

MOTIVATING FACTORS IN APPLYING FOR THE SUPERINTENDENCY

A Dissertation by

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ABSTRACT

A standard quantitative design study employing three surveys was used to identify motivating factors leading district level licensed personnel to choose whether or not to apply for the superintendency. Motivational theory, including the subcategories of content, process and environment, served as the framework for identifying features of district level positions that are, for qualified individuals, motivating or not motivating in their decision to apply for district level administration including the superintendency. A three-part survey was given to examine three areas of motivation: a) What motivates a person to become a superintendent; b) What does the person like about the superintendency; c) What are the challenges of the position. Data were analyzed using ANOVA and a MANOVA. Results indicated that there were no differences between superintendents and non-superintendents for the motivation for the job. Data showed gender differences suggesting that females like the position better than males. There was also a three-way interaction for position, gender and district size. Challenges were divided into four subcategories, with significant differences between superintendents and non-superintendents on organizational challenges and student-related challenges. Implications and further study are discussed.

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CHAPTER 1

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The importance of the superintendent's leadership cannot be underestimated when it comes to student achievement (Water & Marzano, 2006). In school districts, superintendents and other district level administrators play a unique and critical role as the connecting link between schools and communities that have elected and are represented by the school board. Research (e.g. Water, 2006) has shown that superintendents with longer tenures tend to have a greater impact on student achievement. Nationally, however, the number of applicants for the superintendency and other district level administrator positions continues to drop (Fultz, 2006; Glass & Franceschini, 2007). The number of licensed personnel who have achieved their district level license in Kansas, the state in which this study will be conducted, is decreasing (Fultz, 2006). Over half the superintendents in the nation and in Kansas will reach retirement age in the next five years (Fultz, 2006; Glass & Franceschini, 2007). As the pool of candidates decreases, it will be important for Boards of Education to understand the motivations of those holding the district level license and why they choose to apply or not apply for the superintendent position.

Background of the Study

Historically, superintendents begin their careers as teachers and are promoted through the ranks. Nationally, Glass (2006) found that whereas most superintendents came from either the principal or assistant superintendent position, there were a significant number that jumped to the superintendent position from either a teacher or assistant principal position. The state of Kansas does not keep statistics on positions held just before becoming a superintendent. It is a general assumption, as a result of the licensing requirements for the state of Kansas, that superintendents have been licensed teachers before becoming superintendents.

The Superintendency in Kansas

In the State of Kansas, public schools provide a level of leadership that begins with teacher leaders. Kansas requires a teaching license and allows teachers to be a department head on an official basis or lead a group of teachers on an unofficial basis. A building level administrator requires a building administrator or building leadership license. District level administrator requires a district level license or district level leadership which allows a person to become a district level administrator including a superintendent (Kansas State Department of Education, 2007). Most administrators progress from building level license onto district level licensing.

Many medium- to large-sized school districts have a district office with several district level administrators including the superintendent. For many school districts in Kansas, the district office is rather small consisting only of the superintendent. For this reason, district level license can mean either working as the only district level administrator (the superintendent) or, in a large district, it can mean working with a team of other district level administrators, including the superintendent. For this study, when the term district level administrator is used it refers to the superintendent unless otherwise stated.

Kansas' statistics show the number of teachers, building principals, and superintendents retained in their district are on a decline. Data collected between 2003 and 2009 show the number of applications for district level certification declining. Reasons both teachers and administrators gave for leaving the profession included pursuing a different profession, military service, moving out of state, retirement, and termination (Fultz, 2006).

The state of Kansas is also showing a decline in applications for building level and district level endorsements. Table 1 reports an examination of recent statistics provided by the Kansas State

Department of Education (Fultz, 2006) and shows the decreasing numbers of individuals applying for building level and district level endorsement.

Table 1

Numbers of Individuals Applying for Building Level and District Level Endorsements in Kansas

Year	Building Level	District Level
2003	366	113
2004	334	118
2005	349	67
2006	237	48
2007	498	82
2008	440	106
2009	342	64

State statutes authorize Boards of Education to hire superintendents (Kansas State Department of Education, 2007). In 2004, in response to criticism that standards for licensing educational personnel were not rigorous enough, the Kansas State Department of Education revamped its licensure system. Prior to 2004, qualified individuals pursuing a district level license only had to complete an approved graduate course of study (Education Week, 2001; Week Education, 2001)Beginning in 2005, however, in order to receive a conditional license, qualified individuals were required to complete an approved course of study and pass a standardized exam. Individuals with a Conditional license, who hold a district administrative position for a period of

one year and meet district requirements for mentoring, can then apply for a Professional license. A Conditional School Leadership license allows administrators to move to a professional license by showing verification of successful completion of a one-year supervised mentorship by a hosting school district. Under Kansas District Licensure regulations, a school board may hire superintendents under a Conditional School Leadership license (Kansas State Department of Education, 2009). The more stringent licensure process may account for some of the decline in the numbers of those pursuing a school leadership license in the state of Kansas.

Non-traditional Routes to the Superintendency

In a nationwide study, (Glass & Franceschini, 2007), only 103 out of 1,338 (less than 8%) of superintendents reported taking a non-traditional path to the superintendency. These non-traditional superintendents did not begin their careers in education. Many had careers in business or finance. Seventy-six of the 103 served districts of fewer than 3,000. Current examples of non-traditional superintendents serving large districts are those superintendents in Los Angeles, New York, Chicago, and Philadelphia. Nationally, Boards of Education are still reluctant to hire non-traditional candidates (Glass, 2004; Quin, 2007). Teachers believe the district should be led by someone who has the same background as they do (Quin, 2007).

Kansas' licensure regulations provide a restricted license option that allows Boards of Education to hire superintendents without a traditional education background. The Board of Education must meet specific criteria, including having exhausted efforts to find a superintendent with a conditional or professional license. Those hired under the restricted license provision must complete an approved program and then meet the same requirements for conditional licensure as all

other candidates. Kansas does not keep statistics concerning prior positions held to becoming a superintendent.

Overview of the Problem

The importance of the superintendency and other district level administrators in school districts is a widely embraced concept (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). The superintendent provides the link between the schools and the community by a Board of Education. This Board of Education is elected and represents the community. For Boards of Education who need to hire superintendents, success in finding a candidate may depend on several factors: For candidates, the opportunity to move up; the perceived needs of the district in specific skills; availability of applicants, and the motivation of district level licensed personnel in pursuing a superintendent position.

