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THE UNIVERSITY OF ALBERTA

# PREPARATION, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND CAREER PATTERNS OF DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION IN SASKATCHEWAN

by

PAULETTE VAN DER LINDE

A THESIS

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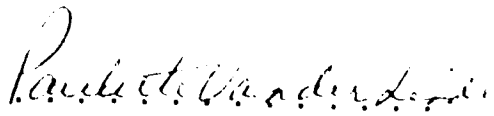
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FACULTY OF GRADUATE STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Preparation, Recruitment, Selection, and Career Patterns of Directors of Education in Saskatchewan" submitted by Paulette Van der Linde in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

E. Miklos, Supervisor

E. J. Ingram

L. J. LaRocque

K. L. Ward

M. P. Browne

K. A. Wilson, External Examiner

Date: 10 October 1989

## Abstract

The focus of this study was the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Questionnaires were distributed to 89 directors of education; the response rate was 89%. Interviews were conducted with three newly appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors. Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative techniques were used to analyze interview data.

The careers of the majority of directors fell into four patterns, with entry to the directorship being primarily from a principalship. The most common career pattern of directors included the positions of teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and director. Directors gained most of their experience in divisions other than the one in which they were currently employed. School boards tended to select "outsiders" when making appointments to a directorship. Four typologies developed in this study--based on organizational mobility, geographic mobility, and age/experience--reflected some differences in selected characteristics of directors and their employing school divisions.

At the time of first appointment, directors exceeded the prescribed academic requirements. They attached considerable importance to self-assessment of abilities and confidence in those abilities as a result of formal studies and successful work experiences as factors which influenced the decision to apply for a directorship. Newspaper advertisements were the major means by which applicants became aware of vacant positions. Selection process elements consisted of letters of

application, reference checks, short lists, and interviews. Regional directors made important contributions to the recruitment and selection procedures. Selection criteria beyond basic requirements tended to focus on managerial skills and interpersonal relationships. The major selection criterion related to the perceived compatibility between the applicant and board members.

Directors generally experienced satisfaction with their positions and regarded the opportunity to influence education as the most satisfying aspect of their work. Interpersonal relationships were the source of the most satisfaction as well as of the greatest frustration for directors. When changing positions, directors were influenced more by the attractiveness of the new directorship than by undesirable characteristics of the former position.

## Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents


| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Introduction | 1 |
| | Research Problem | 2 |
| | Significance of the Study | 3 |
| | Conceptual Framework | 5 |
| | Assumptions | 9 |
| | Delimitations and Limitations | 10 |
| | Definition of Terms | 10 |
| | Organization of the Report | 11 |
| 2. | Review of Related Literature | 12 |
| | Superintendents as Educational Leaders | 12 |
| | Socialization | 16 |
| | Preparation | 23 |
| | Recruitment | 26 |
| | Selection | 28 |
| | Career Patterns | 34 |
| | Demands of the Superintendency | 36 |
| | Summary | 39 |
| 3. | Research Methodology | 41 |
| | Research Design | 41 |
| | Development of the Questionnaire | 43 |
| | Conceptual Basis | 43 |
| | Nature of Questionnaire Items | 46 |
| | Preliminary Review of Questionnaire | 50 |
| | Pilot Test | 51 |

Chapter


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Interview Procedures | 52 |
| Selection of Participants | 53 |
| Development of the Interview Schedules | 53 |
| Trustworthiness Considerations | 54 |
| Validity | 55 |
| Reliability | 56 |
| Objectivity | 57 |
| Generalizability | 57 |
| Data Collection | 58 |
| Distribution and Return of Questionnaires | 59 |
| Collecting Interview Data | 59 |
| Data Analysis | 60 |
| Analysis of Questionnaire Data | 60 |
| Analysis of Interview Data | 61 |
| Characteristics of Respondents | 62 |
| Age and Sex | 62 |
| Division Size and Type | 63 |
| Years of Professional Service | 65 |
| Number of School Divisions | 65 |
| Summary | 65 |
| 4. Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions | 68 |
| Professional Backgrounds of Directors | 69 |
| Administrative and Teaching Experience | 69 |
| Position Prior to Current Appointment | 73 |
| Educational Background | 75 |

Chapter

Page

Professional Development Activities . . . . . 79

Factors Related to Career Decisions . . . . . 82

Administrative Career Decision . . . . . 82

Directorship Career Decision . . . . . 84

Recruitment and Selection . . . . . 88

Awareness and Application . . . . . 88

Selection Processes . . . . . 93

Selection Criteria . . . . . 97

Satisfaction and Stress . . . . . 101

Sources of Satisfaction . . . . . 102

Helping others . . . . . 10

Opportunity to influence education . . . . . 103

Working with people . . . . . 104

Top-level administration . . . . . 104

Sources of Stress . . . . . 105

People . . . . . 10

Resources . . . . . 1

Nature of the role . . . . . 1

Mobility and Career Plans . . . . . 1

Factors Influencing Mobility . . . . . 1

Future Career Plans . . . . . 1

Summary . . . . . 1

5. Career Patterns and Career Typologies of Director of Education . . . . . 1

Career Patterns . . . . . 1

Career Typologies . . . . . 1

Chapter

Page

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 122

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 129

Entry Age and Directorship Experience Typology . . 137

Summary . . . . . 143

6. Case Studies of Selection of Directors . . . . . 146

Prairieland School Division . . . . . 147

Director's Perspective . . . . . 147

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 149

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 151

Wild Grass School Division . . . . . 154

Director's Perspective . . . . . 155

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 157

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 160

Rolling Hills School Division . . . . . 163

Director's Perspective . . . . . 163

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 166

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 168

Similarities and Differences in Selection Processes . . 170

Advertising the Position . . . . . 171

Application Practices . . . . . 171

Shortlisting . . . . . 172

Preparing for the Interview . . . . . 173

Composition of the Interview Panel . . . . . 174

The Interview . . . . . 174

Selection Decision . . . . . 178

Chapter

Page

Issues and Concerns . . . . . 180

Career Paths . . . . . 180

Role of the Regional Director . . . . . 182

Summary . . . . . 184

7. Summary, Discussion, and Implications . . . . . 186

Overview of the Study . . . . . 186

Purpose and Research Questions . . . . . 186

Rationale . . . . . 187

Conceptual Framework . . . . . 188

Research Methodology . . . . . 188

Summary of Questionnaire Findings . . . . . 189

Academic and Professional Qualifications . . . . . 190

Factors Influencing Pursuit of an Administrative Career . . . . . 190

Application Procedures . . . . . 191

Recruitment and Selection . . . . . 192

Satisfactions in Position . . . . . 193

Career Patterns . . . . . 194

Future Career Plans . . . . . 195

Summary of Case Studies . . . . . 196

Typologies of Directors . . . . . 198

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 198

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 199

Age/Experience Typology . . . . . 201

Discussion of Findings . . . . . 202

Conclusions . . . . . 205

Chapter

Page

Implications . . . . . 216

Implications for Theory . . . . . 216

Implications for Research . . . . . 218

Implications for Practice . . . . . 219

Career paths . . . . . 219

Selection criteria . . . . . 220

Role of regional directors . . . . . 220

Role of director . . . . . 221

Recruitment of women directors . . . . . 221

References . . . . . 222

Appendices

A. Questionnaire for Directors of Education . . . . . 232

B. Interviews of Recently Appointed Directors, Board Chairpersons, and Regional Directors . . . . . 245

C. Correspondence . . . . . 253

## List of Tables


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories | 63 |
| 3.2 | Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division | 64 |
| 3.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education | 66 |
| 3.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service | 66 |
| 4.1 | Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position | 70 |
| 4.2 | Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 73 |
| 4.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 74 |
| 4.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment | 75 |
| 4.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.7 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors | 77 |
| 4.8 | Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment | 78 |
| 4.9 | Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Formal Study/Preparation in Educational Administration or Supervision at Time of First Appointment | 79 |
| 4.10 | Mean Number of Memberships and Activities in Which Respondents Were Involved Prior to First Appointment as Director | 80 |
| 4.11 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors Influencing Decision to Pursue an Administrative Career | 83 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.12 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Importance of Mentors in Pursuing an Administrative Career . . . . . | 85 |
| 4.13 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors in Deciding to Pursue a Directorship . . . . . | 85 |
| 4.14 | Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Awareness of Availability of Current Position . . . . . | 89 |
| 4.15 | Frequency of Mention of Various Steps Taken in Applying for the First Directorship . . . . . | 90 |
| 4.16 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Casual Inquiries Regarding the Preferred Management Style of the Director Prior to First Application . . . . . | 92 |
| 4.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Having Informal Discussions with the Regional Director Prior to First Application . . . . . | 92 |
| 4.18 | Frequency of Mention of Elements Present in the Selection Process for the First Directorship . . . . . | 93 |
| 4.19 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Advertising the Position Provincially . . . . . | 94 |
| 4.20 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Checking of References . . . . . | 95 |
| 4.21 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Establishing a Short-List . . . . . | 95 |
| 4.22 | Frequency of Mention of Specific Members of the Interview Panel for the First Directorship . . . . . | 96 |
| 4.23 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Regional Director as Member of the Interview Panel . . . . . | 98 |
| 4.24 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with the Former Director of Education as Member of the Interview Panel . . | 98 |
| 4.25 | Mean Ratings of Importance of Characteristics of Applicants as Criteria in the Selection Process . . . . . | 99 |
| 4.26 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Importance of Educational Qualifications in Director Selection . . . . | 101 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.27 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Attracting Directors to Current Position . . . . . | 108 |
| 4.28 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 109 |
| 4.29 | Cross-Tabulation of Size of Division with Importance of Professional Challenge as a Factor in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 110 |
| 4.30 | Distribution of Respondents by Future Plans . . . . . | 111 |
| 4.31 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Future Plans . . | 112 |
| 4.32 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of Years in Which They Are Likely to Leave the Directorship . . . . . | 113 |
| 4.33 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Years to Retirement or Career Change . . . . . | 114 |
| 5.1 | Distribution of Directors by Career Patterns . . . . . | 118 |
| 5.2 | Distribution of Career Patterns by Age, Location, Division Size, and Director Experience . . . . . | 119 |
| 5.3 | Cross-Tabulations of Career Patterns With Rating of Importance of Prestige/Status in Seeking a Directorship . . | 121 |
| 5.4 | Distributions of Geographic Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 123 |
| 5.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Diploma at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 126 |
| 5.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Educational Qualifications at Time of First Appointment . . | 127 |
| 5.7 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by the Geographic Mobility Type . . . . . | 129 |
| 5.8 | Distributions of Organizational Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 131 |
| 5.9 | Cross-Tabulation of Career Patterns with Organizational Mobility Types . . . . . | 133 |
| 5.10 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Doctorate at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 5.11 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Credit Courses in Other Disciplines at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |
| 5.12 | Analysis of Variance Results of Compatibility with the Social and Educational Context as Criterion in Director Selection by the Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 136 |
| 5.13 | Analysis of Variance Results of Seniority as a Criterion in the Selection Process by Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 137 |
| 5.14 | Distributions of Director Age/Experience Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 139 |
| 5.15 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types . . . . . | 141 |
| 5.16 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by Director Age at Entry/Experience Types . . . . . | 142 |
| 5.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types with Future Plans . . . . . | 144 |

List of Figures


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Organizational structures and individual characteristics . . . . . | 6 |
| 1.2 | Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career . . . . . | 8 |
| 5.1 | Geographic mobility typology . . . . . | 124 |
| 5.2 | Organizational mobility typology . . . . . | 130 |
| 5.3 | Directorship entry age/experience typology . . . . . | 138 |

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

A school superintendent, or director of education, occupies the highest position in the administration of education at the local level; consequently, persons who hold this position are strategically placed in the formal organization of an educational system. The superintendent is ultimately responsible to the board for the education that is provided to the students in the jurisdiction. Coordinating the activities of numerous individuals and groups in achieving the objective of educating children is left to the administrator who holds this senior executive position.

As the chief educational administrator in a school jurisdiction, a superintendent performs many tasks, exerts considerable influence, and has the potential to make a significant difference in the quality of education. Fulfilling these numerous and varied responsibilities requires a competent person. Societal changes and contemporary issues, such as changing social values, increasing teacher professionalism, continuing financial constraints, and ever more complex political conditions influence the role of an educational leader. In turn, effective leadership is contingent upon possession of specific characteristics and skills. Factors such as these serve to underline the importance of the selection of persons who will be able to provide effective leadership under demanding circumstances. A greater understanding of how superintendents prepare for the position, how they are recruited and selected, and what their career patterns are has the potential to contribute to improved practice in this important area.

## Research Problem

The central research question for this study was, "What are the characteristics of the processes through which the careers of directors of education in Saskatchewan unfold?" More specifically, the study focused on the academic and professional backgrounds of directors, the factors which influence them to seek a directorship, and the selection practices of school boards.

The following questions guided the development of the study:

1. What are the academic and professional qualifications of directors of education?
2. What factors influence directors of education to pursue an administrative career?
3. What steps do candidates take in applying for a director of education position?
4. What procedures do boards follow in recruiting and selecting for the director of education position?
5. What factors contribute to mobility among directors of education?
6. What are the sources of satisfaction and of stress in the director of education position?
7. What are the future career plans of directors of education?
8. What is the general nature of career patterns of directors of education?

Answers to these and related questions were sought primarily through a questionnaire survey of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Additional insights were derived from case studies of three selection processes involving interviews with the successful applicants, the board chairpersons, and regional directors of education.

## Significance of the Study

Studies of the superintendency have been conducted in relation to job characteristics, incumbent characteristics, and career mobility. Other studies, focusing on school board attitudes and community issues, have attempted to determine some predictors of turnover of superintendents. However, only limited research has addressed the issue of access to the superintendency. According to Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987), "the whole question of career trajectories and the path to supervisory office status is one which merits much more consideration than it is apparently given" (p. 26). Further to this, Miklos (1988) indicates that studies which "would yield information . . . on relationships among variables associated with processes such as recruitment, selection, appointment, and career development . . . would contribute to advancing basic understandings and to developing new conceptualizations of the processes through which people become administrators" (p. 69).

Leadership in education is receiving increased attention. Since the superintendent is considered to be the educational leader of a school jurisdiction, examination of the factors that contribute to entry into this position is important in order that the most suitable person can be hired and that the best possible leadership can be provided in educational settings. "As of the mid-1980s, the least amount of systematic study has gone to the interaction of personal and situational variables as a source of explanation, the very area that offers most hope for gaining clearer understanding of why administrators do what they do" (Boyan, 1988, p. 93). The results of this study may provide some insight into how people move into leadership positions as well as into the

personal and situational variables which are associated with administrator mobility.

Substantial numbers of directors of education in Saskatchewan are retiring or are nearing retirement. In 1987-88, seven directors of education in that province retired from the position, some of whom took early retirement. In addition, five others left the position for other reasons. Two directors of education retired in December, 1988, and several more in June, 1989. The retirement of directors of education indicates that many school boards in Saskatchewan will soon be selecting new directors of education. The results of this study may give some insights into the characteristics of the newly appointed directors of education, as well as the preparation, selection, and recruitment which occurred prior to the appointments.

Although explicit procedures or policies may be lacking, boards appear to be giving increased attention to selection. Increasingly, school boards are realizing the importance of their choice of superintendent; however, the literature indicates that they may give more attention to personal characteristics than they do to the skills the applicant possesses (Salley, 1979). The results of this study have the potential to assist boards in evaluating their selection and recruitment procedures. In addition, the study may also serve to encourage those aspiring to the position of director of education by indicating the qualifications, preparation, and career patterns which lead to an appointment, as well as the recruitment and selection procedures which presently exist in Saskatchewan school jurisdictions.

## Conceptual Framework

The study of the director of education, which is the subject of this report, was based, in part, on a conceptualization of status attainment and represents an application of a particular theory concerning structures of the corporate careers of men and women (Kanter, 1977). According to this theory, access to top management positions in public education, such as the superintendency, is influenced by an interaction of individual characteristics or actions and organizational structures.

The theorizing suggests that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout a person's work history. Socialization processes, along with preparation for various positions and the degree of fulfillment afforded by the positions, help to determine the career path. Ultimately, organizational structures such as recruitment and selection procedures determine the direction of a person's career. In addition, those who are selected for superintendencies are likely to evidence in their backgrounds specialized academic training, extraordinary visibility, specific work experiences, and strong alliances in their careers.

Figure 1.1 indicates that as a person proceeds along a path from pre-administrative positions to administrative positions and then to director positions, individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures interact in the formation of a career. An individual's career path is contingent upon, and is continually influenced by, the process of socialization which affects all stages of a career. The degree of fulfillment with a position determines whether or not the individual will aspire to another position. Preparation for administration begins just prior to acquiring one's first administrative position, continues through

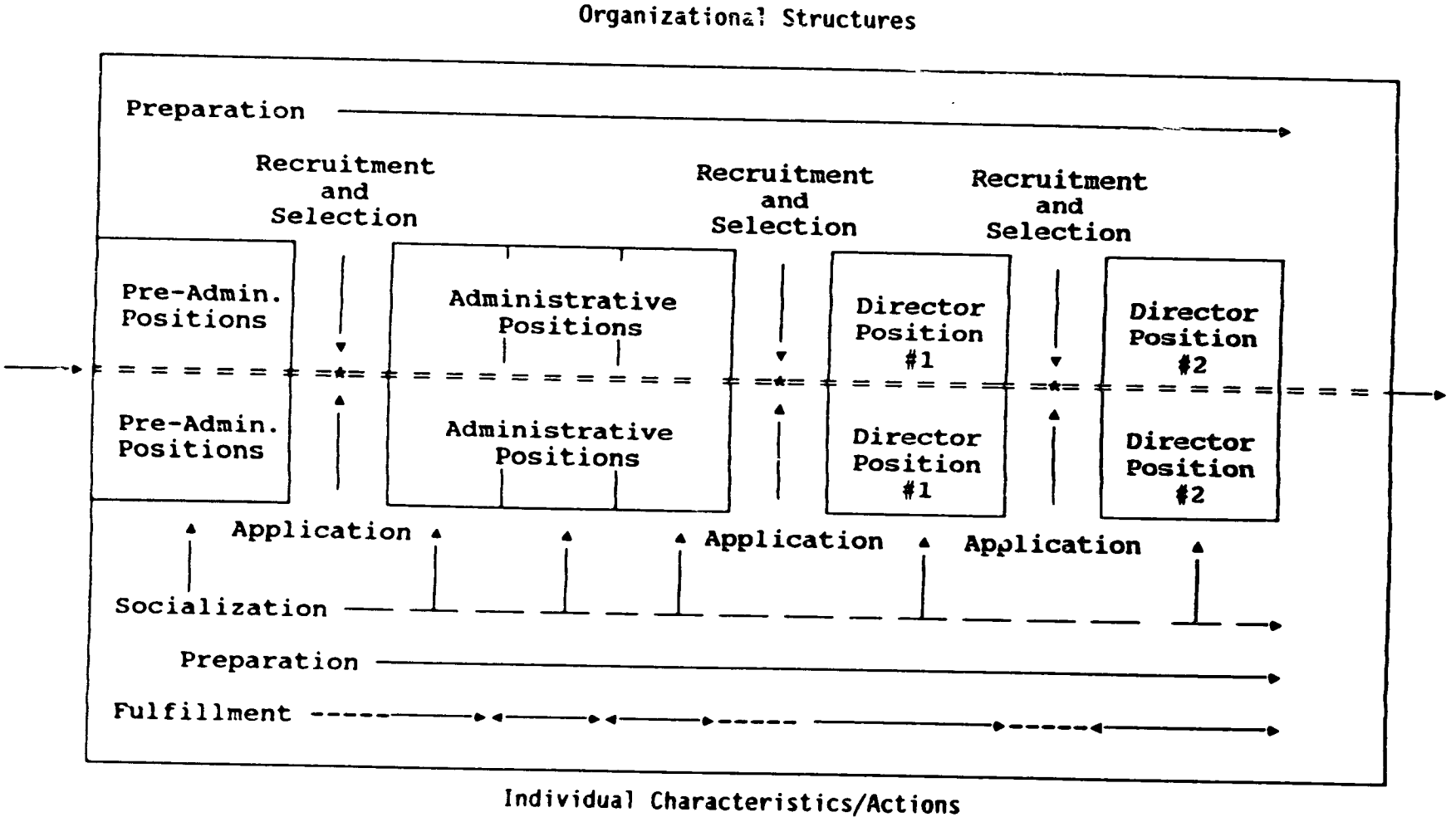



Figure 1.1. Organizational structures and individual characteristics

one's career, and reflects both individual actions, since the individual takes the initiative, and organizational structures, as many elements of preparation are structured by the organization. When an individual applies for a position, the interaction with the organizational structures of the recruitment and selection processes determine whether the individual actually will acquire the position and subsequently move along the career path.

In Figure 1.2 are identified the various elements of an individual's characteristics or actions and the organizational structures whi interact to influence a director of education career. The figure also serves to clarify the prior influences and present circumstances which directly affect the development of a director's career.

Individual actions and background characteristics which are likely to be related to the career of a director of education include: formal training, professional experiences and service, age, support from others, personal goals and confidence, and experience and opportunities in youth. As well, inquiries and discussions in regard to a specific position, coupled with the actual application and conduct at the interview, may relate directly to attaining an administrative position.

Structures such as the actua organization of the school division in regard to the hierarchy of positions, the composition of the board, the urban or rural location, the philosophy and policies of the board (particularly in regard to selection and recruitment procedures), and the type and quantity of professional development activities and preparation programs organizations offer their members impact upon the careers of directors of education. In addition, the frequency of turnover of incumbents relative to the availability of positions and other employment

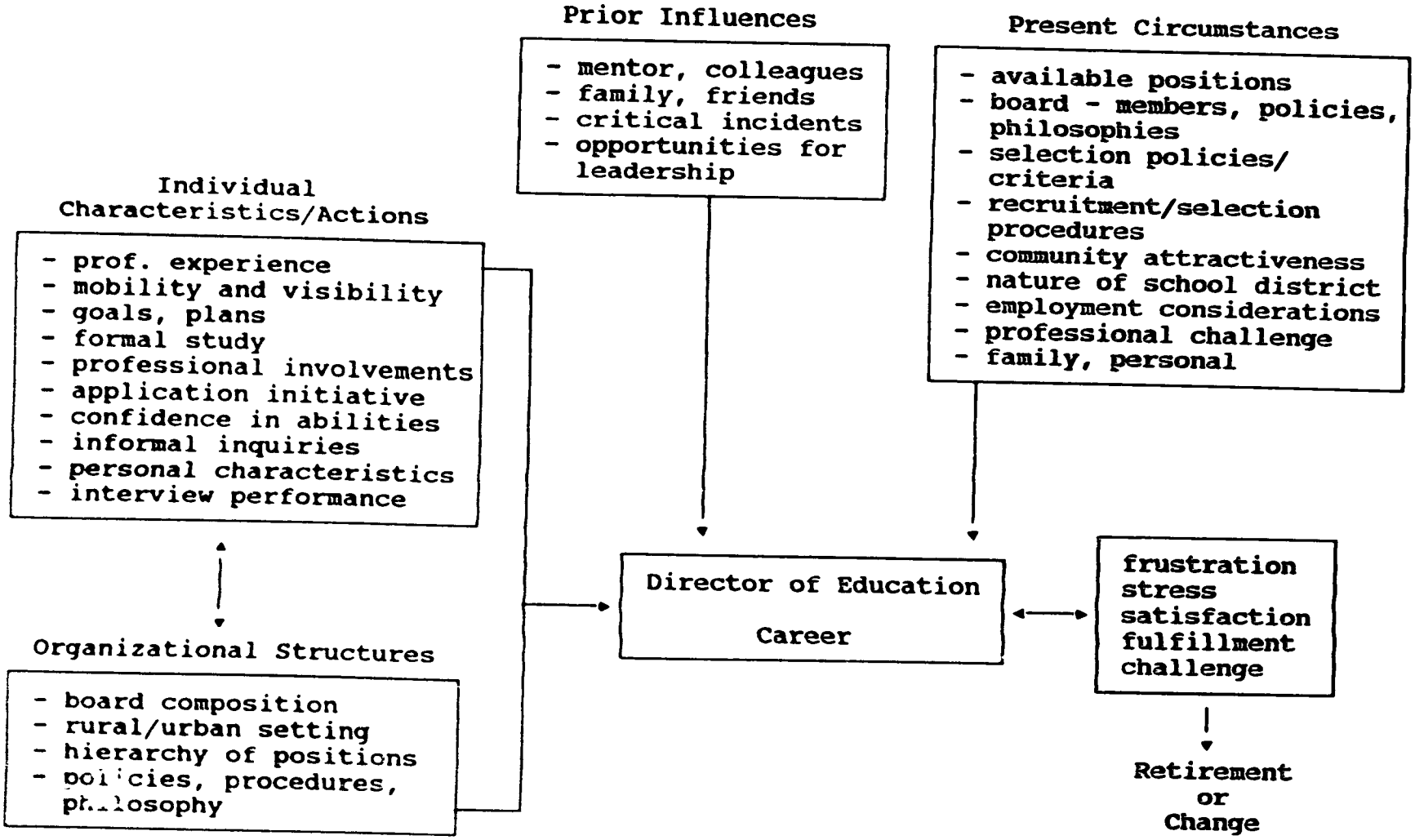



Figure 1.2. Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career

considerations add to this dimension.

The variables identified in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, are considered to be in a state of interaction. Each directly affects and is contingent upon others; none exists in isolation. The socialization processes, personal characteristics, preparation, and self-fulfillment of an individual, coupled with various organizational structures and opportunities, serve to influence the career of an administrator. The actions of individuals who have served in a specific organization, along with the structures that existed at the time, assist in shaping that particular organization. These factors, in turn, affect the current situation.

The variables which were considered to be of paramount importance in this study were the individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures which relate directly to preparation, socialization, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of administrators. In particular, this study focused on factors such as experience, mobility, formal study, professional involvements, mentors, critical incidents, application procedures, and the actual board decision.

## Assumptions

A general assumption underlying this study was that the director of education has a significant impact on education and, therefore, that the processes of acquiring a directorship are important to educational leadership. The research base for assessing the relative merits of various preparation and selection processes is not well developed. Consequently, there is no ready way to assess whether or not the most capable educational leaders are being selected. A plausible assumption is that the most effective leaders are not likely to be selected if the

practices are deficient or questionable; that is, if they are inconsistent with rational procedures. Although following practices which are consistent with current thought on these processes does not guarantee that the best candidates will be selected, the probability of making sound selection decisions is likely to be increased.

Another assumption was that directors are sufficiently aware of the processes relating to preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns to serve as a valid source of data. The search for patterns assumed that regularities exist in the position of director of education in spite of individual variations.

## Delimitations and Limitations

The study was delimited to examining directors of education in Saskatchewan employed at the time of data collection and was confined to their perceptions and understandings during the specific period as indicated by results of a questionnaire survey and interviews.

A limitation of the study was the researcher's assumption that perceptions of respondents were accurate and reflected reality. In addition, the results are applicable only to the population which was surveyed; generalizations to similar positions in other educational systems should be made with caution.

## Definition of Terms

**Directors of education** are the chief executive officers of school divisions in the province of Saskatchewan appointed by school boards.

**Regional directors** are the appointed field representatives of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

**School division** is the basic unit of educational governance in the

province of Saskatchewan, which has a specified boundary and is governed by an elected board.

**Central office position** is one occupied by persons employed in capacities of assistant director, superintendent, assistant superintendent, supervisor, and consultant.

**Preparation** is the formal study and experience candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions.

**Recruitment** is the process through which candidates become aware of director of education vacancies and the factors which encourage them to apply for this position.

**Selection** is the process by which directors of education are appointed to a specific position.

**Career** refers generally to an area of professional life and specifically to professional practice in the field of education.

**Career patterns** are the progressions from one job/position to another in the career of a person.

## Organization of the Report

In the first chapter, the research problem was defined and the conceptual basis for the study was developed. The literature on administrator preparation, socialization, selection, and careers is reviewed in the second chapter. Chapter 3 presents the description of the research methodology. Descriptive information on characteristics of directors of education is presented in Chapter 4, while career patterns are described in Chapter 5. Three case studies of selection are developed in Chapter 6. The report concludes with a summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

## Review of Related Literature

The review of the literature focused on the current writings in the area of educational leadership and career patterns as they relate to socialization and preparation for educational administrative positions as well as to the recruitment and selection of individuals for leadership positions. Seven major topics are developed in this chapter: educational leadership, socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, career patterns, and demands of the superintendency.

### Superintendents as Educational Leaders

Research into both leadership and the roles of administrators is highly important for the field of educational administration. However, Immergart (1988) contends that "it can safely be concluded that there has not been very much priority for research in the educational literature on leadership and leader behavior . . . [and that studies of this nature] appear to be dwindling in number, not increasing" (p. 267). He further states that "studies of educational leaders and investigations by those in the field have for the most part corroborated and replicated other inquiry . . . and tend to mirror other work and to lag behind the empirical, conceptual, and methodological advances realized elsewhere" (p. 267). In wondering why studies of educational leadership have failed to attract greater interest on the part of researchers, Burlingame (1973) suggests that "leaders in education have been lesser [persons] attempting to maintain schools. . . . They are not on the frontier, reconnoitering virgin territory" (p. 64).

Current research has tended to focus on the dynamics of leader-follower/superordinate-subordinate relations and, as a result, has paid little attention to the possible effects organizational and societal contexts might have on leadership (Pitner & Ogawa, 1981, p. 61). Pitner and Ogawa contend that societal structures and preference both serve as the raw materials of superintendents' work and demarcate the boundaries within which superintendents operate. They further state that

> superintendents play an important leadership role in translating these societal preferences into school policies and practices. . . . they monitor their environments to obtain readings of public opinion. Such readings identify issues to which schools must respond and detect conditions which will enable superintendents to move their organizations in directions of their own choosing. (p. 61)

This suggests that superintendents as leaders structure and elicit followers' activities as well as work closely with external elements to legitimize organizational activities and outcomes.

Weick (1978) notes that a peculiarly "macho" connotation has been attached to the notion of leadership and that this has inhibited the recognition of other important dimensions. He provides an alternative by suggesting that it might be useful to view leaders as media. Good media, he suggests, have three characteristics: (1) multiple elements, (2) independence of elements, and (3) external constraints of elements (p. 7). From this perspective a superintendent as a good leader would be one who is responsive to and reflective of external influences. Weick refers to this type of leadership as "docile leadership," and he suggests that docility is a major aspect of leadership in formal organizations.

Wallace (1985) recognizes that considerable literature exists in regard to leadership per se and that various approaches to leadership studies have been utilized:

> The "trait approach" emphasizes the personal qualities of leaders and seeks to identify the traits and skills that contribute to leadership success. The "power-influence approach" attempts to explain leader effectiveness in terms of the source and amount of leader power and manner in which it is exercised. The "behavior approach" seeks to identify the pattern of behaviors and activities that are characteristic of effective leaders. Situational theories cut across the other three approaches and emphasize how aspects of the leadership situation determine what traits, forms of influence, or patterns of behavior are essential for leadership effectiveness.

However, he contends that "virtually no research literature exists on the impact of the role of the superintendent as educational leader" (p. 6). He defines educational leadership as "the process of actively influencing others to establish and use mutually agreed upon methods to achieve desired outcomes" (p. 6) and says that the superintendent, who is the instructional leader of the district, is the one who must exert vigorous leadership to improve instructional effectiveness and promote standards of excellence in the schools. He further contends that educational leaders use available resources to analyze needs; develop, implement, and evaluate plans to achieve educational goals and employ a process of reciprocal leadership; promote a framework of effective teaching and learning; foster instructional effectiveness; recognize, encourage, and support the emergence of instructional leadership in staff; and monitor the instructional program (pp. 6-7).

A study by Cymbol (1986) of locally appointed superintendents of schools in Alberta revealed that superintendents are perceived and expected to perform a wide range of tasks. Both trustees and superintendents attach great significance to the educational leader role which involves working with the professional staff in providing high quality education to students.

Leadership development has been approached in the literature in a variety of ways, one of the most common being from the psychological theory through the trait approach, which focuses on the characteristics of effective leaders. This approach, which is reflected in the work of Fiedler (1971), has been closely associated with the selection of personnel for leadership positions and emphasizes the personality traits, the system of values, and the life style of leaders. One of the problems with this approach is that there is little agreement with regard to which traits should be included and which should be excluded. "The traits of intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, and high energy/activity level are most often mentioned and are commonly agreed on across reviewers" (Immergart, 1988, p. 261).

Bennis and Nanus (1985) conducted in-depth interviews with 90 leaders in a range of public and private organizations in order to identify the skills and strategies used by known effective leaders. These included (1) attention through vision--articulating an appropriate vision of the future; (2) meaning through communication--influencing and organizing meaning for the members of the organization; (3) trust through positioning--making themselves known and trusted; and (4) deployment of self--knowing one's strengths, developing those strengths, and discerning the "fit between one's strengths and weaknesses and the organization's needs" (p. 61). Further, Bennis and Nanus contend that effective leaders have five key skills: (1) the ability to accept people as they are; (2) the capacity to approach relationships and problems in terms of the present rather than the past; (3) the ability to treat those who are close to us with the same courteous attention as that extended to strangers; (4) the ability to trust others even if the risk is great; and

(5) the ability to do without constant approval and recognition from others (pp. 66-67).

The question of "leadership for what" is addressed by Bennis and Nanus (1985) in that their view is empowerment of organizational members "to translate intention into reality and sustain it" (p. 80), which they feel can be done via four components: (1) significance--being in the center of doing something valuable; (2) competence--learning new skills; (3) community--a sense of reliance on one another; and (4) enjoyment--satisfaction and fun (p. 80).

Leavitt (1986) stresses the need for three capacities to be present in effective leaders: pathfinding (vision), problem solving, and implementing. In talking about the aesthetics of leadership, Duke (1986) identifies four concepts: direction, engagement, fit, and originality. Paterson, Purkey, and Parker (1986) develop a framework for educational leadership which consists of vision building, strategic planning, and realization. They also stress the critical importance of understanding and analyzing the environment, patience, and persistence in strategic planning and communication skills.

The processes through which leadership skills are developed and through which individuals with the requisite skills move into administrative positions are as significant as possessing the relevant capabilities.

## Socialization

Becoming an administrator involves a process of "being socialized into thinking and behaving in particuar ways in an organizational context. Socialization is a process that . . . extends through various

stages of formal preparation and employment" (Miklos, 1988, p 53). Ortiz (1978) states:

> Socialization within a profession occurs as a result of certain experiences and training that an individual undergoes. Within education, the traditional roles into which individuals may be socialized are teaching and administration. Both of these contain within them certain career patterns that are a result of further socialization. (p. 125)

Little attention has been paid in the literature to the socialization of managers or to the organizational processes by which commitment is inculcated. However, a study by Buchanan (1974) of 279 business and government managers in eight large organizations yielded some insights into organizational commitment and socialization experiences. The results of the study were generally consistent with previous research findings which identified three stages of experiences: Stage 1--the first year: Experiences include role clarity, peer group cohesion, group attitudes toward the organization, expectations realization, reality shock, first-year job challenge, and loyalty conflicts; Stage 2--the second through fourth year: Experiences include personal importance, self-image reinforcement, fear of failure, organizational commitment norms, and work commitment norms; Stage 3--the fifth year and beyond: The major experience is organizational dependability. Organizational efforts to influence managers at this stage involve the maintenance or alteration of existing attitudes rather than the molding of new ones. The results of the findings further revealed that the influence potential of particular experiences varies significantly with tenure.

A model that conceptualizes the socialization process was developed by Feldman (1976). This model identifies three stages of the

socialization process and the activities that indicate progress through socialization: (1) Anticipatory socialization encompasses all the learning that occurs before the recruit enters the organization. The main activities at this stage are forming expectations about jobs and making decisions about employment; (2) Accommodation is the period in which the individual sees what the organization is actually like and attempts to become a participating member. The main activities at this stage are learning new tasks, establishing new relationships, clarifying roles, and evaluating progress; and (3) Role management is the stage at which individuals mediate the conflicts between their work and other groups which may place demands on them. Four variables are identified as possible outcomes of socialization: general satisfaction, mutual influence, internal work motivation, and job involvement. Feldman concludes:

> The results suggest an analogy to Herzberg's distinction between hygiene and motivator variables. . . . they are correlated positively with indicators of the quality of the work environment rather than the quality of the work itself. The nature of the work itself acts more as a motivator variable and is more strongly associated with employers' needs to self-actualize and to find self-realization through work. (p. 450)

In regard to when the process of socialization begins, Greenfield (1977) suggests that this process starts in the period of candidacy, although Ortiz (1982) contends that this process begins during the period of teaching. "Research also confirms that the process begins in early home life and continues through all levels of schooling" (Miklos, 1988, p. 68). Falk and Cosby (1974) contend that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout one's work history. Parental backgrounds, socialization in the family and the community,

academic performance, and the influence of significant others are important variables in this development.

Greenfield (1977), in a longitudinal study of teachers who were candidates for public school administrative appointment, examined the process of new-role entry. He noted the special nature of socialization in education as it is evidenced in the entire life cycle of educational personnel. From the time individuals enter school as students until they begin teaching and gain administrative appointment, they are exposed to the influence of the group which they eventually join. It is, therefore, difficult to introduce new modes of behavior under such circumstances. The findings indicate that socialization into adult roles is conditioned by the situationally specific behavior of individuals in interpersonal interaction--largely interaction involving members of the reference group to which they aspire. In Greenfield's study, candidates' behavior was a function of (1) the richness of the interpersonal repertoire, and (2) contextual properties of the situation itself (p. 191).

Various studies have been conducted in regard to female administrators in educational administration. In a study which compared male and female "portraits," Edson (1980) found that women were confident in their abilities to do the job and believed they could do the job better than most current administrators. This belief enabled them to pursue principalships despite many obstacles.

A study of elementary principals in Alabama (Moracco, 1982) revealed that the perceptions and behaviors of male and female principals have become more similar over the last 20 years. These results suggest that gender is not a valid predictor of the kind of principal a person will be and should not be used as a criterion for selection.

In regard to advancement of women in administration, a current study of 232 administrators of home economics units was conducted by Slimmer (1984). The most helpful source responsible for locating their current position was identified as direct personal application, while the second was personal friends. In obtaining their present work position, work experience, academic background, and personal recommendations were identified as important factors. Over one half of the respondents had a mentor and indicated that they obtained their present position by "being in the right place at the right time," with many of them indicating that they had placed themselves in the right place. Findings from this study also revealed that women had a high degree of satisfaction with their academic preparation, supportive relationships, goals for career aspirations, and coping skills.

In an examination of factors which influence the promotion of women to the principalship in Arizona, the results of a study by Nelson (1982) revealed that women perceived receiving less encouragement from university professors than men, that women felt membership in associations was necessary to promotion, that more women than men had participated in a district training program, and that there was a significant difference in backgrounds and personal characteristics between men and women.

A process for successful entry to public elementary administration for women was identified in a study by Sandorff (1980). Promotional socialization, the term he uses to refer to the process, consists of a pre-socialization phase where the prospect is identified through exceptional teaching and organizational and interpersonal skills. Four socialization phases follow: a "showcasing" of the prospect's

instructional expertise; a sponsor's invitation to administrative advancement; the sponsor's adoption of the now-aspiring candidate; and an intensified socialization period as assistant principal, whereby adherence to the norms and behaviors of the administrator group is especially stressed. In addition, Sandorff points out that administration is seen as foreign to the educational attitudes of most female teachers because they generally perceive their jobs as avocations and need to be "converted" to administration.

The results of a study of role modeling in socialization (Weiss, 1977) revealed that individuals develop work behavior patterns by observing and modeling the behavior of others. The choice of behavior model is based partially on the social characteristics of potential models interacting with the personality of the observer. "The results of this study suggest that modeling is a mechanism for the socialization of organizational behaviors" (p. 103). The nature of this mechanism is "a complex interaction of model characteristics, observer characteristics, and certain intervening motivational cognitions" (p. 103).

In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models are included in the literature on socialization. The counsel of influential people can be a significant career contingency. Valverde (1974, 1975) described the value of sponsorship, which involved identifying a protege and influencing the protege's attitudes in ways to bring them into conformity with those of the sponsor. Dickson (1983) reported results of a study that showed that mentors were influential in accelerating the rate of career advancement in high school principalships.

The importance of sponsorship and mentoring in regard to selection

of superintendents and to career advancement has been given considerable attention in the literature, particularly in regard to women and minorities (Dusek, 1983; Marshall, 1985; Villani, 1983). Three kinds of sponsors were reported by the subjects in a study conducted by Maienza (1986) of superintendents in large metropolitan school districts in the United States: university professors, coalitions of professionals, and consultants hired by the school districts for executive searches. In addition, the study of Ontario supervisory officers revealed that home and family support is also a viable form of sponsorship (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 62).

Hurley (1988) contends that mentor relationships help the protege by supporting and facilitating the clarification and realization of the protege's dreams. He indicates that most mentors are 8 to 15 years older than their proteges, that the relationship usually lasts from 2 to 10 years, that most young men receive little mentoring, and that women have even more difficult times finding mentors than do men. "Good mentor relationships are rare indeed" (p. 42). He also notes that "more and more companies are having mentor programs" (p. 42).

Obversely, male administrators seem to believe that support from the "old boys" is important to career advancement (Fuqua, 1983). Preparation by mentoring was not found to be widespread in the study of directors in Ontario; only about a quarter of the respondents said they had had a significant mentor (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 110).

Kanter's (1977) research on organizational behavior showed that undertaking out-of-the-ordinary and visible activities, such as the presidency of a professional or scholarly organization, represents an external activity that can bring attention to a person. Similarly, an

activity such as serving on editorial or review boards places the individual in a boundary position between his or her institution and the larger community (p. 141).

In addition, Campbell (1976) supports extending the socialization process to the continuing education of superintendents. He feels that "superintendents need the support of others who face similar problems and those who may have insights that are relevant to such problems" (p. 20). At the inservice level, they could organize and control their own professional groups and provide considerable interchange.

Ortiz (1978) reported that the socialization process "is the adaptation to the work settings that individuals encounter" (p. 128) and is evident throughout one's career. She contends that the decision to move usually begins following the granting of tenure to a beginning teacher. Midcareer socialization may consist of socialization directed at vertical movement, horizontal movement, or remaining in a given position. Midcareerists may be located within all of the administrative levels with three basic adaptations: upward mobility with the superintendency in mind; partial upward mobility, with any one position on the way becoming permanent; and retention of the initially occupied position permanently.

## Preparation

The literature in the area of preparation relates to the process candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions. Research in the area of preparation of administrators "has tended to focus on the extent to which holding qualifications beyond those required for certification enhances access to administrative posts or facilitates

upward mobility" (Miklos, 1988, p. 60). Results of studies by Craig (1982) and Fuqua (1983) conducted in the United States tend to confirm that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendencies. In this regard, Tagg (1983) contends that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts: "Few rural superintendents in western Canada hold doctorates, while almost all those in urban centres do" (p. 2).

In a study of preparation needs of superintendents in Saskatchewan conducted some time ago, Ready (1961) found there was inadequate pre-service preparation. This was supported by superintendents' opinions of their lack of competence in certain areas. The findings also revealed that superintendents felt that their university training had little career value, but that inservice activities, particularly conferences, workshops, and short courses, were valuable means of preparation for a superintendency.

A study by Fowler (1983) of administrators in Washington revealed that male administrators appeared to major in administration, whereas female administrators tended to major in areas such as curriculum or guidance and counselling. A report on the American school superintendency (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) revealed that the typical superintendent has a Master's degree with a major in educational administration and supervision. Superintendents appeared to start these degrees at significantly younger ages than ever before, and, on the whole, graduate programs received good ratings from the superintendents. Cunningham and Hentges also found that superintendents generally have positive feelings about their university preparation in educational administration but recommended more field experiences. Hoyle (1989) also

recommends more field experiences and suggests that "we abandon the present university-based, research-oriented preparation model that produces Ph.D. degrees in favor of a professional studies model . . . [which would award degrees] for programs of study . . . that are less clinically oriented" (p. 377). He suggests strengthening the admissions criteria and on-campus residency requirements, team teaching by professors of disciplines other than education, rewarding professors according to the quality of work in developing school leaders, emphasizing intuition and creativity, and increasing funds to support this model (pp. 377-378).

A study by Hess (1988) of principals and superintendents revealed that principals desired more practical skills and were less satisfied with their graduate training than were central office administrators. Both groups felt graduate programs were too general.

Campbell (1976) contends that "the most powerful force in the preparation of administrators is that of socialization [which] comes with a deliberate program designed to transmit the norms--the understandings, values, and skills--of selected top educational administrators" (p. 19). In this regard, he proposes that "a primary group composed of future administrators and faculty be formed" (p. 19), that they meet frequently in a space near each other, and that this be called a training center.

In the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers, 10 leadership clusters were identified and were related directly to those of Bennis and Nanus (1985). They propose a prescribed program which would include four components: (1) academic preparation, (2) practical work experiences, (3) evaluation of the candidate's performance in both of these areas, and (4) on-going professional

development (p. 28).

The value of professional development in the preparation process for supervisory officers in Ontario was also noted in the study by Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987). The results clearly indicated the primacy of personal contacts (e.g., peer networking, retreats) over traditional forms of professional development (e.g., conferences, workshops) as valued sources of professional development and support. In addition, it was found that many supervisory officers in Ontario attribute most of their relevant preparation to work experiences, not to formal training. The relevance of prior experience as a principal, for example, is commonly cited by directors as valuable professional experience for their position.

## Recruitment

Recruitment refers to the process through which candidates discover administrative vacancies and the factors by which they are encouraged to apply for a position. Studies of recruitment practices confirm that members of minority groups and women perceive and encounter barriers that restrict entry into the traditional pools of candidates (Fisher, 1979; Hall, 1984; Sloan, 1980).

The literature on chief executive officers indicates that the major criterion in selecting a successor is typically that the candidate come from the dominant coalition within the organization, because this is seen as a function necessary to preserve the values of the organization. When this notion is present, the potential for functional and institutional inbreeding exists, and an internal candidate can be carefully groomed by the current chief executive officer in an effort to maintain harmony in

the organization (Smith & White, 1987, p. 263).

To observe trends and changes in recruitment and hiring practices, Socolow (1978) conducted a study of 72 university positions. "The most striking finding of the study was the clear persistence of all the institutions in drawing from a traditional pool of candidates" (p. 42). Nearly all institutions in the sample hired individuals from within academe who had served in lower-status academic administrative posts and showed little geographical movement. Further to this, the findings showed a strong predisposition for hiring the known over the unknown candidate and a tendency to select from within the same institution. They "go through the motions of searching widely for qualified candidates, while they in fact rely heavily on familiar recruiting methods" (p. 43). Socolow contends that "it is clear that colleges and universities are not champions of new and more meritocratic hiring strategies" (p. 54).

The study of supervisory officers in Ontario found that an important variation concerning the development of position announcements exists because some school systems prefer to recruit locally while others advertise provincially or nationally. In rare cases, some positions are not officially advertised at all (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 100). The impression gathered from the results of this study was that more attention should be given to improving the quality of the applicant pool by recruiting more widely and thereby affording a better opportunity to choose the most suitable candidate (p. 101).

Findings from a study by Freund (1987) revealed that candidates for a superintendency carefully evaluate the school districts to which they apply and steer away from boards that are consistently divided, do not

respect confidentiality, are close-minded, and do not adhere to the line between setting school policy and administering policy.

## Selection

Research in this area "rests on the beliefs about the significance of administrative functions in education and about the importance of making sound appointments" (Miklos, 1988, p. 53). Much of this literature is not empirically based, and only a limited amount is specifically focused on the superintendent.

The literature indicates that very few boards have written policies for selecting administrators, although some have very specific criteria which cover a broad range of professional, personal, and functional characteristics. Studies into criteria considered relevant for the selection of superintendents have examined functions that are closely identified with the position: understanding board operations, board-superintendent relations, fiscal management, and relationships with community-parent groups (Miklos, 1988, p. 54). Results of a recent study of Ontario supervisory officers indicated 11 selection criteria: source and scope of experience, track record, skills, competencies, educational qualifications, organizational fit, personal goals, gender/ethnicity, local political support, lack of competition, and administrative reorganization (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 96). Engel (1985) contends that the best indicators for a successful superintendent are skills dealing with others and knowing how to select good personnel.

Studies of selection procedures of administrative personnel in the 1960s (Davis, 1962; Peach, 1963) revealed that selection policies for most districts were not defined and that the major criteria for selection

were training, experience, and personal factors. The findings from a study of Canadian superintendents by Sampson (1965) concurred with the above-mentioned findings and further revealed that information about vacancies was passed on to potential candidates by superintendents and that more than one half had been invited to join the provincial department. At the time of the study, few had Master's degrees, but nearly all had the prerequisites of both administrative and secondary school experience, most of which was in rural areas. No attempt was made to recruit outside provincial boundaries.

However, a current study of selection of principals in Alberta (Oaks, 1986) revealed that most districts had selection policies and that internal recruitment of candidates and self-identification were universally applied in these districts. Selection criteria included personal factors, experience, training, and scholastic achievement; sometimes intelligence and health factors were considered. Procedures for selection included application, references, interviews, and probationary periods.

The results of the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1988) study indicate that there is considerable variation across the province in the sources and amount of data about candidates in the hiring process, although the standard configuration is the applicant's curriculum vitae, record of qualifications, and the interview. In addition, some boards require samples of written reports or philosophy-of-education statements. Local screening practices and the official interview process vary in different jurisdictions in terms of who is involved (trustees, director, teacher representatives, etc.) and how much weight each is given.

According to Miskel and Cosgrove (1985), the sources of future

leaders can be divided into two categories: insiders--when current members of the hiring organization are promoted, and outsiders--when successors are selected from an entirely separate organization (p. 90). Under certain circumstances they suggest that an insider can be a better choice of a successor than an outsider. When intraorganizational conflict is high, a candidate from within may better understand and be able to cope than an outsider (p. 90). Further, a differentiated reaction to change was evident in school boards' selection of superintendents because board members who are basically pleased with the current administration expect insiders to give a stabilizing performance, whereas they expect outsiders to give a creative performance that promotes significant changes (Carlson, 1961).

Assessment centers as a means of identifying strong candidates for administrative positions are described by various researchers (Hersey, 1982; McKay & McCord, 1978; Musella, 1981; Schmitt, 1982). Generally, assessment centers conduct tests of administrative skill in which trained assessors observe and record candidates' job-related behaviors and reach a consensus of each candidate's performance. Schmitt (1982) contends that these are valuable, valid procedures for the selection of school administrators.

Political factors may also play a part in administrator selection. "Success in gaining an administrative appointment may be highly dependent on the judgments of a selection committee. . . . Characteristics of the selection board, such as liberal attitudes, may also affect the appointment decision" (Miklos, 1988, pp. 55-56). In addition, the structure of the educational system may influence selection (Carlson, 1961).

Salley (1979), in a study of 194 superintendents in the United States, found that boards give more emphasis to the personal attributes or qualities of candidates than to what they will or should do and the skills needed to perform effectively on the job. He suggests that personal characteristics might not be as important as abilities to manage and lead an organization (p. 4).

In administrator selection, some attempt is made to "match" the individual and the job. March and March (1978) contend that the formation of such a match

> is based on imperfect information gathered partly through the observation of performances. On the basis of such observations, organizations sort individual managers into reputational categories. People come to be viewed as incompetent, and are fired; as exceptionally qualified, and are promoted; or as adequate, and are retained. (p. 450)

These writers contend that, particularly near the top levels in an administrative career hierarchy where the samples of performance are comparatively small, sampling error could be possible.

## Career Patterns

Career patterns refer to the progressions from one position to another in the career of a person. Literature in this area has focused on the nature of describing careers and on identifying factors involved in becoming an administrator.

The literature on career patterns has charted the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Cuban (1976) found in his study of superintendents in the United States that "the route to the superintendency usually includes stops in the classroom and the principal's office." However, there is

evidence in the literature that career patterns change over time. Cunningham and Hentges (1982) found that the percentage of superintendents who came to their office through the teacher-principal route declined from 1971-1982, whereas the percentage of those who followed the teacher-principal-central office route increased.

In her study of personnel records of public school administrators, Gaertner (1980) discovered three career patterns which led to the superintendency. The first pattern led to the superintendency from the secondary principal position, the second from assistant superintendent, and the third from elementary education. The latter pattern "is populated with disproportionately larger numbers of women . . . [and is] characteristically the women's career path" (p. 15).

The analysis of career patterns reveals a strong tendency toward localism, yet most administrators tend to believe that geographic mobility enhances career prospects (Miklos, 1988, p. 63). The findings of a study of superintendents in Massachusetts revealed that mobile superintendents held more positions, spent fewer years in each position, had a higher level of education, and were more often tenured (Geraldi, 1983). Recent research on mobility in colleges and universities shows academic administrators strive for and desire job change as a means of increasing their professional opportunities throughout their careers (Sagaria, 1984, p. 138).

In a comparison of the findings of the study of Ontario directors (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) with results from the American Association of School Adminnistrators survey of superintendents (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) in regard to career paths, Allison (1988) notes that the "American superintendents typically come to their first

position from the principalship . . . [and] the most dominant path to the Ontario directorship is promotion from some central office position" (pp. 20-21).

The American Association of School Administrators survey (1982) as well as research by Carlson (1972), Gaertner (1980), and Ortiz (1982) have identified three major routes to the superintendency: appointment from a previous superintendency, appointment from some other head office position, and appointment directly from the principalship. There appears to be a relatively high level of mobility between positions within American states. Appointment from some other central office position has traditionally been the least common route, "while direct appointment from the principalship remains the most common route to an administrator's first superintendency. Furthermore, it is typically the secondary school principalship that provides the springboard to the superintendent's office" (Allison, p. 19). Carlson (1972) described the elementary principalship as a "dead end" for those seeking the superintendency (p. 9).

In a study of career patterns of Alberta superintendents, Weleschuk (1969) found that the most common route to the superintendency was teacher-principal-superintendent and that candidates spent very few years in the position of teacher but advanced quickly to a principalship. Most of their experience was in rural areas. The provincial rate of turnover was 13%, and most spent 3.5 years in a superintendency before changing locations. However, a survey of principals in the Edmonton separate school system that same year (Murphy, 1969) revealed that urban teachers spent between 1 and 5 years in a teaching position before advancing to a principalship and approximately 11 years in the latter capacity.

Pitner and Ogawa (1981) found that male and female administrators have different career paths and different demographic profiles, and that they differ in one major respect: female superintendents traveled the traditional career route from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. Maienza (1986) found that women superintendents were older and had more experience than men superintendents when they attained their first superintendency, and had previously served in lower-/middle-level administrative positions. In a study of 34 women superintendents in various parts of the United States, Jackson (1981) found that the majority of women began their administrative careers at the elementary level or in central office positions. The findings further revealed that successful women administrators secured most positions without conscious career planning and that they have been geographically mobile.

McShea (1979) explored the reasons for so few women superintendents and found that sex-related items were the most inhibiting, including attitudes of men and other women toward women administrators, career and home responsibilities, and flexibility in moving to new locations. Richardson (1979) added that attitudes, opinions, and philosophy of school boards are other limiting factors. Paddock (1977) found that influences including sex discrimination in recruitment and promotion, isolation from the "old boys" network, and lack of necessary time or money were major influences. However, in contrast, a study of 50 women administrators in higher education revealed that they viewed male colleagues as loyal supporters, they did not have difficulty securing their present positions, and they did not subscribe to the notion that feminine support groups were important to advance careers for women.

The findings from a study of central office administrators in Tennessee (Cryer, 1980) revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female administrators. There appears to be a tendency for males to be hired into administrative positions earlier in their careers than females; there is a lack of upward mobility for females in administration; and marital status seems to be an influential factor in determining whether or not females become administrators.

Careers within central office have not been dealt with extensively in the literature. However, Ortiz (1978) discusses two basic patterns of central office careers. One pattern is to belong to the major subgroup that controls finances and personnel and has the school board as the significant other. The second pattern is to be a member of the subgroup upon which the remaining school districts' responsibilities rest--the significant others are principals and teachers. Ortiz contends that holders of positions within the first group are line careerists with the potential of attaining the superintendency and that holders of positions within the second group may be staff careerists responsible for instruction and support services.

Literature on career mobility suggested that a variety of variables impinge upon one's mobility throughout a professional career. Included among these variables are (1) individual characteristics, such as age, gender, and marital status; (2) career characteristics associated with a person's professional performance, such as earned degrees, visible activities, and having a mentor; and (3) those variables which address a manager's desires or motives for wanting to move (Sagaria, 1984, pp. 140-141). Rosenbaum (1979) found that age is inversely related to mobility. Studies show different mobility rates for men and women

(Stewart & Gudykunst, 1982). Veiga's (1983) research shows that family ties to a community may have an adverse effect on mobility.

Results of a study by Knezevich (1971) indicated that superintendents of larger districts tended to stay longer, and that careers of superintendents were statebound. In Wisconsin, about half of the superintendents have a second superintendency, but those who have more than one superintendency do not travel far; over half the moves are less than 77 miles. Movement is nonrandom in that superintendents tend to move to larger districts. The status position of a match between superintendent and district depends more on attributes of the district than on attributes of the individual superintendent (March & March, 1977).

In regard to the rate of mobility in one's career, Fuqua (1983) found a significant relationship between the former and five attractiveness variables: age at superintendency, tolerance for work pressure, highest degree, aspiration for upward mobility, and geographic mobility.

In a nation-wide study of 252 administrators which examined the upward mobility of educational administrators, Fuqua and Parks (1983) found that candidates with more professional attractiveness achieve faster, candidates with more influential sponsorship achieve faster, candidates with more professional attractiveness are more likely to have inside sponsorship, and upward mobility is increased by professional attractiveness and inside sponsorship.

Factors important to career success are identified in the literature. Holtz (1979) noted factors such as competence, education, experience, appearance, being in the right place, knowing someone with

influence, working harder than others, mentors, luck, and working your way up from the bottom as being important for career success. Craig (1982) identified factors which an aspiring superintendent must consider for career advancement: age of entry into teaching and administration, size of the school district, involvement in activities, education, and expertise.

Super (1957) and later Schein (1983, p. 3) identified nine major stages in a career cycle: (1) growth, fantasy, exploration; (2) education and training; (3) entry into the world of work; (4) basic training, socialization; (5) gaining membership; (6) gaining of tenure, permanent membership, mid-career crisis, reassessment, (7) maintaining momentum, regaining it, or leveling off; (8) disengagement; and (9) retirement. Schein (p. 5) maintains that these stages "provide a kind of internal timetable for every person," but that the time spent in each stage varies according to the complexity of the occupation.

In regard to administrator succession, which Miskel and Cosgrove (1984) refer to as "the process of replacing key officials in organizations (p. 3), instabilities generally occur.

> In schools the replacement of principals or superintendents is a disruptive event because it changes the lines of communication, realigns relationships of power, impacts decision-making, and generally disrupts the equilibrium of normal activities . . . and will have either no causal impact or negative impact on organizational effectiveness. (p. 2)

Regardless of the reason for succession, Miskel and Cosgrove contend that "high rates of succession may influence the development of an authoritarian, task-oriented leadership style" (p. 11).

## Demands of the Superintendency

The literature in this area examines both the satisfactions and stresses of people in the positions of higher authority.

The majority of supervisory officers in Ontario in the Fullan, Park, and Williams study (1987) say the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. The most common satisfiers were seeing an idea or initiative of their own come to fruition, the power and influence of the job, relationships with others, solving difficult problems, visiting schools, and managing resources effectively. Rewards of the job identified in this study were relationships with colleagues, salary, making a contribution to something worthwhile, having influence and the opportunity to have an impact on what happens, flexibility and freedom in the job, and personal recognition from colleagues and the community (p. 126). Dissatisfiers of the supervisory officers fell into two main categories: the political structure of school systems, particularly the influence of trustees; and the way in which the professional component of the system is organized, such as teacher negotiations. In addition, workload, subordinates, and territorial communication were other dissatisfiers. Respondents identified the following costs of the job: family stress, giving up community and recreational activities for lack of time, changes to health, and distance from the schools (p. 127).

Tagg (1983) contends that an "essential quality of the successful superintendent in a small district is the ability to handle stress" (p. 3). He identifies the following as being causes of stress: being on call seven days a week, getting too close to certain interest groups to retain one's objectivity, problems related to economic restraint, and professional isolation (pp. 3-4). Even though there is stress involved

in a rural superintendency, Tagg notes that it "is an intensely satisfying professional experience" (p. 4).

Another writer, Jackson (1977), makes reference to the stress related to administrator isolation. He identifies the following forces that tend to isolate educational administrators: being perceived as someone special; making decisions in regard to resources and personnel; possessing confidential information; being unable to disengage one's thoughts from a problem, thereby affecting personal relationships; being criticized and disliked; pretending to exude confidence one does not have; and juggling time.

In a study of superintendents in Canada, Sampson (1965) found that the most dissatisfaction respondents had with their jobs related to making arrangements for study leaves and "spreading themselves too thin." Most found the variety in the work the most enjoyable aspect, generally enjoyed their job, and planned to continue in it until retirement.

Duignan (1980), in an observational study of superintendents' behavior in the field, reported four major dilemmas for the superintendent: balancing quality in relation to work behavior, dealing with current issues, making efficient use of time, and managing the information system. In conclusion, Duignan views the superintendent as a "frustrated individual who is faced with an array of problems and crises of varied composition" (p. 25).

## Summary

Most of the research on the superintendency has focused on tasks and skills, and limited work has been done researching socialization, preparation, recruitment, and career patterns. The importance of strong

educational leadership in school settings has been stressed by some contemporary writers in their studies of educational administration, but little emphasis has been placed on how a person actually prepares for and subsequently acquires positions in educational administration, and, more specifically, positions of superintendent. The career patterns of superintendents have been examined in the literature; research findings indicate the importance of socialization, both prior to appointment and during tenure, in this regard. Limited research exists which focuses on the preparation of individuals for educational administrative careers, and on the recruitment and selection procedures which are utilized to secure a position of this nature.

# Chapter 3

## Research Methodology

The research design and methodological procedures for the study form the subject of this chapter. An overview of the research strategy is followed by a description of specific techniques used to collect and analyze the data. The chapter concludes with a presentation of data on basic characteristics of respondents and employing school divisions.

### Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used to investigate the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. Data collection for the study involved two stages: (1) a questionnaire survey directed at all directors of education in Saskatchewan, and (2) interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. The combination of two strategies was intended to ensure that important aspects of the research question were investigated.

Survey research involves a distinctive methodology which accounts for a substantial proportion of the research done in the field of education. The strategy yields descriptions of current situations which may serve as a basis for identifying possibilities for further research or changes in educational practice. According to Borg and Gall (1983), descriptive research is the form of educational research which "seeks to characterize a sample . . . on one or more variables" (p. 30) and also involves "the discovery of new phenomena" (p. 20). Since the researcher sought to identify areas of interest in the preparation, recruitment,

selection, and career patterns of directors of education, the adoption of a survey design seemed appropriate. The basic intent was to describe the population on a number of variables, as well as to explore possible relationships.

The questionnaire, which is one of the most common approaches to data collection in survey research, was chosen as the major means for collecting data for the study. In the process of carrying out the survey, efforts were made to adhere closely to the major steps identified by Borg and Gall (1983, pp. 415-435). In particular, specific objectives to be achieved by the questionnaire were defined; the sample for the study was identified; specific attention was paid to the foundation of questionnaire items in the literature and to their relationship to the research objectives; attention was given to questionnaire format in relation to length, the general layout, and clarity of instructions; a pilot test was conducted and the questionnaire was modified on the basis of results; the covering letter was written so as to clearly explain the purpose of the study and to encourage respondents to complete and return the questionnaire; and care was taken in regard to sending out the questionnaires and in contacting those who had not responded with a follow-up letter.

Data collection for the study involved distribution of questionnaires to all directors of education in Saskatchewan and interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. As is described below, several persons who did not participate in the main study were involved in the pilot testing of the questionnaire. This helped to ensure that

all important methodological issues were addressed and provided a check on the validity of the questionnaire.

## Development of the Questionnaire

In the initial stages of questionnaire development, five broad areas relating to the career of a director of education were identified from the literature: socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns. A very close examination of three major studies was also undertaken: The Supervisory Officer in Ontario (1987), The School Superintendency in British Columbia (1984), and The American School Superintendency Study (1982). In addition, the researcher attended the conference "The Chief School Officer--A Research Perspective" in June, 1988, at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education in Toronto.

### Conceptual Basis

The design of the questionnaire for the study was influenced by the review of the literature relating to the socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of superintendents, as well as the demands of the superintendency (Chapter 2).

Opinions tend to differ about how and when an administrative career develops. Some writers contend that it starts early in life; others say it begins during the period of teaching or candidacy. In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models/mentors tend to indicate that these significant others play a large part in the careers of male administrators but are not nearly so valued in female careers. Kanter's research (1977) showed that undertaking visible activities, such as presidency of an organization, brought attention to a person which had

potential to advance that person's career. The general nature of theorizing in this area suggested questions which could be asked about careers of directors in Saskatchewan.

Research in the area of preparation of administrators shows that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendent. However, Tagg (1983) states that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts. The literature review further revealed the value of professional development in the preparation process. Accordingly, the researcher sought to check the findings of previous studies regarding qualifications of superintendents and, in addition, to identify the areas of specialization, as well as the professional development activities in which directors had engaged.

Studies of recruitment practices confirm that administrators generally come from within the organization. Further, the results of a recent study of supervisory offices in Ontario (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) revealed that an important variation exists in regard to position announcements. Some positions are advertised only locally, some provincially, some nationally, and some not at all. The recommendation from the results of the Ontario study was that more attention should be given to recruiting widely in an attempt to choose the most suitable candidate. These ideas were incorporated into the questionnaire in order to determine the extent of advertising and the internal-external hiring practices of school jurisdictions.

Personal experiences of the researcher led to the development of questions related to applying for a director of education position. General information about practices suggested that potential candidates

make casual inquiries and informally visit the location of the directorship they are seeking. On the possibility that a particular event had been a factor in encouraging a person to seek a directorship, an open-ended question was included in the questionnaire for this purpose.

In an attempt to identify what factors attract people to seek a position as director of education in the first place and what factors influence them to leave one directorship and to seek another, the researcher structured questions to address these issues, most of which were developed with the assistance of colleagues.

A question relative to the criteria in the selection process for a directorship was developed based on results of studies which examined functions that are closely identified with the position. Research results indicate that there is considerable variation in the data about candidates and in the hiring process itself; therefore, questions were structured relative to the latter in order to determine the practices in Saskatchewan.

The literature on career patterns charts the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Pitner (1981) found that male and female administrators have different demographic and mobility profiles. Factors important to career success were identified by Holtz (1979) and Craig (1982). Various studies examined mobility rates and reasons for movement between positions (Fuqua, 1983; Peterson, 1984; Rosenbaum, 1979). Questions based on previous studies relative to the above-mentioned factors were designed and incorporated into the questionnaire.

Finally, the literature examines both satisfactions and stresses of

people in positions of authority. The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers found the role of the director to be more stressful than other roles. The results of their study also suggested that the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. In order to determine the most satisfying/self-fulfilling and frustrating/stressful aspects of the directorship, open-ended questions were structured requesting directors to indicate their own levels of satisfaction with their job.

Two questions relative to future plans of directors of education in Saskatchewan were also included in the questionnaire.

Based on these readings and experiences, coupled with discussions with colleagues and professors of educational administration, a first draft of the questionnaire, containing 69 items, was formulated. Subsequent revisions followed, which ultimately led to the questionnaire which was used in the pilot study.

## Nature of Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire requested directors to provide basic demographic information as well as to specify details regarding their current position in relation to its setting and size. In addition, they were asked to indicate the type and location of the position they held immediately prior to their current one. The format of these items was straightforward as is indicated by the following example:

In regard to your current position, please indicate (✓)

a. whether your teacher/student population is in a

(1) __ city
(2) __ rural area

Data were also collected concerning factors which influenced directors to pursue an administrative career. Respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to enter administration and to indicate the extent of their involvement in activities prior to their first appointment as director of education.

The rating of importance consisted of a five-point scale ranging from 5 - highly important to 1 - not very important. For example:

> Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to pursue an administrative career. Circle a response for each:
>
> | | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
> |---|---|---|---|---|---|
> | encouragement of family/parents | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

The question of the professional qualifications respondents had prior to their first appointment to a director of education position was dealt with in a number of items. Respondents were asked to indicate their major area of study and the degrees or diplomas they held. As well, they indicated the extent of their studies in educational administration or supervision and other relevant professional development activities in which they had participated. A sample question is as follows:

> At the time of your <u>first</u> appointment as director of education, please indicate (✓) the degrees or diplomas held:
>
> (1) __ B.Ed.
> (2) __ B.A., B.Sc., etc.
> (3) __ Diploma in Education
> (4) __ Master's in Education
> (5) __ Master's other than in Education
> (6) __ Ph.D. or Ed.D.

The career patterns of directors of education were approached through soliciting information about the positions they held and the age at which they entered these positions, the total number of years of service to education and how these years were distributed across positions and locations as well as the total number of school jurisdictions in which they had rendered service. Most of the data were obtained through a question with the following format:

> In the chart below, please indicate how these years of service are distributed across positions and locations by entering the number of years in the appropriate cells.

| | Years in This District | Years in Other Districts in Saskatchewan | Years in Another Province | Years in Another Country |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Director of education (include present position) | | | | |

Directors were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to seek the position and to outline an important event which they considered to have been a major factor in encouraging them to become a director. If they had previously served as a director, they were asked to indicate the importance of various factors in leaving their last position and attracting them to their current one. Most of the data were obtained through questions with the following format:

Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to seek the position of Director of Education. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. challenge of the job | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

However, data in regard to identifying an event in the respondents' careers which may have been a major factor in encouraging them to become directors of education were obtained through the following open-ended question:

Briefly outline an important event(s) in your career which you consider to have been a major factor in encouraging you to become a director of education:

_____

_____

The questionnaire also requested directors to indicate the various steps they took in applying for their first directorship position. They were further asked to indicate how they became aware that their current position was available, the elements that were present in the selection process, the importance they attached to various characteristics of applicants in the selection process, and the people who served on the interview panel. Questions such as the following were used to collect most of the data of this nature:

Indicate how you first became aware that your current position was available. Please check (✓) one response.

(1) ____ newspaper advertisement
(2) ____ district newsletter

Directors were also asked to outline their level of satisfaction with their current position, as well as to identify their future career

plans. The following two types of formats were utilized:

> Please outline various aspects of the position of director of education which you find to be:
>
> (a) most satisfying or self-fulfilling:
>
> _____
>
> _____
>
> Kindly estimate in how many years you are likely to leave the position of director of education, either due to retirement or a career change. Check (✓) one response.
>
> (1) ____ within 1 year (4) ____ 6-7 years
> (2) ____ 2-3 years (5) ____ 8-9 years
> (3) ____ 4-5 years (6) ____ 10 years or later

One questionnaire item asked respondents to indicate the extent of their involvement in various activities prior to their first appointment as director of education by circling a number from 0 to 5. The format of the item was as follows:

> Please circle a response for each to indicate the extent of your involvement in various activities prior to your first appointment as director of education. (Be sure to include involvement(s) in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.)
>
> number of educational associations in which you held memberships 0 1 2 3 4 5+

In the revision phase of the questionnaire development, particular attention was given to ensuring that the questionnaire could be completed in a reasonable period of time on the expectation that a greater rate of return could be anticipated if length and format were appropriate. The final form of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

## Preliminary Review of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was reviewed in early October by three former directors of education and one university professor, all of whom are

residents of Saskatchewan. The purpose of this review was to ascertain whether the questions were appropriate and relevant to the directorship. Various suggestions were made, most of which were of an editorial nature, and these were incorporated into the next revision. Three suggestions for the addition of items were offered: Add "your references were checked" to Question 13; add bracketed section to Question 9 to read "employment conditions (salary, benefits, etc.)"; and add "political sensitivity/skills" to Question 15. All three suggestions seemed to have merit and were accepted.

## Pilot Test

Immediately following the revision based on the preliminary review of the questionnaire, the instrument was adapted for the pilot study which was conducted in Alberta. The major adaptation dealt with a change in terminology: the term "superintendent" was substituted for "director of education." The reason for conducting the pilot study in Alberta was so that all directors in Saskatchewan could be included in the main study.

