed

throughout a school rather than vested in an individual person or position” (p. 310). Some educators view shared decision making in school systems as attached to school-wide system reform efforts of decentralization whereby school sites make decisions instead of central offices. Therefore, principals in the administration of schools should continue developing leadership skills sets to groom teachers, teacher leaders, and staff in decision making. The concept places decision making in the hands of the faculty and staff by using data to affect the school’s educational programs, as observed at the school site. This type of understanding of shared decision making in improving school programs should promote effective schools and educational systems by improving student achievement and the learning centered environment. Shared decision-making skills sets are vital tools in building collaborative teams, and successful school principals need to possess or acquire the skill.

Coaching. Participants in training programs sometimes indicate the need for coaching. Coaching is “the practice of providing deliberate support to another individual to help him/her to clarify and/or to achieve goals” (Bloom et al., 2005, p. 5). Administrators of nontraditional schools who acquire coaching skills could offer staff the opportunity to support and share the skills at their school sites. Sometimes teachers have questions arising from training and implementation, and principals can use coaches for demonstration, practice, and feedback in their schools. The goal to educate all children at the highest level possible created the need to use coaching to increase knowledge and mastered skills among principals. “Coached teachers and principals generally practice new strategies more frequently and develop greater skill in the actual moves of a new teaching strategy than did uncoached educators who had experienced identical initial

training” (Joyce & Showers, 2002, p. 86). In teachers’ everyday practices, it appears that collaborative work and coaching engender mastered skills and better teaching strategies. Therefore, administrations of schools need coaching.

Standards. The ISLLC standards are rooted in research literature and different institutions are currently developing different frameworks for administrative skills with the standards. The learning-centered leadership introduced the conceptual framework on skills and leadership. The six components are interconnected and focused on principals’ needed skills and student learning outcomes (ISLLC, 2000).

Principal shortage. The findings of an Education Research Service survey in 1988, supported in 2000 in an Institute for Educational Leadership report, found the candidate pool for principal positions waning, leading to a principal shortage. With the current economic downturn, some aspiring principals may not be motivated to become principals because the demands and responsibilities are increasing. In 2002, NASSP noted that within the next decade, 40% of principals would retire and enough qualified candidates may not replace principals leaving their positions. LEAs throughout the nation report principal openings and a lack of qualified applicants to replace them (NASSP, 2011). NASSP (2011) showed increased responsibilities and accountability, a diverse student population, a lack of training, and new ways of schooling are some of the factors contributing to principal shortage. NASSP recommended that leaders of large school districts, in collaboration with universities, should encourage aspiring and current principals to earn degrees and gain skills to administer school sites.

Other factors contributing to the shortage of principals as indicated in the Education Research Service survey are population growth and schools in urban settings

(Lane, 1998). First, areas where the population has grown rapidly have experienced a principal shortage. The trend could be an economic trend in which high demand requires a higher supply. School district leaders should anticipate and train leaders to fill available positions. Second, school districts with urban settings become undesirable because of many social ills associated with having a low socioeconomic status, including poverty, school violence, and difficult working conditions.

The federal Race to the Top program focuses on providing support to participating LEAs in poor urban environments and low-performing schools to attract principals. The issue of great principals is multifaceted in that it includes evaluations by state. The position of the federal government is that improving low-performing schools is a goal that every LEA should adopt, and transforming low-achieving schools or opening new schools is the responsibility of LEAs (United States Department of Education [USDE], 2010).

Charter Schools

This section includes a discussion on charter schools as the second variable of the study as an instance of nontraditional schools. Nontraditional schools are not be funded, supported, or administered fully by federal, state, or locally employed officials; also, founders should have greater responsibility over instruction without undue interventions in exchange for accountability—student growth—(Budde, 1996). Charter schools are privately or “publicly sponsored autonomous schools that are substantially free from direct administrative control by the government but are held accountable for achieving certain levels of student performance and other specified outcome” (Sergiovanni et al., 2004, p. 36).

A description of three reasons for discussing charter school as an example of nontraditional schools follows. First, dependent charter schools have the qualities of nontraditional schools as well as some similarities with traditional schools, such as the use of public funds and an inability to charge tuition to students. Overall, charter schools are nontraditional schools. Some charter schools are publicly funded, but legally independent, schools whose purpose is to be goal oriented, outcome driven, and a model for change. Charter schools are renewable every 3 to 5 years based on student growth and charter objectives. Second, charter schools are the most current school reform movement and are increasing rapidly. Finally, it could be nebulous to delve into the myriad descriptions of all nontraditional schools such as parochial, religious, cultural, and other private schools. The idea is to project the current needs of nontraditional schools based on the growing number and diversity of charter schools, share the differences between traditional and nontraditional school, and discuss certification and skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

History of charter schools

This review includes an examination into the history of charter schools as nontraditional schools. Educator Ray Budde is linked to the concept of charter schools (Cobb & Garn, 2001). In 2005, *The New York Times* published an article explaining that Budde first used the term charter in the 1970s. The reason behind the design was to give teachers greater responsibility over teaching, as learning requires increased accountability for student growth. Budde (1996) elaborated on the idea of charter reform as an innovation in teaching and learning. Budde illustrated his concept of charter schools by showing a system whereby school districts grant a charter (greater responsibility over

instruction) to groups of teachers without undue interventions in exchange for accountability (student growth) and trying new educational approaches. Whereas the old model of school districts was to follow the status quo, the new model propelled the concept of charter schools to increased acceptance.

Albert Shanker, a union leader, delivered a speech in 1988 during an American Federation of Teachers national conference (Cobb & Garn, 2001) and endorsed a greater appreciation of the charter reform model. Shanker recommended that teacher unions and LEAs should collaborate to allow groups of teachers, away from the bureaucratic district personnel, to establish autonomous schools within existing school districts. In the early 1990s, the perception of charter schools became clearer, particularly when the Minnesota government—Governor Rudy Perpich and the state’s legislature—initiated the first charter school law in 1991. The law allowed LEAs in Minnesota to create public charter schools under its supervision, but with exemption from many local and state regulations (Osborne, 1999). The Minnesota law did not stick to the exact model of charter system as proposed by Budde and endorsed by Shanker. Rather, the law allowed statewide agencies, separate from the district, to authorize and supervise charter schools. The aforementioned development enabled outside entrepreneurs to vie for charter schools. As a result, the union and district negotiation constraints do not apply to independent charter schools.

City Academy opened in 1992 in Minnesota as the first charter school in the United States. Two decades later, the United States has approximately 41 charter school laws, 5,453 operating schools, and 1,729,963 students; Minnesota has 161 schools and 30,184 students (CER, 2011). Charter schools have increased in many forms. California

was the second state to institute a charter school law. Proposition 174, a voucher initiative introduced on the California ballot in 1992, would have permitted the use of public funds for students to attend private schools of choice, but the initiative did not pass (Finn, Manno, & Vanourek, 2000). Nevertheless, Californians viewed charter schools as another option to traditional schools. California Senate Bill 144 passed and became the second charter law in the United States. As charter school initiatives continue to grow in number, California opened its first charter school in 1992. Since the creation of the first charter school in California, the number of charter schools in California has increased to approximately 941—the highest in the nation—serving approximately 348,686 students (CER, 2011). Darwish (2000) noted the first charter school was a center for research on best practices for parents' and teachers' involvement. The charter reform movement continues in different states and counties around the United States.

In Los Angeles County, the charter school movement led to the formation of Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Projects in 1995. The goal of the Los Angeles Annenberg Metropolitan Projects was to develop a network of charter schools well-endowed with technical support and needed resources funded by Annenberg Challenge Fund. In the same year, the Los Angeles Educational Alliance for Reform Now charter complex opened in Palisades, Los Angeles, as the largest charter organization in the nation (Carlos et al., 1998). Los Angeles Unified School District in 2002 approved a charter policy hoping to alleviate overcrowding of students in the schools within the district (Kerchner, 2007). Another idea from Los Angeles Unified School District was the hope that the charter policy would keep students in Los Angeles Unified School District

schools instead of leaving the district entirely. In 2010, Los Angeles County had approximately 152 charter schools, which was the most in any state (CER, 2011).

The charter school concept is similar to the school choice topic for education research dating back to the 1970s (Lane, 1998). Although school choice did not transform into charter, it may have helped advance its acceptance. In the implementation of charter laws within the operations of schools, individuals interested in operating a charter school would explore the core reasons to have a charter school. First, charter information in the proposed area (usually the state and county) is gathered and enthusiastically studied for a particular charter framework. Second, the proposed school community is studied to determine how ready the community is to host a charter school (U.S. Charter Schools [USCS], 2007). Third, charter school organizers use the data gathered to create a vision statement for the proposed school. The California Charter School Association (CCSA; 2007) suggested some sample questions for charter organizers as they work to develop a vision statement: Who are we? Who do we want to be? Who are the students we will be serving? Why are we serving, and how shall we serve the students?

The individuals proposing to develop a charter school must meet what the charter law describes as requirements for a group in opening a charter school (California State Board of Education, 2000). The individuals could be an organization, institution, or LEA. In addition, the group should have to meet the regulations or guiding principles clarifying the legislation about the creation and operation of charter schools. In principle, the guidelines may include information on the application processes and completion (USCS, 2007). One of the key requirements is the developmental cost (CCSA, 2007). There is no limitation on how to garner the funds; organizers could use personal funds, donations, or

other public revenues. Development grants from state or federal governments are available for the development of charter schools. In addition, founders could secure funds from loans, corporate grants, or private institutions (USCS, 2007). Another key requirement is a proposal plan for a charter school. The proposal plan would then become a key in the process of obtaining charter approval, funding, and support (Charter Friend National Network, 2007). The proposal plan should cover the following areas:

- The business plan
- Location and school community
- Mission and vision statements
- Projected financial statements
- Objectives and goal
- Expected outcome

Approved policies and guidelines govern charter schools as nontraditional public schools within the charter petition free from bureaucratic interferences, ostensibly in exchange for high student performance and accountability (Griffin & Wohlstetter, 2001). Charter schools then make certain decisions independent of the LEA granting the charter, such as setting teacher and staff working hours, educational objectives and outcomes, financial obligations, and number of minutes and school days in a school calendar year. Also selected are the instructional materials and staff. Laws and legislation on the operation of charter schools vary in all states (Vergari, 2000). In contrast, nontraditional charter schools are similar to traditional schools because both receive public funding, are tuition free, should conform to health and safety regulations, and abide by state and federal discrimination laws (USDE, 2000).

The administration of nontraditional schools such as charter schools requires unique skills and training (USDE, 2000). The USDE (2000) School Staffing Survey revealed that, “Charter schools require strong, highly skilled, and experienced educational leaders, perhaps even more than traditional public schools” (p. 5). The unique skills required in the administration of charter schools emanated from its history, such as exemptions from bureaucratic guidelines and procedures in exchange for positive results and accountability.

Opening a charter school. The initial cost for opening a charter school can start from \$250,000 (CCSA, 2007). Charter school founders can garner development funds from any legal private source, personal savings, or public funding. The public funds sometimes come from state funding or federal school development grants. In addition, private organizations and institution grants are a legal source of funds for developers of charter schools. Another legal source of funding is traditional institutions such as banks, lending institutions, and credit unions. Donations and fundraisings are good sources of funds for developers of charter schools. After settling the funding concerns, the next focus is creating a business plan for the charter school.

The business plan aids in securing more funds because it outlines the financial needs and school-wide plans. The business plan communicates the founders’ vision, mission, goal, and objective. The plan also addresses the school’s immediate and long-term goals (CCSA, 2007). Some sections of the business plan should include expected income, expenses, market research, and revenue cycle as financial statements. The CCSA (2007) suggested some key points essential to planning expenditures successfully.

1. Administrative staff: A financial plan for preopening salaries and benefits for a director (and support) for approximately 6 months.
2. Facilities: A budget plan to cover renting, leasing, or loans; site preparation; interior decoration; power; ventilation; and technology.
3. Initial staff development: A budget plan on the initial staff development for about 6 weeks.
4. Equipment and furniture: Desks, chairs, tables, cabinets, shelves, and all needed fixtures for the number of anticipated students need a budget plan for purchasing and repairing.
5. Supplies and materials: A budget plan for books, printers, software, computers, and curricular materials.
6. Office supplies: A financial plan to cover office supplies such as telephone system, equipment, cleaning supplies, copiers, and papers.
7. Professional services: A budget statement may include hiring specialists in specialized areas such as technology specialist, nurse, special education specialist, and student testing coordinator.

After creating the business plan, which includes that school's mission, revenue sources, financial management, and estimated expenses, the founders must then submit an application to the governing board that would approve the charter. Applications that are properly completed and meet the governing board's criteria for establishing a charter school receive approval (California State Board of Education, 2000).

In California, a charter is a binding legal contract between the granting organization and the school founders (CCSA, 2007). The granting organization provides

guiding principles to clarify the operational practices of the charter. Charter granting organizations include LEAs, state school boards, universities, or community colleges. CCSA (2007) recommends following four steps to aid in obtaining charter school approval in California.

1. Obtain surveys, recommendations, and approval letters from intended school site communities and stakeholders supporting establishment of the charter school.
2. Establish open communication and positive relationships with the charter granting organization.
3. Seek a preapproval from the granting organization by submitting a draft of the charter petition prior to submitting the actual application.
4. Complete the application by using feedback and making any recommended corrections from the granting organizations.

Across states, USCS (2007) reported that the charter is a legal document that grants permission to a group or an individual to own, operate, and manage a charter school. In addition, USCS recommended 14 key components of a strong application:

1. A mission statement
2. A statement on the importance of the school
3. A description of the school wide education program
4. Expected school learning objectives for all students
5. Assessment methods for all students
6. A business and financial plan
7. Three to 5 years of budget projections

8. An organization model
9. Human resources policies
10. Students recruitment, enrollment, and discipline policies
11. Grounds and facilities information
12. Insurance policies
13. Compliance with all government regulations
14. Evaluation and renewal process

The period of charter application submission and charter approval is a preoperational phase. At this phase, the founders and principal should outline a comprehensive plan and timeline prior to operations. Additionally, before the charter is approved and established, including drafting and filing articles of incorporation, filing nonprofit papers, and forming the governing body, an administrative structure and bylaws should be drafted (USCS, 2007). The operations phase begins when the school opens the door and students arrive to class. During the first days of school, students, staff, and the principal develop the school culture.

Opening a nontraditional school such as a charter school requires a set of key principal skills. Pack (2007) noted two of the most important skills needed when opening a school are strategic leadership and human resources skills. Strategic leadership skills involve goals and vision, and human resources skills include hiring and recruitment.

Pack (2007) used a mixed methodology approach to study the skills needed for opening a charter school. In addition, the study used surveys and interview questions. Portin et al. (2003) inferred that the ability of the principal to recruit employees and

students is an important component of a successful principalship. Principals are visionary leaders and may be more so in nontraditional schools.

Theories of Charter Schools

Some theoretical ideas for the study derived from the literature review are theories such as postmodernism, critical race theory, rational choice theory, and theory of action. A description of the theories follows.

Postmodernism. Guskey and Huberman (1995) noted, “Theories of postmodernity point to the characteristics and consequences of what is coming to be called the postindustrial, postmodern age” (p. 12). In this era, “flexible technologies in smaller units of enterprise” (p. 12) are used in the schooling system, unlike the traditional school system. Small school systems such as small learning communities and charter schools are replacing the old traditional system schools (Guskey & Huberman, 1995). These schools are increasing more than the traditional system schools, which could be one reason judgments about changing learning from its initial context are central to improving principal development and skills. Guskey and Huberman indicated “the need for flexibility and responsiveness is increasingly reflected in decentralized decision making along with flatter decision making structures, reduced specialization, and blurring of roles and boundaries” (p. 12). Flexibility is readily obtainable in nontraditional schools as compared to traditional schools. Therefore, principals of nontraditional schools need to possess or develop skills to integrate modern technology and flexibility.

Critical race theory. Critical social theorists concern themselves with sensitivities to the “contexts of human interactions and the power to relationships that comprise and surround it” (Guskey & Huberman, 1995, p. 11). Other factors beyond

classrooms, schools, and communities that could shape learning include states, countries, economies, and international situations. Symbolic interactionists see the effects of these other factors as “macro-theorizing” (Guskey & Huberman, 1995, p. 11) and believe it is “unachievable, a futile pursuit of conceptual ghosts that have no substance in immediate interaction” (Guskey & Huberman, 1995, p. 11). Critical social theorists urge educators to learn and research more on issues affecting learning and principal development beyond internal and institutional matters such as politics, power, control, equality, equity, fairness, justice, and race. Principals need unique skills to handle these issues well to achieve good results, promote school culture, and sustain the symbol of the school. Guskey and Huberman (1995) noted that little of the teacher literature address macro-level issues and that research on teaching has pointed to the socially generated dilemmas under which individuals work and noting the ways educators work vary according to social class, gender relations, and the changing nature of the labor process in modern societies such as in nontraditional schools. Critical race theory was one of the theoretical ideas considered in positing a substantive-level theory at the conclusion of this study.

Rational choice theory. Rational choice theory postulates that individuals pursue their interests and are never satisfied with their wants (Sergiovanni et al., 2004). Rational choice theory exists in biology, economics, and education. In biology, Darwin’s theories of natural selection show that competition for survival eliminates the weakest. Principals of nontraditional schools could benefit from applying this theory to understand the need to develop survival skills, if not already acquired, to survive market forces and become strong. Weakness in nontraditional schools could lead to failure and the consequence is school closure.

Theory of action. The key operative words in the theory of action are values, plans, and rules to achieve a set goal (Argyris & Schön, 1978). In the administration of nontraditional schools, single-loop learning involves improving principals' skills to achieve positive results—mainly student achievement. Argyris and Schön (1978) described double-loop learning as finding and fixing an error by changing an organization's objectives. Double-loop learning involves detecting a problem and making a change in the governing principles to correct the problem, which means that a shift occurs in the underlying norms. The key operative words are objectives, system, norms, and policies to achieve the goal. Administrations of nontraditional schools need a grounded framework for their principals to improve student achievement and meet the need for high accountability. Therefore, the single loop in this study was exploring ways to improve principals' skills and double loop was exploring ways to improve the framework for the administration of a nontraditional school. The triple loop was a substantive-level theory for transformation.