Although the State of Kansas is willing to make exceptions in areas of high need, in most cases a district level license is required to accept a superintendent position. In recent years, there has been a reduction in the number of district level license and applicants for district level administrative positions. Currently, there are 7,937 people licensed for building leadership and 1574 licensed in district leadership/administration in Kansas. Building leadership numbers are important because in the traditional educational leadership track building leadership licenses are preferred but not required before district licenses (Fultz, 2006). This is important because local school boards will be operating from a limited pool of applicants when searching for a superintendent or district level administrator.

There is a smaller pool of applicants in pursuing the district license and as a result fewer seeking the position for the superintendency in the State of Kansas (Fultz, 2006). District level licensed personnel make application decisions based on motivational factors, which are the district's

size and location and how much they enjoy their current position (Wolverton, 2004). For these reasons, it is important for local Boards of Education to understand the perspective of current superintendents and potential district level administrator candidates. Superintendent retention is an important indicator of increased student achievement especially for districts struggling to meet the demands of No Child Left Behind (Fusarelli, Cooper, & Carella, 2003; NCLB," 2001; Water & Marzano, 2006).

Motivational theories can help explain reasons district level licensed personnel choose to pursue or choose not to pursue a superintendent position. Research (Winter, Rinehart, Keedy, & Bjork, 2007; Wolverton, 2004; Wolverton & Macdonald, 2001) has shown that there are a number of motivational factors that influence a district-licensed person to pursue a superintendent position. Some of these motivators include a desire to have a greater impact on student achievement, personal commitment to American public education, and a desire to be in leadership (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). While the importance of motivational factors concerning the superintendency has been documented nationally (Glass & Franceschini, 2007; Wolverton & Macdonald, 2001), a gap remains for information concerning Kansas. There are no studies in Kansas' school districts and there have been no studies conducted by the State of Kansas concerning motivation in applying for district level administrator positions. There also does not appear to be any studies indicating which motivational factors are most critical for potential superintendent applicants in Kansas.

Findings from this study have the potential to assist local Boards of Educations to identify motivational factors in their own district that encourage personnel holding district level certifications to pursue superintendent positions. This study could help local Boards of Education to examine ways to positively impact the conditions in their district that will attract the kind of

potential district level administrator applicants they seek to fill the specific needs of their school district. Because local Boards of Education serve students' academic interests, attracting highly skilled district level administrator applicants will potentially have an impact on student achievement (Glass & Bjork, 2003).

Purpose of Study

The purpose of the study was to identify factors that district level licensed personnel in Kansas' school districts describe as motivating when choosing to apply or not to apply for the superintendency.

Overview of Methodology

A standard quantitative design study employing three surveys were used to identify motivating factors leading district level licensed personnel to choose whether or not to apply for the superintendency. Motivational theory (Dichter, 1964), including the subcategories of content (Maslow, 1943), process (Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964) and environment (Bowditch & Buono, 1997) served as the framework for identifying features of district level positions that are, for qualified individuals, motivating or not motivating in their decision to apply for district level administration including the superintendency.

Current district level administrators and other district level licensed personnel in the state of Kansas were surveyed to identify motivating factors in pursuing the superintendency. The State, with the help of individual school districts, identified personnel who are district level licensed but are not currently in a district level administrative position.

Organization of the Study

This dissertation follows the traditional 5-chapter organization. Chapter 1 provides an overview of the study, the statement of the problem and the study's purpose. Chapter 2 presents a review of relevant research, which includes the history of the superintendency, characteristics of superintendents, motivational theory, which provides the framework for the proposed study, and studies that examine motivations for those moving to the superintendency. Chapter 3 presents a detailed description of the study's design, the participants, the instruments for the study, and the procedures for gathering the data. Chapter 4 reveals the results of the surveys and the answers to the three research questions. Chapter 5 presents a discussion of the results including the limitations of the study and suggestions for future research.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The review of the literature will begin with the history of the superintendency and discuss characteristics such as changes in expectations, roles, gender, tenure, and the politics surrounding the superintendency. The theoretical frameworks used to study motivational factors in applying for the superintendency are grounded in the work of motivational theories. These theories provide the foundation for the study and report on the findings. Motivation theories may give insight for school boards and others when considering what motivates someone to become a superintendent. Chapter 2 will conclude with studies of motivation for those individuals moving to the superintendency.

History of the Superintendency

Historically, school governance is founded in federal and state constitutions along with statutes and laws. Federal law allows states to establish a school system based on the Tenth Amendment (Kowalski, 2003). There are no positions as superintendents at the federal level. Positions called superintendents serve as CEO's of states in their Department of Education and as CEO's for individual districts within the state. The first state superintendent was appointed in New York in 1812. By 1880, 24 states had established state boards of education (Butts, 1953). Although public schools were established as early as 1640, the superintendency was not created until the mid-1800s (Griffiths, 1966). The primary reason for creating the superintendent position was to assure uniformity in the curriculum and supervision of classroom instruction (Spring, 1994).

The State of Kansas has a CEO for public education that is called the State Education Commissioner instead of the State Superintendent. Qualifications for this position do not always require a professional educator license. By state law, District Boards of Education must hire

personnel licensed to be District level Superintendents for individual school districts. These district level Superintendents serve local districts and school boards as the CEO. The superintendent position has seen many changes in the past several years.

Characteristics of Superintendency

Much of the research that defines the superintendency describes the characteristics of the job. The following are those characteristics most often found in the literature: changes in expectations of the superintendent, roles of the superintendent, tenure, gender issues, politics and school district diversity.

Changes in Expectations

No Child Left Behind ("NCLB," 2001) has brought several changes to the superintendents' job description including higher accountability, mandatory standardized student testing, highly qualified teacher requirements and adequate yearly progress goals (Lin, Baker, & Betebenner, 2002). It seems to be more difficult for superintendents to stay ahead of all of the new requirements that face them. These things, along with the complexity and time demands of the job, make many talented people ponder about whether they want to take on the position (Cooper, Fusarelli, & Carella, 2000). Other challenges include mounting discipline concerns, deteriorating facilities, unfunded mandates and in some areas, teacher shortages (Trevino, Bradley, Brown, & Clate, 2008). Trevino and colleagues also found that the fewer years a superintendent was in the district the more likely that she aware of economic changes and challenges. According to Hess, (1999) because the job is constantly changing and expanding the expectations, it is a greater challenge to judge whether or not superintendents are doing a good job. This change in expectations has contributed to a higher turnover rate in the superintendency (Lindsey, 1994).