Prior to distribution, the draft of the questionnaire was circulated to students in a Master of Education research course for review. Several changes were made as a result of this review, most of which dealt with coding issues (e.g., change a, b, c to 1, 2, 3). Two substantive revisions were also made: the term "professional associations" was replaced by "educational associations" (Question 7) and a reminder to respondents to "check (✓) one response" was added to Question 11.

For the pilot study of the questionnaire, 25 superintendents of districts in central Alberta were selected. The questionnaire was

distributed on October 14, 1988. The final response rate was 92%. Results of the pilot study prompted the following changes to the instrument: The category "101 or more" was added to the number of teachers employed in the district (Question 2[b]); "separate school division" and "public school division" were deleted (Question 2[a]); professional development activities "relevant to preparation" for the position of director of education was substituted for "relevant to your responsibilities" (Question 4[d]), in order to focus the question more accurately on preparation for the directorship; the item "encouragement of peers" was added to the factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career (Question 8); "an important event in encouraging you" was substituted for "a critical incident" (Question 10), in an attempt to encourage more responses on this open-ended question; additions were made to steps taken when applying for the first directorship: "informal discussions with Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents" (Question 12); and two questions dealing with persons who had previously served as directors of education were combined into an A and B section (Question 16), in order to conserve space. A final adjustment was made to the questionnaire in regard to clarification of the phrase "your first appointment as Director of Education" by underlining the word "first" (Questions 4, 7, 12, 13, and 15).

## Interview Procedures

Results of a preliminary analysis of the data from the questionnaire suggested the type of additional data required on the selection of

directors. After exploring various possibilities, the researcher decided to use interviews to compile three case studies of particular appointments.

## Selection of Participants

Since the findings from the questionnaire survey revealed that regional directors were involved in about one half of the selection processes, a decision was made to include a regional director as well as the board chairperson and the recently appointed director in each case study. Following contacts with the executive directors of the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, the researcher made decisions about particular cases. Of the six regions in Saskatchewan at the time of the study, one region did not have a regional director, one region had not appointed a new director recently, and another region was not conveniently accessible. A decision was then made to contact the three remaining regional directors and ask if they would accept being interviewed, and to invite them to nominate a newly appointed director whom they felt would be a suitable interviewee.

Regional directors were then telephoned, as were the newly appointed directors, who in turn gave the names of the board chairpersons, who were also contacted for an interview. All persons contacted agreed to be interviewed.

## Development of the Interview Schedules

The interview questions were based largely on the review of the literature and on findings from the questionnaire survey. Although three

separate sets of questions were compiled for the three types of interviewee, the major focus for all three was about their involvement in the selection process for a newly appointed director.

Questions asked the newly appointed director centered on awareness that the position was open, making application, the interview, selection criteria, and the process used by the board. Board chairpersons were asked questions related to circumstances leading to the selection of a new director, recruitment procedures, criteria for selection, short-listing, the interview process, determining the best candidate, arriving at a decision, the role of the board chairperson, and advice to applicants and other boards. The regional directors were asked questions in relation to the nature of their involvement, procedures the boards followed, short-listing, the interview, selection, and how the final decision was made. In addition, they were invited to comment on advice that they might give to boards and to future applicants in regard to selection of directors. The interview guides are presented in Appendix B.

## Trustworthiness Considerations

In order that other researchers and other practitioners are able to benefit from a study, they must have confidence in the quality or overall "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the procedures and findings. A number of educational and social science researchers have highlighted techniques for helping to ensure high quality research in studies that use quantitative methods (e.g., Ary, Jacobs, & Razavich, 1985; Kerlinger, 1973; Wrightsman, 1977), and more recently, qualitative methods (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985;

Miles & Huberman, 1985). Since this study involved both methods, both types of quality control procedures were considered.

The four dimensions of concern are usually referred to as validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. Guba's (1981) equivalent labels--credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability--are often used in naturalistic research.

## Validity

According to Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) "validity refers to how truthful, genuine, and authentic data are in representing what they purport to measure. . . . To be valid, instruments must measure what the investigator intends and claims to measure" (p. 205). In other words, the findings must represent accurately and truthfully the phenomena under investigation.

Content validity of the questionnaires was an important consideration in this study. Clearly, the items had to represent adequately the areas of particular interest. Recognizing that content validity is necessarily "a subjective, judgmental process" (Shaw & Wright, 1967, p. 18), questionnaire development was based on a thorough investigation of the literature, examination of prior research instruments, and preliminary and pilot tests. The instrument was also reviewed by the researcher's supervisory committee and by other colleagues. The questionnaire was designed to be as direct, unambiguous, and appealingly presented as possible in order to capture interest and attention. The high return rate and some additional remarks in the study were encouraging.

In addition, interviews provided an opportunity to probe in greater

depth the aspects of preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. The validity of the interviews was discerned from respondents' openness, frankness, and willingness to disclose personal attitudes about the matters under investigation.

One common method of establishing validity, particularly in qualitative research (e.g., LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is triangulation. Denzin (1970, p. 427) acknowledges that multiple research methods and data sources are the usual means of triangulation. The interviews, therefore, provided a valuable means of checking on the validity of questionnaire responses by directors. The results were sufficiently similar to give confidence in those findings.

## Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the accuracy of measurement and is a prerequisite of and inherent in valid results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is essential that the items on the instrument be clear to the reader. Reliability is achieved, to some degree, through pilot testing, revision, and repeated administration of the instrument. During the design stage, reliability was attended to by applying the rules as outlined by Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985, p. 209): directions were made clear, the items were carefully examined to be sure that there was only one way to respond to and to interpret an item, and items with dual stems were eliminated. Feedback from experts in the preliminary survey and the pilot study subjects was used to enhance the reliability of the items on the instrument. Although reliability of the questionnaire was not assessed through a test-retest procedure, the content and nature of items provide the basis for assuming an acceptable

degree of reliability.

Hansen (1987) has noted that "within the qualitative domain of inquiry, the reliability notion is regarded as increasingly problematic" (p. 209). In Scriven's (1972) view, the reliability of qualitative inquiry can be established as much by the individual researcher's patently rigorous and systematic approach to research as by independent checking on adherence to conventional procedures.

## Objectivity

Objectivity concerns the "confirmability" (Guba, 1981) of a study. In any study, the objectivity of the data is of critical concern--results should be factual and confirmable. In other words, if the same procedures were used, would the new analysis and interpretation of data result in the same findings? Some writers (e.g., Bailey, 1978; Wrightsman, 1977) have warned about the researcher's influence on questionnaire design. The effort to base the instrument on research and writing, as well as the preliminary interview and pilot testing and procedures in general, promise a measure of objectivity. Further, the research report aiso includes detailed accounts of responses--often direct quotations from the respondents--which serves to permit external scrutiny of interpretation.

## Generalizability

One of the purposes of studies using statistical samples is to be able to generalize findings beyond the sampled respondents to larger populations. This study involved nearly all of the directors of education in Saskatchewan. The respondents included directors from

districts in both urban and rural settings which varied considerably in size. Although most of the respondents were male, three female directors who varied in age and had differing career paths also were among the respondents. Since responses were obtained from nearly the entire population, the results are clearly applicable to Saskatchewan. The results of these findings may also be generalizable to other school divisions and to superintendents/directors with similar educational systems in similar settings.

The findings from the qualitative aspects of the study were not regarded as generalizable since naturalistic strategies are not intended to lead to generalizations. Such strategies assume that social/behavioral phenomena are context-bound: "One must be content with statements descriptive or interpretive of a given context--ideographic or context-relevant statements" (Guba, 1981, p. 86). Nevertheless, the findings may have transferability on a different basis. McCutcheon (1981, p. 8) expressed the view that "generalizability in interpretive studies . . . rests on the readers' ability to generalize personally to their own situations rather than on the researcher's generalizing to populations larger than the sample used in the particular study." Lincoln and Guba (1985) supported this stance. Consequently, readers of this study may find elements of generalizability in terms of the personal meaningfulness of results of qualitative data analysis.

## Data Collection

The methods involved in the distribution of the questionnaires and the collection of interview data are described in this section.

## Distribution and Return of Questionnaires

Names and addresses of all directors of education in Saskatchewan were obtained through the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents. On January 23, 1989, questionnaires were sent by first-class mail to all 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan, together with a covering letter requesting their support for the study, a reply-paid return envelope, and a reply-paid postcard (see Appendix C). The postcard, which was included for return by separate mail, served to identify directors who had completed and returned questionnaires, while affording them the anonymity of questionnaires without codes or other distinguishing markings.

Follow-up letters were distributed to 24 directors who did not respond in the first instance. These were mailed on February 17, 1989. Returns were accepted until March 9, 1989. In total, 82 (89.13%) of the 89 questionnaires distributed to directors of education in Saskatchewan were completed and returned. Prior to the follow-up letter, 68 (74%) had been returned. Results of this letter, therefore, generated an additional 14 completed questionnaires.

## Collecting Interview Data

Following the preparation of the interview questions, the director, regional director, and board chairperson for each case study were contacted by telephone, and a time schedule was developed.

Pilot testing of the interviewing process was conducted prior to the actual interviews. The researcher had several "practice sessions" with colleagues who provided feedback in regard to the questions being asked

and the use of the tape recorder. No questions were altered as a result of the pilot test, but adjustments to the use of the tape recorder were made.

Interviews took place between May 2 and June 8, 1989. The researcher travelled by car to the various locations in order to conduct the interviews. Each interview was tape-recorded and later transcribed. As soon as possible after each interview, the researcher made notes in regard to additional insights and observations. During one interview the tape recorder malfunctioned. The researcher immediately obtained another tape recorder and proceeded to dictate the respondent's answers onto the tape, with the intention to recall as accurately as possible what had transpired. On average, each interview lasted about one hour.

## Data Analysis

The procedures involved in the analysis of both the questionnaire data and the interview data are described below.

### Analysis of Questionnaire Data

Most of the questionnaire responses were pre-coded for quantitative analysis. The responses from the questionnaire items inviting respondents to indicate that an item other than the ones specified in the instrument was applicable to them were recorded and then coded; frequency distributions were also determined. Subsequently, the data were entered into a file for analysis by computer. Percentage frequency distributions and mean ratings of importance attached to various factors and extent of involvement in certain activities were calculated for each variable. The open-ended responses from the questionnaire which invited respondents to

give their own views on various issues were recorded and categorized. Frequency distributions of categories were then determined.

A basis of categorization was established for four variables: age, location, district size, and director experience. Analysis of relationships involving age of directors was carried out on the basis of three groupings: under 45, 45-49, and 50 or older. The location of directors as to either city or rural divisions was derived directly from the questionnaire response. The size of the division in which directors were employed was classified as small (having 101 or fewer teachers) or large (employing 101 or more teachers). Three categories related to director experience were established on the basis of the following ranges: 1-2 years, 3-10 years, or 11 or more years. These categories were used to explore variations in characteristics of respondents and selection practices. Four typologies of career patterns of directors which were also established are described in Chapter 5.

## Analysis of Interview Data

The responses obtained from the case study interviews were first transcribed from the tape recordings by a transcriber, who typed the verbatim responses. The researcher then checked the accuracy of the transcriptions against the actual tape recordings and made any necessary corrections. A copy of the corrected transcription was then mailed to each person who had been interviewed. The respondent was requested to make any necessary corrections/adjustments to the transcript and then to notify the researcher by means of a collect telephone call of any errors which required correcting. There were no responses to this request.

The interview data were then organized into three case studies, each

containing the interview with the newly appointed director, the board chairperson, and the regional director. Each case study was written on the basis of the major themes which initially guided the interview. Several methodological styles were explored. In the first attempt the researcher incorporated the three interviews from one case study into a story of what had occurred in that particular case. A second attempt which involved a reporting of each of the three interviews from a case study in an individual manner proved to be more effective. After the three case studies were developed individually, similarities and differences among the three were explored.

## Characteristics of Respondents

As has been indicated, 82 of 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan provided usable responses in the questionnaire survey. Some basic demographic characteristics of directors as well as characteristics of the employing school divisions are presented in this section.

### Age and Sex

The data presented in Table 3.1 indicate that few directors of education were under the age of 40 years. The majority (35.4%) were between the ages of 45 and 49 years, with about one quarter being between 40 and 44 years of age. Approximately two thirds were above the age of 50. Only one director of education was under the age of 35 years, and only three were between the ages of 35 and 39 years.

Table 3.1 also indicates that 79 respondents were men and 3 directors were women. However, a verification with the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents (L.E.A.D.S.)

Table 3.1

Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories

| Age category | Number Male | Number Female | Total Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 35 | 1 | 0 | 1.1 |
| 35-39 | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| 40-44 | 21 | 0 | 25.6 |
| 45-49 | 27 | 2 | 35.4 |
| 50-54 | 12 | 1 | 15.9 |
| 55-64 | 15 | 0 | 18.3 |
| Total | 79 | 3 | 82 |
| Percent | 96.3 | 3.7 | 100.0 |

revealed that there were only two female directors of education during the time of the questionnaire survey. The researcher concluded that the third respondent was perhaps serving as an acting director during the time period of the survey and had completed the questionnaire in that capacity. The decision was made to include the three questionnaires from the women respondents.

## Division Size and Type

In this study, the term city denotes a school division whose teacher/student population is in the city, and the term rural refers to a school division whose teacher/student population is in a rural area.

As indicated in Table 3.2, 63 (or over three quarters) of the

Table 3.2

Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division

| Number of teachers employed | Urban | Rural | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fewer than 51 | 2 | 4 | 7.3 |
| 51-100 | 7 | 39 | 56.1 |
| 101-200 | 4 | 18 | 26.8 |
| 201-500 | 2 | 2 | 4.9 |
| 501-1,000 | 1 | 0 | 1.2 |
| 1,001 or more | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| Total | 19 | 63 | 82 |
| Percent | 23.2 | 76.8 | 100.0 |

respondents were employed in rural areas, and the remainder were in city divisions. With respect to distribution across division size categories, about 56% were in divisions employing between 51 and 100 teachers, 39 of which are in rural areas, and 7 of which are in cities. About one quarter of the respondents were in divisions which employed between 101 and 200 teachers, 18 of which are in rural areas and 4 in cities. Only six of the respondents were from divisions which employed fewer than 51 teachers. Four were located in rural areas and two in cities. Only a very small number of the respondents were from school divisions which employed more than 200 teachers; two of them were in rural areas and six in the cities. The distribution of respondents by division size suggests that the results of the study are more likely to be generalizable to

directors or superintendents in small or in medium-sized school divisions than to those in larger and urban divisions.

## Years of Professional Service

Table 3.3 shows the years of professional service respondents gave to education. Over half of the respondents (63.4%) indicated that they had given between 19 and 30 years of service to education. Less than one quarter of the respondents (23.2%) had served education for 31 to 40 years, and 13.4% had between 6 and 18 years of experience in this field. None had served less than five years.

## Number of School Divisions

In Table 3.4 the number of school divisions in which directors rendered service is shown. The largest number of respondents (56.0%) had served in three to five divisions, 19.6% had served in six to eight divisions, and 17% had served in one to two divisions. Only six respondents (7.4%) had served in 9 to 11 divisions.

## Summary

To obtain information relating to the research questions, ideas drawn from the literature, the conceptual framework, and pilot studies were used to develop and refine questionnaires for distribution to directors of education. The four dimensions in regard to the trustworthiness of the study were addressed: validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. The questionnaire was distributed to the 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan; responses were received from 82 (89.13%) of them. Interviews were conducted with three newly

Table 3.3

Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education

| Years | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0-5 | 0 | 0 |
| 6-18 | 11 | 13.4 |
| 19-30 | 52 | 63.4 |
| 31-40 | 19 | 23.2 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

Table 3.4

Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service

| Number of school divisions | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1-2 | 14 | 17.0 |
| 3-5 | 46 | 56.0 |
| 6-8 | 16 | 19.6 |
| 9-11 | 6 | 7.4 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors to probe important issues and to assist in establishing validity. Quantitative data were analyzed by comparisons of means and analysis of relationships. Individual responses on questionnaires and in interviews were analyzed for content and arranged for detailed reporting. Most of the respondents were employed in rural school divisions with fewer than 200 teachers. The majority had given more than 20 years of professional service in three or more school divisions.

# Chapter 4

## Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions

In this chapter are presented the results of the data analyses which relate to the major research questions of the study. The first section is focused on the professional backgrounds of directors of education in Saskatchewan including their total administrative and teaching experience, educational background at the time of first appointment, and involvement in professional development activities. Factors associated with the career decisions of the directors are explored in the second section. The recruitment and selection procedures used by school boards are described in the third section from the perspective of directors of education. The chapter concludes with an examination of the sources of satisfaction identified by directors and an overview of their future career plans.

The analysis of the questionnaire data included an exploration of the relationship of selected variables to both individual characteristics of respondents (such as educational background or age) and to characteristics of the employing school division (such as size or rural/urban location). In most instances a Chi-square test was applied to a cross-tabulation of the variables of interest. Results are reported only for those analyses in which a statistically significant value at the .05 level was observed for the test. Relationships among variables and their implications are discussed in Chapter 7.

## Professional Backgrounds of Directors

A number of specific items in the questionnaire were designed to obtain data on the experiential and educational backgrounds of directors. Results of the analysis of data indicate both similarities and variations in the characteristics of directors of education at the time of the study and at the time of first appointment to the position.

### Administrative and Teaching Experience

The data in Table 4.1 indicate the positions directors had held, the location of the positions, and the age at entry to these positions. More specifically, the table shows the number of respondents who had held various positions and the average number of years these positions were held.

Eighty-one respondents had spent an average of 5.33 years in their present school division as the director. The 24 respondents who had been directors in other divisions in Saskatchewan served an average of 5.60 years in this capacity. Five directors had served an average of 5.20 years in another province; none had served as directors in another country. The average age of respondents at the time they assumed a directorship was 40.83 years.

The 30 respondents who served in the capacity of assistant director served an average of 3.99 years in this position. Twelve respondents served approximately 4.08 years in their current school division, while 14 served an average of 3.64 years in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only four served as assistant directors in other provinces; the average length of time spent in this capacity was 4.25 years. The average age at the time the 30 respondents entered the assistant directorship was 37.22

Table 4.1

Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position

| Position | Years in present division | | Years in other divisions in Saskatchewan | | Years in another province | | Years in another country | | Age at entry | | Total Years in Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | Mean |
| Director of education | 81 | 5.33 | 24 | 5.60 | 5 | 5.20 | 0 | 0 | 77 | 40.83 | 5.38 |
| Assistant director | 12 | 4.08 | 14 | 3.64 | 4 | 4.25 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 37.22 | 3.99 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 4 | 2.25 | 9 | 5.44 | 2 | 5.50 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 39.10 | 4.40 |
| Central office position other than the above | 5 | 7.80 | 7 | 3.14 | 3 | 3.33 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 32.00 | 4.76 |
| Principal | 14 | 9.21 | 53 | 8.00 | 11 | 5.81 | 0 | 0 | 78 | 28.70 | 7.67 |
| Vice/assistant principal | 8 | 3.25 | 54 | 2.78 | 8 | 2.62 | 1 | 2.0 | 71 | 27.30 | 2.66 |
| Secondary teacher | 9 | 7.11 | 42 | 4.64 | 10 | 3.60 | 3 | 5.3 | 64 | 21.74 | 5.17 |
| Elementary teacher | 7 | 4.14 | 38 | 3.57 | 8 | 2.50 | 0 | 0 | 53 | 21.74 | 3.40 |

years.

The 15 respondents who served as superintendents or assistant superintendents served an average of 4.40 years in this capacity. Four respondents served an average of 2.25 years as a superintendent or an assistant superintendent in their present school divisions; nine spent an average of 5.44 years in one of these capacities in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only two respondents spent an average of 5.50 years as superintendents or assistant superintendents in another province. Data on the 15 respondents who held a superintendency indicated that they entered the position at an average age of 39.10 years.

Fifteen respondents indicated that they had served in a central office position in capacities other than those of director, assistant director, superintendent, or assistant superintendent. They had entered the position at an average age of 32.00 years and served 4.76 years in this position. Five of the respondents spent an average of 7.80 years in central office positions in their present division, while seven respondents spent an average of 3.14 years in this capacity in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Of the three respondents who worked in a central office position in another province, the average number of years they spent in this position was 3.33.

The average age of entry to a principalship of the 78 respondents who indicated they held the position was 28.70 years. Respondents indicated that they spent an average of 7.67 years in this capacity. Over two thirds of respondents served an average of 8.00 years as a principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan, whereas only 14 served as a principal in their present school division. An average of 9.21 years was spent in this latter capacity. Eleven respondents served an average of

5.81 years as principal in other provinces, and none served as principal in another country.

Fifty-four respondents had served as vice/assistant principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan for an average of 2.78 years. An average of 3.25 years was spent by eight respondents as vice/assistant principal in their current school division, while eight respondents spent an average of 2.62 years in this capacity in another province. One person spent 2.00 years as vice/assistant principal in another country. Data on the 71 respondents revealed that they spent approximately 2.66 years in this position and that their average age at entry to the position was 27.30 years.

Sixty-four and 53 respondents, respectively, indicated that they had served as elementary and/or secondary teachers for about 21 years. Substantial proportions indicated that they had served as teachers in other divisions in Saskatchewan; 42 respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 4.64 years, and 38 served as elementary teachers an average of 3.57 years. Nine respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 7.11 years and seven as elementary teachers an average of 4.14 years in their current division. With regard to serving as teachers in another province, 10 respondents reported that they spent an average of 3.60 years as secondary teachers and 8 as elementary teachers an average of 2.50 years. Three had spent an average of 5.33 years as secondary teachers in another country, whereas none had taught as elementary teachers in another country. Secondary teachers spent an average of 5.17 years and elementary teachers spent an average of 3.40 years in this capacity.

## Position Prior to Current Appointment

The data in Table 4.2 indicate that over three quarters of the respondents held a principalship, an assistant directorship, or another directorship immediately prior to their current position as director. Equal numbers, namely 22, held another directorship or a principalship, and 19 served as assistant directors. Relatively few held other positions: seven served as superintendents or assistant superintendents, four served in a position with the Department of Education, and two served in a central office position other than those identified above. No respondents moved directly from an assistant/vice-principalship to their current directorship, although six served in other capacities from

Table 4.2

Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Position | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another director of education position | 22 | 26.8 |
| Principal | 22 | 26.8 |
| Assistant director of education | 19 | 23.2 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 7 | 8.5 |
| A Department of Education position | 4 | 4.9 |
| A central office position other than those identified above | 2 | 2.5 |
| Assistant/vice-principal | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 6 | 7.3 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

those identified in the questionnaire. The positions included those of professor, insu ce salesperson, deputy superintendent in Alberta, and staff member of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

As is indicated in Table 4.3, over half of the respondents indicated that the position they held prior to their current one was in another school division in Saskatchewan, while just over one fourth indicated that they had most recently served in the present school division. A small number, eight, had served in a school jurisdiction in another province; none had served outside Canada. Only seven had held positions in locations other than those identified in the questionnaire. Among specific other locations identified were the university and the government.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Location | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another school jurisdiction in Saskatchewan | 45 | 54.9 |
| Present school jurisdiction | 22 | 26.8 |
| A school jurisdiction in another province | 8 | 9.8 |
| A school jurisdiction outside Canada | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 7 | 8.5 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

## Educational Background

The respondents were asked to indicate the degrees or diplomas they held at the time of their first appointment as a director. The results of the responses, which are presented in Table 4.4, indicate that about three quarters of the respondents had held B.Ed. degrees, and that more than half had held other baccalaureate degrees, such as Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. Master's degrees were held by about 60% of the respondents, with nearly all being in Education. Somewhat over one third of the respondents had acquired Diplomas in Education; only six had obtained a Ph.D. or Ed.D. degree.

Table 4.4

Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment

| Degrees/diplomas | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| B.Ed. | 62 | 75.6 |
| B.A., B.Sc., etc. | 48 | 58.5 |
| Master's in Education | 46 | 56.1 |
| Diploma in Education | 30 | 36.6 |
| Ph.D. or Ed.D. | 6 | 7.3 |
| Master's other than in Education | 4 | 4.9 |

A cross-tabulation of three age categories and qualifications of directors shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 indicated some contingencies between these characteristics. Of the 46 respondents holding Master's degrees in Education at time of first appointment, the largest number (20) were between the ages of 45 and 49. Sixteen respondents were under

Table 4.5

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications

| Diploma in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 15 | 9 | 6 | 30 |
| No | 10 | 20 | 22 | 52 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 9.07 p = .01

Table 4.6

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications

| Master's in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 16 | 20 | 10 | 46 |
| No | 9 | 9 | 18 | 36 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 7.31 p = .03

the age of 45, and 10 were 50 years of age or older. Thirty respondents held Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, and of these the largest number (15) were under 45 years of age, 9 were between the ages of 45 and 49, and 6 were 50 years of age or older.

Table 4.7 indicates a cross-tabulation of division size and qualifications of directors which indicated some contingencies. Of the 30 respondents holding Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, 25 were located in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers, and 5 were in divisions employing more than 101 teachers.

Table 4.7

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors

| | Division size | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diploma in education | -101 teachers f | 101+ teachers f | f |
| Yes | 25 | 5 | 30 |
| No | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| Total | 52 | 30 | 82 |

Chi-square = 6.79 p = .01

The results of these cross-tabulations indicate that younger directors were more likely to hold a Diploma at the time of first appointment and to be employed in smaller divisions; older directors were more likely to hold a Master's degree and to be employed in larger divisions.

Table 4.8 indicates that the major subject area of credit courses beyond the bachelor's level at the time of the first appointment to a directorship was in administration or supervision, with about 87% of respondents falling into this category. Forty percent of respondents took credit courses in the area of curriculum studies, and nearly 20% studied in the areas of educational foundations, and the same number studied in other educational areas. Only 19 respondents identified guidance and counselling or credit courses in a discipline other than education.

Table 4.8

Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment

| Subject area | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Administration or supervision | 71 | 86.6 |
| Curriculum studies | 33 | 40.2 |
| Educational foundations | 16 | 19.5 |
| Other educational area | 16 | 19.5 |
| Guidance and counselling | 11 | 13.4 |
| Discipline other than education | 8 | 9.8 |

Results of responses to the question about formal preparation in educational administration at the time of first appointment are presented in Table 4.9. One half of the directors indicated that had a specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program at the time of first appointment. About 15 percent of respondents had courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level, and the same

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# PREPARATION, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND CAREER PATTERNS OF DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION IN SASKATCHEWAN

by

PAULETTE VAN DER LINDE

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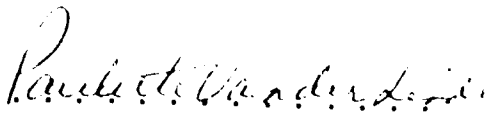
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Preparation, Recruitment, Selection, and Career Patterns of Directors of Education in Saskatchewan" submitted by Paulette Van der Linde in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

E. Miklos, Supervisor

E. J. Ingram

L. J. LaRocque

K. L. Ward

M. P. Browne

K. A. Wilson, External Examiner

Date: 10 October 1989

## Abstract

The focus of this study was the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Questionnaires were distributed to 89 directors of education; the response rate was 89%. Interviews were conducted with three newly appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors. Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative techniques were used to analyze interview data.

The careers of the majority of directors fell into four patterns, with entry to the directorship being primarily from a principalship. The most common career pattern of directors included the positions of teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and director. Directors gained most of their experience in divisions other than the one in which they were currently employed. School boards tended to select "outsiders" when making appointments to a directorship. Four typologies developed in this study--based on organizational mobility, geographic mobility, and age/experience--reflected some differences in selected characteristics of directors and their employing school divisions.

At the time of first appointment, directors exceeded the prescribed academic requirements. They attached considerable importance to self-assessment of abilities and confidence in those abilities as a result of formal studies and successful work experiences as factors which influenced the decision to apply for a directorship. Newspaper advertisements were the major means by which applicants became aware of vacant positions. Selection process elements consisted of letters of

application, reference checks, short lists, and interviews. Regional directors made important contributions to the recruitment and selection procedures. Selection criteria beyond basic requirements tended to focus on managerial skills and interpersonal relationships. The major selection criterion related to the perceived compatibility between the applicant and board members.

Directors generally experienced satisfaction with their positions and regarded the opportunity to influence education as the most satisfying aspect of their work. Interpersonal relationships were the source of the most satisfaction as well as of the greatest frustration for directors. When changing positions, directors were influenced more by the attractiveness of the new directorship than by undesirable characteristics of the former position.

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## Table of Contents


| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Introduction | 1 |
| | Research Problem | 2 |
| | Significance of the Study | 3 |
| | Conceptual Framework | 5 |
| | Assumptions | 9 |
| | Delimitations and Limitations | 10 |
| | Definition of Terms | 10 |
| | Organization of the Report | 11 |
| 2. | Review of Related Literature | 12 |
| | Superintendents as Educational Leaders | 12 |
| | Socialization | 16 |
| | Preparation | 23 |
| | Recruitment | 26 |
| | Selection | 28 |
| | Career Patterns | 31 |
| | Demands of the Superintendency | 33 |
| | Summary | 39 |
| 3. | Research Methodology | 41 |
| | Research Design | 41 |
| | Development of the Questionnaire | 43 |
| | Conceptual Basis | 43 |
| | Nature of Questionnaire Items | 45 |
| | Preliminary Review of Questionnaire | 50 |
| | Pilot Test | 51 |

Chapter

Page

Interview Procedures . . . . . 52

Selection of Participants . . . . . 53

Development of the Interview Schedules . . . . . 53

Trustworthiness Considerations . . . . . 54

Validity . . . . . 55

Reliability . . . . . 56

Objectivity . . . . . 57

Generalizability . . . . . 57

Data Collection . . . . . 58

Distribution and Return of Questionnaires . . . . . 59

Collecting Interview Data . . . . . 59

Data Analysis . . . . . 60

Analysis of Questionnaire Data . . . . . 60

Analysis of Interview Data . . . . . 61

Characteristics of Respondents . . . . . 62

Age and Sex . . . . . 62

Division Size and Type . . . . . 63

Years of Professional Service . . . . . 65

Number of School Divisions . . . . . 65

Summary . . . . . 65

4. Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions . . . 68

Professional Backgrounds of Directors . . . . . 69

Administrative and Teaching Experience . . . . . 69

Position Prior to Current Appointment . . . . . 73

Educational Background . . . . . 75

Chapter


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Professional Development Activities | 79 |
| Factors Related to Career Decisions | 82 |
| Administrative Career Decision | 82 |
| Directorship Career Decision | 84 |
| Recruitment and Selection | 88 |
| Awareness and Application | 88 |
| Selection Processes | 93 |
| Selection Criteria | 97 |
| Satisfaction and Stress | 101 |
| Sources of Satisfaction | 102 |
| Helping others | 10 |
| Opportunity to influence education | 103 |
| Working with people | 104 |
| Top-level administration | 104 |
| Sources of Stress | 105 |
| People | 10 |
| Resources | 10 |
| Nature of the role | 10 |
| Mobility and Career Plans | 10 |
| Factors Influencing Mobility | 10 |
| Future Career Plans | 11 |
| Summary | 11 |
| 5. Career Patterns and Career Typologies of Director of Education | 11 |
| Career Patterns | 11 |
| Career Typologies | 11 |

Chapter

Page

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 122

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 129

Entry Age and Directorship Experience Typology . . 137

Summary . . . . . 143

6. Case Studies of Selection of Directors . . . . . 146

Prairieland School Division . . . . . 147

Director's Perspective . . . . . 147

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 149

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 151

Wild Grass School Division . . . . . 154

Director's Perspective . . . . . 155

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 157

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 160

Rolling Hills School Division . . . . . 163

Director's Perspective . . . . . 163

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 166

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 168

Similarities and Differences in Selection Processes . . 170

Advertising the Position . . . . . 171

Application Practices . . . . . 171

Shortlisting . . . . . 172

Preparing for the Interview . . . . . 173

Composition of the Interview Panel . . . . . 174

The Interview . . . . . 174

Selection Decision . . . . . 178

Chapter

Page

Issues and Concerns . . . . . 180

Career Paths . . . . . 180

Role of the Regional Director . . . . . 182

Summary . . . . . 184

7. Summary, Discussion, and Implications . . . . . 186

Overview of the Study . . . . . 186

Purpose and Research Questions . . . . . 186

Rationale . . . . . 187

Conceptual Framework . . . . . 188

Research Methodology . . . . . 188

Summary of Questionnaire Findings . . . . . 189

Academic and Professional Qualifications . . . . . 190

Factors Influencing Pursuit of an Administrative Career . . . . . 190

Application Procedures . . . . . 191

Recruitment and Selection . . . . . 192

Satisfactions in Position . . . . . 193

Career Patterns . . . . . 194

Future Career Plans . . . . . 195

Summary of Case Studies . . . . . 196

Typologies of Directors . . . . . 198

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 198

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 199

Age/Experience Typology . . . . . 201

Discussion of Findings . . . . . 202

Conclusions . . . . . 203

Chapter

Page

Implications . . . . . 216

Implications for Theory . . . . . 216

Implications for Research . . . . . 218

Implications for Practice . . . . . 219

Career paths . . . . . 219

Selection criteria . . . . . 220

Role of regional directors . . . . . 220

Role of director . . . . . 221

Recruitment of women directors . . . . . 221

References . . . . . 222

Appendices

A. Questionnaire for Directors of Education . . . . . 232

B. Interviews of Recently Appointed Directors, Board Chairpersons, and Regional Directors . . . . . 245

C. Correspondence . . . . . 253

## List of Tables


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories | 63 |
| 3.2 | Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division | 64 |
| 3.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education | 66 |
| 3.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service | 66 |
| 4.1 | Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position | 70 |
| 4.2 | Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 73 |
| 4.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 74 |
| 4.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment | 75 |
| 4.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.7 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors | 77 |
| 4.8 | Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment | 78 |
| 4.9 | Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Formal Study/Preparation in Educational Administration or Supervision at Time of First Appointment | 79 |
| 4.10 | Mean Number of Memberships and Activities in Which Respondents Were Involved Prior to First Appointment as Director | 80 |
| 4.11 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors Influencing Decision to Pursue an Administrative Career | 83 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.12 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Importance of Mentors in Pursuing an Administrative Career . . . . . | 85 |
| 4.13 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors in Deciding to Pursue a Directorship . . . . . | 85 |
| 4.14 | Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Awareness of Availability of Current Position . . . . . | 89 |
| 4.15 | Frequency of Mention of Various Steps Taken in Applying for the First Directorship . . . . . | 90 |
| 4.16 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Casual Inquiries Regarding the Preferred Management Style of the Director Prior to First Application . . . . . | 92 |
| 4.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Having Informal Discussions with the Regional Director Prior to First Application . . . . . | 92 |
| 4.18 | Frequency of Mention of Elements Present in the Selection Process for the First Directorship . . . . . | 93 |
| 4.19 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Advertising the Position Provincially . . . . . | 94 |
| 4.20 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Checking of References . . . . . | 95 |
| 4.21 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Establishing a Short-List . . . . . | 95 |
| 4.22 | Frequency of Mention of Specific Members of the Interview Panel for the First Directorship . . . . . | 96 |
| 4.23 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Regional Director as Member of the Interview Panel . . . . . | 98 |
| 4.24 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with the Former Director of Education as Member of the Interview Panel . . | 98 |
| 4.25 | Mean Ratings of Importance of Characteristics of Applicants as Criteria in the Selection Process . . . . . | 99 |
| 4.26 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Importance of Educational Qualifications in Director Selection . . . . | 101 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.27 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Attracting Directors to Current Position . . . . . | 108 |
| 4.28 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 109 |
| 4.29 | Cross-Tabulation of Size of Division with Importance of Professional Challenge as a Factor in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 110 |
| 4.30 | Distribution of Respondents by Future Plans . . . . . | 111 |
| 4.31 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Future Plans . . | 112 |
| 4.32 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of Years in Which They Are Likely to Leave the Directorship . . . . . | 113 |
| 4.33 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Years to Retirement or Career Change . . . . . | 114 |
| 5.1 | Distribution of Directors by Career Patterns . . . . . | 118 |
| 5.2 | Distribution of Career Patterns by Age, Location, Division Size, and Director Experience . . . . . | 119 |
| 5.3 | Cross-Tabulations of Career Patterns With Rating of Importance of Prestige/Status in Seeking a Directorship . . | 121 |
| 5.4 | Distributions of Geographic Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 123 |
| 5.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Diploma at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 126 |
| 5.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Educational Qualifications at Time of First Appointment . . | 127 |
| 5.7 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by the Geographic Mobility Type . . . . . | 129 |
| 5.8 | Distributions of Organizational Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 131 |
| 5.9 | Cross-Tabulation of Career Patterns with Organizational Mobility Types . . . . . | 133 |
| 5.10 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Doctorate at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 5.11 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Credit Courses in Other Disciplines at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |
| 5.12 | Analysis of Variance Results of Compatibility with the Social and Educational Context as Criterion in Director Selection by the Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 136 |
| 5.13 | Analysis of Variance Results of Seniority as a Criterion in the Selection Process by Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 137 |
| 5.14 | Distributions of Director Age/Experience Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 139 |
| 5.15 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types . . . . . | 141 |
| 5.16 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by Director Age at Entry/Experience Types . . . . . | 142 |
| 5.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types with Future Plans . . . . . | 144 |

## List of Figures


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Organizational structures and individual characteristics . . . . . | 6 |
| 1.2 | Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career . . . . . | 8 |
| 5.1 | Geographic mobility typology . . . . . | 124 |
| 5.2 | Organizational mobility typology . . . . . | 130 |
| 5.3 | Directorship entry age/experience typology . . . . . | 138 |

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

A school superintendent, or director of education, occupies the highest position in the administration of education at the local level; consequently, persons who hold this position are strategically placed in the formal organization of an educational system. The superintendent is ultimately responsible to the board for the education that is provided to the students in the jurisdiction. Coordinating the activities of numerous individuals and groups in achieving the objective of educating children is left to the administrator who holds this senior executive position.

As the chief educational administrator in a school jurisdiction, a superintendent performs many tasks, exerts considerable influence, and has the potential to make a significant difference in the quality of education. Fulfilling these numerous and varied responsibilities requires a competent person. Societal changes and contemporary issues, such as changing social values, increasing teacher professionalism, continuing financial constraints, and ever more complex political conditions influence the role of an educational leader. In turn, effective leadership is contingent upon possession of specific characteristics and skills. Factors such as these serve to underline the importance of the selection of persons who will be able to provide effective leadership under demanding circumstances. A greater understanding of how superintendents prepare for the position, how they are recruited and selected, and what their career patterns are has the potential to contribute to improved practice in this important area.

## Research Problem

The central research question for this study was, "What are the characteristics of the processes through which the careers of directors of education in Saskatchewan unfold?" More specifically, the study focused on the academic and professional backgrounds of directors, the factors which influence them to seek a directorship, and the selection practices of school boards.

The following questions guided the development of the study:

1. What are the academic and professional qualifications of directors of education?
2. What factors influence directors of education to pursue an administrative career?
3. What steps do candidates take in applying for a director of education position?
4. What procedures do boards follow in recruiting and selecting for the director of education position?
5. What factors contribute to mobility among directors of education?
6. What are the sources of satisfaction and of stress in the director of education position?
7. What are the future career plans of directors of education?
8. What is the general nature of career patterns of directors of education?

Answers to these and related questions were sought primarily through a questionnaire survey of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Additional insights were derived from case studies of three selection processes involving interviews with the successful applicants, the board chairpersons, and regional directors of education.

## Significance of the Study

Studies of the superintendency have been conducted in relation to job characteristics, incumbent characteristics, and career mobility. Other studies, focusing on school board attitudes and community issues, have attempted to determine some predictors of turnover of superintendents. However, only limited research has addressed the issue of access to the superintendency. According to Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987), "the whole question of career trajectories and the path to supervisory office status is one which merits much more consideration than it is apparently given" (p. 26). Further to this, Miklos (1988) indicates that studies which "would yield information . . . on relationships among variables associated with processes such as recruitment, selection, appointment, and career development . . . would contribute to advancing basic understandings and to developing new conceptualizations of the processes through which people become administrators" (p. 69).

Leadership in education is receiving increased attention. Since the superintendent is considered to be the educational leader of a school jurisdiction, examination of the factors that contribute to entry into this position is important in order that the most suitable person can be hired and that the best possible leadership can be provided in educational settings. "As of the mid-1980s, the least amount of systematic study has gone to the interaction of personal and situational variables as a source of explanation, the very area that offers most hope for gaining clearer understanding of why administrators do what they do" (Boyan, 1988, p. 93). The results of this study may provide some insight into how people move into leadership positions as well as into the

personal and situational variables which are associated with administrator mobility.

Substantial numbers of directors of education in Saskatchewan are retiring or are nearing retirement. In 1987-88, seven directors of education in that province retired from the position, some of whom took early retirement. In addition, five others left the position for other reasons. Two directors of education retired in December, 1988, and several more in June, 1989. The retirement of directors of education indicates that many school boards in Saskatchewan will soon be selecting new directors of education. The results of this study may give some insights into the characteristics of the newly appointed directors of education, as well as the preparation, selection, and recruitment which occurred prior to the appointments.

Although explicit procedures or policies may be lacking, boards appear to be giving increased attention to selection. Increasingly, school boards are realizing the importance of their choice of superintendent; however, the literature indicates that they may give more attention to personal characteristics than they do to the skills the applicant possesses (Salley, 1979). The results of this study have the potential to assist boards in evaluating their selection and recruitment procedures. In addition, the study may also serve to encourage those aspiring to the position of director of education by indicating the qualifications, preparation, and career patterns which lead to an appointment, as well as the recruitment and selection procedures which presently exist in Saskatchewan school jurisdictions.

## Conceptual Framework

The study of the director of education, which is the subject of this report, was based, in part, on a conceptualization of status attainment and represents an application of a particular theory concerning structures of the corporate careers of men and women (Kanter, 1977). According to this theory, access to top management positions in public education, such as the superintendency, is influenced by an interaction of individual characteristics or actions and organizational structures.

The theorizing suggests that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout a person's work history. Socialization processes, along with preparation for various positions and the degree of fulfillment afforded by the positions, help to determine the career path. Ultimately, organizational structures such as recruitment and selection procedures determine the direction of a person's career. In addition, those who are selected for superintendencies are likely to evidence in their backgrounds specialized academic training, extraordinary visibility, specific work experiences, and strong alliances in their careers.

Figure 1.1 indicates that as a person proceeds along a path from pre-administrative positions to administrative positions and then to director positions, individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures interact in the formation of a career. An individual's career path is contingent upon, and is continually influenced by, the process of socialization which affects all stages of a career. The degree of fulfillment with a position determines whether or not the individual will aspire to another position. Preparation for administration begins just prior to acquiring one's first administrative position, continues through

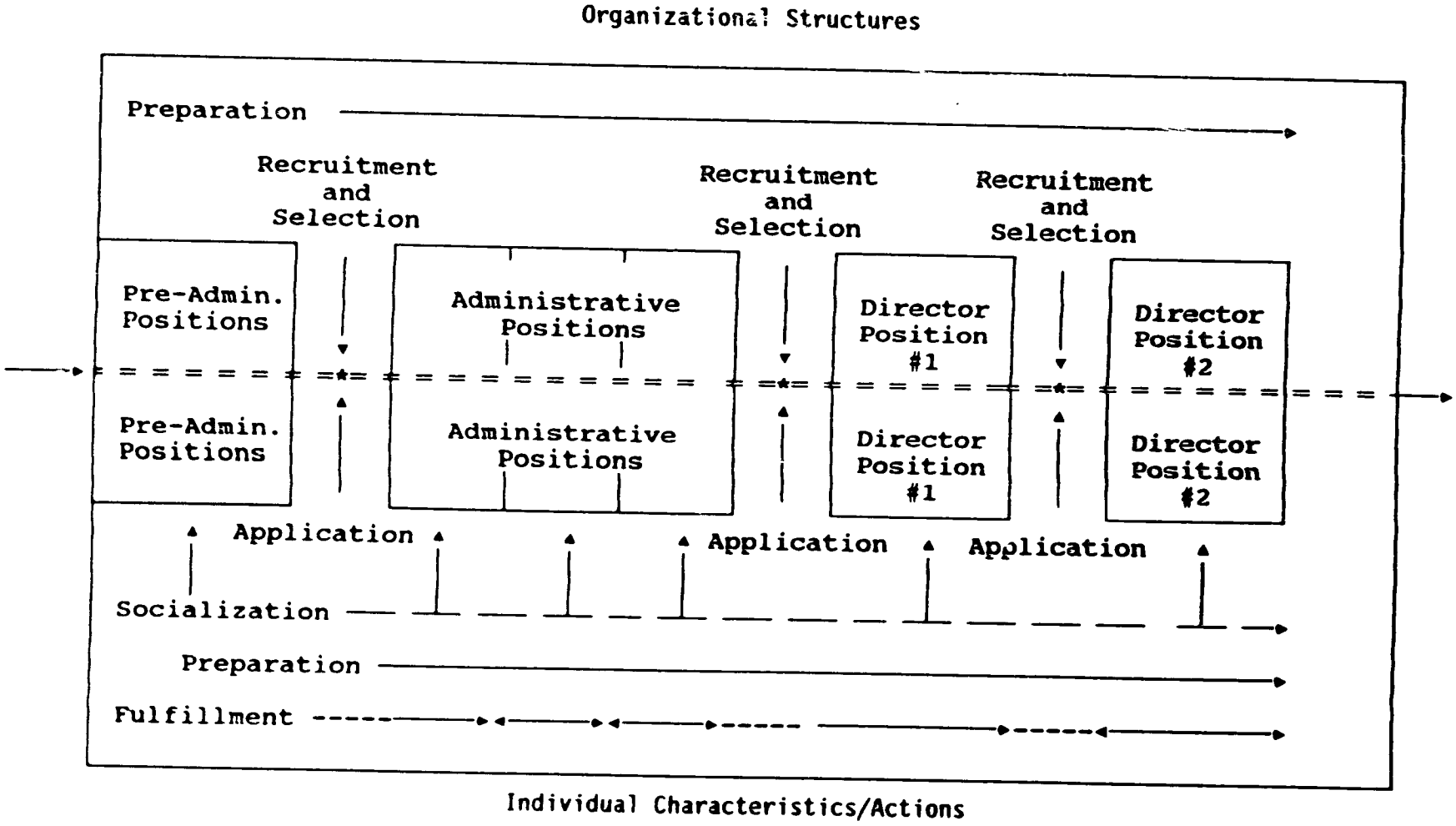



Figure 1.1. Organizational structures and individual characteristics

one's career, and reflects both individual actions, since the individual takes the initiative, and organizational structures, as many elements of preparation are structured by the organization. When an individual applies for a position, the interaction with the organizational structures of the recruitment and selection processes determine whether the individual actually will acquire the position and subsequently move along the career path.

In Figure 1.2 are identified the various elements of an individual's characteristics or actions and the organizational structures whi interact to influence a director of education career. The figure also serves to clarify the prior influences and present circumstances which directly affect the development of a director's career.

Individual actions and background characteristics which are likely to be related to the career of a director of education include: formal training, professional experiences and service, age, support from others, personal goals and confidence, and experience and opportunities in youth. As well, inquiries and discussions in regard to a specific position, coupled with the actual application and conduct at the interview, may relate directly to attaining an administrative position.

Structures such as the actual organization of the school division in regard to the hierarchy of positions, the composition of the board, the urban or rural location, the philosophy and policies of the board (particularly in regard to selection and recruitment procedures), and the type and quantity of professional development activities and preparation programs organizations offer their members impact upon the careers of directors of education. In addition, the frequency of turnover of incumbents relative to the availability of positions and other employment

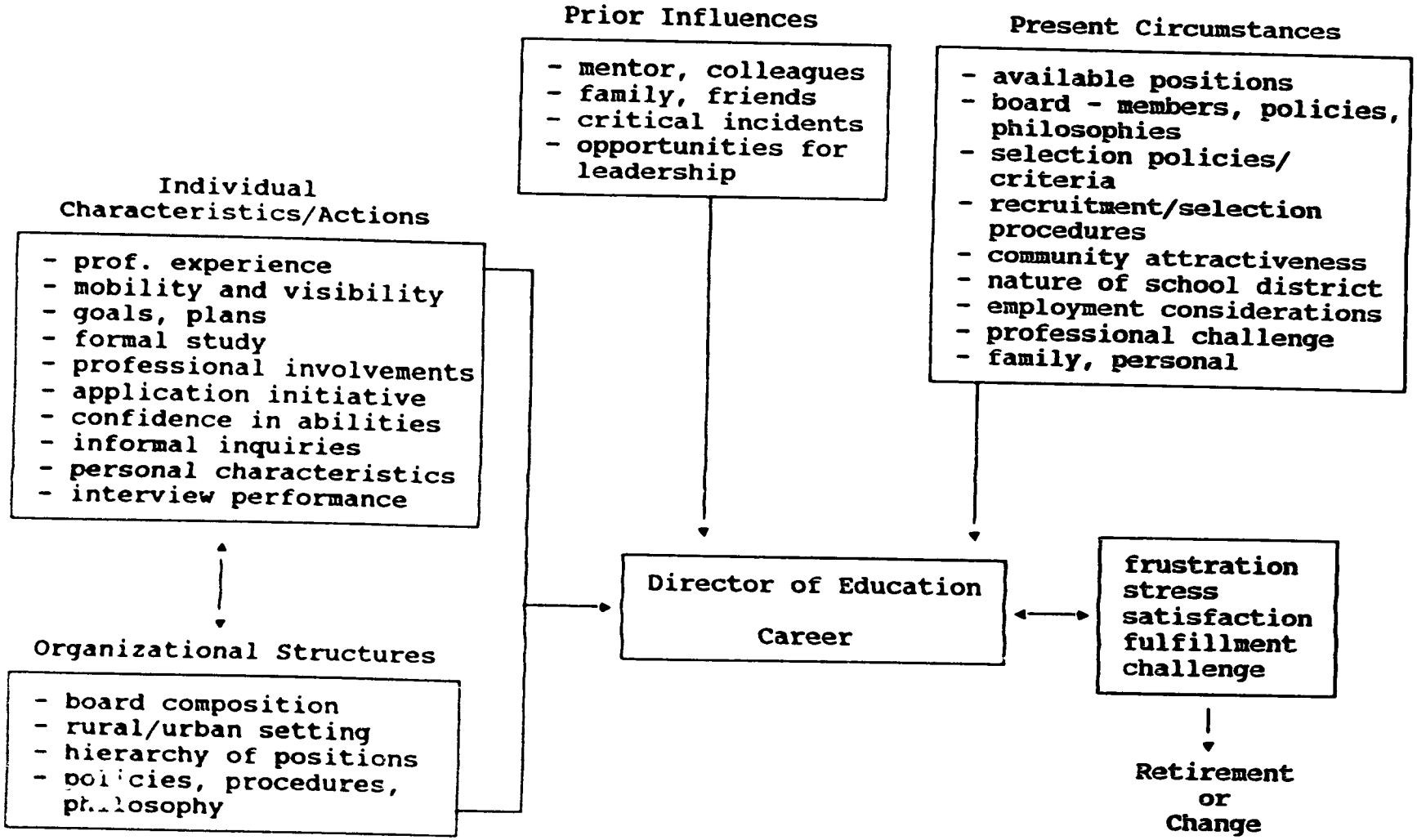



Figure 1.2. Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career

considerations add to this dimension.

The variables identified in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, are considered to be in a state of interaction. Each directly affects and is contingent upon others; none exists in isolation. The socialization processes, personal characteristics, preparation, and self-fulfillment of an individual, coupled with various organizational structures and opportunities, serve to influence the career of an administrator. The actions of individuals who have served in a specific organization, along with the structures that existed at the time, assist in shaping that particular organization. These factors, in turn, affect the current situation.

The variables which were considered to be of paramount importance in this study were the individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures which relate directly to preparation, socialization, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of administrators. In particular, this study focused on factors such as experience, mobility, formal study, professional involvements, mentors, critical incidents, application procedures, and the actual board decision.

## Assumptions

A general assumption underlying this study was that the director of education has a significant impact on education and, therefore, that the processes of acquiring a directorship are important to educational leadership. The research base for assessing the relative merits of various preparation and selection processes is not well developed. Consequently, there is no ready way to assess whether or not the most capable educational leaders are being selected. A plausible assumption is that the most effective leaders are not likely to be selected if the

practices are deficient or questionable; that is, if they are inconsistent with rational procedures. Although following practices which are consistent with current thought on these processes does not guarantee that the best candidates will be selected, the probability of making sound selection decisions is likely to be increased.

Another assumption was that directors are sufficiently aware of the processes relating to preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns to serve as a valid source of data. The search for patterns assumed that regularities exist in the position of director of education in spite of individual variations.

## Delimitations and Limitations

The study was delimited to examining directors of education in Saskatchewan employed at the time of data collection and was confined to their perceptions and understandings during the specific period as indicated by results of a questionnaire survey and interviews.

A limitation of the study was the researcher's assumption that perceptions of respondents were accurate and reflected reality. In addition, the results are applicable only to the population which was surveyed; generalizations to similar positions in other educational systems should be made with caution.

## Definition of Terms

**Directors of education** are the chief executive officers of school divisions in the province of Saskatchewan appointed by school boards.

**Regional directors** are the appointed field representatives of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

**School division** is the basic unit of educational governance in the

province of Saskatchewan, which has a specified boundary and is governed by an elected board.

**Central office position** is one occupied by persons employed in capacities of assistant director, superintendent, assistant superintendent, supervisor, and consultant.

**Preparation** is the formal study and experience candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions.

**Recruitment** is the process through which candidates become aware of director of education vacancies and the factors which encourage them to apply for this position.

**Selection** is the process by which directors of education are appointed to a specific position.

**Career** refers generally to an area of professional life and specifically to professional practice in the field of education.

**Career patterns** are the progressions from one job/position to another in the career of a person.

## Organization of the Report

In the first chapter, the research problem was defined and the conceptual basis for the study was developed. The literature on administrator preparation, socialization, selection, and careers is reviewed in the second chapter. Chapter 3 presents the description of the research methodology. Descriptive information on characteristics of directors of education is presented in Chapter 4, while career patterns are described in Chapter 5. Three case studies of selection are developed in Chapter 6. The report concludes with a summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

## Review of Related Literature

The review of the literature focused on the current writings in the area of educational leadership and career patterns as they relate to socialization and preparation for educational administrative positions as well as to the recruitment and selection of individuals for leadership positions. Seven major topics are developed in this chapter: educational leadership, socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, career patterns, and demands of the superintendency.

### Superintendents as Educational Leaders

Research into both leadership and the roles of administrators is highly important for the field of educational administration. However, Immergart (1988) contends that "it can safely be concluded that there has not been very much priority for research in the educational literature on leadership and leader behavior . . . [and that studies of this nature] appear to be dwindling in number, not increasing" (p. 267). He further states that "studies of educational leaders and investigations by those in the field have for the most part corroborated and replicated other inquiry . . . and tend to mirror other work and to lag behind the empirical, conceptual, and methodological advances realized elsewhere" (p. 267). In wondering why studies of educational leadership have failed to attract greater interest on the part of researchers, Burlingame (1973) suggests that "leaders in education have been lesser [persons] attempting to maintain schools. . . . They are not on the frontier, reconnoitering virgin territory" (p. 64).

Current research has tended to focus on the dynamics of leader-follower/superordinate-subordinate relations and, as a result, has paid little attention to the possible effects organizational and societal contexts might have on leadership (Pitner & Ogawa, 1981, p. 61). Pitner and Ogawa contend that societal structures and preference both serve as the raw materials of superintendents' work and demarcate the boundaries within which superintendents operate. They further state that

> superintendents play an important leadership role in translating these societal preferences into school policies and practices. . . . they monitor their environments to obtain readings of public opinion. Such readings identify issues to which schools must respond and detect conditions which will enable superintendents to move their organizations in directions of their own choosing. (p. 61)

This suggests that superintendents as leaders structure and elicit followers' activities as well as work closely with external elements to legitimize organizational activities and outcomes.

Weick (1978) notes that a peculiarly "macho" connotation has been attached to the notion of leadership and that this has inhibited the recognition of other important dimensions. He provides an alternative by suggesting that it might be useful to view leaders as media. Good media, he suggests, have three characteristics: (1) multiple elements, (2) independence of elements, and (3) external constraints of elements (p. 7). From this perspective a superintendent as a good leader would be one who is responsive to and reflective of external influences. Weick refers to this type of leadership as "docile leadership," and he suggests that docility is a major aspect of leadership in formal organizations.

Wallace (1985) recognizes that considerable literature exists in regard to leadership per se and that various approaches to leadership studies have been utilized:

> The "trait approach" emphasizes the personal qualities of leaders and seeks to identify the traits and skills that contribute to leadership success. The "power-influence approach" attempts to explain leader effectiveness in terms of the source and amount of leader power and manner in which it is exercised. The "behavior approach" seeks to identify the pattern of behaviors and activities that are characteristic of effective leaders. Situational theories cut across the other three approaches and emphasize how aspects of the leadership situation determine what traits, forms of influence, or patterns of behavior are essential for leadership effectiveness.

However, he contends that "virtually no research literature exists on the impact of the role of the superintendent as educational leader" (p. 6). He defines educational leadership as "the process of actively influencing others to establish and use mutually agreed upon methods to achieve desired outcomes" (p. 6) and says that the superintendent, who is the instructional leader of the district, is the one who must exert vigorous leadership to improve instructional effectiveness and promote standards of excellence in the schools. He further contends that educational leaders use available resources to analyze needs; develop, implement, and evaluate plans to achieve educational goals and employ a process of reciprocal leadership; promote a framework of effective teaching and learning; foster instructional effectiveness; recognize, encourage, and support the emergence of instructional leadership in staff; and monitor the instructional program (pp. 6-7).

A study by Cymbol (1986) of locally appointed superintendents of schools in Alberta revealed that superintendents are perceived and expected to perform a wide range of tasks. Both trustees and superintendents attach great significance to the educational leader role which involves working with the professional staff in providing high quality education to students.

Leadership development has been approached in the literature in a variety of ways, one of the most common being from the psychological theory through the trait approach, which focuses on the characteristics of effective leaders. This approach, which is reflected in the work of Fiedler (1971), has been closely associated with the selection of personnel for leadership positions and emphasizes the personality traits, the system of values, and the life style of leaders. One of the problems with this approach is that there is little agreement with regard to which traits should be included and which should be excluded. "The traits of intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, and high energy/activity level are most often mentioned and are commonly agreed on across reviewers" (Immergart, 1988, p. 261).

Bennis and Nanus (1985) conducted in-depth interviews with 90 leaders in a range of public and private organizations in order to identify the skills and strategies used by known effective leaders. These included (1) attention through vision--articulating an appropriate vision of the future; (2) meaning through communication--influencing and organizing meaning for the members of the organization; (3) trust through positioning--making themselves known and trusted; and (4) deployment of self--knowing one's strengths, developing those strengths, and discerning the "fit between one's strengths and weaknesses and the organization's needs" (p. 61). Further, Bennis and Nanus contend that effective leaders have five key skills: (1) the ability to accept people as they are; (2) the capacity to approach relationships and problems in terms of the present rather than the past; (3) the ability to treat those who are close to us with the same courteous attention as that extended to strangers; (4) the ability to trust others even if the risk is great; and

(5) the ability to do without constant approval and recognition from others (pp. 66-67).

The question of "leadership for what" is addressed by Bennis and Nanus (1985) in that their view is empowerment of organizational members "to translate intention into reality and sustain it" (p. 80), which they feel can be done via four components: (1) significance--being in the center of doing something valuable; (2) competence--learning new skills; (3) community--a sense of reliance on one another; and (4) enjoyment--satisfaction and fun (p. 80).

Leavitt (1986) stresses the need for three capacities to be present in effective leaders: pathfinding (vision), problem solving, and implementing. In talking about the aesthetics of leadership, Duke (1986) identifies four concepts: direction, engagement, fit, and originality. Paterson, Purkey, and Parker (1986) develop a framework for educational leadership which consists of vision building, strategic planning, and realization. They also stress the critical importance of understanding and analyzing the environment, patience, and persistence in strategic planning and communication skills.

The processes through which leadership skills are developed and through which individuals with the requisite skills move into administrative positions are as significant as possessing the relevant capabilities.

## Socialization

Becoming an administrator involves a process of "being socialized into thinking and behaving in particuar ways in an organizational context. Socialization is a process that . . . extends through various

stages of formal preparation and employment" (Miklos, 1988, p 53). Ortiz (1978) states:

> Socialization within a profession occurs as a result of certain experiences and training that an individual undergoes. Within education, the traditional roles into which individuals may be socialized are teaching and administration. Both of these contain within them certain career patterns that are a result of further socialization. (p. 125)

Little attention has been paid in the literature to the socialization of managers or to the organizational processes by which commitment is inculcated. However, a study by Buchanan (1974) of 279 business and government managers in eight large organizations yielded some insights into organizational commitment and socialization experiences. The results of the study were generally consistent with previous research findings which identified three stages of experiences: Stage 1--the first year: Experiences include role clarity, peer group cohesion, group attitudes toward the organization, expectations realization, reality shock, first-year job challenge, and loyalty conflicts; Stage 2--the second through fourth year: Experiences include personal importance, self-image reinforcement, fear of failure, organizational commitment norms, and work commitment norms; Stage 3--the fifth year and beyond: The major experience is organizational dependability. Organizational efforts to influence managers at this stage involve the maintenance or alteration of existing attitudes rather than the molding of new ones. The results of the findings further revealed that the influence potential of particular experiences varies significantly with tenure.

A model that conceptualizes the socialization process was developed by Feldman (1976). This model identifies three stages of the

socialization process and the activities that indicate progress through socialization: (1) Anticipatory socialization encompasses all the learning that occurs before the recruit enters the organization. The main activities at this stage are forming expectations about jobs and making decisions about employment; (2) Accommodation is the period in which the individual sees what the organization is actually like and attempts to become a participating member. The main activities at this stage are learning new tasks, establishing new relationships, clarifying roles, and evaluating progress; and (3) Role management is the stage at which individuals mediate the conflicts between their work and other groups which may place demands on them. Four variables are identified as possible outcomes of socialization: general satisfaction, mutual influence, internal work motivation, and job involvement. Feldman concludes:

> The results suggest an analogy to Herzberg's distinction between hygiene and motivator variables. . . . they are correlated positively with indicators of the quality of the work environment rather than the quality of the work itself. The nature of the work itself acts more as a motivator variable and is more strongly associated with employers' needs to self-actualize and to find self-realization through work. (p. 450)

In regard to when the process of socialization begins, Greenfield (1977) suggests that this process starts in the period of candidacy, although Ortiz (1982) contends that this process begins during the period of teaching. "Research also confirms that the process begins in early home life and continues through all levels of schooling" (Miklos, 1988, p. 68). Falk and Cosby (1974) contend that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout one's work history. Parental backgrounds, socialization in the family and the community,

academic performance, and the influence of significant others are important variables in this development.

Greenfield (1977), in a longitudinal study of teachers who were candidates for public school administrative appointment, examined the process of new-role entry. He noted the special nature of socialization in education as it is evidenced in the entire life cycle of educational personnel. From the time individuals enter school as students until they begin teaching and gain administrative appointment, they are exposed to the influence of the group which they eventually join. It is, therefore, difficult to introduce new modes of behavior under such circumstances. The findings indicate that socialization into adult roles is conditioned by the situationally specific behavior of individuals in interpersonal interaction--largely interaction involving members of the reference group to which they aspire. In Greenfield's study, candidates' behavior was a function of (1) the richness of the interpersonal repertoire, and (2) contextual properties of the situation itself (p. 191).

Various studies have been conducted in regard to female administrators in educational administration. In a study which compared male and female "portraits," Edson (1980) found that women were confident in their abilities to do the job and believed they could do the job better than most current administrators. This belief enabled them to pursue principalships despite many obstacles.

A study of elementary principals in Alabama (Moracco, 1982) revealed that the perceptions and behaviors of male and female principals have become more similar over the last 20 years. These results suggest that gender is not a valid predictor of the kind of principal a person will be and should not be used as a criterion for selection.

In regard to advancement of women in administration, a current study of 232 administrators of home economics units was conducted by Slimmer (1984). The most helpful source responsible for locating their current position was identified as direct personal application, while the second was personal friends. In obtaining their present work position, work experience, academic background, and personal recommendations were identified as important factors. Over one half of the respondents had a mentor and indicated that they obtained their present position by "being in the right place at the right time," with many of them indicating that they had placed themselves in the right place. Findings from this study also revealed that women had a high degree of satisfaction with their academic preparation, supportive relationships, goals for career aspirations, and coping skills.

In an examination of factors which influence the promotion of women to the principalship in Arizona, the results of a study by Nelson (1982) revealed that women perceived receiving less encouragement from university professors than men, that women felt membership in associations was necessary to promotion, that more women than men had participated in a district training program, and that there was a significant difference in backgrounds and personal characteristics between men and women.

A process for successful entry to public elementary administration for women was identified in a study by Sandorff (1980). Promotional socialization, the term he uses to refer to the process, consists of a pre-socialization phase where the prospect is identified through exceptional teaching and organizational and interpersonal skills. Four socialization phases follow: a "showcasing" of the prospect's

instructional expertise; a sponsor's invitation to administrative advancement; the sponsor's adoption of the now-aspiring candidate; and an intensified socialization period as assistant principal, whereby adherence to the norms and behaviors of the administrator group is especially stressed. In addition, Sandorff points out that administration is seen as foreign to the educational attitudes of most female teachers because they generally perceive their jobs as avocations and need to be "converted" to administration.

The results of a study of role modeling in socialization (Weiss, 1977) revealed that individuals develop work behavior patterns by observing and modeling the behavior of others. The choice of behavior model is based partially on the social characteristics of potential models interacting with the personality of the observer. "The results of this study suggest that modeling is a mechanism for the socialization of organizational behaviors" (p. 103). The nature of this mechanism is "a complex interaction of model characteristics, observer characteristics, and certain intervening motivational cognitions" (p. 103).

In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models are included in the literature on socialization. The counsel of influential people can be a significant career contingency. Valverde (1974, 1975) described the value of sponsorship, which involved identifying a protege and influencing the protege's attitudes in ways to bring them into conformity with those of the sponsor. Dickson (1983) reported results of a study that showed that mentors were influential in accelerating the rate of career advancement in high school principalships.

The importance of sponsorship and mentoring in regard to selection

of superintendents and to career advancement has been given considerable attention in the literature, particularly in regard to women and minorities (Dusek, 1983; Marshall, 1985; Villani, 1983). Three kinds of sponsors were reported by the subjects in a study conducted by Maienza (1986) of superintendents in large metropolitan school districts in the United States: university professors, coalitions of professionals, and consultants hired by the school districts for executive searches. In addition, the study of Ontario supervisory officers revealed that home and family support is also a viable form of sponsorship (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 62).

Hurley (1988) contends that mentor relationships help the protege by supporting and facilitating the clarification and realization of the protege's dreams. He indicates that most mentors are 8 to 15 years older than their proteges, that the relationship usually lasts from 2 to 10 years, that most young men receive little mentoring, and that women have even more difficult times finding mentors than do men. "Good mentor relationships are rare indeed" (p. 42). He also notes that "more and more companies are having mentor programs" (p. 42).

Obversely, male administrators seem to believe that support from the "old boys" is important to career advancement (Fuqua, 1983). Preparation by mentoring was not found to be widespread in the study of directors in Ontario; only about a quarter of the respondents said they had had a significant mentor (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 110).

Kanter's (1977) research on organizational behavior showed that undertaking out-of-the-ordinary and visible activities, such as the presidency of a professional or scholarly organization, represents an external activity that can bring attention to a person. Similarly, an

activity such as serving on editorial or review boards places the individual in a boundary position between his or her institution and the larger community (p. 141).

In addition, Campbell (1976) supports extending the socialization process to the continuing education of superintendents. He feels that "superintendents need the support of others who face similar problems and those who may have insights that are relevant to such problems" (p. 20). At the inservice level, they could organize and control their own professional groups and provide considerable interchange.

Ortiz (1978) reported that the socialization process "is the adaptation to the work settings that individuals encounter" (p. 128) and is evident throughout one's career. She contends that the decision to move usually begins following the granting of tenure to a beginning teacher. Midcareer socialization may consist of socialization directed at vertical movement, horizontal movement, or remaining in a given position. Midcareerists may be located within all of the administrative levels with three basic adaptations: upward mobility with the superintendency in mind; partial upward mobility, with any one position on the way becoming permanent; and retention of the initially occupied position permanently.

## Preparation

The literature in the area of preparation relates to the process candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions. Research in the area of preparation of administrators "has tended to focus on the extent to which holding qualifications beyond those required for certification enhances access to administrative posts or facilitates

upward mobility" (Miklos, 1988, p. 60). Results of studies by Craig (1982) and Fuqua (1983) conducted in the United States tend to confirm that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendencies. In this regard, Tagg (1983) contends that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts: "Few rural superintendents in western Canada hold doctorates, while almost all those in urban centres do" (p. 2).

In a study of preparation needs of superintendents in Saskatchewan conducted some time ago, Ready (1961) found there was inadequate pre-service preparation. This was supported by superintendents' opinions of their lack of competence in certain areas. The findings also revealed that superintendents felt that their university training had little career value, but that inservice activities, particularly conferences, workshops, and short courses, were valuable means of preparation for a superintendency.

A study by Fowler (1983) of administrators in Washington revealed that male administrators appeared to major in administration, whereas female administrators tended to major in areas such as curriculum or guidance and counselling. A report on the American school superintendency (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) revealed that the typical superintendent has a Master's degree with a major in educational administration and supervision. Superintendents appeared to start these degrees at significantly younger ages than ever before, and, on the whole, graduate programs received good ratings from the superintendents. Cunningham and Hentges also found that superintendents generally have positive feelings about their university preparation in educational administration but recommended more field experiences. Hoyle (1989) also

recommends more field experiences and suggests that "we abandon the present university-based, research-oriented preparation model that produces Ph.D. degrees in favor of a professional studies model . . . [which would award degrees] for programs of study . . . that are less clinically oriented" (p. 377). He suggests strengthening the admissions criteria and on-campus residency requirements, team teaching by professors of disciplines other than education, rewarding professors according to the quality of work in developing school leaders, emphasizing intuition and creativity, and increasing funds to support this model (pp. 377-378).

A study by Hess (1988) of principals and superintendents revealed that principals desired more practical skills and were less satisfied with their graduate training than were central office administrators. Both groups felt graduate programs were too general.

Campbell (1976) contends that "the most powerful force in the preparation of administrators is that of socialization [which] comes with a deliberate program designed to transmit the norms--the understandings, values, and skills--of selected top educational administrators" (p. 19). In this regard, he proposes that "a primary group composed of future administrators and faculty be formed" (p. 19), that they meet frequently in a space near each other, and that this be called a training center.

In the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers, 10 leadership clusters were identified and were related directly to those of Bennis and Nanus (1985). They propose a prescribed program which would include four components: (1) academic preparation, (2) practical work experiences, (3) evaluation of the candidate's performance in both of these areas, and (4) on-going professional

development (p. 28).

The value of professional development in the preparation process for supervisory officers in Ontario was also noted in the study by Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987). The results clearly indicated the primacy of personal contacts (e.g., peer networking, retreats) over traditional forms of professional development (e.g., conferences, workshops) as valued sources of professional development and support. In addition, it was found that many supervisory officers in Ontario attribute most of their relevant preparation to work experiences, not to formal training. The relevance of prior experience as a principal, for example, is commonly cited by directors as valuable professional experience for their position.

## Recruitment

Recruitment refers to the process through which candidates discover administrative vacancies and the factors by which they are encouraged to apply for a position. Studies of recruitment practices confirm that members of minority groups and women perceive and encounter barriers that restrict entry into the traditional pools of candidates (Fisher, 1979; Hall, 1984; Sloan, 1980).

The literature on chief executive officers indicates that the major criterion in selecting a successor is typically that the candidate come from the dominant coalition within the organization, because this is seen as a function necessary to preserve the values of the organization. When this notion is present, the potential for functional and institutional inbreeding exists, and an internal candidate can be carefully groomed by the current chief executive officer in an effort to maintain harmony in

the organization (Smith & White, 1987, p. 263).