Themes of the Administration of Charter Schools

Administration, training, mentoring, and standards are the themes of charter schools under discussion. Although the discussion of these themes appears under charter schools, the themes are important to both traditional and nontraditional schools.

Administration. Administration as used in the title safeguards the effect of the less bureaucratic nature of nontraditional school principalship, which sometimes is perceived in other terms such as leaders and directors. The use of administration is a stabilization approach to the principalship in nontraditional schools. Sergiovanni et al. (2004) defined administration as “a process of working with and through others to

accomplish school goals effectively and efficiently” (p. 58). Efficiency in this definition could be high on the list of nontraditional school administration because of accountability and performance needs. The period between 1946 and 1947 was important in establishing educational administration and professional bodies. The National Cooperation Program in Education Administration, when formed in 1946, led to the formation of the Cooperation Program in Education Administration in 1950. The key function of the Cooperation Program in Education Administration is to improve the administration preparation programs for aspiring and practicing administrators. In addition, the key function of the University Cooperation Program in Education Administration is to improve the university education for aspiring and practicing administrators (Sergiovanni et al., 2004).

Administration is a key variable of the study and illustrates the role of a principal in being committed to the education and well-being of each member of the school community.

Training. Educators commonly use professional development, preparation, and training interchangeably. Guskey and Huberman (1995) noted, “Training typically involves a presenter or team of presenters that shares ideas and expertise . . . [and is] the most common form of professional development and the one with which educators have most experience” (p. 22). For instance, a pre-employment training conducted by a participatory action research (PAR) team at Lakeview Education Organization for teachers and administrators included three methods of delivery: audio and visual presentation, printed handbook materials, and PAR team-led method. The goal was to orient teachers with an overview of the organization and to familiarize all participants with basic practices and procedures, keeping in mind the participants’ values and outcome. The objective included history, purpose, mission, and knowledge and skill

development. In the training, collaboration, inclusive leadership, and shared decision making were critical for success. PAR members demonstrated that to understand the PAR project of exploration and improvement of a training system, understanding participants' needs and values in all circumstances was necessary. The PAR team reviewed existing documents on the existing pre-employment training and the previous training. The PAR discussions aligned with the problem of a lack of pre-employment trained and processed teachers to teach adults and concurrently enrolled high school students. The PAR team made the decision to make the training available and convenient to the participants in four different geographic areas of the city of Los Angeles at different times, instead of hosting it at the usual one location at a particular time. Along with administration, training is a theme that is crucial to possessing and acquiring skills for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Mentoring. The idea of mentoring in education is a means of providing support from a veteran educator or an experienced principal to another principal (Villani, 2006). Mentoring could also be a simple informal relationship between experienced and new or aspiring principals. In some mentoring programs within LEAs, the buddy system, critical friends, or informal relationships are used. In any case, the mentor and mentee would have to work collaboratively for the mentee to develop needed skills. The main function of a mentor in nontraditional schools should be to support and harness the mentee in mastering broad leadership skills.

Standards. The standard instrument in this research was the work of Portin et al. (2003) in which seven leadership standards were established by interviewing approximately 150 persons in 21 different schools. The study used a qualitative case

study method conducted over a 2-year period. The seven leadership areas are outlined as follows.

1. Instructional: Ensuring quality of instruction, modeling teaching practice, supervising curriculum, and ensuring quality of teaching resources.
2. Cultural: Tending to the symbolic resources of the school (e.g., its traditions, climate, and history).
3. Managerial: Tending to the operations of the school (e.g., its budget, schedule, facilities, safety and security, and transportation).
4. Human resources: Recruiting, hiring, firing, inducting, and mentoring teachers and administrators, as well as developing leadership capacity and professional development opportunities.
5. Strategic: Promoting a vision, mission, and goals and developing a means to reach the vision, mission, and goals.
6. External development: Representing the school in the community, developing capital, managing public relations, recruiting students, buffering and mediating external interests, and advocating for the school's interests.
7. Micropolitical: Buffering and mediating internal interests and maximizing financial and human interests.

The study also categorized these seven standards as critical skills comprising the core of principals' duties (Portin et al., 2003).

Principal turnover. The growing rate and diversity of the student body in Los Angeles County affect student enrollment and the growth of nontraditional schools and leads to high principal turnover. Los Angeles County continues to be an industrial and

financial giant and has one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse communities in the world (California Department of Education, 2011). Principal turnover occurs in traditional schools, although it occurs more in nontraditional schools. In a survey of charter school leaders in six different states, Campbell, Gross, and Lake (2008) found there is turnover in many careers today, including traditional school principals, but turnover is higher in nontraditional schools.

Campbell et al. (2008) noted the following about turnover among principals in nontraditional schools: “One-third plan to leave their current positions in the next three years, and about seventy percent expect to move on in the next five years” (p. 8). Some of the reasons inferred are that some nontraditional school principals were overwhelmed by the responsibilities, lack of personal time for family, and work burnout. Principal turnover, a category under human resources, is a serious issue in nontraditional schools. Human resources skills sets are skills sets studies have shown that nontraditional school principals need and are difficult to acquire (Campbell et al., 2008; Pack, 2007). The charter schools survey by Campbell et al. suggested charter school leaders should be prepared to act proactively in overcoming principal turnover. Almost half the charter schools in the survey were not prepared for the principal’s turnover. In addition, probable causes for principal turnover are fear of failing, priority-setting difficulty, concerns with student enrollment, emotional toll, and isolation. The principals are more involved in managing the everyday activities with less control. Villani (2006) noted that principals in this situation are middle managers rather than having the ultimate leaders as in traditional school settings.

Difficult skills. Portin et al. (2003) categorized managing staff, hiring, and training employees under human resources leadership skill. In charter schools, human resource leadership skill is a desirable but difficult skill for principals. Pack (2007) conducted a comparative analysis of survey data in a descriptive mixed methodology study using Portin et al.'s seven leadership skills and identified human resources leadership skill as a desirable, less developed, and difficult to acquire skill in the principalship of charter schools, which includes the ability to manage staff, PLCs, shared decision making, and professional development.

Other difficult skills are managerial leadership skills that include skills sets in management of the facility, finance, scheduling, and operational functioning of the school (Pack, 2007). Facilities, finances, and personnel skills are underdeveloped, difficult, and challenging skills for principals of nontraditional schools (Campbell et al., 2008; Jorgenson, 2006; Pack, 2007; Schafer, 2004). These two skills sets—managerial and human resource leadership skills—can be complex and tend to overshadow the other roles of principals. Nontraditional schools principals, like their traditional K-12 public school counterparts, have the need to attract, hire, and retain good employees and the need in some cases to raise funds and manage the schools' operations and facilities. Portin et al. (2003) inferred that most principals acquire these skills with experience and on-the-job training more than any school-based leadership training or courses.

Conclusion of the Literature Review

The focus of the literature review was exploring the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. First, studies on principalship indicated that the role of principal has expanded and the role has become more complex, overloaded, and

unclear (Fullan, 1991). Orr (2001) noted that expanded role is the largest deterrent to recruiting and retaining school principals. The finding is that the role of a principal has become more tasking and requires unique skills. Beyond the review of history and theories of principalship, the literature also included some important themes in administration such as collaboration, shared decision making, coaching, standards, and a principal shortage.

Second, the literature review included a discussion on the fact that charter school leaders project the current needs of nontraditional schools based on growing numbers and diversity. Two decades after the first California charter law, the number of charter schools in Los Angeles has increased from zero to 152 schools (CER, 2011). The finding from the literature review is that charter schools have increased in many forms and all schools, especially nontraditional schools, deserve well-trained and highly skilled principals. As a result, the review further demonstrated the need for the study and indicated some important themes for developing leadership skills such as administration, training, mentoring, and standards.

Some of the research reviewed indicated that standards exist, such as Portin et al.'s (2003), ISLLC six standards for administrators and seven leadership standards, and CPSELs description of practice. However, the review did not reveal a degree of implementation of these standards for the administration of nontraditional schools. In addition, licensure in California that prepares K-12 traditional school administrators does not seem to meet the complex demands of nontraditional schools, particularly charter schools.

This study included the grounded theory method of research and the standards expressed by Portin et al. (2003). The outcome was an outline of the skills most needed and most difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools. The study was designed to produce these substantive-level theories from theoretical ideas of social constructivism, symbolic interactionism, theory of human nature, theories of leadership, postmodernism, critical race theory, rational choice theory, and theory of action.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

This chapter includes a discussion on the methodology chosen to explore the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as perceived by principals of nontraditional schools. As seen in the literature review, principalship has expanded. The exponential growth of nontraditional schools has compounded the already expanded role of the principal. In California, graduate-level school leadership degrees and credentialing programs prepare primarily K-12 traditional public school principals (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2012). Therefore, to establish a theory or program standard for nontraditional schools, a qualitative research approach with grounded theory methodology was suitable to ground a proposition for the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Restatement of Purpose

The purpose of this study was to explore the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as perceived by the principals of nontraditional schools. The study also involved exploring the skills that principals perceive to be difficult to develop or acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools. The outcome of the study may lead to designs, implementations, dispositions, and adaptations of educational programs for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Restatement of Research Questions

1. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are needed for the administration of nontraditional schools?

2. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are most difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools, thus requiring training and development?

Overview

This study was qualitative in nature and included the grounded theory research methodology to focus on two main outcomes. Grounded theory is the appropriate research methodology for exploring and identifying the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as perceived by principals of nontraditional schools. Principals of nontraditional schools identified the skills most difficult to acquire in the administration of nontraditional schools. These skills may need additional development through programs such as graduate degrees, training, coaching, preparation, or professional development.

Research Design

Qualitative research approaches, which include the grounded theory methodology, “reveal the nature of certain situations, settings, processes, relations, systems, or people; [and] enable a researcher to gain new insights, develop new perspectives, and/or discover problems that exist within phenomena” (Leedy & Ormrod, 2005, p. 134). The fundamental aspect of grounded theory research is studying participants who have experienced a process. In addition, grounded theory research produces at least a substantive proposition that may or may not help provide a framework for further research (Charmaz, 2010; Creswell, 2007; Leedy & Ormrod, 2005). Creswell (2007) further explained that grounded theory studies typically go above description, “to generate or discover a substantive-level theory” (p. 63). Grounded theory research has a

sociological background. The methodology of this study was appropriate because of its philosophical perspectives, sociological approaches, educational needs, and originality qualities. Charmaz (as cited in Creswell, 2007), a grounded theorist, supported “social constructivist perspectives which include emphasizing diverse local worlds, multiple realities, and the complexities of particular worlds, views, and actions” (p. 65).

Particularly, social constructivists advocate using subjective meanings of worldviews, interactions, multiple realities, and ideas rather than starting with a theory or theoretical framework. The basic tenets of social constructivism are (a) applying the open-minded approach to issues with many possibilities, (b) using worldviews to analyze and resolve issues, and (c) learning prevailing issues in people’s lives from multiple angles (Creswell, 2007). The qualitative approach was the most appropriate approach for this study because, unlike the other qualitative research methodologies, qualitative research goes beyond describing experiences to discovering a theory (Creswell, 2007). Qualitative research also enables the prediction and explanation of behavior (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). Finally, although qualitative research has many methodologies, grounded theory methodology was the preferred method of study.

The founders of grounded theory research methodology, Glaser and Strauss (1967), described it as “the discovery of theory from data systematically obtained from social research” (p. 2). The grounded theory research methodology is a method that produces a proposition appropriate to the needs of the research. Creswell (2007), in a description of a grounded theory, noted that another perspective is the philosophy without presupposition whereby all judgments about what is real is suspended until they are theorized. Graduate-level school leadership degrees and credentialing programs in

California were primarily designed to prepare K-12 traditional public school principals, but nontraditional schools have increased in number and diversity; thus, grounded theory methodology was chosen for this study because it would produce a substantive-level theory of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools from Los Angeles County. This methodology was most appropriate for this study because unlike other qualitative research methodologies, it goes beyond describing experiences to discovering a theory (Creswell, 2007). In addition, grounded theory methodology provides perspectives on behaviors and practical applications (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). In comparing the grounded theory methodology of qualitative research to the quantitative research method, there is no known existing substantive-level theory for the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools and the theory may undergo further research for empirical verification with quantitative data. Therefore, it is important to use grounded theory methodology to produce a substantive-level theory that may further be researched with a quantitative method as well as add to the body of literature for individuals, institutions, education review boards, credentialing commissions, and accreditation organizations. Additionally, the theory produced could contribute to graduate-level leadership degrees and credentialing programs.

Context

The focus of this study was interviewing principals in Los Angeles County nontraditional schools. The County of Los Angeles is the most populous county in the United States. The California Department of Finance listed the population of Los Angeles County on January 1, 2009, at 10,393,185 million people. The county continues to be an industrial and financial giant and is one of the most culturally and ethnically diverse

communities in the world. There are 22 universities in Los Angeles County, and 80 unified school districts. In addition, there are numerous nontraditional schools within Los Angeles County (California Department of Education, 2011). Twenty nontraditional school principals were selected for interviews.

Purposeful sampling was the method used to select participants from nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County. The subjects purposely chosen for this study were principals because of the experiences, knowledge, and successes they would have acquired over their years in the field of leadership. As leaders, principals supposedly have improved their skills over their years in leadership. The other purposeful selection was gender, with ten male and ten female principals. The interviews with the selected principals lasted approximately 25 to 30 minutes each, with 10 interview questions (see Appendix A) to identify the skills principals perceive are needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Emilio Pack an expert on principals' perceptions reviewed and approved the instrument (see Appendix B). The interview protocol was approved by the IRB for the study (see Appendix C). Devin Vodicka also validated the interview questions (see Appendix D). The consent for academic research form (see Appendix E) was the instrument used to recruit participants by e-mail, face-to-face, and by mail.

To participate, individuals had to be current principals. The participants also needed to be principals of nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County. Finally, the principals selected had no less than 2 years of experience as a principal, although the experience did not need to be at the same school.

Even though the purposefully selected nontraditional school principals were engaged in interviews that lasted approximately 25 minutes, the highlight of the

interviews was the identification of 10 skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Principals were also asked to identify the skills they perceive are often difficult to acquire and explain why. The text used for comparative analysis of the initial coding was Portin et al.'s (2003) seven leadership skills.

Institutional Review Board (IRB) Requirements

The research followed the Pepperdine University policy for studies and strictly adhered to the Institutional Review Board (IRB) requirements, which follow the guidelines of the Belmont report (see Appendix F). In as much as this study had no known or a minimal risk to the participants, obtaining IRB approval was a priority. In addition to applying for IRB approval, the informed consent for participation form (see Appendix E) was one of the instruments used, and participants fully consented before the collection of information or data ensued. Other approval sought and obtained was the principal's permission to conduct this study. All information collected, including participants' real names and locations, remained in strict confidentiality to ensure there was no risk to the participants. The participants interviewed knew the published study would exclude their real names and personal information, except the informed consent, to protect participants' identities and to ensure any reporting of data findings would respect their confidentiality. Finally, all collected information is in my personal secured cabinet at my home and I am the only one with access. All data will remain in the secured location for 3 years from the date of the collection of the data and then destroyed. Some of the precautions taken to minimize any risk were as follows:

- Worked with Pepperdine Information Technology department and installed all the patches, updates, security software, firewalls, and antimalware. These

installations were timely and updated regularly to keep the information stored in the computer secured as much as possible.

- Used a strong password to ensure no other person could access the information because passwords provide the key line of defense. The use of strong password includes not using an automatic password-saving option and using password protection on the screensaver following time spent away from the computer.
- Locked the computer and the storage at all times, even if the time spent away from the vicinity was brief, and disabled the local and network file-share options.
- Encrypted all files used in the study to safeguard the information in case of a lost or stolen computer.

In as much as this study was an interactive research study, protecting the participants from any known risk beyond minimal risks such as boredom, tiredness, and dissatisfaction with any part of the interview was a key focus. In addition, unforeseen circumstances could have occurred, and participants' protection was a priority. In case of an unforeseen circumstance, the procedure to ameliorate the situation was to inform the participant of a risk as soon as the researcher became aware of the risk. A law enforcement agency and the IRB chairperson would have received notification of the risk no later than 96 hours from the time the researcher became aware of any condition. All efforts would have been undertaken to address the situation.

Instrumentation

To determine the skills most needed for the administration of nontraditional schools, an instrument—a set of 10 interview questions (see Appendix A)—was adapted, reviewed, and approved by Emilio Pack. Pack is an expert on principals' perceptions (see Appendix B). The interview protocol was approved by the IRB for the study on principals' perceptions (see Appendix C). The interview questions allowed principals to identify skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Vodicka also validated the interview questions (see Appendix D). The interview consisted of 10 open-ended questions and the format used for the interview was a face-to-face interview format. Leedy and Ormrod (2005) wrote, "Face-to-face interviews have the distinct advantage of enabling the researcher to establish rapport with participants and therefore gain their cooperation; thus such interviews yield the highest response rates" (pp. 184-185). Pack was a former nontraditional school principal and presently an assistant director at the Institute of School Leadership and Administration at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles.