Roles

In a recent study (Glass & Franceschini, 2007), superintendents were asked to choose what best describes the role that Board of Education members expect regarding their performance. First, educational leadership activities were selected by 41% of the superintendents; second, managerial leadership was chosen by 34.5%; and third being a political leader was selected by 15%. Boards of Education employ and evaluate the superintendent, so it is in the best interest of the superintendent to pay close attention to what the board feels is important. In the state of Kansas, there are no set criteria for superintendent evaluation; thus individual superintendents need to work with their boards to determine district goals. In a qualitative study, Johnson (1996) similarly identified three roles in the superintendency: educational, political leadership and managerial. These roles included securing funds, building coalitions and allocating and distributing resources.

In another study, Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001) found that knowledge of building and sustaining board relations and an understanding of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills were important in their roles as successful superintendents. Generally, this is called tacit knowledge; certain tacit knowledge categories dominate both the reputationally successful superintendent and typical successful superintendent. According to Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001), this tacit knowledge accounts for 62% of the reputationally successful superintendents and 51% of the typical superintendents. Reputationally successful superintendents appear to use numerous avenues to strengthen their role and image. For example, knowing the importance of building and sustaining board relations suggests the importance of talking to board members as a group so that all board members feel that they are being given the same information.

Tenure

An author who only identified himself as a Veteran Fighter in the field of American Education made the following statement, quoted in Callahan (1962):

The point I wish to make is that nothing, absolutely nothing, is of more vital consuming interest to the average superintendent than the tremendously important question of whether or not he will be retained in his present position for the coming year. He knows from statistics, observations and experiences that he is in the most hazardous occupation known to insurance actuaries. Deep sea diving and structural steel work have nothing on the business of school superintending. Lloyds will insure the English clerk against rain on his weekend vacation but no gambling house would be sufficiently reckless to bet on the chances of re-election for superintendents three years or even two years.

Research supports the idea that superintendents enter the superintendency at about age 40, after serving for 5-6 years as a classroom teacher, then serving 5-7 years as a building level administrator, another 5-6 years at a district level position (Glass, Bjork, & Brunner, 2000). The number of insiders and interim superintendents being hired by boards is increasing (Glass, 2004). The average tenure for superintendents in a single district is five and one-half years (Glass & Franceschini, 2007).

In a 2008 study of South Texas superintendents, researchers found a significant relationship between superintendent tenure and their perceptions of how challenging economic and personnel issues were (Trevino, et al., 2008). In a meta-analysis by Waters and Marzano (2006), a statistically significant positive relationship between student achievement and the ability of a superintendent to successfully establish a goal-oriented environment was reported. A short superintendent tenure is of

concern as research indicates lasting school changes can only happen with time and consistency (Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Cooper, et al., 2000).

Gender

The Superintendent position has been traditionally thought of as a male-dominated position. One factor that may be a reason in how women access the position of superintendent may be the length of time spent in the classroom. In the past 10 years, studies (Glass, et al., 2000) have shown that while women indicated that they had spent 10 years in the classroom teaching, men indicated that they spent 5 years (Glass, et al., 2000). There are many themes that surround the absence of women in the superintendency. The glass ceiling effect, lack of mentoring, board or community resistance, and lack of appropriate preparation are some examples that are documented (Blount, 1998; Dana & Bourisaw, 2006).

In another study (Mahitivanichcha & Rorrer, 2006), the authors found that structures and norms within the market system influence where women are positioned in job queues and force women to adapt and exercise constrained choices and decisions. This pattern is observed both within the field of education but also across many professions.

Politics

Superintendents today are required to adapt to many changes in the social, economic and political conditions (Malone, 1999). Special interest groups make the superintendents' job more difficult because it requires increasing time and attention (Carter & Cunningham, 1997; Glass, et al., 2000). The superintendent's relationship with the school board has been found to be critically important in the efficient management of the school corporation (Sharp & Walter, 1997).

Superintendents can please some of the board members and displease others at the same time (Carter & Cunningham, 1997).

According to Carlson, (1961) succession plays a political role in terms of the difference between insiders, those superintendents promoted from within and outsiders, those brought in from the outside. Insiders are usually considered place-bound; they value the place that they work. Insiders are valued for stabilizing or maintaining the system. Typically, those that are place-bound take longer to advance in their career goals. Outsiders are career-bound; they value their career over the place of employment. Outsiders are called upon when the Board wishes to change the system. Outsiders can sometimes move quickly on the career ladder. I have addressed several characteristics of the superintendency; another issue is to examine school districts' diversity.

School District Diversity

School districts in Kansas present much diversity in terms of student poverty, student achievement, enrollment, growth, size and the amount one mil raises. The district with the least student poverty has just over 6% eligible for free lunch while the highest district has 86%. Among the 32 largest high schools in the state, one had over 97% of students scoring proficient on the state math assessment while another had 36%. The largest district has over 44,000 full time equivalent students and nearly 50,000 total students while the smallest district has 72 students. One district grew by just over 400 students and one district lost just over 400 students last year. The largest district in Kansas has about 900 square miles while the smallest district has 8 square miles. One district raises \$576 per pupil while another district raises \$17 per pupil (Heim, 2010).

Demographics

According to recent statistics from a national study (Glass & Franceschini, 2007), the following information was gathered about current superintendents. The mean age of a superintendent was 54 years old. Slightly more than 20% of the superintendents responding in the study were women. The average age for female superintendents was 43, while the average age of males was 62. The average length of time having served as a professional educator was 17 years. Approximately 50% of superintendents reported having doctorate degrees. The other 50% had earned education specialists or masters' degrees. The superintendents reported a mean tenure length of five and one-half years and the median tenure was near six years. The majority of respondents had served as superintendents in two to three districts.

According to statistics from a national study conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) in 2006, roughly one of every 150 teachers and one of every six principals becomes a superintendent. What motivates a teacher or principal to apply to become a superintendent? Motivation theory allows the examination of factors compelling individuals to aspire and actively pursue advancement to a district level administrator or the superintendency. Motivation theory at the same time lends insight to the question of why qualified personnel may elect to stay in their current subordinate position. The next section will focus on a conceptual framework grounded in motivational theories.

Theoretical Framework: Motivation Theories

Motivational theories provided a foundation for the study's framework. These theories are grounded in psychology and the work of Dichter (1964) who is considered the father of motivational research. Motivational research is a name derived from the study of human motive. A

motive is defined as what prompts a person to act in a certain way or at least develop an inclination for specific behavior (Kast & Rosenzweig, 1970). Yorks (1976) defined motivation as those forces within an individual that push or propel him to satisfy basic needs or wants (for example, hunger motivates an individual to find food). Bowditch and Buono (1997) suggested that motivation theories could be divided into three areas: content, process, and environmental. Content theories look at factors that energize behavior. Process theories look at factors that direct behavior. Environmental theories look at factors that sustain behavior over time. Each of these theories will be described in the following paragraphs.