To observe trends and changes in recruitment and hiring practices, Socolow (1978) conducted a study of 72 university positions. "The most striking finding of the study was the clear persistence of all the institutions in drawing from a traditional pool of candidates" (p. 42). Nearly all institutions in the sample hired individuals from within academe who had served in lower-status academic administrative posts and showed little geographical movement. Further to this, the findings showed a strong predisposition for hiring the known over the unknown candidate and a tendency to select from within the same institution. They "go through the motions of searching widely for qualified candidates, while they in fact rely heavily on familiar recruiting methods" (p. 43). Socolow contends that "it is clear that colleges and universities are not champions of new and more meritocratic hiring strategies" (p. 54).

The study of supervisory officers in Ontario found that an important variation concerning the development of position announcements exists because some school systems prefer to recruit locally while others advertise provincially or nationally. In rare cases, some positions are not officially advertised at all (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 100). The impression gathered from the results of this study was that more attention should be given to improving the quality of the applicant pool by recruiting more widely and thereby affording a better opportunity to choose the most suitable candidate (p. 101).

Findings from a study by Freund (1987) revealed that candidates for a superintendency carefully evaluate the school districts to which they apply and steer away from boards that are consistently divided, do not

respect confidentiality, are close-minded, and do not adhere to the line between setting school policy and administering policy.

## Selection

Research in this area "rests on the beliefs about the significance of administrative functions in education and about the importance of making sound appointments" (Miklos, 1988, p. 53). Much of this literature is not empirically based, and only a limited amount is specifically focused on the superintendent.

The literature indicates that very few boards have written policies for selecting administrators, although some have very specific criteria which cover a broad range of professional, personal, and functional characteristics. Studies into criteria considered relevant for the selection of superintendents have examined functions that are closely identified with the position: understanding board operations, board-superintendent relations, fiscal management, and relationships with community-parent groups (Miklos, 1988, p. 54). Results of a recent study of Ontario supervisory officers indicated 11 selection criteria: source and scope of experience, track record, skills, competencies, educational qualifications, organizational fit, personal goals, gender/ethnicity, local political support, lack of competition, and administrative reorganization (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 96). Engel (1985) contends that the best indicators for a successful superintendent are skills dealing with others and knowing how to select good personnel.

Studies of selection procedures of administrative personnel in the 1960s (Davis, 1962; Peach, 1963) revealed that selection policies for most districts were not defined and that the major criteria for selection

were training, experience, and personal factors. The findings from a study of Canadian superintendents by Sampson (1965) concurred with the above-mentioned findings and further revealed that information about vacancies was passed on to potential candidates by superintendents and that more than one half had been invited to join the provincial department. At the time of the study, few had Master's degrees, but nearly all had the prerequisites of both administrative and secondary school experience, most of which was in rural areas. No attempt was made to recruit outside provincial boundaries.

However, a current study of selection of principals in Alberta (Oaks, 1986) revealed that most districts had selection policies and that internal recruitment of candidates and self-identification were universally applied in these districts. Selection criteria included personal factors, experience, training, and scholastic achievement; sometimes intelligence and health factors were considered. Procedures for selection included application, references, interviews, and probationary periods.

The results of the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1988) study indicate that there is considerable variation across the province in the sources and amount of data about candidates in the hiring process, although the standard configuration is the applicant's curriculum vitae, record of qualifications, and the interview. In addition, some boards require samples of written reports or philosophy-of-education statements. Local screening practices and the official interview process vary in different jurisdictions in terms of who is involved (trustees, director, teacher representatives, etc.) and how much weight each is given.

According to Miskel and Cosgrove (1985), the sources of future

leaders can be divided into two categories: insiders--when current members of the hiring organization are promoted, and outsiders--when successors are selected from an entirely separate organization (p. 90). Under certain circumstances they suggest that an insider can be a better choice of a successor than an outsider. When intraorganizational conflict is high, a candidate from within may better understand and be able to cope than an outsider (p. 90). Further, a differentiated reaction to change was evident in school boards' selection of superintendents because board members who are basically pleased with the current administration expect insiders to give a stabilizing performance, whereas they expect outsiders to give a creative performance that promotes significant changes (Carlson, 1961).

Assessment centers as a means of identifying strong candidates for administrative positions are described by various researchers (Hersey, 1982; McKay & McCord, 1978; Musella, 1981; Schmitt, 1982). Generally, assessment centers conduct tests of administrative skill in which trained assessors observe and record candidates' job-related behaviors and reach a consensus of each candidate's performance. Schmitt (1982) contends that these are valuable, valid procedures for the selection of school administrators.

Political factors may also play a part in administrator selection. "Success in gaining an administrative appointment may be highly dependent on the judgments of a selection committee. . . . Characteristics of the selection board, such as liberal attitudes, may also affect the appointment decision" (Miklos, 1988, pp. 55-56). In addition, the structure of the educational system may influence selection (Carlson, 1961).

Salley (1979), in a study of 194 superintendents in the United States, found that boards give more emphasis to the personal attributes or qualities of candidates than to what they will or should do and the skills needed to perform effectively on the job. He suggests that personal characteristics might not be as important as abilities to manage and lead an organization (p. 4).

In administrator selection, some attempt is made to "match" the individual and the job. March and March (1978) contend that the formation of such a match

> is based on imperfect information gathered partly through the observation of performances. On the basis of such observations, organizations sort individual managers into reputational categories. People come to be viewed as incompetent, and are fired; as exceptionally qualified, and are promoted; or as adequate, and are retained. (p. 450)

These writers contend that, particularly near the top levels in an administrative career hierarchy where the samples of performance are comparatively small, sampling error could be possible.

## Career Patterns

Career patterns refer to the progressions from one position to another in the career of a person. Literature in this area has focused on the nature of describing careers and on identifying factors involved in becoming an administrator.

The literature on career patterns has charted the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Cuban (1976) found in his study of superintendents in the United States that "the route to the superintendency usually includes stops in the classroom and the principal's office." However, there is

evidence in the literature that career patterns change over time. Cunningham and Hentges (1982) found that the percentage of superintendents who came to their office through the teacher-principal route declined from 1971-1982, whereas the percentage of those who followed the teacher-principal-central office route increased.

In her study of personnel records of public school administrators, Gaertner (1980) discovered three career patterns which led to the superintendency. The first pattern led to the superintendency from the secondary principal position, the second from assistant superintendent, and the third from elementary education. The latter pattern "is populated with disproportionately larger numbers of women . . . [and is] characteristically the women's career path" (p. 15).

The analysis of career patterns reveals a strong tendency toward localism, yet most administrators tend to believe that geographic mobility enhances career prospects (Miklos, 1988, p. 63). The findings of a study of superintendents in Massachusetts revealed that mobile superintendents held more positions, spent fewer years in each position, had a higher level of education, and were more often tenured (Geraldi, 1983). Recent research on mobility in colleges and universities shows academic administrators strive for and desire job change as a means of increasing their professional opportunities throughout their careers (Sagaria, 1984, p. 138).

In a comparison of the findings of the study of Ontario directors (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) with results from the American Association of School Adminnistrators survey of superintendents (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) in regard to career paths, Allison (1988) notes that the "American superintendents typically come to their first

position from the principalship . . . [and] the most dominant path to the Ontario directorship is promotion from some central office position" (pp. 20-21).

The American Association of School Administrators survey (1982) as well as research by Carlson (1972), Gaertner (1980), and Ortiz (1982) have identified three major routes to the superintendency: appointment from a previous superintendency, appointment from some other head office position, and appointment directly from the principalship. There appears to be a relatively high level of mobility between positions within American states. Appointment from some other central office position has traditionally been the least common route, "while direct appointment from the principalship remains the most common route to an administrator's first superintendency. Furthermore, it is typically the secondary school principalship that provides the springboard to the superintendent's office" (Allison, p. 19). Carlson (1972) described the elementary principalship as a "dead end" for those seeking the superintendency (p. 9).

In a study of career patterns of Alberta superintendents, Weleschuk (1969) found that the most common route to the superintendency was teacher-principal-superintendent and that candidates spent very few years in the position of teacher but advanced quickly to a principalship. Most of their experience was in rural areas. The provincial rate of turnover was 13%, and most spent 3.5 years in a superintendency before changing locations. However, a survey of principals in the Edmonton separate school system that same year (Murphy, 1969) revealed that urban teachers spent between 1 and 5 years in a teaching position before advancing to a principalship and approximately 11 years in the latter capacity.

Pitner and Ogawa (1981) found that male and female administrators have different career paths and different demographic profiles, and that they differ in one major respect: female superintendents traveled the traditional career route from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. Maienza (1986) found that women superintendents were older and had more experience than men superintendents when they attained their first superintendency, and had previously served in lower-/middle-level administrative positions. In a study of 34 women superintendents in various parts of the United States, Jackson (1981) found that the majority of women began their administrative careers at the elementary level or in central office positions. The findings further revealed that successful women administrators secured most positions without conscious career planning and that they have been geographically mobile.

McShea (1979) explored the reasons for so few women superintendents and found that sex-related items were the most inhibiting, including attitudes of men and other women toward women administrators, career and home responsibilities, and flexibility in moving to new locations. Richardson (1979) added that attitudes, opinions, and philosophy of school boards are other limiting factors. Paddock (1977) found that influences including sex discrimination in recruitment and promotion, isolation from the "old boys" network, and lack of necessary time or money were major influences. However, in contrast, a study of 50 women administrators in higher education revealed that they viewed male colleagues as loyal supporters, they did not have difficulty securing their present positions, and they did not subscribe to the notion that feminine support groups were important to advance careers for women.

The findings from a study of central office administrators in Tennessee (Cryer, 1980) revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female administrators. There appears to be a tendency for males to be hired into administrative positions earlier in their careers than females; there is a lack of upward mobility for females in administration; and marital status seems to be an influential factor in determining whether or not females become administrators.

Careers within central office have not been dealt with extensively in the literature. However, Ortiz (1978) discusses two basic patterns of central office careers. One pattern is to belong to the major subgroup that controls finances and personnel and has the school board as the significant other. The second pattern is to be a member of the subgroup upon which the remaining school districts' responsibilities rest--the significant others are principals and teachers. Ortiz contends that holders of positions within the first group are line careerists with the potential of attaining the superintendency and that holders of positions within the second group may be staff careerists responsible for instruction and support services.

Literature on career mobility suggested that a variety of variables impinge upon one's mobility throughout a professional career. Included among these variables are (1) individual characteristics, such as age, gender, and marital status; (2) career characteristics associated with a person's professional performance, such as earned degrees, visible activities, and having a mentor; and (3) those variables which address a manager's desires or motives for wanting to move (Sagaria, 1984, pp. 140-141). Rosenbaum (1979) found that age is inversely related to mobility. Studies show different mobility rates for men and women

(Stewart & Gudykunst, 1982). Veiga's (1983) research shows that family ties to a community may have an adverse effect on mobility.

Results of a study by Knezevich (1971) indicated that superintendents of larger districts tended to stay longer, and that careers of superintendents were statebound. In Wisconsin, about half of the superintendents have a second superintendency, but those who have more than one superintendency do not travel far; over half the moves are less than 77 miles. Movement is nonrandom in that superintendents tend to move to larger districts. The status position of a match between superintendent and district depends more on attributes of the district than on attributes of the individual superintendent (March & March, 1977).

In regard to the rate of mobility in one's career, Fuqua (1983) found a significant relationship between the former and five attractiveness variables: age at superintendency, tolerance for work pressure, highest degree, aspiration for upward mobility, and geographic mobility.

In a nation-wide study of 252 administrators which examined the upward mobility of educational administrators, Fuqua and Parks (1983) found that candidates with more professional attractiveness achieve faster, candidates with more influential sponsorship achieve faster, candidates with more professional attractiveness are more likely to have inside sponsorship, and upward mobility is increased by professional attractiveness and inside sponsorship.

Factors important to career success are identified in the literature. Holtz (1979) noted factors such as competence, education, experience, appearance, being in the right place, knowing someone with

influence, working harder than others, mentors, luck, and working your way up from the bottom as being important for career success. Craig (1982) identified factors which an aspiring superintendent must consider for career advancement: age of entry into teaching and administration, size of the school district, involvement in activities, education, and expertise.

Super (1957) and later Schein (1983, p. 3) identified nine major stages in a career cycle: (1) growth, fantasy, exploration; (2) education and training; (3) entry into the world of work; (4) basic training, socialization; (5) gaining membership; (6) gaining of tenure, permanent membership, mid-career crisis, reassessment, (7) maintaining momentum, regaining it, or leveling off; (8) disengagement; and (9) retirement. Schein (p. 5) maintains that these stages "provide a kind of internal timetable for every person," but that the time spent in each stage varies according to the complexity of the occupation.

In regard to administrator succession, which Miskel and Cosgrove (1984) refer to as "the process of replacing key officials in organizations (p. 3), instabilities generally occur.

> In schools the replacement of principals or superintendents is a disruptive event because it changes the lines of communication, realigns relationships of power, impacts decision-making, and generally disrupts the equilibrium of normal activities . . . and will have either no causal impact or negative impact on organizational effectiveness. (p. 2)

Regardless of the reason for succession, Miskel and Cosgrove contend that "high rates of succession may influence the development of an authoritarian, task-oriented leadership style" (p. 11).

## Demands of the Superintendency

The literature in this area examines both the satisfactions and stresses of people in the positions of higher authority.

The majority of supervisory officers in Ontario in the Fullan, Park, and Williams study (1987) say the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. The most common satisfiers were seeing an idea or initiative of their own come to fruition, the power and influence of the job, relationships with others, solving difficult problems, visiting schools, and managing resources effectively. Rewards of the job identified in this study were relationships with colleagues, salary, making a contribution to something worthwhile, having influence and the opportunity to have an impact on what happens, flexibility and freedom in the job, and personal recognition from colleagues and the community (p. 126). Dissatisfiers of the supervisory officers fell into two main categories: the political structure of school systems, particularly the influence of trustees; and the way in which the professional component of the system is organized, such as teacher negotiations. In addition, workload, subordinates, and territorial communication were other dissatisfiers. Respondents identified the following costs of the job: family stress, giving up community and recreational activities for lack of time, changes to health, and distance from the schools (p. 127).

Tagg (1983) contends that an "essential quality of the successful superintendent in a small district is the ability to handle stress" (p. 3). He identifies the following as being causes of stress: being on call seven days a week, getting too close to certain interest groups to retain one's objectivity, problems related to economic restraint, and professional isolation (pp. 3-4). Even though there is stress involved

in a rural superintendency, Tagg notes that it "is an intensely satisfying professional experience" (p. 4).

Another writer, Jackson (1977), makes reference to the stress related to administrator isolation. He identifies the following forces that tend to isolate educational administrators: being perceived as someone special; making decisions in regard to resources and personnel; possessing confidential information; being unable to disengage one's thoughts from a problem, thereby affecting personal relationships; being criticized and disliked; pretending to exude confidence one does not have; and juggling time.

In a study of superintendents in Canada, Sampson (1965) found that the most dissatisfaction respondents had with their jobs related to making arrangements for study leaves and "spreading themselves too thin." Most found the variety in the work the most enjoyable aspect, generally enjoyed their job, and planned to continue in it until retirement.

Duignan (1980), in an observational study of superintendents' behavior in the field, reported four major dilemmas for the superintendent: balancing quality in relation to work behavior, dealing with current issues, making efficient use of time, and managing the information system. In conclusion, Duignan views the superintendent as a "frustrated individual who is faced with an array of problems and crises of varied composition" (p. 25).

## Summary

Most of the research on the superintendency has focused on tasks and skills, and limited work has been done researching socialization, preparation, recruitment, and career patterns. The importance of strong

educational leadership in school settings has been stressed by some contemporary writers in their studies of educational administration, but little emphasis has been placed on how a person actually prepares for and subsequently acquires positions in educational administration, and, more specifically, positions of superintendent. The career patterns of superintendents have been examined in the literature; research findings indicate the importance of socialization, both prior to appointment and during tenure, in this regard. Limited research exists which focuses on the preparation of individuals for educational administrative careers, and on the recruitment and selection procedures which are utilized to secure a position of this nature.

# Chapter 3

# Research Methodology

The research design and methodological procedures for the study form the subject of this chapter. An overview of the research strategy is followed by a description of specific techniques used to collect and analyze the data. The chapter concludes with a presentation of data on basic characteristics of respondents and employing school divisions.

## Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used to investigate the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. Data collection for the study involved two stages: (1) a questionnaire survey directed at all directors of education in Saskatchewan, and (2) interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. The combination of two strategies was intended to ensure that important aspects of the research question were investigated.

Survey research involves a distinctive methodology which accounts for a substantial proportion of the research done in the field of education. The strategy yields descriptions of current situations which may serve as a basis for identifying possibilities for further research or changes in educational practice. According to Borg and Gall (1983), descriptive research is the form of educational research which "seeks to characterize a sample . . . on one or more variables" (p. 30) and also involves "the discovery of new phenomena" (p. 20). Since the researcher sought to identify areas of interest in the preparation, recruitment,

selection, and career patterns of directors of education, the adoption of a survey design seemed appropriate. The basic intent was to describe the population on a number of variables, as well as to explore possible relationships.

The questionnaire, which is one of the most common approaches to data collection in survey research, was chosen as the major means for collecting data for the study. In the process of carrying out the survey, efforts were made to adhere closely to the major steps identified by Borg and Gall (1983, pp. 415-435). In particular, specific objectives to be achieved by the questionnaire were defined; the sample for the study was identified; specific attention was paid to the foundation of questionnaire items in the literature and to their relationship to the research objectives; attention was given to questionnaire format in relation to length, the general layout, and clarity of instructions; a pilot test was conducted and the questionnaire was modified on the basis of results; the covering letter was written so as to clearly explain the purpose of the study and to encourage respondents to complete and return the questionnaire; and care was taken in regard to sending out the questionnaires and in contacting those who had not responded with a follow-up letter.

Data collection for the study involved distribution of questionnaires to all directors of education in Saskatchewan and interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. As is described below, several persons who did not participate in the main study were involved in the pilot testing of the questionnaire. This helped to ensure that

all important methodological issues were addressed and provided a check on the validity of the questionnaire.

## Development of the Questionnaire

In the initial stages of questionnaire development, five broad areas relating to the career of a director of education were identified from the literature: socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns. A very close examination of three major studies was also undertaken: The Supervisory Officer in Ontario (1987), The School Superintendency in British Columbia (1984), and The American School Superintendency Study (1982). In addition, the researcher attended the conference "The Chief School Officer--A Research Perspective" in June, 1988, at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education in Toronto.

### Conceptual Basis

The design of the questionnaire for the study was influenced by the review of the literature relating to the socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of superintendents, as well as the demands of the superintendency (Chapter 2).

Opinions tend to differ about how and when an administrative career develops. Some writers contend that it starts early in life; others say it begins during the period of teaching or candidacy. In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models/mentors tend to indicate that these significant others play a large part in the careers of male administrators but are not nearly so valued in female careers. Kanter's research (1977) showed that undertaking visible activities, such as presidency of an organization, brought attention to a person which had

potential to advance that person's career. The general nature of theorizing in this area suggested questions which could be asked about careers of directors in Saskatchewan.

Research in the area of preparation of administrators shows that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendent. However, Tagg (1983) states that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts. The literature review further revealed the value of professional development in the preparation process. Accordingly, the researcher sought to check the findings of previous studies regarding qualifications of superintendents and, in addition, to identify the areas of specialization, as well as the professional development activities in which directors had engaged.

Studies of recruitment practices confirm that administrators generally come from within the organization. Further, the results of a recent study of supervisory offices in Ontario (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) revealed that an important variation exists in regard to position announcements. Some positions are advertised only locally, some provincially, some nationally, and some not at all. The recommendation from the results of the Ontario study was that more attention should be given to recruiting widely in an attempt to choose the most suitable candidate. These ideas were incorporated into the questionnaire in order to determine the extent of advertising and the internal-external hiring practices of school jurisdictions.

Personal experiences of the researcher led to the development of questions related to applying for a director of education position. General information about practices suggested that potential candidates

make casual inquiries and informally visit the location of the directorship they are seeking. On the possibility that a particular event had been a factor in encouraging a person to seek a directorship, an open-ended question was included in the questionnaire for this purpose.

In an attempt to identify what factors attract people to seek a position as director of education in the first place and what factors influence them to leave one directorship and to seek another, the researcher structured questions to address these issues, most of which were developed with the assistance of colleagues.

A question relative to the criteria in the selection process for a directorship was developed based on results of studies which examined functions that are closely identified with the position. Research results indicate that there is considerable variation in the data about candidates and in the hiring process itself; therefore, questions were structured relative to the latter in order to determine the practices in Saskatchewan.

The literature on career patterns charts the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Pitner (1981) found that male and female administrators have different demographic and mobility profiles. Factors important to career success were identified by Holtz (1979) and Craig (1982). Various studies examined mobility rates and reasons for movement between positions (Fuqua, 1983; Peterson, 1984; Rosenbaum, 1979). Questions based on previous studies relative to the above-mentioned factors were designed and incorporated into the questionnaire.

Finally, the literature examines both satisfactions and stresses of

people in positions of authority. The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers found the role of the director to be more stressful than other roles. The results of their study also suggested that the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. In order to determine the most satisfying/self-fulfilling and frustrating/stressful aspects of the directorship, open-ended questions were structured requesting directors to indicate their own levels of satisfaction with their job.

Two questions relative to future plans of directors of education in Saskatchewan were also included in the questionnaire.

Based on these readings and experiences, coupled with discussions with colleagues and professors of educational administration, a first draft of the questionnaire, containing 69 items, was formulated. Subsequent revisions followed, which ultimately led to the questionnaire which was used in the pilot study.

## Nature of Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire requested directors to provide basic demographic information as well as to specify details regarding their current position in relation to its setting and size. In addition, they were asked to indicate the type and location of the position they held immediately prior to their current one. The format of these items was straightforward as is indicated by the following example:

In regard to your current position, please indicate (✓)

a. whether your teacher/student population is in a

(1) __ city
(2) __ rural area

Data were also collected concerning factors which influenced directors to pursue an administrative career. Respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to enter administration and to indicate the extent of their involvement in activities prior to their first appointment as director of education.

The rating of importance consisted of a five-point scale ranging from 5 - highly important to 1 - not very important. For example:

> Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to pursue an administrative career. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| encouragement of family/parents | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

The question of the professional qualifications respondents had prior to their first appointment to a director of education position was dealt with in a number of items. Respondents were asked to indicate their major area of study and the degrees or diplomas they held. As well, they indicated the extent of their studies in educational administration or supervision and other relevant professional development activities in which they had participated. A sample question is as follows:

> At the time of your <u>first</u> appointment as director of education, please indicate (✓) the degrees or diplomas held:
>
> (1) __ B.Ed.
> (2) __ B.A., B.Sc., etc.
> (3) __ Diploma in Education
> (4) __ Master's in Education
> (5) __ Master's other than in Education
> (6) __ Ph.D. or Ed.D.

The career patterns of directors of education were approached through soliciting information about the positions they held and the age at which they entered these positions, the total number of years of service to education and how these years were distributed across positions and locations as well as the total number of school jurisdictions in which they had rendered service. Most of the data were obtained through a question with the following format:

> In the chart below, please indicate how these years of service are distributed across positions and locations by entering the number of years in the appropriate cells.

| | Years in This District | Years in Other Districts in Saskatchewan | Years in Another Province | Years in Another Country |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Director of education (include present position) | | | | |

Directors were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to seek the position and to outline an important event which they considered to have been a major factor in encouraging them to become a director. If they had previously served as a director, they were asked to indicate the importance of various factors in leaving their last position and attracting them to their current one. Most of the data were obtained through questions with the following format:

Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to seek the position of Director of Education. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. challenge of the job | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

However, data in regard to identifying an event in the respondents' careers which may have been a major factor in encouraging them to become directors of education were obtained through the following open-ended question:

Briefly outline an important event(s) in your career which you consider to have been a major factor in encouraging you to become a director of education:

_____

_____

The questionnaire also requested directors to indicate the various steps they took in applying for their first directorship position. They were further asked to indicate how they became aware that their current position was available, the elements that were present in the selection process, the importance they attached to various characteristics of applicants in the selection process, and the people who served on the interview panel. Questions such as the following were used to collect most of the data of this nature:

Indicate how you first became aware that your current position was available. Please check (✓) one response.

(1) ____ newspaper advertisement
(2) ____ district newsletter

Directors were also asked to outline their level of satisfaction with their current position, as well as to identify their future career

plans. The following two types of formats were utilized:

> Please outline various aspects of the position of director of education which you find to be:
>
> (a) most satisfying or self-fulfilling:
>
> _____
>
> _____
>
> Kindly estimate in how many years you are likely to leave the position of director of education, either due to retirement or a career change. Check (✓) one response.
>
> (1) ____ within 1 year (4) ____ 6-7 years
> (2) ____ 2-3 years (5) ____ 8-9 years
> (3) ____ 4-5 years (6) ____ 10 years or later

One questionnaire item asked respondents to indicate the extent of their involvement in various activities prior to their first appointment as director of education by circling a number from 0 to 5. The format of the item was as follows:

> Please circle a response for each to indicate the extent of your involvement in various activities prior to your first appointment as director of education. (Be sure to include involvement(s) in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.)
>
> number of educational associations in which you held memberships 0 1 2 3 4 5+

In the revision phase of the questionnaire development, particular attention was given to ensuring that the questionnaire could be completed in a reasonable period of time on the expectation that a greater rate of return could be anticipated if length and format were appropriate. The final form of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

## Preliminary Review of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was reviewed in early October by three former directors of education and one university professor, all of whom are

residents of Saskatchewan. The purpose of this review was to ascertain whether the questions were appropriate and relevant to the directorship. Various suggestions were made, most of which were of an editorial nature, and these were incorporated into the next revision. Three suggestions for the addition of items were offered: Add "your references were checked" to Question 13; add bracketed section to Question 9 to read "employment conditions (salary, benefits, etc.)"; and add "political sensitivity/skills" to Question 15. All three suggestions seemed to have merit and were accepted.

## Pilot Test

Immediately following the revision based on the preliminary review of the questionnaire, the instrument was adapted for the pilot study which was conducted in Alberta. The major adaptation dealt with a change in terminology: the term "superintendant" was substituted for "director of education." The reason for conducting the pilot study in Alberta was so that all directors in Saskatchewan could be included in the main study.

Prior to distribution, the draft of the questionnaire was circulated to students in a Master of Education research course for review. Several changes were made as a result of this review, most of which dealt with coding issues (e.g., change a, b, c to 1, 2, 3). Two substantive revisions were also made: the term "professional associations" was replaced by "educational associations" (Question 7) and a reminder to respondents to "check (✓) <u>one</u> response" was added to Question 11.

For the pilot study of the questionnaire, 25 superintendents of districts in central Alberta were selected. The questionnaire was

distributed on October 14, 1988. The final response rate was 92%. Results of the pilot study prompted the following changes to the instrument: The category "101 or more" was added to the number of teachers employed in the district (Question 2[b]); "separate school division" and "public school division" were deleted (Question 2[a]); professional development activities "relevant to preparation" for the position of director of education was substituted for "relevant to your responsibilities" (Question 4[d]), in order to focus the question more accurately on preparation for the directorship; the item "encouragement of peers" was added to the factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career (Question 8); "an important event in encouraging you" was substituted for "a critical incident" (Question 10), in an attempt to encourage more responses on this open-ended question; additions were made to steps taken when applying for the first directorship: "informal discussions with Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents" (Question 12); and two questions dealing with persons who had previously served as directors of education were combined into an A and B section (Question 16), in order to conserve space. A final adjustment was made to the questionnaire in regard to clarification of the phrase "your first appointment as Director of Education" by underlining the word "first" (Questions 4, 7, 12, 13, and 15).

## Interview Procedures

Results of a preliminary analysis of the data from the questionnaire suggested the type of additional data required on the selection of

directors. After exploring various possibilities, the researcher decided to use interviews to compile three case studies of particular appointments.

## Selection of Participants

Since the findings from the questionnaire survey revealed that regional directors were involved in about one half of the selection processes, a decision was made to include a regional director as well as the board chairperson and the recently appointed director in each case study. Following contacts with the executive directors of the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, the researcher made decisions about particular cases. Of the six regions in Saskatchewan at the time of the study, one region did not have a regional director, one region had not appointed a new director recently, and another region was not conveniently accessible. A decision was then made to contact the three remaining regional directors and ask if they would accept being interviewed, and to invite them to nominate a newly appointed director whom they felt would be a suitable interviewee.

Regional directors were then telephoned, as were the newly appointed directors, who in turn gave the names of the board chairpersons, who were also contacted for an interview. All persons contacted agreed to be interviewed.

## Development of the Interview Schedules

The interview questions were based largely on the review of the literature and on findings from the questionnaire survey. Although three

separate sets of questions were compiled for the three types of interviewee, the major focus for all three was about their involvement in the selection process for a newly appointed director.

Questions asked the newly appointed director centered on awareness that the position was open, making application, the interview, selection criteria, and the process used by the board. Board chairpersons were asked questions related to circumstances leading to the selection of a new director, recruitment procedures, criteria for selection, short-listing, the interview process, determining the best candidate, arriving at a decision, the role of the board chairperson, and advice to applicants and other boards. The regional directors were asked questions in relation to the nature of their involvement, procedures the boards followed, short-listing, the interview, selection, and how the final decision was made. In addition, they were invited to comment on advice that they might give to boards and to future applicants in regard to selection of directors. The interview guides are presented in Appendix B.

## Trustworthiness Considerations

In order that other researchers and other practitioners are able to benefit from a study, they must have confidence in the quality or overall "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the procedures and findings. A number of educational and social science researchers have highlighted techniques for helping to ensure high quality research in studies that use quantitative methods (e.g., Ary, Jacobs, & Razavich, 1985; Kerlinger, 1973; Wrightsman, 1977), and more recently, qualitative methods (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985;

Miles & Huberman, 1985). Since this study involved both methods, both types of quality control procedures were considered.

The four dimensions of concern are usually referred to as validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. Guba's (1981) equivalent labels--credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability--are often used in naturalistic research.

## Validity

According to Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) "validity refers to how truthful, genuine, and authentic data are in representing what they purport to measure. . . . To be valid, instruments must measure what the investigator intends and claims to measure" (p. 205). In other words, the findings must represent accurately and truthfully the phenomena under investigation.

Content validity of the questionnaires was an important consideration in this study. Clearly, the items had to represent adequately the areas of particular interest. Recognizing that content validity is necessarily "a subjective, judgmental process" (Shaw & Wright, 1967, p. 18), questionnaire development was based on a thorough investigation of the literature, examination of prior research instruments, and preliminary and pilot tests. The instrument was also reviewed by the researcher's supervisory committee and by other colleagues. The questionnaire was designed to be as direct, unambiguous, and appealingly presented as possible in order to capture interest and attention. The high return rate and some additional remarks in the study were encouraging.

In addition, interviews provided an opportunity to probe in greater

depth the aspects of preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. The validity of the interviews was discerned from respondents' openness, frankness, and willingness to disclose personal attitudes about the matters under investigation.

One common method of establishing validity, particularly in qualitative research (e.g., LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is triangulation. Denzin (1970, p. 427) acknowledges that multiple research methods and data sources are the usual means of triangulation. The interviews, therefore, provided a valuable means of checking on the validity of questionnaire responses by directors. The results were sufficiently similar to give confidence in those findings.

## Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the accuracy of measurement and is a prerequisite of and inherent in valid results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is essential that the items on the instrument be clear to the reader. Reliability is achieved, to some degree, through pilot testing, revision, and repeated administration of the instrument. During the design stage, reliability was attended to by applying the rules as outlined by Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985, p. 209): directions were made clear, the items were carefully examined to be sure that there was only one way to respond to and to interpret an item, and items with dual stems were eliminated. Feedback from experts in the preliminary survey and the pilot study subjects was used to enhance the reliability of the items on the instrument. Although reliability of the questionnaire was not assessed through a test-retest procedure, the content and nature of items provide the basis for assuming an acceptable

degree of reliability.

Hansen (1987) has noted that "within the qualitative domain of inquiry, the reliability notion is regarded as increasingly problematic" (p. 209). In Scriven's (1972) view, the reliability of qualitative inquiry can be established as much by the individual researcher's patently rigorous and systematic approach to research as by independent checking on adherence to conventional procedures.

## Objectivity

Objectivity concerns the "confirmability" (Guba, 1981) of a study. In any study, the objectivity of the data is of critical concern--results should be factual and confirmable. In other words, if the same procedures were used, would the new analysis and interpretation of data result in the same findings? Some writers (e.g., Bailey, 1978; Wrightsman, 1977) have warned about the researcher's influence on questionnaire design. The effort to base the instrument on research and writing, as well as the preliminary interview and pilot testing and procedures in general, promise a measure of objectivity. Further, the research report also includes detailed accounts of responses--often direct quotations from the respondents--which serves to permit external scrutiny of interpretation.

## Generalizability

One of the purposes of studies using statistical samples is to be able to generalize findings beyond the sampled respondents to larger populations. This study involved nearly all of the directors of education in Saskatchewan. The respondents included directors from

districts in both urban and rural settings which varied considerably in size. Although most of the respondents were male, three female directors who varied in age and had differing career paths also were among the respondents. Since responses were obtained from nearly the entire population, the results are clearly applicable to Saskatchewan. The results of these findings may also be generalizable to other school divisions and to superintendents/directors with similar educational systems in similar settings.

The findings from the qualitative aspects of the study were not regarded as generalizable since naturalistic strategies are not intended to lead to generalizations. Such strategies assume that social/behavioral phenomena are context-bound: "One must be content with statements descriptive or interpretive of a given context--ideographic or context-relevant statements" (Guba, 1981, p. 86). Nevertheless, the findings may have transferability on a different basis. McCutcheon (1981, p. 8) expressed the view that "generalizability in interpretive studies . . . rests on the readers' ability to generalize personally to their own situations rather than on the researcher's generalizing to populations larger than the sample used in the particular study." Lincoln and Guba (1985) supported this stance. Consequently, readers of this study may find elements of generalizability in terms of the personal meaningfulness of results of qualitative data analysis.

## Data Collection

The methods involved in the distribution of the questionnaires and the collection of interview data are described in this section.

## Distribution and Return of Questionnaires

Names and addresses of all directors of education in Saskatchewan were obtained through the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents. On January 23, 1989, questionnaires were sent by first-class mail to all 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan, together with a covering letter requesting their support for the study, a reply-paid return envelope, and a reply-paid postcard (see Appendix C). The postcard, which was included for return by separate mail, served to identify directors who had completed and returned questionnaires, while affording them the anonymity of questionnaires without codes or other distinguishing markings.

Follow-up letters were distributed to 24 directors who did not respond in the first instance. These were mailed on February 17, 1989. Returns were accepted until March 9, 1989. In total, 82 (89.13%) of the 89 questionnaires distributed to directors of education in Saskatchewan were completed and returned. Prior to the follow-up letter, 68 (74%) had been returned. Results of this letter, therefore, generated an additional 14 completed questionnaires.

## Collecting Interview Data

Following the preparation of the interview questions, the director, regional director, and board chairperson for each case study were contacted by telephone, and a time schedule was developed.

Pilot testing of the interviewing process was conducted prior to the actual interviews. The researcher had several "practice sessions" with colleagues who provided feedback in regard to the questions being asked

and the use of the tape recorder. No questions were altered as a result of the pilot test, but adjustments to the use of the tape recorder were made.

Interviews took place between May 2 and June 8, 1989. The researcher travelled by car to the various locations in order to conduct the interviews. Each interview was tape-recorded and later transcribed. As soon as possible after each interview, the researcher made notes in regard to additional insights and observations. During one interview the tape recorder malfunctioned. The researcher immediately obtained another tape recorder and proceeded to dictate the respondent's answers onto the tape, with the intention to recall as accurately as possible what had transpired. On average, each interview lasted about one hour.

## Data Analysis

The procedures involved in the analysis of both the questionnaire data and the interview data are described below.

### Analysis of Questionnaire Data

Most of the questionnaire responses were pre-coded for quantitative analysis. The responses from the questionnaire items inviting respondents to indicate that an item other than the ones specified in the instrument was applicable to them were recorded and then coded; frequency distributions were also determined. Subsequently, the data were entered into a file for analysis by computer. Percentage frequency distributions and mean ratings of importance attached to various factors and extent of involvement in certain activities were calculated for each variable. The open-ended responses from the questionnaire which invited respondents to

give their own views on various issues were recorded and categorized. Frequency distributions of categories were then determined.

A basis of categorization was established for four variables: age, location, district size, and director experience. Analysis of relationships involving age of directors was carried out on the basis of three groupings: under 45, 45-49, and 50 or older. The location of directors as to either city or rural divisions was derived directly from the questionnaire response. The size of the division in which directors were employed was classified as small (having 101 or fewer teachers) or large (employing 101 or more teachers). Three categories related to director experience were established on the basis of the following ranges: 1-2 years, 3-10 years, or 11 or more years. These categories were used to explore variations in characteristics of respondents and selection practices. Four typologies of career patterns of directors which were also established are described in Chapter 5.

## Analysis of Interview Data

The responses obtained from the case study interviews were first transcribed from the tape recordings by a transcriber, who typed the verbatim responses. The researcher then checked the accuracy of the transcriptions against the actual tape recordings and made any necessary corrections. A copy of the corrected transcription was then mailed to each person who had been interviewed. The respondent was requested to make any necessary corrections/adjustments to the transcript and then to notify the researcher by means of a collect telephone call of any errors which required correcting. There were no responses to this request.

The interview data were then organized into three case studies, each

containing the interview with the newly appointed director, the board chairperson, and the regional director. Each case study was written on the basis of the major themes which initially guided the interview. Several methodological styles were explored. In the first attempt the researcher incorporated the three interviews from one case study into a story of what had occurred in that particular case. A second attempt which involved a reporting of each of the three interviews from a case study in an individual manner proved to be more effective. After the three case studies were developed individually, similarities and differences among the three were explored.

## Characteristics of Respondents

As has been indicated, 82 of 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan provided usable responses in the questionnaire survey. Some basic demographic characteristics of directors as well as characteristics of the employing school divisions are presented in this section.

### Age and Sex

The data presented in Table 3.1 indicate that few directors of education were under the age of 40 years. The majority (35.4%) were between the ages of 45 and 49 years, with about one quarter being between 40 and 44 years of age. Approximately two thirds were above the age of 50. Only one director of education was under the age of 35 years, and only three were between the ages of 35 and 39 years.

Table 3.1 also indicates that 79 respondents were men and 3 directors were women. However, a verification with the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents (L.E.A.D.S.)

Table 3.1

Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories

| Age category | Number Male | Number Female | Total Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 35 | 1 | 0 | 1.1 |
| 35-39 | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| 40-44 | 21 | 0 | 25.6 |
| 45-49 | 27 | 2 | 35.4 |
| 50-54 | 12 | 1 | 15.9 |
| 55-64 | 15 | 0 | 18.3 |
| Total | 79 | 3 | 82 |
| Percent | 96.3 | 3.7 | 100.0 |

revealed that there were only two female directors of education during the time of the questionnaire survey. The researcher concluded that the third respondent was perhaps serving as an acting director during the time period of the survey and had completed the questionnaire in that capacity. The decision was made to include the three questionnaires from the women respondents.

## Division Size and Type

In this study, the term city denotes a school division whose teacher/student population is in the city, and the term rural refers to a school division whose teacher/student population is in a rural area.

As indicated in Table 3.2, 63 (or over three quarters) of the

Table 3.2

Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division

| Number of teachers employed | Urban | Rural | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fewer than 51 | 2 | 4 | 7.3 |
| 51-100 | 7 | 39 | 56.1 |
| 101-200 | 4 | 18 | 26.8 |
| 201-500 | 2 | 2 | 4.9 |
| 501-1,000 | 1 | 0 | 1.2 |
| 1,001 or more | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| Total | 19 | 63 | 82 |
| Percent | 23.2 | 76.8 | 100.0 |

respondents were employed in rural areas, and the remainder were in city divisions. With respect to distribution across division size categories, about 56% were in divisions employing between 51 and 100 teachers, 39 of which are in rural areas, and 7 of which are in cities. About one quarter of the respondents were in divisions which employed between 101 and 200 teachers, 18 of which are in rural areas and 4 in cities. Only six of the respondents were from divisions which employed fewer than 51 teachers. Four were located in rural areas and two in cities. Only a very small number of the respondents were from school divisions which employed more than 200 teachers; two of them were in rural areas and six in the cities. The distribution of respondents by division size suggests that the results of the study are more likely to be generalizable to

directors or superintendents in small or in medium-sized school divisions than to those in larger and urban divisions.

## Years of Professional Service

Table 3.3 shows the years of professional service respondents gave to education. Over half of the respondents (63.4%) indicated that they had given between 19 and 30 years of service to education. Less than one quarter of the respondents (23.2%) had served education for 31 to 40 years, and 13.4% had between 6 and 18 years of experience in this field. None had served less than five years.

## Number of School Divisions

In Table 3.4 the number of school divisions in which directors rendered service is shown. The largest number of respondents (56.0%) had served in three to five divisions, 19.6% had served in six to eight divisions, and 17% had served in one to two divisions. Only six respondents (7.4%) had served in 9 to 11 divisions.

## Summary

To obtain information relating to the research questions, ideas drawn from the literature, the conceptual framework, and pilot studies were used to develop and refine questionnaires for distribution to directors of education. The four dimensions in regard to the trustworthiness of the study were addressed: validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. The questionnaire was distributed to the 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan; responses were received from 82 (89.13%) of them. Interviews were conducted with three newly

Table 3.3

Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education

| Years | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0-5 | 0 | 0 |
| 6-18 | 11 | 13.4 |
| 19-30 | 52 | 63.4 |
| 31-40 | 19 | 23.2 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

Table 3.4

Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service

| Number of school divisions | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1-2 | 14 | 17.0 |
| 3-5 | 46 | 56.0 |
| 6-8 | 16 | 19.6 |
| 9-11 | 6 | 7.4 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors to probe important issues and to assist in establishing validity. Quantitative data were analyzed by comparisons of means and analysis of relationships. Individual responses on questionnaires and in interviews were analyzed for content and arranged for detailed reporting. Most of the respondents were employed in rural school divisions with fewer than 200 teachers. The majority had given more than 20 years of professional service in three or more school divisions.

# Chapter 4

## Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions

In this chapter are presented the results of the data analyses which relate to the major research questions of the study. The first section is focused on the professional backgrounds of directors of education in Saskatchewan including their total administrative and teaching experience, educational background at the time of first appointment, and involvement in professional development activities. Factors associated with the career decisions of the directors are explored in the second section. The recruitment and selection procedures used by school boards are described in the third section from the perspective of directors of education. The chapter concludes with an examination of the sources of satisfaction identified by directors and an overview of their future career plans.

The analysis of the questionnaire data included an exploration of the relationship of selected variables to both individual characteristics of respondents (such as educational background or age) and to characteristics of the employing school division (such as size or rural/urban location). In most instances a Chi-square test was applied to a cross-tabulation of the variables of interest. Results are reported only for those analyses in which a statistically significant value at the .05 level was observed for the test. Relationships among variables and their implications are discussed in Chapter 7.

## Professional Backgrounds of Directors

A number of specific items in the questionnaire were designed to obtain data on the experiential and educational backgrounds of directors. Results of the analysis of data indicate both similarities and variations in the characteristics of directors of education at the time of the study and at the time of first appointment to the position.

### Administrative and Teaching Experience

The data in Table 4.1 indicate the positions directors had held, the location of the positions, and the age at entry to these positions. More specifically, the table shows the number of respondents who had held various positions and the average number of years these positions were held.

Eighty-one respondents had spent an average of 5.33 years in their present school division as the director. The 24 respondents who had been directors in other divisions in Saskatchewan served an average of 5.60 years in this capacity. Five directors had served an average of 5.20 years in another province; none had served as directors in another country. The average age of respondents at the time they assumed a directorship was 40.83 years.

The 30 respondents who served in the capacity of assistant director served an average of 3.99 years in this position. Twelve respondents served approximately 4.08 years in their current school division, while 14 served an average of 3.64 years in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only four served as assistant directors in other provinces; the average length of time spent in this capacity was 4.25 years. The average age at the time the 30 respondents entered the assistant directorship was 37.22

Table 4.1

Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position

| Position | Years in present division | | Years in other divisions in Sask-atchewan | | Years in another province | | Years in another country | | Age at entry | | Total Years in Posi-tion |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | Mean |
| Director of education | 81 | 5.33 | 24 | 5.60 | 5 | 5.20 | 0 | 0 | 77 | 40.83 | 5.38 |
| Assistant director | 12 | 4.08 | 14 | 3.64 | 4 | 4.25 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 37.22 | 3.99 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 4 | 2.25 | 9 | 5.44 | 2 | 5.50 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 39.10 | 4.40 |
| Central office position other than the above | 5 | 7.80 | 7 | 3.14 | 3 | 3.33 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 32.00 | 4.76 |
| Principal | 14 | 9.21 | 53 | 8.00 | 11 | 5.81 | 0 | 0 | 78 | 28.70 | 7.67 |
| Vice/assistant principal | 8 | 3.25 | 54 | 2.78 | 8 | 2.62 | 1 | 2.0 | 71 | 27.30 | 2.66 |
| Secondary teacher | 9 | 7.11 | 42 | 4.64 | 10 | 3.60 | 3 | 5.3 | 64 | 21.74 | 5.17 |
| Elementary teacher | 7 | 4.14 | 38 | 3.57 | 8 | 2.50 | 0 | 0 | 53 | 21.74 | 3.40 |

years.

The 15 respondents who served as superintendents or assistant superintendents served an average of 4.40 years in this capacity. Four respondents served an average of 2.25 years as a superintendent or an assistant superintendent in their present school divisions; nine spent an average of 5.44 years in one of these capacities in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only two respondents spent an average of 5.50 years as superintendents or assistant superintendents in another province. Data on the 15 respondents who held a superintendency indicated that they entered the position at an average age of 39.10 years.

Fifteen respondents indicated that they had served in a central office position in capacities other than those of director, assistant director, superintendent, or assistant superintendent. They had entered the position at an average age of 32.00 years and served 4.76 years in this position. Five of the respondents spent an average of 7.80 years in central office positions in their present division, while seven respondents spent an average of 3.14 years in this capacity in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Of the three respondents who worked in a central office position in another province, the average number of years they spent in this position was 3.33.

The average age of entry to a principalship of the 78 respondents who indicated they held the position was 28.70 years. Respondents indicated that they spent an average of 7.67 years in this capacity. Over two thirds of respondents served an average of 8.00 years as a principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan, whereas only 14 served as a principal in their present school division. An average of 9.21 years was spent in this latter capacity. Eleven respondents served an average of

5.81 years as principal in other provinces, and none served as principal in another country.

Fifty-four respondents had served as vice/assistant principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan for an average of 2.78 years. An average of 3.25 years was spent by eight respondents as vice/assistant principal in their current school division, while eight respondents spent an average of 2.62 years in this capacity in another province. One person spent 2.00 years as vice/assistant principal in another country. Data on the 71 respondents revealed that they spent approximately 2.66 years in this position and that their average age at entry to the position was 27.30 years.

Sixty-four and 53 respondents, respectively, indicated that they had served as elementary and/or secondary teachers for about 21 years. Substantial proportions indicated that they had served as teachers in other divisions in Saskatchewan; 42 respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 4.64 years, and 38 served as elementary teachers an average of 3.57 years. Nine respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 7.11 y rs and seven as elementary teachers an average of 4.14 years in their current division. With regard to serving as teachers in another province, 10 respondents reported that they spent an average of 3.60 years as secondary teachers and 8 as elementary teachers an average of 2.50 years. Three had spent an average of 5.33 years as secondary teachers in another country, whereas none had taught as elementary teachers in another country. Secondary teachers spent an average of 5.17 years and elementary teachers spent an average of 3.40 years in this capacity.

## Position Prior to Current Appointment

The data in Table 4.2 indicate that over three quarters of the respondents held a principalship, an assistant directorship, or another directorship immediately prior to their current position as director. Equal numbers, namely 22, held another directorship or a principalship, and 19 served as assistant directors. Relatively few held other positions: seven served as superintendents or assistant superintendents, four served in a position with the Department of Education, and two served in a central office position other than those identified above. No respondents moved directly from an assistant/vice-principalship to their current directorship, although six served in other capacities from

Table 4.2

Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Position | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another director of education position | 22 | 26.8 |
| Principal | 22 | 26.8 |
| Assistant director of education | 19 | 23.2 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 7 | 8.5 |
| A Department of Education position | 4 | 4.9 |
| A central office position other than those identified above | 2 | 2.5 |
| Assistant/vice-principal | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 6 | 7.3 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

those identified in the questionnaire. The positions included those of professor, insu ce salesperson, deputy superintendent in Alberta, and staff member of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

As is indicated in Table 4.3, over half of the respondents indicated that the position they held prior to their current one was in another school division in Saskatchewan, while just over one fourth indicated that they had most recently served in the present school division. A small number, eight, had served in a school jurisdiction in another province; none had served outside Canada. Only seven had held positions in locations other than those identified in the questionnaire. Among specific other locations identified were the university and the government.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Location | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another school jurisdiction in Saskatchewan | 45 | 54.9 |
| Present school jurisdiction | 22 | 26.8 |
| A school jurisdiction in another province | 8 | 9.8 |
| A school jurisdiction outside Canada | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 7 | 8.5 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

## Educational Background

The respondents were asked to indicate the degrees or diplomas they held at the time of their first appointment as a director. The results of the responses, which are presented in Table 4.4, indicate that about three quarters of the respondents had held B.Ed. degrees, and that more than half had held other baccalaureate degrees, such as Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. Master's degrees were held by about 60% of the respondents, with nearly all being in Education. Somewhat over one third of the respondents had acquired Diplomas in Education; only six had obtained a Ph.D. or Ed.D. degree.

Table 4.4

Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment

| Degrees/diplomas | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| B.Ed. | 62 | 75.6 |
| B.A., B.Sc., etc. | 48 | 58.5 |
| Master's in Education | 46 | 56.1 |
| Diploma in Education | 30 | 36.6 |
| Ph.D. or Ed.D. | 6 | 7.3 |
| Master's other than in Education | 4 | 4.9 |

A cross-tabulation of three age categories and qualifications of directors shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 indicated some contingencies between these characteristics. Of the 46 respondents holding Master's degrees in Education at time of first appointment, the largest number (20) were between the ages of 45 and 49. Sixteen respondents were under

Table 4.5

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications

| Diploma in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 15 | 9 | 6 | 30 |
| No | 10 | 20 | 22 | 52 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 9.07 p = .01

Table 4.6

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications

| Master's in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 16 | 20 | 10 | 46 |
| No | 9 | 9 | 18 | 36 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 7.31 p = .03

the age of 45, and 10 were 50 years of age or older. Thirty respondents held Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, and of these the largest number (15) were under 45 years of age, 9 were between the ages of 45 and 49, and 6 were 50 years of age or older.

Table 4.7 indicates a cross-tabulation of division size and qualifications of directors which indicated some contingencies. Of the 30 respondents holding Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, 25 were located in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers, and 5 were in divisions employing more than 101 teachers.

Table 4.7

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors

| | Division size | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diploma in education | -101 teachers f | 101+ teachers f | f |
| Yes | 25 | 5 | 30 |
| No | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| Total | 52 | 30 | 82 |

Chi-square = 6.79 p = .01

The results of these cross-tabulations indicate that younger directors were more likely to hold a Diploma at the time of first appointment and to be employed in smaller divisions; older directors were more likely to hold a Master's degree and to be employed in larger divisions.

Table 4.8 indicates that the major subject area of credit courses beyond the bachelor's level at the time of the first appointment to a directorship was in administration or supervision, with about 87% of respondents falling into this category. Forty percent of respondents took credit courses in the area of curriculum studies, and nearly 20% studied in the areas of educational foundations, and the same number studied in other educational areas. Only 19 respondents identified guidance and counselling or credit courses in a discipline other than education.

Table 4.8

Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment

| Subject area | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Administration or supervision | 71 | 86.6 |
| Curriculum studies | 33 | 40.2 |
| Educational foundations | 16 | 19.5 |
| Other educational area | 16 | 19.5 |
| Guidance and counselling | 11 | 13.4 |
| Discipline other than education | 8 | 9.8 |

Results of responses to the question about formal preparation in educational administration at the time of first appointment are presented in Table 4.9. One half of the directors indicated that they had a specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program at the time of first appointment. About 15 percent of respondents had courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level, and the same

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# PREPARATION, RECRUITMENT, SELECTION, AND CAREER PATTERNS OF DIRECTORS OF EDUCATION IN SASKATCHEWAN

by

PAULETTE VAN DER LINDE

A THESIS

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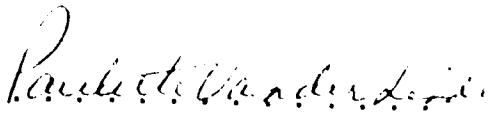
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The undersigned certify that they have read, and recommend to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research for acceptance, a thesis entitled "Preparation, Recruitment, Selection, and Career Patterns of Directors of Education in Saskatchewan" submitted by Paulette Van der Linde in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

E. Miklos, Supervisor

E. J. Ingram

L. J. LaRocque

K. L. Ward

M. P. Browne

K. A. Wilson, External Examiner

Date: 10 October 1989

## Abstract

The focus of this study was the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Questionnaires were distributed to 89 directors of education; the response rate was 89%. Interviews were conducted with three newly appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors. Questionnaire data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Qualitative techniques were used to analyze interview data.

The careers of the majority of directors fell into four patterns, with entry to the directorship being primarily from a principalship. The most common career pattern of directors included the positions of teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and director. Directors gained most of their experience in divisions other than the one in which they were currently employed. School boards tended to select "outsiders" when making appointments to a directorship. Four typologies developed in this study--based on organizational mobility, geographic mobility, and age/experience--reflected some differences in selected characteristics of directors and their employing school divisions.

At the time of first appointment, directors exceeded the prescribed academic requirements. They attached considerable importance to self-assessment of abilities and confidence in those abilities as a result of formal studies and successful work experiences as factors which influenced the decision to apply for a directorship. Newspaper advertisements were the major means by which applicants became aware of vacant positions. Selection process elements consisted of letters of

application, reference checks, short lists, and interviews. Regional directors made important contributions to the recruitment and selection procedures. Selection criteria beyond basic requirements tended to focus on managerial skills and interpersonal relationships. The major selection criterion related to the perceived compatibility between the applicant and board members.

Directors generally experienced satisfaction with their positions and regarded the opportunity to influence education as the most satisfying aspect of their work. Interpersonal relationships were the source of the most satisfaction as well as of the greatest frustration for directors. When changing positions, directors were influenced more by the attractiveness of the new directorship than by undesirable characteristics of the former position.

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This research was conducted with considerable assistance and support from many people. The ideas of the directors, board chairpersons, and regional directors who took time to respond to questionnaires and engage in interviews were vital and much appreciated.

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## Table of Contents


| Chapter | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1. | Introduction | 1 |
| | Research Problem | 2 |
| | Significance of the Study | 3 |
| | Conceptual Framework | 5 |
| | Assumptions | 9 |
| | Delimitations and Limitations | 10 |
| | Definition of Terms | 10 |
| | Organization of the Report | 11 |
| 2. | Review of Related Literature | 12 |
| | Superintendents as Educational Leaders | 12 |
| | Socialization | 16 |
| | Preparation | 23 |
| | Recruitment | 26 |
| | Selection | 28 |
| | Career Patterns | 31 |
| | Demands of the Superintendency | 33 |
| | Summary | 39 |
| 3. | Research Methodology | 41 |
| | Research Design | 41 |
| | Development of the Questionnaire | 43 |
| | Conceptual Basis | 43 |
| | Nature of Questionnaire Items | 47 |
| | Preliminary Review of Questionnaire | 50 |
| | Pilot Test | 51 |

Chapter

Page

Interview Procedures . . . . . 52

Selection of Participants . . . . . 53

Development of the Interview Schedules . . . . . 53

Trustworthiness Considerations . . . . . 54

Validity . . . . . 55

Reliability . . . . . 56

Objectivity . . . . . 57

Generalizability . . . . . 57

Data Collection . . . . . 58

Distribution and Return of Questionnaires . . . . . 59

Collecting Interview Data . . . . . 59

Data Analysis . . . . . 60

Analysis of Questionnaire Data . . . . . 60

Analysis of Interview Data . . . . . 61

Characteristics of Respondents . . . . . 62

Age and Sex . . . . . 62

Division Size and Type . . . . . 63

Years of Professional Service . . . . . 65

Number of School Divisions . . . . . 65

Summary . . . . . 65

4. Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions . . . 68

Professional Backgrounds of Directors . . . . . 69

Administrative and Teaching Experience . . . . . 69

Position Prior to Current Appointment . . . . . 73

Educational Background . . . . . 75

Chapter


| | Page |
|---|---|
| Professional Development Activities | 79 |
| Factors Related to Career Decisions | 82 |
| Administrative Career Decision | 82 |
| Directorship Career Decision | 84 |
| Recruitment and Selection | 88 |
| Awareness and Application | 88 |
| Selection Processes | 93 |
| Selection Criteria | 97 |
| Satisfaction and Stress | 101 |
| Sources of Satisfaction | 102 |
| Helping others | 10 |
| Opportunity to influence education | 103 |
| Working with people | 104 |
| Top-level administration | 104 |
| Sources of Stress | 105 |
| People | 10 |
| Resources | 1 |
| Nature of the role | 1 |
| Mobility and Career Plans | 1 |
| Factors Influencing Mobility | 1 |
| Future Career Plans | 1 |
| Summary | 1 |
| 5. Career Patterns and Career Typologies of Director of Education | 1 |
| Career Patterns | 1 |
| Career Typologies | 1 |

Chapter

Page

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 122

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 129

Entry Age and Directorship Experience Typology . . 137

Summary . . . . . 143

6. Case Studies of Selection of Directors . . . . . 146

Prairieland School Division . . . . . 147

Director's Perspective . . . . . 147

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 149

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 151

Wild Grass School Division . . . . . 154

Director's Perspective . . . . . 155

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 157

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 160

Rolling Hills School Division . . . . . 163

Director's Perspective . . . . . 163

Board Chairperson's Perspective . . . . . 166

Regional Director's Perspective . . . . . 168

Similarities and Differences in Selection Processes . . 170

Advertising the Position . . . . . 171

Application Practices . . . . . 171

Shortlisting . . . . . 172

Preparing for the Interview . . . . . 173

Composition of the Interview Panel . . . . . 174

The Interview . . . . . 174

Selection Decision . . . . . 178

Chapter

Page

Issues and Concerns . . . . . 180

Career Paths . . . . . 180

Role of the Regional Director . . . . . 182

Summary . . . . . 184

7. Summary, Discussion, and Implications . . . . . 186

Overview of the Study . . . . . 186

Purpose and Research Questions . . . . . 186

Rationale . . . . . 187

Conceptual Framework . . . . . 188

Research Methodology . . . . . 188

Summary of Questionnaire Findings . . . . . 189

Academic and Professional Qualifications . . . . . 190

Factors Influencing Pursuit of an Administrative Career . . . . . 190

Application Procedures . . . . . 191

Recruitment and Selection . . . . . 192

Satisfactions in Position . . . . . 193

Career Patterns . . . . . 194

Future Career Plans . . . . . 195

Summary of Case Studies . . . . . 196

Typologies of Directors . . . . . 198

Geographic Mobility Typology . . . . . 198

Organizational Mobility Typology . . . . . 199

Age/Experience Typology . . . . . 200

Discussion of Findings . . . . . 201

Conclusions . . . . . 203

Chapter

Page

Implications . . . . . 216

Implications for Theory . . . . . 216

Implications for Research . . . . . 218

Implications for Practice . . . . . 219

Career paths . . . . . 219

Selection criteria . . . . . 220

Role of regional directors . . . . . 220

Role of director . . . . . 221

Recruitment of women directors . . . . . 221

References . . . . . 222

Appendices

A. Questionnaire for Directors of Education . . . . . 232

B. Interviews of Recently Appointed Directors, Board Chairpersons, and Regional Directors . . . . . 245

C. Correspondence . . . . . 253

## List of Tables


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 3.1 | Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories | 63 |
| 3.2 | Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division | 64 |
| 3.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education | 66 |
| 3.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service | 66 |
| 4.1 | Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position | 70 |
| 4.2 | Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 73 |
| 4.3 | Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship | 74 |
| 4.4 | Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment | 75 |
| 4.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications | 76 |
| 4.7 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors | 77 |
| 4.8 | Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment | 78 |
| 4.9 | Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Formal Study/Preparation in Educational Administration or Supervision at Time of First Appointment | 79 |
| 4.10 | Mean Number of Memberships and Activities in Which Respondents Were Involved Prior to First Appointment as Director | 80 |
| 4.11 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors Influencing Decision to Pursue an Administrative Career | 83 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.12 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Importance of Mentors in Pursuing an Administrative Career | 85 |
| 4.13 | Mean Importance Rating of Factors in Deciding to Pursue a Directorship | 85 |
| 4.14 | Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Awareness of Availability of Current Position | 89 |
| 4.15 | Frequency of Mention of Various Steps Taken in Applying for the First Directorship | 90 |
| 4.16 | Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Casual Inquiries Regarding the Preferred Management Style of the Director Prior to First Application | 92 |
| 4.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Having Informal Discussions with the Regional Director Prior to First Application | 92 |
| 4.18 | Frequency of Mention of Elements Present in the Selection Process for the First Directorship | 93 |
| 4.19 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Advertising the Position Provincially | 94 |
| 4.20 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Checking of References | 95 |
| 4.21 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Establishing a Short-List | 95 |
| 4.22 | Frequency of Mention of Specific Members of the Interview Panel for the First Directorship | 96 |
| 4.23 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Regional Director as Member of the Interview Panel | 98 |
| 4.24 | Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with the Former Director of Education as Member of the Interview Panel | 98 |
| 4.25 | Mean Ratings of Importance of Characteristics of Applicants as Criteria in the Selection Process | 99 |
| 4.26 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Importance of Educational Qualifications in Director Selection | 101 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 4.27 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Attracting Directors to Current Position . . . . . | 108 |
| 4.28 | Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 109 |
| 4.29 | Cross-Tabulation of Size of Division with Importance of Professional Challenge as a Factor in Leaving Last Directorship . . . . . | 110 |
| 4.30 | Distribution of Respondents by Future Plans . . . . . | 111 |
| 4.31 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Future Plans . . | 112 |
| 4.32 | Distribution of Respondents by Number of Years in Which They Are Likely to Leave the Directorship . . . . . | 113 |
| 4.33 | Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Years to Retirement or Career Change . . . . . | 114 |
| 5.1 | Distribution of Directors by Career Patterns . . . . . | 118 |
| 5.2 | Distribution of Career Patterns by Age, Location, Division Size, and Director Experience . . . . . | 119 |
| 5.3 | Cross-Tabulations of Career Patterns With Rating of Importance of Prestige/Status in Seeking a Directorship . . | 121 |
| 5.4 | Distributions of Geographic Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 123 |
| 5.5 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Diploma at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 126 |
| 5.6 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Educational Qualifications at Time of First Appointment . . | 127 |
| 5.7 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by the Geographic Mobility Type . . . . . | 129 |
| 5.8 | Distributions of Organizational Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 131 |
| 5.9 | Cross-Tabulation of Career Patterns with Organizational Mobility Types . . . . . | 133 |
| 5.10 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Doctorate at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |

| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 5.11 | Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Credit Courses in Other Disciplines at Time of First Appointment . . . . . | 135 |
| 5.12 | Analysis of Variance Results of Compatibility with the Social and Educational Context as Criterion in Director Selection by the Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 136 |
| 5.13 | Analysis of Variance Results of Seniority as a Criterion in the Selection Process by Organizational Mobility Type . . . . . | 137 |
| 5.14 | Distributions of Director Age/Experience Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director . . . | 139 |
| 5.15 | Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types . . . . . | 141 |
| 5.16 | Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by Director Age at Entry/Experience Types . . . . . | 142 |
| 5.17 | Cross-Tabulation of Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types with Future Plans . . . . . | 144 |

List of Figures


| Number | | Page |
|---|---|---|
| 1.1 | Organizational structures and individual characteristics . . . . . | 6 |
| 1.2 | Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career . . . . . | 8 |
| 5.1 | Geographic mobility typology . . . . . | 124 |
| 5.2 | Organizational mobility typology . . . . . | 130 |
| 5.3 | Directorship entry age/experience typology . . . . . | 138 |

# Chapter 1

## Introduction

A school superintendent, or director of education, occupies the highest position in the administration of education at the local level; consequently, persons who hold this position are strategically placed in the formal organization of an educational system. The superintendent is ultimately responsible to the board for the education that is provided to the students in the jurisdiction. Coordinating the activities of numerous individuals and groups in achieving the objective of educating children is left to the administrator who holds this senior executive position.

As the chief educational administrator in a school jurisdiction, a superintendent performs many tasks, exerts considerable influence, and has the potential to make a significant difference in the quality of education. Fulfilling these numerous and varied responsibilities requires a competent person. Societal changes and contemporary issues, such as changing social values, increasing teacher professionalism, continuing financial constraints, and ever more complex political conditions influence the role of an educational leader. In turn, effective leadership is contingent upon possession of specific characteristics and skills. Factors such as these serve to underline the importance of the selection of persons who will be able to provide effective leadership under demanding circumstances. A greater understanding of how superintendents prepare for the position, how they are recruited and selected, and what their career patterns are has the potential to contribute to improved practice in this important area.

## Research Problem

The central research question for this study was, "What are the characteristics of the processes through which the careers of directors of education in Saskatchewan unfold?" More specifically, the study focused on the academic and professional backgrounds of directors, the factors which influence them to seek a directorship, and the selection practices of school boards.

The following questions guided the development of the study:

1. What are the academic and professional qualifications of directors of education?
2. What factors influence directors of education to pursue an administrative career?
3. What steps do candidates take in applying for a director of education position?
4. What procedures do boards follow in recruiting and selecting for the director of education position?
5. What factors contribute to mobility among directors of education?
6. What are the sources of satisfaction and of stress in the director of education position?
7. What are the future career plans of directors of education?
8. What is the general nature of career patterns of directors of education?

Answers to these and related questions were sought primarily through a questionnaire survey of directors of education in Saskatchewan. Additional insights were derived from case studies of three selection processes involving interviews with the successful applicants, the board chairpersons, and regional directors of education.

## Significance of the Study

Studies of the superintendency have been conducted in relation to job characteristics, incumbent characteristics, and career mobility. Other studies, focusing on school board attitudes and community issues, have attempted to determine some predictors of turnover of superintendents. However, only limited research has addressed the issue of access to the superintendency. According to Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987), "the whole question of career trajectories and the path to supervisory office status is one which merits much more consideration than it is apparently given" (p. 26). Further to this, Miklos (1988) indicates that studies which "would yield information . . . on relationships among variables associated with processes such as recruitment, selection, appointment, and career development . . . would contribute to advancing basic understandings and to developing new conceptualizations of the processes through which people become administrators" (p. 69).

Leadership in education is receiving increased attention. Since the superintendent is considered to be the educational leader of a school jurisdiction, examination of the factors that contribute to entry into this position is important in order that the most suitable person can be hired and that the best possible leadership can be provided in educational settings. "As of the mid-1980s, the least amount of systematic study has gone to the interaction of personal and situational variables as a source of explanation, the very area that offers most hope for gaining clearer understanding of why administrators do what they do" (Boyan, 1988, p. 93). The results of this study may provide some insight into how people move into leadership positions as well as into the

personal and situational variables which are associated with administrator mobility.

Substantial numbers of directors of education in Saskatchewan are retiring or are nearing retirement. In 1987-88, seven directors of education in that province retired from the position, some of whom took early retirement. In addition, five others left the position for other reasons. Two directors of education retired in December, 1988, and several more in June, 1989. The retirement of directors of education indicates that many school boards in Saskatchewan will soon be selecting new directors of education. The results of this study may give some insights into the characteristics of the newly appointed directors of education, as well as the preparation, selection, and recruitment which occurred prior to the appointments.

Although explicit procedures or policies may be lacking, boards appear to be giving increased attention to selection. Increasingly, school boards are realizing the importance of their choice of superintendent; however, the literature indicates that they may give more attention to personal characteristics than they do to the skills the applicant possesses (Salley, 1979). The results of this study have the potential to assist boards in evaluating their selection and recruitment procedures. In addition, the study may also serve to encourage those aspiring to the position of director of education by indicating the qualifications, preparation, and career patterns which lead to an appointment, as well as the recruitment and selection procedures which presently exist in Saskatchewan school jurisdictions.

## Conceptual Framework

The study of the director of education, which is the subject of this report, was based, in part, on a conceptualization of status attainment and represents an application of a particular theory concerning structures of the corporate careers of men and women (Kanter, 1977). According to this theory, access to top management positions in public education, such as the superintendency, is influenced by an interaction of individual characteristics or actions and organizational structures.

The theorizing suggests that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout a person's work history. Socialization processes, along with preparation for various positions and the degree of fulfillment afforded by the positions, help to determine the career path. Ultimately, organizational structures such as recruitment and selection procedures determine the direction of a person's career. In addition, those who are selected for superintendencies are likely to evidence in their backgrounds specialized academic training, extraordinary visibility, specific work experiences, and strong alliances in their careers.

Figure 1.1 indicates that as a person proceeds along a path from pre-administrative positions to administrative positions and then to director positions, individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures interact in the formation of a career. An individual's career path is contingent upon, and is continually influenced by, the process of socialization which affects all stages of a career. The degree of fulfillment with a position determines whether or not the individual will aspire to another position. Preparation for administration begins just prior to acquiring one's first administrative position, continues through

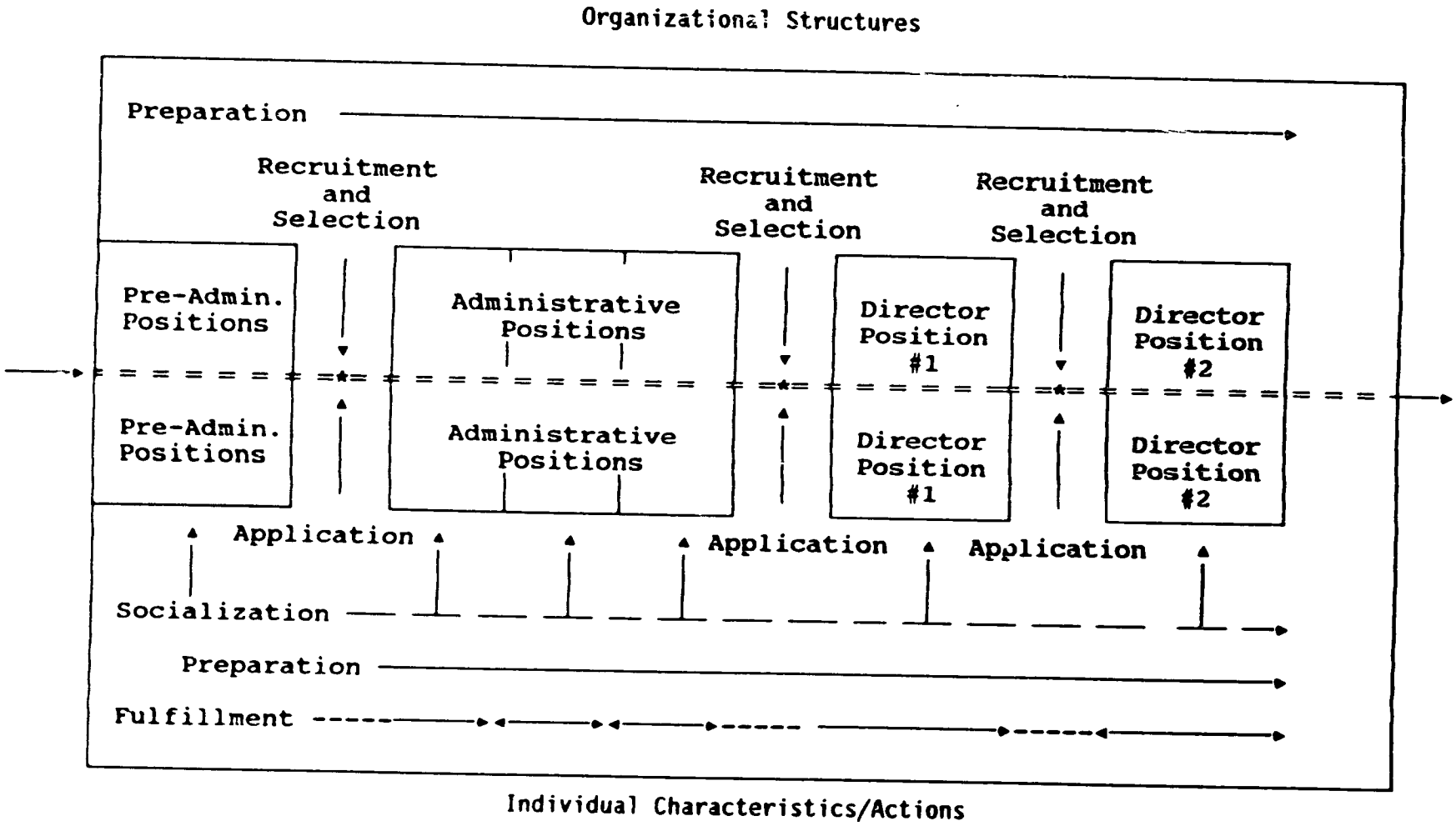



Figure 1.1. Organizational structures and individual characteristics

one's career, and reflects both individual actions, since the individual takes the initiative, and organizational structures, as many elements of preparation are structured by the organization. When an individual applies for a position, the interaction with the organizational structures of the recruitment and selection processes determine whether the individual actually will acquire the position and subsequently move along the career path.