The 10 interview questions featured five demographic and background information. Questions 6 through 10 addressed Research Questions 1 and 2, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1

Relationship Between Interview and Research Questions

Research questions	Interview questions related to the research question
1	6, 7, 8,
2	9, 10

Portin et al.'s (2003) seven leadership skills, which are instructional leadership, cultural leadership, managerial leadership, human resources leadership, strategic leadership, external development leadership, and micropolitical leadership, were used as an extant text. Grounded theory methodology uses comparative analysis such as shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Correlation of Extant Text, Leadership Skills, and Literature References

Seven leadership skills	Interview questions	Literature references
Instructional leadership skill	1, 2, 6, 9	Matthews & Crow (2003); Bloom et al. (2005)
Cultural leadership skill	2, 3, 6, 8	Schein (2004); Davis et al. (2005)
Managerial leadership skill	1, 6, 8, 9	DuFour et al. (2008); Brown (2005)
Human resources skill	6, 7, 8, 10	Charmaz (2006); Rousmaniere (2007)
Strategic leadership skill	3, 6, 7, 9	Creswell (2007); Fullan (1991)
External development skill	1, 2, 6, 8	Lashway (2000); Sergiovanni et al. (2004)
Micropolitical skill	5, 6, 9, 10	Kafka (2009)

Validity

The validity of the instrument stemmed from the review of literature and the work conducted by Portin et al. (2003). Two experts in the areas of principals' perceptions and instrument validation reviewed and validated the interview protocol:

- Emilio Pack was a former nontraditional school principal and is presently an assistant director at the Institute of School Leadership and Administration at Loyola Marymount University in Los Angeles. In addition, Pack is an expert on

principals' perceptions (see Appendix B). The interview protocol was approved by the IRB for the study on principals' perceptions (see Appendix C).

- Devin Vodicka is a professor at Pepperdine University and the Carlsbad Unified School District assistant superintendent, Business Services. Vodicka is an expert in instrument and interview protocol development for data collection at Pepperdine University. Vodicka also validated the interview questions (see Appendix D).

The experts met in person and made some recommendations:

- Pack approved the adapted interview protocol. He also recommended using face-to-face interviews and emphasized that a survey instrument should not be used for this grounded theory research.
- Vodicka reviewed the interview questions and recommended using 10 questions instead of 11 questions in the instrument presented for validation.

Trustworthiness

Two experienced nontraditional schools principals reviewed the instrument used. Interviews allow for a higher rate of response and “play a central role in the data collection in a grounded theory study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 131). Vodicka, who affirmed that the instrument is trustworthy, also approved the instrument (see Appendix D).

Interviews may have the potential for bias, but the interviewer and interviewees remained in a neutral mind-set. The focus of the interview was identifying the needed skills and reduced subjectivity.

Researcher Bias

The grounded theory research methodology with Charmaz's variant helped the researcher to control bias by recommending that the research follow the leads defined in data. Grounded theorists "do not force preconceived ideas and theories directly upon our data; rather we follow leads that we define in the data" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 17).

Following Charmaz's recommendations helped in reducing the researcher's bias, as preconceptions could have influenced the analysis of the research data and added to the researcher's inclination to an intended outcome. The researcher is not a nontraditional school principal and strictly followed Charmaz's approach and recommendations.

Data Analysis

In qualitative grounded theory, data analysis begins from the initial data collected using qualitative open coding recommended by Charmaz (2006). "Qualitative coding, the process of defining what the data are about, is our first analytic step" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 43). Subsequently, the data collection approach and methodology helped in data analysis. The focus of the interview questions was on the key aspects of the participant's data with the analysis process in mind. Qualitative coding led to creating codes. Therefore, the data analysis in this study included initial coding the data collected from the first four interviews to establish categories for the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Charmaz wrote, "This initial step in coding moves us toward later decisions about defining our core conceptual categories" (p. 47). The categories in the initial coding emerged by comparative analysis of the data collected and the extant text of Portin et al.'s (2003) seven leadership skills. The comparative analysis method used was

mainly precautionary and did not interfere with multiple views and emerging actions from the data.

Open coding and transcribing done on Microsoft Word captured the categories in the interviewees' responses using Leedy and Ormrod's (2005) four steps for analyzing interview transcripts.

1. Identified statements related to the topic by separating relevant from irrelevant data. The relevant information yielded themes.
2. Grouped statements into meaning units for categories of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.
3. Probed for divergent perspectives and all qualified views used in producing the emerged categories.
4. Constructed a composite for an overall meaning of principals' perceptions as reported.

Initial coding is the process of initially defining the data collected by categorizing the emerging themes. Charmaz (2006) described initial coding as the means of naming categories from the initial data collected and analyzed. Initial data coding in grounded theory research remained provisional, that is, open to multiple analytical possibilities. At this stage, the research is simplified and preserved. In addition, initial coding sets up the data for comparative and progressive process. As a result, the data were ready for comparative analysis with the extant standard as well as progression to the focused coding stage. Carefully performed initial coding helps control researcher bias. Another reason initial coding is important is the relief associated with the emergence of categories

that make the relationship between collected data and structured analysis visible, especially moving to focused coding.

Focused coding was the next phase of coding in Charmaz's (2006) variant of grounded theory research. Charmaz described focused coding as a process of establishing early categories as a guide to the rest of the data to be collected; "focused coding requires decisions about which initial codes make the most analytic sense to categorize your data" (p. 57). However, the process of focused coding should not be linear or cloud emerging ideas. Focused coding could lead to revisiting the initial coding if new ideas or categories emerge. In some cases, the emerging new ideas would lead to theoretical coding.

Axial coding involves assembling data in categories after initial coding (Creswell, 2007). This study did not include axial coding because of the nature and quantity of the data. Twenty principals are not sufficient to warrant the use of axial coding as well as the need to include all participants' views, a part of the study design and methodology. In addition, Charmaz's (2006) grounded theory variant does not require the use of axial coding. Charmaz contended that axial coding provides a frame that may limit a researcher's vision. However, there will be a transition from focused coding to substantive-level theory when the categories are saturated using selective coding.

The focus of selective coding as described in Charmaz's (2006) variant of grounded theory is not on integrating focused and axial coding, but the suggested use of selective coding is to integrate initial coding and focused coding to produce a proposition for the study (Creswell, 2007). Relationships between the categories, data, and coding are established as the proposition emerge, and hypotheses emerge from the relationship of initial coding and focused coding using theoretical coding. Theoretical coding is

Charmaz's suggested form of selective coding focused on emerging relationships from the theoretical ideas established, comparative analysis, and initial and focused coding. "Theoretical coding is a sophisticated level of coding that follows the codes selected during focused coding" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). Theoretical coding is an analytical tool used to develop a substantive-level theory in Charmaz's variant of grounded theory.

Substantive-level theory is an outcome of a meaningful proposition from the interpretation of data in a study to solve an existing problem. It is also an explanation of a bordered process peculiar to a situation or group of people, such as principals' perceptions, education settings, and family relationships (Charmaz, 2006). According to Creswell (2007), "The substantive-level theory, may be tested later for its empirical verification with quantitative data" (p. 67). A researcher can generalize the substantive-level theory to a population or a sample. In other words, Charmaz (2006) referred to substantive-level theory verification as substantive coding. The idea is that "novice researchers may find that they rely most on substantive codes" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 93). In this instance, the situation usually involves describing codes and writing code notes rather than developing a theory.

Procedure

The principals of nontraditional schools selected with purposeful sampling came from, but were not limited to, private, charter, and religious schools in the four geographic areas—north, south, east, and west—of Los Angeles County. The size of the sample is 20 participants. Sequentially, the data were collected in sets of four interviews. Some principals who responded to the random purposive sampling to determine the participants for the study were not eligible. The method also included equitable gender

distribution for data collection, as indicated in Appendix C. Gay and Airasian (2003) described random purposive sampling as a process of randomly choosing participants from a purposefully selected sample. But first, nontraditional school principals from four geographic areas of Los Angeles County (north, south, east, and west) with no less than 2 years of experience as principals comprised the purposeful sample. Second, participants within the purposeful sample went through a random selection process. Using a random purposive sampling approach enabled the generalization of the result to the population under study. In addition, the approach further validated and grounded the proposition that emerged from the data. The grounded theory research methodology also appeared to align more with the random purposive approach because of the goal to produce a substantive-level theory.

The contact information of the nontraditional schools was located online from the California Department of Education website and a Google Scholar search.

1. There were no cooperating institutions.
2. The focus of the study was not on the institutions but on the perceptions of principals.
3. Letters of permission from the principals were necessary.

The purposeful sampling method provided 20 principals of nontraditional schools from, but not limited to private, charter, and religious schools in the four geographic areas of Los Angeles County. The contact information of the schools was located online at the California Department of Education website and through a Google Scholar search. After identifying principals of nontraditional schools, the recruitment took place via e-mail, in person, or by mail. Face-to-face recruitment involved meeting with the principals

in person, e-mail recruitment involved e-mailing the principals, and mail recruitment involved mailing the cover letter (see Appendix C) to the selected principals.

The basic procedure used for conducting this grounded theory research, as recommended by Creswell (2007), was as follows:

1. Determined that grounded theory research would be the most appropriate method for this study.
2. Questions centered on understanding the participants' perceptions or views. The next level of questions constructing determined what the core characteristic was and what strategies were used during the process.
3. Collected data using an instrument (see Appendix A) in the form of an interview as well as documents and audiovisuals by
 - Conducting interviews with 20 purposefully selected principals of nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County.
 - Gathering what principals perceive to be the skills most needed for the administration of nontraditional schools using 10 open-ended interview questions (see Appendix A).
 - Sorting data for categorization by using the open-coding method or a variant of grounded theory methodology.
 - Collecting additional data through field notes, documents, and artifacts where necessary.
4. Analyzed data using initial and focused coding.
5. Took notes by writing down my ideas about the evolution of the theory throughout the process.

6. Produced propositions for the principals of nontraditional schools.

The propositions, when approved by Pepperdine University, became substantive-level theories and recommended for implementation in its entirety. Otherwise, the research ended with the emergence of the theories.

After transcribing the data, with participants' confidentiality as the priority, the data were carefully coded. The procedure for oral and written interviews was as follows:

1. Recruiting the participants.
2. Setting up meetings.
3. Explaining to the participants their rights.
4. Obtaining needed consents.
5. Giving oral or written interviews at the scheduled place and time.
6. Thanking the participants.

Chapter 4: Results

The findings from the analyses of the data collected from principals' perceptions resulted in six skills identified as needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. The interviewed principals of nontraditional schools also identified some skills they perceived as difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools. Twenty principals of nontraditional schools from the four geographic areas of Los Angeles County—north, south, east, and west—participated in the study. In the analyses, the interviews provided the answers to the research questions of the study restated below.

Restatement of the Research Questions

1. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are needed for the administration of nontraditional schools?
2. What skills do nontraditional school principals perceive are most difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools, thus requiring training and development?

Literature Review Results

The literature review of this study indicated that the ISLLC published a list of essential skills needed for principalship (ISLLC, 1996). The six standards of the essential skills outlined principals' needed knowledge. The establishment of the six standards is an indication of the modern principalship. The six standards of the ISLLC help the leaders of many colleges and universities to develop frameworks for principal preparation programs throughout the United States. Summarized and outlined below are the six standards of the ISLLC:

1. Vision of learning

2. School culture
3. Management
4. Collaboration
5. Professionalism
6. Responsiveness

In California, the credentialing commission hosts certifications for principals in Los Angeles County, which is the most populous county in the nation. WestEd (2003) published a study that translated the CPSEL standards into descriptions of practice (DOPs) titled *Moving Leadership Standards Into Everyday Work*. The DOPs, like the ISLLC standards, comprise six standards. The six standards of the DOP help educators clarify languages, concepts, and skills needed in the administration of traditional and nontraditional schools. The six DOP standards are as follows:

1. Shared vision
2. School culture
3. Safe school
4. Collaboration
5. Professionalism
6. External development

Portin et al. (2003), in a study of school principalship, examined what school principals do to lead schools. Portin et al. collected data from interviews with educators in four states and drew a major conclusion toward the core of principalship. The result was that principalship needs leadership in seven critical skills areas:

1. Instructional

2. Cultural
3. Managerial
4. Human resources
5. Strategic
6. External development
7. Micropolitical

Interview Results

Four initial interviews conducted in accordance with the qualitative grounded theory methodology represented the initial data for qualitative open-coding analysis. The four initial interviews, after transcription into Microsoft Word 2007 and a review by interviewees for accuracy, were ready for analysis using qualitative open coding as recommended by Charmaz (2006). In this initial data analysis (open coding), comparative analysis of the data with extant text—Portin et al.'s (2003) seven leadership skills—produced the categories.

The four initial interviewees answered the same interview questions from the interview protocol. The locations varied, as the participants chose locations for confidentiality and comfort. The researcher transcribed the interview and focused on not straying from the data, keeping the confidentiality of the subject, not changing categories, and preserving the features of the data collected.

Principal 1. The participant designated as P1, a female principal, had been a principal for 9 years, but she was in her first year at her current school. She oversees a private school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the

demographic data of the interviewees. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school:

1. Teaching
2. Evaluation
3. Collaboration
4. Curriculum
5. Leadership
6. Mission and vision
7. Management
8. Professional development
9. Funding and finance
10. External development

P1 had a mixed approach when asked to prioritize the skills. She stated,

It depends on what the needs are. What time of the year. What the financial situation is. They will rise and fall depending on the current situation and the needs . . . although mission and vision never changes. It is definitely number one.

In answering the Interview Question 8, P1 shared that she is presently in an administrative program.

I will say that the program has been helpful because it has helped me to learn how to see things from 35 feet rather than a few inches away, which is good. As a principal, you could get very narrow focused. I also would say that probably the best education I have gotten for this kind of training has been on-the-job experience.

On the question of skills most difficult to acquire, P1 answered that bigger picture, strategic, and generality thinking skills are the most difficult skills to acquire. P1 said, “Well for me, I will go back to say that it is the bigger picture thinking, the strategic thinking, and the generality thinking that has been most difficult for me than working with the details and other stuff.”

Principal 2. The participant designated as P2, a male principal, had been a principal for 7 years, but he was in his first year at the current school. He leads a private charter school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewees. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school:

1. Communication
2. Public speaking
3. People management
4. Decision making
5. Problem solving
6. Collaboration
7. Time management
8. Versatile
9. Goal setting
10. Event planning

When P2 was prioritizing the above outlined skills, he numbered the skills starting with communication, decision making, problem solving, collaboration, people management, time management, versatile, goal setting, public speaking, and event

planning. When answering how past training and administrative programs prepared him for these skills, he mentioned being mentored by another principal. In P2's opinion of the skills most difficult to acquire, he named people management and decision making. P2 said, "It's difficult because you're dealing with so many different people and personalities. In addition, there's only you. So it's hard to keep track of all of your employees regularly."

Principal 3. The participant designated as P3, a female principal, had been a principal for 21 years. She was in her sixth year at the current school. She leads a Christian school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified seven, instead of 10, skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a Christian school:

1. Leadership
2. Organizational
3. Technology
4. Financial
5. Communication
6. Grant writing
7. People skills

On prioritizing the seven skills, P3's top priority was leadership, followed by organization, financial, communication, people skills, technology, and grant writing. P3 stated her past training and administrative program prepared her through role-playing, writing exercises, research, finance courses, and developmental training. In addition, P3

picked finance as the skill most difficult to acquire. When asked why it is the most difficult to acquire, P3 answered,

Why is this one difficult to acquire? It is because of the requirements, policies, and procedures, constant changes in programs, procedures, collecting money.

They keep changing the programs and the procedures in collecting money. They [school directors] change the requirements for the auditors.

Principal 4. The participant designated as P4, a male principal, had been a principal for 5 years. He was also in his fifth year at the current school. He oversees a private charter school in Los Angeles County. Presently, he is mentoring aspiring principals for the charter school organization. The current school student enrollment has increased and the charter organization is in the process of opening another private charter school. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified nine skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private charter school:

1. Relationship building/intercommunication (people skills)
2. Decision making
3. Logical/rational thinking
4. Organizational skills
5. Written/oral communication
6. Knowledge of instruction
7. Motivation of others
8. Risk management
9. Micropolitical leadership

P4's priority of the skills was relationship building/intercommunication, logical/rational thinking, decision making, written and oral communication, knowledge of instruction, risk management, motivation of other, micropolitical leadership, and organization skill. P4 stated that he used learning from Fullan, "leading in a culture of change," and Colbert, "mind-set management," as taught in his administrative programs. He said, "Better education confirmed my ideas about what makes a better leader." On the skills most difficult to acquire, P4 wanted to distinguish between the skills he perceived difficult for him to acquire and the skills he perceived most difficult for other principals to acquire. For him, he thinks the decision-making skill set is the most difficult to acquire and the relationship-building skill set is the most difficult skill set for other principals to acquire.

Correlation of the Initial Four Interviews

The first set of four interviews, transcribed and coded following Charmaz's (2006) variant of grounded theory methodology and data analysis, represents the first analytic step. The qualitative open coding and zigzag data collection and analysis in the first analytic step of the four interviews established the categories as P1, P2, P3, and P4. In addition, this first analytic step created a condition for defining the core conceptual categories (Charmaz, 2006). Table 3 shows the demographic data from Questions 1 to 5 of the open coding.

Table 3

Demographic Data of P1-P4

Interview questions	P1	P2	P3	P4
How many years have you been a principal?	9	7	21	5
How many years have you been at this location?	1	1	6	5
How many years has this school been in operation?	7	1	63	5
Please indicate your gender	Female	Male	Female	Male
Please select your age range	40-49	30-39	60-65	30-39

Note. P = principal; Numbers represent values of the questions.

Table 3 shows a wide range in the number of years of experience as principals. The range was from 5 to 21 years of experience as principals. On the years at the current schools, unlike the years of experience, the range was from 1 to 6 years at the current school. The age range varied from 30-39 to 60-65. On the schools' years in operation, the range was from 1 to 63 years in existence. In addition, equal gender distribution ensured the structure of the purposive sampling method for the study.

The data from the first four interviews were simplified and preserved. The initial coding and analysis led to comparative analysis with the extant skills by Portin et al. (2003) and simultaneously progressed to the focused coding stage. Table 4 shows the extant skills comparison and focused coding analysis for Question 6.