Motivation Content Theories

Motivation content theories explain the drive behind the behavior, all of which have their foundation in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943). Maslow influenced Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness, and Growth theory (1972), McClelland's (1961) theory of achievement, power, and affiliation (1961), McGregor's theory of human motivation (1960), and Herzberg's (1966) motivation hygiene theory.

In his hierarchy of needs theory, Maslow (1943) suggested five different levels of needs drive behavior. He defined these as physiological, security, social, esteem, and self-actualization. Physiological needs are food, water, sex, and shelter. Security needs include protection from danger (including protection against danger with respect to continued employment). Social needs are giving and receiving of love and friendship. Esteem or ego needs are satisfied with achievement. Self-actualization is the need to realize one's potential. Physiological, security, and sometimes social are considered lower needs. According to Maslow (1943), these needs form a hierarchy that has lower needs being met before a higher need can be undertaken.

Alderfer's Existence, Relatedness and Growth (ERG) theory (1972) is premised on Maslow's needs hierarchy. This theory explains three different levels of needs that motivate behavior. These include basic existence needs, relatedness needs, and growth needs. Alderfer organized physiological and security into the basic existence needs. Security and social were explained under relatedness needs. Esteem and self-actualization fit under the term growth needs. Like Maslow, Alderfer believed that a person could shift back and forth between the three levels.

Another researcher working from the same time period, McClelland (1961) developed a theory of needs based on the work of Henry Murray (1938). McClelland explains a system of three basic needs. He described them as achievement, power, and affiliation. The need for achievement is the desire to independently master objects, ideas, or people. Power can mean two types: personal and institutional. Affiliation deals with a need to get along with people. While both Maslow and Alderfer suggested these needs were innate, McClelland defined needs as culturally learned.

McGregor's (1960) motivation theory was based on Maslow's highest level: self-actualization. McGregor's theory does not take into account the fulfillment of lower level needs. He posits that motivation is based on self-direction, self-control, and maturity. These characteristics are often cited by school districts as being those needed to lead school districts. Herzberg's (1966) motivation hygiene theory concluded there were two separate motivating factors. They were *satisfiers* (motivating) and *dissatisfiers* (hygiene). Satisfiers' describe the work itself or motivating factors while dissatisfiers' describe the working conditions or hygiene factors. This theory was developed in an industrial setting and puts most of the emphasis on fulfilling working conditions or what Maslow would consider lower level needs. Herzberg and McGregor's motivation theory lend insight in determining motivation in terms of educational leadership.

The theories described by Maslow, Alderfer, and McClelland lend insight to the fact that nationally, about a third (34.6%) of superintendents of all district sizes indicated the primary motivating factor for entering the superintendency was a desire to have a greater impact on student achievement (NCES, 2006). Research has shown that teachers become teachers because they want to help students do well in school (Berg, Coker, & Reno, 1992; Clarke & Keating, 1995; Farkas, Johnson, & Foleno, 2000). Farkas, et al., (2000), reported that teaching gives a sense of being appreciated and respected. Most current superintendents began their career as teachers. This motivating trend seems to hold true in their pursuit of the superintendency.

Motivations explained within the context of content motivation are those things that energize behavior. For most people, needing a job would energize behavior to find a job. The act of finding a job might certainly meet survival and existence needs. But, those needs could be met by having any job. Motivating factors that draw people to education such as wanting to help students succeed are strong in meeting higher needs of teachers and perhaps a district level administrator. In any case, the teacher's and district level administrator's needs are being met whether or not the needs were acquired as suggested by McClelland or innate as stated by Maslow or Alderfer.

Motivational content theories describe various factors that energize behavior. Maslow, Alderfer, and McClelland each identify different types and levels of needs. As stated above, content motivating factors that cause teachers to enter the education field may also explain motivating factors for district licensed personnel applying for a superintendent or other district level position. Another of the motivational subcategories useful in this inquiry is found by examining process theories.

Motivational Process Theories

Motivational process theories are those things that direct behavior. Two of these process theories explain motivating factors for those pursuing a district administrative position by examining job effort and job equity. The first of these two theories comes from work by Vroom (1964) and is called expectancy theory. The second theory is referred to as equity theory and comes from work by another motivational theorist, Adams (1963).

Vroom (1964) postulated that expectancy is the strength of a person's belief about whether or not a particular job performance is attainable. Assuming all things are equal, if a person believes she can do the job then she can. If a person performs well, she will be rewarded. Glass (2004) reported in his research that only 16% of superintendents reported a high interest in the work and tasks of a superintendent. Smaller district superintendents reported the work and tasks of the superintendency to be a higher motivator than did superintendents from large districts. A superintendent may believe that she can raise test scores or get a bond issue passed. Following the same logic, the same may be said about other district level administrator positions. If an assistant superintendent for curriculum feels that she can implement effective staff development for all teachers, then she can. If a potential district administrator believes that she can do the job and all things are equal then, according to the expectancy theory, she can.

Adams (1963) asserted that employees seek to maintain equity between the inputs they bring to a job and the outcomes they receive from it against the perceived inputs and outcomes of others. If a potential district licensed administrator, does not feel the increased effort in becoming a superintendent warrants the effort then the potential administrator may not choose to pursue a superintendent position. Adams' work is supported by recent research by Glass and Franceschini

(2007). They reported that 47% of superintendents felt very rewarded or rewarded on the job. These data also corresponded to high levels of satisfaction that were also reported in their study. This would seem to reflect that most current superintendents feel equity in their inputs and outputs on the job.

Environmental Motivational Theories

Whereas content theory explains what energizes behavior, and process theory helps explain those things that direct behavior, environmental theory addresses factors that sustain behavior over time (Bowditch & Buono, 1997). This theory suggests that an individual's surroundings are a force on her decisions. One of the seminal writers in environmental theory, Bandura, (1977) expanded on the work of Rotter, (1954). Bandura postulated that behavior could be influenced not just through psychological factors but also through environmental factors. Social learning theory suggests that individuals engage in vicarious learning. Vicarious learning requires certain steps: attention, retention, reproduction and motivation. Attention indicates that if a person is going to learn, she must be aware of what is happening. Retention means that one must remember what is happening. Reproduction means that one must be able to do the behavior that one is observing. Finally, motivation means that one must want to reproduce the behavior that one remembered and was aware of what was happening (Bandura, 1977).

According to environmental theory, a potential superintendent may learn about the superintendent position by accepting experiences of other superintendents as their own and then be motivated to reproduce the behavior. Thus, if current superintendents are having positive experiences, then potential district level applicants may feel that they may also have positive experiences as a superintendent. This may lead them to be motivated to apply for a superintendent

position. These findings suggest that motivation works on three levels (content, process, and environment). How do these levels affect moving to the superintendency?