In Figure 1.2 are identified the various elements of an individual's characteristics or actions and the organizational structures whi interact to influence a director of education career. The figure also serves to clarify the prior influences and present circumstances which directly affect the development of a director's career.

Individual actions and background characteristics which are likely to be related to the career of a director of education include: formal training, professional experiences and service, age, support from others, personal goals and confidence, and experience and opportunities in youth. As well, inquiries and discussions in regard to a specific position, coupled with the actual application and conduct at the interview, may relate directly to attaining an administrative position.

Structures such as the actua organization of the school division in regard to the hierarchy of positions, the composition of the board, the urban or rural location, the philosophy and policies of the board (particularly in regard to selection and recruitment procedures), and the type and quantity of professional development activities and preparation programs organizations offer their members impact upon the careers of directors of education. In addition, the frequency of turnover of incumbents relative to the availability of positions and other employment

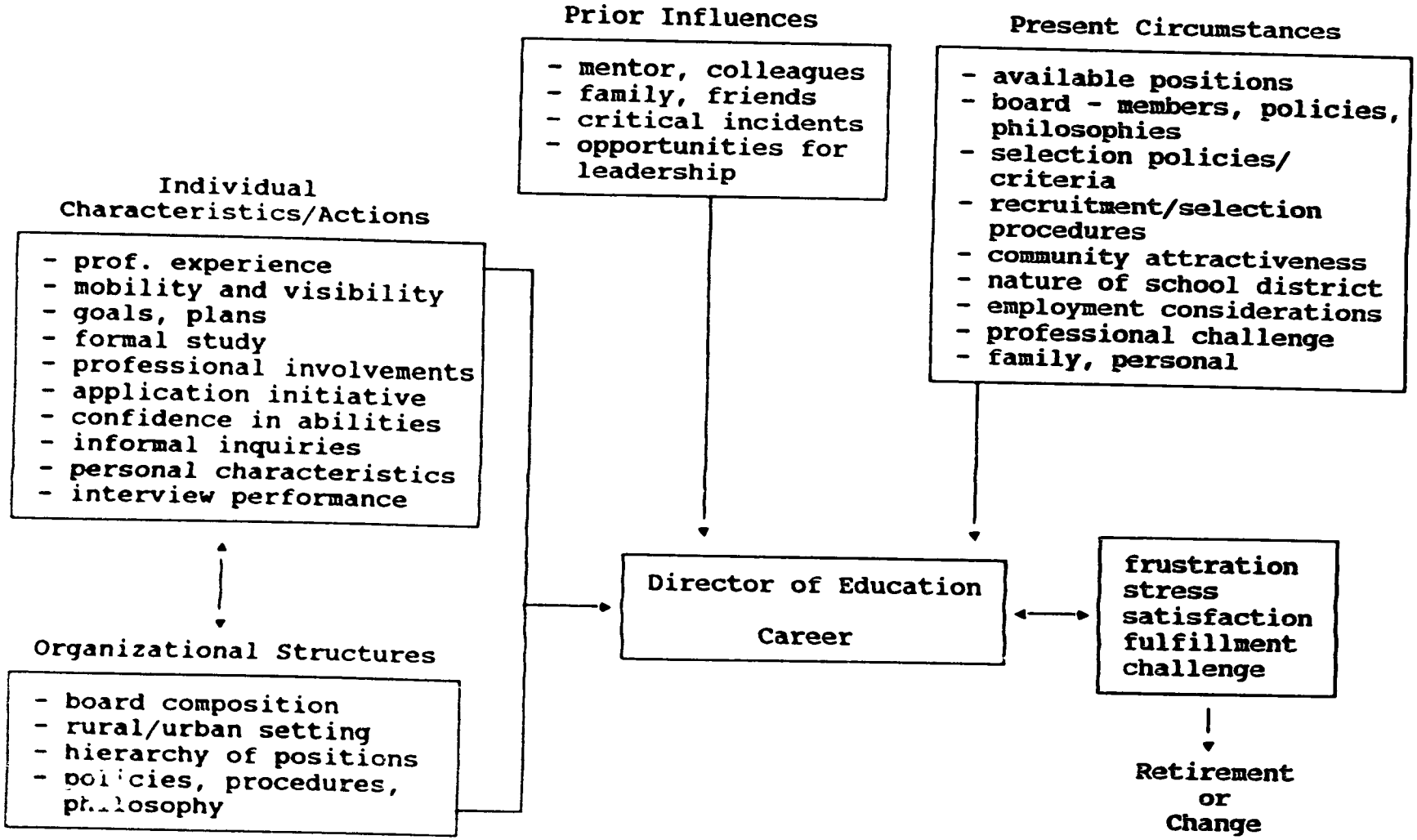



Figure 1.2. Interaction of variables influencing the director of education career

considerations add to this dimension.

The variables identified in Figures 1.1 and 1.2, are considered to be in a state of interaction. Each directly affects and is contingent upon others; none exists in isolation. The socialization processes, personal characteristics, preparation, and self-fulfillment of an individual, coupled with various organizational structures and opportunities, serve to influence the career of an administrator. The actions of individuals who have served in a specific organization, along with the structures that existed at the time, assist in shaping that particular organization. These factors, in turn, affect the current situation.

The variables which were considered to be of paramount importance in this study were the individual characteristics/actions and organizational structures which relate directly to preparation, socialization, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of administrators. In particular, this study focused on factors such as experience, mobility, formal study, professional involvements, mentors, critical incidents, application procedures, and the actual board decision.

## Assumptions

A general assumption underlying this study was that the director of education has a significant impact on education and, therefore, that the processes of acquiring a directorship are important to educational leadership. The research base for assessing the relative merits of various preparation and selection processes is not well developed. Consequently, there is no ready way to assess whether or not the most capable educational leaders are being selected. A plausible assumption is that the most effective leaders are not likely to be selected if the

practices are deficient or questionable; that is, if they are inconsistent with rational procedures. Although following practices which are consistent with current thought on these processes does not guarantee that the best candidates will be selected, the probability of making sound selection decisions is likely to be increased.

Another assumption was that directors are sufficiently aware of the processes relating to preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns to serve as a valid source of data. The search for patterns assumed that regularities exist in the position of director of education in spite of individual variations.

## Delimitations and Limitations

The study was delimited to examining directors of education in Saskatchewan employed at the time of data collection and was confined to their perceptions and understandings during the specific period as indicated by results of a questionnaire survey and interviews.

A limitation of the study was the researcher's assumption that perceptions of respondents were accurate and reflected reality. In addition, the results are applicable only to the population which was surveyed; generalizations to similar positions in other educational systems should be made with caution.

## Definition of Terms

**Directors of education** are the chief executive officers of school divisions in the province of Saskatchewan appointed by school boards.

**Regional directors** are the appointed field representatives of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

**School division** is the basic unit of educational governance in the

province of Saskatchewan, which has a specified boundary and is governed by an elected board.

**Central office position** is one occupied by persons employed in capacities of assistant director, superintendent, assistant superintendent, supervisor, and consultant.

**Preparation** is the formal study and experience candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions.

**Recruitment** is the process through which candidates become aware of director of education vacancies and the factors which encourage them to apply for this position.

**Selection** is the process by which directors of education are appointed to a specific position.

**Career** refers generally to an area of professional life and specifically to professional practice in the field of education.

**Career patterns** are the progressions from one job/position to another in the career of a person.

## Organization of the Report

In the first chapter, the research problem was defined and the conceptual basis for the study was developed. The literature on administrator preparation, socialization, selection, and careers is reviewed in the second chapter. Chapter 3 presents the description of the research methodology. Descriptive information on characteristics of directors of education is presented in Chapter 4, while career patterns are described in Chapter 5. Three case studies of selection are developed in Chapter 6. The report concludes with a summary, conclusions, and recommendations.

## Chapter 2

## Review of Related Literature

The review of the literature focused on the current writings in the area of educational leadership and career patterns as they relate to socialization and preparation for educational administrative positions as well as to the recruitment and selection of individuals for leadership positions. Seven major topics are developed in this chapter: educational leadership, socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, career patterns, and demands of the superintendency.

### Superintendents as Educational Leaders

Research into both leadership and the roles of administrators is highly important for the field of educational administration. However, Immergart (1988) contends that "it can safely be concluded that there has not been very much priority for research in the educational literature on leadership and leader behavior . . . [and that studies of this nature] appear to be dwindling in number, not increasing" (p. 267). He further states that "studies of educational leaders and investigations by those in the field have for the most part corroborated and replicated other inquiry . . . and tend to mirror other work and to lag behind the empirical, conceptual, and methodological advances realized elsewhere" (p. 267). In wondering why studies of educational leadership have failed to attract greater interest on the part of researchers, Burlingame (1973) suggests that "leaders in education have been lesser [persons] attempting to maintain schools. . . . They are not on the frontier, reconnoitering virgin territory" (p. 64).

Current research has tended to focus on the dynamics of leader-follower/superordinate-subordinate relations and, as a result, has paid little attention to the possible effects organizational and societal contexts might have on leadership (Pitner & Ogawa, 1981, p. 61). Pitner and Ogawa contend that societal structures and preference both serve as the raw materials of superintendents' work and demarcate the boundaries within which superintendents operate. They further state that

> superintendents play an important leadership role in translating these societal preferences into school policies and practices. . . . they monitor their environments to obtain readings of public opinion. Such readings identify issues to which schools must respond and detect conditions which will enable superintendents to move their organizations in directions of their own choosing. (p. 61)

This suggests that superintendents as leaders structure and elicit followers' activities as well as work closely with external elements to legitimize organizational activities and outcomes.

Weick (1978) notes that a peculiarly "macho" connotation has been attached to the notion of leadership and that this has inhibited the recognition of other important dimensions. He provides an alternative by suggesting that it might be useful to view leaders as media. Good media, he suggests, have three characteristics: (1) multiple elements, (2) independence of elements, and (3) external constraints of elements (p. 7). From this perspective a superintendent as a good leader would be one who is responsive to and reflective of external influences. Weick refers to this type of leadership as "docile leadership," and he suggests that docility is a major aspect of leadership in formal organizations.

Wallace (1985) recognizes that considerable literature exists in regard to leadership per se and that various approaches to leadership studies have been utilized:

> The "trait approach" emphasizes the personal qualities of leaders and seeks to identify the traits and skills that contribute to leadership success. The "power-influence approach" attempts to explain leader effectiveness in terms of the source and amount of leader power and manner in which it is exercised. The "behavior approach" seeks to identify the pattern of behaviors and activities that are characteristic of effective leaders. Situational theories cut across the other three approaches and emphasize how aspects of the leadership situation determine what traits, forms of influence, or patterns of behavior are essential for leadership effectiveness.

However, he contends that "virtually no research literature exists on the impact of the role of the superintendent as educational leader" (p. 6). He defines educational leadership as "the process of actively influencing others to establish and use mutually agreed upon methods to achieve desired outcomes" (p. 6) and says that the superintendent, who is the instructional leader of the district, is the one who must exert vigorous leadership to improve instructional effectiveness and promote standards of excellence in the schools. He further contends that educational leaders use available resources to analyze needs; develop, implement, and evaluate plans to achieve educational goals and employ a process of reciprocal leadership; promote a framework of effective teaching and learning; foster instructional effectiveness; recognize, encourage, and support the emergence of instructional leadership in staff; and monitor the instructional program (pp. 6-7).

A study by Cymbol (1986) of locally appointed superintendents of schools in Alberta revealed that superintendents are perceived and expected to perform a wide range of tasks. Both trustees and superintendents attach great significance to the educational leader role which involves working with the professional staff in providing high quality education to students.

Leadership development has been approached in the literature in a variety of ways, one of the most common being from the psychological theory through the trait approach, which focuses on the characteristics of effective leaders. This approach, which is reflected in the work of Fiedler (1971), has been closely associated with the selection of personnel for leadership positions and emphasizes the personality traits, the system of values, and the life style of leaders. One of the problems with this approach is that there is little agreement with regard to which traits should be included and which should be excluded. "The traits of intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, and high energy/activity level are most often mentioned and are commonly agreed on across reviewers" (Immergart, 1988, p. 261).

Bennis and Nanus (1985) conducted in-depth interviews with 90 leaders in a range of public and private organizations in order to identify the skills and strategies used by known effective leaders. These included (1) attention through vision--articulating an appropriate vision of the future; (2) meaning through communication--influencing and organizing meaning for the members of the organization; (3) trust through positioning--making themselves known and trusted; and (4) deployment of self--knowing one's strengths, developing those strengths, and discerning the "fit between one's strengths and weaknesses and the organization's needs" (p. 61). Further, Bennis and Nanus contend that effective leaders have five key skills: (1) the ability to accept people as they are; (2) the capacity to approach relationships and problems in terms of the present rather than the past; (3) the ability to treat those who are close to us with the same courteous attention as that extended to strangers; (4) the ability to trust others even if the risk is great; and

(5) the ability to do without constant approval and recognition from others (pp. 66-67).

The question of "leadership for what" is addressed by Bennis and Nanus (1985) in that their view is empowerment of organizational members "to translate intention into reality and sustain it" (p. 80), which they feel can be done via four components: (1) significance--being in the center of doing something valuable; (2) competence--learning new skills; (3) community--a sense of reliance on one another; and (4) enjoyment--satisfaction and fun (p. 80).

Leavitt (1986) stresses the need for three capacities to be present in effective leaders: pathfinding (vision), problem solving, and implementing. In talking about the aesthetics of leadership, Duke (1986) identifies four concepts: direction, engagement, fit, and originality. Paterson, Purkey, and Parker (1986) develop a framework for educational leadership which consists of vision building, strategic planning, and realization. They also stress the critical importance of understanding and analyzing the environment, patience, and persistence in strategic planning and communication skills.

The processes through which leadership skills are developed and through which individuals with the requisite skills move into administrative positions are as significant as possessing the relevant capabilities.

## Socialization

Becoming an administrator involves a process of "being socialized into thinking and behaving in particuar ways in an organizational context. Socialization is a process that . . . extends through various

stages of formal preparation and employment" (Miklos, 1988, p 53). Ortiz (1978) states:

> Socialization within a profession occurs as a result of certain experiences and training that an individual undergoes. Within education, the traditional roles into which individuals may be socialized are teaching and administration. Both of these contain within them certain career patterns that are a result of further socialization. (p. 125)

Little attention has been paid in the literature to the socialization of managers or to the organizational processes by which commitment is inculcated. However, a study by Buchanan (1974) of 279 business and government managers in eight large organizations yielded some insights into organizational commitment and socialization experiences. The results of the study were generally consistent with previous research findings which identified three stages of experiences: Stage 1--the first year: Experiences include role clarity, peer group cohesion, group attitudes toward the organization, expectations realization, reality shock, first-year job challenge, and loyalty conflicts; Stage 2--the second through fourth year: Experiences include personal importance, self-image reinforcement, fear of failure, organizational commitment norms, and work commitment norms; Stage 3--the fifth year and beyond: The major experience is organizational dependability. Organizational efforts to influence managers at this stage involve the maintenance or alteration of existing attitudes rather than the molding of new ones. The results of the findings further revealed that the influence potential of particular experiences varies significantly with tenure.

A model that conceptualizes the socialization process was developed by Feldman (1976). This model identifies three stages of the

socialization process and the activities that indicate progress through socialization: (1) Anticipatory socialization encompasses all the learning that occurs before the recruit enters the organization. The main activities at this stage are forming expectations about jobs and making decisions about employment; (2) Accommodation is the period in which the individual sees what the organization is actually like and attempts to become a participating member. The main activities at this stage are learning new tasks, establishing new relationships, clarifying roles, and evaluating progress; and (3) Role management is the stage at which individuals mediate the conflicts between their work and other groups which may place demands on them. Four variables are identified as possible outcomes of socialization: general satisfaction, mutual influence, internal work motivation, and job involvement. Feldman concludes:

> The results suggest an analogy to Herzberg's distinction between hygiene and motivator variables. . . . they are correlated positively with indicators of the quality of the work environment rather than the quality of the work itself. The nature of the work itself acts more as a motivator variable and is more strongly associated with employers' needs to self-actualize and to find self-realization through work. (p. 450)

In regard to when the process of socialization begins, Greenfield (1977) suggests that this process starts in the period of candidacy, although Ortiz (1982) contends that this process begins during the period of teaching. "Research also confirms that the process begins in early home life and continues through all levels of schooling" (Miklos, 1988, p. 68). Falk and Cosby (1974) contend that the development of a career starts early in life and continues throughout one's work history. Parental backgrounds, socialization in the family and the community,

academic performance, and the influence of significant others are important variables in this development.

Greenfield (1977), in a longitudinal study of teachers who were candidates for public school administrative appointment, examined the process of new-role entry. He noted the special nature of socialization in education as it is evidenced in the entire life cycle of educational personnel. From the time individuals enter school as students until they begin teaching and gain administrative appointment, they are exposed to the influence of the group which they eventually join. It is, therefore, difficult to introduce new modes of behavior under such circumstances. The findings indicate that socialization into adult roles is conditioned by the situationally specific behavior of individuals in interpersonal interaction--largely interaction involving members of the reference group to which they aspire. In Greenfield's study, candidates' behavior was a function of (1) the richness of the interpersonal repertoire, and (2) contextual properties of the situation itself (p. 191).

Various studies have been conducted in regard to female administrators in educational administration. In a study which compared male and female "portraits," Edson (1980) found that women were confident in their abilities to do the job and believed they could do the job better than most current administrators. This belief enabled them to pursue principalships despite many obstacles.

A study of elementary principals in Alabama (Moracco, 1982) revealed that the perceptions and behaviors of male and female principals have become more similar over the last 20 years. These results suggest that gender is not a valid predictor of the kind of principal a person will be and should not be used as a criterion for selection.

In regard to advancement of women in administration, a current study of 232 administrators of home economics units was conducted by Slimmer (1984). The most helpful source responsible for locating their current position was identified as direct personal application, while the second was personal friends. In obtaining their present work position, work experience, academic background, and personal recommendations were identified as important factors. Over one half of the respondents had a mentor and indicated that they obtained their present position by "being in the right place at the right time," with many of them indicating that they had placed themselves in the right place. Findings from this study also revealed that women had a high degree of satisfaction with their academic preparation, supportive relationships, goals for career aspirations, and coping skills.

In an examination of factors which influence the promotion of women to the principalship in Arizona, the results of a study by Nelson (1982) revealed that women perceived receiving less encouragement from university professors than men, that women felt membership in associations was necessary to promotion, that more women than men had participated in a district training program, and that there was a significant difference in backgrounds and personal characteristics between men and women.

A process for successful entry to public elementary administration for women was identified in a study by Sandorff (1980). Promotional socialization, the term he uses to refer to the process, consists of a pre-socialization phase where the prospect is identified through exceptional teaching and organizational and interpersonal skills. Four socialization phases follow: a "showcasing" of the prospect's

instructional expertise; a sponsor's invitation to administrative advancement; the sponsor's adoption of the now-aspiring candidate; and an intensified socialization period as assistant principal, whereby adherence to the norms and behaviors of the administrator group is especially stressed. In addition, Sandorff points out that administration is seen as foreign to the educational attitudes of most female teachers because they generally perceive their jobs as avocations and need to be "converted" to administration.

The results of a study of role modeling in socialization (Weiss, 1977) revealed that individuals develop work behavior patterns by observing and modeling the behavior of others. The choice of behavior model is based partially on the social characteristics of potential models interacting with the personality of the observer. "The results of this study suggest that modeling is a mechanism for the socialization of organizational behaviors" (p. 103). The nature of this mechanism is "a complex interaction of model characteristics, observer characteristics, and certain intervening motivational cognitions" (p. 103).

In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models are included in the literature on socialization. The counsel of influential people can be a significant career contingency. Valverde (1974, 1975) described the value of sponsorship, which involved identifying a protege and influencing the protege's attitudes in ways to bring them into conformity with those of the sponsor. Dickson (1983) reported results of a study that showed that mentors were influential in accelerating the rate of career advancement in high school principalships.

The importance of sponsorship and mentoring in regard to selection

of superintendents and to career advancement has been given considerable attention in the literature, particularly in regard to women and minorities (Dusek, 1983; Marshall, 1985; Villani, 1983). Three kinds of sponsors were reported by the subjects in a study conducted by Maienza (1986) of superintendents in large metropolitan school districts in the United States: university professors, coalitions of professionals, and consultants hired by the school districts for executive searches. In addition, the study of Ontario supervisory officers revealed that home and family support is also a viable form of sponsorship (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 62).

Hurley (1988) contends that mentor relationships help the protege by supporting and facilitating the clarification and realization of the protege's dreams. He indicates that most mentors are 8 to 15 years older than their proteges, that the relationship usually lasts from 2 to 10 years, that most young men receive little mentoring, and that women have even more difficult times finding mentors than do men. "Good mentor relationships are rare indeed" (p. 42). He also notes that "more and more companies are having mentor programs" (p. 42).

Obversely, male administrators seem to believe that support from the "old boys" is important to career advancement (Fuqua, 1983). Preparation by mentoring was not found to be widespread in the study of directors in Ontario; only about a quarter of the respondents said they had had a significant mentor (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 110).

Kanter's (1977) research on organizational behavior showed that undertaking out-of-the-ordinary and visible activities, such as the presidency of a professional or scholarly organization, represents an external activity that can bring attention to a person. Similarly, an

activity such as serving on editorial or review boards places the individual in a boundary position between his or her institution and the larger community (p. 141).

In addition, Campbell (1976) supports extending the socialization process to the continuing education of superintendents. He feels that "superintendents need the support of others who face similar problems and those who may have insights that are relevant to such problems" (p. 20). At the inservice level, they could organize and control their own professional groups and provide considerable interchange.

Ortiz (1978) reported that the socialization process "is the adaptation to the work settings that individuals encounter" (p. 128) and is evident throughout one's career. She contends that the decision to move usually begins following the granting of tenure to a beginning teacher. Midcareer socialization may consist of socialization directed at vertical movement, horizontal movement, or remaining in a given position. Midcareerists may be located within all of the administrative levels with three basic adaptations: upward mobility with the superintendency in mind; partial upward mobility, with any one position on the way becoming permanent; and retention of the initially occupied position permanently.

## Preparation

The literature in the area of preparation relates to the process candidates go through to qualify for administrative positions. Research in the area of preparation of administrators "has tended to focus on the extent to which holding qualifications beyond those required for certification enhances access to administrative posts or facilitates

upward mobility" (Miklos, 1988, p. 60). Results of studies by Craig (1982) and Fuqua (1983) conducted in the United States tend to confirm that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendencies. In this regard, Tagg (1983) contends that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts: "Few rural superintendents in western Canada hold doctorates, while almost all those in urban centres do" (p. 2).

In a study of preparation needs of superintendents in Saskatchewan conducted some time ago, Ready (1961) found there was inadequate pre-service preparation. This was supported by superintendents' opinions of their lack of competence in certain areas. The findings also revealed that superintendents felt that their university training had little career value, but that inservice activities, particularly conferences, workshops, and short courses, were valuable means of preparation for a superintendency.

A study by Fowler (1983) of administrators in Washington revealed that male administrators appeared to major in administration, whereas female administrators tended to major in areas such as curriculum or guidance and counselling. A report on the American school superintendency (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) revealed that the typical superintendent has a Master's degree with a major in educational administration and supervision. Superintendents appeared to start these degrees at significantly younger ages than ever before, and, on the whole, graduate programs received good ratings from the superintendents. Cunningham and Hentges also found that superintendents generally have positive feelings about their university preparation in educational administration but recommended more field experiences. Hoyle (1989) also

recommends more field experiences and suggests that "we abandon the present university-based, research-oriented preparation model that produces Ph.D. degrees in favor of a professional studies model . . . [which would award degrees] for programs of study . . . that are less clinically oriented" (p. 377). He suggests strengthening the admissions criteria and on-campus residency requirements, team teaching by professors of disciplines other than education, rewarding professors according to the quality of work in developing school leaders, emphasizing intuition and creativity, and increasing funds to support this model (pp. 377-378).

A study by Hess (1988) of principals and superintendents revealed that principals desired more practical skills and were less satisfied with their graduate training than were central office administrators. Both groups felt graduate programs were too general.

Campbell (1976) contends that "the most powerful force in the preparation of administrators is that of socialization [which] comes with a deliberate program designed to transmit the norms--the understandings, values, and skills--of selected top educational administrators" (p. 19). In this regard, he proposes that "a primary group composed of future administrators and faculty be formed" (p. 19), that they meet frequently in a space near each other, and that this be called a training center.

In the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers, 10 leadership clusters were identified and were related directly to those of Bennis and Nanus (1985). They propose a prescribed program which would include four components: (1) academic preparation, (2) practical work experiences, (3) evaluation of the candidate's performance in both of these areas, and (4) on-going professional

development (p. 28).

The value of professional development in the preparation process for supervisory officers in Ontario was also noted in the study by Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987). The results clearly indicated the primacy of personal contacts (e.g., peer networking, retreats) over traditional forms of professional development (e.g., conferences, workshops) as valued sources of professional development and support. In addition, it was found that many supervisory officers in Ontario attribute most of their relevant preparation to work experiences, not to formal training. The relevance of prior experience as a principal, for example, is commonly cited by directors as valuable professional experience for their position.

## Recruitment

Recruitment refers to the process through which candidates discover administrative vacancies and the factors by which they are encouraged to apply for a position. Studies of recruitment practices confirm that members of minority groups and women perceive and encounter barriers that restrict entry into the traditional pools of candidates (Fisher, 1979; Hall, 1984; Sloan, 1980).

The literature on chief executive officers indicates that the major criterion in selecting a successor is typically that the candidate come from the dominant coalition within the organization, because this is seen as a function necessary to preserve the values of the organization. When this notion is present, the potential for functional and institutional inbreeding exists, and an internal candidate can be carefully groomed by the current chief executive officer in an effort to maintain harmony in

the organization (Smith & White, 1987, p. 263).

To observe trends and changes in recruitment and hiring practices, Socolow (1978) conducted a study of 72 university positions. "The most striking finding of the study was the clear persistence of all the institutions in drawing from a traditional pool of candidates" (p. 42). Nearly all institutions in the sample hired individuals from within academe who had served in lower-status academic administrative posts and showed little geographical movement. Further to this, the findings showed a strong predisposition for hiring the known over the unknown candidate and a tendency to select from within the same institution. They "go through the motions of searching widely for qualified candidates, while they in fact rely heavily on familiar recruiting methods" (p. 43). Socolow contends that "it is clear that colleges and universities are not champions of new and more meritocratic hiring strategies" (p. 54).

The study of supervisory officers in Ontario found that an important variation concerning the development of position announcements exists because some school systems prefer to recruit locally while others advertise provincially or nationally. In rare cases, some positions are not officially advertised at all (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 100). The impression gathered from the results of this study was that more attention should be given to improving the quality of the applicant pool by recruiting more widely and thereby affording a better opportunity to choose the most suitable candidate (p. 101).

Findings from a study by Freund (1987) revealed that candidates for a superintendency carefully evaluate the school districts to which they apply and steer away from boards that are consistently divided, do not

respect confidentiality, are close-minded, and do not adhere to the line between setting school policy and administering policy.

## Selection

Research in this area "rests on the beliefs about the significance of administrative functions in education and about the importance of making sound appointments" (Miklos, 1988, p. 53). Much of this literature is not empirically based, and only a limited amount is specifically focused on the superintendent.

The literature indicates that very few boards have written policies for selecting administrators, although some have very specific criteria which cover a broad range of professional, personal, and functional characteristics. Studies into criteria considered relevant for the selection of superintendents have examined functions that are closely identified with the position: understanding board operations, board-superintendent relations, fiscal management, and relationships with community-parent groups (Miklos, 1988, p. 54). Results of a recent study of Ontario supervisory officers indicated 11 selection criteria: source and scope of experience, track record, skills, competencies, educational qualifications, organizational fit, personal goals, gender/ethnicity, local political support, lack of competition, and administrative reorganization (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 96). Engel (1985) contends that the best indicators for a successful superintendent are skills dealing with others and knowing how to select good personnel.

Studies of selection procedures of administrative personnel in the 1960s (Davis, 1962; Peach, 1963) revealed that selection policies for most districts were not defined and that the major criteria for selection

were training, experience, and personal factors. The findings from a study of Canadian superintendents by Sampson (1965) concurred with the above-mentioned findings and further revealed that information about vacancies was passed on to potential candidates by superintendents and that more than one half had been invited to join the provincial department. At the time of the study, few had Master's degrees, but nearly all had the prerequisites of both administrative and secondary school experience, most of which was in rural areas. No attempt was made to recruit outside provincial boundaries.

However, a current study of selection of principals in Alberta (Oaks, 1986) revealed that most districts had selection policies and that internal recruitment of candidates and self-identification were universally applied in these districts. Selection criteria included personal factors, experience, training, and scholastic achievement; sometimes intelligence and health factors were considered. Procedures for selection included application, references, interviews, and probationary periods.

The results of the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1988) study indicate that there is considerable variation across the province in the sources and amount of data about candidates in the hiring process, although the standard configuration is the applicant's curriculum vitae, record of qualifications, and the interview. In addition, some boards require samples of written reports or philosophy-of-education statements. Local screening practices and the official interview process vary in different jurisdictions in terms of who is involved (trustees, director, teacher representatives, etc.) and how much weight each is given.

According to Miskel and Cosgrove (1985), the sources of future

leaders can be divided into two categories: insiders--when current members of the hiring organization are promoted, and outsiders--when successors are selected from an entirely separate organization (p. 90). Under certain circumstances they suggest that an insider can be a better choice of a successor than an outsider. When intraorganizational conflict is high, a candidate from within may better understand and be able to cope than an outsider (p. 90). Further, a differentiated reaction to change was evident in school boards' selection of superintendents because board members who are basically pleased with the current administration expect insiders to give a stabilizing performance, whereas they expect outsiders to give a creative performance that promotes significant changes (Carlson, 1961).

Assessment centers as a means of identifying strong candidates for administrative positions are described by various researchers (Hersey, 1982; McKay & McCord, 1978; Musella, 1981; Schmitt, 1982). Generally, assessment centers conduct tests of administrative skill in which trained assessors observe and record candidates' job-related behaviors and reach a consensus of each candidate's performance. Schmitt (1982) contends that these are valuable, valid procedures for the selection of school administrators.

Political factors may also play a part in administrator selection. "Success in gaining an administrative appointment may be highly dependent on the judgments of a selection committee. . . . Characteristics of the selection board, such as liberal attitudes, may also affect the appointment decision" (Miklos, 1988, pp. 55-56). In addition, the structure of the educational system may influence selection (Carlson, 1961).

Salley (1979), in a study of 194 superintendents in the United States, found that boards give more emphasis to the personal attributes or qualities of candidates than to what they will or should do and the skills needed to perform effectively on the job. He suggests that personal characteristics might not be as important as abilities to manage and lead an organization (p. 4).

In administrator selection, some attempt is made to "match" the individual and the job. March and March (1978) contend that the formation of such a match

> is based on imperfect information gathered partly through the observation of performances. On the basis of such observations, organizations sort individual managers into reputational categories. People come to be viewed as incompetent, and are fired; as exceptionally qualified, and are promoted; or as adequate, and are retained. (p. 450)

These writers contend that, particularly near the top levels in an administrative career hierarchy where the samples of performance are comparatively small, sampling error could be possible.

## Career Patterns

Career patterns refer to the progressions from one position to another in the career of a person. Literature in this area has focused on the nature of describing careers and on identifying factors involved in becoming an administrator.

The literature on career patterns has charted the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Cuban (1976) found in his study of superintendents in the United States that "the route to the superintendency usually includes stops in the classroom and the principal's office." However, there is

evidence in the literature that career patterns change over time. Cunningham and Hentges (1982) found that the percentage of superintendents who came to their office through the teacher-principal route declined from 1971-1982, whereas the percentage of those who followed the teacher-principal-central office route increased.

In her study of personnel records of public school administrators, Gaertner (1980) discovered three career patterns which led to the superintendency. The first pattern led to the superintendency from the secondary principal position, the second from assistant superintendent, and the third from elementary education. The latter pattern "is populated with disproportionately larger numbers of women . . . [and is] characteristically the women's career path" (p. 15).

The analysis of career patterns reveals a strong tendency toward localism, yet most administrators tend to believe that geographic mobility enhances career prospects (Miklos, 1988, p. 63). The findings of a study of superintendents in Massachusetts revealed that mobile superintendents held more positions, spent fewer years in each position, had a higher level of education, and were more often tenured (Geraldi, 1983). Recent research on mobility in colleges and universities shows academic administrators strive for and desire job change as a means of increasing their professional opportunities throughout their careers (Sagaria, 1984, p. 138).

In a comparison of the findings of the study of Ontario directors (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) with results from the American Association of School Adminnistrators survey of superintendents (Cunningham & Hentges, 1982) in regard to career paths, Allison (1988) notes that the "American superintendents typically come to their first

position from the principalship . . . [and] the most dominant path to the Ontario directorship is promotion from some central office position" (pp. 20-21).

The American Association of School Administrators survey (1982) as well as research by Carlson (1972), Gaertner (1980), and Ortiz (1982) have identified three major routes to the superintendency: appointment from a previous superintendency, appointment from some other head office position, and appointment directly from the principalship. There appears to be a relatively high level of mobility between positions within American states. Appointment from some other central office position has traditionally been the least common route, "while direct appointment from the principalship remains the most common route to an administrator's first superintendency. Furthermore, it is typically the secondary school principalship that provides the springboard to the superintendent's office" (Allison, p. 19). Carlson (1972) described the elementary principalship as a "dead end" for those seeking the superintendency (p. 9).

In a study of career patterns of Alberta superintendents, Weleschuk (1969) found that the most common route to the superintendency was teacher-principal-superintendent and that candidates spent very few years in the position of teacher but advanced quickly to a principalship. Most of their experience was in rural areas. The provincial rate of turnover was 13%, and most spent 3.5 years in a superintendency before changing locations. However, a survey of principals in the Edmonton separate school system that same year (Murphy, 1969) revealed that urban teachers spent between 1 and 5 years in a teaching position before advancing to a principalship and approximately 11 years in the latter capacity.

Pitner and Ogawa (1981) found that male and female administrators have different career paths and different demographic profiles, and that they differ in one major respect: female superintendents traveled the traditional career route from teacher to principal to central office administrator to superintendent. Maienza (1986) found that women superintendents were older and had more experience than men superintendents when they attained their first superintendency, and had previously served in lower-/middle-level administrative positions. In a study of 34 women superintendents in various parts of the United States, Jackson (1981) found that the majority of women began their administrative careers at the elementary level or in central office positions. The findings further revealed that successful women administrators secured most positions without conscious career planning and that they have been geographically mobile.

McShea (1979) explored the reasons for so few women superintendents and found that sex-related items were the most inhibiting, including attitudes of men and other women toward women administrators, career and home responsibilities, and flexibility in moving to new locations. Richardson (1979) added that attitudes, opinions, and philosophy of school boards are other limiting factors. Paddock (1977) found that influences including sex discrimination in recruitment and promotion, isolation from the "old boys" network, and lack of necessary time or money were major influences. However, in contrast, a study of 50 women administrators in higher education revealed that they viewed male colleagues as loyal supporters, they did not have difficulty securing their present positions, and they did not subscribe to the notion that feminine support groups were important to advance careers for women.

The findings from a study of central office administrators in Tennessee (Cryer, 1980) revealed that there was a significant difference between male and female administrators. There appears to be a tendency for males to be hired into administrative positions earlier in their careers than females; there is a lack of upward mobility for females in administration; and marital status seems to be an influential factor in determining whether or not females become administrators.

Careers within central office have not been dealt with extensively in the literature. However, Ortiz (1978) discusses two basic patterns of central office careers. One pattern is to belong to the major subgroup that controls finances and personnel and has the school board as the significant other. The second pattern is to be a member of the subgroup upon which the remaining school districts' responsibilities rest--the significant others are principals and teachers. Ortiz contends that holders of positions within the first group are line careerists with the potential of attaining the superintendency and that holders of positions within the second group may be staff careerists responsible for instruction and support services.

Literature on career mobility suggested that a variety of variables impinge upon one's mobility throughout a professional career. Included among these variables are (1) individual characteristics, such as age, gender, and marital status; (2) career characteristics associated with a person's professional performance, such as earned degrees, visible activities, and having a mentor; and (3) those variables which address a manager's desires or motives for wanting to move (Sagaria, 1984, pp. 140-141). Rosenbaum (1979) found that age is inversely related to mobility. Studies show different mobility rates for men and women

(Stewart & Gudykunst, 1982). Veiga's (1983) research shows that family ties to a community may have an adverse effect on mobility.

Results of a study by Knezevich (1971) indicated that superintendents of larger districts tended to stay longer, and that careers of superintendents were statebound. In Wisconsin, about half of the superintendents have a second superintendency, but those who have more than one superintendency do not travel far; over half the moves are less than 77 miles. Movement is nonrandom in that superintendents tend to move to larger districts. The status position of a match between superintendent and district depends more on attributes of the district than on attributes of the individual superintendent (March & March, 1977).

In regard to the rate of mobility in one's career, Fuqua (1983) found a significant relationship between the former and five attractiveness variables: age at superintendency, tolerance for work pressure, highest degree, aspiration for upward mobility, and geographic mobility.

In a nation-wide study of 252 administrators which examined the upward mobility of educational administrators, Fuqua and Parks (1983) found that candidates with more professional attractiveness achieve faster, candidates with more influential sponsorship achieve faster, candidates with more professional attractiveness are more likely to have inside sponsorship, and upward mobility is increased by professional attractiveness and inside sponsorship.

Factors important to career success are identified in the literature. Holtz (1979) noted factors such as competence, education, experience, appearance, being in the right place, knowing someone with

influence, working harder than others, mentors, luck, and working your way up from the bottom as being important for career success. Craig (1982) identified factors which an aspiring superintendent must consider for career advancement: age of entry into teaching and administration, size of the school district, involvement in activities, education, and expertise.

Super (1957) and later Schein (1983, p. 3) identified nine major stages in a career cycle: (1) growth, fantasy, exploration; (2) education and training; (3) entry into the world of work; (4) basic training, socialization; (5) gaining membership; (6) gaining of tenure, permanent membership, mid-career crisis, reassessment, (7) maintaining momentum, regaining it, or leveling off; (8) disengagement; and (9) retirement. Schein (p. 5) maintains that these stages "provide a kind of internal timetable for every person," but that the time spent in each stage varies according to the complexity of the occupation.

In regard to administrator succession, which Miskel and Cosgrove (1984) refer to as "the process of replacing key officials in organizations (p. 3), instabilities generally occur.

> In schools the replacement of principals or superintendents is a disruptive event because it changes the lines of communication, realigns relationships of power, impacts decision-making, and generally disrupts the equilibrium of normal activities . . . and will have either no causal impact or negative impact on organizational effectiveness. (p. 2)

Regardless of the reason for succession, Miskel and Cosgrove contend that "high rates of succession may influence the development of an authoritarian, task-oriented leadership style" (p. 11).

## Demands of the Superintendency

The literature in this area examines both the satisfactions and stresses of people in the positions of higher authority.

The majority of supervisory officers in Ontario in the Fullan, Park, and Williams study (1987) say the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. The most common satisfiers were seeing an idea or initiative of their own come to fruition, the power and influence of the job, relationships with others, solving difficult problems, visiting schools, and managing resources effectively. Rewards of the job identified in this study were relationships with colleagues, salary, making a contribution to something worthwhile, having influence and the opportunity to have an impact on what happens, flexibility and freedom in the job, and personal recognition from colleagues and the community (p. 126). Dissatisfiers of the supervisory officers fell into two main categories: the political structure of school systems, particularly the influence of trustees; and the way in which the professional component of the system is organized, such as teacher negotiations. In addition, workload, subordinates, and territorial communication were other dissatisfiers. Respondents identified the following costs of the job: family stress, giving up community and recreational activities for lack of time, changes to health, and distance from the schools (p. 127).

Tagg (1983) contends that an "essential quality of the successful superintendent in a small district is the ability to handle stress" (p. 3). He identifies the following as being causes of stress: being on call seven days a week, getting too close to certain interest groups to retain one's objectivity, problems related to economic restraint, and professional isolation (pp. 3-4). Even though there is stress involved

in a rural superintendency, Tagg notes that it "is an intensely satisfying professional experience" (p. 4).

Another writer, Jackson (1977), makes reference to the stress related to administrator isolation. He identifies the following forces that tend to isolate educational administrators: being perceived as someone special; making decisions in regard to resources and personnel; possessing confidential information; being unable to disengage one's thoughts from a problem, thereby affecting personal relationships; being criticized and disliked; pretending to exude confidence one does not have; and juggling time.

In a study of superintendents in Canada, Sampson (1965) found that the most dissatisfaction respondents had with their jobs related to making arrangements for study leaves and "spreading themselves too thin." Most found the variety in the work the most enjoyable aspect, generally enjoyed their job, and planned to continue in it until retirement.

Duignan (1980), in an observational study of superintendents' behavior in the field, reported four major dilemmas for the superintendent: balancing quality in relation to work behavior, dealing with current issues, making efficient use of time, and managing the information system. In conclusion, Duignan views the superintendent as a "frustrated individual who is faced with an array of problems and crises of varied composition" (p. 25).

## Summary

Most of the research on the superintendency has focused on tasks and skills, and limited work has been done researching socialization, preparation, recruitment, and career patterns. The importance of strong

educational leadership in school settings has been stressed by some contemporary writers in their studies of educational administration, but little emphasis has been placed on how a person actually prepares for and subsequently acquires positions in educational administration, and, more specifically, positions of superintendent. The career patterns of superintendents have been examined in the literature; research findings indicate the importance of socialization, both prior to appointment and during tenure, in this regard. Limited research exists which focuses on the preparation of individuals for educational administrative careers, and on the recruitment and selection procedures which are utilized to secure a position of this nature.

# Chapter 3

# Research Methodology

The research design and methodological procedures for the study form the subject of this chapter. An overview of the research strategy is followed by a description of specific techniques used to collect and analyze the data. The chapter concludes with a presentation of data on basic characteristics of respondents and employing school divisions.

## Research Design

A descriptive survey design was used to investigate the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. Data collection for the study involved two stages: (1) a questionnaire survey directed at all directors of education in Saskatchewan, and (2) interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. The combination of two strategies was intended to ensure that important aspects of the research question were investigated.

Survey research involves a distinctive methodology which accounts for a substantial proportion of the research done in the field of education. The strategy yields descriptions of current situations which may serve as a basis for identifying possibilities for further research or changes in educational practice. According to Borg and Gall (1983), descriptive research is the form of educational research which "seeks to characterize a sample . . . on one or more variables" (p. 30) and also involves "the discovery of new phenomena" (p. 20). Since the researcher sought to identify areas of interest in the preparation, recruitment,

selection, and career patterns of directors of education, the adoption of a survey design seemed appropriate. The basic intent was to describe the population on a number of variables, as well as to explore possible relationships.

The questionnaire, which is one of the most common approaches to data collection in survey research, was chosen as the major means for collecting data for the study. In the process of carrying out the survey, efforts were made to adhere closely to the major steps identified by Borg and Gall (1983, pp. 415-435). In particular, specific objectives to be achieved by the questionnaire were defined; the sample for the study was identified; specific attention was paid to the foundation of questionnaire items in the literature and to their relationship to the research objectives; attention was given to questionnaire format in relation to length, the general layout, and clarity of instructions; a pilot test was conducted and the questionnaire was modified on the basis of results; the covering letter was written so as to clearly explain the purpose of the study and to encourage respondents to complete and return the questionnaire; and care was taken in regard to sending out the questionnaires and in contacting those who had not responded with a follow-up letter.

Data collection for the study involved distribution of questionnaires to all directors of education in Saskatchewan and interviews with three directors of education, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors of education. As is described below, several persons who did not participate in the main study were involved in the pilot testing of the questionnaire. This helped to ensure that

all important methodological issues were addressed and provided a check on the validity of the questionnaire.

## Development of the Questionnaire

In the initial stages of questionnaire development, five broad areas relating to the career of a director of education were identified from the literature: socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns. A very close examination of three major studies was also undertaken: The Supervisory Officer in Ontario (1987), The School Superintendency in British Columbia (1984), and The American School Superintendency Study (1982). In addition, the researcher attended the conference "The Chief School Officer--A Research Perspective" in June, 1988, at the Ontario Institute of Studies in Education in Toronto.

### Conceptual Basis

The design of the questionnaire for the study was influenced by the review of the literature relating to the socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of superintendents, as well as the demands of the superintendency (Chapter 2).

Opinions tend to differ about how and when an administrative career develops. Some writers contend that it starts early in life; others say it begins during the period of teaching or candidacy. In addition, results of studies regarding the value of role models/mentors tend to indicate that these significant others play a large part in the careers of male administrators but are not nearly so valued in female careers. Kanter's research (1977) showed that undertaking visible activities, such as presidency of an organization, brought attention to a person which had

potential to advance that person's career. The general nature of theorizing in this area suggested questions which could be asked about careers of directors in Saskatchewan.

Research in the area of preparation of administrators shows that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for positions such as superintendent. However, Tagg (1983) states that rural superintendents are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts. The literature review further revealed the value of professional development in the preparation process. Accordingly, the researcher sought to check the findings of previous studies regarding qualifications of superintendents and, in addition, to identify the areas of specialization, as well as the professional development activities in which directors had engaged.

Studies of recruitment practices confirm that administrators generally come from within the organization. Further, the results of a recent study of supervisory offices in Ontario (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) revealed that an important variation exists in regard to position announcements. Some positions are advertised only locally, some provincially, some nationally, and some not at all. The recommendation from the results of the Ontario study was that more attention should be given to recruiting widely in an attempt to choose the most suitable candidate. These ideas were incorporated into the questionnaire in order to determine the extent of advertising and the internal-external hiring practices of school jurisdictions.

Personal experiences of the researcher led to the development of questions related to applying for a director of education position. General information about practices suggested that potential candidates

make casual inquiries and informally visit the location of the directorship they are seeking. On the possibility that a particular event had been a factor in encouraging a person to seek a directorship, an open-ended question was included in the questionnaire for this purpose.

In an attempt to identify what factors attract people to seek a position as director of education in the first place and what factors influence them to leave one directorship and to seek another, the researcher structured questions to address these issues, most of which were developed with the assistance of colleagues.

A question relative to the criteria in the selection process for a directorship was developed based on results of studies which examined functions that are closely identified with the position. Research results indicate that there is considerable variation in the data about candidates and in the hiring process itself; therefore, questions were structured relative to the latter in order to determine the practices in Saskatchewan.

The literature on career patterns charts the sequence through which individuals enter administration and move up the ranks to superintendent. Pitner (1981) found that male and female administrators have different demographic and mobility profiles. Factors important to career success were identified by Holtz (1979) and Craig (1982). Various studies examined mobility rates and reasons for movement between positions (Fuqua, 1983; Peterson, 1984; Rosenbaum, 1979). Questions based on previous studies relative to the above-mentioned factors were designed and incorporated into the questionnaire.

Finally, the literature examines both satisfactions and stresses of

people in positions of authority. The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of supervisory officers found the role of the director to be more stressful than other roles. The results of their study also suggested that the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. In order to determine the most satisfying/self-fulfilling and frustrating/stressful aspects of the directorship, open-ended questions were structured requesting directors to indicate their own levels of satisfaction with their job.

Two questions relative to future plans of directors of education in Saskatchewan were also included in the questionnaire.

Based on these readings and experiences, coupled with discussions with colleagues and professors of educational administration, a first draft of the questionnaire, containing 69 items, was formulated. Subsequent revisions followed, which ultimately led to the questionnaire which was used in the pilot study.

## Nature of Questionnaire Items

The questionnaire requested directors to provide basic demographic information as well as to specify details regarding their current position in relation to its setting and size. In addition, they were asked to indicate the type and location of the position they held immediately prior to their current one. The format of these items was straightforward as is indicated by the following example:

In regard to your current position, please indicate (✓)

a. whether your teacher/student population is in a

(1) __ city
(2) __ rural area

Data were also collected concerning factors which influenced directors to pursue an administrative career. Respondents were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to enter administration and to indicate the extent of their involvement in activities prior to their first appointment as director of education.

The rating of importance consisted of a five-point scale ranging from 5 - highly important to 1 - not very important. For example:

> Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to pursue an administrative career. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| encouragement of family/parents | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

The question of the professional qualifications respondents had prior to their first appointment to a director of education position was dealt with in a number of items. Respondents were asked to indicate their major area of study and the degrees or diplomas they held. As well, they indicated the extent of their studies in educational administration or supervision and other relevant professional development activities in which they had participated. A sample question is as follows:

> At the time of your <u>first</u> appointment as director of education, please indicate (✓) the degrees or diplomas held:
>
> (1) __ B.Ed.
> (2) __ B.A., B.Sc., etc.
> (3) __ Diploma in Education
> (4) __ Master's in Education
> (5) __ Master's other than in Education
> (6) __ Ph.D. or Ed.D.

The career patterns of directors of education were approached through soliciting information about the positions they held and the age at which they entered these positions, the total number of years of service to education and how these years were distributed across positions and locations as well as the total number of school jurisdictions in which they had rendered service. Most of the data were obtained through a question with the following format:

> In the chart below, please indicate how these years of service are distributed across positions and locations by entering the number of years in the appropriate cells.

| | Years in This District | Years in Other Districts in Saskatchewan | Years in Another Province | Years in Another Country |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Director of education (include present position) | | | | |

Directors were asked to rate the importance they attached to various factors in making their decision to seek the position and to outline an important event which they considered to have been a major factor in encouraging them to become a director. If they had previously served as a director, they were asked to indicate the importance of various factors in leaving their last position and attracting them to their current one. Most of the data were obtained through questions with the following format:

Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to seek the position of Director of Education. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. challenge of the job | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 |

However, data in regard to identifying an event in the respondents' careers which may have been a major factor in encouraging them to become directors of education were obtained through the following open-ended question:

Briefly outline an important event(s) in your career which you consider to have been a major factor in encouraging you to become a director of education:

_____

_____

The questionnaire also requested directors to indicate the various steps they took in applying for their first directorship position. They were further asked to indicate how they became aware that their current position was available, the elements that were present in the selection process, the importance they attached to various characteristics of applicants in the selection process, and the people who served on the interview panel. Questions such as the following were used to collect most of the data of this nature:

Indicate how you first became aware that your current position was available. Please check (✓) one response.

(1) ____ newspaper advertisement
(2) ____ district newsletter

Directors were also asked to outline their level of satisfaction with their current position, as well as to identify their future career

plans. The following two types of formats were utilized:

> Please outline various aspects of the position of director of education which you find to be:
>
> (a) most satisfying or self-fulfilling:
>
> _____
>
> _____
>
> Kindly estimate in how many years you are likely to leave the position of director of education, either due to retirement or a career change. Check (✓) one response.
>
> (1) ____ within 1 year (4) ____ 6-7 years
> (2) ____ 2-3 years (5) ____ 8-9 years
> (3) ____ 4-5 years (6) ____ 10 years or later

One questionnaire item asked respondents to indicate the extent of their involvement in various activities prior to their first appointment as director of education by circling a number from 0 to 5. The format of the item was as follows:

> Please circle a response for each to indicate the extent of your involvement in various activities prior to your first appointment as director of education. (Be sure to include involvement(s) in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.)
>
> number of educational associations in which you held memberships 0 1 2 3 4 5+

In the revision phase of the questionnaire development, particular attention was given to ensuring that the questionnaire could be completed in a reasonable period of time on the expectation that a greater rate of return could be anticipated if length and format were appropriate. The final form of the questionnaire is included in Appendix A.

## Preliminary Review of Questionnaire

The questionnaire was reviewed in early October by three former directors of education and one university professor, all of whom are

residents of Saskatchewan. The purpose of this review was to ascertain whether the questions were appropriate and relevant to the directorship. Various suggestions were made, most of which were of an editorial nature, and these were incorporated into the next revision. Three suggestions for the addition of items were offered: Add "your references were checked" to Question 13; add bracketed section to Question 9 to read "employment conditions (salary, benefits, etc.)"; and add "political sensitivity/skills" to Question 15. All three suggestions seemed to have merit and were accepted.

## Pilot Test

Immediately following the revision based on the preliminary review of the questionnaire, the instrument was adapted for the pilot study which was conducted in Alberta. The major adaptation dealt with a change in terminology: the term "superintendent" was substituted for "director of education." The reason for conducting the pilot study in Alberta was so that all directors in Saskatchewan could be included in the main study.

Prior to distribution, the draft of the questionnaire was circulated to students in a Master of Education research course for review. Several changes were made as a result of this review, most of which dealt with coding issues (e.g., change a, b, c to 1, 2, 3). Two substantive revisions were also made: the term "professional associations" was replaced by "educational associations" (Question 7) and a reminder to respondents to "check (✓) <u>one</u> response" was added to Question 11.

For the pilot study of the questionnaire, 25 superintendents of districts in central Alberta were selected. The questionnaire was

distributed on October 14, 1988. The final response rate was 92%. Results of the pilot study prompted the following changes to the instrument: The category "101 or more" was added to the number of teachers employed in the district (Question 2[b]); "separate school division" and "public school division" were deleted (Question 2[a]); professional development activities "relevant to preparation" for the position of director of education was substituted for "relevant to your responsibilities" (Question 4[d]), in order to focus the question more accurately on preparation for the directorship; the item "encouragement of peers" was added to the factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career (Question 8); "an important event in encouraging you" was substituted for "a critical incident" (Question 10), in an attempt to encourage more responses on this open-ended question; additions were made to steps taken when applying for the first directorship: "informal discussions with Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents" (Question 12); and two questions dealing with persons who had previously served as directors of education were combined into an A and B section (Question 16), in order to conserve space. A final adjustment was made to the questionnaire in regard to clarification of the phrase "your first appointment as Director of Education" by underlining the word "first" (Questions 4, 7, 12, 13, and 15).

## Interview Procedures

Results of a preliminary analysis of the data from the questionnaire suggested the type of additional data required on the selection of

directors. After exploring various possibilities, the researcher decided to use interviews to compile three case studies of particular appointments.

## Selection of Participants

Since the findings from the questionnaire survey revealed that regional directors were involved in about one half of the selection processes, a decision was made to include a regional director as well as the board chairperson and the recently appointed director in each case study. Following contacts with the executive directors of the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, the researcher made decisions about particular cases. Of the six regions in Saskatchewan at the time of the study, one region did not have a regional director, one region had not appointed a new director recently, and another region was not conveniently accessible. A decision was then made to contact the three remaining regional directors and ask if they would accept being interviewed, and to invite them to nominate a newly appointed director whom they felt would be a suitable interviewee.

Regional directors were then telephoned, as were the newly appointed directors, who in turn gave the names of the board chairpersons, who were also contacted for an interview. All persons contacted agreed to be interviewed.

## Development of the Interview Schedules

The interview questions were based largely on the review of the literature and on findings from the questionnaire survey. Although three

separate sets of questions were compiled for the three types of interviewee, the major focus for all three was about their involvement in the selection process for a newly appointed director.

Questions asked the newly appointed director centered on awareness that the position was open, making application, the interview, selection criteria, and the process used by the board. Board chairpersons were asked questions related to circumstances leading to the selection of a new director, recruitment procedures, criteria for selection, short-listing, the interview process, determining the best candidate, arriving at a decision, the role of the board chairperson, and advice to applicants and other boards. The regional directors were asked questions in relation to the nature of their involvement, procedures the boards followed, short-listing, the interview, selection, and how the final decision was made. In addition, they were invited to comment on advice that they might give to boards and to future applicants in regard to selection of directors. The interview guides are presented in Appendix B.

## Trustworthiness Considerations

In order that other researchers and other practitioners are able to benefit from a study, they must have confidence in the quality or overall "trustworthiness" (Lincoln & Guba, 1985) of the procedures and findings. A number of educational and social science researchers have highlighted techniques for helping to ensure high quality research in studies that use quantitative methods (e.g., Ary, Jacobs, & Razavich, 1985; Kerlinger, 1973; Wrightsman, 1977), and more recently, qualitative methods (e.g., Bogdan & Biklen, 1982; LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985;

Miles & Huberman, 1985). Since this study involved both methods, both types of quality control procedures were considered.

The four dimensions of concern are usually referred to as validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. Guba's (1981) equivalent labels--credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability--are often used in naturalistic research.

## Validity

According to Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985) "validity refers to how truthful, genuine, and authentic data are in representing what they purport to measure. . . . To be valid, instruments must measure what the investigator intends and claims to measure" (p. 205). In other words, the findings must represent accurately and truthfully the phenomena under investigation.

Content validity of the questionnaires was an important consideration in this study. Clearly, the items had to represent adequately the areas of particular interest. Recognizing that content validity is necessarily "a subjective, judgmental process" (Shaw & Wright, 1967, p. 18), questionnaire development was based on a thorough investigation of the literature, examination of prior research instruments, and preliminary and pilot tests. The instrument was also reviewed by the researcher's supervisory committee and by other colleagues. The questionnaire was designed to be as direct, unambiguous, and appealingly presented as possible in order to capture interest and attention. The high return rate and some additional remarks in the study were encouraging.

In addition, interviews provided an opportunity to probe in greater

depth the aspects of preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. The validity of the interviews was discerned from respondents' openness, frankness, and willingness to disclose personal attitudes about the matters under investigation.

One common method of establishing validity, particularly in qualitative research (e.g., LeCompte & Goetz, 1982; Lincoln & Guba, 1985) is triangulation. Denzin (1970, p. 427) acknowledges that multiple research methods and data sources are the usual means of triangulation. The interviews, therefore, provided a valuable means of checking on the validity of questionnaire responses by directors. The results were sufficiently similar to give confidence in those findings.

## Reliability

Reliability is concerned with the accuracy of measurement and is a prerequisite of and inherent in valid results (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). It is essential that the items on the instrument be clear to the reader. Reliability is achieved, to some degree, through pilot testing, revision, and repeated administration of the instrument. During the design stage, reliability was attended to by applying the rules as outlined by Stufflebeam, McCormick, Brinkerhoff, and Nelson (1985, p. 209): directions were made clear, the items were carefully examined to be sure that there was only one way to respond to and to interpret an item, and items with dual stems were eliminated. Feedback from experts in the preliminary survey and the pilot study subjects was used to enhance the reliability of the items on the instrument. Although reliability of the questionnaire was not assessed through a test-retest procedure, the content and nature of items provide the basis for assuming an acceptable

degree of reliability.

Hansen (1987) has noted that "within the qualitative domain of inquiry, the reliability notion is regarded as increasingly problematic" (p. 209). In Scriven's (1972) view, the reliability of qualitative inquiry can be established as much by the individual researcher's patently rigorous and systematic approach to research as by independent checking on adherence to conventional procedures.

## Objectivity

Objectivity concerns the "confirmability" (Guba, 1981) of a study. In any study, the objectivity of the data is of critical concern--results should be factual and confirmable. In other words, if the same procedures were used, would the new analysis and interpretation of data result in the same findings? Some writers (e.g., Bailey, 1978; Wrightsman, 1977) have warned about the researcher's influence on questionnaire design. The effort to base the instrument on research and writing, as well as the preliminary interview and pilot testing and procedures in general, promise a measure of objectivity. Further, the research report also includes detailed accounts of responses--often direct quotations from the respondents--which serves to permit external scrutiny of interpretation.

## Generalizability

One of the purposes of studies using statistical samples is to be able to generalize findings beyond the sampled respondents to larger populations. This study involved nearly all of the directors of education in Saskatchewan. The respondents included directors from

districts in both urban and rural settings which varied considerably in size. Although most of the respondents were male, three female directors who varied in age and had differing career paths also were among the respondents. Since responses were obtained from nearly the entire population, the results are clearly applicable to Saskatchewan. The results of these findings may also be generalizable to other school divisions and to superintendents/directors with similar educational systems in similar settings.

The findings from the qualitative aspects of the study were not regarded as generalizable since naturalistic strategies are not intended to lead to generalizations. Such strategies assume that social/behavioral phenomena are context-bound: "One must be content with statements descriptive or interpretive of a given context--ideographic or context-relevant statements" (Guba, 1981, p. 86). Nevertheless, the findings may have transferability on a different basis. McCutcheon (1981, p. 8) expressed the view that "generalizability in interpretive studies . . . rests on the readers' ability to generalize personally to their own situations rather than on the researcher's generalizing to populations larger than the sample used in the particular study." Lincoln and Guba (1985) supported this stance. Consequently, readers of this study may find elements of generalizability in terms of the personal meaningfulness of results of qualitative data analysis.

## Data Collection

The methods involved in the distribution of the questionnaires and the collection of interview data are described in this section.

## Distribution and Return of Questionnaires

Names and addresses of all directors of education in Saskatchewan were obtained through the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and the Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents. On January 23, 1989, questionnaires were sent by first-class mail to all 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan, together with a covering letter requesting their support for the study, a reply-paid return envelope, and a reply-paid postcard (see Appendix C). The postcard, which was included for return by separate mail, served to identify directors who had completed and returned questionnaires, while affording them the anonymity of questionnaires without codes or other distinguishing markings.

Follow-up letters were distributed to 24 directors who did not respond in the first instance. These were mailed on February 17, 1989. Returns were accepted until March 9, 1989. In total, 82 (89.13%) of the 89 questionnaires distributed to directors of education in Saskatchewan were completed and returned. Prior to the follow-up letter, 68 (74%) had been returned. Results of this letter, therefore, generated an additional 14 completed questionnaires.

## Collecting Interview Data

Following the preparation of the interview questions, the director, regional director, and board chairperson for each case study were contacted by telephone, and a time schedule was developed.

Pilot testing of the interviewing process was conducted prior to the actual interviews. The researcher had several "practice sessions" with colleagues who provided feedback in regard to the questions being asked

and the use of the tape recorder. No questions were altered as a result of the pilot test, but adjustments to the use of the tape recorder were made.

Interviews took place between May 2 and June 8, 1989. The researcher travelled by car to the various locations in order to conduct the interviews. Each interview was tape-recorded and later transcribed. As soon as possible after each interview, the researcher made notes in regard to additional insights and observations. During one interview the tape recorder malfunctioned. The researcher immediately obtained another tape recorder and proceeded to dictate the respondent's answers onto the tape, with the intention to recall as accurately as possible what had transpired. On average, each interview lasted about one hour.

## Data Analysis

The procedures involved in the analysis of both the questionnaire data and the interview data are described below.

### Analysis of Questionnaire Data

Most of the questionnaire responses were pre-coded for quantitative analysis. The responses from the questionnaire items inviting respondents to indicate that an item other than the ones specified in the instrument was applicable to them were recorded and then coded; frequency distributions were also determined. Subsequently, the data were entered into a file for analysis by computer. Percentage frequency distributions and mean ratings of importance attached to various factors and extent of involvement in certain activities were calculated for each variable. The open-ended responses from the questionnaire which invited respondents to

give their own views on various issues were recorded and categorized. Frequency distributions of categories were then determined.

A basis of categorization was established for four variables: age, location, district size, and director experience. Analysis of relationships involving age of directors was carried out on the basis of three groupings: under 45, 45-49, and 50 or older. The location of directors as to either city or rural divisions was derived directly from the questionnaire response. The size of the division in which directors were employed was classified as small (having 101 or fewer teachers) or large (employing 101 or more teachers). Three categories related to director experience were established on the basis of the following ranges: 1-2 years, 3-10 years, or 11 or more years. These categories were used to explore variations in characteristics of respondents and selection practices. Four typologies of career patterns of directors which were also established are described in Chapter 5.

## Analysis of Interview Data

The responses obtained from the case study interviews were first transcribed from the tape recordings by a transcriber, who typed the verbatim responses. The researcher then checked the accuracy of the transcriptions against the actual tape recordings and made any necessary corrections. A copy of the corrected transcription was then mailed to each person who had been interviewed. The respondent was requested to make any necessary corrections/adjustments to the transcript and then to notify the researcher by means of a collect telephone call of any errors which required correcting. There were no responses to this request.

The interview data were then organized into three case studies, each

containing the interview with the newly appointed director, the board chairperson, and the regional director. Each case study was written on the basis of the major themes which initially guided the interview. Several methodological styles were explored. In the first attempt the researcher incorporated the three interviews from one case study into a story of what had occurred in that particular case. A second attempt which involved a reporting of each of the three interviews from a case study in an individual manner proved to be more effective. After the three case studies were developed individually, similarities and differences among the three were explored.

## Characteristics of Respondents

As has been indicated, 82 of 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan provided usable responses in the questionnaire survey. Some basic demographic characteristics of directors as well as characteristics of the employing school divisions are presented in this section.

### Age and Sex

The data presented in Table 3.1 indicate that few directors of education were under the age of 40 years. The majority (35.4%) were between the ages of 45 and 49 years, with about one quarter being between 40 and 44 years of age. Approximately two thirds were above the age of 50. Only one director of education was under the age of 35 years, and only three were between the ages of 35 and 39 years.

Table 3.1 also indicates that 79 respondents were men and 3 directors were women. However, a verification with the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents (L.E.A.D.S.)

Table 3.1

Distribution of Male and Female Respondents Across Age Categories

| Age category | Number Male | Number Female | Total Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Under 35 | 1 | 0 | 1.1 |
| 35-39 | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| 40-44 | 21 | 0 | 25.6 |
| 45-49 | 27 | 2 | 35.4 |
| 50-54 | 12 | 1 | 15.9 |
| 55-64 | 15 | 0 | 18.3 |
| Total | 79 | 3 | 82 |
| Percent | 96.3 | 3.7 | 100.0 |

revealed that there were only two female directors of education during the time of the questionnaire survey. The researcher concluded that the third respondent was perhaps serving as an acting director during the time period of the survey and had completed the questionnaire in that capacity. The decision was made to include the three questionnaires from the women respondents.

## Division Size and Type

In this study, the term city denotes a school division whose teacher/student population is in the city, and the term rural refers to a school division whose teacher/student population is in a rural area.

As indicated in Table 3.2, 63 (or over three quarters) of the

Table 3.2

Distribution of Respondents in Urban and Rural School Divisions by Number of Teachers in Division

| Number of teachers employed | Urban | Rural | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| Fewer than 51 | 2 | 4 | 7.3 |
| 51-100 | 7 | 39 | 56.1 |
| 101-200 | 4 | 18 | 26.8 |
| 201-500 | 2 | 2 | 4.9 |
| 501-1,000 | 1 | 0 | 1.2 |
| 1,001 or more | 3 | 0 | 3.7 |
| Total | 19 | 63 | 82 |
| Percent | 23.2 | 76.8 | 100.0 |

respondents were employed in rural areas, and the remainder were in city divisions. With respect to distribution across division size categories, about 56% were in divisions employing between 51 and 100 teachers, 39 of which are in rural areas, and 7 of which are in cities. About one quarter of the respondents were in divisions which employed between 101 and 200 teachers, 18 of which are in rural areas and 4 in cities. Only six of the respondents were from divisions which employed fewer than 51 teachers. Four were located in rural areas and two in cities. Only a very small number of the respondents were from school divisions which employed more than 200 teachers; two of them were in rural areas and six in the cities. The distribution of respondents by division size suggests that the results of the study are more likely to be generalizable to

directors or superintendents in small or in medium-sized school divisions than to those in larger and urban divisions.

## Years of Professional Service

Table 3.3 shows the years of professional service respondents gave to education. Over half of the respondents (63.4%) indicated that they had given between 19 and 30 years of service to education. Less than one quarter of the respondents (23.2%) had served education for 31 to 40 years, and 13.4% had between 6 and 18 years of experience in this field. None had served less than five years.

## Number of School Divisions

In Table 3.4 the number of school divisions in which directors rendered service is shown. The largest number of respondents (56.0%) had served in three to five divisions, 19.6% had served in six to eight divisions, and 17% had served in one to two divisions. Only six respondents (7.4%) had served in 9 to 11 divisions.

## Summary

To obtain information relating to the research questions, ideas drawn from the literature, the conceptual framework, and pilot studies were used to develop and refine questionnaires for distribution to directors of education. The four dimensions in regard to the trustworthiness of the study were addressed: validity, generalizability, reliability, and objectivity. The questionnaire was distributed to the 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan; responses were received from 82 (89.13%) of them. Interviews were conducted with three newly

Table 3.3

Distribution of Respondents by Years of Professional Service to Education

| Years | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 0-5 | 0 | 0 |
| 6-18 | 11 | 13.4 |
| 19-30 | 52 | 63.4 |
| 31-40 | 19 | 23.2 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

Table 3.4

Distribution of Respondents by Number of School Divisions in Which They Rendered Service

| Number of school divisions | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| 1-2 | 14 | 17.0 |
| 3-5 | 46 | 56.0 |
| 6-8 | 16 | 19.6 |
| 9-11 | 6 | 7.4 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

appointed directors, three board chairpersons, and three regional directors to probe important issues and to assist in establishing validity. Quantitative data were analyzed by comparisons of means and analysis of relationships. Individual responses on questionnaires and in interviews were analyzed for content and arranged for detailed reporting. Most of the respondents were employed in rural school divisions with fewer than 200 teachers. The majority had given more than 20 years of professional service in three or more school divisions.

# Chapter 4

## Professional Characteristics of Directors of Education, Selection Procedures, and Career Decisions

In this chapter are presented the results of the data analyses which relate to the major research questions of the study. The first section is focused on the professional backgrounds of directors of education in Saskatchewan including their total administrative and teaching experience, educational background at the time of first appointment, and involvement in professional development activities. Factors associated with the career decisions of the directors are explored in the second section. The recruitment and selection procedures used by school boards are described in the third section from the perspective of directors of education. The chapter concludes with an examination of the sources of satisfaction identified by directors and an overview of their future career plans.

The analysis of the questionnaire data included an exploration of the relationship of selected variables to both individual characteristics of respondents (such as educational background or age) and to characteristics of the employing school division (such as size or rural/urban location). In most instances a Chi-square test was applied to a cross-tabulation of the variables of interest. Results are reported only for those analyses in which a statistically significant value at the .05 level was observed for the test. Relationships among variables and their implications are discussed in Chapter 7.

## Professional Backgrounds of Directors

A number of specific items in the questionnaire were designed to obtain data on the experiential and educational backgrounds of directors. Results of the analysis of data indicate both similarities and variations in the characteristics of directors of education at the time of the study and at the time of first appointment to the position.

### Administrative and Teaching Experience

The data in Table 4.1 indicate the positions directors had held, the location of the positions, and the age at entry to these positions. More specifically, the table shows the number of respondents who had held various positions and the average number of years these positions were held.

Eighty-one respondents had spent an average of 5.33 years in their present school division as the director. The 24 respondents who had been directors in other divisions in Saskatchewan served an average of 5.60 years in this capacity. Five directors had served an average of 5.20 years in another province; none had served as directors in another country. The average age of respondents at the time they assumed a directorship was 40.83 years.