Interview Question 6 asked principals to identify the skills they perceived as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools. Human resources and managerial skills secured 13 and 10 themed skills, respectively, to lead other categories in extant comparison. The focused categories that emerged were education

(instructional), organization (cultural), decision making (management), collaboration (human resources), mission (strategic), external relationships (external development), and cultivating relationships (micropolitical). On focused coding analysis, the initial codes that made the most analytic sense to categorize the data were educational, organizational, decision making, collaboration, mission, and relationships. The themes were limited to six, because the last two groups were in relationships. At this stage, the categories were provisional and new ideas or categories could still emerge.

In response to the question to prioritize the skills principals perceived as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools, three of the four principals ranked human resources with related categories as their top priorities. The fourth principal picked her top priority to be the mission/vision of the schools, which is in the strategic skill category. After assigning numbers to the categories in the order of priority, human resources had five points. Management category ranked second in priority with 14 points. The third ranked was strategic leadership skills with 18 points. The fourth ranked category was instructional leadership skills with 29 points. Fifth ranked was micropolitical with 30 points, followed by cultural leadership skills in sixth place with 33 points, and the seventh category was external development with 39 points. In making analytic sense, the micropolitical and external development categories were coded into relationship skills. The relationship category included themes such as people skills, external relationships, macro/micropolitical, internal relationships, and versatility. There could be other emerging ideas and nonlinear themes for this category. In addition, people skills that would belong in the human resources category were in the relationship category, as shown in Table 5.

Table 4

Extant Comparison and Focused Coding

Extant	P1	P2	P3	P4
Instructional	Teaching curriculum			Knowledge of instruction
Cultural	Environment		Organizational	Organizational
Managerial	Management	Event planning	Technology	Risk management
		Time management	Financial	Logical/rational thinking
		Decision making		Decision making
		Problem solving		
Human resources	Evaluation	Communication	Leadership	Relationship building
	Collaboration	People management	Communication	People skills
	Teacher recruitment	Collaboration	People skills	Written/oral communication
				Motivation of others
Strategic	Mission	Goal setting		
External development	External relationship	Public speaking		
Micropolitical	Cultivating relationship	Versatile	Grant writing	Micropolitical

Note. P = principal.

Table 5

Focused Coding and Analysis of P1 to P4

P	P1	P2	P3	P4
1	Mission/vision (strategic)	Communication (human resources)	Leadership (human resources)	People skills (human resources)
2	Leadership (human resources)	Decision making (management)	Organizational (cultural)	Logical thinking (management)
3	Collaboration (human resources)	Problem solving (management)	Technology (management)	Decision making (management)
4	Teaching (instructional)	Collaboration (human resources)	Financial (management)	Communication (human resources)
5	Curriculum (instructional)	People management (human resources)	Communication (human resources)	Instr. knowledge (instructional)
6	Evaluation (human resources)	Time management (management)	Grant writing (micropolitical)	Risk management (management)
7	Management	Versatile (micropolitical)	People skills (human resources)	Motivation (human resources)
8	Development (human resources)	Goal setting (strategic)		Micropolitical
9	Financial (micropolitical)	Public speaking (external development)		Organizational (cultural)
10	Grounds (management)	Event planning (management)		

Note. P = priority; P_n = principal; Parentheses contain extant texts for comparisons.

On how past training and administrative programs prepare participants for the skills previously identified and prioritized, the principals varied in their answers.

Although the participants' responses varied, one common area coded was mentoring.

Three of the initial four participants stated that they learned a lot from working with a principal mentor, especially during the early years of their principalship and more so in

nontraditional settings. The other answers were critical thinking, management, writing, upbringing, and a broad view of principalship. P4 was the only participant among the four who alluded to good preparation received from a university course—finance. P4 was also the only participant out of the initial four participants to mention an author—Fullan—whom he said guided his leadership style. Table 6 shows the responses and quotes from the four initial participants.

The participants' opinions on which of the identified 10 skills were the most difficult to acquire and why these skills were difficult to acquire produced management and human resources. The most common reason given by the participants on why these skills are difficult to acquire is the demand on dealing with diverse population, emotions, and a range of personalities. The other reason is fluctuations in financial resources and budget procedures. Table 7 shows participants' answers.

Analysis of the Second Set of Four Interviews

The second set of interviews, like the first set, followed the qualitative grounded theory methodology and was transcribed with Microsoft Word 2007. This set of interviewees answered the same interview questions. The locations varied as the participants chose the location for confidentiality and comfort. The alignment of the second set of four interviews was a means of defining the focused coding developed during open coding.

Table 6

Coding for Responses to Question 8 of P1 to P4

Question 8	P1	P2	P3	P4
How did your past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills?	Think/critical	Management	Writing	Upbringing
	Mentors	Mentors	Research	Mentors
	Educational leadership for superintendent		Finance classes	Fullan
	Broad view		Budget	
Quotes	The best education I have gotten for this kind of training has been on-the-job experience	I was mentored by another principal	They prepared me through role-playing. I had to . . . writing. I had to do a lot of writing exercise	Better education confirmed my ideas about what makes a better leader

Note. P = principal.

Table 7

Coding for Responses to Questions 9 and 10 of P1 to P4

Questions 9 and 10	P1	P2	P3	P4
Difficult skills	Thinking (management)	People management (human resources)	Finance (management)	Decision making (management)
		Decision making (management)		Relationship building (human resources)
Why are these skills difficult to acquire?	I have always been tactical and task oriented instead of broadening my vision	It is difficult because you are dealing with many people and personalities	Requirements, procedures, and programs are constantly changing	People were raised differently and had different models

Note. P = principal; Parentheses contain extant texts for comparisons.

Principal 5. Principal 5, designated as P5, was a female principal and had been for 7 years. She was in her fourth year as a principal at the school. She oversaw a charter school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 8.

Table 8

P5 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P5
Educational	Instructional	Instructional accountability Knowledge of curriculum
Organizational	Cultural	Knowledge of history
Decision making	Managerial	Ability to access data in dynamic ways Knowing students challenges
Collaboration	Human resources	Motivation
Mission	Strategic	Desired school philosophies
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Community relationship Recruiting skills Maximizing resources

Note. P5 = principal five.

P5 is a school leader with a focus on the mission and vision of the charter school. She stated, “Focus on mission and vision led me to my current position.” She is also an alumna of Pepperdine University and she professed how her leadership training at Pepperdine was the most valuable program in preparing her as a leader. P5 prioritized her perceived leadership skills, starting with the highest priority and ending with the lowest priority, as collaboration, decision making, organizational, educational, relationships, and mission. On the most difficult skills to acquire, P5 said that understanding a new school model and meshing the understanding with a leadership style—management—as well as the existing school community—relationship—is difficult. The other difficult area she mentioned is collaboration and her training helped her. P5’s answer to why the skills are

difficult is the time it takes to learn and adjust in a given school in relationship to the demand and expectation placed on the principal as soon as the principal arrives.

Principal 6. The sixth principal, designated P6 is a male principal of a religious school. The interview was audiovisual. P6 has been a principal of the religious school for 5 years and was an assistant principal for 25 years. The school where he is currently a principal has been in operation for 108 years. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 9.

Table 9

P6 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P6
Educational	Instructional	General knowledge
Organizational	Cultural	Culture
Decision making	Managerial	Management Financial
Collaboration	Human resources	Knowing your clientele
Mission	Strategic	Identity
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Marketing Network Relationship with supervisor

Note. P6 = principal six.

On prioritizing the identified principalship skills, P6 started with the top priority and ended with the lowest priority such as collaboration, relationships, mission, decision making, organizational, and educational. P6 was among the principals who learned from

other leaders and emphasized the importance of experience from other leaders. He stated, “I was a VP [vice principal] for a long time, 25 years, and I learned from great principals and teachers. I think I learned from good and horrible principals. It is from experience.” The other key note in this statement is the idea that he learned from horrible principals. On answering the question of the most difficult skills to acquire, P6 replied collaboration. He also inferred that he would question any principal who unequivocally stated that he or she had mastered collaboration skills. The second difficult skill for P6 was management—specifically finance. P6 noted finance is difficult to acquire because the administrative programs he went through only offered brief courses on finance. In addition, he stated that the brief courses offered did not teach anything about how to plan a budget for a nontraditional school. On collaboration, P6 stated that it is a difficult principalship skill to acquire because many people are involved.

Principal 7. The seventh principal, designated P7, interviewed in the second set of data was a male principal with 32 years of experience as a principal. P7 was a principal of a private school in Los Angeles County. The current school student enrollment had decreased, and the school that has been in operation for 32 years is facing financial difficulties. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 10.

Table 10

P7 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P7
Educational	Instructional	Education
Organizational	Cultural	Organization politics
Decision making	Managerial	Computer Being involved
Collaboration	Human resources	Communication Collaboration
Mission	Strategic	Parental involvement
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Active in the community Cooperate with other institutions Student support

Note. P7 = principal seven.

P7 took his time identifying the 10 skills he perceived as necessary for the administration of his private school and when he was answering Question 7 to prioritize the skills he identified, he informed me that he was prioritizing the skills at the same time he was identifying them. P7's priority list started with the most important skill and ended with the least among the skills: educational, collaboration, decision making, mission, organization, and relationship. P7 is an alumnus of Pepperdine University and he was receptive to participating in the study. On the question of how past training and administrative programs prepared him for these skills, he said the training prepared him with collaborative skills, especially for dealing with high school students. In his opinion, the skills most difficult to acquire are collaboration and leadership skills. On the final

question, P7 answered that collaboration is most difficult to acquire because it has to do with the personalities of the school, people, and the school community.

Principal 8. The final interview for the second set of data was with P8, a female principal who had been a principal for 2 years. She was in her second year as a principal at a private charter school in Los Angeles County. The school had also been in operation for 2 years. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured demographic data of the interviewee. On Question 6, the principal identified the 10 skills she perceived as necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 11.

Table 11

P8 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P8
Educational	Instructional	Knowledge of curriculum
Organizational	Cultural	Organization Cultural
Decision making	Managerial	Detail oriented Being calm
Collaboration	Human resources	Flexibility Communication Relationship building
Mission	Strategic	Team player
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Knowledge of outside agencies

Note. P8 = principal eight.

P8 prioritized her identified skills starting with the skills she perceived are most necessary and ending with the skills she perceived are least necessary: collaboration,

organization, decision making, educational, mission, and relationship skills. Prioritization of the skills posed the most challenges to the participants. Most of the principals stated that the skills are interchangeable, linked, and dependent among them and other circumstances. When answering the question on how past training and administrative programs prepared her, P8 stated that hands-on training such as serving on logistics teams and event-planning teams helped her. In addition, P8 stated that her knowledge and education as a curriculum specialist prepared her for the identified skills. On the question regarding the most difficult skills to acquire, P8 answered that relationship skills are the most difficult to acquire because things are always changing.

Correlation of the Second Set of Four Interviews

The second set of four interviews were transcribed and coded and remained open to multiple analytical possibilities (Charmaz, 2006). This stage correlated well with the initial coding. The progression involved using the emerged categories from P5, P6, P7, and P8 with the focused code and extant text to make the structured analysis visible in defining the data. No new categories emerged. Table 12 shows the demographic data from Questions 1 to 5 of the second set of four interviews.

The demographic data in Table 12 show a wide range in the number of years of experience of the principals P5 to P8. The range was from 2 to 32 years of principalship experience. The data for the years spent at the current school were similar to the years of experience, ranging from 2 to 32. The age range varied from 18-29 to 60-65. With regard to the schools' years in operation, the range was from 2 to 108 years. In addition, there was equal gender distribution to ensure the structure of the purposive sampling method.

Table 12

Demographic Data of P5 to P8

Interview questions	P5	P6	P7	P8
How many years have you been a principal?	7	5	32	2
How many years have you been at your current school?	4	5	32	2
How many years has this school been in operation?	5	108	32	2
Please indicate your gender	Female	Male	Male	Female
Please select your age range	30-39	60-65	60-65	18-29

Note. P = principal; Numbers represent values of the questions.

At this stage, the data comparatively aligned with the extant skills by Portin et al. (2003) and emerged in focused codes. Table 13 shows the priority table of the second set of four interviews.

Table 13

Priority Table of the Second Set of Four Interviews

Priority table	P5	P6	P7	P8
1. Collaboration with 5	1	1	2, 6, 8	1, 2, 8
2. Decision making with 13	2, 5	4, 7	3	4, 5
3. Mission with 24	8	3	4	9
4. Educational with 19	4, 10	8	1	6
5. Organizational with 18	3	5, 6, 9	7	3, 7
6. Relationships 23	6, 7, 9	2	5, 9, 10	10

Note. P = principal. Numbers are the priorities; the lowest numbers are highest in priority.

In the correlation of the second set of data with the initial set of data, collaboration and decision-making skills still maintained the first and second positions, respectively, in order of priority. The mission skills slipped down to sixth. Organization was third, followed by education and relationship skills sets. Although the correlation of the second set of four interviews showed a shift in the order of priority from the first set of four interviews, the order of priority would not permanently change yet, but in the third set of four interviews, the new priority would guide the alignment.

The second set of interviews did not yield specific skills on how past training and administrative programs prepared the participants from the skills previously identified and prioritized. Participants picked mentoring, organization, decision making, education, and relationship. Table 14 illustrates the responses and notable quotes from the second set of four participants.

The second set of principals' perceived opinions on which of the identified 10 skills were most difficult to acquire and why these skills are difficult to acquire produced collaboration skill as the most difficult skill to acquire. Table 15 shows the principals' answers and reasons. Three of the four principals interviewed in the second set of interviews perceived collaboration skill to be the most difficult skill to acquire. The other skills mentioned in this set of interviews were decision making, organization, and relationship skills.

Table 14

Notable Quotes From the Second Set of Four Interviews

Question 8	P5	P6	P7	P8
How did your past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills	Organization	Mentor	Decision making	Relationships Education
Quotes	Focus on mission and vision led me to my current position	I learned from a great principal and teacher. I think I learned from good and horrible principal. It is from experiences	It has to do with the personalities of the school, students, people, and the motivation for the school to be successful	Serving on logistics and event planning helped. Being a curriculum specialist helped

Note. P = principal.

Coding for responses to questions 9 and 10 of P1 and P2 (Table 7) on page 85 established difficult skills sets from comparison of the first set of four interviews and the extant text of Portin et al. (2003). In Table 7, P1 through P4 named management (decision-making) as the most difficult skills sets to acquire. The focused codes such as decision-making skills sets from the extant text from Table 7 is then used to establish the first set of difficult skills and reasons from P5 through P8 as shown on table 15 below. Although in table 15, only one participant named decision-making as difficult skills sets.

Table 15

First Set of Difficult Skills and Reasons

Interview questions	P5	P6	P7	P8
Difficult skills	Organization	Collaboration	Collaboration	Relationships
	Collaboration	Decision making		
Why are these skills difficult to acquire?	The time that it takes to learn the mission and develop as a leader	When I did my administrative program, there was a small section on finance.	We work with students and people with different personalities and the motivation to be a successful school.	Things are always changing

Note. P = principal.

Analysis of the Third Set of Four Interviews

Principal 9. The principal designated as P9, a male, had been a principal for 3 years and he had also been an assistant principal for 5 years at the current school. P9 leads a private charter school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewees. In Question 6, P9 identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 16.

Table 16

P9 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P9
Collaboration	Human resources	Communicative skills Articulate
Decision making	Managerial	Confidence and perceptiveness Creative thinking, punctuality An open mind and heart
Organization	Cultural	Organization skills
Education	Instructional	Curriculum and instruction in knowledge and ability
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Business administrative skills
Mission	Strategic	Legal awareness (knowledge of school law)

Note. P = principal.

P9 prioritized his identified skills as follows: collaboration, decision making, educational, mission, relationship, and organization skills. When answering the question about how past training and administrative programs had prepared him for these skills, he indicated his many years in training prepared him for principalship. In addition, P9 stated that academic training—bachelor of art, master of art, and certifications—further prepared him for his role as a principal. P9 stated that education skills are the most difficult skills to acquire, although he inferred that the education skills included acquiring collaboration and shared decision-making skills. When asked why they are the most difficult skills to acquire, P9 answered that it was difficult to acquire the education while

fully employed. He stated, “I was fully employed so studies were more demanding.” P9 was passionate about the demand placed on him when he was studying.

Principal 10. The principal known as P10 was a female principal who had been a principal for 2 years. She was in her second year as a principal at the school. She oversaw a private charter school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified the 10 skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 17.

Table 17

P10 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P10
Collaboration	Human resources	Human management/relationship builder
		Motivational/leadership
Decision making	Managerial	Fiscal management
		Time management
		Computer literacy
		Analyze/interpret data
Organization	Cultural	Competency with current law
Education	Instructional	Instructional delivery
		Writing skills
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Public speaking
Mission	Strategic	Strong work ethic

Note. P = principal.

P10 began prioritizing her identified skills with education, followed by management, mission, collaboration, relationship, and organization. P10 was teaching a class and, with 2 years of experience as a principal, she placed the most emphasis on education. On the question of how past training and administrative programs prepared her for these skills, she noted that experience-based training and pedagogy are the best lessons. P10 also added that an administration program and operating a school enhances her administrative skills. Although P10 did not think collaboration skill has the highest priority, she did say it was the most difficult skill to acquire. P10 stated that shifting people's preconceived notions about children and learning is a challenge.

Principal 11. Principal 11, designated as P11, was a female principal and had been a principal for 15 years. She was in her second year as a principal at the current nontraditional school. She oversaw a private religious school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 helped in collecting the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills she perceived were necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 18.

On outlining the skills in order of priority, P11 started by stating, "You cannot prioritize one from the other." She elaborated this comment by stating that leadership is number one—the main—and instead of prioritizing, she placed collaboration in the middle and inferred that the other skills surround it. Figure 1 is a similar elaboration as drawn by P11.