Moving to the Superintendency

An examination of research concerning state studies of current and potential district level administrators reveals only a handful of studies and few in terms of motivational factors. Only one study looked at those that had a superintendent license and did not plan on applying for a superintendent's position. Wolverton (2004) found that there were many administrators who held a superintendent license but had no plans on applying for a superintendent's position. The study included a five state area: Alaska, Idaho, Montana, Oregon and Washington. The researcher advises regional and state levels to perhaps look for unconventional approaches to encourage applicants to apply.

The following three studies address the supply and demand in terms of moving to the superintendency. A study in the state of Kentucky, (Winter, et al., 2007) researched supply and demand of district level administrators. The participants in these studies were practicing district level administrators, mainly superintendents. The research examined potential recruitment of building principals for the superintendency. The study did not take into consideration whether or not the building administrator was licensed to take a district level administrator or superintendent's position. The study noted the underrepresentation of women and minorities in the data.

In the state of Wisconsin, Price (1992) researched supply and demand of district level administrators. He found that about one-third of all administrators who were not retiring intend to leave their present position. Given the number of administrators needed in the state, this indicated that there would likely be a shortage of administrators. Recommendations from the study included a

follow-up of motivational factors in job satisfaction and commitment. Another recommendation was to study an individual's decision to become an administrator.

Another study in the state of Minnesota, Robicheau and Haar (2007) researched supply and demand of district level administrators. The research suggested that there is an adequate supply of licensed school administrators at the present time. The study also found that within the next six years, there might be a high level of turnover in school leadership through retirement or transfer or leaving the field of education. This would leave the state with a challenge in providing a potential pool of licensed administrative candidates.

Only one study, Dlugosh (1994) reported on working conditions of both building and district administrators in Nebraska. Dlugosh reported that working conditions encourage turnover in school administrators. Many administrators justified the reason for their move as accepting a new challenge for a system or a building. Others felt that they had stagnated in their previous positions. The majority of administrators (57%) planned to remain in their current position for the next five years. One superintendent stated that he wasn't certain he could plan to remain in the same position for five years. As in the New York study, the researcher found that many superintendents will be eligible for retirement within the next five years. He felt that the lack of experience in the present pool might cause a crisis due to lack of experience.

Volp (1993) addressed four areas affecting superintendents' perceptions of the job: (a) personal-geographical data; (b) contractual issues; (c) retirement; and (d) perceptions of education issues. Topics included retirement plans, insurance, and educational and contractual issues. The last part included superintendents' perceptions that characterize school board members. Superintendents were very positive when describing their board of education members. Other

issues discussed included superintendent responsibilities in actual time required as opposed to ideal time required. Most superintendents would desire more time in working with instruction/curriculum rather than finances. Volp found that many of the surveyed superintendents would be eligible for retirement in the next five years.

There were only three studies that addressed the motivations of becoming a superintendent. In a recent study by Glass and Franceschini (2007), superintendents gave desire to have a greater impact on student achievement as the primary reason to move to the superintendency. In the same study, additional reasons superintendents gave for entering the superintendent's position were desires for higher salary and higher prestige. Another factor for entering the superintendency was desire to be in a leadership position. The term *leadership position* in all studies was undefined so it is unclear from this response what the energizing behavior might be. Principals and superintendents may define leadership in a variety of different ways (Glass, et al., 2000; Wolverton & Macdonald, 2001).

In a more recent three-state study (Illinois, Indiana, and Texas), Sharp, Malone, and Walter (2002) indicated that the reason individuals chose to be a superintendent was that they felt they could make a difference. These superintendents were not highly motivated by salary nor did they feel that they were owed the job.

Most recently, Sharp, Malone, and Walter (2010) repeated the survey in the same three states and the same reason was given. Superintendents were found to be drawn to the opportunity to serve others, to be a change agent and to make a positive difference for children.

State studies can shed light on events that happen in individual districts within that state. However, since each state may have issues specific to that state a study specific to Kansas may give

further explanation. Local boards of education do not have control over who adds district level endorsements to their license. Developing an understanding of the motivational factors from a district licensed administrator perspective is an essential component to aid the local school board in identifying motivational factors which encourage administrators holding district level certifications to pursue a superintendent position.

Summary

The job of superintendent has seen dramatic changes in the past ten years. High accountability, mandatory standardized student testing and adequate yearly progress has challenged superintendents (Lin, et al., 2002). Superintendents identified educational, managerial and political leadership as important roles to be successful (Glass & Franceschini, 2007). This includes knowing what and how the Board feels is important. The average tenure for a superintendent is just over five years (Glass, 2004). There is a significant relationship between the tenure of the superintendent and positive student achievement (Water & Marzano, 2006). Research indicates that lasting school changes can only happen with time and consistency (Carter & Cunningham, 1997). Superintendents must adapt to many political conditions. Special interest groups make the superintendents' job more difficult because it requires additional time and attention. The superintendent's relationship with the Board of Education is critical (Sharp & Walter, 1997)

There are many reasons that surround the absence of women in the superintendency. Some of these reasons include: glass ceiling, lack of mentoring, and community resistance (Blount, 1998). Kansas school districts show diversity in various ways. Most notably in number of students and physical size of the district (Heim, 2010). This may influence the type of services offered to students.

The review of research concerning state studies and superintendents shows very little in terms of the number of studies and motivational factors. Studies from New York (Volp, 1993) and Nebraska (Dlugosh, 1994) explore attitudes and issues such as insurance, retirement plans, education issues and working conditions. Studies in the states of Kentucky (Winter, et al., 2007) and Wisconsin (Price, 1992) research supply and demand for district level conditions. In a recent study, superintendents in the states of Illinois, Indiana and Texas (Sharp, Malone, & Walter, 2002, 2010) were asked why they wanted to become a superintendent.

According to the latest numbers for the state of Kansas, there are fewer educators becoming licensed to be superintendents. Not only are fewer educators becoming licensed, but fewer are applying for superintendent positions. What are the motivating factors in those who apply to become superintendents and those who don't?

Motivation theory may explain why. Motivation is defined as forces within an individual that push or propel him to satisfy needs or wants. Motivation theories can be divided into three areas: content (Maslow, 1943), process (Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964) and environmental (Bowditch & Buono, 1997). Content theories explain the drive behind the behavior; process theories look at factors that energize behavior; and environmental theories look at factors that sustain behavior over time.