The 30 respondents who served in the capacity of assistant director served an average of 3.99 years in this position. Twelve respondents served approximately 4.08 years in their current school division, while 14 served an average of 3.64 years in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only four served as assistant directors in other provinces; the average length of time spent in this capacity was 4.25 years. The average age at the time the 30 respondents entered the assistant directorship was 37.22

Table 4.1

Number of Respondents Who Held Particular Positions, Mean Number of Years in Specific Locations, and Age at Entry to Position

| Position | Years in present division | | Years in other divisions in Saskatchewan | | Years in another province | | Years in another country | | Age at entry | | Total Years in Position |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | N | Mean | Mean |
| Director of education | 81 | 5.33 | 24 | 5.60 | 5 | 5.20 | 0 | 0 | 77 | 40.83 | 5.38 |
| Assistant director | 12 | 4.08 | 14 | 3.64 | 4 | 4.25 | 0 | 0 | 30 | 37.22 | 3.99 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 4 | 2.25 | 9 | 5.44 | 2 | 5.50 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 39.10 | 4.40 |
| Central office position other than the above | 5 | 7.80 | 7 | 3.14 | 3 | 3.33 | 0 | 0 | 15 | 32.00 | 4.76 |
| Principal | 14 | 9.21 | 53 | 8.00 | 11 | 5.81 | 0 | 0 | 78 | 28.70 | 7.67 |
| Vice/assistant principal | 8 | 3.25 | 54 | 2.78 | 8 | 2.62 | 1 | 2.0 | 71 | 27.30 | 2.66 |
| Secondary teacher | 9 | 7.11 | 42 | 4.64 | 10 | 3.60 | 3 | 5.3 | 64 | 21.74 | 5.17 |
| Elementary teacher | 7 | 4.14 | 38 | 3.57 | 8 | 2.50 | 0 | 0 | 53 | 21.74 | 3.40 |

years.

The 15 respondents who served as superintendents or assistant superintendents served an average of 4.40 years in this capacity. Four respondents served an average of 2.25 years as a superintendent or an assistant superintendent in their present school divisions; nine spent an average of 5.44 years in one of these capacities in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Only two respondents spent an average of 5.50 years as superintendents or assistant superintendents in another province. Data on the 15 respondents who held a superintendency indicated that they entered the position at an average age of 39.10 years.

Fifteen respondents indicated that they had served in a central office position in capacities other than those of director, assistant director, superintendent, or assistant superintendent. They had entered the position at an average age of 32.00 years and served 4.76 years in this position. Five of the respondents spent an average of 7.80 years in central office positions in their present division, while seven respondents spent an average of 3.14 years in this capacity in other divisions in Saskatchewan. Of the three respondents who worked in a central office position in another province, the average number of years they spent in this position was 3.33.

The average age of entry to a principalship of the 78 respondents who indicated they held the position was 28.70 years. Respondents indicated that they spent an average of 7.67 years in this capacity. Over two thirds of respondents served an average of 8.00 years as a principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan, whereas only 14 served as a principal in their present school division. An average of 9.21 years was spent in this latter capacity. Eleven respondents served an average of

5.81 years as principal in other provinces, and none served as principal in another country.

Fifty-four respondents had served as vice/assistant principal in other divisions in Saskatchewan for an average of 2.78 years. An average of 3.25 years was spent by eight respondents as vice/assistant principal in their current school division, while eight respondents spent an average of 2.62 years in this capacity in another province. One person spent 2.00 years as vice/assistant principal in another country. Data on the 71 respondents revealed that they spent approximately 2.66 years in this position and that their average age at entry to the position was 27.30 years.

Sixty-four and 53 respondents, respectively, indicated that they had served as elementary and/or secondary teachers for about 21 years. Substantial proportions indicated that they had served as teachers in other divisions in Saskatchewan; 42 respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 4.64 years, and 38 served as elementary teachers an average of 3.57 years. Nine respondents had served as secondary teachers an average of 7.11 years and seven as elementary teachers an average of 4.14 years in their current division. With regard to serving as teachers in another province, 10 respondents reported that they spent an average of 3.60 years as secondary teachers and 8 as elementary teachers an average of 2.50 years. Three had spent an average of 5.33 years as secondary teachers in another country, whereas none had taught as elementary teachers in another country. Secondary teachers spent an average of 5.17 years and elementary teachers spent an average of 3.40 years in this capacity.

## Position Prior to Current Appointment

The data in Table 4.2 indicate that over three quarters of the respondents held a principalship, an assistant directorship, or another directorship immediately prior to their current position as director. Equal numbers, namely 22, held another directorship or a principalship, and 19 served as assistant directors. Relatively few held other positions: seven served as superintendents or assistant superintendents, four served in a position with the Department of Education, and two served in a central office position other than those identified above. No respondents moved directly from an assistant/vice-principalship to their current directorship, although six served in other capacities from

Table 4.2

Distribution of Respondents by Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Position | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another director of education position | 22 | 26.8 |
| Principal | 22 | 26.8 |
| Assistant director of education | 19 | 23.2 |
| Superintendent or assistant superintendent | 7 | 8.5 |
| A Department of Education position | 4 | 4.9 |
| A central office position other than those identified above | 2 | 2.5 |
| Assistant/vice-principal | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 6 | 7.3 |
| Total | 82 | 100.0 |

those identified in the questionnaire. The positions included those of professor, insu ce salesperson, deputy superintendent in Alberta, and staff member of the Saskatchewan Department of Education.

As is indicated in Table 4.3, over half of the respondents indicated that the position they held prior to their current one was in another school division in Saskatchewan, while just over one fourth indicated that they had most recently served in the present school division. A small number, eight, had served in a school jurisdiction in another province; none had served outside Canada. Only seven had held positions in locations other than those identified in the questionnaire. Among specific other locations identified were the university and the government.

Table 4.3

Distribution of Respondents by Location of Position Held Prior to Current Directorship

| Location | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Another school jurisdiction in Saskatchewan | 45 | 54.9 |
| Present school jurisdiction | 22 | 26.8 |
| A school jurisdiction in another province | 8 | 9.8 |
| A school jurisdiction outside Canada | 0 | 0 |
| Other | 7 | 8.5 |
| Total | 32 | 100.0 |

## Educational Background

The respondents were asked to indicate the degrees or diplomas they held at the time of their first appointment as a director. The results of the responses, which are presented in Table 4.4, indicate that about three quarters of the respondents had held B.Ed. degrees, and that more than half had held other baccalaureate degrees, such as Bachelor of Arts or Bachelor of Science. Master's degrees were held by about 60% of the respondents, with nearly all being in Education. Somewhat over one third of the respondents had acquired Diplomas in Education; only six had obtained a Ph.D. or Ed.D. degree.

Table 4.4

Distribution of Respondents by Degrees/Diplomas Held at Time of First Appointment

| Degrees/diplomas | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| B.Ed. | 62 | 75.6 |
| B.A., B.Sc., etc. | 48 | 58.5 |
| Master's in Education | 46 | 56.1 |
| Diploma in Education | 30 | 36.6 |
| Ph.D. or Ed.D. | 6 | 7.3 |
| Master's other than in Education | 4 | 4.9 |

A cross-tabulation of three age categories and qualifications of directors shown in Tables 4.5 and 4.6 indicated some contingencies between these characteristics. Of the 46 respondents holding Master's degrees in Education at time of first appointment, the largest number (20) were between the ages of 45 and 49. Sixteen respondents were under

Table 4.5

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Diploma Qualifications

| Diploma in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 15 | 9 | 6 | 30 |
| No | 10 | 20 | 22 | 52 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 9.07 p = .01

Table 4.6

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Master's Qualifications

| Master's in Education | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 16 | 20 | 10 | 46 |
| No | 9 | 9 | 18 | 36 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 7.31 p = .03

the age of 45, and 10 were 50 years of age or older. Thirty respondents held Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, and of these the largest number (15) were under 45 years of age, 9 were between the ages of 45 and 49, and 6 were 50 years of age or older.

Table 4.7 indicates a cross-tabulation of division size and qualifications of directors which indicated some contingencies. Of the 30 respondents holding Diplomas in Education at the time of first appointment, 25 were located in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers, and 5 were in divisions employing more than 101 teachers.

Table 4.7

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Diploma Qualifications of Directors

| | Division size | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Diploma in education | -101 teachers f | 101+ teachers f | f |
| Yes | 25 | 5 | 30 |
| No | 27 | 25 | 52 |
| Total | 52 | 30 | 82 |

Chi-square = 6.79 p = .01

The results of these cross-tabulations indicate that younger directors were more likely to hold a Diploma at the time of first appointment and to be employed in smaller divisions; older directors were more likely to hold a Master's degree and to be employed in larger divisions.

Table 4.8 indicates that the major subject area of credit courses beyond the bachelor's level at the time of the first appointment to a directorship was in administration or supervision, with about 87% of respondents falling into this category. Forty percent of respondents took credit courses in the area of curriculum studies, and nearly 20% studied in the areas of educational foundations, and the same number studied in other educational areas. Only 19 respondents identified guidance and counselling or credit courses in a discipline other than education.

Table 4.8

Distribution of Respondents by Subject Areas of Credit Courses Beyond the Bachelor's Level at Time of First Appointment

| Subject area | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Administration or supervision | 71 | 86.6 |
| Curriculum studies | 33 | 40.2 |
| Educational foundations | 16 | 19.5 |
| Other educational area | 16 | 19.5 |
| Guidance and counselling | 11 | 13.4 |
| Discipline other than education | 8 | 9.8 |

Results of responses to the question about formal preparation in educational administration at the time of first appointment are presented in Table 4.9. One half of the directors indicated that they had a specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program at the time of first appointment. About 15 percent of respondents had courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level, and the same

Table 4.9

Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Formal Study/Preparation in Educational Administration or Supervision at Time of First Appointment

| Formal study/preparation | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program | 41 | 50.0 |
| Courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level | 12 | 14.6 |
| Studies beyond the Master's level | 12 | 14.6 |
| Some courses on a Master's program, but specialization in another area | 11 | 13.4 |
| None of the above | 6 | 7.3 |

proportion had studied beyond the Master's level. A lower proportion of respondents had some courses on a Master's program but had specialized in another area. Only six respondents had formal study/preparation in areas other than those mentioned in the questionnaire.

## Professional Development Activities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their involvement in various activities prior to their first appointment as director. Table 4.10 shows the extent of the respondents' involvement. The average number of educational associations in which respondents held memberships was 3.59, while in associations outside the field of education the average number was 2.81. They chaired conventions/committees on an average of 3.01 times and held presidencies on approximately 2.80 occasions. The respondents indicated that they had served on about 2.5 boards/commissions on average and held few positions in

Table 4.10

Mean Number of Memberships and Activities in Which Respondents Were Involved Prior to First Appointment as Director

| Memberships/activities | Mean |
|---|---|
| Number of educational associations in which memberships were held | 3.59 |
| Number of conventions/committees chaired | 3.01 |
| Number of associations outside the field of education in which memberships were held | 2.8 |
| Number of presidencies held | 2.8 |
| Number of boards/commissions served on | 2.54 |
| Number of provincial/national offices held | 1.00 |

provincial/national offices.

Participants in the study were also asked to identify various professional development activities which they considered to be relevant to their preparation for the position of director of education. Results of the analysis of responses to the open-ended question suggest that these could be placed into four categories: (1) seminars, workshops, and conferences; (2) courses/classes; (3) leadership development activities; and (4) past experiences.

Of the 52 directors who responded to this question, the largest number by far indicated that they had participated extensively in seminars, workshops, and conferences, and that these had been valuable professional development experiences. Five respondents singled out the Madeline Hunter seminar as having been particularly valuable, while several others mentioned seminars relating to teacher effectiveness,

teacher supervision, and curriculum development. A number of respondents commented on the value of the camaraderie in "talking with colleagues and other directors" at seminars, workshops, and conferences which they had attended.

Approximately one third of those responding to this question indicated that courses/classes had served a professional development function in their preparation for the position of director of education. Eleven respondents singled out the Saskatchewan Principals' Short Course as having been particularly valuable, seven mentioned the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents short courses, and two cited the Banff Short Course. The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Administrative Leadership Development Program was mentioned by three respondents for its value in their preparation for a directorship, and university graduate studies were cited by four respondents as being helpful. In addition, six respondents indicated that they considered professional reading to have been very valuable in their preparation for a directorship.

Nine respondents to this open-ended question indicated the importance of their involvements with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation in preparing them for the position of director of education. More specifically, they cited serving as councillor, as local president, on ad hoc committees, and being involved with Project T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Effectiveness and Classroom Handling) as being noteworthy.

Respondents also mentioned the value of having chaired committees as well as having served on executives of provincial and national associations, particularly in the capacity of president.

Past work experiences such as having been a successful principal, an

assistant superintendent, an apprentice under an outstanding director, a university lecturer, and a Department of Education employee were among the other activities identified by respondents as having been useful experiences in their preparation for a directorship.

## Factors Related to Career Decisions

Circumstances which might have influenced respondents to pursue administrative careers generally and that of director specifically were explored through both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

### Administrative Career Decision

Respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale the importance they attached to various factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career. The data in Table 4.11 indicate that for the respondents, the single most important factor in making the decision was a personal assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education. The mean of the ratings for this factor was 4.22 on the five-point scale. The second most important factor, which respondents rated moderately important (mean = 3.74), was the confidence they had in their own abilities as a result of formal studies. Next in importance and also rated moderately important (mean = 3.51) were the guidance they had received from mentors and the opportunities for leadership development they had had in their teaching careers. Also considered to be moderately important by respondents in deciding to pursue an administrative career were the factors relating to encouragement of others, support of a network of professional colleagues, and involvement in educational associations. Encouragement of

Table 4.11

Mean Importance Rating of Factors Influencing Decision to Pursue an Administrative Career

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Assessment of own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education | 4.22 |
| Confidence in abilities as a result of formal studies | 3.74 |
| Guidance of mentors | 3.[illegible] |
| Opportunities for leadership development in the teaching career | 3.51 |
| Encouragement of others | 3.25 |
| Support of a network of professional colleagues | 3.16 |
| Involvement in educational associations | 3.13 |
| Encouragement of family/parents | 2.79 |
| Involvement in clubs/associations outside the field of education | 2.74 |
| Opportunities for leadership development as a youth in school | 2.57 |

family/parents, involvement in clubs/associations outside the field of education, and opportunities for leadership development as a youth in school were rated by respondents as not highly important factors in the decision to pursue an administrative career.

A cross-tabulation of ratings of importance of factors and location of school division resulted in one statistically significant Chi-square test. The results are shown in Table 4.12. Nearly two thirds of the 63 respondents whose school division was in a rural area felt that the guidance of mentors was highly important in making their decision to pursue an administrative career. Thirteen considered the guidance of mentors to be moderately important, and 10 felt it was not very important. Of the 19 respondents whose school division was in a city, 8 considered the guidance of mentors to be moderately important in making their decision to pursue an administrative career, 5 considered it to be highly important, and 6 felt it was not very important.

The results of this cross-tabulation tend to suggest that directors in rural divisions consider the guidance of mentors in making their decision to pursue an administrative career to be somewhat more important than do directors in cities.

## Directorship Career Decision

Table 4.13 shows the importance respondents attached to various factors in making their decision to seek the position of director of education. Factors were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being highly important and 1 being not very important. Two factors--the challenge of the job (mean = 4.59) and the opportunity to influence educational policy (mean = 4.54)--were considered by the respondents to

Table 4.12

Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Importance of Mentors in Pursuing an Administrative Career

| | Highly important | Moderately important | Not very important | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Location | f | f | f | f |
| City | 5 | 8 | 6 | 19 |
| Rural | 40 | 13 | 10 | 63 |
| Total | 45 | 21 | 16 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.15 p = .02

Table 4.13

Mean Importance Rating of Factors in Deciding to Pursue a Directorship

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Challenge of the job | 4.59 |
| Opportunity to influence educational policy | 4.54 |
| Career progress | 4.17 |
| Employment considerations | 3.30 |
| Prestige/status | 2.87 |
| Other | 4.66 |

be highly important. Of somewhat less importance, but still with a relatively high mean rating (4.17), was the factor of career progress. Rated moderately important by respondents was employment considerations; prestige/status did not appear to be a significant factor. Respondents also identified other factors as being important. These "other" factors included mentors, desire to serve education, recruitment, status, self-actualization, ambition, time for a change, opportunity to interact with people from all walks of life, and belief in self.

Respondents were also asked to describe, in response to an open-ended question, an important event(s) in their career which they consider to have been a major factor in encouraging them to become a director of education. Sixty-five directors responded to this question. Their responses fell into four categories: (1) encouragement of others, (2) successful work experience, (3) personal initiative, and (4) legislative change.

Twenty respondents cited the encouragement of others as an important event in their career, and eight indicated that they had been asked to apply. The term "encouragement" was used in nearly all of the responses. Respondents received most encouragement from those with whom they worked closely: directors, superintendents, and supervisors. Several cited board members and board chairmen as having encouraged them, and several indicated encouragement from close professional colleagues and other people. In several instances, single events were cited as having played an important part in encouraging respondents to pursue a directorship: "a statement by the director that I was the principal in the system who had the most potential to succeed as a director," and "a conversation with a former superintendent who suggested that I would do very well in

such a position." Many respondents used the term "mentor" in referring to a person who encouraged them, and several respondents indicated that their director/superintendent was also their mentor.

The second most frequent type of response regarding important events in the career of aspiring directors was in the area of successful work experience. Eleven respondents to this question cited their success as a principal as having given them confidence in their abilities as a leader, and many related this success to working for a very good director: "working for Mr. _____, who was a very good director," "admiring Mr. _____, my Director of Education." The assistant directorship was another position cited by seven respondents as having been a successful work experience which led to their application for a directorship: "working as an assistant director under a very formative mentor, the director of education," and "experience as an assistant director."

Six respondents indicated personal initiative as having been a factor in encouraging them to seek a directorship. A large number of respondents cited university graduate classes, usually culminating in a Master's degree or a Graduate Diploma, as having been important events for them. Three respondents felt they needed a change and applied for a directorship: "I realize that if I didn't find a new challenge, I would soon slip into retirement on the job, and I was only 40!" "realization that I was growing older and that a change was required," and "I was stagnating." Still other respondents indicated that they developed confidence in their own abilities after seeing a director doing a poor job: "dissatisfaction with the performance of the previous director and a determination to do better," "had a weak director . . . I became informal leader and trustees turned to me."

The legislative change in Saskatchewan in 1970, which allowed school boards to hire their own directors of education rather than having them appointed provincially, was seen by a relatively small number of directors (three) as having been an important event in their career which led to their appointment to a directorship.

## Recruitment and Selection

Movement into a directorship position or among such positions may be assumed to involve an awareness on the part of applicants of a vacancy, application procedures on the part of applicants, and formal selection processes. The respondents' views and perceptions of various aspects of those processes are presented in this section.

### Awareness and Application

Respondents were asked to indicate how they became aware of the availability of their current position. Table 4.14 shows that the most frequent means of awareness was through a newspaper advertisement; just under half of the respondents indicated that this was how they became aware that their current position was available. Eighteen respondents indicated that they became aware that their current position was available from the former director of education, and nearly as many indicated that they were invited to apply. A very small number of respondents (six) became aware through the network of professional colleagues, only one had made personal inquiries in regard to the availability of the current position, and two had become aware that their current position was available through other means.

Table 4.14

Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Awareness of Availability of Current Position

| Source of awareness | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Newspaper advertisement | 38 | 46.3 |
| Former director of education | 18 | 22.0 |
| Was invited to apply | 17 | 20.7 |
| Network of professional colleagues | 6 | 7.3 |
| Personal inquiry | 1 | 1.2 |
| Other | 2 | 2.4 |
| District newsletter | 0 | 0 |
| Advertisement in a professional magazine | 0 | 0 |
| Notification from the school district with regard to an application already on file | 0 | 0 |

A review of data collected related to steps taken in applying for their first directorship, and shown in Table 4.15, revealed that over two thirds of respondents had made casual inquiries about the characteristics of the school division, and that nearly 60% had inquired about the community as a place to live or about procedures and characteristics of the board. About one third of the respondents had made casual inquiries about employment conditions, and one fourth had inquired about the preferred management style of the director. Only a small number of respondents had made casual inquiries about administrative hiring practices or other matters.

Respondents indicated that in applying for their first directorship

Table 4.15

Frequency of Mention of Various Steps Taken in Applying for the First Directorship

| Specific action | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Casual inquiries about: | | |
| Characteristics of the school division | 56 | 68.3 |
| Community as a place to live | 49 | 59.7 |
| Procedures and characteristics of the board | 48 | 58.5 |
| Employment conditions | 28 | 34.1 |
| Preferred management style of the director | 21 | 25.6 |
| Administrative hiring practices | 10 | 12.2 |
| Other | 14 | 17.1 |
| Informal discussions with: | | |
| The former director | 47 | 57.3 |
| Mentors/colleagues | 40 | 48.8 |
| The regional director | 32 | 39.0 |
| Board members | 23 | 28.0 |
| Staff members of L.E.A.D.S. | 20 | 24.4 |
| Acquaintances living in the district | 17 | 20.7 |
| Staff members of S.S.T.A. | 11 | 13.4 |
| Discussions with other people | 3 | 3.7 |
| Informal visits to: | | |
| Schools/towns in the district | 26 | 31.7 |
| Site of the director's office | 26 | 31.7 |

they had informal discussions with a variety of people. Over half had had discussions with the former director, nearly half had had discussions with mentors/colleagues, and over one third had had discussions with the regional director. Approximately one quarter of respondents had had discussions with board members, with staff members of the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, and with acquaintances living in the division. Only a small number of respondents had had discussions with staff members of the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and with other people.

In applying for their first directorship, nearly one third of the respondents indicated that they had made informal visits to the schools/towns in the division and to the site of the director's office.

In a cross-tabulation of application procedures with school district location and age of directors, a significant contingency was observed for two steps. The first, as shown in Table 4.16, indicates that of the 63 respondents who are employed in rural school districts, 20 made casual inquiries about the preferred management style of the director of education before applying for their first directorship. Of the 19 directors employed in cities, only one made casual inquiries of this nature. The second, as shown in Table 4.17, indicates that of the 32 respondents who had informal discussions with the regional director prior to applying for their first directorship, one half (16) were between the ages of 45 and 49, 12 were 50 years of age or over, and 4 were under the age of 45.

The results of these cross-tabulations indicate that rural directors made casual inquiries about the preferred management style of the director prior to applying for their first directorship more frequently

Table 4.16

Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Casual Inquiries Regarding the Preferred Management Style of the Director Prior to First Application

| Casual inquiries regarding management style | Location | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | City f | Rural f | f |
| Yes | 1 | 20 | 21 |
| No | 18 | 43 | 61 |
| Total | 19 | 63 | 82 |

Chi-square = 4.07 p = .04

Table 4.17

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Having Informal Discussions with the Regional Director Prior to First Application

| Informal discussions with the regional director | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 4 | 16 | 12 | 32 |
| No | 21 | 13 | 16 | 50 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.92 p = .01

than did directors employed in cities. In addition, directors over the age of 45 were much more likely to have informal discussions with the regional director prior to applying for their first directorship than were those under the age of 45.

## Selection Processes

The data in Table 4.18 show the elements present in the selection process for the first directorship and reveal that in over 90% of cases an interview took place. Respondents also indicated that over 80% of the time the position was advertised provincially, a short-list was established, and references were checked. Forty-one percent of respondents indicated that a policy of selection procedures was in place, and about the same proportion indicated that a search committee was

Table 4.18

Frequency of Mention of Elements Present in the Selection Process for the First Directorship

| Selection element | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| An interview took place | 75 | 91.5 |
| The position was advertised provincially | 70 | 85.4 |
| A short-list was established | 69 | 84.1 |
| References were checked | 69 | 84.1 |
| A policy of selection procedures was in place | 34 | 41.4 |
| A search committee was established | 33 | 40.2 |
| The position was advertised nationally | 11 | 13.4 |
| A second/follow-up interview was held | 11 | 13.4 |

established. Only a small number of respondents indicated that the position was advertised nationally or that a second/follow-up interview was held.

Several contingencies were identified when this questionnaire item was cross-tabulated with three age groups of directors. The results of these findings are shown in Tables 4.19, 4.20, and 4.21. Of the 70 respondents who indicated that the position was advertised provincially, 28 were between the ages of 45 and 49, one third (23) was under the age of 45, and 19 were 50 years of age or over. Sixty-nine directors responded identically in regard to the checking of references and establishing a short-list. Over two thirds (50) in both cases were under the age of 50 years, with 27 being between 45 and 49 and 23 being under 45. Nineteen were 50 years of age or over.

The findings from this cross-tabulation indicate that for their

Table 4.19

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Advertising the Position Provincially

| The position was advertised provincially | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 28 | 19 | 70 |
| No | 2 | 1 | 9 | 12 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 10.66 p = .00

Table 4.20

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Checking of References

| | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Your references were checked | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 27 | 19 | 69 |
| No | 2 | 2 | 9 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.47 p = .01

Table 4.21

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Establishing a Short-List

| | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A short-list was established | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 27 | 19 | 69 |
| No | 2 | 2 | 9 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.47 p = .01

first appointment to a directorship, the position was advertised provincially, their references were checked, and a short-list was established most frequently for the respondents between the ages of 45 and 49, less frequently for those under 45, and least frequently for those over 50. These results may indicate that selection procedures have changed in recent years.

Respondents were asked to indicate the membership of the interview panel for their first directorship. As is indicated in Table 4.22, 68 respondents indicated that all board members served on the interview panel, whereas only six indicated that only some board members served on the panel. Slightly over half of the respondents indicated that the regional director served on the panel, and just over one quarter of respondents indicated that central office representatives were also

Table 4.22

Frequency of Mention of Specific Members of the Interview Panel for the First Directorship

| Panel membership | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| All board members | 68 | 82.9 |
| The regional director | 44 | 53.7 |
| Central Office representatives | 24 | 29.3 |
| The former director of education | 18 | 22.0 |
| Some board members | 6 | 7.3 |
| Principal representatives | 3 | 3.7 |
| Teacher representatives | 2 | 2.4 |
| Parent representatives | 0 | 0 |

included. Eighteen respondents indicated that the former director of education served on the panel. A very small number of respondents indicated the panel included a principal representative or teacher representatives.

A cross-tabulation of division size and members of the interview panel shown in Tables 4.23 and 4.24 indicated some contingencies between these variables. Of the 52 respondents who revealed that the regional director was a member of the interview panel for their first directorship, 30 indicated that this was the case in divisions employing more than 101 teachers and 22 indicated that this was true in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers. In divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers, the 18 respondents indicated that 15 of them had also had the former director of education as a member of the interview panel, whereas in school divisions employing more than 101 teachers only 3 indicated that this was the case.

The findings from these cross-tabulations indicate that regional directors served on the interview panel for respondents' first directorship more frequently in larger school divisions, and that the former director of education served on this panel more frequently in smaller divisions than in larger divisions.

## Selection Criteria

The data in Table 4.25 show the means of the respondents' rating of the perceived importance attached to characteristics of applicants used as criteria in the selection process. The criteria were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being highly important and 1 being not very important. Respondents perceived that educational/administrative skills,

Table 4.23

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Regional Director as Member of the Interview Panel

| | Division size | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Regional director on panel | -101 teachers f | 101+ teachers f | f |
| Yes | 22 | 30 | 52 |
| No | 22 | 8 | 30 |
| Total | 44 | 38 | 82 |

Chi-square = 6.17 p = .01

Table 4.24

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with the Former Director of Education as Member of the Interview Panel

| | Division size | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Former director of education member | -101 teachers f | 101+ teachers f | f |
| Yes | 15 | 3 | 18 |
| No | 37 | 27 | 64 |
| Total | 52 | 30 | 82 |

Chi-square = 3.94 p = .05

Table 4.25

Mean Ratings of Importance of Characteristics of Applicants as Criteria in the Selection Process

| Characteristic | Mean |
|---|---|
| Educational/administrative skills, competencies, and knowledge | 4.59 |
| General professional standing | 4.40 |
| Successful experience in other school districts | 4.24 |
| Educational qualifications | 4.22 |
| Calibre of references | 4.21 |
| Potential to address specific problem(s) which require solution | 4.14 |
| Compatibility with the social and educational context | 4.13 |
| Clarity of professional goals | 4.11 |
| Readiness to initiate change | 3.98 |
| Political sensitivity/skills | 3.80 |
| Readiness to support established policies | 3.78 |
| Professional experience in the district | 2.45 |
| Seniority | 1.65 |
| Other | 4.72 |

competencies, and knowledge (mean = 4.59) and general professional standing (mean = 4.40) were of highest importance. Three characteristics with only slightly lower means included successful experience in other school districts, educational qualifications, and calibre of references. Three additional characteristics had mean ratings above 4.00, namely, potential to address specific problem(s) which require solution, compatibility with the social and educational context, and clarity of professional goals. Of moderate importance were three items with mean ratings between 3.70 and 4.00: readiness to initiate change, political sensitivity/skills, and readiness to support established policies. Professional experience in the district and seniority were perceived as not highly important by respondents. Other characteristics of applicants which were perceived as important criteria in the selection process included commitment to a Christian lifestyle, ability to get along with others and to make decisions, desire to work in a larger system, leadership, the right "chemistry," independence, and openness to minority groups.

One cross-tabulation shown in Table 4.26 indicated a contingency between perceived importance of educational qualifications with the age of directors. Of the 25 respondents under 45 years of age, 20 perceived that educational qualifications in director selection were highly important criteria, while the remainder (5) indicated that these criteria were only moderately important or not very important criteria. Twenty-two of the directors in the 45-49-year age bracket perceived that these criteria for selection were highly important, while seven perceived that they were moderately important or not very important. All 27 respondents 50 years of age or over perceived that educational

Table 4.26

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Importance of Educational Qualifications in Director Selection

| | Highly important | Moderately important or not very important | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | f | f | f |
| Under 45 | 20 | 5 | 25 |
| 45-49 | 22 | 7 | 29 |
| 50 or over | 27 | 0 | 27 |
| Total | 69 | 12 | 81 |

Chi-square = 7.23 p = .03

qualifications were highly important criteria for selection of directors.

The results indicate that there is greater consensus among directors 50 years of age or over regarding the perceived importance of educational qualifications in the selection of directors as compared to views of directors in younger age categories.

## Satisfaction and Stress

Respondents were asked to outline in response to an open-ended question various aspects of the position of director of education which they found to be satisfying or fulfilling and frustrating or stressful. All but three of the respondents provided a response to this question.

## Sources of Satisfaction

The major sources of satisfaction identified by respondents fell into four categories: (1) helping others, (2) opportunity to influence education, (3) working with people, and (4) top-level administration.

Helping others. Over one half of the responses were in this category. Respondents defined the theme of "helping others" with general statements such as "interpersonal opportunities," "providing opportunities for others to experience success," and "opportunity to facilitate plans of others." Specific sub-themes were identified which related to helping or working with particular categories of people: students, teachers, other administrators, and parents.

A significant number of responses (17) were directly related to helping students by "enhancing educational opportunities for students," "influencing policies and practices which affect student learning," "providing excellence of service to children," "introducing programs which improve education and kids," "bringing about appropriate positive change for the betterment of children," "providing needed service to children," "the challenge to lead improvement for youngsters," "improving student progress," "improving the curriculum and programs/teaching and learning," and "the opportunity to bring about appropriate positive change for the betterment of children."

Thirteen responses in regard to satisfaction of directors centered directly around helping teachers to do a better job through staff development, classroom observations/supervision, increasing morale, team building, visiting schools and students, associating with the teaching-learning process, working cooperatively with school administrators and teachers, and "seeing positive change in teachers that improves the

learning situation for students."

Some respondents (approximately 11) indicated that they had achieved considerable satisfaction from "helping administrators do a better job" and thereby affecting education in a very positive sense. They derived satisfaction from developing an administrative team, working cooperatively with them and helping them to grow, working toward a common goal, developing long-term plans with the administrative team, and grooming and coaching prospective administrators who will become successful in their own right.

Another area in which directors found satisfaction was that of helping parents. Some directors enjoyed "helping parents understand their child's capabilities and working to help them," "developing and sustaining a team that serves the family and each child," "working closely with parents," and developing local community involvement.

Ten respondents recognized the satisfaction from working with the board by influencing change in attitude of the board, working with a supportive board, "developing good solid board-director relationships," "interaction with the Board of Education and the Board of Trustees," "helping board members," and "developing strong positive board vision and leadership." They also derived satisfaction from professional development with the board by conceptualizing the functions of the board members, and by helping the board and the public to understand and accept the goals of the division.

Opportunity to influence education. Approximately one third of the responses related to the satisfaction respondents experienced from having the opportunity to influence education. Some respondents indicated the satisfaction they experienced from seeing the changes they had

recommended succeed; from providing leadership in curriculum; from influencing change in policy, practices, attitudes of the board, teachers, and administrations; and from "working for causes that really matter." Others recognized the satisfaction they enjoyed in having the freedom to affect change; "in providing leadership, counsel, and inspiration"; in having the ability to move the system in a positive direction; and in being able to support innovative ideas. In addition, some respondents derived satisfaction from being able to initiate change, give direction, establish a purposeful climate in the division, influence education in the division, develop programs/policies which directly affect students, and by successfully solving problems. A number of respondents indicated the satisfaction they received from planning for the future, formulating and implementing a mission statement for the school division, "promoting a vision of education," achieving objectives and goals established for the system, and from having "futuristic ideas."

Working with people. A small number of respondents who replied to this open-ended question gave approximately 13 responses which related to working with people. A significant number of responses related to the satisfaction they received from working with "supportive boards" and "competent teachers," from having the "opportunity to learn from colleagues," and from "contacts through L.E.A.D.S." One respondent indicated that he experienced satisfaction from "interpersonal opportunities," and another from "working with a large group of colleagues."

Top-level administration. Approximately 10 responses related to satisfaction felt in making top-level decisions, in "having responsibility," in "solving complex problems," and in "the variety of

challenges" afforded by the position. "Freedom to establish your own schedule" and having flexibility were cited as areas of satisfaction by two respondents, as were money, prestige, status, and respect.

## Sources of Stress

The responses to this open-ended question could be placed into three major categories: (1) people, (2) resources, and (3) nature of the role.

People. Of the total comments made in relation to this question, the largest number fell into this category. The people who were identified as sources of stress or frustration included board members, teachers, and various other individuals.

Twenty-eight percent of the respondents commented on the frustration they felt in working with board members. Comments centered largely around interference by board members in the day-to-day operations of the division by "not seeing their role as policy makers vs. administrators" and thinking "they are educational experts and thereby getting in the way." Several comments focussed on the frustration of "dealing with new board members before orientation" and "dealing with those with a personal/hidden agenda." Frustration was also felt in regard to board members' over-concern with their image and thereby "waffling on decisions because of local pressure," and by board members who "make all of their decisions based on the dollar." A number of comments related to local school board members/trustees who want to be involved in all major decisions and "who do not understand the process of governance of education."

The second largest number of comments in regard to personnel was in the area of teachers. Of the responses in this area, most related to the

frustrations experienced in regard to "weak, unmotivated teachers" who "lack initiative/motivation," teachers who resist change, "negative teachers" and "mediocrity/laissez-faire teachers," and the difficulty directors experience in "weeding them out." Several directors indicated that they experienced frustration and stress in dismissing and transferring teachers.

A small number of respondents (9) indicated frustration in dealing with various other people such as the secretary-treasurer and parents, as well as the Deputy Minister and the Department of Education, particularly in regard to personnel in the latter two instances being "uncollaborative" and providing "limited leadership."

**Resources**. Approximately one quarter of respondents indicated that they experienced frustration and stress in regard to matters related to money, most of which were of the nature of "lack of funds" and "limited resources." They experienced frustration in "matching budgets and curriculum implementation," in "meeting increasing demands with decreasing resources," and with "maintaining a low mill rate at the expense of quality education." In addition, school closures were cited by several directors as areas of frustration and stress.

**Nature of the role**. Several other role-related factors were cited by directors as sources of frustration and stress. Of these, the largest number related to a lack of time for the performance of duties and to the excessive amount of paperwork/forms. A significant number of respondents indicated areas of frustration and stress as being related to "small 'p' politics," with the "irrational political world vs. the rational world of planning" as being problematic. A number of other frustrations and stresses of directors were cited by respondents, including unclear

channels of communication, lack of focus on the job specifications, unfounded criticisms/rumors, pressure groups, very little praise, conflicts, and "damned if you do/damned if you don't situations."

## Mobility and Career Plans

The factors which contribute to mobility in the directorship and particular career plans were explored through a number of closed-ended questions. A number of aspects of mobility and career plans were related to individual and division characteristics.

### Factors Influencing Mobility

Respondents who had previously served in the capacity of director of education were asked to rate, on five-point scales, the importance they attached to factors which attracted them to their current position, as well as those associated with leaving the last position. As is indicated in Table 4.27, professional challenge was rated as highly important. Six other factors were rated as moderately important: nature of the school division, career advancement, attractiveness of the community, opportunity to work in a larger division, employment conditions, and personal/family reasons. Philosophy of the board (mean = 2.81) and board relations and policies (mean = 2.76) were not significant factors in attracting directors to their current position. A small number of respondents rated other factors as highly important. These factors included time for a change, less travel, desire for prestige, and a supportive board.

None of the factors associated with leaving the previous position which are listed in Table 4.28 was rated as being of more than moderate

Table 4.27

Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Attracting Directors to Current Position

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Professional challenge | 4.20 |
| Nature of the school division | 3.70 |
| Career advancement | 3.44 |
| Attractiveness of the community | 3.38 |
| Opportunity to work in a larger division | 3.33 |
| Employment considerations | 3.33 |
| Personal/family reasons | 3.24 |
| Philosophy of the board | 2.81 |
| Board relations and policies | 2.76 |
| Other | 4.00 |

importance. Five items had mean ratings between 2.50 and 3.00: employment considerations, limited career opportunities, limited professional challenge, nature of the school division, and personal/family reasons. Respondents rated three items as not very important: community attractiveness, relationship with the board, and relationships with the professional staff. A small number of respondents identified other factors as highly important: travelling distance within the division, extreme political interference, time for a change, and a one-year appointment.

The rating of importance of professional challenge as a factor in leaving when cross-tabulated with the size of school divisions indicated

Table 4.28

Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Leaving Last Directorship

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Employment considerations | 2.84 |
| Limited career opportunities | 2.80 |
| Limited professional challenge | 2.76 |
| Nature of the school division | 2.64 |
| Personal/family reasons | 2.52 |
| Community attractiveness | 2.20 |
| Relationship with the board | 2.16 |
| Relationship with the professional staff | 1.56 |
| Other | 5.00 |

a significant contingency, as shown in Table 4.29. Twelve of the 13 respondents in school divisions employing 101 or more teachers rated limited professional challenge as a limited or moderate factor in leaving their last directorship, while only one respondent rated this factor as highly important. Of the 12 respondents employed in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers, 8 rated limited professional challenge as a highly important factor in leaving their last directorship, whereas four rated this factor as not very important or moderately important.

The results indicate that directors in smaller school divisions tend to feel more strongly that limited professional challenge is an important factor in leaving their last directorship than do directors in larger school divisions.

Table 4.29

Cross-Tabulation of Size of Division with Importance of Professional Challenge as a Factor in Leaving Last Directorship

| Rating of importance | Division size: -101 teachers f | Division size: 101+ teachers f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not very important or moderately important | 4 | 12 | 16 |
| Highly important | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| Total | 12 | 13 | 25 |

Chi-square = 7.03 p = .01

## Future Career Plans

Table 4.30 provides data on the future plans of directors of education. Over half of the respondents indicated that they plan to continue in their current position until retirement, and nearly one fifth indicated that they plan to seek another position as director. Only two respondents indicated that they intend to return to teaching or school-level administration or to seek a position outside the field of education. Thirteen indicated that they had other plans, such as university study/teaching, working in the business community, consulting in human relations, retirement, or becoming an assistant in a large urban division.

A cross-tabulation of future plans with the age of directors revealed a significant contingency. The results are shown in Table 4.31.

Table 4.30

Distribution of Respondents by Future Plans

| Plan | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Continue in current position until retirement | 48 | 60.0 |
| Another position as director | 15 | 18.8 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 2 | 2.4 |
| Position outside the field of education | 2 | 2.4 |
| Other | 13 | 16.4 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

Over one half of the respondents indicated that they plan to continue in this position until retirement. Of these, 22 were 50 years of age or older, 18 were between the ages of 45 and 49, and 8 were under 45. Of the 15 respondents who plan to seek another position as director of education, most (8) were under 45, 5 were between 45 and 49, and 2 were 50 years of age or older. Two respondents, both under age 45, plan to return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator; and two respondents, one under 45 and the other between 45 and 49, plan to seek positions outside the field of education. Thirteen respondents indicated that they have plans other than those listed in the questionnaire, six of whom were under 45, three were between 45 and 49, and four were 50 years of age or older.

The results of this analysis indicate that directors 50 years of age or older tend to plan to remain in their current position until

Table 4.31

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Future Plans

| Future plan | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Another position as director of education | 8 | 5 | 2 | 15 |
| Continue in this position until retirement | 8 | 18 | 22 | 48 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Position outside the field of education | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Other | 6 | 3 | 4 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 27 | 28 | 80 |

Chi-square = 16.34 p = .04

retirement while those under the age of 50 tend to plan to continue in this position until retirement or seek another position as director of education. In general, the results suggest that the older respondents were, the more likely they were to continue in this position until retirement and the less likely they were to seek another position as director of education.

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years in which they are likely to leave the directorship. The data in Table 4.32 indicate

that over one fourth of the respondents are likely to leave the directorship within the next three years and nearly one half within five years. Just under one fourth expect to be in the directorship for 10 years.

Table 4.32

Distribution of Respondents by Number of Years in Which They Are Likely to Leave the Directorship

| Number of years | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Within 1 year | 12 | 15.0 |
| 2-3 years | 11 | 13.8 |
| 4-5 years | 15 | 18.8 |
| 6-7 years | 17 | 21.3 |
| 8-9 years | 6 | 7.4 |
| 10 years or more | 19 | 23.7 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

A cross-tabulation of years to retirement or career change with the age of directors revealed a significant contingency; the results are shown in Table 4.33.

Of the 19 directors who do not plan to retire or change careers for 10 or more years, 13 are under the age of 45, 5 are between 45 and 49, and 1 is 50 years of age or older. Six respondents plan to leave the position in eight or nine years, four of whom are between the ages of 45 and 49, and two are under the age of 45. None are 50 years of age or older.

Table 4.33

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Years to Retirement or Career Change

| Number of years | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Within 1 year | 3 | 1 | 8 | 12 |
| 2-3 years | 1 | 1 | 9 | 11 |
| 4-5 years | 2 | 6 | 7 | 15 |
| 6-7 years | 3 | 12 | 2 | 17 |
| 8-9 years | 2 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| 10 years or later | 13 | 5 | 1 | 19 |
| Total | 24 | 29 | 27 | 80 |

Chi-square = 46.94 p = .0000

Seventeen directors plan to leave the position within six or seven years, most (12) of whom are between the ages of 45 and 49, with 3 being under 45 and 2 being 50 years of age or older. Slightly less than one fifth of respondents plan to retire or change careers within four to five years. Nearly one half of this group are 50 years of age or older. Eleven plan to retire or change careers within two or three years. Nine of these respondents are 50 years of age or older, one is under 45, and another is between 45 and 49 years of age.

Twelve directors plan to leave the position within one year. Of these, eight are 50 years of age or older, three are under 45, and one is

between 45 and 49.

The results of this analysis indicate that of the directors who are 50 years of age or older, most plan to leave their position within the next three years. As is to be expected, the younger the respondents are, the less likely they are to leave the position in the near future. Most respondents between 45 and 49 plan to leave the position in four to seven years, and those under 45 plan to leave in eight or more years.

## Summary

Although there is some variation in the professional backgrounds of directors of education in Saskatchewan, all of them have experience as teachers and as school or division-level administrators. The position from which the directors moved into their current one is almost equally likely to be another directorship, a principalship, or an assistant directorship in Saskatchewan. About two thirds of the directors held at least a Master's degree at the time of first appointment, and most of them had specialized in administration or supervision in coursework beyond the initial degree. The directors regarded their involvement in seminars, workshops, and conferences to be a significant aspect of their professional development.

A significant factor in the decision to pursue an administrative career was the personal assessment of abilities. The decision to undertake a directorship was influenced by the challenge of the job, the opportunity to influence educational policy, and desire for career progress. Encouragement of others, successful work experience, and personal initiative were identified by directors among important events in their career decision.

Awareness of the availability of a directorship position resulted primarily from newspaper advertisements and the former director. Most of the directors made casual inquiries about the school division, the community, and the board before applying. The former director, colleagues, and the regional director were significant sources of information. Among fairly normal selection procedures used by boards were province-wide advertising, establishing a short list, checking references, and interviewing. All board members participated in the interview in the majority of cases, and the regional director participated in about half of the cases. Directors perceived that relevant criteria such as educational/administrative competence, general professional standing, and successful experience were important in the selection decision.

Among the major sources of satisfaction reported by directors were helping others, the opportunity to influence education, and general self-fulfilment. Major sources of stress included people problems, lack of resources, and the nature of the role. The mobility of directors was influenced more by attractive aspects of the new position than by undesirable characteristics of the former position. Directors were likely to find the professional challenge of the new position, the nature of the division and community, and general career advancement as factors in their decision to accept a new position. On the other hand, factors such as employment considerations and limited career opportunities or professional challenge were likely to be of moderate influence on a decision to leave. More than one half of the respondents intend to remain in the current position until retirement, which will occur for about one half of all directors within five years.

# Chapter 5

# Career Patterns and Career Typologies of Directors of Education

A number of typologies were developed in order to explore further the general nature of careers of directors of education. The first approach was to examine the sequence of positions through which directors had moved into the directorship; second, three typologies were created on the basis of various characteristics of directors. After the various typologies were developed, their conceptual and empirical potential was explored through cross-tabulations with other characteristics of directors and their employing divisions. Analysis of variance was also used where the level of measurement warranted the appropriate assumptions. In this chapter are presented the descriptions of the four typologies, in turn, together with results of the analysis of relationships with other characteristics.

## Career Patterns

The sequence of positions through which educators move on their way to a directorship may be thought of as a career path. Since there are only a limited number of positions in the organizational structure of schools and school divisions, there is also a likelihood that a limited number of distinctive paths or patterns can be identified. The task was approached both conceptually--by defining some possible patterns--and empirically--by using a computer-sorting strategy to check on the presence of various patterns.

Four patterns of careers of directors were identified through the

data analysis; careers of all but three respondents fell into one of these patterns. Table 5.1 identifies the four major career patterns of directors, and Table 5.2 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these career patterns with characteristics of respondents and the divisions in which they are employed.

The most common career pattern of respondents, identified as Pattern "A", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal) and principal to a directorship. Of the 33 directors who followed this career pattern, 16 were over the age of 50 years and 12 were under 45 years of age. Over three quarters were located in a rural area; a similar proportion indicated that their school division employed fewer than 101 teachers. Experience as a director of those who followed this career pattern varied considerably: 11 had between 1 and 2 years of

Table 5.1

Distribution of Directors by Career Patterns

| Pattern label | Career pattern | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Teacher (including vice-principal)-principal-director | 33 | 40.2 |
| B | Teacher (including vice-principal)-principal-central office-director | 19 | 23.2 |
| C | Teacher-principal-central office-director | 16 | 19.5 |
| D | Teacher (including vice-principal)-central office-director | 11 | 13.4 |
| E | Other | 3 | 3.7 |
| Total | | 82 | 100.0 |

Table 5.2

Distribution of Career Patterns by Age, Location, Division Size, and Director Experience

| Career pattern | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| A | 12 | 5 | 16 | 8 | 25 | 25 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 10 |
| B | 4 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 4 |
| C | 6 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 5 |
| D | 3 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| Total | 25 | 26 | 28 | 18 | 61 | 51 | 28 | 25 | 33 | 21 |

experience, 12 had 3-10 years, and 10 had 11 or more years of experience.

The second most common career pattern, identified as Pattern "B", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and central office (including assistant superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director) to director. Of the 19 directors who followed this career pattern, 10 were between the ages of 45 and 49, 4 were under 45, and 5 were over 50. Over three quarters were located in rural divisions, and over half were in divisions which employed fewer than 101 teachers. Nearly one half of the directors in this classification had between 3 and 10 years of experience in this capacity.

Sixteen of the respondents indicated that their career followed Pattern "C"--teacher, principal, central office (including assistant

superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director), and director. These directors were distributed almost equally across the three age categories. Over two thirds of the directors following this career pattern were located in a rural area. Nine were employed in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers and seven in divisions of more than 101 teachers. Years of experience as a director reflected an almost equal distribution across the categories of 1-2 years, 3-10 years, or more than 10 years.

The least common career pattern of Saskatchewan directors of education, identified as Pattern "D", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal), central office (including assistant superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director), and director. Of the 11 directors whose careers fell into this classification, seven were between the ages of 45 and 49, and only one was over 50 years of age. All but one director was located in a rural area; five worked in divisions employing more than 101 teachers. Six of the directors had between 3 and 10 years of experience in a directorship, three had between 1 and 2 years of experience, and two had 11 or more years of experience.

In cross-tabulations of the career patterns of directors with their age and experience categories, and with location and size of division, a significant Chi-square value was observed only in relation to age. The data for the cross-tabulation of these two variables was the same as that presented in Table 5.2. The Chi-square value of 12.91 with df = 6 was significant at p = 0.044.

Due to the relatively low frequencies, the contingencies between these variables are difficult to discern. In general there appeared to be more clustering by age for Career Patterns A, B, and D than for C. The majority of directors with Patterns B and D were in the 45- to

49-year age category. In contrast, a minority of directors with career Pattern A was in this category, with a tendency for clustering in the younger and older categories. The 16 directors whose careers followed Pattern C were distributed almost equally across the categories.

A cross-tabulation of the four career patterns of directors with the importance which they attached to prestige/status in making their decision to seek a directorship suggested a contingency. Table 5.3 shows the cross-tabulation for the Chi-square test. As was the case with age, the low frequencies suggest the need for caution in interpreting the significance of the results. In general, somewhat less importance is attached to prestige/status by those who have followed Pattern A in their

Table 5.3

Cross-Tabulations of Career Patterns with Rating of Importance of Prestige/Status in Seeking a Directorship

| | Rating of importance | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Career pattern | Highly important | Moderately important | Not very important | Total |
| | f | f | f | f |
| A | 5 | 14 | 13 | 32 |
| B | 4 | 10 | 5 | 19 |
| C | 6 | 4 | 6 | 16 |
| D | 3 | 5 | 3 | 11 |
| Total | 18 | 33 | 27 | 78 |

Chi-square = 3.03 p = 0.39

career--somewhat higher importance is attached to the prestige of the position by those who have followed Pattern B or Pattern D.

A comparison of Tables 5.2 and 5.3 reveals that Career Patterns B and D, for which the highest proportion of directors are between the ages of 45 and 49, also have the highest proportion rating the prestige factor as moderately important.

## Career Typologies

As a further step toward developing the conceptual bases for analyzing the careers of directors of education, three separate typologies were created. The typologies reflect different personal and professional characteristics of directors. A geographic mobility typology establishes categories based on the extent to which directors have gained experience in different school divisions. The organizational mobility typology indicates the extent to which directors have experience at school and division levels. Finally, a third typology was based on age at entry to, and experience in, the position of director. Descriptions of directors in each of the categories derived from these typologies yield some insights into their conceptual relevance and potential. The labels attached to the categories are intended to be descriptive, not evaluative; they do not indicate that a particular combination of characteristics is more desirable than some other combination.

### Geographic Mobility Typology

The data for this typology of directors was generated through a combination of the experience of directors in the school division in

which they were employed at the time of the study and their previous experience as directors in other divisions. Four categories of directors were identified and are shown in Figure 5.1: (1) Novice Directors, (2) Experienced Newcomers, (3) Experienced Locals, and (4) "Old-Timers." Table 5.4 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four classifications with the four basic categories of age, location, division size, and director experience.

Table 5.4

Distributions of Geographic Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Novice Directors | 14 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 19 | 17 | 8 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Experienced Newcomers | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 2 |
| Experienced Locals | 7 | 12 | 11 | 5 | 25 | 22 | 8 | 0 | 23 | 7 |
| "Old-Timers" | 2 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 4 | 14 |
| Total | 25 | 28 | 28 | 19 | 62 | 51 | 30 | 25 | 33 | 23 |

**Novice Directors** were defined as those having limited experience (1-2 years) in their present division and no experience in other divisions. Twenty-five respondents fell into this category. Over one half of these directors were under 45 years of age. They were generally

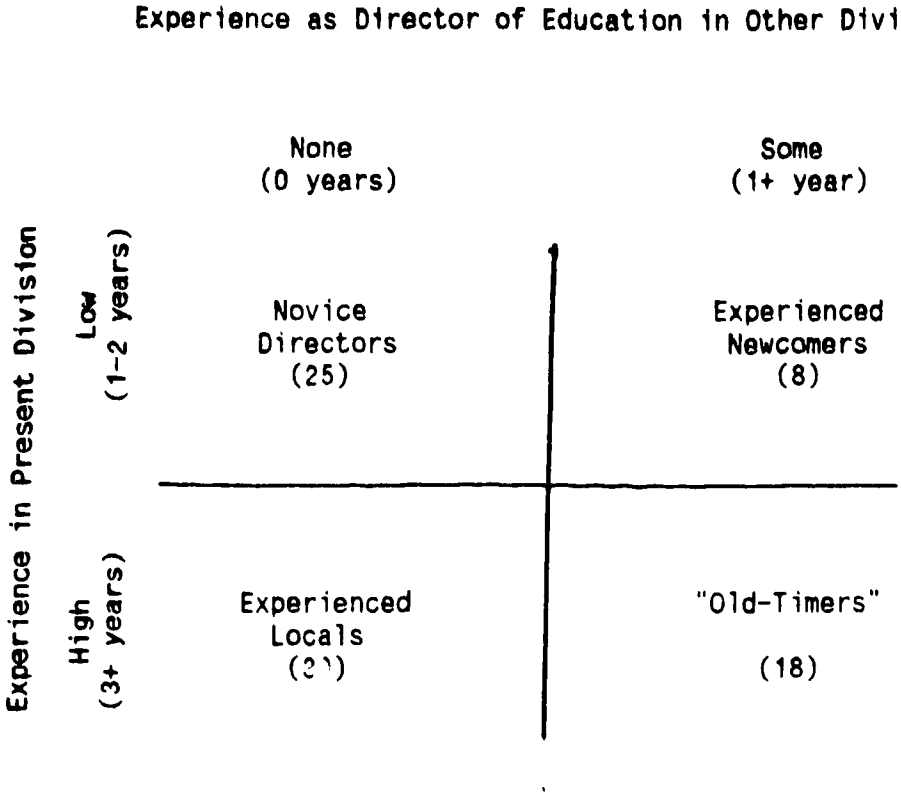



Figure 5.1. Geographic mobility typology

located in rural divisions; seventeen were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers.

**Experienced Newcomers** were defined as those directors having relatively limited experience (1-2 years) in their present school division and some experience in other divisions. The smallest number of respondents, only eight, fell into this category. Four of these directors were between 45 and 49 years of age. Five respondents were employed in a rural area. The size of the division varied, with five respondents indicating that they were employed in divisions of more than 101 teachers and three respondents indicating employment in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers. Six respondents had between 3 and 10 years' and two had 11 or more years' experience as a director.

**Experienced Locals**, comprising the largest group of respondents (30), were those who had no experience in other divisions and three or more years in their present division. Twenty-three were over 45 years of age. Seven were under the age of 45 years. Generally, the directors in this category were located in rural areas, with well over three quarters of respondents indicating this type of division. Nearly three quarters were employed in a division with fewer than 101 teachers. Their experience in a directorship was largely between 3 and 10 years.

**"Old-Timers"** were identified as directors who had some experience in other divisions and three years or more in their present division. Sixteen of the 18 directors in this category were 45 years of age and over. Nearly three quarters were located in rural divisions; only five indicated that they were located in a city. Respondents were evenly distributed by size of the division: nine each indicated the size of the division as employing fewer than 101 teachers or employing more than 101.

Fourteen of the directors indicated that they had 11 or more years of experience as a director.

A test of the significance of the contingency between geographic mobility type and age yielded a Chi-square value of 21.88 which is significant at p = 0.02 with df = 10. As might be expected because of the relationship between age and experience, Novice Directors tended to be younger than Experienced Locals and "Old-Timers."

A cross-tabulation of the four categories of directors in the geographical mobility typology with the items dealing with educational qualifications at the time of first appointment to a directorship is shown in Table 5.5. The significant Chi-square value suggests that Experienced Locals were more likely to hold a diploma at the time of first appointment than were directors in the other categories.

Table 5.5

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Diploma at Time of First Appointment

| Diploma held | Novice Directors | Experienced Newcomers | Experienced Locals | "Old Timers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 9 | 1 | 18 | 2 | 30 |
| No | 16 | 7 | 12 | 16 | 51 |
| Total | 25 | 8 | 30 | 18 | 81 |

Chi-square = 14.05 p = 0.00

A cross-tabulation of the four categories of directors in the geographical mobility typology with the extent of formal study/ preparation in educational administration or supervision is presented in Table 5.6. Fifteen of the 40 respondents who had a specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program at the time of first appointment were Experienced Locals. Approximately one

Table 5.6

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Educational Qualifications at Time of First Appointment

| Qualification | Novice Directors f | Experienced Newcomers f | Experienced Locals f | "Old Timers" f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program | 11 | 5 | 15 | 9 | 40 |
| Courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level | 2 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 12 |
| Studies beyond the Master's level | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| Some courses on a Master's program, but specialization in another area | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 11 |
| None of the above | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Total | 25 | 8 | 30 | 18 | 81 |

Chi-square = 24.53 p = 0.02

quarter of Novice Directors and of Old-Timers had specializations in this area. However, only a few Experienced Newcomers had this specialization. Of the 12 who had courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level or had studies beyond the Master's level, 9 were Experienced Locals. Eight of 12 directors who had a specialization in educational administration beyond the Master's level were Novice Directors. Eleven respondents had some courses on a Master's program but specialization in another area. Of these, only one was an Experienced Newcomer. The others were distributed across the remaining three types.

Although the Chi-square value for this cross-classification was significant, the low frequencies in a number of cells complicate the interpretation of the contingency.

An analysis of variance was conducted on the questionnaire item dealing with the importance respondents attach to assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education as a factor in pursuing an administrative career with the geographic mobility typology. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.7.

The 81 respondents to this questionnaire item rated this factor as highly important (Mean = 4.22). However, Novice Directors rated this item more highly important (Mean = 4.68) than did either the Old-Timers (Mean = 4.11), the Experienced Newcomers (Mean = 4.00), or the Experienced Locals (Mean = 3.96). Only the differences between the mean ratings of Novice Directors and of Experienced Locals were statistically significant. The results of the analysis indicate that directors with limited experience in their present division and in other divisions felt that assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education in pursuing an administrative career was more

Table 5.7

Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by the Geographic Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Novice Directors | 25 | 4.68 | A > C |
| B. Experienced Newcomers | 8 | 4.00 | -- |
| C. Experienced Locals | 30 | 3.96 | -- |
| D. "Old-Timers" | 18 | 4.11 | -- |
| Total | 81 | 4.22 | |

important than did respondents with no experience in other divisions, but with three or more years of experience in their present division.

## Organizational Mobility Typology

In order to develop this typology, the total years of experience directors had in schools was combined with the total years of experience they had in a central office position. Four categories relative to directors' experience in these two locations were identified and are shown in Figure 5.2: (1) upward mobiles, (2) late recruits, (3) stalled mobiles, and (4) "slow movers." Table 5.8 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four categories with the four characteristics of directors and school divisions.

**Upward Mobiles** were those directors who had limited (0-5 years) experience in a central office and also a relatively low number of total years of experience (0-15) years in schools. Thirty-six of the 81

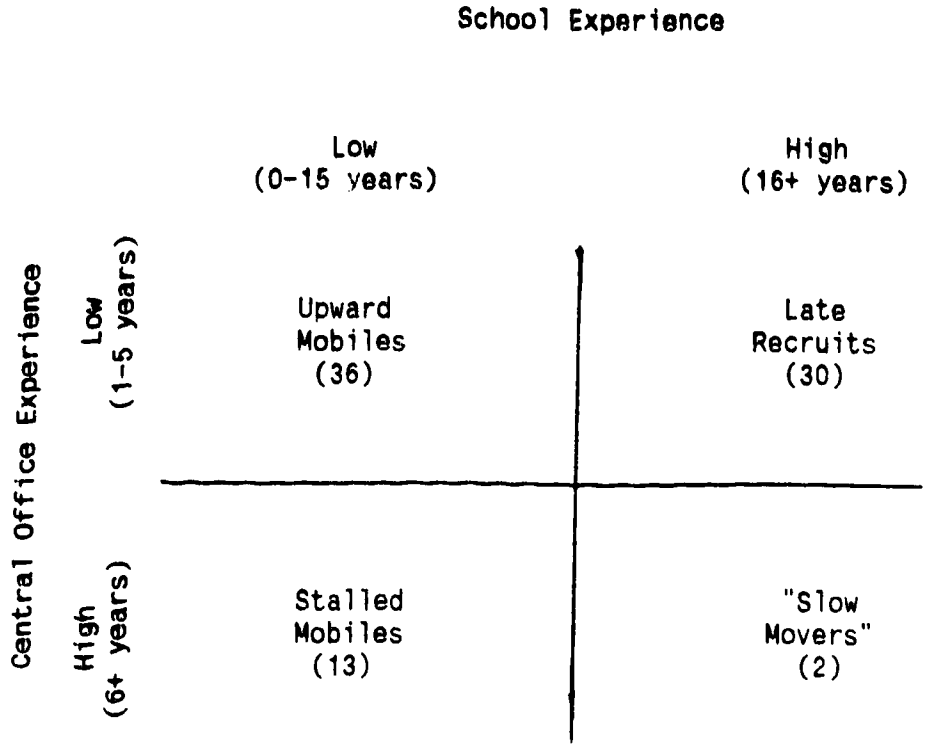



Figure 5.2. Organizational mobility typology

respondents fell into this category. As is indicated by the data in Table 5.8, Upward Mobiles were generally under 50 years of age; only eight were 50 years of age or older. Over three quarters of the directors in this category were located in the rural areas. Over three quarters were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers. About one half of the respondents had between 3 and 10 years of experience as a director, and 12 had 11 years of experience or more.

Table 5.8

Distributions of Organizational Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Upward Mobile | 12 | 16 | 8 | 8 | 28 | 26 | 10 | 7 | 17 | 12 |
| Late Recruits | 7 | 7 | 16 | 7 | 23 | 19 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 7 |
| Stalled Mobiles | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| "Slow Movers" | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 27 | 19 | 62 | 52 | 29 | 25 | 34 | 22 |

**Late Recruits** were identified as directors who had considerable school experience (16 or more years) and relatively limited experience (5 years or less) in a central office. This classification comprised the

second largest group, 30, of respondents. As might be expected, over one half of the Late Recruits were 50 years of age or over at the time of the study. Over three quarters of the respondents in this classification were located in rural areas. Nineteen were in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers, while 11 were in divisions of more than 101 teachers. Experience in the directorship ranged from 12 respondents having 3-10 years, 11 having 1-2 years, and 7 having 11 or more years in this position.

**Stalled Mobiles**, comprised of 13 respondents, were directors who had limited experience (0-15 years) in schools and relatively considerable experience (6 years or more) in a central office before being appointed to a directorship. They were generally under the age of 50, with six indicating that they were between 45 and 49 years of age, and five respondents indicating that they were under 45. More respondents were located in rural areas (nine) than were located in cities (four). Nearly an equal number of respondents were located in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers as were located in divisions employing more than 101 teachers. Experience as a director varied, with six respondents indicating that their experience in this position was 1-2 years, while seven indicated that they had more than 3 years of experience.

**"Slow Movers,"** were directors who had substantial experience in schools (16 years or more) and also in a central office position (6 years or more). Only two directors were categorized as "Slow Movers." Although this category is meaningful conceptually, in practice the career paths of few directors would seem to include relatively lengthy experience in both school and central office positions.

A cross-tabulation of the career patterns and the organizational

mobility typologies presented in Table 5.9 suggests a measure of overlap between the two ways of classifying directors. Career Pattern A, which was comprised of the largest number (33) of directors, had over one half in the Late Recruits classification and the next largest number (15) in the Upward Mobile classification. Over one half of the respondents who followed Career Pattern B were in the Upward Mobile classification.

Table 5.9

Cross-Tabulation of Career Patterns with Organizational Mobility Types

| Career pattern | Upward Mobiles f | Late Recruits f | Stalled Mobiles f | "Slow Movers" f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 15 | 17 | 0 | 1 | 33 |
| B | 10 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| C | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 15 |
| D | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 11 |
| Total | 34 | 30 | 12 | 2 | 78 |

Chi-square = 16.13 p = 0.06

In Career Pattern C, an equal number of respondents (five) were in the three classifications Upward Mobile, Late Recruits, and Stalled Mobiles. None were in the "Slow Movers" category. Respondents who followed Career Pattern D were approximately equally distributed across the classifications of Upward Mobiles, Late Recruits, and Stalled Mobiles.

In general, the results tend to indicate that Upward Mobiles are likely to follow Career Pattern A--teacher (including vice-principal)/principal/director--route or Career Pattern B--teacher (including vice-principal)/principal/central office/director--route. Late Recruits tend to follow Pattern A, which does not include a central office position.

Cross-tabulations of the four categories of directors in the organizational mobility typology with the items dealing with educational qualifications at the time of first appointment revealed some significant contingencies. The results are shown in Table 5.10 and Table 5.11. The low frequencies in some cells render the interpretations of contingencies problematic. With the appropriate caution, some inferences may be drawn that those who held doctoral degrees at the time of first appointment were more likely to have the characteristics of Stalled Mobiles. Those who had an undergraduate specialization outside of education were likely to be either Upward Mobiles or Stalled Mobiles.

An analysis of variance of the rating of the importance attached to compatibility with the social and educational context as a factor in selection revealed some significant differences across the organizational mobility categories. The results of analysis are shown in Table 5.12. Seventy-eight respondents perceived that this factor was highly important (Mean = 4.15) in selection. However, Upward Mobiles rated this factor more highly important (Mean = 4.40) than did the Stalled Mobiles (Mean = 4.15) or the Late Recruits (Mean = 3.86). The mean rating of the Upward Mobiles was significantly higher than that of the Late Recruits. The results indicate that the respondents with limited school experience and limited central office experience felt that compatibility with the social

Table 5.10

Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Doctorate at Time of First Appointment

| Doctorate at time of appointment | Upward Mobiles | Late Recruits | Stalled Mobiles | "Slow Movers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| No | 35 | 29 | 10 | 1 | 75 |
| Total | 36 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 81 |

Chi-square = 11.79 p = 0.01

Table 5.11

Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Credit Courses in Other Disciplines at Time of First Appointment

| University credit courses beyond bachelor's level in a discipline other than education | Upward Mobiles | Late Recruits | Stalled Mobiles | "Slow Movers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
| No | 33 | 30 | 9 | 2 | 74 |
| Total | 36 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 81 |

Chi-square = 11.09 p = 0.01

Table 5.12

Analysis of Variance Results of Compatibility with the Social and Educational Context as Criterion in Director Selection by the Organizational Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Upward Mobiles | 35 | 4.40 | A > B |
| B. Late Recruits | 30 | 3.86 | -- |
| C. Stalled Mcbiles | 13 | 4.15 | -- |
| Total | 78 | 4.15 | |

and educational context was more important as a factor for director selection than did those respondents with considerable school experience and limited central office experience.

In an analysis of variance of the questionnaire item dealing with the importance which respondents perceive is attached to seniority as a criterion in the selection process and the organizational mobility typology, some significant differences were observed. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.13.

In general, 77 respondents rated this characteristic as not very important (Mean = 1.66). However, the Stalled Mobiles rated this factor slightly higher in importance (Mean = 2.23) than did the Upward Mobiles (Mean = 1.58) or the Late Recruits (Mean = 1.50). The differences between the ratings of the Upward Mobiles and those of the Late Recruits, as well as the Stalled Mobiles, were both statistically significant.

The results suggest that Stalled Mobiles (the respondents with limited school experience and considerable central office experience)

Table 5.13

Analysis of Variance Results of Seniority as a Criterion in the Selection Process by Organizational Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Upward Mobiles | 36 | 1.58 | A < C |
| B. Late Recruits | 28 | 1.50 | B < C |
| C. Stalled Mobiles | 13 | 2.23 | -- |
| Total | 77 | 1.66 | |

perceived that seniority as a criterion in the selection process for directors was more important than did either Upward Mobiles (those respondents with limited school experience and limited central office experience) or Late Recruits (the respondents with considerable school experience and limited central office experience). In other words, seniority was perceived to be of some importance by those who tended to have longer central office experience.

## Entry Age and Directorship Experience Typology

The basis for this typology of directors was a comparison of age at which respondents entered their first directorship and the number of years they had served in the position. Four categories relative to directorship entry age and directorship experience were defined and are shown in Figure 5.3: (1) Younger Inexperienced, (2) Older Inexperienced, (3) Younger Experienced, and (4) Older Experienced. Table 5.14 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four classifications with the characteristics of directors and divisions.

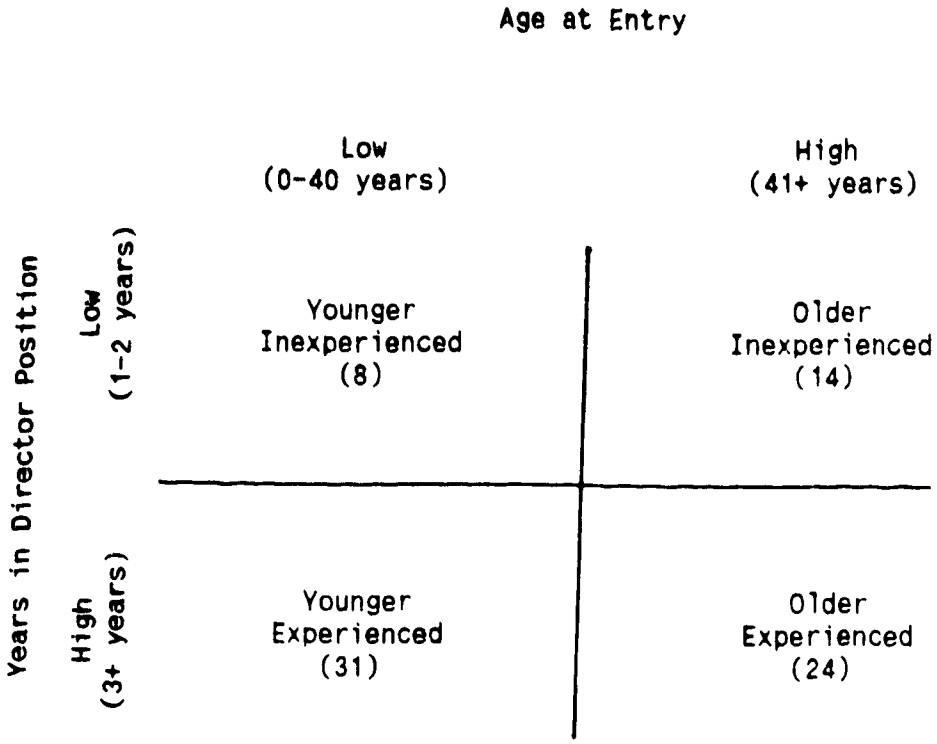



Figure 5.3. Directorship entry age/experience typology

Table 5.14

Distributions of Director Age/Experience Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Younger Inexperienced | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Older Inexperienced | 6 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Younger Experienced | 8 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 23 | 19 | 12 | 0 | 15 | 16 |
| Older Experienced | 3 | 10 | 11 | 5 | 19 | 15 | 9 | 0 | 18 | 6 |
| Total | 25 | 27 | 25 | 19 | 58 | 49 | 28 | 22 | 33 | 22 |

**Younger Inexperienced** were identified as those directors who were relatively young (40 years or less) at entry to the directorship and who had relatively little experience (1-2 years) in this position. The smallest number of respondents (eight) fell into this category. As is indicated by the data in Table 5.14, all directors in this category were employed in school divisions with fewer than 101 teachers. Six were located in rural areas, and only two were located in cities.

**Older Inexperienced** were those directors identified as having limited directorship experience (1-2 years), but who were relatively older (41 years of age or over) when they entered their first

directorship. The second smallest group of respondents (14) fell into this category. Six were under the age of 45 years, five were over 50, and three were between 45 and 49. Ten respondents were located in rural areas. An equal number (seven) were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers as were in divisions with more than 101 teachers.

**Younger Experienced**, who comprised the largest number in this typology (31), were those directors who entered their first directorship at a relatively young age (under 40 years) and who had relatively more (three or more years) experience in the capacity of director. About one half of them were between 45 and 49 years of age. Nearly three quarters were located in a rural area. The size of the school division in which they were employed varied; 19 respondents indicated that there are fewer than 101 teachers in their divisions and 12 indicated that there are more than 101 teachers in the division. Sixteen of the respondents had 11 or more years of experience.