P11 believed she learned a lot from training and mentorship. She made a comparison between the current training as a nontraditional school principal to the training she received as a traditional school principal and mentioned she preferred the

current training. Other than the professional development and training, P11 stated that she learned from very good principals she worked with as an assistant principal. On which of the skills were most difficult to acquire, P11 said that the most difficult skill to acquire is finance. She said that it is difficult to acquire because it keeps changing, whereas the other ones can be developed through training.

Table 18

P11 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P11
Collaboration	Human resources	Collaboration Communication skills
Decision making	Managerial	Organizational skills Skills on finances (budgeting) Empower colleagues (shared decision)
Organization	Cultural	Discipline strategies for children
Education	Instructional	Educational leadership
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Community relationship Marketing endeavor
Mission	Strategic	Love for children

Note. P = principal.

Principal 12. The twelfth principal, designated P12, was a male principal of a private school. The interview was a written interview. P12 had been a principal of the private school for 32 years. The school for which he was currently a principal had been in operation for 33 years, although the name recently changed. In Question 6, the principal

identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 19.

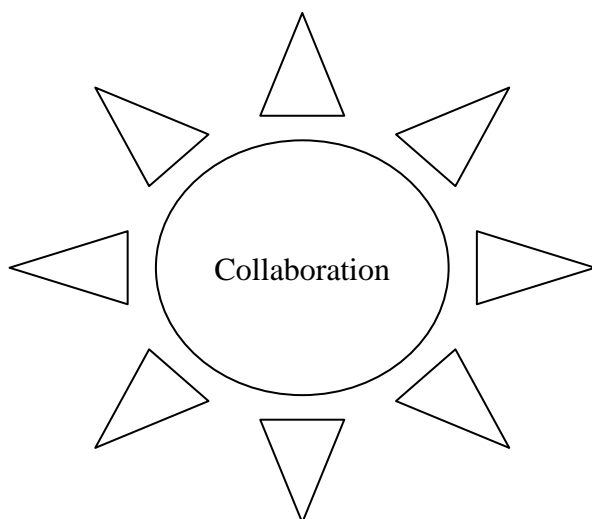


Figure 1. Illustration of collaboration skills in relation to the other skills sets by P11.

Table 19

P12 Focused Coding With Extant Text

Focused code	Extant	P12
Collaboration	Human resources	Effective communicator Leadership abilities
Decision making	Managerial	Organized Sound decision making
Organization	Cultural	Responsible
Education	Instructional	Good intrapersonal skills
Relationship	External development and micropolitical	Good motivator
Mission	Strategic	Coordinate work Confidence

Note. P = principal.

Alignment of the Third Set of Four Interviews

The third set of four interviews remained open to multiple analytical possibilities (Charmaz, 2006) and aligned with the focused codes established from open coding. In this third stage of data collection and progression, P9, P10, P11, and P12 aligned with the initial coding process developed with the first set of four interviews. The extant text was not used in this section but the focused codes became prominent and strengthened the structured analysis visible in the data. No new categories emerged. Table 20 shows the demographic data from Questions 1 to 5 of the third set of four interviews.

Table 20

Demographic Data of P9 Through P12

Interview questions	P9	P10	P11	P12
No. of years as a principal?	3	2	15	32
No. of years at current school?	8	2	2	1
No. of years has school been in operation?	17	8	62	1
Gender	Male	Female	Female	Male
Age range	60-65	30-39	50-59	60-65
Collaboration	1, 8	3, 6, 7	3, 4	1, 8
Decision making	2, 7, 9, 10	1, 2, 4, 12	1, 2, 5	2, 4,
Organization	6	9	10	3
Education	3	5, 11	6	7
Relationship	5	8	7, 8	10
Mission	4	10	9	5, 9

Note. No. = number; P = principal. Numbers are criteria from participants' interview.

Table 20 shows a wide range in the number of years of experience for P9 to P12. The range is from 2 to 32 years of experience as principals, which aligned with the number of years of experience of the second set of four participants. The alignment strengthened the focused codes by the similarity in experiences. The numbers used in the focused codes section of Table 20 are the skills identified by the participants. In addition, equal gender distribution sampling ensured the structure of the purposive sampling method of the study. At this stage, the data aligned with the focused codes. Table 21 is the priority table of the third set of four interviews.

Table 21

Priority Table of the Third Set of Four Interviews

Priority table	P9	P10	P11	P12
Collaboration	1	6, 7, 8	1, 5	1, 2, 4
Decision making	2, 7, 9, 10	2, 4, 5	3, 4, 6	3, 5, 8
Organization	6	10	10	7
Educational	3	1	2	9
Relationship	5, 8	9	7, 8	6
Mission	4	3	9	10

Note. P = principal. Numbers are the priorities; the lowest numbers are highest in priority.

In the alignment, collaboration and decision-making skills maintained first and second positions, respectively, on the priority table. Educational skills moved up to third place on the perceived priority table. Mission skills scored fourth place. Relationship skills maintained fifth place, while organization skills finished in sixth place. This alignment produced consistency with principals' perceived first and second priorities—collaboration and decision-making skills. The alignment established the first and second

priorities as perceived by the participant, but third through sixth leadership skills remained fluid. Therefore, the fourth set of four interviews would serve as a guide in establishing the priorities of third through sixth leadership skills.

The third set of interviews produced collaboration, decision making, and educational skills as the skills for which past training and administrative programs prepared them. All four cited collaboration skills. Table 22 illustrates the responses and notable quotes from the third set of four participants.

Table 22

Notable Quotes From the Third Set of Four Participants

Interview question	P9	P10	P11	P12
How did your past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills	Collaboration Education	Education Collaboration	Collaboration	Collaboration Decision making
Quotes	Placing these skills in order of priority is the most difficult task because of the necessity and importance of each	To manage adults on behalf of children needs to be strategically executed to maximize outcomes	Actually, collaboration leadership skill is in the middle, it is a balance kind of the leadership	Over the years I have come to the realization of how much I don't know

Note. P = principal.

The third set of principals' perceived opinions on which of the identified 10 skills were most difficult to acquire and why these skills are difficult to acquire produced

collaboration, decision making, and educational skills as the three most difficult skills to acquire. Table 23 shows the principals' answers and reasons.

Table 23

Second Set of Difficult Skills and Reasons

Interview questions	P9	P10	P11	P12
Difficult skills	Education	Collaboration	Decision making	Collaboration
	Decision making			Decision making
	Collaboration			
Why are these skills difficult to acquire	It was demanding to be a student and fully employed	Shifting peoples' preconceived notions about children and learning is a challenge.	Change of the times—inflation, economy, and so on, affect everything.	Making decisions affects people and they could be good or bad.

Note. P = principal.

Analysis of the Fourth Set of Four Interviews

The fourth set of interviews answered to the same interview questions. The analysis of the data established consistency with the focused codes established with the second set of four interviews and further aligned with the third set of interviews.

Principal 13. The 13th principal, designated P13 was a male principal of a private school. P13 had been a principal for 5 years, although he stated that he had been at the school for 12 years. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills he perceived as necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 24.

Table 24

P13 Focused Coding

Focused code	P13
Collaboration	Flexibility
Decision making	Critical thinking
	Discernment
Organization	Dedication
Education	Teaching ability
	Intelligence
Relationship	Humility
	Interpersonal
Mission	Genuineness
	Diligence

Note. P = principal.

On prioritizing the principalship skills, P13 started with the top priority (collaboration), followed by organizational, relationship, decision-making, mission, and educational skills. P13 is a principal who learned from the other leaders. On answering the question of the most difficult skills to acquire, P13 stated collaboration was the most difficult principalship skill to acquire. P13 wrote that the reason he cited collaboration as the most difficult principalship skill is that sometimes there is no right or wrong answers in dealing with people, and thus, it is difficult to produce meaningful and lasting change.

Principal 14. The 14th principal, designated as P14 and interviewed among the fourth set of data collected, was a female principal with 21 years of experience as a

principal. P14 was a principal of a religious private school in Los Angeles County. The school had been in operation for 60 years. Interview Questions 1 through 5 as designed captured demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, P14 identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 25.

Table 25

P14 Focused Coding

Focused code	P14
Collaboration	Flexibility
Decision making	Supervision
	Management
Organization	Understanding of culture
Education	Knowledge
	Writing
Relationship	Marketing
	Alumni
	Empathy
Mission	Understanding of client

Note. P = principal.

P14 identified the 10 skills she perceived were necessary for the administration of her religious school and when she was asked in Question 7 to prioritize the skills she identified, she started with the skill most important to her (collaboration) and ended with the least among the skills (mission, education, decision making, organization, and relationship). On the question of how past training and administrative programs prepared

her for these skills, she wrote that the training prepared her with the skills of sensitivity to bring multiple cultures together. In her opinion on which of the skills identified is most difficult to acquire, P14 named relationship as the most difficult to acquire because of the need to be sensitive in bringing all cultures together.

Principal 15. The interviewee designated as P15, a male principal, had been a principal for 4 years. P15 was in his second year at the current school. He oversaw a religious school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 as designed and used helped capture the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a nontraditional school, as shown in Table 26.

Table 26

P15 Focused Coding

Focused code	P15
Collaboration	Flexibility, listening
Decision making	Dispute resolutions Management Funding, planning
Organization	Transparency
Education	Patience
Relationship	Human relations
Mission	Adaptability

Note. P = principal.

On prioritizing the skills, P15 placed collaboration first, then decision making, relationships, education, mission, and finally organization. When P15 answered the question of how past training and administrative programs prepared him for these skills, he stated that the training prepared him in different ways, especially with the background from his master of science degree in planning and development and master in business administration. He also stated that he learned from Covey's (1990) *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People*. In his opinion of the skills most difficult to acquire, P15 named collaboration and education skills. P15 then answered the final question, saying that collaboration is the most difficult to acquire because,

it takes some experience to realize that just because I explain my vision and provide clear directives, it does not mean others will embrace or agree with me.

There is a need to be inclusive in developing policies and strategies especially with those who will implement them.

P15 also shared that it requires soliciting and listening to feedback and being patient for others to process the information.

Principal 16. The final interview for the fourth set of data was with a female principal designated as P16. She had been a principal for 9 years. She was in her ninth year as a principal at the same school. She was a principal of a charter school in Los Angeles County. The school had been in operation for 9 years. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the principal. On Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school, as shown in Table 27.

Table 27

P16 Focused Coding

Focused code	P16
Collaboration	Human management
	Motivational leadership
Decision making	Time management
Organization	Knowledge of the school
	Knowledge of current law
Education	Instruction
	Interpretation of data
Relationship	Conflict resolution
	Public relations
Mission	Passion for students

Note. P = principal.

When P16 prioritized the previously identified skills, she started with collaboration followed by decision making, organization, relationship, mission, and education. P16 stated the past training and administrative program guided her along with her mentor toward being passionate as a leader. P16 now strongly believes in being passionate about the work she does for the children and families of her school. On the skills most difficult to acquire, P16 stated that collaboration is the most difficult skill to acquire. When asked why it is the most difficult to acquire, P16 answered, “We have to understand that the resources out there are limited. Therefore, it is difficult to learn skills

to motivate employees with limited resources to be passionate about providing quality education and nurture the students.”

Selective Saturation Analysis of the Fourth Set of Four Interviews

The fourth set of four interviews remained open to multiple analytical possibilities (Charmaz, 2006), but was used as saturation data toward producing a proposition for the study (Creswell, 2007). In the fourth stage of data collection, P13, P14, P15, and P16 aligned with the focused codes developed with the second set of four interviews using Charmaz’s (2006) selective coding variant. The extant text was not used in this section but focused codes were used to strengthen the six identified skills that principals’ perceived as needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. No new categories emerged in this data set. Table 28 shows the demographic data from Questions 1 to 5 of the fourth set of four interviews—selective coded data.

Table 28

Demographic Data of P13 to P16

Interview questions	P13	P14	P15	P16
How many years have you been a principal?	5	21	4	9
How many years have you been at your current school?	12	21	2	9
How many years has this school been in operation?	15	60	50	9
Please indicate your gender	Male	Female	Male	Female
Please select your age range	30-39	50-59	60-65	60-65

Note. P = principal. Numbers represent values to the questions.

Table 28 showed a wide range in the number of years of experience for P13 to P16, consistent with the previous data sets collected using the same interview protocol.

The data ranged from 4 to 21 years of principalship experiences. The number of years at the current schools—2 to 21—were similar to the years of principalship experience. The age range varied from 30-39 to 60-65. On the schools' years in operation, the range was from 9 to 60 years. In addition, equal gender distribution ensured the structure of the purposive sampling method of the study.

In the selective saturation analysis of the fourth set of data with focused codes toward the proposition of the six principalship skills that principals perceived are needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. No new category emerged in this selective saturation analysis. Table 29 is the priority table for the fourth set of four interviews.

Table 29

Priority Table of the Fourth Set of Four Interviews

Priority table	P13	P14	P15	P16
Collaboration	1	1	1, 5	1, 5
Decision making	4, 8	4, 7	2, 10	2
Organization	2	6	8	3, 7
Educational	9, 10	3, 10	7	9, 10
Relationship	3, 5	2, 8, 9	3, 8	4, 6
Mission	6, 7	5	4, 6	8

Note. P = principal. Numbers are the priorities; the lowest numbers are highest in priority.

Selective saturation analysis of the order of priority clearly identified collaboration as the top priority. Decision making maintained second highest in priority, although it tied with relationship skills that rose from the fifth position with the fourth set

of data. Organization, mission, and educational completed the priority list. The selective saturation analysis of the fourth set of four interviews showed a shift in order of priority from the first, second, and third set of four interviews. Therefore, the order of priority did not change. The first two priorities were saturated and the third to sixth would need another set of interviews for further saturation.

The fourth set of interviews did not saturate any specific skill on how past training and administrative programs prepared the participants from the skills previously identified and prioritized. Participants picked mentoring, education, and relationship. Table 30 shows the responses and notable quotes from the fourth set of four participants.

The fourth set of principals' opinions on which of the identified 10 skills were most difficult to acquire and why these skills are difficult to acquire indicated collaboration skills were the most difficult skills to acquire. Table 31 shows the principals' answers and reasons.

The four principals interviewed in the fourth set of interviews perceived that collaboration skills are the most difficult skills set to acquire. The analysis selectively saturated the collaboration skills set as difficult to acquire. The other skill mentioned in this set of interviews was education.

Analysis of the Final Set of Four Interviews

The final set of interviews, like the first set, followed the qualitative grounded theory methodology. The transcripts were in Microsoft Word 2007 and reviewed by interviewees for accuracy. In addition, this set of interviewees for the data collection answered the same interview questions. The locations varied, as the participants chose the location for confidentiality and comfort.

Table 30

Notable Quotes From the Fourth Set of Interviews

Interview question	P13	P14	P15	P16
How did your Past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills?	Teaching preparation and background, scope and depth of responsibilities, and faith	Understanding and sensitivity of bringing multi-cultures together	P15 shared that he has a MS and MBA which helps him in keeping up with the responsibilities	P16 is a strong believer of mentoring. She gives regards to principals who mentored her.
Quotes	Administrative training program and experience helped to inform me of the scope and depth of my responsibilities	My training prepared me for understanding and sensitivity of bringing multi-cultures together and working with a school board	I am a certified Facilitator for the Franklin Covey 7 Habits of Highly Effective People seminar program	I learned from a principal mentor who guided me through being passionate about the work we do for the children and families

Note. P = principal.

Table 31

Third Set of Difficult Skills and Reasons

Interview question	P13	P14	P15	P16
Difficult skills	Collaboration	Collaboration	Collaboration	Collaboration
			Education	
Why are these skills difficult to acquire?	P13 stated that sometimes there is no right or wrong answer to produce a lasting change.	P14 believes in the sensitivity of bringing multi-cultures together.	P15 believes that it takes some experience to learn how people will embrace or agree with him.	Motivating people to be collaborative is difficult with limited resources.

Note. P = principal.

Principal 17. The principal designated P17, a male principal, had 3 years of principalship experiences and he was in his fourth year at the current school. He was leading a private school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. On the sixth question, the principal identified the skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school.

Table 32

P17 Saturation With Focused Codes, Theoretical Ideas, and Themes

Focused code	P17	Theoretical Idea	Theme
Collaboration	Communication	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration
Decision making	Prioritization	Human nature	Shared decision making
Organization	Support	Postmodernism	Coaching
Education	Patience	Theory of action	Standards
Relationship	Marketing	Critical race theory	Administration
Mission	Adaptability	Rational choice theory	Mentoring Training

Note. P = principal.

When P17 prioritized skills listed in Table 32, he numbered the skills starting with collaboration, organization, education, decision making, mission, and relationship. On the answer about how past training and administrative programs prepared him for these skills, he cited the importance of education and how he integrated all the skills he learned into principalship. In P17's opinion of the skills most difficult to acquire, he named collaboration and relationship skills. P17 stated that the difficulty is in applying the appropriate skill at the appropriate time.

Principal 18. The principal designated as P18, a male, had been a principal for 11 years. He was leading a religious school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified the skills he perceived are necessary for the administration of a nontraditional school.

Table 33

P18 Saturation With Focused Codes, Theoretical Ideas, and Themes

Focused code	P18	Theoretical ideas	Theme
Collaboration	Arbitration	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration
Decision making	Decision making	Human nature	Shared decision making
Organization	Sincere care	Social constructivism	Coaching
Education	Broad knowledge	Theory of action	Standards
Relationship	Business	Theories of leadership	Administration
Mission	Positive disposition	Rational choice theory	Mentoring Training

Note. P = principal.

On prioritizing his identified skills, P18 started with collaboration as first priority, followed by decision making, education, relationship, organization, and mission skills with focused coding. P18 answered that past training and administrative programs prepared him for these skills; he inferred that his many years in training prepared him for principalship. P18 stated that decision-making skills are the most difficult skill to acquire. When asked why they are the most difficult skills to acquire, P18 answered that they need more time, training, and courses to develop.