Research Questions

What, then, is the motivation in becoming a superintendent? The purpose of this study was to identify factors that superintendents and non-superintendents in Kansas' school districts describe as motivating (content, process or environmental) when choosing to apply or not to apply for the superintendency. Second, because the issue of gender and district size may also impact the decision

to become a superintendent these two demographic variables were included. For the purposes of this study, superintendents are defined as individuals who are currently employed as superintendents in the state of Kansas; non-superintendents are those who are qualified as district licensed personnel but are not employed as superintendents. The study focused on the following research questions:

1. What do current Kansas' superintendents and non-superintendents identify as motivating factors for pursuing a superintendent position? This question addressed motivation content theory.
 - a. Will there be differences between superintendents and non-superintendents?
 - b. Will there be differences between males and females?
 - c. Will there be differences between large and small districts
2. What do superintendents and non-superintendents like about being a superintendent? This question addressed motivation environmental theory.
 - a. Will there be differences between superintendents and non-superintendents?
 - b. Will there be differences between males and females?
 - c. Will there be differences between large and small districts?
3. What do superintendents and non-superintendents see as challenges of the superintendency? This question addressed motivational process theory.
 - a. Will there be differences between superintendents and non-superintendents?
 - b. Will there be differences between males and females?
 - c. Will there be differences between large and small districts?

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

A quantitative research design was used to study two groups: current superintendents in Kansas and non-superintendents (those that are qualified district level licensed personnel). The study identified factors of the two groups that motivate them when choosing, or not choosing, to pursue a district level administrative position. Motivational theory served as the framework for identifying motivational factors as described by superintendents and non-superintendents. The three areas included: (a) motivation to become a superintendent (motivation content theory); (b) positives of the position (motivation environmental theory); and (c) challenges of the position (motivation process theory). These three areas address the three dimensions of motivational theory.

Research Context

The research site is the state of Kansas, which gained statehood in the mid 1800's. The state's population is approximately 2,775,000. Movement in the Kansas population tends to be from rural to the more populated city areas. Kansas is known to be somewhat conservative as evidenced by the largely Republican voting history. The State Board of Education governs the state's public schools at the primary and secondary level. Currently, the state has 289 school districts each governed by an elected Board of Education. Each district employs a superintendent licensed by the state. School districts are funded by the state legislature and with additional local funding determined by a local option budget. This study utilized all of the current districts in Kansas.

Study Participants and Sample

Participants in this study included superintendents and non-superintendents licensed in Kansas. Only those licensed by the state as opposed to those who have completed the course of

study but have chosen not to have the endorsement placed on their license were used in the study. As previously stated, state law requires that Boards of Education only offer positions to properly licensed personnel. The first group consisted of 289 superintendents, one from each district in the State of Kansas (Education, 2009-2010). All of the 289 superintendents were contacted; 106 responded for a 37% response rate. The second group of participants consisted of those who were non-superintendents. A list of approximately 500 district-licensed non-superintendents was provided in the fall of 2009 from the Kansas Department of Education. Of these, email addresses were found for 250 non-superintendents, who were then contacted; 110 responded for a 44% response rate. See Table 2 for a breakdown of those who responded to the survey. Not all participants responded to every demographic question thus the totals for the demographic variables might be different. For ethnicity, the only ethnic group selected was European American, Native American and other.

Of those responding in the superintendent group, there were 91 males and 15 females. The mean age of the superintendents was 51-55 years of age. The mean length of time of being a superintendent was 8.9 years. There were 86 superintendents who indicated European American ethnicity. Two indicated Native American ethnicity and 18 indicated "other". There were 85 non-superintendents who indicated European American ethnicity. One indicated Native American and 23 indicated "other". Superintendents indicated that 31 of them were from districts of under 500 students, 32 superintendents from districts between 500-999 students, 21 superintendents were from districts of between 1000-2499 students, 13 superintendents from districts between 2500-3999 students, 1 from districts between 4000-6000 and finally 8 superintendents from districts over 6000.

Table 2

Demographic Information of the Study Participants

Demographics	Supt.	Non-Supt.	Total
Gender			
Male	91	68	159
Female	15	42	57
Total	106	110	216
Ethnicity			
European American	86	85	171
Native American	2	1	3
Other	18	23	41
Total	105	109	214
District Size			
Under 500	31	13	44
500-999	32	19	51
1000-2499	21	27	48
2500-3999	13	12	25
4000-6000	1	13	14
Over 6000	8	25	33
Total	106	109	215

Of those responding in the non-superintendent group, there were 68 males and 42 females.

The mean age of the non-superintendents was 46-50 years of age. The positions of the non-superintendents included building principal (n=60), deputy superintendent (n=3), assistant superintendent (n=2), associate superintendent (n=2), director (n=10) (e.g., special education or curriculum director), Chief Academic Officer (n=1) and Board clerk (n=1). Non-superintendents indicated that 13 of them were from districts under 500, 19 from districts between 500-999 students, 27 were from districts of between 1000-2499 students, 12 from districts between 2500-3999 students, 13 from districts between 4000-6000 and finally 25 from districts over 6000.

The mean length of time in education for superintendents was 28.5 years and for non-superintendents was 26.4. Superintendents ranked themselves as highly satisfied with their positions, (M=4.25 out of a possible 5 points). None ranked themselves less than average in satisfaction with their position. The number of superintendencies for superintendents ranged from one to seven with most stating that they were in their second experience. The vast majority (91%) of Superintendents answered that they would become a superintendent again. Non-superintendents ranked from low to high; however their mean score was 4.4 indicating that they very satisfied with the positions they held.

Instruments

Three surveys and a demographic questionnaire were administered. For this study, these four surveys were modified into one large survey that was placed on Survey Monkey. The four instruments are discussed separately below.

What Do You Like About Being A Superintendent? This survey was developed by Sharp et al. (2002, 2010). (See Appendix A, Part 2.) A group of 25 superintendents were asked to write out what they liked about being a superintendent. These responses were then edited and formed the basis for the statements placed in the surveys. These surveys were repeated in a 2010 research study. Due to concerns about length of time for completing the total survey, one item was eliminated (See Appendix C for those items eliminated and the rationale). For the first 16 questions a Likert-type scale was used in which responses were listed from a 1=weak to 5=strong. Scores could range from a minimum of 16 to a maximum of 80. The higher the score the more the superintendent likes his position. Three questions asked the superintendents to select the top three of those 16 items. A final question was open-ended, asking the superintendents for any other

responses. There were no reliability and validity provided by the authors. For this study a Cronbach Alpha was conducted on the items and resulted in reliability co-efficient of .81 to determine inter-item reliability. This provides initial evidence of the stability of the instrument and substantiation that the items are indeed measuring the same construct.