**Older Experienced** were those directors identified as having considerable experience (three or more years) in a directorship and who were relatively older (41 years or over) when they entered their first position as director. Twenty-four respondents, the second largest number in this classification, fell into this group. As is to be expected, most of the respondents were over the age of 45 years. More than three quarters of respondents in this category were located in rural areas. Fifteen respondents indicated that they were employed in a school division which had fewer than 101 teachers, and 9 were employed in divisions which had more than 101 teachers. Most directors (18) had between 3 and 10 years of experience in the directorship.

A cross-tabulation of two typologies, geographic mobility with

directorship entry age/experience, indicated some overlap between the conceptualizations. The results are shown in Table 5.15. As might be expected, the Novice Director category was comprised of either the Younger Inexperienced (8) or the Older Inexperienced (14) directors. Similarly, the eight Experienced Newcomers in the geographic mobility typology were comprised of six Younger Experienced and two Older Experienced directors.

Table 5.15

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types

| | Younger Inexperienced | Older Inexperienced | Younger Experienced | Older Experienced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | f | f | f | f | f |
| Novice Directors | 8 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Experienced Newcomers | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Experienced Locals | 0 | 0 | 13 | 16 | 29 |
| "Old-Timers" | 0 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 17 |
| Total | 8 | 14 | 30 | 24 | 76 |

Chi-square = 80.44 p = 0.00

The largest classification, the Experienced Locals (29), consisted of 16 respondents belonging to the Older Experienced category and 13 in the Younger Experienced category. Of 17 "Old-Timers," 11 were in the

Younger Experienced and 6 were in the Older Experienced categories.

The results suggest that these two typologies might serve similar purposes; however, exploratory analysis may indicate that one may have more potential than the other for understanding particular aspects of the careers of directors of education.

An analysis of variance on the ratings of the importance which respondents attached to the assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education as a factor in pursuing an administrative career indicated some significant differences between categories in the entry age/experience typology. The results are presented in Table 5.16. The 77 directors who responded to this item rated the factor as highly important (Mean = 4.19). However, Older Inexperienced directors rated this factor as more highly important (Mean = 4.71) than did those in the other three categories. Differences between means were significant for the Younger Experienced directors (Mean = 4.03) and the Older Experienced directors (Mean = 4.00).

Table 5.16

Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by Director Age at Entry/Experience Types

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Younger Inexperienced | 8 | 4.50 | -- |
| B. Older Inexperienced | 14 | 4.71 | -- |
| C. Younger Experienced | 31 | 4.03 | C < B |
| D. Older Experienced | 24 | 4.00 | D < B |
| Total | 77 | 4.19 | |

The results of this analysis suggest that those directors with limited director experience and who entered the directorship at 41 years of age or older felt that assessment of their own abilities was a more important factor in deciding to pursue an administrative career than did either those who entered the directorship at 40 years of age or younger and who had three or more years of experience as a director or those who entered the directorship at 41 years of age or older and who had three or more years of experience as a director.

A cross-tabulation of the four classifications of directors in the directorship entry age/experience typology with future plans of directors suggests the presence of some additional contingencies. The results are shown in Table 5.17. As might be expected, both age and experience are related to career plans. Although the small frequencies tend to obscure patterns, older directors are likely to continue in the present position until retirement regardless of the amount of experience they have in the directorship. Younger experienced directors also appear to have limited propensity to become mobile. The relatively small proportion of directors who are likely to seek another directorship tended to be distributed across all four categories of the typology.

## Summary

An examination of the various position routes which led to the directorship confirmed that four patterns were descriptive of the careers of nearly all directors. The most common career pattern leads from a teaching position (including a vice-principalship) to a principalship and then to a directorship without an intermediate central office position. Such a central office position is part of the second most frequently

Table 5.17

Cross-Tabulation of Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types with Future Plans

| | Younger Inexperienced | Older Inexperienced | Younger Experienced | Older Experienced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Future plans | f | f | f | f | f |
| Another position as director of education | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 14 |
| Continue in this position until retirement | 0 | 7 | 21 | 16 | 44 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Position outside the field of education | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Other | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 13 |
| Total | 8 | 14 | 30 | 23 | 75 |

Chi-square = 24.07 p = 0.02

occurring career path. A third pattern involves moving from a teaching position directly to a principalship then to a central office position prior to becoming a director. For a relatively small minority, the route to the directorship does not include the principalship.

The conceptual and empirical relevance of the various typologies was supported to some degree by the relationship of types to various

characteristics of directors and their employing school divisions. Although relatively few statistically significant results were obtained, those which were observed were generally consistent with the conceptual basis of the typology. The patterns of directors' careers seem to bear some relationship to age. Similarly, types within the geographic mobility and organizational mobility typologies tend to differ in qualifications at the time of first appointment. The former also differ in the importance they attach to the personal assessment of their abilities in the decision to pursue an administrative career. Types in the organizational mobility typology as well as in the entry age/experience typology differ in the importance which they attach to particular selection criteria. The latter typology also seems to differentiate among directors on the basis of their future career plans.

The patterns and typologies developed in the chapter overlap to some extent. Consequently, they might be used either as alternatives or in combination in exploring careers of administrators.

# Chapter 6

## Case Studies of Selection of Directors

The content of this chapter is focused on the descriptions of the processes of selecting three directors of education. In each instance, the decision had been made within one year of the time of data collection. Three perspectives are provided on each selection process: that of the successful applicant, that of the board chairperson, and that of the regional director of education. The three case studies are followed by an analysis of similarities and differences in the selection process. A discussion of some issues in administrator selection concludes the chapter.

Some general background information about the appointment of directors of education in Saskatchewan is relevant to the case studies. Although directors may be appointed by the Department of Education, increasingly they are employed by the school division board. The regional director of education, who is appointed by the Department, serves all boards in a specified geographic area. Among the regional directors' functions are keeping school divisions informed of Department policy and programs, assessing the effectiveness of the policies and programs, providing an "ombudsman" service in response to parental requests, ensuring that schools and programs are being conducted in accordance with departmental legislation, and ensuring that open communication exists between division boards and the Department.

## Prairieland School Division

Prairieland School Division is located in the central part of Saskatchewan. The division services a rural area and employs about 130 teachers. A new director of education, Charles, was appointed in November of 1988. The previous director had been asked to leave during the summer, and the board immediately advertised the position. Pending the appointment of a director, the assistant director was designated as acting director.

### Director's Perspective

Charles, who was employed in a central office position in a neighboring division, knew about the vacant directorship from conversations with people in the community. He had "been looking at a Chief Executive Officer position for a long time," but since he was very happy in his current position, and since he and his family liked the town in which they lived, he did not consider positions for which he would have to relocate. Because this particular directorship did not require a relocation, he decided to consider the opportunity carefully. Charles was very much aware of the situation which led to the previous director's dismissal. As he said, "I knew it was going to be a challenge, and I've never backed away from a challenge, so I thought I'd throw my name in."

In submitting his application, Charles sent a letter along with a four-page resume. The acting director, on behalf of the board, acknowledged receipt of the application and soon thereafter invited him to an interview.

Charles made only limited preparations for the interview largely because he was aware of the type of questions that would be asked. He

had "set up everything including the questions for the interview" in relation to the selection of a director of education in his previous school division. He thought, "Heck, if I'm not ready for this interview, nobody is!"

All board members and the regional director attended the interview, which was convened and adjourned by the chairperson. The regional director asked nearly all of the questions while board members took notes. Questions were "based on leadership, what [the candidate] thought of leadership; what [the candidate] perceived the role to be in regard to other personnel in the school system, including the school board. . . . There were also questions on teacher supervision and the supervison of personnel, . . . and on some educational issues." At the conclusion of the interview, several questions were asked by individual board members.

Charles was not nervous about the interview because, as he said, "I'll tell it the way it is, and that's the way it's got to be. I've always been very honest with people, no matter how badly I wanted a job, and I know that sometimes it cost me a job." He was generally pleased with the interview because he was able to be "honest and open" and was able to "make it very clear that [he] was the Chief Executive Officer and expected to work in that capacity."

Several days later, Charles was invited to a board meeting for a second interview. For this meeting, Charles "prepared [himself] by bringing in a sample contract, the sample terms that [he] felt were important before [taking] the job."

Charles felt that he was offered the position because of the fine reputation he had established in his previous school division and because, as he said, "I interview well." He also recognized that, since

he had previously worked for the regional director, "he probably put in a good word for me."

Board Chairperson's Perspective

The board was "happy to have the opportunity to select a new director." The relationship with the previous director had deteriorated to the point where the board found it necessary to ask him to leave. Immediately thereafter, the board contacted the regional director, who agreed to assist and offered his services. "He suggested the procedures and questions the board might use while interviewing, what [they] should look for, and the whole process [they] would go through."

The board had placed the assistant director in an acting director position; he participated in the hiring process to some extent. The position was advertised in early fall in the local newspaper, major provincial newspapers, and newspapers in a neighboring province. Applications were received soon afterward. The advertisement requested applicants to submit a letter of application along with a resume, but the board chairperson recalled that "it certainly varied what they sent. . . . We had everything from a photostat of all their marks and courses . . . to just two or three pages." Over 20 applications were received by the chairperson, who passed them on to the regional director. The board and the regional director then "went through them and came up with the ones [they] thought [they] should shortlist and the reasons why." The board chairperson recalled that the board knew some of the applicants, and "that made a difference . . . because two local people who applied were interviewed. Visibility was a factor."

In the opinion of the board chairperson, the board was

> searching for someone who would take charge; someone who would be firm, particularly with principals; be visible in the schools and in the division; someone who was a hard worker . . . ; but mostly someone who was firm in his convictions and willing to back them up."

As the board chairperson said, "We wanted someone who was willing to look into the future, not just putting out bush fires, as opposed to planning."

In determining the best person for the position, the board, along with the regional director, conducted interviews with five candidates. Throughout the interviews, they attempted to determine the candidate's "basic philosophy . . . , how he would apply his philosophy in [the] school system, and the methods that he would use."

The board was "very impressed with the manner in which Charles conduc'ed himself in the interview. The chairperson commented that "he came very prepared; he seemed to know exactly what direction he wanted to go." The board also felt that, even though Charles is a quiet person, he gave the impression of being a firm administrator who "had some definite ideas in certain areas that if he were hired, that is the way he would want it to be."

Charles was subsequently invited to a second interview, and the board chairperson recalled that "he came with a draft copy of a role description that if he were director, this is what he would like the role description to read." This impressed the board.

Following the interviews, the board along with the regional director met. At this time, board members reviewed their notes, made a first and second choice, and then discussed their choices. Since the first and second choices were not the same for everyone, the board chairperson indicated that there was some discussion --"we argue a lot . . . , and I

think we probably did that time, too." The regional director "offered advice . . . but was very careful not to influence [them]." The actual selection process took several hours, but, as the board chairperson said, "[We] negotiated and discussed the different aspects, and then came to a consensus."

The board chairperson commented that "Charles was the chosen candidate because the definite ideas he had were the same as ours." Charles was ultimately offered the position, and he accepted.

Regional Director's Perspective

The first involvement by the regional director in this particular case followed an invitation from the board chairperson. The regional director recalled that "[the board] knew me because I had been the director [there], so it was kind of a natural thing to happen." He welcomed the opportunity to work with the board in selecting a new director because he felt that "regional directors can help . . . . [They] have an interest in what's going on . . . , and the more regional directors who go to boards with prescribed kinds of packages to help them . . . , the better the selection of directors is going to be."

The regional director presented a "package" to the board which essentially was a set of procedures that they would work out together. The first thing they did was to clarify what kind of director the board wanted, and the regional director recalled that there was some debate over this because board members were unsure as to whether they wanted the "old standard superintendent kind of guy, or did they want a Chief Executive Officer?" They finally decided upon the latter. An advertisement was drafted which was subsequently placed in local and

provincial newspapers, as well as in one newspaper in a large city in an adjoining province. Upon receipt of each application, the acting director sent a letter of acknowledgement which had been previously drafted by the regional director. In addition, a bulletin containing information about student populations, schools, and specialized budgets was mailed to each applicant.

The board asked the regional director to do the reference checks of applicants based on the criteria that they had adopted. The regional director felt that they asked him to conduct the reference checks because, as he said, "I knew what they wanted, and they knew what I was doing." He used a shortlisting criteria questionnaire which he felt would be consistent for all applicants. Questions asked the referees dealt with the applicant's human relations skills, organizational and planning skills, strengths and weaknesses, whether the applicant would be an innovator or maintain the status quo, and whether or not they would hire this person as a director of education. The regional director checked references on every applicant and then presented the board with a chart which listed the applicant's qualifications, years of experience, and other characteristics, as well as which referees were contacted and, in a few cases, whether or not the reference check was favorable.

Following the reference checks, the regional director and the board met. The board discussed the applicants based on the reference chart and eliminated all but 10. They requested specific details from the regional director in regard to these remaining applicants. The board then reviewed applicants' resumes and frequently asked for further clarification with regard to the reference checks. The regional director recalled that he often had to elaborate or explain in more detail various

education aspects. He felt that, "although they're board members, they are lay people, and a lot of our jargon is not lay-type jargon" and needs further clarification. He also felt obliged to tell the board if "an applicant had already developed a reputation of not being a worthy candidate." Based on these discussions, the board then eliminated five more applicants. The board eventually decided upon three candidates whom they planned to interview, but the regional director recalled that "there was always the proviso that if they weren't happy with the three that they met, they could go to the next two."

Interviews for the three candidates were set up by the acting director. In preparation for the interviews, the board decided to have the regional director ask all of the questions. The regional director thought that the board made this decision because "they felt they could concentrate on the answers . . . ; they could listen and take notes." However, he also felt that "deep down, people generally, even in the 1980s, are intimidated by someone who has a little more education . . . , and that they might feel that they may muck up and sound silly . . . , and so they feel more comfortable letting someone else ask the questions." He also indicated that this is not normal practice; most often boards prefer to ask the questions themselves. All board members and the regional director attended the interviews.

The regional director commented that "Charles conducted himself extremely well, the second interviewee was so-so, and the third guy was really good but made the mistake of saying that he didn't think that the board could afford him!" He further recognized that in the interviewing process

> there is something that you can't measure . . . . There is this chemistry that's got to be going on there, and if the chemistry is not there, you can tell within ten minutes . . . , so you may be qualified, you may be articulate, you may be honest, and you may be everything, but there's this quality that I can only call chemistry that seems to be there . . . between you and the six or seven people sitting around the table . . . , and if it's not there, you can tell!"

The regional director reflected on what he thought convinced the board to hire Charles. Throughout the interview he kept hearing

> All right, we know that a director has legislated responsibilities, he's got a mandate, he or she has to know the Education Act . . . , but can we get along with that individual? So in Charles's case that's basically what they were looking for. They wanted somebody, I guess, that they didn't feel would be talking down to them as elected people.

In making the final decision, the regional director recalled encouraging the board not to "end up with a three-four or two-five split, or something of that nature--it's got to be unanimous." The process took several hours. Eventually the board decided to invite Charles to a second interview. The regional director was not present at that interview but was notified very shortly thereafter that Charles had been offered the position.

The regional director commented that "boards are very keen on making the right decision. They take it very seriously. There's no question about the integrity of boards hiring people that they want."

## Wild Grass School Division

Wild Grass School Division is located in the southern part of the province and employs approximately 100 teachers. All of the division schools are rurally located. Selecting a director was a new venture for the Wild Grass School Division; until this time they had employed a provincially appointed superintendent as their Chief Executive Officer.

The appointment of the new director, Gerald, took place in the spring of 1988 due to the resignation of the incumbent earlier that year. An acting director was appointed for the interim, and Gerald assumed the position in the fall of 1988.

## Director's Perspective

Gerald first became aware that his current position was available from a colleague who had just applied for the position. He watched the newspaper the following weekend and read the advertisement.

In considering this career opportunity, Gerald took various factors into account. His ultimate career goal was to become a director. Since he had just completed his Master's degree, he felt he "was eligible to start looking around." He had applied for another directorship and an assistant directorship but was not interviewed in either case. Gerald and his wife discussed this at some length and decided that the rural location did not present a problem. Gerald realized, however, that perhaps his career path, which was somewhat untraditional in that he had never served in a central office position, could be a problem. In the final analysis, Gerald thought that "[he] would at least have an opportunity for an interview here because of its rural location and also because of [the division's] very bad reputation." He then submitted his application, "hoping to get an interview and do well at that."

Along with the letter of application, Gerald submitted a "basic resume" and a list of references which the board had requested. Several days later he received a letter acknowledging his application, and shortly thereafter he was telephoned and invited to an interview. These matters were all handled by the acting director.

Gerald acknowledged the very favorable reference given by his former director as being the reason he was interviewed. He placed considerable value on the referees: "You can have all the documentation and qualifications in the world, but if you don't have solid references, you're in trouble!"

In preparing for the interview, Gerald spent one Saturday afternoon with his director of education (who was also one of his referees) attempting to identify the types of questions that would likely be asked at the interview. His director indicated that "the questions will be geared toward finding out what kind of manager and what kind of educational leader you will be." Gerald also received some advice in regard to how to negotiate a contract. Further to this, Gerald talked to the acting director in order to find out "about the area . . . and what the situation was."

Gerald indicated that he was interviewed by four of the six board members and the regional director, who asked most of the questions. The questions pertained to his experience, educational background, management style, educational philosophy, his feelings about special programs, and the reasons why he wanted to be a director. A lot of questions, he felt, "were geared to just kind of finding out what my general attitude was toward kids and teachers and so on," but some questions were aimed at compatibility with the community: "Is this guy going to be able to live in this rural community, and what can he bring to the community besides his directorial skills?" Questions relating to why he would want to leave his current position and his capacity for work were also asked. Gerald felt that "they were looking for sincerity." He recalled that "once [he] went into the interview [he] went in with the idea to win

. . . and had no hesitation in accepting." He recalled that "the board was very quiet throughout the interview, very serious . . . [and] it was very hard to judge the reaction because everybody was fairly solemn." He sensed that one particular board member was not that impressed with him. He felt that the board "wanted somebody who was able to make tough decisions and stick with them," and that they were not necessarily looking for a successful director, but that "they came in with an open mind for a personality."

According to Gerald, he was chosen "because of a combination of the skills I had--the strengths and leadership ability--and likeability . . . it just came down to likeability--that they liked me better than the other applicants, and they felt that the school division and employees and people would accept me better." He also had a very different personality from that of the previous director, which he felt the board also wanted.

Later on the day of the interview, Gerald was offered the directorship and negotiated a contract with the board.

## Board Chairperson's Perspective

In this particular case, the board was aware that they would be appointing a director due to the resignation of the incumbent in early 1988. They had appointed an interim director. Selecting a director was a new venture for this board; until this time they had employed a provincially appointed superintendent as their Chief Executive Officer. They were "kind of apprehensive," because they "had fought long and hard not to go this route," but had been told by the Department of Education that when their current superintendent resigned, they would have to

select their own director. They immediately involved the regional director, who "went through the process" with them.

The position was advertised provincially, and over 20 applications were received. Applicants were asked to send resumes and a list of references along with their letter of application. Reference checks were conducted largely by the interim director, but sometimes the board chairperson was asked by the interim director to telephone some of the referees because "sometimes a board member talking to another board member is easier than a director doing it." The whole board was asked to assist with the shortlisting, but "not all of them could make it, so they just had to rely on the opinion [of those members who were present]." The regional director assisted with the shortlisting process, and five candidates were chosen to be interviewed.

Although a formal list of desirable characteristics of the new director was never officially formulated, the board chairperson felt that they wanted someone with leadership ability, someone who was very outgoing and who can really relate well to people--staff members and board members." The chairperson felt that the board was searching for someone who was quite different from their past superintendent, because they "didn't think he was a leader."

The five candidates were interviewed by the board members and the regional director, who asked most of the questions. The chairperson indicated that the interview played a large part in providing an opportunity for the board "to talk to [the candidates] and to get a feel about them." The purpose of the interviews was to find out what each candidate felt he/she could offer the school division in this job, how he/she would "make it work," and how each candidate felt about working

for a board. The board also explored whether or not the candidates could live in this rural setting--"if they could settle in."

Following the interviews, the regional director "kept it all going for [the board]" by encouraging them to discuss each candidate and "to decide what each person could offer." The chairperson recalled that in making the decision "they went around the table and talked about each one" and kept eliminating "until there were only two or three left." They then had a vote. The chairperson did not comment on whether or not the decision was unanimous, but he did say that board members "have to respect the majority vote and go with it! Once it's voted on, even if you personally don't go along with it, you have to work to see that it happens the way the vote went."

In reflecting on the characteristics of the successful candidate, the board chairperson felt that he

> was the best person for us--his very outgoingness, his ability to work with people and to carry out the kinds of things that we saw we had to do, . . . he was what we needed at the time--somebody that could take hold of the reins and draw everythimg together.

There was some concern among board members in regard to the chosen candidate's career path, but the chairperson felt that

> sometimes a person who has never done a particular job before can come into it with no preconceived notions of how things should be done and can offer a lot because he or she hasn't been tied to any type of system--they make their own--they learn along with you.

The board then offered the position to Gerald, who "told [them] some of the things that he would expect in a contract." Since the board had never been involved in drawing up a contract, the chairperson "got copies of different contracts" from other school divisions and also contacted the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association lawyer for advice. Then,

with assistance from their interim director, they drew up a contract which was agreeable to both parties and signed it along with their newly appointed director.

## Regional Director's Perspective

The regional director had been aware for several months that the board would be hiring a director because the previous director's resignation had been submitted in early February and an interim director had been appointed. Since this school division had just recently been assigned to him, he was virtually unknown to the board. However, they did contact him shortly after they received the director's resignation. He met with them soon thereafter and recalled that he "could tell right off the bat that they were very suspicious of senior administrators and of local employment [of directors]." He helped with placing the advertisement for applications for their director. He indicated that "the ad was a fairly common one, but it did have to meet certain criteria in terms of the regulations of the Education Act."

The next involvement by the regional director was in the shortlisting process, or, as he called it, "doing the reference checks," which, he said, "I am not very comfortable with because I feel that the Board of Education should do that . . . unless they come across a reference that they can't access." He then assisted the board with the actual selection of candidates to be interviewed by "filling whatever capacity the board wanted." He recalled that "the board was just about sick . . . because almost all of [the applicants] were unknown." He was not surprised at this, because this division "did not have a good reputation provincially. . . . It was looked upon as a board that was

antagonistic toward administrators." He encouraged them to "bring the shortlist down to preferably no more than four."

In the interview stage, the regional director indicated that generally boards develop criteria in regard to the type of person they want and focus their questions on those, but in this case he felt that there were very few criteria. "They were just hoping to get someone who could pilot them through a very difficult point of time in their history." However, he commented that "this was one of the worst-handled interviews that I've ever seen. The board was not prepared. I think that this was one of the interviews where I walked in and they said, 'Where are the questions?'" He indicated that he had brought a standard set of interview questions with him, which he felt are "getting to be well worn . . . and need to be revamped." However, he also indicated that although boards are seldom unprepared, "it's more common than [I] like." He further commented that in cases of this nature, too much weight is placed on the regional director. But, as he said, "You have to understand, in rural Saskatchewan we're dealing with people who are not used to any kind of public speaking; they are rural folks who are--don't get me wrong, they're great people--genuine, honest--but they're not into this fancy interview stuff." During the actual interview process, most questions were asked by the regional director based on the questions he had brought with him. The questions centered around the following broad areas: personal characteristics, interpersonal relations, managerial abilities, experience, and aspirations.

In determining the best applicant, the regional director remained in the room and encouraged the board to take a piece of paper and do some selecting. He helped them to focus on the issue by saying, "If you were

to choose all by yourself, who would be number one? number two?" The selection narrowed very quickly to two candidates. The board then started discussing the strengths and shortcomings of the two candidates in order to "try to persuade one another that this person should be chosen over the other." At one point they asked the regional director to check the financial background experience of one of the candidates. During this final selection process the regional director recalled feeling that "this particular board would have dearly loved to have me make the decision so that they could have somebody to blame [if things go awry]." In regard to his influence in the final decision, he indicated that he tries not to persuade the board, but "on a rare occasion where [he] sees a board leaning toward a candidate that [he] knows deep down will not be successful in that division, in [his] opinion, [he] will try to get the message to the chairman in some way." However, he noted that "there is a point where you have to stand up, close your books, and say something to the effect that "now descends upon you the heavy responsibility of trusteeship. You must now select your director."

The board ultimately chose their new director. The regional director felt that the director was chosen "because the board liked him personally; individual members liked him--they just liked his personality --they liked listening to him." He also felt that another deciding factor for the board was that this candidate "had a very strong reference from a widely respected director and educator in the province."

The regional director sensed that the board felt that they chose a fine director and that they "now realize what a person who actually works for them could do for them" as opposed to the provincially appointed superintendent. However, he felt that "they just got plain lucky with

Gerald because he's a flamboyant sort of big kind of individual who commands a great deal of respect because of his genuineness."

## Rolling Hills School Division

Rolling Hills School Division is an urban division which employs approximately 200 teachers. A new director, Donald, was selected in the spring of 1989 due to the retirement of the previous director. Donald assumed his position on August 1, 1989. Since the previous director had merely been promoted to the position a number of years ago, the selection of a director was a new process for the board.

### Director's Perspective

Donald first became aware that this particular directorship was available by reading the advertisement in the newspaper. He was interested in the position because "[he] had worked in that school division before and enjoyed it. [He] liked the area . . . and the people that [he] had worked with and wanted to get more experience and come back to offer more." Donald was very aware of the situation in the school division. He commented that "one of the things that appealed to me is that [the school division] was in a time of change." He was aware that the current director and the assistant director were retiring and that the secretary-treasurer had just retired. Donald also knew that many of the principals were leaving, so "[he] didn't feel as if [he] was going back to do what [he] was doing before (as an assistant director), but [he] felt that [he] was going back to a familiar setting with a whole new different challenge."

In making application for the position, Donald included a resume, a

performance review from his current employer, and a "System of Beliefs on School Administration," the latter which he had devised and "is a philosophy of sorts." The application was submitted to the board chairperson, and within a week he was called by the current director, who invited him to an interview.

Donald prepared for the interview quite extensively. Since he had been interviewed for a directorship "six or seven times," he took "the questions from those interviews, put them together," and wrote the answers out in point form. As he said, "I would get my thinking clear . . . so that when asked these questions I wouldn't wander--I would be as concise and crisp as I could after having thought through almost every anticipated question."

The interview lasted about an hour and a half. All board members, the regional director, and the current director were present. Donald recalled that "they got right into the interview fairly quickly" because "[he] knew every trustee except one." Each board member "took an area and asked questions, and they went around the table. The chairman didn't ask questions . . . ; he was more or less an observer. The regional director asked a question or two, and the retiring director didn't ask any questions." Donald indicated that although each board member asked only a few questions,

> they blocked [them] in such a way that they were so big and hard to answer. . . . One question, for example, was, "What is your perception of the director of education in terms of teachers, principals, the staff, the local board, and the division board?"

Other questions asked related to the role of the director, relationships between the director and the secretary-treasurer, the consultants and the assistant director, professional development, bargaining, communication,

planning, programming, future issues, decision making, evaluation, and provincial initiatives. He indicated, "They asked one that I hadn't anticipated about how I felt about private schools."

In regard to his performance at the interview, Donald commented that "I felt I could have done better, [but] I thought the questions were good, and I think I did fairly well in answering them. I was prepared for the interview, and I didn't get too many surprises!" He indicated that he felt a bit uneasy with the current director being present at the interview because he had worked with him as his assistant previously. He said:

> We think quite differently about a lot of issues, and I didn't want to put down things that he values and that I don't value, and vice versa, so I felt that was a bit of a restriction on how free I could be in order to remain professional.

Donald felt that the board "criteria weren't crystal clear because they asked a lot of general questions" However, he did indicate that he felt the board was likely looking for a "different style of leadership and management for their division." A number of questions focused on the internal operation and management of central office" and on the role of the Chief Executive Officer. He also felt that the board wanted "someone who would be visible in the community and within their school division."

The newly appointed director felt that, since he had worked for this particular school board previously in a senior administrative position, "this worked in [his] favor because they knew [him], and they knew what kind of person [he] was." Donald indicated that "one of the strengths [the board] wanted and that I have is the ability to work collaboratively with people and to get them alongside very, very quickly. . . . I think they selected me because of past experience! The fact that they knew me

gave me an edge on [the other candidates], and I think that's why they selected me."

## Board Chairperson's Perspective

The board had been aware for nearly a year that it would be appointing a new director due to the pending retirement of their director. Board members were "looking forward to a change and to new ideas . . . as the two top people had been [there] for between eighteen and thirty years."

The director position was advertised provincially, and approximately 36 applications were received. Upon receipt of the applications, the board chairperson contacted the regional director, who assisted the board with the shortlisting process. The board found the regional director to be "very helpful." The chairperson indicated that the regional director is "the ultimate guardian of this region, and he knows the personalities that we are dealing with; he knows our division; and he knows some of the needs we have."

Developing criteria in regard to the type of person the board wanted was the first step that the board and the regional director took. The decision was made to attempt to hire a person who had "experience as a Chief Executive Officer" and who would not be "reliant on the secretary-treasurer . . . , who would be able to implement new programs . . . , and who would be comfortable living in rural Saskatchewan." Preferably, the new director would have experience in rural Saskatchewan; "rural areas are very different from urban areas because every little region has to teach its own things . . . and has to deal with every aspect of education."

Following a thorough review of the applications and "trying to fit the criteria to the applicants' resumes," approximately a dozen applicants were selected for further investigation. This investigation involved "hard-copy referencing" whereby letters were sent to the applicants' referees requesting them to reply in writing about the applicant in regard to specific pre-determined criteria. Following the return of the references, the board and the regional director invited six candidates to an interview: two assistant directors, two directors, and two persons with Department of Education experience. The board chairperson indicated that numerous applications had been received from principals, but that a conscious decision was made not to interview principals. The board felt that

> they're not being fair to themselves applying for a director's job. There are certain levels of expertise they have to gain: First, they have to have K to 12 experience as a principal, maybe in a large school, then be an assistant or consultant, and then try for a directorship. . . . People who try to bypass two or three of those steps are maybe doing a disservice to themselves and probably not taking the right experience to the board they're going to.

The interviews were arranged by the current director. Those present at the interviews included the five-member board, the regional director, and the current director. The chairperson indicated that the board took this process very seriously and tried to determine how well each candidate matched the pre-established criteria. He further emphasized how valuable the interviews were in that "you can only get so much information from the resumes. You have to meet the person in order to get a feeling whether or not you can work with that person."

Following the interviews, the board discussed the candidates in detail. Eventually, by "a show of hands," the members decided upon two

candidates. In the discussion regarding Donald, the chairperson recalled that he "knew Donald personally and really felt he was the best person for the job but tried very hard not to sway the other board members' opinions." He recalled that the other candidate had excellent communication skills and gave the impression that "he would really take over," which board members felt "could be a problem for them later on." In addition, this candidate had had "some personal problems" in the past which also concerned the board. Donald, on the other hand, "was a people-person" who had previously worked in their central office and whom they had "had good reports about." The board liked Donald because he was a "low-key person" with whom they felt they could work effectively. They made a unanimous decision to offer the directorship to Donald.

Regional Director's Perspective

The regional director first became involved in this particular selection following an invitation from the board chairperson, who indicated that he and the vice-chairperson would like to discuss the selection procedures with him, since this was a new procedure for them. In meeting with them, the regional director

> tried to reach some understanding with them on the importance of the position, not only for the school division but also for the Department of Education . . . that it's a unique position in that [the director] stands as Chief Executive Officer of the board, yet at the same time legislation assigns some primary duties and responsibilities that the director has to the Department.

The regional director indicated that although his involvement in this selection was consistent with that of other cases, he did have some concerns that this board "might narrow its selection criteria [by being] perhaps too preoccupied with salary considerations and not get involved

in an overall comprehensive selection procedure."

Prior to the cut-off date of the receipt of applications, the regional director indicated that he did some "reaching out and tapping" whereby he asked some potential candidates if they were aware that this position was being advertised.

Upon receipt of the applications, the regional director assisted the board with deciding what the "critical factors for this position were." The regional director indicated that he felt this was very important:

> I don't even want to look at applications, talk about applications or anything else until we've had some degree of thinking about what the critical factors are. Ideally, if they can set out their critical factors, then clearly you can say, "There are some things you can glean from an application, there are other things you can glean from references, and there are other things that you can glean from an interview."

He felt that the most critical factor for this board was selecting a director "with Chief Executive Officer manager administrative experience."

Board members, along with the regional director, reviewed the applications and selected approximately 12 candidates to be "hard-copy referenced." This procedure required referees to respond in writing with respect to various aspects of the applicants. Once the references were received, the board and regional director selected six candidates to be interviewed.

The regional director assisted the board with "setting out twenty-some questions," and the board members divided the questions among themselves. This procedure was followed at the interviews with "the standard sort of Department relationship questions" asked by the regional director. He indicated that he likes "to push people in terms of consistency . . . and scan [the interview]."

Following the interviews, in the final stages of making the selection, the regional director "drew things to the board's attention." He recalled that "two applicants stood out, and [the board] was comfortable with one or the other . . . ; they were fairly equal. There were little hooks or little worries on each of the applicants . . . and certainly salary was a part of it." In reflecting on this stage of selection, he said, "I don't know what you call it, or whether there's a name for it in the literature, it's overcoming some of the little negative things."

The regional director felt that Donald was selected as director for various reasons: His education was "clearly upper end"; he had experience in the Department, in central office, and in another school division; his experience working with the current director, although difficult, was perceived as having been successful; "he knew the schools . . . , the area . . . , the minefields"; and he was able to "convey a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for really wanting the job and wanting to work in that division." "There were very few little negative hooks hanging on the whole package!"

## Similarities and Differences in Selection Processes

An analysis of the nine interviews conducted for the three case studies revealed both similarities and differences in various aspects of the selection process. Among the aspects which warrant attention are practices related to advertising, shortlisting, interviewing, and making the selection decision.

## Advertising the Position

In all three cases boards knew well in advance that they would be selecting a director and advertised the position early. The most common time of year for selection of directors in Saskatchewan is early spring; this occurred in two of the three cases. The action of one board in dismissing the director in July resulted in advertising of that directorship in early fall. The board chairperson in this case felt that "it would have been much more appropriate if we could have advertised in the spring and interviewed and hired the first of August. . . . I believe we would have received more quality applications at a different time of year."

Advertisements for the position were placed in the major provincial newspaper and sometimes in newspapers in an adjoining province. Candidates became aware of the position largely by reading the newspaper advertisements. Generally, advertisements consisted of a brief job description, educational and experiential requirements as set out by legislation, and information about to whom the application should be sent and what it should contain.

## Application Practices

Applicants submitted a letter of application along with a current resume and a list of references to the board chairperson. Even though board requirements for applications were quite straightforward, there was variation in what was sent. One regional director cautioned applicants "not to overdo the application . . . ; realize what the important parts of your experience are, and zero in." The importance of applicants showing a straight career path "leaving no omissions" and of including

the current board chairperson's name in their reference list were also recommended by a regional director.

A number of applicants followed up on their applications by contacting board members and other key persons. Several directors felt that this procedure was somewhat unethical, and one director commented that "[you should] submit your resume and wait--don't pressure boards."

On average, about 25 applications were received for each of the positions in the case studies. Letters of acknowledgement were sent to all applicants by the acting/current director upon receipt of the application.

## Shortlisting

Boards involved the regional director in shortlisting applicants. Together they examined the applications, conducted reference checks, and selected applicants to be interviewed. Prior to examining the applications, regional directors attempted to have board members decide upon the kind of person they want as their director. Two regional directors had board members go through a process in order to make this decision. Based on the established criteria, members, along with the regional director, chose among the applications.

Reference checks were conducted on the chosen applicants. Generally, the checks were made by telephone by the regional director but sometimes by the board chairperson or the current director. On one occasion, "hard-copy" referencing was done. One regional director encouraged the "direct employer-to-employer kind of relationship by [making] sure that the board chairman contacts the board chairman of the employing division." When contacts of this nature are made, one board

chairperson recalled that "some of [the board chairpersons] were quite dismayed to think that their director would leave or even think of leaving!"

When reference checks proved to be positive, the applicant was invited to an interview. In all cases the current director set up the interviews. Regional directors encourage boards to "keep the number of candidates to be interviewed to four or five."

## Preparing for the Interview

The manner in which candidates prepared for the interview varied from a discussion with a mentor to writing out possible answers to anticipated questions. However, regional directors encouraged directors to prepare for the interview by telling them to take time to find out about the division, check policy manuals, "check around . . . to see if the employing board is really after a C.E.O.," "clue into the issues . . . , and superimpose some sense of vision or mission over it," and "understand what it is that you believe in . . . and what you are expecting."

Board members met with their respective regional directors and adopted the questions presented to them. They also decided on the general format of the interviews and who would ask the questions. Even though board members formally prepare for the interviews, one director who had been interviewed "six or seven times" previously commented that "over half of the interviews are poorly structured."

## Composition of the Interview Panel

All board members and the regional director comprised the interview panel for the three cases; in one case the current director was also present. The newly appointed director in this case indicated that the current director's presence at the interview caused him to be somewhat uneasy, and he said that he did not know "what could be accomplished by [his presence]." The board chairperson indicated that the current director was there "as a resource person" for the board. One director commented that perhaps consideration should be given to having the secretary-treasurer serve on the interview panel since "the Chief Executive Officer will have that Secretary-Treasurer reporting to him afterward." The regional director's membership on the panel was generally very well received. As one director commented,

> The regional director is the key person in the whole process of selection of directors. You get good guidance by the regional director, and then you get a good interview. If you don't have [the regional director], these boards don't get a true picture--they don't find out what they need to know.

One regional director indicated that he thought boards felt comfortable when he is on the panel: "[They] feel that I'm there for their best interests and that there's nobody I'm trying to put into that position."

## The Interview

The interviews were convened and adjourned by the board chairperson. Panel members alternately asked questions, except in one case where the regional director asked all of the questions. In the latter instance the regional director felt that the board wanted him to ask the questions in order that "they could concentrate on the answers . . . , and they could write their notes." However, another regional director indicated that

"if [he does] the questioning, the applicants talk only to [him], and they feel that [he] is doing the selection." In addition, one director pointed out that "each board member should have a chance to ask questions . . . and that the same questions should be asked each candidate . . . so that they can compare." He also indicated the value in having the regional director ask all of the questions in that "sometimes [the interviewer] has to probe to get a point that's important . . . , [and] the board members may not have the insight to pick up on the educational issues."

The first interview question usually related to the candidate's background and served the purpose of putting the candidate at ease, although in one case the director indicated that since nearly all board members knew him, "we got right into the interview fairly quickly." The remainder of the questions centered largely on issues relative to interpersonal relations and managerial abilities. One candidate specifically commented on the difficulty he experienced in answering very long, complex questions and much preferred "one-tiered" questions. However, generally candidates felt that the questions were "appropriate."

From the questions asked, candidates able to assess to some degree the type of person the board was searching for. There appeared to be a concern in all cases as to whether or not the candidate could get along with the board--as one regional director put it, "They wanted somebody that they didn't feel would be talking down to them as elected people."

Board chairpersons and regional directors commented on candidates' performance at the interview. They encouraged them to "present yourself in a business-like fashion," but "be yourself," and to "come to the

Table 4.9

Distribution of Respondents by Extent of Formal Study/Preparation in Educational Administration or Supervision at Time of First Appointment

| Formal study/preparation | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program | 41 | 50.0 |
| Courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level | 12 | 14.6 |
| Studies beyond the Master's level | 12 | 14.6 |
| Some courses on a Master's program, but specialization in another area | 11 | 13.4 |
| None of the above | 6 | 7.3 |

proportion had studied beyond the Master's level. A lower proportion of respondents had some courses on a Master's program but had specialized in another area. Only six respondents had formal study/preparation in areas other than those mentioned in the questionnaire.

## Professional Development Activities

Respondents were asked to indicate the extent of their involvement in various activities prior to their first appointment as director. Table 4.10 shows the extent of the respondents' involvement. The average number of educational associations in which respondents held memberships was 3.59, while in associations outside the field of education the average number was 2.81. They chaired conventions/committees on an average of 3.01 times and held presidencies on approximately 2.80 occasions. The respondents indicated that they had served on about 2.5 boards/commissions on average and held few positions in

Table 4.10

Mean Number of Memberships and Activities in Which Respondents Were Involved Prior to First Appointment as Director

| Memberships/activities | Mean |
|---|---|
| Number of educational associations in which memberships were held | 3.59 |
| Number of conventions/committees chaired | 3.01 |
| Number of associations outside the field of education in which memberships were held | 2.8[1] |
| Number of presidencies held | 2.8 |
| Number of boards/commissions served on | 2.54 |
| Number of provincial/national offices held | 1.00 |

provincial/national offices.

Participants in the study were also asked to identify various professional development activities which they considered to be relevant to their preparation for the position of director of education. Results of the analysis of responses to the open-ended question suggest that these could be placed into four categories: (1) seminars, workshops, and conferences; (2) courses/classes; (3) leadership development activities; and (4) past experiences.

Of the 52 directors who responded to this question, the largest number by far indicated that they had participated extensively in seminars, workshops, and conferences, and that these had been valuable professional development experiences. Five respondents singled out the Madeline Hunter seminar as having been particularly valuable, while several others mentioned seminars relating to teacher effectiveness,

teacher supervision, and curriculum development. A number of respondents commented on the value of the camaraderie in "talking with colleagues and other directors" at seminars, workshops, and conferences which they had attended.

Approximately one third of those responding to this question indicated that courses/classes had served a professional development function in their preparation for the position of director of education. Eleven respondents singled out the Saskatchewan Principals' Short Course as having been particularly valuable, seven mentioned the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents short courses, and two cited the Banff Short Course. The Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation Administrative Leadership Development Program was mentioned by three respondents for its value in their preparation for a directorship, and university graduate studies were cited by four respondents as being helpful. In addition, six respondents indicated that they considered professional reading to have been very valuable in their preparation for a directorship.

Nine respondents to this open-ended question indicated the importance of their involvements with the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation in preparing them for the position of director of education. More specifically, they cited serving as councillor, as local president, on ad hoc committees, and being involved with Project T.E.A.C.H. (Teacher Effectiveness and Classroom Handling) s being noteworthy.

Respondents also mentioned the value of having chaired committees as well as having served on executives of provincial and national associations, particularly in the capacity of president.

Past work experiences such as having been a successful principal, an

assistant superintendent, an apprentice under an outstanding director, a university lecturer, and a Department of Education employee were among the other activities identified by respondents as having been useful experiences in their preparation for a directorship.

## Factors Related to Career Decisions

Circumstances which might have influenced respondents to pursue administrative careers generally and that of director specifically were explored through both closed-ended and open-ended questions.

### Administrative Career Decision

Respondents were asked to rate on a five-point scale the importance they attached to various factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career. The data in Table 4.11 indicate that for the respondents, the single most important factor in making the decision was a personal assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education. The mean of the ratings for this factor was 4.22 on the five-point scale. The second most important factor, which respondents rated moderately important (mean = 3.74), was the confidence they had in their own abilities as a result of formal studies. Next in importance and also rated moderately important (mean = 3.51) were the guidance they had received from mentors and the opportunities for leadership development they had had in their teaching careers. Also considered to be moderately important by respondents in deciding to pursue an administrative career were the factors relating to encouragement of others, support of a network of professional colleagues, and involvement in educational associations. Encouragement of

Table 4.11

Mean Importance Rating of Factors Influencing Decision to Pursue an Administrative Career

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Assessment of own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education | 4.22 |
| Confidence in abilities as a result of formal studies | 3.74 |
| Guidance of mentors | 3.[illegible] |
| Opportunities for leadership development in the teaching career | 3.51 |
| Encouragement of others | 3.25 |
| Support of a network of professional colleagues | 3.16 |
| Involvement in educational associations | 3.13 |
| Encouragement of family/parents | 2.79 |
| Involvement in clubs/associations outside the field of education | 2.74 |
| Opportunities for leadership development as a youth in school | 2.57 |

family/parents, involvement in clubs/associations outside the field of education, and opportunities for leadership development as a youth in school were rated by respondents as not highly important factors in the decision to pursue an administrative career.

A cross-tabulation of ratings of importance of factors and location of school division resulted in one statistically significant Chi-square test. The results are shown in Table 4.12. Nearly two thirds of the 63 respondents whose school division was in a rural area felt that the guidance of mentors was highly important in making their decision to pursue an administrative career. Thirteen considered the guidance of mentors to be moderately important, and 10 felt it was not very important. Of the 19 respondents whose school division was in a city, 8 considered the guidance of mentors to be moderately important in making their decision to pursue an administrative career, 5 considered it to be highly important, and 6 felt it was not very important.

The results of this cross-tabulation tend to suggest that directors in rural divisions consider the guidance of mentors in making their decision to pursue an administrative career to be somewhat more important than do directors in cities.

## Directorship Career Decision

Table 4.13 shows the importance respondents attached to various factors in making their decision to seek the position of director of education. Factors were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being highly important and 1 being not very important. Two factors--the challenge of the job (mean = 4.59) and the opportunity to influence educational policy (mean = 4.54)--were considered by the respondents to

Table 4.12

Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Importance of Mentors in Pursuing an Administrative Career

| Location | Highly important f | Moderately important f | Not very important f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| City | 5 | 8 | 6 | 19 |
| Rural | 40 | 13 | 10 | 63 |
| Total | 45 | 21 | 16 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.15 p = .02

Table 4.13

Mean Importance Rating of Factors in Deciding to Pursue a Directorship

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Challenge of the job | 4.59 |
| Opportunity to influence educational policy | 4.54 |
| Career progress | 4.17 |
| Employment considerations | 3.30 |
| Prestige/status | 2.87 |
| Other | 4.66 |

be highly important. Of somewhat less importance, but still with a relatively high mean rating (4.17), was the factor of career progress. Rated moderately important by respondents was employment considerations; prestige/status did not appear to be a significant factor. Respondents also identified other factors as being important. These "other" factors included mentors, desire to serve education, recruitment, status, self-actualization, ambition, time for a change, opportunity to interact with people from all walks of life, and belief in self.

Respondents were also asked to describe, in response to an open-ended question, an important event(s) in their career which they consider to have been a major factor in encouraging them to become a director of education. Sixty-five directors responded to this question. Their responses fell into four categories: (1) encouragement of others, (2) successful work experience, (3) personal initiative, and (4) legislative change.

Twenty respondents cited the encouragement of others as an important event in their career, and eight indicated that they had been asked to apply. The term "encouragement" was used in nearly all of the responses. Respondents received most encouragement from those with whom they worked closely: directors, superintendents, and supervisors. Several cited board members and board chairmen as having encouraged them, and several indicated encouragement from close professional colleagues and other people. In several instances, single events were cited as having played an important part in encouraging respondents to pursue a directorship: "a statement by the director that I was the principal in the system who had the most potential to succeed as a director," and "a conversation with a former superintendent who suggested that I would do very well in

such a position." Many respondents used the term "mentor" in referring to a person who encouraged them, and several respondents indicated that their director/superintendent was also their mentor.

The second most frequent type of response regarding important events in the career of aspiring directors was in the area of successful work experience. Eleven respondents to this question cited their success as a principal as having given them confidence in their abilities as a leader, and many related this success to working for a very good director: "working for Mr. _____, who was a very good director," "admiring Mr. _____, my Director of Education." The assistant directorship was another position cited by seven respondents as having been a successful work experience which led to their application for a directorship: "working as an assistant director under a very formative mentor, the director of education," and "experience as an assistant director."

Six respondents indicated personal initiative as having been a factor in encouraging them to seek a directorship. A large number of respondents cited university graduate classes, usually culminating in a Master's degree or a Graduate Diploma, as having been important events for them. Three respondents felt they needed a change and applied for a directorship: "I realize that if I didn't find a new challenge, I would soon slip into retirement on the job, and I was only 40!" "realization that I was growing older and that a change was required," and "I was stagnating." Still other respondents indicated that they developed confidence in their own abilities after seeing a director doing a poor job: "dissatisfaction with the performance of the previous director and a determination to do better," "had a weak director . . . I became informal leader and trustees turned to me."

The legislative change in Saskatchewan in 1970, which allowed school boards to hire their own directors of education rather than having them appointed provincially, was seen by a relatively small number of directors (three) as having been an important event in their career which led to their appointment to a directorship.

## Recruitment and Selection

Movement into a directorship position or among such positions may be assumed to involve an awareness on the part of applicants of a vacancy, application procedures on the part of applicants, and formal selection processes. The respondents' views and perceptions of various aspects of those processes are presented in this section.

### Awareness and Application

Respondents were asked to indicate how they became aware of the availability of their current position. Table 4.14 shows that the most frequent means of awareness was through a newspaper advertisement; just under half of the respondent indicated that this was how they became aware that their current position was available. Eighteen respondents indicated that they became aware that their current position was available from the former director of education, and nearly as many indicated that they were invited to apply. A very small number of respondents (six) became aware through the network of professional colleagues, only one had made personal inquiries in regard to the availability of the current position, and two had become aware that their current position was available through other means.

Table 4.14

Distribution of Respondents by Sources of Awareness of Availability of Current Position

| Source of awareness | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Newspaper advertisement | 38 | 46.3 |
| Former director of education | 18 | 22.0 |
| Was invited to apply | 17 | 20.7 |
| Network of professional colleagues | 6 | 7.3 |
| Personal inquiry | 1 | 1.2 |
| Other | 2 | 2.4 |
| District newsletter | 0 | 0 |
| Advertisement in a professional magazine | 0 | 0 |
| Notification from the school district with regard to an application already on file | 0 | 0 |

A review of data collected related to steps taken in applying for their first directorship, and shown in Table 4.15, revealed that over two thirds of respondents had made casual inquiries about the characteristics of the school division, and that nearly 60% had inquired about the community as a place to live or about procedures and characteristics of the board. About one third of the respondents had made casual inquiries about employment conditions, and one fourth had inquired about the preferred management style of the director. Only a small number of respondents had made casual inquiries about administrative hiring practices or other matters.

Respondents indicated that in applying for their first directorship

Table 4.15

Frequency of Mention of Various Steps Taken in Applying for the First Directorship

| Specific action | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Casual inquiries about: | | |
| Characteristics of the school division | 56 | 68.3 |
| Community as a place to live | 49 | 59.7 |
| Procedures and characteristics of the board | 48 | 58.5 |
| Employment conditions | 28 | 34.1 |
| Preferred management style of the director | 21 | 25.6 |
| Administrative hiring practices | 10 | 12.2 |
| Other | 14 | 17.1 |
| Informal discussions with: | | |
| The former director | 47 | 57.3 |
| Mentors/colleagues | 40 | 48.8 |
| The regional director | 32 | 39.0 |
| Board members | 23 | 28.0 |
| Staff members of L.E.A.D.S. | 20 | 24.4 |
| Acquaintances living in the district | 17 | 20.7 |
| Staff members of S.S.T.A. | 11 | 13.4 |
| Discussions with other people | 3 | 3.7 |
| Informal visits to: | | |
| Schools/towns in the district | 26 | 31.7 |
| Site of the director's office | 26 | 31.7 |

they had informal discussions with a variety of people. Over half had had discussions with the former director, nearly half had had discussions with mentors/colleagues, and over one third had had discussions with the regional director. Approximately one quarter of respondents had had discussions with board members, with staff members of the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, and with acquaintances living in the division. Only a small number of respondents had had discussions with staff members of the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association and with other people.

In applying for their first directorship, nearly one third of the respondents indicated that they had made informal visits to the schools/towns in the division and to the site of the director's office.

In a cross-tabulation of application procedures with school district location and age of directors, a significant contingency was observed for two steps. The first, as shown in Table 4.16, indicates that of the 63 respondents who are employed in rural school districts, 20 made casual inquiries about the preferred management style of the director of education before applying for their first directorship. Of the 19 directors employed in cities, only one made casual inquiries of this nature. The second, as shown in Table 4.17, indicates that of the 32 respondents who had informal discussions with the regional director prior to applying for their first directorship, one half (16) were between the ages of 45 and 49, 12 were 50 years of age or over, and 4 were under the age of 45.

The results of these cross-tabulations indicate that rural directors made casual inquiries about the preferred management style of the director prior to applying for their first directorship more frequently

Table 4.16

Cross-Tabulation of Location of Directors with Casual Inquiries Regarding the Preferred Management Style of the Director Prior to First Application

| Casual inquiries regarding management style | Location | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| | City f | Rural f | f |
| Yes | 1 | 20 | 21 |
| No | 18 | 43 | 61 |
| Total | 19 | 63 | 82 |

Chi-square = 4.07 p = .04

Table 4.17

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Having Informal Discussions with the Regional Director Prior to First Application

| Informal discussions with the regional director | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 4 | 16 | 12 | 32 |
| No | 21 | 13 | 16 | 50 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.92 p = .01

than did directors employed in cities. In addition, directors over the age of 45 were much more likely to have informal discussions with the regional director prior to applying for their first directorship than were those under the age of 45.

## Selection Processes

The data in Table 4.18 show the elements present in the selection process for the first directorship and reveal that in over 90% of cases an interview took place. Respondents also indicated that over 80% of the time the position was advertised provincially, a short-list was established, and references were checked. Forty-one percent of respondents indicated that a policy of selection procedures was in place, and about the same proportion indicated that a search committee was

Table 4.18

Frequency of Mention of Elements Present in the Selection Process for the First Directorship

| Selection element | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| An interview took place | 75 | 91.5 |
| The position was advertised provincially | 70 | 85.4 |
| A short-list was established | 69 | 84.1 |
| References were checked | 69 | 84.1 |
| A policy of selection procedures was in place | 34 | 41.4 |
| A search committee was established | 33 | 40.2 |
| The position was advertised nationally | 11 | 13.4 |
| A second/follow-up interview was held | 11 | 13.4 |

established. Only a small number of respondents indicated that the position was advertised nationally or that a second/follow-up interview was held.

Several contingencies were identified when this questionnaire item was cross-tabulated with three age groups of directors. The results of these findings are shown in Tables 4.19, 4.20, and 4.21. Of the 70 respondents who indicated that the position was advertised provincially, 28 were between the ages of 45 and 49, one third (23) was under the age of 45, and 19 were 50 years of age or over. Sixty-nine directors responded identically in regard to the checking of references and establishing a short-list. Over two thirds (50) in both cases were under the age of 50 years, with 27 being between 45 and 49 and 23 being under 45. Nineteen were 50 years of age or over.

The findings from this cross-tabulation indicate that for their

Table 4.19

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Advertising the Position Provincially

| The position was advertised provincially | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 28 | 19 | 70 |
| No | 2 | 1 | 9 | 12 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 10.66 p = .00

Table 4.20

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Checking of References

| | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Your references were checked | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 27 | 19 | 69 |
| No | 2 | 2 | 9 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.47 p = .01

Table 4.21

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with the Selection Process Element Regarding Establishing a Short-List

| | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| A short-list was established | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Yes | 23 | 27 | 19 | 69 |
| No | 2 | 2 | 9 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 28 | 82 |

Chi-square = 8.47 p = .01

first appointment to a directorship, the position was advertised provincially, their references were checked, and a short-list was established most frequently for the respondents between the ages of 45 and 49, less frequently for those under 45, and least frequently for those over 50. These results may indicate that selection procedures have changed in recent years.

Respondents were asked to indicate the membership of the interview panel for their first directorship. As is indicated in Table 4.22, 68 respondents indicated that all board members served on the interview panel, whereas only six indicated that only some board members served on the panel. Slightly over half of the respondents indicated that the regional director served on the panel, and just over one quarter of respondents indicated that central office representatives were also

Table 4.22

Frequency of Mention of Specific Members of the Interview Panel for the First Directorship

| Panel membership | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| All board members | 68 | 82.9 |
| The regional director | 44 | 53.7 |
| Central Office representatives | 24 | 29.3 |
| The former director of education | 18 | 22.0 |
| Some board members | 6 | 7.3 |
| Principal representatives | 3 | 3.7 |
| Teacher representatives | 2 | 2.4 |
| Parent representatives | 0 | 0 |

included. Eighteen respondents indicated that the former director of education served on the panel. A very small number of respondents indicated the panel included a principal representative or teacher representatives.

A cross-tabulation of division size and members of the interview panel shown in Tables 4.23 and 4.24 indicated some contingencies between these variables. Of the 52 respondents who revealed that the regional director was a member of the interview panel for their first directorship, 30 indicated that this was the case in divisions employing more than 101 teachers and 22 indicated that this was true in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers. In divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers, the 18 respondents indicated that 15 of them had also had the former director of education as a member of the interview panel, whereas in school divisions employing more than 101 teachers only 3 indicated that this was the case.

The findings from these cross-tabulations indicate that regional directors served on the interview panel for respondents' first directorship more frequently in larger school divisions, and that the former director of education served on this panel more frequently in smaller divisions than in larger divisions.

## Selection Criteria

The data in Table 4.25 show the means of the respondents' rating of the perceived importance attached to characteristics of applicants used as criteria in the selection process. The criteria were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with 5 being highly important and 1 being not very important. Respondents perceived that educational/administrative skills,

Table 4.23

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with Regional Director as Member of the Interview Panel

| Regional director on panel | Division size: -101 teachers f | Division size: 101+ teachers f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 22 | 30 | 52 |
| No | 22 | 8 | 30 |
| Total | 44 | 38 | 82 |

Chi-square = 6.17 p = .01

Table 4.24

Cross-Tabulation of Division Size with the Former Director of Education as Member of the Interview Panel

| Former director of education member | Division size: -101 teachers f | Division size: 101+ teachers f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|
| Yes | 15 | 3 | 18 |
| No | 37 | 27 | 64 |
| Total | 52 | 30 | 82 |

Chi-square = 3.94 p = .05

Table 4.25

Mean Ratings of Importance of Characteristics of Applicants as Criteria in the Selection Process

| Characteristic | Mean |
|---|---|
| Educational/administrative skills, competencies, and knowledge | 4.59 |
| General professional standing | 4.40 |
| Successful experience in other school districts | 4.24 |
| Educational qualifications | 4.22 |
| Calibre of references | 4.21 |
| Potential to address specific problem(s) which require solution | 4.14 |
| Compatibility with the social and educational context | 4.13 |
| Clarity of professional goals | 4.11 |
| Readiness to initiate change | 3.98 |
| Political sensitivity/skills | 3.80 |
| Readiness to support established policies | 3.78 |
| Professional experience in the district | 2.45 |
| Seniority | 1.65 |
| Other | 4.72 |

competencies, and knowledge (mean = 4.59) and general professional standing (mean = 4.40) were of highest importance. Three characteristics with only slightly lower means included successful experience in other school districts, educational qualifications, and calibre of references. Three additional characteristics had mean ratings above 4.00, namely, potential to address specific problem(s) which require solution, compatibility with the social and educational context, and clarity of professional goals. Of moderate importance were three items with mean ratings between 3.70 and 4.00: readiness to initiate change, political sensitivity/skills, and readiness to support established policies. Professional experience in the district and seniority were perceived as not highly important by respondents. Other characteristics of applicants which were perceived as important criteria in the selection process included commitment to a Christian lifestyle, ability to get along with others and to make decisions, desire to work in a larger system, leadership, the right "chemistry," independence, and openness to minority groups.

One cross-tabulation shown in Table 4.26 indicated a contingency between perceived importance of educational qualifications with the age of directors. Of the 25 respondents under 45 years of age, 20 perceived that educational qualifications in director selection were highly important criteria, while the remainder (5) indicated that these criteria were only moderately important or not very important criteria. Twenty-two of the directors in the 45-49-year age bracket perceived that these criteria for selection were highly important, while seven perceived that they were moderately important or not very important. All 27 respondents 50 years of age or over perceived that educational

Table 4.26

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Importance of Educational Qualifications in Director Selection

| | Highly important | Moderately important or not very important | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Age | f | f | f |
| Under 45 | 20 | 5 | 25 |
| 45-49 | 22 | 7 | 29 |
| 50 or over | 27 | 0 | 27 |
| Total | 69 | 12 | 81 |

Chi-square = 7.23 p = .03

qualifications were highly important criteria for selection of directors.

The results indicate that there is greater consensus among directors 50 years of age or over regarding the perceived importance of educational qualifications in the selection of directors as compared to views of directors in younger age categories.

## Satisfaction and Stress

Respondents were asked to outline in response to an open-ended question various aspects of the position of director of education which they found to be satisfying or fulfilling and frustrating or stressful. All but three of the respondents provided a response to this question.

## Sources of Satisfaction

The major sources of satisfaction identified by respondents fell into four categories: (1) helping others, (2) opportunity to influence education, (3) working with people, and (4) top-level administration.

Helping others. Over one half of the responses were in this category. Respondents defined the theme of "helping others" with general statements such as "interpersonal opportunities," "providing opportunities for others to experience success," and "opportunity to facilitate plans of others." Specific sub-themes were identified which related to helping or working with particular categories of people: students, teachers, other administrators, and parents.

A significant number of responses (17) were directly related to helping students by "enhancing educational opportunities for students," "influencing policies and practices which affect student learning," "providing excellence of service to children," "introducing programs which improve education and kids," "bringing about appropriate positive change for the betterment of children," "providing needed service to children," "the challenge to lead improvement for youngsters," "improving student progress," "improving the curriculum and programs/teaching and learning," and "the opportunity to bring about appropriate positive change for the betterment of children."

Thirteen responses in regard to satisfaction of directors centered directly around helping teachers to do a better job through staff development, classroom observations/supervision, increasing morale, team building, visiting schools and students, associating with the teaching-learning process, working cooperatively with school administrators and teachers, and "seeing positive change in teachers that improves the

learning situation for students."

Some respondents (approximately 11) indicated that they had achieved considerable satisfaction from "helping administrators do a better job" and thereby affecting education in a very positive sense. They derived satisfaction from developing an administrative team, working cooperatively with them and helping them to grow, working toward a common goal, developing long-term plans with the administrative team, and grooming and coaching prospective administrators who will become successful in their own right.

Another area in which directors found satisfaction was that of helping parents. Some directors enjoyed "helping parents understand their child's capabilities and working to help them," "developing and sustaining a team that serves the family and each child," "working closely with parents," and developing local community involvement.

Ten respondents recognized the satisfaction from working with the board by influencing change in attitude of the board, working with a supportive board, "developing good solid board-director relationships," "interaction with the Board of Education and the Board of Trustees," "helping board members," and "developing strong positive board vision and leadership." They also derived satisfaction from professional development with the board by conceptualizing the functions of the board members, and by helping the board and the public to understand and accept the goals of the division.

Opportunity to influence education. Approximately one third of the responses related to the satisfaction respondents experienced from having the opportunity to influence education. Some respondents indicated the satisfaction they experienced from seeing the changes they had

recommended succeed; from providing leadership in curriculum; from influencing change in policy, practices, attitudes of the board, teachers, and administrations; and from "working for causes that really matter." Others recognized the satisfaction they enjoyed in having the freedom to affect change; "in providing leadership, counsel, and inspiration"; in having the ability to move the system in a positive direction; and in being able to support innovative ideas. In addition, some respondents derived satisfaction from being able to initiate change, give direction, establish a purposeful climate in the division, influence education in the division, develop programs/policies which directly affect students, and by successfully solving problems. A number of respondents indicated the satisfaction they received from planning for the future, formulating and implementing a mission statement for the school division, "promoting a vision of education," achieving objectives and goals established for the system, and from having "futuristic ideas."

Working with people. A small number of respondents who replied to this open-ended question gave approximately 13 responses which related to working with people. A significant number of responses related to the satisfaction they received from working with "supportive boards" and "competent teachers," from having the "opportunity to learn from colleagues," and from "contacts through L.E.A.D.S." One respondent indicated that he experienced satisfaction from "interpersonal opportunities," and another from "working with a large group of colleagues."

Top-level administration. Approximately 10 responses related to satisfaction felt in making top-level decisions, in "having responsibility," in "solving complex problems," and in "the variety of

challenges" afforded by the position. "Freedom to establish your own schedule" and having flexibility were cited as areas of satisfaction by two respondents, as were money, prestige, status, and respect.

## Sources of Stress

The responses to this open-ended question could be placed into three major categories: (1) people, (2) resources, and (3) nature of the role.

People. Of the total comments made in relation to this question, the largest number fell into this category. The people who were identified as sources of stress or frustration included board members, teachers, and various other individuals.

Twenty-eight percent of the respondents commented on the frustration they felt in working with board members. Comments centered largely around interference by board members in the day-to-day operations of the division by "not seeing their role as policy makers vs. administrators" and thinking "they are educational experts and thereby getting in the way." Several comments focussed on the frustration of "dealing with new board members before orientation" and "dealing with those with a personal/hidden agenda." Frustration was also felt in regard to board members' over-concern with their image and thereby "wiffling on decisions because of local pressure," and by board members who "make all of their decisions based on the dollar." A number of comments related to local school board members/trustees who want to be involved in all major decisions and "who do not understand the process of governance of education."

The second largest number of comments in regard to personnel was in the area of teachers. Of the responses in this area, most related to the

frustrations experienced in regard to "weak, unmotivated teachers" who "lack initiative/motivation," teachers who resist change, "negative teachers" and "mediocrity/laissez-faire teachers," and the difficulty directors experience in "weeding them out." Several directors indicated that they experienced frustration and stress in dismissing and transferring teachers.

A small number of respondents (9) indicated frustration in dealing with various other people such as the secretary-treasurer and parents, as well as the Deputy Minister and the Department of Education, particularly in regard to personnel in the latter two instances being "uncollaborative" and providing "limited leadership."

Resources. Approximately one quarter of respondents indicated that they experienced frustration and stress in regard to matters related to money, most of which were of the nature of "lack of funds" and "limited resources." They experienced frustration in "matching budgets and curriculum implementation," in "meeting increasing demands with decreasing resources," and with "maintaining a low mill rate at the expense of quality education." In addition, school closures were cited by several directors as areas of frustration and stress.

Nature of the role. Several other role-related factors were cited by directors as sources of frustration and stress. Of these, the largest number related to a lack of time for the performance of duties and to the excessive amount of paperwork/forms. A significant number of respondents indicated areas of frustration and stress as being related to "small 'p' politics," with the "irrational political world vs. the rational world of planning" as being problematic. A number of other frustrations and stresses of directors were cited by respondents, including unclear

channels of communication, lack of focus on the job specifications, unfounded criticisms/rumors, pressure groups, very little praise, conflicts, and "damned if you do/damned if you don't situations."

## Mobility and Career Plans

The factors which contribute to mobility in the directorship and particular career plans were explored through a number of closed-ended questions. A number of aspects of mobility and career plans were related to individual and division characteristics.

### Factors Influencing Mobility

Respondents who had previously served in the capacity of director of education were asked to rate, on five-point scales, the importance they attached to factors which attracted them to their current position, as well as those associated with leaving the last position. As is indicated in Table 4.27, professional challenge was rated as highly important. Six other factors were rated as moderately important: nature of the school division, career advancement, attractiveness of the community, opportunity to work in a larger division, employment conditions, and personal/family reasons. Philosophy of the board (mean = 2.81) and board relations and policies (mean = 2.76) were not significant factors in attracting directors to their current position. A small number of respondents rated other factors as highly important. These factors included time for a change, less travel, desire for prestige, and a supportive board.

None of the factors associated with leaving the previous position which are listed in Table 4.28 was rated as being of more than moderate

Table 4.27

Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Attracting Directors to Current Position

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Professional challenge | 4.20 |
| Nature of the school division | 3.70 |
| Career advancement | 3.44 |
| Attractiveness of the community | 3.38 |
| Opportunity to work in a larger division | 3.33 |
| Employment considerations | 3.33 |
| Personal/family reasons | 3.24 |
| Philosophy of the board | 2.81 |
| Board relations and policies | 2.76 |
| Other | 4.00 |

importance. Five items had mean ratings between 2.50 and 3.00: employment considerations, limited career opportunities, limited professional challenge, nature of the school division, and personal/family reasons. Respondents rated three items as not very important: community attractiveness, relationship with the board, and relationships with the professional staff. A small number of respondents identified other factors as highly important: travelling distance within the division, extreme political interference, time for a change, and a one-year appointment.

The rating of importance of professional challenge as a factor in leaving when cross-tabulated with the size of school divisions indicated

Table 4.28

Mean Importance Ratings of Factors in Leaving Last Directorship

| Factor | Mean |
|---|---|
| Employment considerations | 2.84 |
| Limited career opportunities | 2.80 |
| Limited professional challenge | 2.76 |
| Nature of the school division | 2.64 |
| Personal/family reasons | 2.52 |
| Community attractiveness | 2.20 |
| Relationship with the board | 2.16 |
| Relationship with the professional staff | 1.56 |
| Other | 5.00 |

a significant contingency, as shown in Table 4.29. Twelve of the 13 respondents in school divisions employing 101 or more teachers rated limited professional challenge as a limited or moderate factor in leaving their last directorship, while only one respondent rated this factor as highly important. Of the 12 respondents employed in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers, 8 rated limited professional challenge as a highly important factor in leaving their last directorship, whereas four rated this factor as not very important or moderately important.

The results indicate that directors in smaller school divisions tend to feel more strongly that limited professional challenge is an important factor in leaving their last directorship than do directors in larger school divisions.

Table 4.29

Cross-Tabulation of Size of Division with Importance of Professional Challenge as a Factor in Leaving Last Directorship

| Rating of importance | Division size: -101 teachers f | Division size: 101+ teachers f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|
| Not very important or moderately important | 4 | 12 | 16 |
| Highly important | 8 | 1 | 9 |
| Total | 12 | 13 | 25 |

Chi-square = 7.03 p = .01

## Future Career Plans

Table 4.30 provides data on the future plans of directors of education. Over half of the respondents indicated that they plan to continue in their current position until retirement, and nearly one fifth indicated that they plan to seek another position as director. Only two respondents indicated that they intend to return to teaching or school-level administration or to seek a position outside the field of education. Thirteen indicated that they had other plans, such as university study/teaching, working in the business community, consulting in human relations, retirement, or becoming an assistant in a large urban division.

A cross-tabulation of future plans with the age of directors revealed a significant contingency. The results are shown in Table 4.31.

Table 4.30

Distribution of Respondents by Future Plans

| Plan | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Continue in current position until retirement | 48 | 60.0 |
| Another position as director | 15 | 18.8 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 2 | 2.4 |
| Position outside the field of education | 2 | 2.4 |
| Other | 13 | 16.4 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

Over one half of the respondents indicated that they plan to continue in this position until retirement. Of these, 22 were 50 years of age or older, 18 were between the ages of 45 and 49, and 8 were under 45. Of the 15 respondents who plan to seek another position as director of education, most (8) were under 45, 5 were between 45 and 49, and 2 were 50 years of age or older. Two respondents, both under age 45, plan to return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator; and two respondents, one under 45 and the other between 45 and 49, plan to seek positions outside the field of education. Thirteen respondents indicated that they have plans other than those listed in the questionnaire, six of whom were under 45, three were between 45 and 49, and four were 50 years of age or older.

The results of this analysis indicate that directors 50 years of age or older tend to plan to remain in their current position until

Table 4.31

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Future Plans

| Future plan | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Another position as director of education | 8 | 5 | 2 | 15 |
| Continue in this position until retirement | 8 | 18 | 22 | 48 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 2 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Position outside the field of education | 1 | 1 | 0 | 2 |
| Other | 6 | 3 | 4 | 13 |
| Total | 25 | 27 | 28 | 80 |

Chi-square = 16.34 p = .04

retirement while those under the age of 50 tend to plan to continue in this position until retirement or seek another position as director of education. In general, the results suggest that the older respondents were, the more likely they were to continue in this position until retirement and the less likely they were to seek another position as director of education.

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years in which they are likely to leave the directorship. The data in Table 4.32 indicate

that over one fourth of the respondents are likely to leave the directorship within the next three years and nearly one half within five years. Just under one fourth expect to be in the directorship for 10 years.

Table 4.32

Distribution of Respondents by Number of Years in Which They Are Likely to Leave the Directorship

| Number of years | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Within 1 year | 12 | 15.0 |
| 2-3 years | 11 | 13.8 |
| 4-5 years | 15 | 18.8 |
| 6-7 years | 17 | 21.3 |
| 8-9 years | 6 | 7.4 |
| 10 years or more | 19 | 23.7 |
| Total | 80 | 100.0 |

A cross-tabulation of years to retirement or career change with the age of directors revealed a significant contingency; the results are shown in Table 4.33.