Principal 19. Principal 19, designated as P19, was a female principal and had been a principal for 8 years. She was in her eighth year as a principal at her own private school in Los Angeles County. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee. In Question 6, the principal identified 10 skills she perceived are necessary for the administration of a private school.

Table 34

P19 Saturation With Focused Codes, Theoretical Ideas, and Themes

Focused code	P19	Theoretical ideas	Theme
Collaboration	Communication Team work	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration
Decision making	First aid	Human nature	Administration
Organization	Discipline	Social constructivism	Coaching
Education	Patience Academic awareness	Theory of action	Standards
Relationship	Respect	Theories of leadership	Administration
Mission	Love and faith	Rational choice theory	Mentoring

Note. P = principal.

P19 started her prioritization with collaboration as first priority, then decision making, education, relationship, organization, and mission skills with focused coding. P19 answered that she learned from experience and she inferred that formal training is not required for her principalship. P19 stated that collaboration and mission skills are the most difficult skills to acquire. When asked why they are the most difficult skills to acquire, P19 answered because people grew up with some preferences and prejudices that are hard to change.

Principal 20. The final interview was with a female principal designated as P20. She had been a principal for 2 years. She was in her fourth year at the same school. She was a principal of a religious school in Los Angeles County. The school had been in operation for 17 years. Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the interviewee, as shown in Table 35.

Table 35

P20 Saturation With Focused Codes, Theoretical Ideas, and Themes

Focused code	P20	Theoretical ideas	Theme
Collaboration	Staff management Communication	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration
Decision making	Budget	Human nature	Administration
Organization	Understanding of school laws Know the school	Social constructivism	Coaching
Education	Scheduling Knowledge of instruction	Theory of action	Standards
Relationship	Parental relationship	Theories of leadership	Administration
Mission	Passionate	Rational choice theory	Mentoring/training

Note. P = principal.

On prioritizing her identified skills, P20 started with the skills she perceived as most necessary and ended with the skills she perceived as least necessary: collaboration, organization, decision making, educational, mission, and relationship skills. To answer the question about how past training and administrative programs prepared her, P20 stated that she relied on mentorship from previous principals and hands-on leadership from her training. She also said that education prepared her with the learning skills and relationship-building skills she needs in her position. On the question of the most difficult skills to acquire, P20 answered that collaboration and relationship skills are the most difficult to acquire because people are different and always changing with situations.

Saturation and Theoretical Analysis of the Final Set of Interviews

The fifth and final set of four interviews for this study remained open to multiple analytical possibilities, but was used to saturate and theorize the six skills that principals of nontraditional schools had identified as skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. The study proposition emerged from the saturation of the data with focused codes and theoretical ideas (Creswell, 2007). The extant text was not used in this section but focused codes were used to strengthen the six identified skills that principals perceived as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools. No new categories emerged in this data set. Table 36 shows the demographic data from Questions 1 to 5 of the fifth and final set of four interviews.

Table 36

Demographic Data of the Saturation Set of Interviews

Interview questions	P17	P18	P19	P20
How many years have you been a principal?	3	11	8	2
How many years have you been at your current school?	4	11	8	4
How many years has this school been in operation?	21	49	8	17
Please indicate your gender	Male	Male	Female	Female
Please select your age range	30-39	40-49	40-49	40-49

Note. P = principal. Numbers are values to the questions.

Table 36 shows a smaller range in the number of years of experience for P17 to P20 when compared to the previous data sets. The range is from 2 to 11 years of principalship experiences. At this stage, the research purposefully focused on the mid-level age groups (30-39 and 40-49) that would have acquired some educational

experiences and would represent the future of nontraditional schools or would be subject to nontraditional schools' principal turnover effects. On the schools' years in operation, the range remained similar to the previous sets of data, from 8 to 49 years in existence. In addition, equal gender distribution ensured the structure of the purposive sampling method of the study. This stage of data collection, categorized as P17, P18, P19, and P20 and saturated with the focused codes, theoretical ideas, and themes of the study, is illustrated in Table 37.

Table 37

Priority Saturation With Focused Codes, Theoretical Ideas, and Themes

Priority	Theoretical ideas	Themes	P17	P18	P19	P20
Collaboration	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration	1, 10	1, 10	5, 6, 10	2, 4
Decision making	Human nature	Shared decision making	5, 6	2, 6, 7, 8	8	3
Organization	Postmodernism	Coaching	2, 3	5	4, 7	1, 10
Education	Theory of action	Standards	4	3	2, 9	5, 9
Relationship	Critical race theory	Administration	8	4	3	6, 7
Mission	Rational choice theory	Mentoring Training	7	9	1	8

Note. Numbers are the priorities; the lowest numbers are highest in priority.

The final set of data identified the six skills and correlated with the theoretical ideas and themes of the study. The data set also clearly saturated collaboration as the top priority. The other skill priorities varied.

The data from the final set of interviews did not saturate for any specific skill on how past training and administrative programs prepared the participants from the skills

previously identified. However, participants alluded to mentoring, education, and experiences. Table 38 illustrates the responses and notable quotes from the final set of four participants.

The fifth and final set of principals' perceptions on which of the identified skills were most difficult to acquire and why these skills are difficult to acquire included the collaboration skills set as the most difficult to acquire. Table 39 contains the principals' answers and reasons.

The final set of four interviews indicated that the collaboration skills set is the most difficult skills set to acquire. The analysis showed that collaboration skills sets are difficult to acquire. The other skills mentioned in this set of interviews were relationship, decision making, and mission.

Proposition From Focused Codes and Theoretical Ideas

Theoretical coding is Charmaz's (2006) suggested variant of selective coding toward developing a proposition from theoretical ideas and focused codes. "Theoretical coding is a sophisticated level of coding that follows the codes selected during focused coding" (Charmaz, 2006, p. 63). This analytical tool, through the interpretation of data, develops a substantive-level theory from a meaningful proposition. The proposition developed from the interpretation of the data in this study includes the six skills identified as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools, as shown in Table 40.

Table 38

Notable Quotes From Saturation Interviews

Interview question	P17	P18	P19	P20
How did your past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills	Different positions from the past prepared me	The administrative programs provided the knowledge base. In addition, some role-playing situations help	I learn from experience, I did not have professional training for this position: it is not required in a private school	I relied on mentorship from previous principals and hands on leadership. My education prepared me with the learning skills and relationship building skills
Quotes	This position has been a unique integration of these skill sets	The toughest to learn is probably the business sense, since as so little time is spent on it in teacher preparation programs	Psychological training would be an area where I feel we need help	Taking different approaches in dealing with students and parents requires knowing all the laws that affect all aspects of education

Note. P = principal.

Table 39

Saturation of Difficult Skills and Reasons

Interview questions	P17	P18	P19	P20
Difficult skills	Collaboration Relationship	Decision making Collaboration Mission	Collaboration Mission	Collaboration Relationships
Why are these skills difficult to acquire?	The difficulty is in applying the appropriate skill at the appropriate time.	Most schools/districts are run with different business/leadership models.	Generally, people are brought up with some preference or prejudice that needs to be overcome.	Knowing the laws helps to reach the students and parents effectively.

Note. P = principal.

The proposition of these six skills emerged from the stories of the principals interviewed, categories developed, focused codes, theoretical ideas, and themes. The use of the grounded theory methodology and the emergence of the proposition resulted in the substantive-level theory of the six skills needed in the administration of nontraditional schools. Table 41 illustrates the relationships. Therefore, the substantive-level theory is the six skills sets needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Additionally, the second emerged substantive-level theory is that the collaboration and decision-making skills sets are difficult skills sets to acquire. As a result, frameworks, implementations, dispositions, and adaptations of educational programs for the increasing needs of nontraditional schools should address these difficult skills. A visual model for the production of a substantive-level theory of six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional school is shown in figure 2 below.

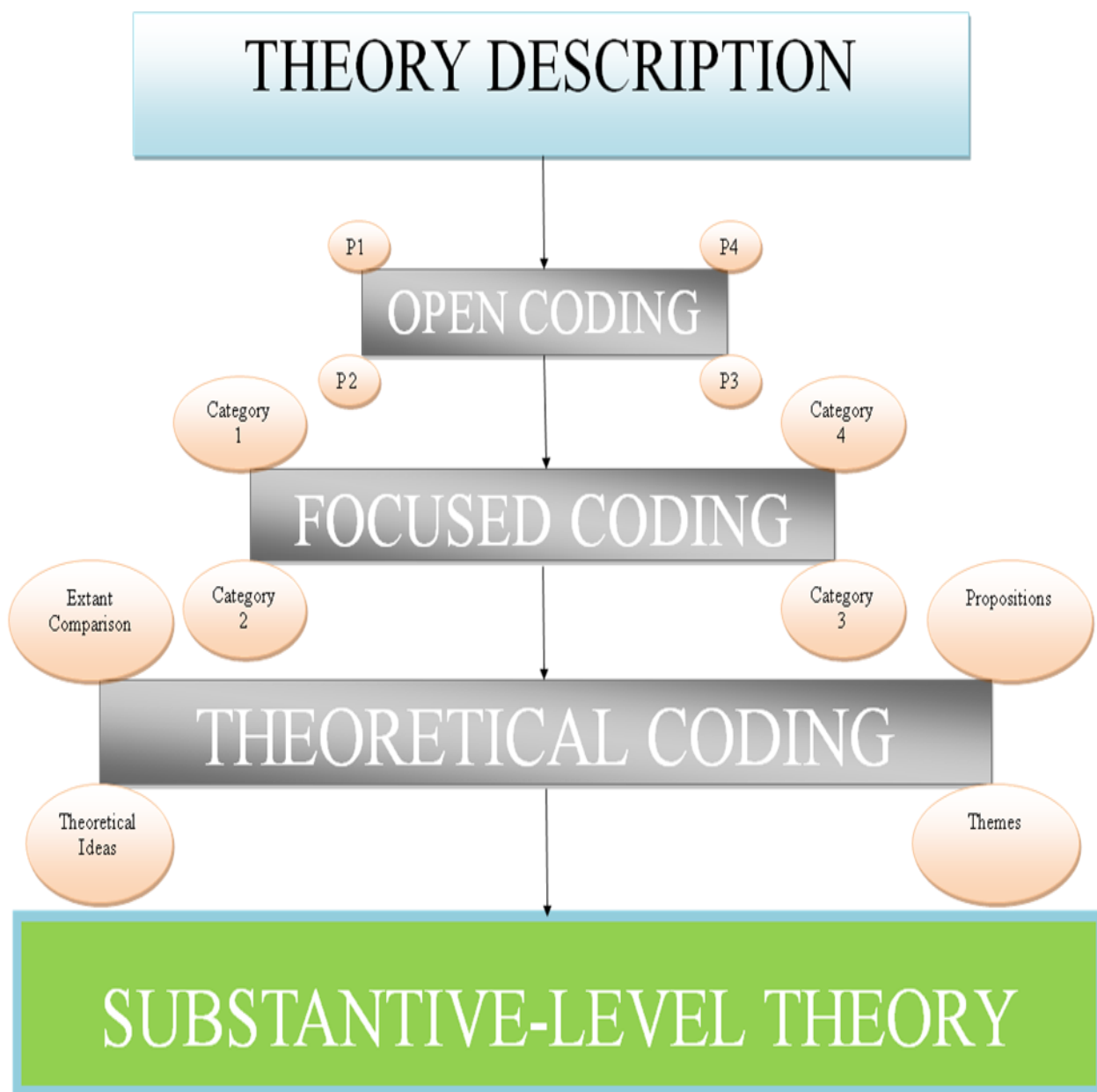


Figure 2. Theory description. P = Principal. Category is a group of four interviews.

Table 40

Six Skills Needed for the Administration of Nontraditional Schools

Six skills	Focused codes
Collaboration	Collaboration, evaluation, teacher recruitment, people management, communication, employee motivation, people skills, leadership, flexibility, articulate, listening, arbitration, team work, staff management
Decision making	Management, problem solving, decision making, time management, event planning, risk management, logical/rational thinking, financial, technological, data access and uses, detail oriented, calmness, confidence and perceptiveness, creative thinking, punctuality, open mind/heart, budgeting, colleagues, empowerment, organized, discernment, supervision, funding, first aid
Organization	Environment, organization, knowledge of school history, culture, current school law, organizational discipline, responsibility, dedication, transparency, support
Education	Teaching, curriculum, knowledge of instruction, instructional ability, general knowledge, education, writing skills, instructional delivery, education leadership, intrapersonal, patience, academic awareness, scheduling
Relationship	External relationships, public speaking, cultivating relationships, versatile grant writing, micropolitical, community relationships, maximizing resources, marketing, network, cooperating with other institution, knowledge of other agencies, business, humility, interpersonal, alumni, empathy, human relations, public relations, respect, parental relationship
Mission	Mission, goal setting, desired school philosophies, identity, parental involvement, team player, legal awareness, strong work ethics, love for children, work coordination, genuineness, diligence, understanding of clients, adaptability, positive disposition, love, faith, passion

Table 41

Substantiating the Proposition

Focused code	Proposition	Theoretical ideas	Theme
Collaboration	Collaboration	Symbolic interactionism	Collaboration
Decision making	Decision making	Human nature	Administration
Organization	Organization	Social constructivism	Coaching
Education	Education	Theory of action	Standards
Relationship	Relationship	Theories of leadership	Administration
Mission	Mission	Rational choice theory	Mentoring

Analysis of the Research Questions

In response to Research Question 1 of this study, six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools emerged. This finding is comparative to Portin et al.'s (2003) finding in the areas of functions of six skills. Portin et al.'s study represented all schools, whereas the focus of this study was nontraditional schools. The primary difference is the combination of external development and micropolitical skills to relationship skills. Also notable are the terms used commonly in nontraditional schools and not obvious in the extant text. An example is the term human resources in all schools, but themed collaboration in nontraditional schools. In a bigger picture, the finding also varied relatively from the six standards of CPSEL and ISLLC. The notable similarity is the use of the theme collaboration skills set whereas the notable difference is the emergence of the theme decision-making skills set.

Analysis of the findings for Research Question 2 indicated collaboration and decision-making skills are the most difficult skills sets to acquire. This finding

complements the works of Portin et al. (2003), Schafer (2004), Jorgenson (2006), Pack (2007), and Campbell et al. (2008), who noted that the two skills sets could be complex and tend to affect the other roles of the principals.

Interview Results Related to the Demographics of the Participants

Interview Questions 1 through 5 captured the demographic data of the participants. Tables 42 and 43 display the frequency counts of variables.

Table 42

Frequency Counts of the Selected Variables

Category and variable	Number	Percentage
Years of experience		
2 to 4	9	45
5 to 9	5	25
10 to 14	1	5
15 to 19	1	5
20 and over	4	20
Gender		
Female	10	50
Male	10	50
Age range		
18 to 29	1	5
30 to 39	6	30
40 to 49	4	20
50 to 59	2	10
60 and over	7	35

Table 43

Variables Related to Nontraditional Schools

Variables and category	Number	Percentage
Years at the school		
2 to 5	12	60
6 to 10	4	20
11 to 15	2	10
16 to 20	0	0
21 and over	2	10
Years of schools		
0 to 10	9	45
11 to 20	3	15
21 to 30	1	5
31 to 40	1	5
41 to 50	2	10
51 to 60	1	5
60 and over	3	15

Analysis of the Demographic Variables

The purposive sampling used for this grounded theory study included equitable gender distribution for data collection, as indicated in Appendix C. Gay and Airasian (2003) described this approach as random purposive sampling. All participants responded to the gender question on the interview instrument.

The years of experience of the principals showed an inverse relationship to increase in years. This relationship supports the 2000 Education Research Service survey by the Institute for Educational Leadership that found the candidate pool for principal positions to be decreasing, leading to a principal shortage. The inverse relationship is also an indication of high principal turnover rate, as noted in Campbell et al.'s (2008) survey of charter school leaders. Campbell et al. noted, "One-third plan to leave their current positions in the next three years, and about seventy percent expect to move on in the next five years" (p. 8). The comparison with this study showed a decline of approximately one third, from 45 to 25%, as shown in figure 2. The categories in figure two represent sets of years of experience, number of principals with the years, and the corresponding percentages.

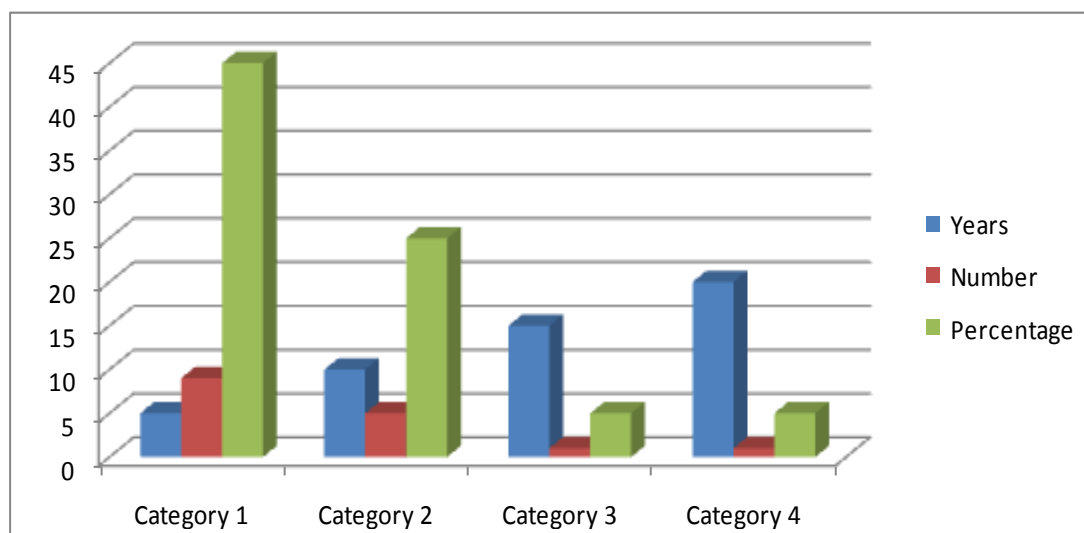


Figure 3. Principals' years of experience. Categories are groups of years, corresponding number of participants, and percentages.