What Motivated You to Become a Superintendent? This survey was developed by Sharp et al (Sharp, et al., 2002, 2010) (See Appendix A, Part 3.) The same procedure was followed as previously discussed. Again, because of concerns about the length of the total survey, one item was eliminated. (See Appendix C for question eliminated and for rationale) For the first 12 questions a Likert-type scale was used in which responses were listed from a 1=weak to 5=strong. Scores could range from 12 to 60. Three questions asked the superintendents to select the top three of those 12 items. A final question was open-ended asking the superintendents for any other responses. There were no reliability and validity provided by the authors. Again, a Cronbach Alpha was conducted on the items to determine inter-item reliability and yielded a reliability co-efficient of .71. This provides initial evidence of the stability of the instrument and substantiation that the items are indeed related.

Present Challenges for a Superintendent. This survey was developed by Trevino et al. (2008). (See appendix A, Part 4.) The survey is a Likert-type scale in which responses range from 1=seldom challenging to 5=almost always challenging. At the end of this section, participants were once again asked to make comments. Once more, because of length of the total survey, seven items were eliminated. (See Appendix C for questions eliminated and for rationale) This survey has four sections that address challenges a superintendent generally encounters. The first section addresses organizational challenges such as politics/governance, high stakes testing, curriculum and

instruction. After two questions were deleted, this section contained 10 questions and scores ranged from 10 to 50. The second section addressed economic challenges including funding, socio-economic and demographics. After deleting one, this section also had 10 questions and scores ranged from 10 to 50. The third section addresses personnel challenges, which includes personnel ethics and highly qualified teachers and paraprofessionals. After one question was eliminated, this section had seven questions and scores could range from 7 to 35. The final section was student related challenges, which include educational diversity and student discipline. Again one question was eliminated, leaving this section with seven questions and scores ranging from 7 to 35. The authors conducted Cronbach Alphas, which produced the following results: organizational challenges yielded an alpha of .74; economic challenges yielded an alpha of .81; personnel challenges yielded an alpha of .61; and student related challenges had an alpha of .56. No Cronbach Alphas were conducted for the entire survey; however, for subsections (especially those for organization and economic challenges), these alphas are sufficiently high. Because of concerns of the length of the survey, five questions were eliminated; thus Cronbach Alphas were conducted on the remaining items to determine if the elimination of these questions affected the inter-item reliability. Organizational challenges yielded an alpha of .63; economic challenges yielded an alpha of .80; personnel challenges yielded an alpha of .54; and student challenges yielded an alpha of .62. By eliminating some questions, two sections have somewhat reduced reliability ratings; one remained the same, and one increased. Overall, reducing these questions did not substantially affect the reliability ratings of the instrument.

Demographics. (See Appendix A, Part 1.) Demographic information requested included such variables as gender, age and ethnicity. In addition, the size of school districts were gathered.

Non-Superintendent Surveys

The titles for the parts of the survey for the non-superintendents was revised. For Part A, the title was: *What would you like about being a Superintendent?* For Part B, the title was: *What would motivate you to become a Superintendent?* Appropriate responses were available for non-superintendents in the demographic information. The other parts remained the same for both groups.

Data Collection Procedures

In order to ensure that participants' rights were protected, the requirements of their participation was discussed and provided in writing. Participation in the survey was considered permission to participate in the study. Confidentiality was assured to the participants. No names were used on reports and the Institutional Review Board at Wichita State University provided approval for the study. The survey was given to 5 staff members in order to determine length of time for completion; the average time for completion was 25 minutes.

Both superintendents and non-superintendents were contacted by email and asked to participate. First, the participants were given an explanation of the nature of the study, which assured them of their anonymity. Superintendents from all 289 Kansas school districts were asked to participate by completing the survey. The researcher used the Kansas State Department of Education directory to find emails for the list generated from the Kansas State Department of Education's list of those licensed for district level. After receiving the list of non-superintendents, 250 were also contacted. As part of the email, the surveys were administered by sending participants a link to Survey Monkey.

The first email was sent out on September 15; 45 total responses were returned. A second email was sent out on September 27 to urge participants to respond; approximately an additional 98

total participants responded to the second email. A third email was sent on October 2 because the rate of respondents was less than 30%; 26 total responded. To try to get a response to 40%, a fourth email was sent on October 15, which yielded an additional 12 total responses. Even after three follow-up requests for return of surveys, the total result for both superintendents and non-superintendents was less than 40%. One of the disadvantages of online surveys is the low response rate (Kroth, et al., 2009).

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS

The data were analyzed by each of the three dependent variables (the research questions of likes, motivators, and challenges of the superintendency). The researcher investigated differences in these three factors based on the three demographic variables: Occupation (whether the participants were a superintendent or non-superintendent), gender of the participant, and size of the school district. One unforeseen result was that some participants (both superintendents and non-superintendents) skipped over the motivation questions and then continued on to answer the challenge questions. Another factor is that some answered only the first survey (likes). If a participant completed one complete section (e.g., motivation) that survey was analyzed. Thus, the numbers of those completing each section was different. (See Table 3 for those numbers completing each section.) SPSS was used to calculate the results.

Participant's Comments

Only 19 superintendents commented after the surveys, and one non-superintendents made statements; thus, the comments are used simply to substantiate the statistical findings. As the statistical results are discussed in Chapter 5, the comments will be included to provide narrative evidence of the significant findings. (See Appendix D for a list of all of the comments.)

Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 presents the means and standard deviations for each of the three dependent variables by occupation, gender and district size. Some of the mean scores that indicated a possibility of significant differences among the groups are discussed here. For example, in terms of gender

differences for the likes survey, females indicate a greater liking for the position (M=65.49) than males (M=63.73). On challenges, also, there are some gender differences: females (M=35.09) find organization to be a greater challenge than males (M=33.5). For position, non-superintendents (M=42.89) are more motivated for the position of superintendent than superintendents (M=40.7). Also non-superintendents (M=39.56) find organizational challenges more challenging than superintendents (M=32.59).

In terms of district size, participants from districts with 1000-2499 (M=65.38) and 2500-3999 (M=66.0) like the position of superintendent more than those from district sizes 4000-6000 (M=60.69). A similar finding occurs under organizational challenges in that those from district sizes 4000-6000 (M=36.31) find organizational challenges greater than those from districts under 1000 (M=63.5). Again for student related challenges, participants from the larger district sizes (those over 4000) find student related challenges greater than the smallest districts.

Inferential Statistics

Analysis of variance (ANOVA) provides one of the most rigorous tools for determining statistical significance and the ability to make inferences on differences in the means of the dependent variables. ANOVA statistics were chosen because it allows the researcher to evaluate each independent variable with a dependent variable as well as address interactions between the independent variables on the dependent variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2005). ANOVAs were conducted for the first two research questions in order to determine if there were statistically significant differences in the dependent variables of likes the position and motivation to seek the position based on occupation, gender, or district size.