Of the 19 directors who do not plan to retire or change careers for 10 or more years, 13 are under the age of 45, 5 are between 45 and 49, and 1 is 50 years of age or older. Six respondents plan to leave the position in eight or nine years, four of whom are between the ages of 45 and 49, and two are under the age of 45. None are 50 years of age or older.

Table 4.33

Cross-Tabulation of Age of Directors with Years to Retirement or Career Change

| Number of years | Age | | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Under 45 f | 45-49 f | 50+ f | f |
| Within 1 year | 3 | 1 | 8 | 12 |
| 2-3 years | 1 | 1 | 9 | 11 |
| 4-5 years | 2 | 6 | 7 | 15 |
| 6-7 years | 3 | 12 | 2 | 17 |
| 8-9 years | 2 | 4 | 0 | 6 |
| 10 years or later | 13 | 5 | 1 | 19 |
| Total | 24 | 29 | 27 | 80 |

Chi-square = 46.94 p = .0000

Seventeen directors plan to leave the position within six or seven years, most (12) of whom are between the ages of 45 and 49, with 3 being under 45 and 2 being 50 years of age or older. Slightly less than one fifth of respondents plan to retire or change careers within four to five years. Nearly one half of this group are 50 years of age or older. Eleven plan to retire or change careers within two or three years. Nine of these respondents are 50 years of age or older, one is under 45, and another is between 45 and 49 years of age.

Twelve directors plan to leave the position within one year. Of these, eight are 50 years of age or older, three are under 45, and one is

between 45 and 49.

The results of this analysis indicate that of the directors who are 50 years of age or older, most plan to leave their position within the next three years. As is to be expected, the younger the respondents are, the less likely they are to leave the position in the near future. Most respondents between 45 and 49 plan to leave the position in four to seven years, and those under 45 plan to leave in eight or more years.

## Summary

Although there is some variation in the professional backgrounds of directors of education in Saskatchewan, all of them have experience as teachers and as school or division-level administrators. The position from which the directors moved into their current one is almost equally likely to be another directorship, a principalship, or an assistant directorship in Saskatchewan. About two thirds of the directors held at least a Master's degree at the time of first appointment, and most of them had specialized in administration or supervision in coursework beyond the initial degree. The directors regarded their involvement in seminars, workshops, and conferences to be a significant aspect of their professional development.

A significant factor in the decision to pursue an administrative career was the personal assessment of abilities. The decision to undertake a directorship was influenced by the challenge of the job, the opportunity to influence educational policy, and desire for career progress. Encouragement of others, successful work experience, and personal initiative were identified by directors among important events in their career decision.

Awareness of the availability of a directorship position resulted primarily from newspaper advertisements and the former director. Most of the directors made casual inquiries about the school division, the community, and the board before applying. The former director, colleagues, and the regional director were significant sources of information. Among fairly normal selection procedures used by boards were province-wide advertising, establishing a short list, checking references, and interviewing. All board members participated in the interview in the majority of cases, and the regional director participated in about half of the cases. Directors perceived that relevant criteria such as educational/administrative competence, general professional standing, and successful experience were important in the selection decision.

Among the major sources of satisfaction reported by directors were helping others, the opportunity to influence education, and general self-fulfilment. Major sources of stress included people problems, lack of resources, and the nature of the role. The mobility of directors was influenced more by attractive aspects of the new position than by undesirable characteristics of the former position. Directors were likely to find the professional challenge of the new position, the nature of the division and community, and general career advancement as factors in their decision to accept a new position. On the other hand, factors such as employment considerations and limited career opportunities or professional challenge were likely to be of moderate influence on a decision to leave. More than one half of the respondents intend to remain in the current position until retirement, which will occur for about one half of all directors within five years.

# Chapter 5

# Career Patterns and Career Typologies of Directors of Education

A number of typologies were developed in order to explore further the general nature of careers of directors of education. The first approach was to examine the sequence of positions through which directors had moved into the directorship; second, three typologies were created on the basis of various characteristics of directors. After the various typologies were developed, their conceptual and empirical potential was explored through cross-tabulations with other characteristics of directors and their employing divisions. Analysis of variance was also used where the level of measurement warranted the appropriate assumptions. In this chapter are presented the descriptions of the four typologies, in turn, together with results of the analysis of relationships with other characteristics.

## Career Patterns

The sequence of positions through which educators move on their way to a directorship may be thought of as a career path. Since there are only a limited number of positions in the organizational structure of schools and school divisions, there is also a likelihood that a limited number of distinctive paths or patterns can be identified. The task was approached both conceptually--by defining some possible patterns--and empirically--by using a computer-sorting strategy to check on the presence of various patterns.

Four patterns of careers of directors were identified through the

data analysis; careers of all but three respondents fell into one of these patterns. Table 5.1 identifies the four major career patterns of directors, and Table 5.2 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these career patterns with characteristics of respondents and the divisions in which they are employed.

The most common career pattern of respondents, identified as Pattern "A", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal) and principal to a directorship. Of the 33 directors who followed this career pattern, 16 were over the age of 50 years and 12 were under 45 years of age. Over three quarters were located in a rural area; a similar proportion indicated that their school division employed fewer than 101 teachers. Experience as a director of those who followed this career pattern varied considerably: 11 had between 1 and 2 years of

Table 5.1

Distribution of Directors by Career Patterns

| Pattern label | Career pattern | f | Percent |
|---|---|---|---|
| A | Teacher (including vice-principal)-principal-director | 33 | 40.2 |
| B | Teacher (including vice-principal)-principal-central office-director | 19 | 23.2 |
| C | Teacher-principal-central office-director | 16 | 19.5 |
| D | Teacher (including vice-principal)-central office-director | 11 | 13.4 |
| E | Other | 3 | 3.7 |
| Total | | 82 | 100.0 |

Table 5.2

Distribution of Career Patterns by Age, Location, Division Size, and Director Experience

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Career pattern | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| A | 12 | 5 | 16 | 8 | 25 | 25 | 8 | 11 | 12 | 10 |
| B | 4 | 10 | 5 | 4 | 15 | 11 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 4 |
| C | 6 | 4 | 6 | 5 | 11 | 9 | 7 | 5 | 6 | 5 |
| D | 3 | 7 | 1 | 1 | 10 | 6 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 2 |
| Total | 25 | 26 | 28 | 18 | 61 | 51 | 28 | 25 | 33 | 21 |

experience, 12 had 3-10 years, and 10 had 11 or more years of experience.

The second most common career pattern, identified as Pattern "B", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and central office (including assistant superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director) to director. Of the 19 directors who followed this career pattern, 10 were between the ages of 45 and 49, 4 were under 45, and 5 were over 50. Over three quarters were located in rural divisions, and over half were in divisions which employed fewer than 101 teachers. Nearly one half of the directors in this classification had between 3 and 10 years of experience in this capacity.

Sixteen of the respondents indicated that their career followed Pattern "C"--teacher, principal, central office (including assistant

superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director), and director. These directors were distributed almost equally across the three age categories. Over two thirds of the directors following this career pattern were located in a rural area. Nine were employed in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers and seven in divisions of more than 101 teachers. Years of experience as a director reflected an almost equal distribution across the categories of 1-2 years, 3-10 years, or more than 10 years.

The least common career pattern of Saskatchewan directors of education, identified as Pattern "D", followed the route of teacher (including vice-principal), central office (including assistant superintendent, superintendent, and assistant director), and director. Of the 11 directors whose careers fell into this classification, seven were between the ages of 45 and 49, and only one was over 50 years of age. All but one director was located in a rural area; five worked in divisions employing more than 101 teachers. Six of the directors had between 3 and 10 years of experience in a directorship, three had between 1 and 2 years of experience, and two had 11 or more years of experience.

In cross-tabulations of the career patterns of directors with their age and experience categories, and with location and size of division, a significant Chi-square value was observed only in relation to age. The data for the cross-tabulation of these two variables was the same as that presented in Table 5.2. The Chi-square value of 12.91 with df = 6 was significant at $p = 0.044$.

Due to the relatively low frequencies, the contingencies between these variables are difficult to discern. In general there appeared to be more clustering by age for Career Patterns A, B, and D than for C. The majority of directors with Patterns B and D were in the 45- to

49-year age category. In contrast, a minority of directors with career Pattern A was in this category, with a tendency for clustering in the younger and older categories. The 16 directors whose careers followed Pattern C were distributed almost equally across the categories.

A cross-tabulation of the four career patterns of directors with the importance which they attached to prestige/status in making their decision to seek a directorship suggested a contingency. Table 5.3 shows the cross-tabulation for the Chi-square test. As was the case with age, the low frequencies suggest the need for caution in interpreting the significance of the results. In general, somewhat less importance is attached to prestige/status by those who have followed Pattern A in their

Table 5.3

Cross-Tabulations of Career Patterns with Rating of Importance of Prestige/Status in Seeking a Directorship

| | Rating of importance | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Career pattern | Highly important | Moderately important | Not very important | Total |
| | f | f | f | f |
| A | 5 | 14 | 13 | 32 |
| B | 4 | 10 | 5 | 19 |
| C | 6 | 4 | 6 | 16 |
| D | 3 | 5 | 3 | 11 |
| Total | 18 | 33 | 27 | 78 |

Chi-square = 3.03 p = 0.39

career--somewhat higher importance is attached to the prestige of the position by those who have followed Pattern B or Pattern D.

A comparison of Tables 5.2 and 5.3 reveals that Career Patterns B and D, for which the highest proportion of directors are between the ages of 45 and 49, also have the highest proportion rating the prestige factor as moderately important.

## Career Typologies

As a further step toward developing the conceptual bases for analyzing the careers of directors of education, three separate typologies were created. The typologies reflect different personal and professional characteristics of directors. A geographic mobility typology establishes categories based on the extent to which directors have gained experience in different school divisions. The organizational mobility typology indicates the extent to which directors have experience at school and division levels. Finally, a third typology was based on age at entry to, and experience in, the position of director. Descriptions of directors in each of the categories derived from these typologies yield some insights into their conceptual relevance and potential. The labels attached to the categories are intended to be descriptive, not evaluative; they do not indicate that a particular combination of characteristics is more desirable than some other combination.

### Geographic Mobility Typology

The data for this typology of directors was generated through a combination of the experience of directors in the school division in

which they were employed at the time of the study and their previous experience as directors in other divisions. Four categories of directors were identified and are shown in Figure 5.1: (1) Novice Directors, (2) Experienced Newcomers, (3) Experienced Locals, and (4) "Old-Timers." Table 5.4 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four classifications with the four basic categories of age, location, division size, and director experience.

Table 5.4

Distributions of Geographic Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Novice Directors | 14 | 4 | 7 | 6 | 19 | 17 | 8 | 25 | 0 | 0 |
| Experienced Newcomers | 2 | 4 | 2 | 3 | 5 | 3 | 5 | 0 | 6 | 2 |
| Experienced Locals | 7 | 12 | 11 | 5 | 25 | 22 | 8 | 0 | 23 | 7 |
| "Old-Timers" | 2 | 8 | 8 | 5 | 13 | 9 | 9 | 0 | 4 | 14 |
| Total | 25 | 28 | 28 | 19 | 62 | 51 | 30 | 25 | 33 | 23 |

**Novice Directors** were defined as those having limited experience (1-2 years) in their present division and no experience in other divisions. Twenty-five respondents fell into this category. Over one half of these directors were under 45 years of age. They were generally

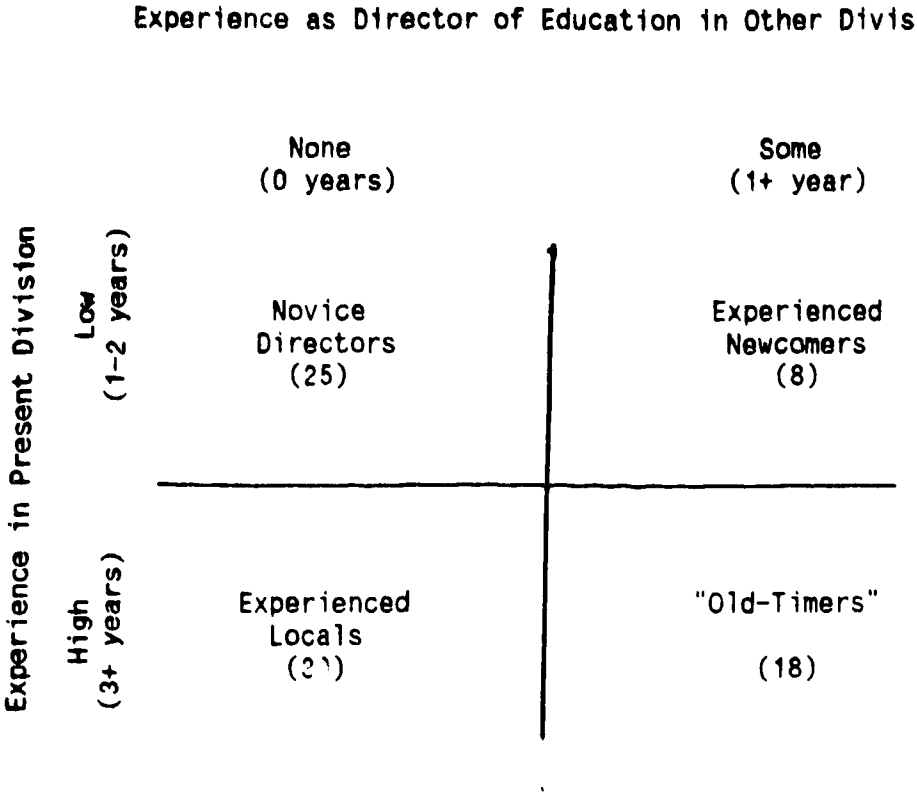



Figure 5.1. Geographic mobility typology

located in rural divisions; seventeen were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers.

**Experienced Newcomers** were defined as those directors having relatively limited experience (1-2 years) in their present school division and some experience in other divisions. The smallest number of respondents, only eight, fell into this category. Four of these directors were between 45 and 49 years of age. Five respondents were employed in a rural area. The size of the division varied, with five respondents indicating that they were employed in divisions of more than 101 teachers and three respondents indicating employment in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers. Six respondents had between 3 and 10 years' and two had 11 or more years' experience as a director.

**Experienced Locals**, comprising the largest group of respondents (30), were those who had no experience in other divisions and three or more years in their present division. Twenty-three were over 45 years of age. Seven were under the age of 45 years. Generally, the directors in this category were located in rural areas, with well over three quarters of respondents indicating this type of division. Nearly three quarters were employed in a division with fewer than 101 teachers. Their experience in a directorship was largely between 3 and 10 years.

**"Old-Timers"** were identified as directors who had some experience in other divisions and three years or more in their present division. Sixteen of the 18 directors in this category were 45 years of age and over. Nearly three quarters were located in rural divisions; only five indicated that they were located in a city. Respondents were evenly distributed by size of the division: nine each indicated the size of the division as employing fewer than 101 teachers or employing more than 101.

Fourteen of the directors indicated that they had 11 or more years of experience as a director.

A test of the significance of the contingency between geographic mobility type and age yielded a Chi-square value of 21.88 which is significant at $p = 0.02$ with $df = 10$. As might be expected because of the relationship between age and experience, Novice Directors tended to be younger than Experienced Locals and "Old-Timers."

A cross-tabulation of the four categories of directors in the geographical mobility typology with the items dealing with educational qualifications at the time of first appointment to a directorship is shown in Table 5.5. The significant Chi-square value suggests that Experienced Locals were more likely to hold a diploma at the time of first appointment than were directors in the other categories.

Table 5.5

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Diploma at Time of First Appointment

| Diploma held | Novice Directors | Experienced Newcomers | Experienced Locals | "Old Timers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 9 | 1 | 18 | 2 | 30 |
| No | 16 | 7 | 12 | 16 | 51 |
| Total | 25 | 8 | 30 | 18 | 81 |

Chi-square = 14.05 p = 0.00

A cross-tabulation of the four categories of directors in the geographical mobility typology with the extent of formal study/ preparation in educational administration or supervision is presented in Table 5.6. Fifteen of the 40 respondents who had a specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program at the time of first appointment were Experienced Locals. Approximately one

Table 5.6

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Educational Qualifications at Time of First Appointment

| | Novice Directors | Experienced Newcomers | Experienced Locals | "Old Timers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Qualification | f | f | f | f | f |
| Specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program | 11 | 5 | 15 | 9 | 40 |
| Courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level | 2 | 0 | 9 | 1 | 12 |
| Studies beyond the Master's level | 8 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 12 |
| Some courses on a Master's program, but specialization in another area | 3 | 1 | 4 | 3 | 11 |
| None of the above | 1 | 0 | 1 | 4 | 6 |
| Total | 25 | 8 | 30 | 18 | 81 |

Chi-square = 24.53 p = 0.02

quarter of Novice Directors and of Old-Timers had specializations in this area. However, only a few Experienced Newcomers had this specialization. Of the 12 who had courses at a pre-Master's or diploma level or had studies beyond the Master's level, 9 were Experienced Locals. Eight of 12 directors who had a specialization in educational administration beyond the Master's level were Novice Directors. Eleven respondents had some courses on a Master's program but specialization in another area. Of these, only one was an Experienced Newcomer. The others were distributed across the remaining three types.

Although the Chi-square value for this cross-classification was significant, the low frequencies in a number of cells complicate the interpretation of the contingency.

An analysis of variance was conducted on the questionnaire item dealing with the importance respondents attach to assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education as a factor in pursuing an administrative career with the geographic mobility typology. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.7.

The 81 respondents to this questionnaire item rated this factor as highly important (Mean = 4.22). However, Novice Directors rated this item more highly important (Mean = 4.68) than did either the Old-Timers (Mean = 4.11), the Experienced Newcomers (Mean = 4.00), or the Experienced Locals (Mean = 3.96). Only the differences between the mean ratings of Novice Directors and of Experienced Locals were statistically significant. The results of the analysis indicate that directors with limited experience in their present division and in other divisions felt that assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education in pursuing an administrative career was more

Table 5.7

Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by the Geographic Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Novice Directors | 25 | 4.68 | A > C |
| B. Experienced Newcomers | 8 | 4.00 | -- |
| C. Experienced Locals | 30 | 3.96 | -- |
| D. "Old-Timers" | 18 | 4.11 | -- |
| Total | 81 | 4.22 | |

important than did respondents with no experience in other divisions, but with three or more years of experience in their present division.

## Organizational Mobility Typology

In order to develop this typology, the total years of experience directors had in schools was combined with the total years of experience they had in a central office position. Four categories relative to directors' experience in these two locations were identified and are shown in Figure 5.2: (1) upward mobiles, (2) late recruits, (3) stalled mobiles, and (4) "slow movers." Table 5.8 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four categories with the four characteristics of directors and school divisions.

**Upward Mobiles** were those directors who had limited (0-5 years) experience in a central office and also a relatively low number of total years of experience (0-15) years in schools. Thirty-six of the 81

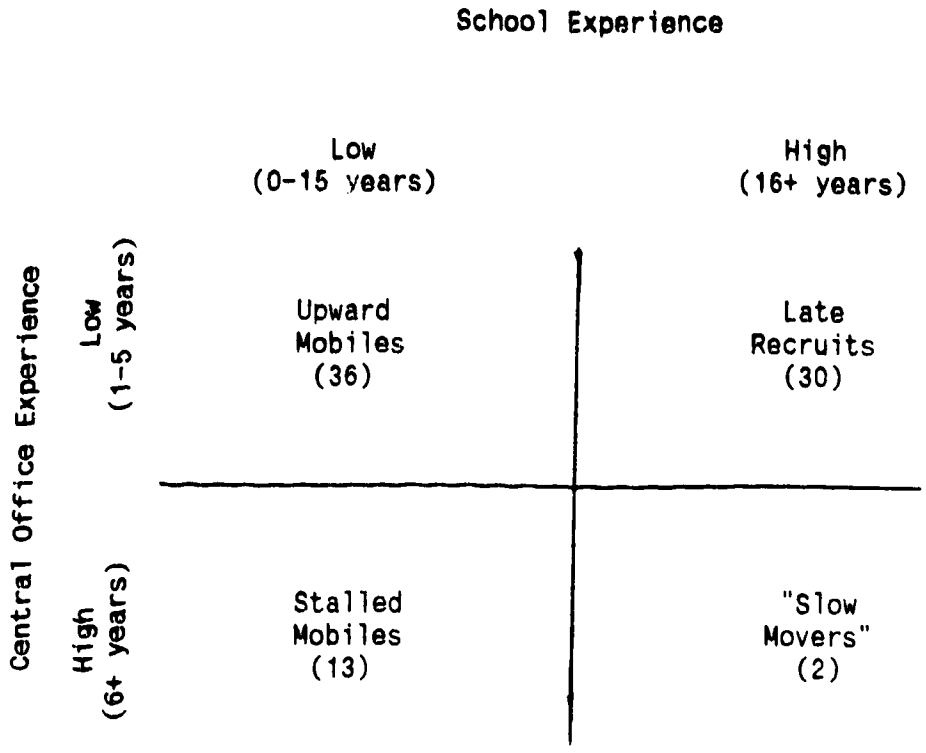



Figure 5.2. Organizational mobility typology

respondents fell into this category. As is indicated by the data in Table 5.8, Upward Mobiles were generally under 50 years of age; only eight were 50 years of age or older. Over three quarters of the directors in this category were located in the rural areas. Over three quarters were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers. About one half of the respondents had between 3 and 10 years of experience as a director, and 12 had 11 years of experience or more.

Table 5.8

Distributions of Organizational Mobility Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Upward Mobile | 12 | 16 | 8 | 8 | 28 | 26 | 10 | 7 | 17 | 12 |
| Late Recruits | 7 | 7 | 16 | 7 | 23 | 19 | 11 | 11 | 12 | 7 |
| Stalled Mobiles | 5 | 6 | 2 | 4 | 9 | 6 | 7 | 6 | 4 | 3 |
| "Slow Movers" | 1 | 0 | 1 | 0 | 2 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 1 | 0 |
| Total | 25 | 29 | 27 | 19 | 62 | 52 | 29 | 25 | 34 | 22 |

**Late Recruits** were identified as directors who had considerable school experience (16 or more years) and relatively limited experience (5 years or less) in a central office. This classification comprised the

second largest group, 30, of respondents. As might be expected, over one half of the Late Recruits were 50 years of age or over at the time of the study. Over three quarters of the respondents in this classification were located in rural areas. Nineteen were in divisions of fewer than 101 teachers, while 11 were in divisions of more than 101 teachers. Experience in the directorship ranged from 12 respondents having 3-10 years, 11 having 1-2 years, and 7 having 11 or more years in this position.

**Stalled Mobiles**, comprised of 13 respondents, were directors who had limited experience (0-15 years) in schools and relatively considerable experience (6 years or more) in a central office before being appointed to a directorship. They were generally under the age of 50, with six indicating that they were between 45 and 49 years of age, and five respondents indicating that they were under 45. More respondents were located in rural areas (nine) than were located in cities (four). Nearly an equal number of respondents were located in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers as were located in divisions employing more than 101 teachers. Experience as a director varied, with six respondents indicating that their experience in this position was 1-2 years, while seven indicated that they had more than 3 years of experience.

**"Slow Movers,"** were directors who had substantial experience in schools (16 years or more) and also in a central office position (6 years or more). Only two directors were categorized as "Slow Movers." Although this category is meaningful conceptually, in practice the career paths of few directors would seem to include relatively lengthy experience in both school and central office positions.

A cross-tabulation of the career patterns and the organizational

mobility typologies presented in Table 5.9 suggests a measure of overlap between the two ways of classifying directors. Career Pattern A, which was comprised of the largest number (33) of directors, had over one half in the Late Recruits classification and the next largest number (15) in the Upward Mobile classification. Over one half of the respondents who followed Career Pattern B were in the Upward Mobile classification.

Table 5.9

Cross-Tabulation of Career Patterns with Organizational Mobility Types

| Career pattern | Upward Mobiles f | Late Recruits f | Stalled Mobiles f | "Slow Movers" f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| A | 15 | 17 | 0 | 1 | 33 |
| B | 10 | 5 | 3 | 1 | 19 |
| C | 5 | 5 | 5 | 0 | 15 |
| D | 4 | 3 | 4 | 0 | 11 |
| Total | 34 | 30 | 12 | 2 | 78 |

Chi-square = 16.13 p = 0.06

In Career Pattern C, an equal number of respondents (five) were in the three classifications Upward Mobile, Late Recruits, and Stalled Mobiles. None were in the "Slow Movers" category. Respondents who followed Career Pattern D were approximately equally distributed across the classifications of Upward Mobiles, Late Recruits, and Stalled Mobiles.

In general, the results tend to indicate that Upward Mobiles are likely to follow Career Pattern A--teacher (including vice-principal)/ principal/director--route or Career Pattern B--teacher (including vice-principal)/principal/central office/director--route. Late Recruits tend to follow Pattern A, which does not include a central office position.

Cross-tabulations of the four categories of directors in the organizational mobility typology with the items dealing with educational qualifications at the time of first appointment revealed some significant contingencies. The results are shown in Table 5.10 and Table 5.11. The low frequencies in some cells render the interpretations of contingencies problematic. With the appropriate caution, some inferences may be drawn that those who held doctoral degrees at the time of first appointment were more likely to have the characteristics of Stalled Mobiles. Those who had an undergraduate specialization outside of education were likely to be either Upward Mobiles or Stalled Mobiles.

An analysis of variance of the rating of the importance attached to compatibility with the social and educational context as a factor in selection revealed some significant differences across the organizational mobility categories. The results of analysis are shown in Table 5.12. Seventy-eight respondents perceived that this factor was highly important (Mean = 4.15) in selection. However, Upward Mobiles rated this factor more highly important (Mean = 4.40) than did the Stalled Mobiles (Mean = 4.15) or the Late Recruits (Mean = 3.86). The mean rating of the Upward Mobiles was significantly higher than that of the Late Recruits. The results indicate that the respondents with limited school experience and limited central office experience felt that compatibility with the social

Table 5.10

Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Doctorate at Time of First Appointment

| Doctorate at time of appointment | Upward Mobiles | Late Recruits | Stalled Mobiles | "Slow Movers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 1 | 1 | 3 | 1 | 6 |
| No | 35 | 29 | 10 | 1 | 75 |
| Total | 36 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 81 |

Chi-square = 11.79 p = 0.01

Table 5.11

Cross-Tabulation of Organizational Mobility Types with Credit Courses in Other Disciplines at Time of First Appointment

| University credit courses beyond bachelor's level in a discipline other than education | Upward Mobiles | Late Recruits | Stalled Mobiles | "Slow Movers" | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | f | f | f | f | f |
| Yes | 3 | 0 | 4 | 0 | 7 |
| No | 33 | 30 | 9 | 2 | 74 |
| Total | 36 | 30 | 13 | 2 | 81 |

Chi-square = 11.09 p = 0.01

Table 5.12

Analysis of Variance Results of Compatibility with the Social and Educational Context as Criterion in Director Selection by the Organizational Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Upward Mobiles | 35 | 4.40 | A > B |
| B. Late Recruits | 30 | 3.86 | -- |
| C. Stalled Mcbiles | 13 | 4.15 | -- |
| Total | 78 | 4.15 | |

and educational context was more important as a factor for director selection than did those respondents with considerable school experience and limited central office experience.

In an analysis of variance of the questionnaire item dealing with the importance which respondents perceive is attached to seniority as a criterion in the selection process and the organizational mobility typology, some significant differences were observed. The results of the analysis are shown in Table 5.13.

In general, 77 respondents rated this characteristic as not very important (Mean = 1.66). However, the Stalled Mobiles rated this factor slightly higher in importance (Mean = 2.23) than did the Upward Mobiles (Mean = 1.58) or the Late Recruits (Mean = 1.50). The differences between the ratings of the Upward Mobiles and those of the Late Recruits, as well as the Stalled Mobiles, were both statistically significant.

The results suggest that Stalled Mobiles (the respondents with limited school experience and considerable central office experience)

Table 5.13

Analysis of Variance Results of Seniority as a Criterion in the Selection Process by Organizational Mobility Type

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Upward Mobiles | 36 | 1.58 | A < C |
| B. Late Recruits | 28 | 1.50 | B < C |
| C. Stalled Mobiles | 13 | 2.23 | -- |
| Total | 77 | 1.66 | |

perceived that seniority as a criterion in the selection process for directors was more important than did either Upward Mobiles (those respondents with limited school experience and limited central office experience) or Late Recruits (the respondents with considerable school experience and limited central office experience). In other words, seniority was perceived to be of some importance by those who tended to have longer central office experience.

## Entry Age and Directorship Experience Typology

The basis for this typology of directors was a comparison of age at which respondents entered their first directorship and the number of years they had served in the position. Four categories relative to directorship entry age and directorship experience were defined and are shown in Figure 5.3: (1) Younger Inexperienced, (2) Older Inexperienced, (3) Younger Experienced, and (4) Older Experienced. Table 5.14 shows the results of the cross-tabulation of these four classifications with the characteristics of directors and divisions.

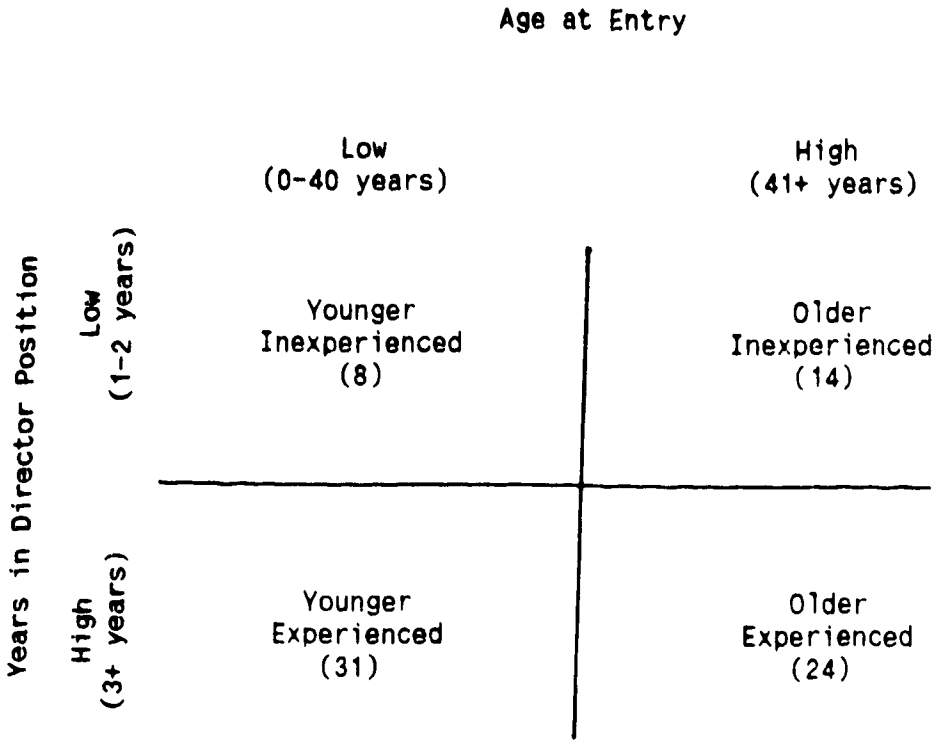



Figure 5.3. Directorship entry age/experience typology

Table 5.14

Distributions of Director Age/Experience Types by Age, Location, Division Size, and Experience as a Director

| | Age | | | Location | | Division size | | Director experience | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Type | Under 45 | 45-49 | 50+ | City | Rural | Fewer than 101 | More than 101 | 1-2 yrs. | 3-10 yrs. | 11+ yrs. |
| Younger Inexperienced | 8 | 0 | 0 | 2 | 6 | 8 | 0 | 8 | 0 | 0 |
| Older Inexperienced | 6 | 3 | 5 | 4 | 10 | 7 | 7 | 14 | 0 | 0 |
| Younger Experienced | 8 | 14 | 9 | 8 | 23 | 19 | 12 | 0 | 15 | 16 |
| Older Experienced | 3 | 10 | 11 | 5 | 19 | 15 | 9 | 0 | 18 | 6 |
| Total | 25 | 27 | 25 | 19 | 58 | 49 | 28 | 22 | 33 | 22 |

**Younger Inexperienced** were identified as those directors who were relatively young (40 years or less) at entry to the directorship and who had relatively little experience (1-2 years) in this position. The smallest number of respondents (eight) fell into this category. As is indicated by the data in Table 5.14, all directors in this category were employed in school divisions with fewer than 101 teachers. Six were located in rural areas, and only two were located in cities.

**Older Inexperienced** were those directors identified as having limited directorship experience (1-2 years), but who were relatively older (41 years of age or over) when they entered their first

directorship. The second smallest group of respondents (14) fell into this category. Six were under the age of 45 years, five were over 50, and three were between 45 and 49. Ten respondents were located in rural areas. An equal number (seven) were employed in divisions with fewer than 101 teachers as were in divisions with more than 101 teachers.

**Younger Experienced**, who comprised the largest number in this typology (31), were those directors who entered their first directorship at a relatively young age (under 40 years) and who had relatively more (three or more years) experience in the capacity of director. About one half of them were between 45 and 49 years of age. Nearly three quarters were located in a rural area. The size of the school division in which they were employed varied; 19 respondents indicated that there are fewer than 101 teachers in their divisions and 12 indicated that there are more than 101 teachers in the division. Sixteen of the respondents had 11 or more years of experience.

**Older Experienced** were those directors identified as having considerable experience (three or more years) in a directorship and who were relatively older (41 years or over) when they entered their first position as director. Twenty-four respondents, the second largest number in this classification, fell into this group. As is to be expected, most of the respondents were over the age of 45 years. More than three quarters of respondents in this category were located in rural areas. Fifteen respondents indicated that they were employed in a school division which had fewer than 101 teachers, and 9 were employed in divisions which had more than 101 teachers. Most directors (18) had between 3 and 10 years of experience in the directorship.

A cross-tabulation of two typologies, geographic mobility with

directorship entry age/experience, indicated some overlap between the conceptualizations. The results are shown in Table 5.15. As might be expected, the Novice Director category was comprised of either the Younger Inexperienced (8) or the Older Inexperienced (14) directors. Similarly, the eight Experienced Newcomers in the geographic mobility typology were comprised of six Younger Experienced and two Older Experienced directors.

Table 5.15

Cross-Tabulation of Geographic Mobility Types with Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types

| Type | Younger Inexperienced f | Older Inexperienced f | Younger Experienced f | Older Experienced f | Total f |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Novice Directors | 8 | 14 | 0 | 0 | 22 |
| Experienced Newcomers | 0 | 0 | 6 | 2 | 8 |
| Experienced Locals | 0 | 0 | 13 | 16 | 29 |
| "Old-Timers" | 0 | 0 | 11 | 6 | 17 |
| Total | 8 | 14 | 30 | 24 | 76 |

Chi-square = 80.44 p = 0.00

The largest classification, the Experienced Locals (29), consisted of 16 respondents belonging to the Older Experienced category and 13 in the Younger Experienced category. Of 17 "Old-Timers," 11 were in the

Younger Experienced and 6 were in the Older Experienced categories.

The results suggest that these two typologies might serve similar purposes; however, exploratory analysis may indicate that one may have more potential than the other for understanding particular aspects of the careers of directors of education.

An analysis of variance on the ratings of the importance which respondents attached to the assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education as a factor in pursuing an administrative career indicated some significant differences between categories in the entry age/experience typology. The results are presented in Table 5.16. The 77 directors who responded to this item rated the factor as highly important (Mean = 4.19). However, Older Inexperienced directors rated this factor as more highly important (Mean = 4.71) than did those in the other three categories. Differences between means were significant for the Younger Experienced directors (Mean = 4.03) and the Older Experienced directors (Mean = 4.00).

Table 5.16

Analysis of Variance Results of Assessment of Ability in Pursuing an Administrative Career by Director Age at Entry/Experience Types

| Type | N | Mean | Significance |
|---|---|---|---|
| A. Younger Inexperienced | 8 | 4.50 | -- |
| B. Older Inexperienced | 14 | 4.71 | -- |
| C. Younger Experienced | 31 | 4.03 | C < B |
| D. Older Experienced | 24 | 4.00 | D < B |
| Total | 77 | 4.19 | |

The results of this analysis suggest that those directors with limited director experience and who entered the directorship at 41 years of age or older felt that assessment of their own abilities was a more important factor in deciding to pursue an administrative career than did either those who entered the directorship at 40 years of age or younger and who had three or more years of experience as a director or those who entered the directorship at 41 years of age or older and who had three or more years of experience as a director.

A cross-tabulation of the four classifications of directors in the directorship entry age/experience typology with future plans of directors suggests the presence of some additional contingencies. The results are shown in Table 5.17. As might be expected, both age and experience are related to career plans. Although the small frequencies tend to obscure patterns, older directors are likely to continue in the present position until retirement regardless of the amount of experience they have in the directorship. Younger experienced directors also appear to have limited propensity to become mobile. The relatively small proportion of directors who are likely to seek another directorship tended to be distributed across all four categories of the typology.

## Summary

An examination of the various position routes which led to the directorship confirmed that four patterns were descriptive of the careers of nearly all directors. The most common career pattern leads from a teaching position (including a vice-principalship) to a principalship and then to a directorship without an intermediate central office position. Such a central office position is part of the second most frequently

Table 5.17

Cross-Tabulation of Directorship Entry Age/Experience Types with Future Plans

| | Younger Inexperienced | Older Inexperienced | Younger Experienced | Older Experienced | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Future plans | f | f | f | f | f |
| Another position as director of education | 4 | 3 | 2 | 5 | 14 |
| Continue in this position until retirement | 0 | 7 | 21 | 16 | 44 |
| Return to a school division as a teacher or school administrator | 1 | 1 | 0 | 0 | 2 |
| Position outside the field of education | 0 | 0 | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| Other | 3 | 3 | 5 | 2 | 13 |
| Total | 8 | 14 | 30 | 23 | 75 |

Chi-square = 24.07 p = 0.02

occurring career path. A third pattern involves moving from a teaching position directly to a principalship then to a central office position prior to becoming a director. For a relatively small minority, the route to the directorship does not include the principalship.

The conceptual and empirical relevance of the various typologies was supported to some degree by the relationship of types to various

characteristics of directors and their employing school divisions. Although relatively few statistically significant results were obtained, those which were observed were generally consistent with the conceptual basis of the typology. The patterns of directors' careers seem to bear some relationship to age. Similarly, types within the geographic mobility and organizational mobility typologies tend to differ in qualifications at the time of first appointment. The former also differ in the importance they attach to the personal assessment of their abilities in the decision to pursue an administrative career. Types in the organizational mobility typology as well as in the entry age/experience typology differ in the importance which they attach to particular selection criteria. The latter typology also seems to differentiate among directors on the basis of their future career plans.

The patterns and typologies developed in the chapter overlap to some extent. Consequently, they might be used either as alternatives or in combination in exploring careers of administrators.

# Chapter 6

## Case Studies of Selection of Directors

The content of this chapter is focused on the descriptions of the processes of selecting three directors of education. In each instance, the decision had been made within one year of the time of data collection. Three perspectives are provided on each selection process: that of the successful applicant, that of the board chairperson, and that of the regional director of education. The three case studies are followed by an analysis of similarities and differences in the selection process. A discussion of some issues in administrator selection concludes the chapter.

Some general background information about the appointment of directors of education in Saskatchewan is relevant to the case studies. Although directors may be appointed by the Department of Education, increasingly they are employed by the school division board. The regional director of education, who is appointed by the Department, serves all boards in a specified geographic area. Among the regional directors' functions are keeping school divisions informed of Department policy and programs, assessing the effectiveness of the policies and programs, providing an "ombudsman" service in response to parental requests, ensuring that schools and programs are being conducted in accordance with departmental legislation, and ensuring that open communication exists between division boards and the Department.

## Prairieland School Division

Prairieland School Division is located in the central part of Saskatchewan. The division services a rural area and employs about 130 teachers. A new director of education, Charles, was appointed in November of 1988. The previous director had been asked to leave during the summer, and the board immediately advertised the position. Pending the appointment of a director, the assistant director was designated as acting director.

### Director's Perspective

Charles, who was employed in a central office position in a neighboring division, knew about the vacant directorship from conversations with people in the community. He had "been looking at a Chief Executive Officer position for a long time," but since he was very happy in his current position, and since he and his family liked the town in which they lived, he did not consider positions for which he would have to relocate. Because this particular directorship did not require a relocation, he decided to consider the opportunity carefully. Charles was very much aware of the situation which led to the previous director's dismissal. As he said, "I knew it was going to be a challenge, and I've never backed away from a challenge, so I thought I'd throw my name in."

In submitting his application, Charles sent a letter along with a four-page resume. The acting director, on behalf of the board, acknowledged receipt of the application and soon thereafter invited him to an interview.

Charles made only limited preparations for the interview largely because he was aware of the type of questions that would be asked. He

had "set up everything including the questions for the interview" in relation to the selection of a director of education in his previous school division. He thought, "Heck, if I'm not ready for this interview, nobody is!"

All board members and the regional director attended the interview, which was convened and adjourned by the chairperson. The regional director asked nearly all of the questions while board members took notes. Questions were "based on leadership, what [the candidate] thought of leadership; what [the candidate] perceived the role to be in regard to other personnel in the school system, including the school board. . . . There were also questions on teacher supervision and the supervison of personnel, . . . and on some educational issues." At the conclusion of the interview, several questions were asked by individual board members.

Charles was not nervous about the interview because, as he said, "I'll tell it the way it is, and that's the way it's got to be. I've always been very honest with people, no matter how badly I wanted a job, and I know that sometimes it cost me a job." He was generally pleased with the interview because he was able to be "honest and open" and was able to "make it very clear that [he] was the Chief Executive Officer and expected to work in that capacity."

Several days later, Charles was invited to a board meeting for a second interview. For this meeting, Charles "prepared [himself] by bringing in a sample contract, the sample terms that [he] felt were important before [taking] the job."

Charles felt that he was offered the position because of the fine reputation he had established in his previous school division and because, as he said, 'I interview well." He also recognized that, since

he had previously worked for the regional director, "he probably put in a good word for me."

## Board Chairperson's Perspective

The board was "happy to have the opportunity to select a new director." The relationship with the previous director had deteriorated to the point where the board found it necessary to ask him to leave. Immediately thereafter, the board contacted the regional director, who agreed to assist and offered his services. "He suggested the procedures and questions the board might use while interviewing, what [they] should look for, and the whole process [they] would go through."

The board had placed the assistant director in an acting director position; he participated in the hiring process to some extent. The position was advertised in early fall in the local newspaper, major provincial newspapers, and newspapers in a neighboring province. Applications were received soon afterward. The advertisement requested applicants to submit a letter of application along with a resume, but the board chairperson recalled that "it certainly varied what they sent. . . . We had everything from a photostat of all their marks and courses . . . to just two or three pages." Over 20 applications were received by the chairperson, who passed them on to the regional director. The board and the regional director then "went through them and came up with the ones [they] thought [they] should shortlist and the reasons why." The board chairperson recalled that the board knew some of the applicants, and "that made a difference . . . because two local people who applied were interviewed. Visibility was a factor."

In the opinion of the board chairperson, the board was

> searching for someone who would take charge; someone who would be firm, particularly with principals; be visible in the schools and in the division; someone who was a hard worker . . . ; but mostly someone who was firm in his convictions and willing to back them up."

As the board chairperson said, "We wanted someone who was willing to look into the future, not just putting out bush fires, as opposed to planning."

In determining the best person for the position, the board, along with the regional director, conducted interviews with five candidates. Throughout the interviews, they attempted to determine the candidate's "basic philosophy . . . , how he would apply his philosophy in [the] school system, and the methods that he would use."

The board was "very impressed with the manner in which Charles conduc'ed himself in the interview. The chairperson commented that "he came very prepared; he seemed to know exactly what direction he wanted to go." The board also felt that, even though Charles is a quiet person, he gave the impression of being a firm administrator who "had some definite ideas in certain areas that if he were hired, that is the way he would want it to be."

Charles was subsequently invited to a second interview, and the board chairperson recalled that "he came with a draft copy of a role description that if he were director, this is what he would like the role description to read." This impressed the board.

Following the interviews, the board along with the regional director met. At this time, board members reviewed their notes, made a first and second choice, and then discussed their choices. Since the first and second choices were not the same for everyone, the board chairperson indicated that there was some discussion --"we argue a lot . . . , and I

think we probably did that time, too." The regional director "offered advice . . . but was very careful not to influence [them]." The actual selection process took several hours, but, as the board chairperson said, "[We] negotiated and discussed the different aspects, and then came to a consensus."

The board chairperson commented that "Charles was the chosen candidate because the definite ideas he had were the same as ours." Charles was ultimately offered the position, and he accepted.

Regional Director's Perspective

The first involvement by the regional director in this particular case followed an invitation from the board chairperson. The regional director recalled that "[the board] knew me because I had been the director [there], so it was kind of a natural thing to happen." He welcomed the opportunity to work with the board in selecting a new director because he felt that "regional directors can help . . . . [They] have an interest in what's going on . . . , and the more regional directors who go to boards with prescribed kinds of packages to help them . . . , the better the selection of directors is going to be."

The regional director presented a "package" to the board which essentially was a set of procedures that they would work out together. The first thing they did was to clarify what kind of director the board wanted, and the regional director recalled that there was some debate over this because board members were unsure as to whether they wanted the "old standard superintendent kind of guy, or did they want a Chief Executive Officer?" They finally decided upon the latter. An advertisement was drafted which was subsequently placed in local and

provincial newspapers, as well as in one newspaper in a large city in an adjoining province. Upon receipt of each application, the acting director sent a letter of acknowledgement which had been previously drafted by the regional director. In addition, a bulletin containing information about student populations, schools, and specialized budgets was mailed to each applicant.

The board asked the regional director to do the reference checks of applicants based on the criteria that they had adopted. The regional director felt that they asked him to conduct the reference checks because, as he said, "I knew what they wanted, and they knew what I was doing." He used a shortlisting criteria questionnaire which he felt would be consistent for all applicants. Questions asked the referees dealt with the applicant's human relations skills, organizational and planning skills, strengths and weaknesses, whether the applicant would be an innovator or maintain the status quo, and whether or not they would hire this person as a director of education. The regional director checked references on every applicant and then presented the board with a chart which listed the applicant's qualifications, years of experience, and other characteristics, as well as which referees were contacted and, in a few cases, whether or not the reference check was favorable.

Following the reference checks, the regional director and the board met. The board discussed the applicants based on the reference chart and eliminated all but 10. They requested specific details from the regional director in regard to these remaining applicants. The board then reviewed applicants' resumes and frequently asked for further clarification with regard to the reference checks. The regional director recalled that he often had to elaborate or explain in more detail various

education aspects. He felt that, "although they're board members, they are lay people, and a lot of our jargon is not lay-type jargon" and needs further clarification. He also felt obliged to tell the board if "an applicant had already developed a reputation of not being a worthy candidate." Based on these discussions, the board then eliminated five more applicants. The board eventually decided upon three candidates whom they planned to interview, but the regional director recalled that "there was always the proviso that if they weren't happy with the three that they met, they could go to the next two."

Interviews for the three candidates were set up by the acting director. In preparation for the interviews, the board decided to have the regional director ask all of the questions. The regional director thought that the board made this decision because "they felt they could concentrate on the answers . . . ; they could listen and take notes." However, he also felt that "deep down, people generally, even in the 1980s, are intimidated by someone who has a little more education . . . , and that they might feel that they may muck up and sound silly . . . , and so they feel more comfortable letting someone else ask the questions." He also indicated that this is not normal practice; most often boards prefer to ask the questions themselves. All board members and the regional director attended the interviews.

The regional director commented that "Charles conducted himself extremely well, the second interviewee was so-so, and the third guy was really good but made the mistake of saying that he didn't think that the board could afford him!" He further recognized that in the interviewing process

> there is something that you can't measure . . . . There is this chemistry that's got to be going on there, and if the chemistry is not there, you can tell within ten minutes . . . , so you may be qualified, you may be articulate, you may be honest, and you may be everything, but there's this quality that I can only call chemistry that seems to be there . . . between you and the six or seven people sitting around the table . . . , and if it's not there, you can tell!"

The regional director reflected on what he thought convinced the board to hire Charles. Throughout the interview he kept hearing

> All right, we know that a director has legislated responsibilities, he's got a mandate, he or she has to know the Education Act . . . , but can we get along with that individual? So in Charles's case that's basically what they were looking for. They wanted somebody, I guess, that they didn't feel would be talking down to them as elected people.

In making the final decision, the regional director recalled encouraging the board not to "end up with a three-four or two-five split, or something of that nature--it's got to be unanimous." The process took several hours. Eventually the board decided to invite Charles to a second interview. The regional director was not present at that interview but was notified very shortly thereafter that Charles had been offered the position.

The regional director commented that "boards are very keen on making the right decision. They take it very seriously. There's no question about the integrity of boards hiring people that they want."

## Wild Grass School Division

Wild Grass School Division is located in the southern part of the province and employs approximately 100 teachers. All of the division schools are rurally located. Selecting a director was a new venture for the Wild Grass School Division; until this time they had employed a provincially appointed superintendent as their Chief Executive Officer.

The appointment of the new director, Gerald, took place in the spring of 1988 due to the resignation of the incumbent earlier that year. An acting director was appointed for the interim, and Gerald assumed the position in the fall of 1988.

## Director's Perspective

Gerald first became aware that his current position was available from a colleague who had just applied for the position. He watched the newspaper the following weekend and read the advertisement.

In considering this career opportunity, Gerald took various factors into account. His ultimate career goal was to become a director. Since he had just completed his Master's degree, he felt he "was eligible to start looking around." He had applied for another directorship and an assistant directorship but was not interviewed in either case. Gerald and his wife discussed this at some length and decided that the rural location did not present a problem. Gerald realized, however, that perhaps his career path, which was somewhat untraditional in that he had never served in a central office position, could be a problem. In the final analysis, Gerald thought that "[he] would at least have an opportunity for an interview here because of its rural location and also because of [the division's] very bad reputation." He then submitted his application, "hoping to get an interview and do well at that."

Along with the letter of application, Gerald submitted a "basic resume" and a list of references which the board had requested. Several days later he received a letter acknowledging his application, and shortly thereafter he was telephoned and invited to an interview. These matters were all handled by the acting director.

Gerald acknowledged the very favorable reference given by his former director as being the reason he was interviewed. He placed considerable value on the referees: "You can have all the documentation and qualifications in the world, but if you don't have solid references, you're in trouble!"

In preparing for the interview, Gerald spent one Saturday afternoon with his director of education (who was also one of his referees) attempting to identify the types of questions that would likely be asked at the interview. His director indicated that "the questions will be geared toward finding out what kind of manager and what kind of educational leader you will be." Gerald also received some advice in regard to how to negotiate a contract. Further to this, Gerald talked to the acting director in order to find out "about the area . . . and what the situation was."

Gerald indicated that he was interviewed by four of the six board members and the regional director, who asked most of the questions. The questions pertained to his experience, educational background, management style, educational philosophy, his feelings about special programs, and the reasons why he wanted to be a director. A lot of questions, he felt, "were geared to just kind of finding out what my general attitude was toward kids and teachers and so on," but some questions were aimed at compatibility with the community: "Is this guy going to be able to live in this rural community, and what can he bring to the community besides his directorial skills?" Questions relating to why he would want to leave his current position and his capacity for work were also asked. Gerald felt that "they were looking for sincerity." He recalled that "once [he] went into the interview [he] went in with the idea to win

. . . and had no hesitation in accepting." He recalled that "the board was very quiet throughout the interview, very serious . . . [and] it was very hard to judge the reaction because everybody was fairly solemn." He sensed that one particular board member was not that impressed with him. He felt that the board "wanted somebody who was able to make tough decisions and stick with them," and that they were not necessarily looking for a successful director, but that "they came in with an open mind for a personality."

According to Gerald, he was chosen "because of a combination of the skills I had--the strengths and leadership ability--and likeability . . . it just came down to likeability--that they liked me better than the other applicants, and they felt that the school division and employees and people would accept me better." He also had a very different personality from that of the previous director, which he felt the board also wanted.

Later on the day of the interview, Gerald was offered the directorship and negotiated a contract with the board.

## Board Chairperson's Perspective

In this particular case, the board was aware that they would be appointing a director due to the resignation of the incumbent in early 1988. They had appointed an interim director. Selecting a director was a new venture for this board; until this time they had employed a provincially appointed superintendent as their Chief Executive Officer. They were "kind of apprehensive," because they "had fought long and hard not to go this route," but had been told by the Department of Education that when their current superintendent resigned, they would have to

select their own director. They immediately involved the regional director, who "went through the process" with them.

The position was advertised provincially, and over 20 applications were received. Applicants were asked to send resumes and a list of references along with their letter of application. Reference checks were conducted largely by the interim director, but sometimes the board chairperson was asked by the interim director to telephone some of the referees because "sometimes a board member talking to another board member is easier than a director doing it." The whole board was asked to assist with the shortlisting, but "not all of them could make it, so they just had to rely on the opinion [of those members who were present]." The regional director assisted with the shortlisting process, and five candidates were chosen to be interviewed.

Although a formal list of desirable characteristics of the new director was never officially formulated, the board chairperson felt that they wanted someone with leadership ability, someone who was very outgoing and who can really relate well to people--staff members and board members." The chairperson felt that the board was searching for someone who was quite different from their past superintendent, because they "didn't think he was a leader."

The five candidates were interviewed by the board members and the regional director, who asked most of the questions. The chairperson indicated that the interview played a large part in providing an opportunity for the board "to talk to [the candidates] and to get a feel about them." The purpose of the interviews was to find out what each candidate felt he/she could offer the school division in this job, how he/she would "make it work," and how each candidate felt about working

for a board. The board also explored whether or not the candidates could live in this rural setting--"if they could settle in."

Following the interviews, the regional director "kept it all going for [the board]" by encouraging them to discuss each candidate and "to decide what each person could offer." The chairperson recalled that in making the decision "they went around the table and talked about each one" and kept eliminating "until there were only two or three left." They then had a vote. The chairperson did not comment on whether or not the decision was unanimous, but he did say that board members "have to respect the majority vote and go with it! Once it's voted on, even if you personally don't go along with it, you have to work to see that it happens the way the vote went."

In reflecting on the characteristics of the successful candidate, the board chairperson felt that he

> was the best person for us--his very outgoingness, his ability to work with people and to carry out the kinds of things that we saw we had to do, . . . he was what we needed at the time--somebody that could take hold of the reins and draw everythimg together.

There was some concern among board members in regard to the chosen candidate's career path, but the chairperson felt that

> sometimes a person who has never done a particular job before can come into it with no preconceived notions of how things should be done and can offer a lot because he or she hasn't been tied to any type of system--they make their own--they learn along with you.

The board then offered the position to Gerald, who "told [them] some of the things that he would expect in a contract." Since the board had never been involved in drawing up a contract, the chairperson "got copies of different contracts" from other school divisions and also contacted the Saskatchewan School Trustees Association lawyer for advice. Then,

with assistance from their interim director, they drew up a contract which was agreeable to both parties and signed it along with their newly appointed director.

## Regional Director's Perspective

The regional director had been aware for several months that the board would be hiring a director because the previous director's resignation had been submitted in early February and an interim director had been appointed. Since this school division had just recently been assigned to him, he was virtually unknown to the board. However, they did contact him shortly after they received the director's resignation. He met with them soon thereafter and recalled that he "could tell right off the bat that they were very suspicious of senior administrators and of local employment [of directors]." He helped with placing the advertisement for applications for their director. He indicated that "the ad was a fairly common one, but it did have to meet certain criteria in terms of the regulations of the Education Act."

The next involvement by the regional director was in the shortlisting process, or, as he called it, "doing the reference checks," which, he said, "I am not very comfortable with because I feel that the Board of Education should do that . . . unless they come across a reference that they can't access." He then assisted the board with the actual selection of candidates to be interviewed by "filling whatever capacity the board wanted." He recalled that "the board was just about sick . . . because almost all of [the applicants] were unknown." He was not surprised at this, because this division "did not have a good reputation provincially. . . . It was looked upon as a board that was

antagonistic toward administrators." He encouraged them to "bring the shortlist down to preferably no more than four."

In the interview stage, the regional director indicated that generally boards develop criteria in regard to the type of person they want and focus their questions on those, but in this case he felt that there were very few criteria. "They were just hoping to get someone who could pilot them through a very difficult point of time in their history." However, he commented that "this was one of the worst-handled interviews that I've ever seen. The board was not prepared. I think that this was one of the interviews where I walked in and they said, 'Where are the questions?'" He indicated that he had brought a standard set of interview questions with him, which he felt are "getting to be well worn . . . and need to be revamped." However, he also indicated that although boards are seldom unprepared, "it's more common than [I] like." He further commented that in cases of this nature, too much weight is placed on the regional director. But, as he said, "You have to understand, in rural Saskatchewan we're dealing with people who are not used to any kind of public speaking; they are rural folks who are--don't get me wrong, they're great people--genuine, honest--but they're not into this fancy interview stuff." During the actual interview process, most questions were asked by the regional director based on the questions he had brought with him. The questions centered around the following broad areas: personal characteristics, interpersonal relations, managerial abilities, experience, and aspirations.

In determining the best applicant, the regional director remained in the room and encouraged the board to take a piece of paper and do some selecting. He helped them to focus on the issue by saying, "If you were

to choose all by yourself, who would be number one? number two?" The selection narrowed very quickly to two candidates. The board then started discussing the strengths and shortcomings of the two candidates in order to "try to persuade one another that this person should be chosen over the other." At one point they asked the regional director to check the financial background experience of one of the candidates. During this final selection process the regional director recalled feeling that "this particular board would have dearly loved to have me make the decision so that they could have somebody to blame [if things go awry]." In regard to his influence in the final decision, he indicated that he tries not to persuade the board, but "on a rare occasion where [he] sees a board leaning toward a candidate that [he] knows deep down will not be successful in that division, in [his] opinion, [he] will try to get the message to the chairman in some way." However, he noted that "there is a point where you have to stand up, close your books, and say something to the effect that "now descends upon you the heavy responsibility of trusteeship. You must now select your director."

The board ultimately chose their new director. The regional director felt that the director was chosen "because the board liked him personally; individual members liked him--they just liked his personality --they liked listening to him." He also felt that another deciding factor for the board was that this candidate "had a very strong reference from a widely respected director and educator in the province."

The regional director sensed that the board felt that they chose a fine director and that they "now realize what a person who actually works for them could do for them" as opposed to the provincially appointed superintendent. However, he felt that "they just got plain lucky with

Gerald because he's a flamboyant sort of big kind of individual who commands a great deal of respect because of his genuineness."

## Rolling Hills School Division

Rolling Hills School Division is an urban division which employs approximately 200 teachers. A new director, Donald, was selected in the spring of 1989 due to the retirement of the previous director. Donald assumed his position on August 1, 1989. Since the previous director had merely been promoted to the position a number of years ago, the selection of a director was a new process for the board.

### Director's Perspective

Donald first became aware that this particular directorship was available by reading the advertisement in the newspaper. He was interested in the position because "[he] had worked in that school division before and enjoyed it. [He] liked the area . . . and the people that [he] had worked with and wanted to get more experience and come back to offer more." Donald was very aware of the situation in the school division. He commented that "one of the things that appealed to me is that [the school division] was in a time of change." He was aware that the current director and the assistant director were retiring and that the secretary-treasurer had just retired. Donald also knew that many of the principals were leaving, so "[he] didn't feel as if [he] was going back to do what [he] was doing before (as an assistant director), but [he] felt that [he] was going back to a familiar setting with a whole new different challenge."

In making application for the position, Donald included a resume, a

performance review from his current employer, and a "System of Beliefs on School Administration," the latter which he had devised and "is a philosophy of sorts." The application was submitted to the board chairperson, and within a week he was called by the current director, who invited him to an interview.

Donald prepared for the interview quite extensively. Since he had been interviewed for a directorship "six or seven times," he took "the questions from those interviews, put them together," and wrote the answers out in point form. As he said, "I would get my thinking clear . . . so that when asked these questions I wouldn't wander--I would be as concise and crisp as I could after having thought through almost every anticipated question."

The interview lasted about an hour and a half. All board members, the regional director, and the current director were present. Donald recalled that "they got right into the interview fairly quickly" because "[he] knew every trustee except one." Each board member "took an area and asked questions, and they went around the table. The chairman didn't ask questions . . . ; he was more or less an observer. The regional director asked a question or two, and the retiring director didn't ask any questions." Donald indicated that although each board member asked only a few questions,

> they blocked [them] in such a way that they were so big and hard to answer. . . . One question, for example, was, "What is your perception of the director of education in terms of teachers, principals, the staff, the local board, and the division board?"

Other questions asked related to the role of the director, relationships between the director and the secretary-treasurer, the consultants and the assistant director, professional development, bargaining, communication,

planning, programming, future issues, decision making, evaluation, and provincial initiatives. He indicated, "They asked one that I hadn't anticipated about how I felt about private schools."

In regard to his performance at the interview, Donald commented that "I felt I could have done better, [but] I thought the questions were good, and I think I did fairly well in answering them. I was prepared for the interview, and I didn't get too many surprises!" He indicated that he felt a bit uneasy with the current director being present at the interview because he had worked with him as his assistant previously. He said:

> We think quite differently about a lot of issues, and I didn't want to put down things that he values and that I don't value, and vice versa, so I felt that was a bit of a restriction on how free I could be in order to remain professional.

Donald felt that the board "criteria weren't crystal clear because they asked a lot of general questions" However, he did indicate that he felt the board was likely looking for a "different style of leadership and management for their division." A number of questions focused on the internal operation and management of central office" and on the role of the Chief Executive Officer. He also felt that the board wanted "someone who would be visible in the community and within their school division."

The newly appointed director felt that, since he had worked for this particular school board previously in a senior administrative position, "this worked in [his] favor because they knew [him], and they knew what kind of person [he] was." Donald indicated that "one of the strengths [the board] wanted and that I have is the ability to work collaboratively with people and to get them alongside very, very quickly. . . . I think they selected me because of past experience! The fact that they knew me

gave me an edge on [the other candidates], and I think that's why they selected me."

## Board Chairperson's Perspective

The board had been aware for nearly a year that it would be appointing a new director due to the pending retirement of their director. Board members were "looking forward to a change and to new ideas . . . as the two top people had been [there] for between eighteen and thirty years."

The director position was advertised provincially, and approximately 36 applications were received. Upon receipt of the applications, the board chairperson contacted the regional director, who assisted the board with the shortlisting process. The board found the regional director to be "very helpful." The chairperson indicated that the regional director is "the ultimate guardian of this region, and he knows the personalities that we are dealing with; he knows our division; and he knows some of the needs we have."

Developing criteria in regard to the type of person the board wanted was the first step that the board and the regional director took. The decision was made to attempt to hire a person who had "experience as a Chief Executive Officer" and who would not be "reliant on the secretary-treasurer . . . , who would be able to implement new programs . . . , and who would be comfortable living in rural Saskatchewan." Preferably, the new director would have experience in rural Saskatchewan; "rural areas are very different from urban areas because every little region has to teach its own things . . . and has to deal with every aspect of education."

Following a thorough review of the applications and "trying to fit the criteria to the applicants' resumes," approximately a dozen applicants were selected for further investigation. This investigation involved "hard-copy referencing" whereby letters were sent to the applicants' referees requesting them to reply in writing about the applicant in regard to specific pre-determined criteria. Following the return of the references, the board and the regional director invited six candidates to an interview: two assistant directors, two directors, and two persons with Department of Education experience. The board chairperson indicated that numerous applications had been received from principals, but that a conscious decision was made not to interview principals. The board felt that

> they're not being fair to themselves applying for a director's job. There are certain levels of expertise they have to gain: First, they have to have K to 12 experience as a principal, maybe in a large school, then be an assistant or consultant, and <u>then</u> try for a directorship. . . . People who try to bypass two or three of those steps are maybe doing a disservice to themselves and probably not taking the right experience to the board they're going to.

The interviews were arranged by the current director. Those present at the interviews included the five-member board, the regional director, and the current director. The chairperson indicated that the board took this process very seriously and tried to determine how well each candidate matched the pre-established criteria. He further emphasized how valuable the interviews were in that "you can only [illegible]ch information from the resumes. You have to meet the perso[illegible]der to get a feeling whether or not you can work with that person."

Following the interviews, the board discussed the candidates in detail. Eventually, by "a show of hands," the members decided upon two

candidates. In the discussion regarding Donald, the chairperson recalled that he "knew Donald personally and really felt he was the best person for the job but tried very hard not to sway the other board members' opinions." He recalled that the other candidate had excellent communication skills and gave the impression that "he would really take over," which board members felt "could be a problem for them later on." In addition, this candidate had had "some personal problems" in the past which also concerned the board. Donald, on the other hand, "was a people-person" who had previously worked in their central office and whom they had "had good reports about." The board liked Donald because he was a "low-key person" with whom they felt they could work effectively. They made a unanimous decision to offer the directorship to Donald.

Regional Director's Perspective

The regional director first became involved in this particular selection following an invitation from the board chairperson, who indicated that he and the vice-chairperson would like to discuss the selection procedures with him, since this was a new procedure for them. In meeting with them, the regional director

> tried to reach some understanding with them on the importance of the position, not only for the school division but also for the Department of Education . . . that it's a unique position in that [the director] stands as Chief Executive Officer of the board, yet at the same time legislation assigns some primary duties and responsibilities that the director has to the Department.

The regional director indicated that although his involvement in this selection was consistent with that of other cases, he did have some concerns that this board "might narrow its selection criteria [by being] perhaps too preoccupied with salary considerations and not get involved

in an overall comprehensive selection procedure."

Prior to the cut-off date of the receipt of applications, the regional director indicated that he did some "reaching out and tapping" whereby he asked some potential candidates if they were aware that this position was being advertised.

Upon receipt of the applications, the regional director assisted the board with deciding what the "critical factors for this position were." The regional director indicated that he felt this was very important:

> I don't even want to look at applications, talk about applications or anything else until we've had some degree of thinking about what the critical factors are. Ideally, if they can set out their critical factors, then clearly you can say, "There are some things you can glean from an application, there are other things you can glean from references, and there are other things that you can glean from an interview."

He felt that the most critical factor for this board was selecting a director "with Chief Executive Officer manager administrative experience."

Board members, along with the regional director, reviewed the applications and selected approximately 12 candidates to be "hard-copy referenced." This procedure required referees to respond in writing with respect to various aspects of the applicants. Once the references were received, the board and regional director selected six candidates to be interviewed.

The regional director assisted the board with "setting out twenty-some questions," and the board members divided the questions among themselves. This procedure was followed at the interviews with "the standard sort of Department relationship questions" asked by the regional director. He indicated that he likes "to push people in terms of consistency . . . and scan [the interview]."

Following the interviews, in the final stages of making the selection, the regional director "drew things to the board's attention." He recalled that "two applicants stood out, and [the board] was comfortable with one or the other . . . ; they were fairly equal. There were little hooks or little worries on each of the applicants . . . and certainly salary was a part of it." In reflecting on this stage of selection, he said, "I don't know what you call it, or whether there's a name for it in the literature, it's overcoming some of the little negative things."

The regional director felt that Donald was selected as director for various reasons: His education was "clearly upper end"; he had experience in the Department, in central office, and in another school division; his experience working with the current director, although difficult, was perceived as having been successful; "he knew the schools . . . , the area . . . , the minefields"; and he was able to "convey a tremendous amount of enthusiasm for really wanting the job and wanting to work in that division." "There were very few little negative hooks hanging on the whole package!"

## Similarities and Differences in Selection Processes

An analysis of the nine interviews conducted for the three case studies revealed both similarities and differences in various aspects of the selection process. Among the aspects which warrant attention are practices related to advertising, shortlisting, interviewing, and making the selection decision.

## Advertising the Position

In all three cases boards knew well in advance that they would be selecting a director and advertised the position early. The most common time of year for selection of directors in Saskatchewan is early spring; this occurred in two of the three cases. The action of one board in dismissing the director in July resulted in advertising of that directorship in early fall. The board chairperson in this case felt that "it would have been much more appropriate if we could have advertised in the spring and interviewed and hired the first of August. . . . I believe we would have received more quality applications at a different time of year."

Advertisements for the position were placed in the major provincial newspaper and sometimes in newspapers in an adjoining province. Candidates became aware of the position largely by reading the newspaper advertisements. Generally, advertisements consisted of a brief job description, educational and experiential requirements as set out by legislation, and information about to whom the application should be sent and what it should contain.

## Application Practices

Applicants submitted a letter of application along with a current resume and a list of references to the board chairperson. Even though board requirements for applications were quite straightforward, there was variation in what was sent. One regional director cautioned applicants "not to overdo the application . . . ; realize what the important parts of your experience are, and zero in." The importance of applicants showing a straight career path "leaving no omissions" and of including

the current board chairperson's name in their reference list were also recommended by a regional director.

A number of applicants followed up on their applications by contacting board members and other key persons. Several directors felt that this procedure was somewhat unethical, and one director commented that "[you should] submit your resume and wait--don't pressure boards."

On average, about 25 applications were received for each of the positions in the case studies. Letters of acknowledgement were sent to all applicants by the acting/current director upon receipt of the application.

## Shortlisting

Boards involved the regional director in shortlisting applicants. Together they examined the applications, conducted reference checks, and selected applicants to be interviewed. Prior to examining the applications, regional directors attempted to have board members decide upon the kind of person they want as their director. Two regional directors had board members go through a process in order to make this decision. Based on the established criteria, members, along with the regional director, chose among the applications.

Reference checks were conducted on the chosen applicants. Generally, the checks were made by telephone by the regional director but sometimes by the board chairperson or the current director. On one occasion, "hard-copy" referencing was done. One regional director encouraged the "direct employer-to-employer kind of relationship by [making] sure that the board chairman contacts the board chairman of the employing division." When contacts of this nature are made, one board

chairperson recalled that "some of [the board chairpersons] were quite dismayed to think that their director would leave or even think of leaving!"

When reference checks proved to be positive, the applicant was invited to an interview. In all cases the current director set up the interviews. Regional directors encourage boards to "keep the number of candidates to be interviewed to four or five."

## Preparing for the Interview

The manner in which candidates prepared for the interview varied from a discussion with a mentor to writing out possible answers to anticipated questions. However, regional directors encouraged directors to prepare for the interview by telling them to take time to find out about the division, check policy manuals, "check around . . . to see if the employing board is really after a C.E.O.," "clue into the issues . . . , and superimpose some sense of vision or mission over it," and "understand what it is that you believe in . . . and what you are expecting."

Board members met with their respective regional directors and adopted the questions presented to them. They also decided on the general format of the interviews and who would ask the questions. Even though board members formally prepare for the interviews, one director who had been interviewed "six or seven times" previously commented that "over half of the interviews are poorly structured."

## Composition of the Interview Panel

All board members and the regional director comprised the interview panel for the three cases; in one case the current director was also present. The newly appointed director in this case indicated that the current director's presence at the interview caused him to be somewhat uneasy, and he said that he did not know "what could be accomplished by [his presence]." The board chairperson indicated that the current director was there "as a resource person" for the board. One director commented that perhaps consideration should be given to having the secretary-treasurer serve on the interview panel since "the Chief Executive Officer will have that Secretary-Treasurer reporting to him afterward." The regional director's membership on the panel was generally very well received. As one director commented,

> The regional director is the key person in the whole process of selection of directors. You get good guidance by the regional director, and then you get a good interview. If you don't have [the regional director], these boards don't get a true picture--they don't find out what they need to know.

One regional director indicated that he thought boards felt comfortable when he is on the panel: "[They] feel that I'm there for their best interests and that there's nobody I'm trying to put into that position."

## The Interview

The interviews were convened and adjourned by the board chairperson. Panel members alternately asked questions, except in one case where the regional director asked all of the questions. In the latter instance the regional director felt that the board wanted him to ask the questions in order that "they could concentrate on the answers . . . , and they could write their notes." However, another regional director indicated that

"if [he does] the questioning, the applicants talk only to [him], and they feel that [he] is doing the selection." In addition, one director pointed out that "each board member should have a chance to ask questions . . . and that the same questions should be asked each candidate . . . so that they can compare." He also indicated the value in having the regional director ask all of the questions in that "sometimes [the interviewer] has to probe to get a point that's important . . . , [and] the board members may not have the insight to pick up on the educational issues."

The first interview question usually related to the candidate's background and served the purpose of putting the candidate at ease, although in one case the director indicated that since nearly all board members knew him, "we got right into the interview fairly quickly." The remainder of the questions centered largely on issues relative to interpersonal relations and managerial abilities. One candidate specifically commented on the difficulty he experienced in answering very long, complex questions and much preferred "one-tiered" questions. However, generally candidates felt that the questions were "appropriate."