The years principals had been at the schools depicted a two-thirds percentage decline or principal turnover. The principals do not stay in the position long enough or

the schools do not have programs in place to retain principals. There could be a number of reasons for the decline, but a notable reason is the increase in the role of principals.

Figure 4 illustrates the decline.

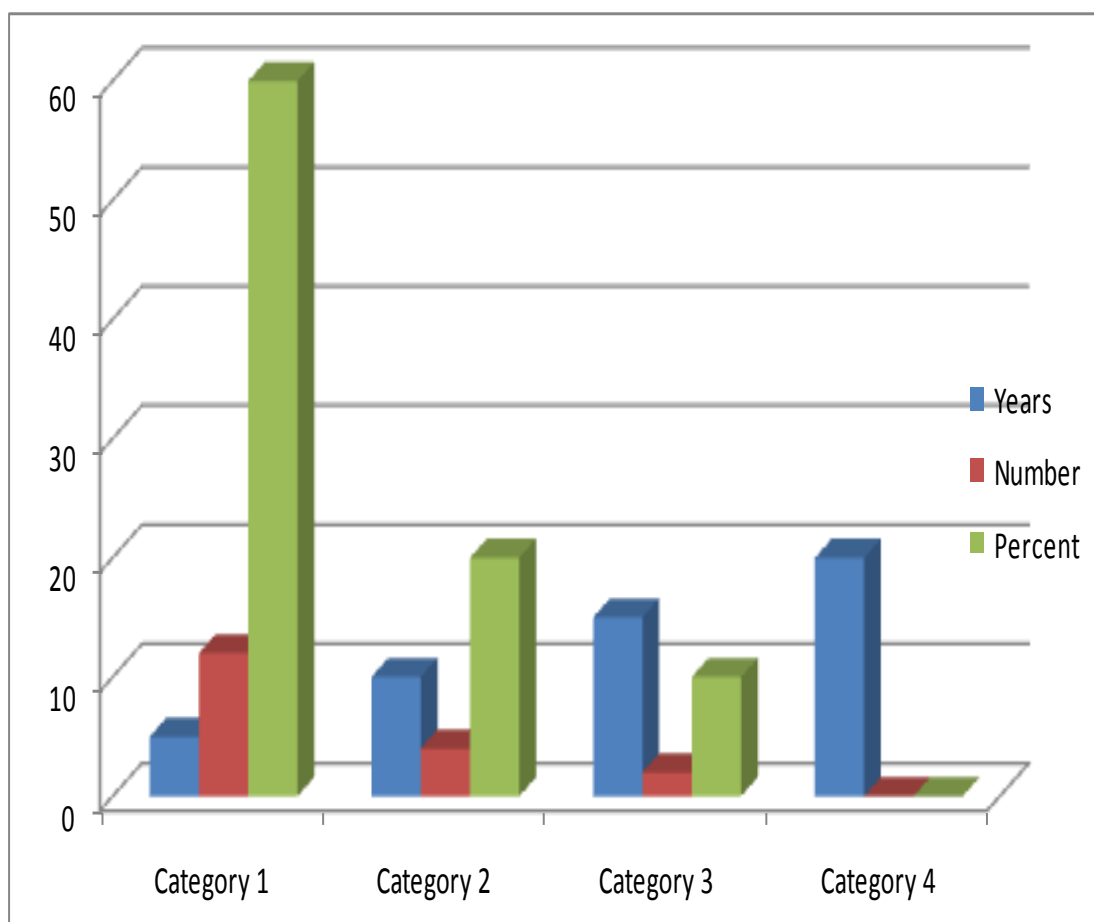


Figure 4. Principals' years at school. Categories are groups of years, corresponding number of participants, and percentages.

Conversely, the number of nontraditional schools, predominantly charter schools, in Los Angeles County has increased (CER, 2010). Figure 4 shows the increase in the number of years the schools have been in existence.

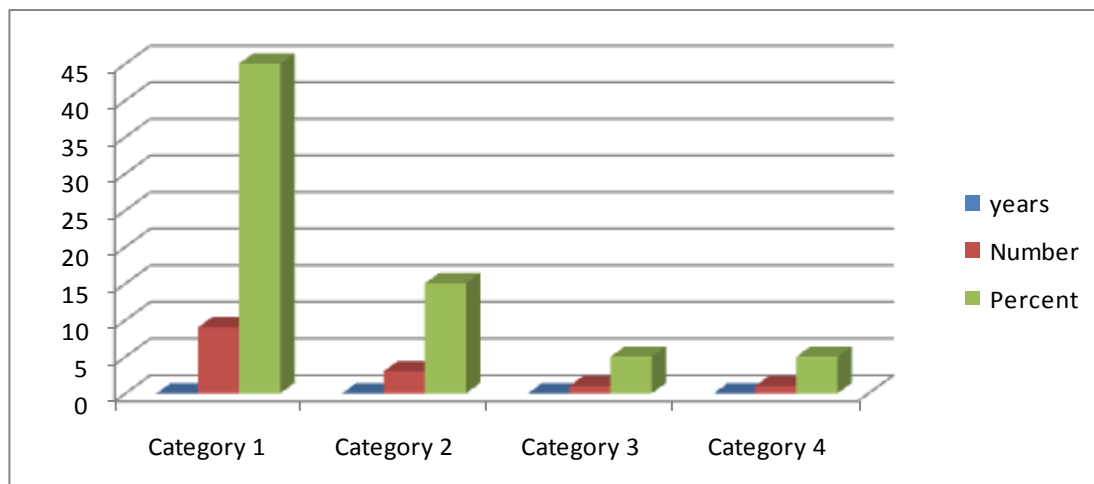


Figure 5. Number of years the schools have been in existence. Categories are group of years, corresponding number of participants, and percentages.

When three variables—years of experience, years at school, and years school has been in existence—are compared in an area graph, the data show the years of experience and principalship experiences inversely related to the number of schools built recently, which shows an increase as the years progress.

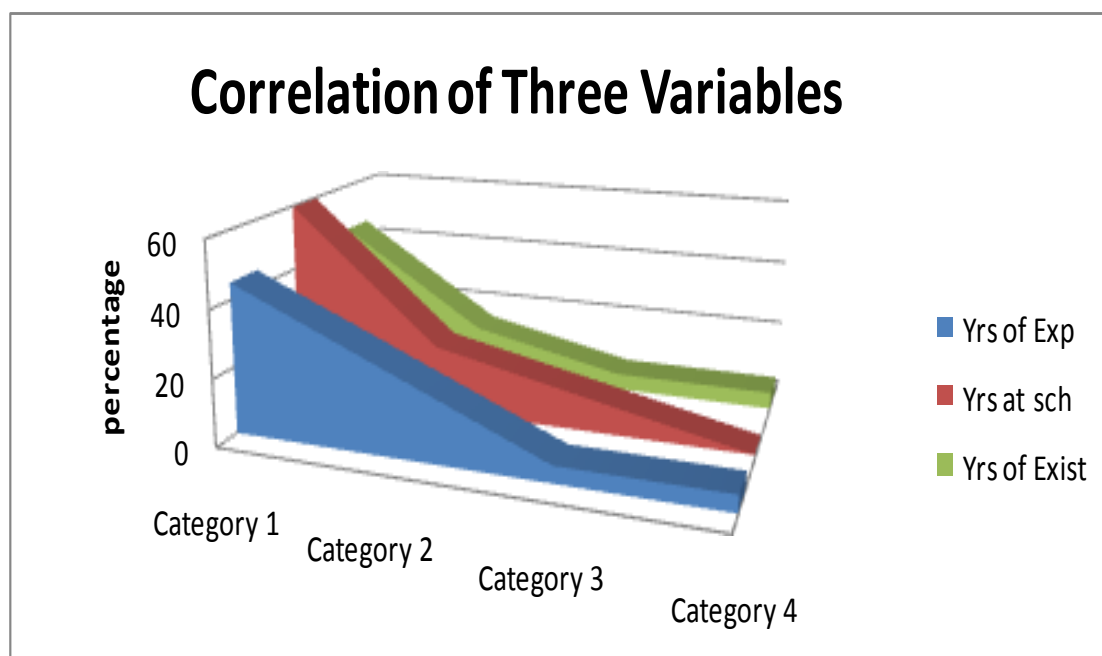


Figure 6. Years of experience, at school, and existence. Categories are group of years, corresponding number of participants, and percentages.

Chapter Summary

The interview data collected from principals answered the research questions. The results are the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools: collaboration, decision making, education, organization, relationship, and mission skills sets. The six-skill set from the grounded theory study is the substantive-level theory derived from the principals' interviews, developed categories, focused codes, theoretical ideas, and themes. Additionally, two skills sets, collaboration and decision-making skills, emerged as skills difficult to acquire.

Themes and theoretical ideas established in this study were evident in the data collected. The themes and theoretical ideas correlated with the focused codes from the principals' answers on how their past training and administrative programs prepared them. The correlated areas are mentorship, coaching, training, and experiences. The question why collaboration and decision-making skills are difficult to acquire produced answers such as personalities are involved, individuals have set ways of behaving, it takes patience to get to people, and resources are limited.

The data analyzed revealed additional findings, such as the importance of training or professional development in the areas of collaboration and decision-making skills sets, specifically, the areas of collaboration, management, budget, and finance. Another important finding was the importance of on the job training, the passion for education, and studiousness among the principals interviewed.

Some findings deserve additional attention, such as principal turnover in nontraditional schools. A principal turnover rate of over 50% is alarming and is a major concern. Another troubling finding is the lack of training, professional development, or

guidance from institutions and the credentialing commission. Standards exist, but the efficiency and effectiveness were not evident in the study. Nontraditional schools, predominantly charter schools, in Los Angeles County have increased in number and diversity. Therefore, these six skills are necessary to continue serving and meeting nontraditional schools' needs. Chapter 5 includes discussions of the findings and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

This chapter contains the findings, discussions, and recommendations for the study of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. In addition, this chapter contains the substantive-level theory of principals' perceptions of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools and recommendations for further studies. Finally, this chapter restates the limitations and includes a summary of key findings, policy recommendations, practitioner recommendations, and the study conclusion.

The purpose of this grounded theory study was to explore the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as perceived by principals of nontraditional schools. Additionally, the study involved exploring the skills that principals perceived are difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools. Although the same interview protocol was used in each interview, interviews were conducted in different settings. Furthermore, the principals identified two skills they perceived are difficult to acquire.

The literature review involved exploring and identifying principalship skills perceived as necessary for the administration of schools, standards for principalship, and extant text on educational leadership skills. The extant text, Portin et al.'s (2003) study, included seven functions and leadership skills used in a comparative analysis to identify the six skills principals perceived as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools. Table 5.1 below shows a visual correlation of the existing standards and the emerged six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Table 44

Comparisons of the Theory and Three Existing Standards

ISLLC (1996)	CPSEL (DOP 2003)	Portin et al. (2003)	Ike (2012)
Vision of learning	Shared vision	Instructional	Collaboration
School culture	School culture	Culture	Decision making
Management	Safe school	Managerial	Education
Collaboration	Collaboration	Human resources	Organization
Professionalism	Professionalism	Strategic	Relationship
Responsiveness	External development	External development	Mission
		Micropolitical	

Note. ISLLC is Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium; DOP is Description of Practice; CPSEL is California Professional Standards for Educational Leaders.

In addition, the two identified skills that principals perceived as difficult to acquire are the areas where the principals perceived that they needed additional development and training. The interview protocol collected data on gender for random sampling purposes and years of experience for inclusion or exclusion.

Presentation of the Findings for Research Question 1

Findings. Research Question 1 asked what skills nontraditional school principals perceive as necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools. According to the interviews and principals' perceptions, the following six principalship skills emerged as a substantive-level theory of the skills necessary for the administration of nontraditional schools:

1. Collaboration
2. Decision making

3. Education
4. Organization
5. Relationship
6. Mission

Discussions. The six skills sets theorized in this study align with the ISLLC six standards, CPSELs, and Portin et al.'s (2003) leadership skills, functions, and standards. Conversely, specific terms that relate directly with nontraditional schools emerged from this study. In addition, some emerged terms aligned into categories different from the categories of the existing standards. The reclassification emerged from the data, focused codes, theoretical ideas, and themes. Due to the variation of the terms in the existing standards discovered from the literature review, one of the questions in the interview protocol asked participants to prioritize identified skills in order of importance.

The prioritization produced the collaboration skills set as the most needed skill. This finding agrees with Portin et al. (2003) and DuFour et al. (2008), who inferred that the collaboration of principals and the school community to recruit, hire, manage, and retain experienced employees is one of the most important elements of a successful principalship. Specifically, DuFour et al. wrote that the collaborative team is the fundamental building block of an organization. This finding also agreed with the theory of symbolic interactionism, which focuses on learnable skills as described by Guskey and Huberman (1995), who inferred that principals within their work environments would need to extend and interact in a symbolic manner for the growth of their students and schools. Beyond the collaboration skills sets, the other five skills were not saturated.

Recommendations. The importance and priority of the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools deserve further exploration on a larger scale using grounded theory methodology. This study primarily produced the proposition; it would be beneficial and is highly recommended to include more perceptions from additional research on the importance and priority of the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. The recommended further study would also enable a better appreciation and understanding of principalship, leadership preparation programs, and professional development.

Presentation of the Findings for Research Question 2

Findings. Research Question 2 asked what skills principals perceive are most difficult to acquire for the administration of nontraditional schools, thus requiring training and development. Based on the literature review, data collected, focused codes, theoretical ideas, and themes analyzed, two skills sets—collaboration and decision making—emerged as the most difficult to acquire.

Discussions. Collaboration and decision-making skills sets as categorized within this study are dense areas. They include key principalship functions such as teacher recruitment, people management, money management, supervision, and leadership. The findings reflected agreement with Campbell et al. (2008), who inferred that these two skills sets could be complex and tend to overshadow the other roles of principals. There is also an alignment of these two skills with the theoretical ideas—symbolic interactionism and social constructivism—and themes—postmodernism and shared decision making—associated with the emergence of the substantive-level theory. Shared decision-making integrates well with collaboration. This type of integration would promote student

achievement and effective schools, principalship, and educational systems via collaborative teams. The integration of these two skills sets was evident in the stories from the principals on why these skills are difficult to acquire. Some of the stories focused on the small number of course sections offered in leadership preparation programs, changing personalities, the time it takes to learn and develop as a principal, and the timely use of the necessary skills. The data and the analysis of this study depict the need for the two skills identified as difficult skills sets to acquire demand that proper training and professional development are accessible to all principals.

Recommendations. The role of principals has increased and, with the importance accorded to collaboration and decision-making skills in this study, there should be extra attention given to the subject. This study mainly identified the two most difficult skills to acquire; as such, a focus on alleviating the effects of these difficult skills sets is recommended for professional development, leadership preparation programs, policies, and credentialing commissions. Principals interviewed expressed the need for preparation and training in the areas of collaboration and decision-making skills. The data of this study also share the calls from the participants for preparation in areas of difficult skills. NASSP (2010) cited increased responsibilities, lack of training, and new ways of schooling as some of the factors contributing to the principal shortage. NASSP recommended that large school districts, in collaboration with universities, should encourage aspiring and current principals to earn degrees and gain skills to administer school sites. The overall outcome may lead to lower principal turnover and principal shortage, especially in the era of increasing nontraditional schools, principal duties, and student diversity.

Other Findings

Findings. Beyond the findings associated with Research Questions 1 and 2, other findings emerged from the data collection and analysis. Specifically, the interview question on how the principals' past training and administrative programs prepared them for these skills revealed additional findings. The other findings were as follows:

First is the importance of mentorship and coaching; the principals understood and shared that a fine line exists between process and relationship as participants overwhelmingly indicated the need for mentoring and coaching themes. The principals indicated that coaching and mentoring are important factors for successful principalship, as was evident from the data in this study.

Second is the exponential growth of nontraditional schools, which include private, religious, cultural, parochial, and private online schools. Although nontraditional schools are granted exemptions from many state laws and district bureaucratic policies such as staffing needs, their principals still need to meet the accountability standards of student achievement and school improvement. Principals of nontraditional schools must possess the skills to manage a myriad of issues arising at each school site. Presumably, the skills needed for nontraditional school principals are even more wide-ranging in scope as compared to the traditional school counterpart (Lane, 1998), such as in a shared decision-making skills. The data from principals interviewed showed a 200% increase in two decades of schools, from 15% of schools in existence 11-20 years compared to 45% of schools in existence 0-10 years.

Third is the principal turnover and shortage rate; again, this area showed a 200% turnover rate, from 26% from 6 to 10 years at a location compared to 60% from 2 to 5 years at a location. Age range and especially gender were nonfactors in these findings.

Discussions. Other findings included areas of need toward improving principalship, student achievement, and nontraditional schools. Approximately 25% of student achievement has a direct relationship with school leadership actions (Kafka, 2009). As evident in this study and the data collected from principals, there are obvious needs to improve schools, students' performance, and the skills of principals. In an era of No Child Left Behind and the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act, the findings presented support data toward school reform.

First, with regard to coaching and mentoring themes, the data and findings showed agreement with those from Lane's (1998) study, which inferred that charter school leaders need to collaborate and share experiences as a deliberate support to new or struggling leaders to achieve their goals by functioning at a higher efficiency level. The goal to educate all children at the highest level possible led to the need to use coaching to increase knowledge and master skills among principals (Joyce & Showers, 2002). These emerged themes aligned with Argyris and Schön's (1978) theory of action or single-loop learning in nontraditional schools, which included a focus on improving principals' skills to achieve positive results—primarily student achievement.