From the questions asked, candidates able to assess to some degree the type of person the board was searching for. There appeared to be a concern in all cases as to whether or not the candidate could get along with the board--as one regional director put it, "They wanted somebody that they didn't feel would be talking down to them as elected people."

Board chairpersons and regional directors commented on candidates' performance at the interview. They encouraged them to "present yourself in a business-like fashion," but "be yourself," and to "come to the

interview in as relaxed a state as possible." One candidate commented that interviews used to be like a one-way street: "I want in and I'll conform to anything in order to get in." He now "[goes] into the interview like it's a two-way street--I have something to offer." He felt that in the latter way, there are "no surprises later on."

When answering questions, candidates were expected to be consistent in their responses, and in order to do that, "you have to understand what it is you believe in." One director, who had previously had several interviews for a directorship, pointed out that sometimes "they ask a question in a different way to see if you will contradict yourself." Interviewees were encouraged to "be honest--call a spade a spade," and, as one director commented, "If you sell yourself as something you're not, then you have to live with that." A board chairperson also commented on how important it was for candidates to be "open and honest about physical disabilities, retirement plans, etc."

One director indicated that in answering questions he finds it best to briefly address the issue in regard to general philosophy and "then to relate it back to experience. . . . An example of an application seems to work well." Further to this, mention was made that candidates should "make those board members want to hear more [but] know when they've heard enough." "Don't try to B.S. your way around a question." As one regional director commented, "The most important criterion to be a director of education is that you are an educational leader," and this message must be conveyed very clearly."

In regard to the language used in responding to questions, one regional director commented that candidates should "read [their] audience--don't overuse educational jargon! This scares [board members]

You've got to remember who you're talking to."

A regional director mentioned that "two things kill [candidates]: no real sense of what they're looking for, and letting salary and benefits get in the way." In regard to the latter, boards appear to be very concerned about money, particularly in "these times of restraint," and that this issue is of utmost concern. One regional director commented in regard to this issue being discussed at interviews and felt that "at the end of the interview, board chairmen should ask candidates what their remuneration expectations are." In addition, a newly appointed director indicated that he tried to separate salary from the interview:

> I don't like to end up the selection interview and get it muddled up with salary. The boards like to get into that. They like to nail down a price pretty quickly, so I try to avoid that if I can. . . . I set what my expectations would be, I priorize them according to what's important to me, and I work it that way. I say, "I make this now; I'm negotiable; if you think I'm the kind of person you want, I'll sit down and conference with you about salary."

Interviews lasted about one and one half hours; as one regional director commented, "After an hour and a half, the true personality [of the candidate] comes through." One director also mentioned that he appreciated that board members allowed sufficient time for the interview. However, one director commented that he felt one small thing could be done in order to make interviews "less painful": "They always sit you at the end of a table on a hard chair and look down the long table at you; it would be nice if they would have a round table and put you in a soft chair." He further commented that it would be preferred if they would "discuss rather than grill; they grill, but they all do, they grill!"

In one case, a director was invited to a second interview. However,

one regional director commented that this generally does not happen, as "call backs are infrequent."

## Selection Decision

In making the final decision, board members and the regional director met, at which time board members discussed each candidate very carefully. One board chairperson described the process in this way: "We went around the table and talked about each one. Sometimes we went around several times. In the end, after everybody had their say of who they thought would be the best one, we voted." Generally, the process resulted in a vote being taken between two candidates. Regional directors encourage boards to "never pick only one person, because it could be that after the discussion about the monetary aspect and the benefits, there may be a refusal by a candidate, so boards are always encouraged to pick two."

In all cases the regional director left prior to the final vote being taken. The voting process varied from secret ballot to a show of hands to agreement by consensus. Board members felt that it was important to "come out with a majority vote and go with it," as do regional directors. One regional director summarized his thoughts as follows: "Boards must come out and live by a unanimous decision. . . . Where that hasn't happened, the director never lasts long." Another went so far as to suggest that "applications be shredded" so that board members "don't ever look back." One board chairperson commented that he felt that their selection process was "a democratic way to do it" and that he would do it the same way another time.

There appeared to be a definite relationship between the type of

director boards were searching for and the actual candidate whom they hired. However, several regional directors expressed concern in regard to the impact that the salary of the director has upon selection. One regional director indicated that he "sees principals getting some positions probably because they're asking ten, twelve, fifteen thousand dollars less than an experienced person, when probably an experienced director should be going into that position." Another regional director expressed similar sentiments when he said,

> It gets a little worrisome at times when you see a division that recruits, has an application from a pretty high-profile, experienced person, and ends up going with a totally inexperienced, unknown commodity, and the only thing that you kind of get out of people is some sort of mumbling about salary or expectations.

One director commented that he felt boards say, "Well, they're all the same--they're a bunch of turkeys, so you may as well get the cheapest turkey!" Yet, one board chairperson commented that "if you pay peanuts, you get monkeys!"

In selecting a director, the regional directors, board chairpersons, and directors seemed to be aware that a person who was quite different from the current director might be the most desirable and be ultimately hired. Boards, directors, and regional directors felt that knowing one another was advantageous to the selection process. In one case the candidate was well known to all board members except one; in another the candidate lived in the community and was known to some degree by board members but had also previously worked for the regional director.

## Issues and Concerns

Only a limited number of concerns or issues were evident in comments made by interviewees about the selection of directors. The two that were mentioned most frequently revolved around the preferred career paths and the role of the regional director.

### Career Paths

The professional backgrounds of the three directors involved in this study reflected differing career paths: Two involved a teacher principal-central office/Saskatchewan Education-director pattern, and the other consisted of a teacher-principal-director path. There appeared to be some concern among board members and regional directors in regard to the latter pattern. The board chairperson in this case acknowledged the question about this candidate's somewhat untraditional career path, but indicated that

> his strong reference from a well known director and the board's attitude that sometimes a person who has never done it before can come into it with no pre-conceived notions of how things should be done and can offer a lot

led to his selection.

Another board chairperson indicated that principals who apply for directorships are

> not being fair to themselves. . . . There are certain levels of expertise they have to gain. First of all, they have to be not only a K-12 principal, they should have K-12 experience, maybe in some larger school, then be an assistant or a consultant, then try for a director. People who try to jump by bypassing two or three of those steps . . . are doing a disservice to themselves and probably not taking the right experience to the board they're going to.

In addition, the director who followed this particular career path agreed with this position in that he felt that

> if [he] had had a year or two as an assistant director and had been closer to a board and been in a board meeting and found out how things work, [he] wouldn't have had the frustrations . . . of the politics and of the realities of rural Saskatchewan. It was baptism under fire!

One regional director commented that he felt principals are being promoted to directorships because they are likely asking ten, twelve, fifteen thousand dollars less than an experienced person"; another regional director indicated that directors "who are the most successful at their jobs follow the career path which includes an assistant directorship or a central office position."

In regard to candidates having experience as a high school principal, one regional director said that "years ago there was a lot of that high school principal hangup kind of stuff . . . , and now that's diminishing; when I look at some of the better appointments, people coming in with substantial elementary school principal experience have a good if not a better shot at it."

Board members and regional directors encouraged aspiring directors to "prepare [their] career path" and get to be known: Visibility and educational background signal people that you're interested." One regional director referred to the existence of a group of "knowns" in the province. This is a

> cadre of individuals who hold senior administrative positions or are high-profile principals who are what we call upward mobile types. This group is well known. There are probably about a hundred and fifty. . . . Their names are well known among the educational community.

He also indicated that there is another group of "knowns," but these are

> people who apply for everything. . . . They are known because their names appear in every single competition. They have never had an interview in their entire lives for a senior position, nor will they ever have because they couldn't handle

> a classroom, they couldn't handle a principalship, and now they think they can somehow become a director of education and be successful. It's ludicrous!

Aspiring directors are also encouraged to "be successful at every stage of your career--that you were a successful teacher, that you were a successful administrator, that you have a good solid academic background. . . . Those things will get you to the table." They are also reminded that "Saskatchewan is nothing but a big town, and your reputation follows you wherever you go!" And, as one director himself put it, "Your reputation has to speak for itself."

One newly appointed director reflected that being a director

> is a very lonely job in many ways. . . . You don't get to work with kids anymore, . . . but you have to realize that the way you're helping kids is by helping the administrators and teachers in the system by making things better, . . . so you really can make a difference.

## Role of the Regional Director

The regional director plays a very important part in the selection of directors of education. As one board chairperson said, "the regional director is the ultimate guardian of the region," yet regional directors felt that "there is a watch-dog-monitoring capacity as far as the Department is concerned, but on the board side of it, we consider ourselves as resources."

Regional directors appear to have considerable influence in director selection. They are highly respected by school boards, and are the first persons contacted prior to the beginning of the selection process. One board chairperson indicated that at one time boards contacted the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association for assistance, but now they contact the regional director. A respondent commented that boards

see the regional office as being of some use to them in this respect."

In addition, regional directors are seen by directors as being very valuable at the interview; one director commented on how impressed he was with the board because they had the foresight to "bring in a very experienced regional director to conduct the interview."

On the other hand, regional directors are frequently contacted by directors or aspiring directors in regard to the selection process. They feel comfortable discussing issues with their regional director and frequently request advice from him.

When asked what school boards did in regard to selecting their new director that was particularly purposeful, all board chairpersons indicated that involving their regional director was a very positive step. However, one interviewee commented that "more boards feel that government is using influence in selecting Chief Executive Officers" by involving the regional director so are more reluctant to have close involvement with him."

Regional directors felt that they can have a very positive influence over selection. One regional director commented that "in rural Saskatchewan we are dealing with lay people . . . who are not used to this fancy interview stuff. . . . Their attitude is, 'I can tell by looking at him whether he'd make a good director.' It's a real earthy kind of attitude." Another regional director indicated that, in this regard, "the more regional directors who go to boards with prescribed kinds of [selection] packages, the better the selection of directors is going to be."

In Saskatchewan all directors and regional directors belong to "the same professional organization": the League of Educational

Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents (L.E.A.D.S.). One interviewee commented on this "strange union" of government employees and elected directors, "which doesn't happen in many provinces." Another respondent noted the value of the two groups belonging to the same organization: "We nave a special sort of camaraderie." There are six regional directors in the province of Saskatchewan, and, as one regional director commented: "We are a very close network: We talk weekly, we have conference calls, we meet at least once a month. . . . We have a very close relationship, and one that, on a personal note, is very enjoyable."

In regard to the selection of directors in Saskatchewan in recent years, regional directors commented that "they are definitely younger," "there is a trend for principals to be appointed as directors," and "in rural Saskatchewan, women are still having a lot of trouble getting to the interview table, . . . and rural Saskatchewan isn't going to give an affirmative action program."

In general, there appears to be some concern associated with the regional directors' involvement in selection of directors. On the one hand, they fulfill an assisting role for boards in the process of selection, and on the other hand, with their considerable expertise in the area, they fulfill the role of sanctioning office for the Department of Education. They are in a tenuous position and must be careful not to sway one way or the other in order to maintain this fragile balance.

## Summary

Descriptions of the processes of selecting three directors of education were provided from three perspectives: that of the [illegible]

applicant, that of the board chairperson, and that of the regional director of education. The selection process for directors of education was generally found to be consistent in the three cases studied.

Boards knew well in advance of the pending vacant directorship and invited the respective regional directors to assist them with the process. Advertisements were placed in provincial newspapers, and approximately 25 applications were received for each position. Criteria for selection were established, references were checked, and candidates were selected for an interview. Both the boards and the candidates prepared for the interview. The interviews were largely attended by the board members, the regional director, and the interviewee and lasted approximately one-and-one-half hours. Similar questions were asked candidates in all three cases and centered largely on interpersonal relations and managerial skills. The final decision was made by the board, at which time each candidate was discussed at length, and a vote was taken. The characteristics of successful applicants seemed to be consistent with the type of director for whom boards were searching.

Several issues and concerns emerged from the case studies. The return to a former career pattern leading to a directorship--teacher-principal-director--was noted, particularly in regard to its appropriateness as a prerequisite to a directorship and as a possible cost-saving device for boards. Another issue centered on the tenuous position of the regional director in the selection process.

# Chapter 7

## Summary, Conclusions, and Implications

This final chapter presents an overview of the study, a summary and discussion of the findings, and a statement of conclusions. The report concludes with implications of the results for theory, research, and practice.

## Overview of the Study

A statement of the purpose of the study, the questions that guided the research, the rationale for the study, the conceptual framework, and the research methodology serves as an overview of the research project which is the subject of this report.

### Purpose and Research Questions

The central research question for this study was, "What are the characteristics of the processes through which the careers of directors of education in Saskatchewan unfold?" More specifically, the study focused on the academic and professional backgrounds of directors, the factors which influence them to seek a directorship, and the selection practices of school boards. Eight general questions guided the development of the research project:

1. What are the academic and professional qualifications of directors of education?
2. What factors influence directors of education to pursue an administrative career?

3. What steps do candidates take in applying for a director of education position?
4. What procedures do boards follow in recruiting and selecting directors of education?
5. What factors contribute to mobility among directors of education?
6. What are the major sources of satisfaction in the director of education position?
7. What are the future career plans of directors of education?
8. What is the general nature of career patterns of directors of education?

In order to answer these questions, data were collected through a questionnaire survey of all directors of education in Saskatchewan and through three case studies involving interviews with the recently appointed directors of education, the regional directors of education, and the board chairpersons.

## Rationale

Concerns of writers in the literature on the superintendency have revolved primarily around job characteristics, incumbent characteristics, career mobility, and turnover. Very few studies have addressed the question of how people acquire the position of superintendent/director of education.

A trend toward increased attention by boards to director selection may be due largely to the increased number of directors who are leaving the position. Since directors of education are considered to be the educational leaders in their school divisions, selection of the most suitable person is highly important. Consequently, insights into the

characteristics of recently appointed directors of education, as well as the preparation, selection, and recruitment which occurred prior to the appointments, may assist in ensuring that suitable people are placed in these educational leadership positions.

## Conceptual Framework

This study of the director of education was based on a framework of the development theory of status attainment and represents an adaptation of Kanter's (1977) ideas concerning the corporate careers of men and women. The theory suggests that access to top management positions in public education, such as the superintendency, is influenced by an interaction of individual characteristics or actions and organizational structures.

The theory further proposes that the development of a career starts early in life and continues through a person's work history. This socialization process, along with the preparation for various positions and the degree of fulfillment afforded by the positions, helps to determine an individual's career path. Ultimately, the interaction of organizational structures such as recruitment and selection procedures with individual characteristics determine the direction of an individual's career.

## Research Methodology

A descriptive survey design was used to investigate the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education. Data collection for the study involved a questionnaire survey [illegible] directors of education in Saskatchewan and three case studies of [illegible]

selection/appointment procedures.

The design of the questionnaire was influenced by a review of the literature relating to socialization, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of educational administrators, as well as the demands of the superintendency. A preliminary review of the questionnaire and a pilot test were conducted, each resulting in high response rates. After revisions, the questionnaire was distributed to 89 directors of education in Saskatchewan; usable responses were received from 82, which represents an 89.13% response rate.

The interview questions were based largely on the review of the literature and on results of the questionnaire survey, with the major focus being on the selection process for the newly appointed director. After several "practice sessions" with the interview questions, the researcher conducted interviews with three newly appointed directors, regional directors, and board chairpersons.

Data analysis techniques reflected the descriptive nature of the study. Statistical techniques such as means, frequency distributions, Chi-square tests, and analysis of variance were used to analyze the quantitative data. Responses to open-ended questions were analyzed by content analysis and were used to support quantitative findings. Interviews were transcribed and then organized according to case studies on the basis of themes; similarities and differences were explored.

## Summary of Questionnaire Findings

A summary of findings is presented in relation to each of the research questions which guided the study.

## Academic and Professional Qualifications

When first appointed, most of the directors of education held B.Ed. degrees, and many held Master's degrees or other baccalaureate degrees; approximately one third had diplomas in education, and six held doctoral degrees. Of those who had credit courses beyond the bachelor's level, most were in the area of educational administration or supervision on a Master's program. The largest percentage of directors who held diplomas in education at the time of first appointment were under the age of 45 and worked in divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers. Of the directors holding Master's degrees in Education, most were between 45 and 49 years of age. Many directors had participated extensively in seminars, workshops, and conferences. These had been valuable professional development experiences which they considered to be relevant to their preparation for a directorship.

## Factors Influencing Pursuit of an Administrative Career

In rating the importance of factors in relation to the decision to pursue an administrative career, directors of education indicated that the most important factor in this regard was the assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education. Confidence in their own abilities as a result of formal studies, guidance of mentors, and opportunities for leadership development in teaching careers were additional important factors in deciding to pursue an administrative career. Directors in rural divisions considered the guidance of mentors more important in making their decision to pursue an administrative career than did directors in cities. Respondents frequently held memberships in associations but were less actively

involved in holding offices, chairing committees/conventions, and serving on boards/commissions.

Among the important events in respondents' careers which they considered to have been contributing factors in attracting them to a directorship were specific encouragement from others, confidence gained through successful work experiences, personal initiatives taken (particularly university training), and the legislative change from provincially to locally appointed directors. Three factors which were highly important in attracting respondents to a director of education position were the challenge of the job, the opportunity to influence educational policy, and career progress.

Directors who had previously served in that capacity and had since acquired another directorship tended to leave their last position because of employment considerations, limited career opportunities, limited professional challenge, and the nature of the school division. Directors in school divisions employing fewer than 101 teachers felt that limited professional challenge was a more important factor in leaving their last directorship than did respondents employed in divisions with 101 teachers or more. The two major factors which attracted directors to their current position were professional challenge and the nature of the school division.

## Application Procedures

Most prospective candidates made casual inquiries about the characteristics of the school division, about the community as a place to live, and also about the procedures and characteristics of the board. They had informal discussions with the former director and with

mentor/colleagues. Some had made informal visits to the director's office and to some of the schools/towns in the division. Rural directors were more likely than city directors to make casual inquiries about the preferred management style of the director prior to applying for their first directorship. Directors over 45 years of age were much more likely to have informal discussions with the regional director than were those under the age of 45.

## Recruitment and Selection

Most directors became aware of the availability of their current position through newspaper advertisements; however, a considerable number found out from the former director, and some were invited to apply.

The order of importance of characteristics which respondents felt were highly important was educational/administrative skills, competencies, and knowledge; general professional standing; successful experience in other school divisions; educational qualifications; calibre of references; potential to address specific problems which require solution; compatibility with the social and educational context; clarity of professional goals; and readiness to initiate change. Directors 50 years of age or over felt that educational qualifications for director selection were much more important than did those under the age of 50.

In most instances the selection process for a first directorship included an interview, province-wide advertising of the position, establishment of a short-list, and checking of references. However, the latter three elements were more likely to be present in cases where respondents were between the ages of 45 and 49, less likely for those under 45, and least likely for respondents over 50 years of age.

In nearly all selection processes, an interview took place. Frequently, the members of the interview panel consisted of all board members and the regional director. In a substantial number of cases, central office representatives and the former director were also present. Regional directors served on interview panels more frequently in large school divisions than in small school divisions, while the former director served on the panels more frequently in smaller divisions than in larger divisions.

## Satisfactions in Position

Directors indicated the various aspects of their position which they found to be satisfying/self-fulfilling and frustrating/stressful. The largest number of responses fell into the category which related to helping others, particularly in regard to helping teachers, students, administrators, and parents. Many respondents' replies were related to having the opportunity to influence education largely by affecting change. A small number of responses were of the nature of working with people, which included contacts with a variety of people, making decisions, having responsibility, and having freedom.

Two major aspects of the position were particularly frustrating/stressful. The first related to personnel, mostly in regard to interference by board members, problems caused by incompetent teachers, and the bureaucratic features of the educational system. The second related to financial matters, mostly of the nature of decreasing resources and school closures. A significant number of respondents also indicated frustration and stress related to the lack of time for the performance of duties.

## Career Patterns

In general, directors spent approximately five years in each position leading to a directorship: teacher, vice/assistant principal, principal, central office, assistant superintendent/superintendent, and assistant director, with a slightly longer average period of time (eight years) in the principalship. After entering teaching at the average age of about 22 years, directors entered the vice/assistant principalship approximately five years later and the principalship two years after that. If a central office position (other than that of superintendent/assistant superintendent or assistant director) was acquired, it usually occurred about 10 years after entering teaching, 5 years after a vice/assistant principalship, or 3 years after a principalship. Respondents were in their late thirties when they entered the positions of superintendent/assistant superintendent or assistant director, with this generally being 16 years after entering teaching, 11 years after serving in a vice/assistant principalship, 9 years after serving as a principal, or 6 years after a central office position. Most directors gained considerable experience in other school divisions in Saskatchewan. In all positions, the greatest number of respondents gained experience in other divisions in Saskatchewan than in the one in which they served at the time of the study.

Four career patterns were identified from the questionnaire results. Career Pattern "A," following the route of teacher, principal, and director, was the most common. Most directors following this pattern were over the age of 50, had considerable experience as a director, and were located in small school divisions in rural areas. Career Pattern "B," the second most common pattern, followed the route of teacher

(including vice-principal), principal, central office position, and director. Respondents in this classification had considerable experience as a director, tended to be between the ages of 45 and 49, and to be located in small rural divisions. Career Pattern "C" consisted of the route of teacher, principal, central office position, and director. Respondents tended to be either under the age of 45 or over the age of 50 with either 1-2 years of director experience or 11 or more years of experience. They were generally located in small rural divisions. Career Pattern "D," following the route of teacher, central office, and director, was the least common pattern. Respondents tended to have considerable experience as a director, to be located in small rural divisions, and to be between the ages of 45 and 49.

Directors under age 45 tended to follow Career Patterns A and C, those between 45 and 49 tended to follow Pattern D, and those over 50 tended to follow Pattern A. Those directors who followed Career Patterns B and D rated prestige/status as more important in seeking a directorship than did directors following Pattern C.

Future Career Plans

Over one half of the respondents plan to continue in their current position until retirement. In general, the older the respondents the more likely they were to continue in tneir current position until retirement and the less likely they were to seek another position as director of education.

Over one half of the directors indicated that they are likely to remain in the directorship for 6 or more years, with nearly one quarter indicating that they will remain in the position for 10 years or more.

However, slightly over one quarter of the respondents plan to leave the directorship within the next three years; most of them are 50 years of age or older.

## Summary of Case Studies

For the three cases studied, nine people were interviewed. In each case, the persons interviewed included a newly appointed director of education, as well as the board chairperson and the regional director, who were both directly involved in the particular selection process. The data assisted in developing insights into the actual selection process for directors and also substantiated many of the questionnaire findings.

Each board knew well in advance that it would be selecting a director and generally advertised the position four months before the decision, usually in the spring of the year. Advertisements were placed in major provincial newspapers and consisted of a brief job description and educational and experiential requirements.

Applicants submitted a letter of application and a resume, including a list of references, to the board chairperson. Some applicants included additional documents. Approximately 25 applications were received in each of the cases studied, and letters of acknowledgment were sent to all applicants by the current/acting director. The regional director, together with board members, clarified the selection criteria, previewed applications, conducted reference checks, and selected candidates to be interviewed. Generally, reference checks were conducted by telephone by the regional director, who had a standard set of questions to be asked each referee. In one case written references were requested. If reference checks proved to be positive, the applicant was invited to an

interview. An average of four applicants were interviewed.

The manner in which candidates prepared for the interview varied from a discussion with a mentor to writing out answers to anticipated questions. In preparation for the interview, board members decided on the general format of the interviews and on who would ask the questions. They generally adopted the questions presented to them by the regional director.

All board members and the regional director comprised the interview panel for all of the cases studied; in one case the current director was also present. The regional director's membership on the panel was well received by both candidates and board members; however, there was some concern expressed in regard to the value of the current director's involvement.

The interviews were convened and adjourned by the board chairperson. The panel members alternately asked questions, except in one case where the regional director asked all of the questions. Questions generally centered on interpersonal relations and managerial skills. Candidates were able to assess to some degree the type of person for whom the board was searching. There appeared to be a concern in all cases in regard to the candidate's ability to get along with the board and whether or not the candidate would be comfortable living in the community. Generally, interviews lasted about one and one half hours. In one case, the candidate was invited to a second interview several days later.

Board members and the regional director met following the interviews. Each candidate was discussed at length by board members. The regional director served as a resource person who occasionally gave advice. Through a process of elimination, board members eventually

arrived at a decision to be made between two candidates, and a vote was then taken.

In general, there appeared to be congruence between the type of director boards were searching for and the candidate whom they selected. In all cases, a person different from their current director was preferred and ultimately hired. Familiarity with board members, regional directors, and directors was advantageous to the candidate Salary was an issue of concern in director selection. Some concern was expressed that perhaps principals are being hired in place of experienced directors because they accepted positions at lower salaries.

There was also some concern among board members and regional directors in regard to the teacher-principal-director career path, particularly in light of its appropriateness as a prerequisite for a directorship and its relationship to salary expectations.

## Typologies of Directors

Three typologies of career patterns and characteristics were devleoped based on Geographic Mobility, Organizational Mobility, and Age/Experience. The significnce of the typologies was explored through cross-tabulations and analysis of variance in relation to particular variables.

### Geographic Mobility Typology

This typology categorized directors according to the number of years they served as a director in their current division and in other divisions. Four categories were defined. The most common one was Experienced Locals, which included those who had no experience in other

divisions and considerable experience in their present division. Most were over the age of 45 and were located in relatively small rural areas. Novice Directors had limited experience in their present division and none elsewhere; they tended to be under age 45, and to be located in small rural divisions. "Old Timers" had considerable director experience in their present division and little elsewhere. They tended to be 45 years of age or older and to be located in relatively large rural divisions. Experienced Newcomers, comprising the smallest classification, had limited director experience in their present division and considerable experience elsewhere. Most were located in larger rural divisions and were between 45 and 49 years of age.

Experienced Locals were most likely to have had a Diploma in Education at the time of first appointment, while Experienced Newcomers and "Old Timers" were more likely to hold Master's degrees. The major extent of formal study/preparation prior to first appointment for directors in all categories was specialization in educational administration or supervision on a Master's program. Novice Directors tended to have studies beyond the Master's level. Experienced Locals and "Old Timers" tended to feel that assessment of their own abilities relative to those of others in the field was not as important a factor in pursuing an administrative career as did the other two categories of directors. Novice Directors tended to feel that self-assessment was more important than did Experienced Locals.

Organizational Mobility Typology

In this typology directors were categorized according to experience in schools and in central office. Four categories were defined. The

most common category was Upward Mobiles, consisting of those who had little experience in either position. They tended to be between the ages of 45 and 49 and tended to be located in small rural divisions. Late Recruits were those who had considerable school experience and limited central office experience. Most were over the age of 50 and were located in small rural divisions. Stalled Mobiles had considerable experience in central office and little in schools. They tended to be under the age of 49 and were generally located in relatively large rural divisions. "Slow Movers," who comprised the smallest category, consisted of those who had considerable experience both in schools and in central office. They were generally either under the age of 45 or over 50 and were located in relatively large rural divisions.

Upward Mobiles and "Slow Movers" tended to follow the career pattern of teacher-vice-principal-principal-central office-director, Late Recruits followed the teacher-principal-director route, and Stalled Mobiles followed the pattern of teacher-central office-director.

Stalled Mobiles included more directors with doctoral degrees, and with university credit courses beyond the bachelor's level in a discipline other than education, than any of the other categories. In addition, Upward Mobiles tended to feel more strongly that successful experience in other divisions prior to first appointment was important, while Late Recruits and "Slow Movers" tended to feel strongly that seniority as a criterion in the selection process was not very important. Stalled Mobiles felt that career progress was a more important factor in deciding to seek a directorship than did "Slow Movers." Late Recruits tended to feel that compatibility with the social and educational context was less important as a factor for director selection than did the Upward

Mobiles. Stalled Mobiles tended to feel that seniority as a criterion in director selection was more important than did Upward Mobiles and Late Recruits.

## Age/Experience Typology

This typology categorized respondents according to their age at entry to a directorship and the total years of director experience. Four classifications were identified. The Younger Experienced, those who had entered the directorship at a young age and had considerable director experience, comprised the largest category. They were generally between 45 and 49 years of age and were located in both city and rural divisions of varying sizes. Directors in the Older Experienced category had considerable experience as a director and were relatively older when they entered the directorship. Most were over the age of 45 and tended to be located in small rural divisions. Older Inexperienced had limited director experience and were relatively older when they entered their first directorship. Most were under the age of 49 and were located in rural divisions of varying sizes. Younger Inexperienced, comprising the smallest category, were relatively young at entry to the directorship and had little director experience. They were under 45 years of age and tended to be located in small rural divisions.

The Younger Experienced category contained the largest number of directors both under and over the age of 45. Older directors (the Older Experienced/Inexperienced) tended to feel that career progress was not as important a factor in deciding to seek a directorship as did the younger respondents (Younger Experienced/Inexperienced). Directors with more

experience (Younger/Old Experienced) were likely to plan to continue in their current position until retirement.

## Discussion of Findings

The findings derived from the study offer insights into, and raise important questions about, preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education, particularly in the context of previous research.

When first appointed to a directorship, appointees tend to exceed the minimum prescribed academic requirements. In 1978 the Saskatchewan Education Act Regulations stipulated that directors of education be required to have a bachelor's degree plus one year of graduate studies. Well over two thirds of directors had Master's degrees, and a few held doctoral degrees, at the time of first appointment. Results of studies by Craig (1982) and Fuqua (1983) tend to confirm that holding higher degrees, particularly doctorates, is an important factor for appointment to senior administrative positions such as superintendencies in the United States. Tagg (1983) reported that rural superintendents in western Canada are not as highly qualified as their urban counterparts. The results of this study are consistent with those findings in that a greater percentage of urban directors had Master's or doctoral degrees when first appointed than did rural directors.

The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study found that supervisory officers in Ontario attribute most of their relevant preparation to work experiences, not to formal training. The results of this study indicated that respondents considered successful experience to be somewhat less important than formal training. However, training in the form of

professional development activities such as seminars, retreats, workshops, and conferences were considered by respondents in both studies to be a relevant means of preparation for a directorship, particularly in regard to the camaraderie and professional contacts made at these sessions.

The findings of this study revealed that respondents attached considerable importance to the assessment of their own abilities, having confidence in their abilities, and the encouragement of others in pursuing an administrative career. Directors appeared to gain confidence in their own abilities from formal studies and successful work experiences. These findings are generally consistent with those of other studies. Gussner (1974) found that establishment of self-assurance is an important stage in the process of socialization in career development. Various researchers, such as Valverde (1974), Dickson (1983), Dusek (1983), Villani (1983), and Marshall (1985), recognize the importance of sponsorship and mentoring in career advancement. The findings from a study by Maienza (1986) revealed that university professors, coalitions of professionals, and executive search consultants were the three major kinds of sponsorship. This study also revealed that respondents received encouragement from others, mostly from those with whom they worked closely such as directors, superintendents, and supervisors.

Kanter's (1977) research showed that undertaking visible activities can enhance one's career by bringing attention to a person. This was supported to some degree by the findings of this study in regard to respondents' involvement in activities and associations. However, respondents' involvements generally consisted of memberships in associations as opposed to actual involvements such as serving as an

executive member or a president.

Results of the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study revealed that there was considerable variation in the sources and amount of data about candidates in the selection process, although the standard configuration was the applicant's curriculum vitae, records of qualifications, and list of references. The findings of this study were similar in that, although boards generally require standard data, candidates send a variety of material.

The results of this study further revealed that most candidates find out about the vacant position from provincial newspaper advertisements and that they frequently make additional inquiries about the school division, the community, and the board through discussions with the former director of education, mentors/colleagues, and the regional director. Respondents over the age of 45 were most likely to have discussions with the regional director than were those under that age, which may indicate that older candidates are less intimidated by regional directors and perhaps even consider them mentors.

Although most directors became aware of the availability of their current position through advertisements, a considerable number were informed by the former director or were invited to apply. That a number of potential candidates were informed by their former director may indicate that directors are serving a mentoring role. In addition, the research indicates that those who were invited to apply are likely senior directors, as this procedure was somewhat more common formerly than it is now. The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study of Ontario supervisory officers indicated that a variation concerning position announcements exists in that some divisions prefer to recruit locally or not advertise

at all. The findings of this study revealed that variations of this nature do not occur in Saskatchewan largely due to government regulations which make it mandatory to advertise directorships provincially.

The literature indicates that very few boards have written policies for selecting administrators (DeFrahn, 1974; Glover, 1970; Kelsey & Leullier, 1978), although some have very specific criteria. The findings of this study are consistent with the literature. In Saskatchewan, fewer than half of the boards have written policies for selection, and even fewer have specific criteria.

The interview data revealed that in some cases the regional director assists the board in establishing criteria. Directors' perceptions of the criteria generally were similar to those identified in previous studies: understanding board operations, board-superintendent relations, fiscal management, personal relationships (Powell, 1984; Robertson, 1984); and professional experience, track record, skills, competencies, educational qualifications, organizational fit, and personal goals (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 96). However, the findings of this study indicate that directors consider the caliber of references an important selection criterion, while experience in the present school division and seniority are not considered important. Directors feel that being able to solve specific problems is an important criterion, while readiness to support existing policy is not.

Candidates were able to assess to some degree the type of person for whom the board was searching; however, one of the major criteria for selection dealt with the "chemistry" between the board and the candidates, particularly in regard to their ability to get along with one another.

The Socolow (1978) study of recruitment practices confirmed that administrators come from traditional pools of candidates including persons presently on staff. Vancil (1987) further found that a successor is typically selected from a dominant coalition in order to preserve the values of the organization. Miskel and Cosgrove (1985) contend that future leaders can be divided into two categories: insiders--when current members of the hiring organization are promoted, and outsiders--when successors are selected from an entirely separate organization (p. 90). Carlson (1961) indicates that when school boards select superintendents, they promote an insider to give a stabilizing effect if they are basically pleased with the current administration, whereas they expect outsiders to give a creative performance that signifies changes. The results of this study differed from previous research in that directors in Saskatchewan generally gained most of their experience, both as teachers and as administrators, in school divisions other than the one in which they are currently director. Since outsiders are promoted most frequently, this may indicate that most school divisions are prepared to accept change when employing a new director rather than to emphasize maintenance of previous administrative practices.

The elements present in the actual selection process were standard in that references were checked, a short list was established, and an interview took place. The findings of this study, as well as those of the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) Ontario study, revealed that there is variation in terms of who is involved in the actual interview. Typically in Saskatchewan, board members and the regional director comprised the interview panel, although in some cases the former director and teacher, principal, or central office representatives were also

present. In no cases were parent representatives involved. This latter exclusion appears to be somewhat inconsistent with other developments in which parental involvement is being strongly encouraged and the extent to which locally elected trustees and parent advisory councils are in existence at school levels.

An examination of educational qualifications of directors at the time of first appointment revealed that those with the least experience had the most education. Perhaps this indicates that educational qualifications for directors are increasing. Directors with considerable central office experience were the most highly educated, which may indicate the value of experience in central office where the likelihood of stimulation and encouragement by colleagues and senior administrators to improve educational qualifications is high, or it may indicate that those who aspire to a directorship recognize the importance of both formal training and experience.

In deciding to pursue an administrative career or a directorship, the findings of the study revealed that younger directors feel that prestige/status and assessment of their own abilities as factors are more important than do older directors. Directors who are less mobile and tend to remain in their present school division also tend to feel that this factor is not very important. Perhaps this serves to indicate that since these respondents remain largely in one school division, it is more difficult for them to compare their abilities to those of others. Furthermore, directors who entered the directorship at an older age and who have considerable school experience tend to feel that career progress is not highly important in seeking a directorship. Perhaps when these directors were first appointed career progress was not considered to be

as important a criterion for appointment as it is now.

In regard to the importance directors attach to various criteria in the selection process for a directorship, the less experience respondents had, the more highly important they felt the criteria included seniority, successful experience in other divisions, and compatibility with the social and organizational context. However, respondents with more central office experience rated the latter factor more important than did others. This finding may serve to support the opinions of interview respondents who feel that principals who become directors without being in central office are not sufficiently prepared for the directorship. A director's ability to recognize the value of organizational "fit" is a characteristic which may be acquired largely by serving in a central office position.

The analysis of career patterns reveals a strong tendency toward localism (Peterson, 1984; Stanfield, 1982), yet most administrators tend to believe that geographic mobility enhances career prospects (Fuqua, 1983; Jackson, 1981; Johnson, 1979). The findings of this study revealed that directors in Saskatchewan tend to be mobile; most gained considerable experience in school divisions other than in their current one. In addition, well over one half of the directors had served education in another province or country. This is somewhat inconsistent with the findings of a study by Knezevich (1971) which revealed that careers of superintendents in the United States tend to be "state bound."

The results of a study by Rosenbaum (1979) indicated that age is inversely related to mobility. The findings from this study support the Rosenbaum findings in that the directors who are over the age of 50 plan to remain in their current position until retirement.

As in the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) research, the directors of education in this study say the rewards of the job outweigh the costs. The findings of this study differ from those of Duignan (1980), who found that the superintendent is "a frustrated individual who is faced with an array of problems and crises" (p. 25). The major dilemmas for the superintendent identified in the Duignan study centered around office work such as balancing pace and quality of work behavior, dealing with current issues, and managing information systems. The major stressors identified in this study revolved around people problems, the lack of resources, and the nature of the role. The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) findings concur with the latter findings of this study--the nature of the job and the lack of resources--in that the former also identified stress "resulting from conflicting expectations as a result of their position" and from "access to resources" (pp. 130-131).

Professional isolation (Tagg, 1983) and role isolation (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987) were identified in the literature as being problem areas for school division administrators. These findings were supported to some degree by the results of this study in that various open-ended comments related to the satisfaction directors achieved from the professional contacts afforded through the League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents and from other contacts made at conferences and seminars which helped to reduce their feeling of isolation to some degree.

In the Ontario study of supervising officers (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987), satisfaction was found to come from being in a position to make things happen. The findings of this study substantiated this perspective; directors recognized the satisfaction they achieved from

having the opportunity to influence education.

The major factor that emerged from this study which caused directors both satisfaction and dissatisfaction had to do with working with people. Since the main role of directors consists of dealing with people (e.g., senior administrators, board members, teachers, parents, and students) in one way or another, interactions of this kind can be very rewarding but can also be very challenging and a source of problems.

The results of this study revealed the likelihood that in 9 years nearly all directorships will have changed due either to retirement or to career change. At the present time, over half of the directors (most of whom are over the age of 50) plan to continue in their present position until retirement. This suggests that mobility of directors within the province will be restricted to about one half of the total director positions. In addition, many of the positions in which directors plan to remain are large divisions employing 101 teachers or more. Consequently, there will be less director mobility in the immediate future because the inclination for directors to seek a larger directorship in order to actualize their desire for a professional challenge will be somewhat reduced. In changing directorships, most directors are influenced by attractive aspects rather than by undesirable characteristics of past positions. The major reason directors leave their current position is the need for a professional challenge.

In Saskatchewan, the most common career pattern leads from a principalship to a directorship without an intermediate central office position. However, the Cunningham and Hentges (1982) study found that in the United States the percentage of superintendents who came to their office through the teacher-principal route had declined, whereas the

percentage of those who followed the teacher-principal-central office route had increased. This latter route was found to be similar to the second most common pattern among Saskatchewan directors. The findings suggest that in Saskatchewan there may be a return to the principal-director pattern, since both those under age 45 and those over age 50 followed this route. The interview data revealed some concern in regard to the persistence of this pattern, as it was felt that a central office position is a very necessary step in preparation for a directorship. A possible reason for the continuation of this pattern, as cited by several regional directors, has to do with the desire on the part of school boards to hire less expensive directors, which would contribute to the decision to hire principals.

Previous studies also revealed considerable horizontal or lateral movement cross the same or similar positions in different locations (Miklos, 1988, p. 60). These findings are consistent with those of this study in that there was considerable lateral movement by directors at all stages of their career from teacher to director. A further finding was that directors frequently change directorships within the province.

Various studies in regard to differing career patterns for male and female superintendents have been conducted. Pitner (1981) found that women travel the traditional career route from teacher to principal to central office to superintendent, and Maienza (1986) found that women superintendents were older and had more experience than their male counterparts. Although findings from this study concur with the above-mentioned findings, it must be noted that the percentage of female directors in this study was extremely low (3.7%), and therefore generalizations of this nature are hardly meaningful.

Administrative positions in education, whether they be at the school or division level, have traditionally been occupied by men. Since the majority of teachers are women, for the top managerial positions to be occupied by men seems incongruent. "In Ontario, 1982 figures show that . . . only 25 (4.2%) [of supervisory officers] were women" (Fullan, Park, & Williams, 1987, p. 222). The situation in the United States is similar, with recent figures showing women holding approximately one to two percent of the superintendencies (Linn & Hall, 1986). In Saskatchewan in 1988, 16 women (9.30%) were in senior administrative positions: director (2), assistant director (6), superintendent (4), and assistant superintendent (2) (Directory, Saskatchewan League of Educational Administrators, Directors, and Superintendents, 1988-89, pp. 1-16). Although the number of women directors of education is very low, the overall percentage of women senior administrators in Saskatchewan is higher than in Ontario or the United States. Canadian statistics even suggest a decline in the proportion of women in school administrative positions (Statistics Canada, 1984, pp. 1-3).

The literature has attempted to explain the failure of women to gain administrative positions in terms of socialization and sex role stereotyping (Adkinson, 1981; Ester, 1975; Hennig & Jardim, 1977), discrimination (Abella, 1985; Kanter, 1977), the structural characteristics of power (Kanter, 1977; McBroom, 1986; Wolman & Frank, 1975), the historical nature of teaching (Prentice, 1983; Strober & Tyack, 1980), career paths (Linn & Hall, 1986; Lyman & Speizer, 1980; Pfiffner, 1979), attitudes towards work (Porat, 1985; Woo, 1985), and conflict of roles (Atkinson, 1981; McDade & Drake, 1982).

The Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study concludes that there is

some evidence to suggest that women are moving increasingly into the ranks of educational administration, but the size of the shift is not dramatic. The number of women senior administrators indicates that women may be moving into these ranks in Saskatchewan. Although until the time of this study only two women were serving as chief executive officers, that 14 women were in senior administrative positions that have the potential for promotion suggests there is a basis for change. There is reason to speculate about possible changes lying ahead: potential women leaders have been developing their leadership skills; there are presently more women in junior administrative positions (vice-principals, principals), which is aiding in increasing the candidate pool; affirmative action programs are increasing, which will ultimately increase sensitivity in the hiring practices; and, due to the number of anticipated retirements in the next 10 years, the number of promotional opportunities will increase.

## Conclusions

The results of the study provide a basis for formulating a number of conclusions about the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors of education in Saskatchewan.

1. Directors of education have varied academic backgrounds and formal preparation. Most had engaged in studies beyond the Bachelor's level at the time of first appointment, but only slightly more than half held Master's degrees. Nearly all had taken at least some courses in educational administration when first appointed, and some had specialized in this area beyond the Master's level. They considered their membership in professional associations and participation in

professional development activities as relevant preparation for a directorship.

2. The professional experience backgrounds of directors are also highly varied. Although all had served as teachers, the specific administrative positions held at school and division levels--as well as the experience in these positions--vary considerably from person to person. Statistical averages give some indication of tendencies but mask the variety which is present in the characteristics of directors of education.
3. In spite of the variations in academic and professional backgrounds, the majority of careers fall into four distinctive patterns of positions. Entry to the directorship is primarily either from a principalship or central office position. The most common single career pattern for directors includes positions as teacher (including vice-principal), principal, and director; however, the majority of directors have experience in a central office position.
4. Directors of education acquire most of their professional experience in divisions other than the one in which they are currently employed. In other words, school boards tend to select "outsiders" when making appointments to a directorship.
5. Although the guidance and encouragement of mentors and colleagues is a significant factor in the decision to pursue an administrative career, directors attach more importance to self-assessment of their abilities and confidence in those abilities as a result of formal studies. More distant sources of influence such as early opportunities for leadership are not considered to be highly important.

6. The most important factors in the decision to pursue a directorship career are the challenge of the job and the opportunity to influence educational policy. Encouragement of others and successful work experience also give aspirants the confidence to apply for a directorship position.
7. Newspaper advertisements are the major means for creating an awareness of vacant directorships. Prospective candidates tend to make various forms of casual inquiries about the position before submitting a formal application.
8. The involvement of the regional director of education serves to regularize the process and to inject an important measure of expertise which members of school boards do not normally possess. This expertise tends to compensate for the absence of explicit policies regarding the selection of a director.
9. The major criteria in determining which applicants are selected for interviews relate to basic administrative and educational competence. At the interview attention shifts to interpersonal relations and managerial skills. The major criterion in selecting the successful candidate relates to the perceived compatibility between the applicant and board members.
10. Interpersonal relationships--working with others--are the source of the most satisfactions as well as of the greatest frustrations for directors. Consequently, human relations skills are important to experiencing satisfaction and fulfilment in a directorship.
11. When changing positions, directors are influenced more by attractive aspects of the new directorship--such as professional challenge--than by undesirable characteristics of the former

position. As a consequence, certain school divisions are likely to be in more favorable circumstances than others when recruiting a director.

12. Retirements and career changes will result in numerous vacant directorships in the next few years in Saskatchewan. This situation will offer new opportunities for aspiring directors and new challenges for school boards who will be selecting educational leaders.

Numerous additional specific conclusions are implicit in the summary of the findings of the study.

## Implications

The findings and conclusions of this study have implications for theory, for the practice of educational administration, and for further research.

### Implications for Theory

This study generally supports Kanter's (1977) theory of status attainment which suggests that access to top-level positions in public education, such as the directorship, is influenced by an interaction of individual characteristics or actions and organizational structures. The results of this study are congruent with Kanter's theory in that a career starts early in life and continues throughout a person's work history, that preparation for positions and the degree of fulfillment help to determine one's career path, and that organizational structures such as recruitment and selection procedures determine the direction of a person's career. In addition, the results of this study support

theorizing that persons who are selected for superintendencies are likely to evidence in their backgrounds specialized academic training, extraordinary visibility, specific work experience, and strong alliances in their careers. Socialization, personal characteristics, preparation, and self-fulfillment of an individual, coupled with various organizational structures and opportunities, serve to shape the career of a director of education.

Some differences in regard to previously established theories were noted in this study of Saskatchewan directors of education. The finding from the Fullan, Park, and Williams (1987) study in regard to work experiences being more important than formal training in preparing for a directorship was not supported by this study; the findings in studies by Socolow (1978) and Vancil (1978) in regard to administrators coming from traditional pools of candidates also was not supported--nor was the tendency toward localism (Peterson, 1984; Stanfield, 1982).

Theorizing about administrative careers may have to take into account the possibility of significant variations in contextual factors such as legal requirements, the structure of the educational system, history, and culture which might make theories or hypotheses applicable in one setting but inapplicable in others. Therefore, theory development needs to be more sensitive to the specific context particularly in regard to variations across provinces and countries.

The exploratory analysis which was based on the different typologies suggests that further theoretical development could be carried out in those areas. To some extent, the typologies reflect preliminary attempts at theory development in relation to administrative careers.

In addition, socialization has been addressed through empirical

research, but theorizing in this area is limited. Theory building in this area would be of value in advancing research programs.

## Implications for Research

A first implication for research is that there is a need to examine more closely the selection process for director of education positions. Further studies could be conducted through observations of actual selection processes and in-depth interviews with board members in order to ascertain exactly how decisions of this nature are made.

There is also a need for further studies that explore the careers of directors of education. Interviews would allow the researcher to probe the values, motives, and significant events in the careers of administrators. Studies of the careers of educators who aspired to directorships but were unsuccessful in competing for the position would also be informative.

This study could serve as a springboard for future researchers who are interested in studying preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of directors/superintendents. Similar research in other provinces would provide the basis for comparisons with the conclusions reached in this study.

Although recruitment and selection processes may be studied in their own right, these processes would take on added significance if they could be linked to the quality of educational leadership. Consequently, future research could focus more on the characteristics and conditions for effective educational leadership in school jurisdictions. This has two dimensions: the first relates to desired future directions for education in Saskatchewan; the second relates to the qualities of administrators

who can provide the desired leadership. Research could then focus on the processes which contribute to the preparation and selection of suitable candidates for leadership positions. Although challenging both conceptually and methodologically, this line of research is required in order to move to a stage beyond the description of existing practices.

The combination of qualitative and quantitative techniques in this study was found to be productive and is recommended for subsequent inquiry in various domains of educational research. The sequential strategy of a survey followed by a specific focus on unresolved questions and issues may be of merit in certain circumstances.

## Implications for Practice

The findings of this study have implications for aspiring directors--teachers, principals, and central office personnel--particularly for their career paths and the preparation necessary for assuming the responsibilities of a directorship. Additional implications relate to the selection practices of school boards as well as to the roles of regional directors and of directors.

Career paths. A major implication for aspiring directors relates to the finding which tends to indicate a return to a former career path to the directorship: teacher (including vice-principal)-principal-director. Although candidates are moving into directorships without central office experience, both the interview data and questionnaire data indicate this is a valuable step in preparation for the position of director of education. The implication for aspiring directors is that if they desire to improve education and to be successful, consideration should be given to a career path which includes a central office position. The

additional stage of administrative experience may also prove to be significant in terms of future career opportunities.

Selection criteria. Boards should be aware that the position of director as educational leader is a very important one and that various factors must be taken into account in selecting a director. In order for the most capable directors to be hired, school boards should carefully evaluate their current practices, particularly the selection criteria which are used. Regional directors expressed concern that perhaps the trend for boards to hire principals is related to salary considerations. In most cases, principals newly appointed to a directorship receive a lower salary than, for instance, a candidate with central office or previous director experience. The major concern is whether or not the best people are being hired as directors. Boards should conscientiously weigh the value of selecting the most capable educational leader against the pressure to exercise financial restraint.

Role of regional directors. Regional directors of education have a seemingly high profile in the province. They are invited to serve on the selection process for most director positions and appear to be respected by both directors and board members. There is no doubt that they have considerable expertise in regard to the selection of directors; however, they have to be very circumspect in defining their role. On the one hand, they provide an important service to the boards in the selection process. On the other hand, they also fulfill the role of sanctioning officer for the Department of Education. Consequently, they are in a very tenuous position; to sway one way or the other would be unwise. There must be a continual effort to maintain a fragile balance. Perhaps professional development for regional directors in clarifying their role

and establishing a measure of consistency throughout the province would be of value.

Role of director. Generally, directors leave their directorship because they want a professional challenge, not because of their relations with the board. However, in cases where directors and board members are having problems, the major reason appears to be the reluctance of boards to permit the director to perform the role of chief executive officer. Clarifying this matter prior to the appointment of a director would be advantageous to both parties.

Recruitment of women directors. There are relatively few women educators in senior administrative positions in Saskatchewan. Since there are numberous barriers which restrict access of women to directorships, they should be encouraged through mentoring and affirmative action programs to seek positions of this nature.

The impending director turnover in Saskatchewan has direct implications for the many stakeholders in education. Aspiring directors need to position themselves and prepare for the many available directorships; taxpayers of the province should try to elect board members who will be capable of selecting the most capable educational leaders for the 1990s; and the Department of Education, the Saskatchewan School Trustees' Association, the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation, and the universities should examine closely their involvement in the process of director preparation and selection in order to ensure that practices are truly responding to educational needs.

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# Appendix A

## Questionnaire for Directors of Education

**Preparation, Recruitment, Selection and Career Patterns**

**of Directors of Education**

The purpose of this questionnaire is to obtain information with respect to the preparation, recruitment, selection and career patterns of Directors of Education in Saskatchewan.

Please answer all of the questions. If you wish to comment on any questions or qualify your answers, feel free to use the space in the margins or attach an additional sheet of paper. Your comments will be read and taken into account.

Respondents will remain anonymous, and confidentiality of responses is assured.

Please return the completed questionnaire and the postcard as soon as possible, preferably by February 6, 1989, to:

Director of Education Study
Department of Educational Administration
University of Alberta
7-104 Education Building North
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2G5

Thank you for your help.

Paulette Van der Linde
Researcher

For the purpose of this questionnaire, please note the use of the following terms:

**Director of Education** is the Chief Executive Officer of a school division. If you have served in this capacity under a different title, please relate that title to Director of Education.

**School District, School Division, School Jurisdiction** are used interchangeably.

Office Use Only

1. Please indicate (✓) the following: ___1 (1-3)

   a. your age: 4

   (1) __ under 35
   (2) __ 35-39
   (3) __ 40-44
   (4) __ 45-49
   (5) __ 50-54
   (6) __ 55-64
   (7) __ 65+

   b. your sex: 5

   (1) __ male
   (2) __ female

2. In regard to your current position, please indicate (✓):

   a. whether your teacher/student population is in a 6

   (1) __ city
   (2) __ rural area

   b. the number of teachers presently employed in your district: 7

   (1) __ fewer than 51
   (2) __ 51-100
   (3) __ 101-200
   (4) __ 201-500
   (5) __ 501-1,000
   (6) __ 1,001 or more

c. the position (or equivalent) you held immediately prior to your current one:

(1) __ another Director of Education position
(2) __ Assistant Director of Education
(3) __ Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent
(4) __ a Central Office position other than those identified above
(5) __ Principal
(6) __ Assistant Principal or Vice-Principal
(7) __ other (please specify) _____

_____ 8

d. the location in which you held the position identified in 2(c):

(1) __ in your present school jurisdiction
(2) __ in another school jurisdiction in Saskatchewan
(3) __ in a school jurisdiction in another province
(4) __ in a school jurisdiction outside Canada
(5) __ other (please specify) _____

_____ 9

3. In column A, please indicate (✓) the positions held; in column B, please give your age at entry to the respective positions.

| A Positions | | B Age at Entry | |
|---|---|---|---|
| __ | Director of Education | ____ | 10-12 |
| __ | Assistant Director of Education | ____ | 13-15 |
| __ | Superintendent | ____ | 16-18 |
| __ | Assistant Superintendent | ____ | 19-21 |
| __ | Central Office Administrator (other than above) | ____ | 22-24 |
| __ | Principal | ____ | 25-27 |
| __ | Vice/Assistant Principal | ____ | 28-30 |
| __ | Teacher | ____ | 31-33 |

4. At the time of your <u>first</u> appointment as Director of Education:

   a. please indicate (✓) the degrees or diplomas held:

   (1) __ B.Ed.
   (2) __ B.A., B.Sc., etc.
   (3) __ Diploma in Education
   (4) __ Master's in Education
   (5) __ Master's other than in Education
   (6) __ Ph.D. or Ed.D.

   34-39

   b. please indicate (✓) if you had completed any university credit courses beyond a bachelor's level:

   (1) __ Yes (2) __ No

   40

   If yes, please identify (✓) the areas to which they apply:

   __ administration or supervision 41
   __ guidance and counselling 42
   __ curriculum studies 43
   __ educational foundations 44
   __ other educational area 45
   __ discipline other than education 46

   c. please indicate (✓) the extent of your formal study/preparation in educational administration or supervision (check <u>one</u> of the following):

   (1) __ courses at a pre-master's or diploma level
   (2) __ some courses on a master's program, but specialization in another area
   (3) __ specialization in educational administration or supervision on a master's program
   (4) __ studies beyond the master's level
   (5) __ none of the above

   47

   d. Identify other professional development activities in which you participated and which you consider to be relevant to your preparation for the position of Director of Education.

   _____ 48-57

   _____

   _____

   _____

   _____

2
1-3
4-5

5. a. Please indicate the total number of years (to the nearest year) of professional service to education: ____ years.

b. In the chart below, please indicate how these years of service are distributed across positions and locations by entering the number of years in the appropriate cells.

| | Years in This District | Years in Other Districts in Saskatchewan | Years in Another Province | Years in Another Country | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| (1) Director of Education (include present position) | | | | | 6-13 |
| (2) Assistant Director of Education | | | | | 14-21 |
| (3) Superintendent or Assistant Superintendent | | | | | 22-29 |
| (4) Central Office position other than those in 1, 2, or 3 | | | | | 30-37 |
| (5) Principal, with or without teaching responsibilities | | | | | 38-45 |
| (6) Vice/Assistant Principal, with or without teaching responsibilities | | | | | 46-53 |
| (7) Secondary teacher (approximately Grades 9-12) | | | | | 54-61 |
| (8) Elementary teacher (approximately Grades K-8) | | | | | 62-69 |
| (9) Other (please specify) | | | | | |

Please check to ensure that the total of the entries equals the total number of years of professional service.

6. Kindly indicate the total number of school districts/jurisdictions in which you rendered the service accounted for in #5: ___ 70-71

7. Please circle a response for each to indicate the extent of your involvement in various activities prior to your first appointment as Director of Education. (Be sure to include involvement(s) in the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation.)

| | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. number of educational associations in which you held memberships | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 72 |
| b. number of associations outside the field of education in which you held memberships | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 73 |
| c. number of times you served as the president of an association (educational or other) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 74 |
| d. number of boards/commissions you served on | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 75 |
| e. number of provincial/national offices you held (educational or other) | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 76 |
| f. number of conventions/ committees you chaired | 0 | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5+ | 77 |

1-3 3

8. Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to pursue an administrative career. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. encouragement of family/parents | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| b. guidance of mentors | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| c. support of a network of professional colleagues | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| d. encouragement of peers | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| e. opportunities for leadership development as a youth in school | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| f. opportunities for leadership development in your teaching career | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| g. confidence in ability as a result of formal studies | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 10 |
| h. involvement in clubs/ associations outside the field of education | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 11 |
| i. involvement in educational associations | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 12 |
| j. your assessment of your own abilities relative to those of others in the field of education | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 13 |
| k. other (please specify) _____ | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 14 |

9. Please rate the importance you attach to the following factors in making your decision to seek the position of Director of Education. Circle a response for each:

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. challenge of the job | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 15 |
| b. opportunity to influence educational policy | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 16 |
| c. prestige/status | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 17 |
| d. employment conditions (salary, benefits, etc.) | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 18 |
| e. career progress | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| f. other (please specify) | | | | | | |
| _____ | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 |

10. Briefly outline an important event(s) in your career which you consider to have been a major factor in encouraging you to become a Director of Education:

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. Indicate how you first became aware that your current position was available. Please check (✓) one response.

(1) ____ newspaper advertisement 21
(2) ____ district newsletter
(3) ____ advertisement in a professional magazine
(4) ____ former Director of Education
(5) ____ personal inquiry
(6) ____ network of professional colleagues
(7) ____ notification from the school district with regard to an application already on file
(8) ____ was invited to apply
(9) ____ other (please specify) _____

12. Below are some steps which you may have taken at the time you were considering applying for your <u>first</u> Director of Education position. Please indicate (✓) the ones which apply:

Casual inquiries about:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | characteristics of the school division | 22 |
| ___ | preferred management style of the Director of Education | 23 |
| ___ | procedures and characteristics of the board | 24 |
| ___ | administrative hiring practices | 25 |
| ___ | employment conditions (salary, benefits, etc.) | 26 |
| ___ | community as a place to live | 27 |
| ___ | other (please specify) _____ | 28 |

Informal discussions with:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | staff members of L.E.A.D.S. | 29 |
| ___ | staff members of S.S.T.A. | 30 |
| ___ | the former Director of Education | 31 |
| ___ | board member(s) | 32 |
| ___ | the Regional Director | 33 |
| ___ | mentors/colleagues | 34 |
| ___ | acquaintances living in the district | 35 |
| ___ | other (please specify) _____ | 36 |

Informal visits to:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | schools/towns in the district | 37 |
| ___ | site of the Director of Education office | 38 |

13. To the best of your knowledge, please indicate (✓) the number of elements which were present in the selection process which was conducted for your <u>first</u> Director of Education position:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | a policy of selection procedures was in place | 39 |
| ___ | the position was advertised provincially | 40 |
| ___ | the position was advertised nationally | 41 |
| ___ | a search committee was established | 42 |
| ___ | your references were checked | 43 |
| ___ | a short-list was established | 44 |
| ___ | an interview took place | 45 |
| ___ | a second/follow-up interview was held | 46 |

14. If an interview took place, kindly indicate (✓) who served on the first interview panel:

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| ___ | the former Director of Education | 47 |
| ___ | all board members | 48 |
| ___ | some board members | 49 |
| ___ | principal representatives | 50 |
| ___ | Central Office representatives | 51 |
| ___ | teacher representatives | 52 |
| ___ | parent representatives | 53 |
| ___ | other (please specify) _____ | 54 |

_____

15. Please indicate the importance you attach to the following characteristics of applicants as criteria in the selection process for your first position of Director of Education. (Circle a response for each.)

| | | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| a. | general professional standing | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 55 |
| b. | educational/administrative skills, competencies, and knowledge | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 56 |
| c. | professional experience in the district | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 57 |
| d. | educational qualifications | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 58 |
| e. | calibre of references | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 59 |
| f. | clarity of professional goals | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 60 |
| g. | compatibility with the social and educational context | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 61 |
| h. | successful experience in other school districts | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 62 |
| i. | potential to address specific problem(s) which required solution | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 63 |
| j. | political sensitivity/skills | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 64 |
| k. | readiness to initiate change | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 65 |
| l. | readiness to support established policies | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 66 |
| m. | seniority | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 67 |
| n. | other (please specify) _____ | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 68 |

16. If you have previously served in the capacity of Director of Education (or equivalent), please respond to the following section by indicating in A, how important the following factors were in leaving your last position; and in B, how important the following factors were in attracting you to your current position.

___4
1-3

| | Highly Important | | Moderately Important | | Not Very Important | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **A. Leaving last position:** | | | | | | |
| a. limited career opportunities | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 4 |
| b. employment considerations | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 5 |
| c. limited professional challenge | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 6 |
| d. relationship with the board | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 7 |
| e. nature of the school district | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 8 |
| f. relationship with the professional staff | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 9 |
| g. community attractiveness | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 10 |
| h. personal/family reasons | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 11 |
| i. other _____ | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 12 |
| **B. Attraction to current position:** | | | | | | |
| a. career advancement | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 13 |
| b. attractiveness of the community | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 14 |
| c. opportunity to work in a larger jurisdiction | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 15 |
| d. employment considerations | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 16 |
| e. board relations and policies | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 17 |
| f. professional challenge | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 18 |
| g. philosophy of the board | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 19 |
| h. nature of the school district | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 20 |
| i. personal/family reasons | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 21 |
| j. other _____ | 5 | 4 | 3 | 2 | 1 | 22 |

17. Please outline various aspects of the position of Director of Education which you find to be:

(a) most satisfying or self-fulfilling:

_____ 23-28

_____

_____

_____

(b) most frustrating or stressful:

_____ 29-34

_____

_____

_____

18. Please indicate your possible future plans by checking (✓) one of the following:

(1) ____ another position as Director of Education 35
(2) ____ continue in this position until retirement
(3) ____ university teaching position
(4) ____ return to a school district as a teacher or school administrator
(5) ____ position outside the field of education
(6) ____ other (please specify) _____

_____

19. Kindly estimate in how many years you are likely to leave the position of Director of Education, either due to retirement or a career change. Check (✓) one response.

(1) ____ within 1 year (4) ____ 6-7 years 36
(2) ____ 2-3 years (5) ____ 8-9 years
(3) ____ 4-5 years (6) ____ 10 years or later

Thank you very much for completing this questionnaire!

# Appendix B

## Interviews of Recently Appointed Directors, Board Chairpersons, and Regional Directors

## Recently Appointed Director

1. (a) How did you become aware that the position was open?

   (b) Did you decide to apply immediately, or did you have to think about the decision? What factors did you take into account in considering this career opportunity?

   (c) Did you engage in any "explorations," or did you seek background information about the position? If so, how did you go about obtaining that information?

2. (a) What information did the board request from you? What documents and supporting materials did you include in your application?

   (b) Tell me about the application process. How did you actually make application? What was the nature of the response from the board? Who responded and how?

3. Let's focus on your contacts with the board or the selection committee.

   (a) How was your interview(s) arranged?

   (b) How did you prepare yourself for the interview(s)? Who participated in the interview(s)?

4. (a) What kinds of questions were asked in the interview(s)? Who asked the questions?

   (b) In general, describe how the process unfolded. Also, how did you feel about the interview(s) and about your performance?

5. On the basis of the interview(s) and the information you were asked to provide, what criteria do you think the board used in assessing applicants for the position? Did there seem to be agreement among board members on the criteria? Did you sense any shifts in emphasis on the criteria?

6. What is your impression of the reasons why you were selected? What were the determining factors which led to the board selecting you over other applicants? Why do you think the board considered you to be the best person for the position?
7. Could you reflect on the process used by the board, please? What aspects were handled particularly well? What aspects might have been handled better? What advice would you give to the board regarding the process to be used in selecting your successor?
8. As a result of your experience in the selection process associated with this position, what would you do differently; what would you do the same if you were to apply for another director of education position?
9. Do you have any additional comments?

## Board Chairperson

1. (a) Could you please sketch for me some background for the selection and appointment of the current director. Did you have advanced warning that you would be making an appointment? Under what circumstances did the previous director leave?

   (b) What was the attitude of the board to the opportunity to select a new director?

2. (a) What preparations did the board make for the decision? Was a committee established? Did you seek any advice or consultant services?

   (b) What was the nature of discussions about the position and the decision?

3. (a) What documents and information did you ask applicants to provide? Did you seek additional information about applicants from other sources? If so, how helpful was this information?

   (b) What procedures did you follow in advertising the position, receiving applications, and establishing a short-list of applicants?

4. (a) What kind of director was the board searching for?

   (b) What criteria/characteristics were considered to be important by the board? Were these criteria/characteristics defined in a formal way--written out, for example? Was there agreement on these criteria/characteristics?

5. (a) How did you go about determining which of the applicants was best suited for the position? Did you conduct interviews? If so, how important were the interviews in making the decision?

   (b) What did you try to find out through the interviews?

6. What were the characteristics of the successful candidate which led to his selection? What was different about this person? Why was he judged to be the best person for the position?
7. Tell me something about the procedures which were followed in arriving at a decision.
   (a) Did a committee prepare initial recommendations, or was the question discussed by the full board?
   (b) What was the nature of the deliberations?
   (c) How was the final decision made?
8. (a) Please reflect on the procedures which <u>you</u> followed in finding and appointing a new director.
   (b) What did the board do particularly well? What changes/improvements would you consider for the next time you make such a decision?
9. (a) Do you have any advice to offer applicants for a directorship?
   (b) How should they prepare themselves? How should they conduct themselves during the process to enhance the probability of being selected?
10. Do you have any additional comments?

## Regional Director

1. (a) Although our conversation will focus on the selection and appointment of (specific director), could you please sketch for me the general nature of your involvement in selection processes?

   (b) Was your involvement in the selection of (specific director) generally consistent with that in other appointments, or were there some unique features in that case?

2. (a) At what stages did you become involved in the process?

   (b) What action was taken by the board prior to your involvement?

   (c) What expectations did the board hold for you? What did they expect you to contribute?

3. Please sketch for me the general procedures followed by the board in recruiting and selecting a director. How was the position advertised? How did the board solicit and review applications?

4. (a) What procedures did the board follow in obtaining information on the applicants?

   (b) What was in the applicant's file?

   (c) Did the board obtain information on the applicants which did not become part of the applicants' files? If so, how significant was that information?

5. (a) In your view, how was a short-list established? What criteria were applied in establishing a short-list?

   (b) What kind of person was the board searching for, and why that kind of person? How explicit were the criteria? Was there agreement on the criteria?

(c) Do you think there were factors important to the board which were not made explicit or discussed in public? If so, why were these important?

6. Let's focus on the final stages of the selection process.
   (a) How did the board go about getting more information about short-listed candidates? Were more meetings/interviews scheduled?
   (b) If so, who participated in these interviews? What kinds of questions were asked? Who asked the most significant questions?
7. (a) How did the board approach the task of making the final decision? Did a committee make a recommendation, or was the matter discussed by the full board?
   (b) Do you have any impressions of the details of the procedures associated with reaching a decision?
8. In your view, what were the determining factors in the selection of (specific director) for the position? Why was he considered to be the "right" person for the position?
9. Please reflect on the process followed in this decision.
   (a) What aspects did the board handle particularly well? What aspects might have been handled better?
   (b) What advice would you give this or another board about procedures to follow in order to enhance the prospects of making a good decision?
10. Please reflect on the applicants for this position and their participation in the process.

(a) What aspects did they handle well? What might they have done better?

(b) What advice would you give to those who wish to apply for a directorship or change positions?

11. Do you have any additional comments?

# Appendix C

## Correspondence

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241



October 17,1988

Dear Superintendent,

My purpose in writing is to ask for your assistance with the development of a questionnaire which I plan to use in collecting data for my doctoral thesis. Specifically, I would be very grateful if you could take time from your busy schedule to complete the enclosed copy of the questionnaire.

As you will note, my thesis topic relates to the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of school superintendents. I have attempted to design the questionnaire so that the demand on the respondent's time is reasonable. Perhaps this feature, together with the opportunity for you to reflect on your career, will enable you to give favorable consideration to the request.

In addition to completing the questionnaire, please make marginal notes whenever you feel that either a question or the format could be improved. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for returning the completed questionnaire.

Please accept my sincere thnks for considering this request. Your cooperation will help me to move to the next stage of my research project.

I shall look forward to the possibility of receiving the completed questionnaire in the near future. Thank you again!

Yours sincerely,

Paulette Van der LInde

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241



December 2, 1988

Dear Superintendent,

Thank you so very much for your assistance with the development of my questionnaire with regard to the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of school superintendents. Your conscientious completion of the questionnaire, along with your insightful comments and superb response rate (92%), was most encouraging and has made it possible for me to continue my doctoral research.

Thank you again!

Yours sincerely,

Paulette Van der Linde

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

**Department of Educational Administration**
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241



January 23, 1989

Dear Director of Education:

My purpose in writing is to ask for your assistance with a research project which I am conducting for my doctoral thesis. Specifically, I would be very grateful if you would take time from your busy schedule to complete the enclosed questionnaire.

As you will note, my thesis topic relates to the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of Directors of Education. All Directors of Education in Saskatchewan are being asked to give their opinions. I have attempted to design the questionnaire so that the demands on the respondent's time are reasonable. Perhaps this feature, together with the opportunity for you to reflect on your career, will enable you to give favorable consideration to this request.

You may be assured of complete confidentiality. A stamped, self-addressed envelope is enclosed for your convenience in returning the completed questionnaire. In addition, a postcard is attached, which you are asked to return to me under separate cover at the time of the completion of the questionnaire. This will serve as an indicator that you have completed and returned the questionnaire.

Please accept my sincere thanks for considering this request. I shall look forward to receiving the completed questionnaire in the near future. Thank you again!

Yours sincerely,

Paulette Van der Linde
Researcher

PVdL/lp
Encls.

The return of this postcard indicates that

_____

(print your name)

has completed and returned the

Director of Education questionnaire.

University of Alberta
Edmonton
Canada T6G 2G5

Department of Educational Administration
Faculty of Education
7-104 Education Building North, Telephone (403) 432-5241



February 17, 1989

Dear _____:

Recently I sent you a questionnaire about the preparation, recruitment, selection, and career patterns of Saskatchewan Directors of Education. As of today, I have not received your response.

I am writing to you again because of the importance of each individual questionnaire for my research. In order for this study to be truly representative of the opinions of Saskatchewan Directors of Education, I need a response from each person who received a questionnaire. Accordingly, I would be very grateful if you could take time from your busy schedule to complete the questionnaire within the next few days.

In the event that you did not receive a questionnaire, or that it has been misplaced, please call me collect at your earliest convenience (403-433-6084), and I will mail one to you.

Yours sincerely,

Paulette Van der Linde
Researcher

#907 - 11135 - 83 Avenue
Edmonton, Alberta
T6G 2C6

June 28, 1989

[Regional Director, Director, or Board Chairperson]

Dear [ ]:

Enclosed please find a copy of the transcript of our interview, which took place several weeks ago. The information you presented me has proven to be very valuable in my research.

Kindly peruse the transcript, and if you detect any major problem in regard to errors that have been made, call me collect ([403] 433-6084) in order that I can make the necessary adjustments. Please be assured that confidentiality and anonymity are guaranteed in this doctoral study.

May I take this opportunity to thank you once again for your cooperation in regard to this interview. I look forward to perhaps seeing you again in the future.

Sincerely yours,

Paulette van der Linde

PvdL/lp
Encl.