Second, the data from this study indicated exponential growth of nontraditional schools. California currently has the highest number of active charter schools in the nation. The different kinds of charter schools in California include conversion, independent, start-up, and dependent charter schools (CER, 2011). The rapid growth in

the number of nontraditional school in California is presumably a result of the growth in student population and diversity. In 2010, approximately 152 of the 941 charter schools in California were in Los Angeles County, which represented the largest number in any one county in the nation (CER, 2011). A key theme prevalent in the growth of nontraditional schools is opening a school. Opening a charter school—a nontraditional school—requires a set of key principal skills. In a mixed methodology study, Pack (2007) noted that two of the most important skills needed when opening a school are strategic leadership—goals and vision—and human resources—hiring and recruitment—skills. Mentoring and coaching, when properly used in schools, could improve other skills sets, especially the difficult skills sets identified: collaboration and decision-making skills.

Third, principal turnover and the principal shortage rate is a serious concern for students' growth. Most of the principals interviewed indicated the importance of experience, but principal turnover reduces the depth of experience among principals. This finding alludes to the rational choice theory, which posits that individuals pursue their interests (Sergiovanni et al., 2004). If the founders of nontraditional schools make their schools interesting by showing interest in equipping their principals with the identified six skills sets to enable principals to tackle the onerous tasks bestowed on them, perhaps they will retain more principals. Additionally, it would mean that if the interests of nontraditional schools' owners were students' growth through experienced principals, the owners would endeavor to pursue this interest by providing professional development for their principals.

Recommendations. Educational policy makers, members of credentialing commissions, leaders of nonprofit organizations, and researchers have shown interest in

the skills needed to meet the expanding role of the principal and the growth of nontraditional schools (Kafka, 2009; Lane, 1998). However, the administration of nontraditional schools receives very little attention and effort. To this end, nontraditional schools that face unique challenges need principals with unique skills to mitigate the increasing needs; as such, this study recommends that nontraditional schools, in collaboration with universities, encourage aspiring, new, and underperforming principals to acquire skills to administer school sites. The value of professional development, principals' preparation, and training is evident in this study.

Summary of Key Findings

1. This grounded theory research produced six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as substantive-level theory.
2. Collaboration and decision-making skills are the skills sets identified as the most difficult skills in the administration of nontraditional schools.
3. This study outlined coaching and mentoring as a good support for new and underperforming principals.
4. Standards exist, including the ISLLC six standards for administrators, the CPSEL six descriptions of practice, and the seven leadership standards by Portin et al. (2003); however, the degree of implementation and the effectiveness of these standards for the administration of nontraditional schools still need to be researched.
5. There has been an exponential growth of nontraditional schools in the last since 2007 and the projection is that the increase will continue.

6. There is also a high rate of principal turnover, as shown by the number of years principals have spent at their current school.

Recommendations for Future Research

Recommendation 1. The study's methodology was grounded theory, which produced a substantive-level theory. The substantive-level theory may undergo further study for empirical verification with quantitative data (Creswell, 2007). Because the role of principal has expanded, and nontraditional schools are increasing in number and diversity, expansion of this study would help in developing leadership and principal preparation programs in various institutions to equip school leaders with the six needed skills for administration of nontraditional schools. The full expansion and implementation of this study is highly recommended.

Recommendation 2. This study identified six skills needed in the administration of nontraditional schools and two skills sets that are difficult to acquire; as such, nontraditional school administrators or management teams at universities, colleges, and nontraditional institutions are encouraged to provide training, principal professional development, and internship programs for the development of principals or potential leaders. This tool would help to equip principals with the skills to attempt to manage the many responsibilities bestowed on them. Therefore, this study recommends including more perceptions by conducting another in-depth research on the importance and priority of the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools.

Policy Recommendations

All the skills identified for principals of nontraditional schools are synonymous with the skills members of credentialing commissions and educational boards use for

program standards. Members of the commission are encouraged to look into how leaders are prepared with the changing needs of schools and to be able to recommend or at least encourage individuals to acquire requisite skills sets similar to the skills identified in this grounded theory study.

Universities, LEAs, nonprofit organizations, and colleges across the United States are improving educational leadership programs (Pennsylvania Department of Education, 2008). In addition, there are some efforts from state and federal levels to improve the skills of school administrators and leadership preparation programs such as the Race to the Top program. Scherer (2010) noted:

If there has been a time to improve schools, the time is now; when both school insiders and school outsiders are calling for change, the unprecedented flow of funding for innovation makes it especially advantageous for schools and educators to identify and implement good ideas (p. 5).

There are obvious needs to improve the nations' schools, students' performance, and skills of principals; as such, attention and further research is highly recommended to expand, implement, and monitor the results of this study in entirety.

Practitioner Recommendations

Additional findings from the data of this study showed that the principals are not highly retained in nontraditional schools. Principal turnover questions the desire and interest of the founders of nontraditional schools to retain and nurture principals for the ultimate benefit of the students. The need for experienced principals, especially with experiences acquired from nontraditional schools, reverberated among the principals. Two emerged themes—mentoring and coaching—are dependent and most effectively

implemented with experienced and passionate principals. Most of the data from this study indicated the importance of coaching and mentoring when participants' responded to how past experiences prepared them for principalship.

The other theme that emerged from the data is training. Inasmuch as this study recommends that principals and aspiring principals of nontraditional schools should use the guidelines from this study to understand the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools, the founders and management of nontraditional schools are encouraged to use this study to develop a framework for training, professional development, and principal preparation programs.

Restatement of Limitations

This research was an exploratory study, which required self-reporting views. Therefore, the data collected and accepted for the study emerged from the self-reporting interview. In addition, the level of candor of the participants could be subject to limitations. As a result, generalization of the findings is subjective. The study may need quantitative data because of its importance and in furthering the study. Finally, although experts reviewed the instrument used in this study, there could be some concerns or unforeseen circumstances with the questions, its administration, or response analyses.

Chapter Summary

The conclusion chapter provided and presented the six skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools as a substantive-level theory. In addition, collaboration and decision-making skills sets are the skills most difficult to acquire. Other findings shared in this chapter are the emergence of coaching and mentoring themes, the rapid and projected increase of nontraditional schools, and a high rate of principal

turnover and shortage. These findings answered Research Questions 1 and 2. Additional insights were shared regarding the analysis of the data collected.

This chapter included a discussion on the relationships of the literature reviewed, theoretical ideas, themes of the study, and data collected. The discussion showed how the study affects individuals involved in student growth, principalship, and the education system. Other findings discussed in this chapter were the effect of the growth in the number of nontraditional schools on the increase in the number of students served and the diversity associated with the increased student body.

The chapter included recommendations to individuals, founders, management, schools, principals, institutions, and commissions. To improve schools, it is important to alleviate the demands placed on principals and ultimately improve students' achievement. Additionally, a recommendation was made to support, expand, and explore the findings of the study, especially in developing frameworks and preparation programs. Finally, the chapter included recommendations for future research, policy recommendations, practitioner recommendations, limitations, a chapter summary, and a study conclusion.

Study Conclusion

This study involved exploring principals' perceptions and providing a substantive-level theory. The substantive-level theory was developed from the introduction of the study, review of literature, use of grounded theory, and analyses of data collected. The emergence and alignment of the themes from the literature review to the results are phenomenal. The results of this study provide great opportunities for all professionals. In addition, this study added to the body of literature on the skills needed

for the administration of nontraditional schools. Finally, if this study is replicated, it is recommended that the theory—six skills for the administration of nontraditional school—be given to participants during data collection as well as used as extant text for comparison analysis.

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APPENDIX A

Interview Questions

Adapted interview protocol approved by Dr. Emilio Pack

1. How many years have you been a principal?
2. How many years have you been at your current school?
3. How many years has this school been in operation?
4. Please indicate your gender?
5. Please select your age range?
___ 18-29 ___30-39 ___40-49 ___50-59 ___60 and over
6. Please identify ten skills you perceive are needed for the administration of a nontraditional school?
7. Please outline these skills in order of priority?
8. How did your past training and administrative programs prepare you for these skills?
9. In your opinion which of these skills were most difficult to acquire?
10. Why are these skills difficult to acquire?

APPENDIX B

Letter to an Expert—Dr. Emilio Pack for the Use of Instrument

Dear Dr. Pack,

Thank you very much for your readiness to assist me in my dissertation work at Educational Leadership, Administration and Policy of Pepperdine University. As we discussed, I appreciate your approval to use in my study your approved validated survey instrument and interview protocol.

I am studying the principals' perceptions of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. My target population for the study would include principals of nontraditional school settings.

This research will be conducted in accordance with the Pepperdine University policy and adhere strictly to the Institutional Review Board (IRB), which follows the guidelines of the Belmont Report. Please, indicate or suggest any modification(s) at anytime if you perceive that this instrument and protocol will not accomplish the goals of the study or is harmful to its participants.

Again, I appreciate your support and I look forward to your continuous guidance especially on the issue of human subject protection.

Sincerely,

Bon Ike

Doctoral Student,

Pepperdine University

APPENDIX C

Permission to Use Instrument

Permission Letter to Use IRB Approved Survey and Interview protocol

July 28, 2011

Dr. Yuying Tsong

Chair, Graduate & Professional School Institutional Review Board

Pepperdine University

24255 Pacific Coast Highway

Malibu, CA 90263-4608

Dear Dr. Tsong,

Bon Ike has my permission to use the approved survey and interview protocol that I developed for the Foundations for a Training Program to study the principals' perceptions of the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional school. I understand the importance of this study and the need to use these instruments.

I am supportive of Bon Ike's research and look forward to a great outcome. Please, I could be reached for any concern.

Thank you for your attention to this subject and assistance to Mr. Ike in his study.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Emilio Pack" with a stylized flourish at the end.

Emilio Pack

Assistant Director, Institute of School Leadership and Administration (ISLA)
Loyola Marymount University

APPENDIX D

Email to an Expert for Instrument Validation and Trustworthiness

Dear Dr. Vodicka,

I hope you and family are doing well. I am working on my chapter 3 and I referenced your approval of my instrument based on your review of the interview questions after class on 5/15/2011. I wanted to inform you that I included you as per our discussion. I attached my ch3, interview questions, and here is the text:

Validity

The draft interview questions for this study were reviewed by the experts in the areas of principals' perceptions and instrument validation.

- Dr. Devin Vodicka a professor at Pepperdine University and also Carlsbad Unified School District Assistant Superintendent, Business Services. He is an expert in instrument and interview protocol development for data collection at Pepperdine University.
- Dr. Vodicka reviewed the interview question and recommended ten questions instead of eleven questions in the draft.

Trustworthiness

Interviews allow for a higher rate of responses and “play a central role in the data collection in a grounded theory study” (Creswell, 2007, p. 131). This instrument is also approved by Dr. Devin Vodicka who affirmed that the instrument is trustworthy. However, interviews may have the potential for biasness, but could be controlled if interviewers and interviewees remain in a neutral mind set.

Please let me know if there is any other adjustment. I look forward to your continuous support.

Thank you,

Bon Ike

APPENDIX E

Consent for Academic Research

Principals' perceptions of skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools

Dear Principal,

You are invited to participate in a project conducted as part of the requirements for a dissertation project in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University. For this project I will gather data through interviews from purposefully selected principals to explore the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County. The research will be supervised by Robert Barner, PhD. The purpose of this project is to identify the skills principals perceive are most needed for the administration of nontraditional schools. Secondly, the study will attempt to discover skills principals perceive are most difficult to acquire. You will be asked to answer ten questions. The entire discussion should take between 25 to 30 minutes. This may be done in-person or by phone at your preferred time and location. I will record the interview for accuracy, and at any point, you may ask me to stop the interview. Also, I will collect documents and take field notes based on observations. Through this data I hope to gather information to identify the skills needed for the administration of nontraditional schools in Los Angeles County.

I would greatly appreciate your assistance by participating in this project. All information obtained will be treated with confidentiality and kept in a secured manner. Your identity will remain anonymous and the result of the interview will be used only in this study. You will review the transcript to ensure accuracy of your responses. There is absolutely no risk beyond ordinary life minimal risks and all efforts will be made to protect your confidentiality. Your signature below indicates your agreement to participate in the study.

You are free to withdraw your participation at any time. If you have any questions or concerns, feel free to contact me at bon.ike@pepperdine.edu. I hope you will enjoy this opportunity. Thank you for your help. For questions about your rights, please contact or Dr. Yuying Tsong, IRB Chairperson, at yuying.tsong@pepperdine.edu

I look forward to our discussion and thank you for your assistance and support.

Sincerely,

Bon Ike

Researcher

Signature of Participant

Date

Signature of Chairperson

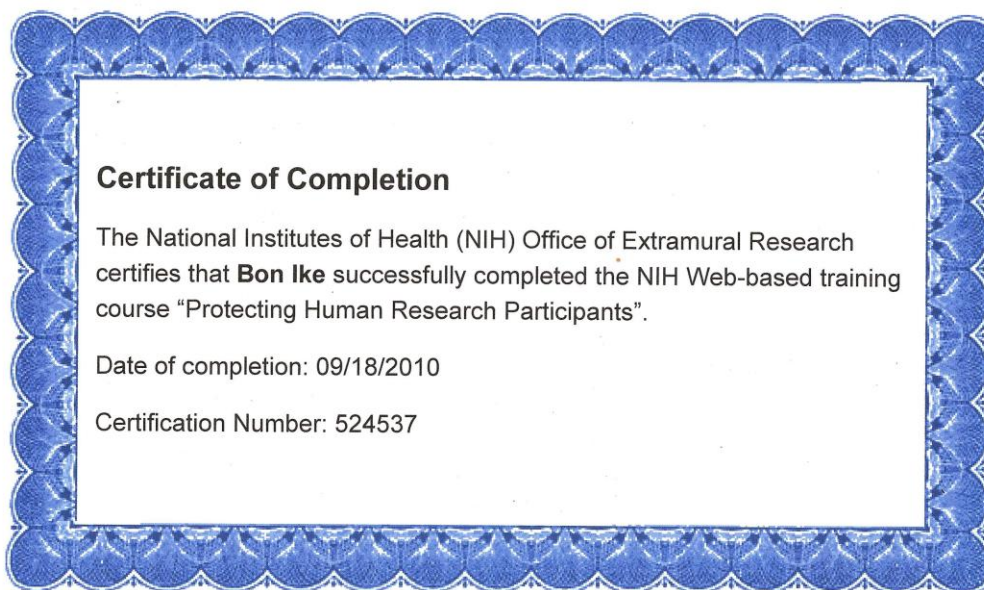
Date

Please sign both copies, keep one copy and return one to the researcher.

APPENDIX F
Human Subject Research Certificate

Protecting Human Subject Research Participants

Page 1 of 1



PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

December 13, 2011

Bon Ike _____

Protocol #: E1111D02

Project Title: *Principals' Perceptions of the Skills Needed for the Administration of Nontraditional Schools*

Dear Mr. Ike:

Thank you for submitting your revised IRB application, *Principals' Perceptions of the Skills Needed for the Administration of Nontraditional Schools*, to Pepperdine's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB has reviewed your revised submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. As the nature of the research met the requirements for expedited review under provision Title 45 CFR 46.110 (research category 7) of the federal Protection of Human Subjects Act, the IRB conducted a formal, but expedited, review of your application materials.

I am pleased to inform you that your application for your study was granted **Full Approval**. The IRB approval begins today, **December 13, 2011** and terminates on **December 12, 2012**.

Your final consent form has been stamped by the IRB to indicate the expiration date of study approval. One copy of the consent form is enclosed with this letter and one copy will be retained for our records. **You can only use copies of the consent that have been stamped with the GPS IRB expiration date to obtain consent from your participants.**

Please note that your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the GPS IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For **any** proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for expedited review and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB. If contact with subjects will extend beyond **December 12, 2012**, a **Continuation or Completion of Review Form** must be submitted at least **one month prior** to the expiration date of study approval to avoid a lapse in approval. These forms can be found on the IRB website at <http://services.pepperdine.edu/irb/irbforms/#Apps>.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at <http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/>).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact me. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Appendix D
Interview Consent for Academic Research

Principals' Perceptions of the Skills Needed for the Administration of Nontraditional Schools

I authorize Bon Ike, a researcher, under the supervision of Dr. Robert Barner in the Graduate School of Education and Psychology at Pepperdine University to interview me for the dissertation titled: *Principals' Perceptions of the Skills Needed for the Administration of Nontraditional Schools*.

I understand that my participation is strictly voluntary and will require 25 to 30 minutes of my time to complete an interview session. I have been selected to participate in this interview because I am a principal of a nontraditional school and have experiences useful to this study.

I understand that the interview will be recorded and that all information obtained will be treated with confidentiality, kept safely and anonymously. I have been informed that there is absolutely no obvious risk beyond ordinary life minimal risk and all effort will be made to protect me in case of an unexpected event. I also understand that there is no compensation for my participation, but there is benefit for contributing to a seminal research and the body of literature.

I understand that I have the right to refuse to participate. Moreover, I understand that I can discontinue my participation at any time and the interview will be voided. I also have the right to refuse to answer any question. I understand that none of the information from the participation will be released to others without my permission, or as required by California and federal law.

I understand that if I have any questions regarding the study procedures, I can contact Bon Ike at _____
In case of further concerns, I may contact Dr. Robert Barner at _____
And questions about my right as a research participant, I may contact Dr. Yuying Tsong at yuying.tsong@pepperdine.edu

I understand to my satisfaction the information in the consent form regarding my participation in the research project. All of my questions have been answered to my satisfaction. I have also received a copy of this informed consent form and cover letter which I have read and understood. I hereby consent to participate in the research as described herein.

Signature of Participant

Date

I have explained, answered all questions, and defined in detail the research procedure in which the subject has consented to participate. I hereby cosign this form and accept the participants consent for this study.

Signature of Researcher

Date

Please sign both copies, keep one copy and return one to the researcher.

GPS IRB APPROVAL
PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

DEC 12 2012

VALID UNTIL
DATE ABOVE