Because fewer participants answered the motivation section of the survey, I conducted an ANOVA to address the first research question: What do current Kansas' superintendents identify as

Table 3

Means, Standard Deviations, and Numbers of Participants Liking the Position, Motivation for the Position and Challenges of the Position by Position, Gender and District Size.

Ind. Variables	Likes		Motivation			Challenges			
	N	M(sd)	N	M(sd)	N	Organiz. M(sd)	Economics M(sd)	Personnel M(sd)	Stud. Rel. M(sd)
Position									
Superintendent	95	64.43(4.4)	88	40.70(4.4)	86	32.59(4.7)	34.08(6.7)	24.83(3.8)	19.01(4.1)
Non-Supt.	86	63.95(6.6)	62	42.89(5.7)	52	35.96(4.6)	33.35(7.3)	25.12(3.9)	20.69(4.5)
Total	181	64.20(5.8)	150	41.61(5.1)	138	33.86(4.9)	33.8(6.9)	24.93(3.8)	19.64(4.3)
Gender									
Male	132	63.73(5.7)	112	41.44(5.0)	103	33.50(4.8)	33.74(7.1)	24.55(3.9)	19.3(4.3)
Female	49	65.49(5.7)	37	42.22(5.3)	34	35.09(5.2)	33.94(6.5)	25.94(3.5)	20.71(4.3)
Total	181	64.20(5.8)	149	41.63(5.1)	137	33.89(4.9)	33.79(6.9)	24.90(3.8)	19.65(4.3)
District Size									
Under 500	33	63.39(4.2)	30	40.77(2.5)	28	31.71(4.2)	32.89(7.1)	24.5(4.2)	17.61(4.2)
500-999	44	63.5(6.7)	37	40.92(7.0)	31	32.71(4.8)	33.61(6.5)	25.0(4.3)	19.58(4.8)
1000-2499	40	65.38(5.8)	32	43.1(5.4)	32	33.84(3.8)	32.56(6.3)	24.66(3.0)	19.72(4.0)
2500-3999	22	66.0(4.0)	18	42.22(3.5)	16	36.31(5.1)	35.06(4.9)	25.0(3.6)	19.5(3.4)
4000-6000	13	60.69(6.4)	10	42.2(6.1)	9	39.22(5.5)	32.67(8.9)	25.0(4.3)	22.0(5.5)
Over 6000	28	64.89(6.1)	21	41.1(4.3)	20	34.15(5.1)	36.55(8.7)	25.6(3.9)	21.2(3.3)
Total	180	64.22(5.8)	148	41.63(5.1)	136	33.84(4.9)	33.76(7.0)	25.9(3.8)	19.60(4.3)

motivating factors for pursuing a superintendent position? This ANOVA also addressed the research question in terms of differences between occupations, gender, and district size in order to determine if there were any significant differences on each of the independent variables and if there were interactions among the three demographic variables. There were no significant differences for any of the independent variables and there were no interactions among the three demographic variables. This suggests there are few if any differences among this sample in terms of motivation for becoming a superintendent.

The second research question asked the following: What do superintendents like about being a superintendent? A second ANOVA addressed this research question in terms of differences between occupations, gender, and district size in order to determine if there were any significant differences on each of the independent variables and if there were interactions among the three demographic variables. The only significance difference was for gender. ($F=3.0;p=.08$) indicating that females liked the position better than males. There were no significant differences between superintendents and non-superintendents and no significant differences based on district size. Table 4 presents the statistics.

Table 4

ANOVA Statistics for Liking the Position by Gender

	Males M(sd)	Females M(sd)	<i>F</i>	<i>df</i>	<i>p</i>
Superintendent	64.09	66.18			
Non-Superintendent	63.97	64.49			
ANOVA Statistics			3.0	1(105)	.08

There was a three way interaction among position, gender and district size that approached significance ($f=2.07, p=.10$), suggesting that liking the position may depend on a combination of factors.

Figure 1

Interaction of Mean Scores for Liking the Position Based on Position and District Size for Males and Females

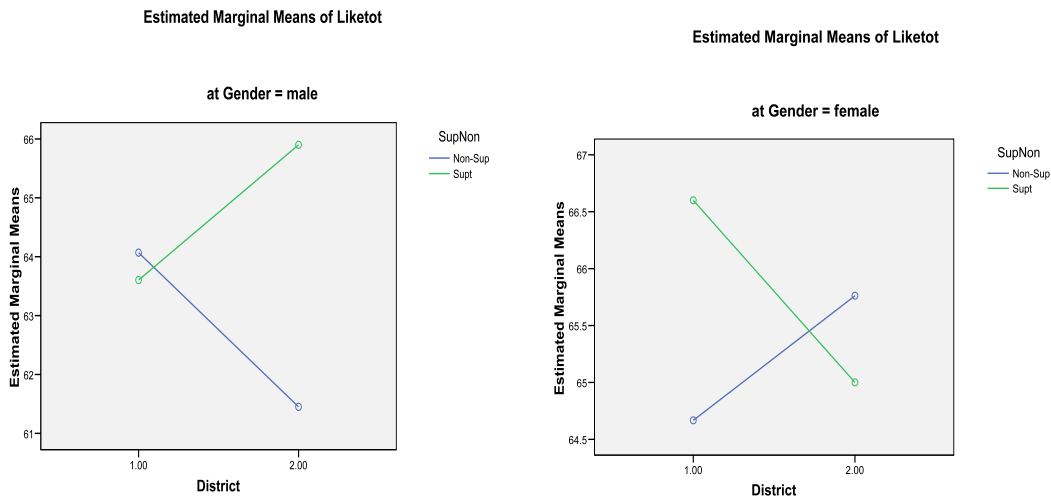


Figure one shows male superintendents like the large districts better whereas female superintendents like the small districts better. On the other hand it is the opposite for non-superintendents: females think they would like the large districts better and males think they would like the small districts.

Multiple analysis of variance (MANOVA) is similar to the ANOVA in rigor and was selected for the third research question (what challenges the participants perceived as part of the superintendency) because “a MANOVA can include several dependent variables, whereas ANOVA

can handle only one dependent variable” (Mertler & Vannatta, 2005, p119). The challenges were divided into four different areas: organizational, personnel, economics and student which creates four dependent variables. There were no gender differences or district size differences on any of the four challenge subcategories. There were, however, two areas of differences between superintendents and non-superintendents: on the organizational subcategory ($F=23.76$; $p=.000$) and on student related issues ($F=3.80$; $p=.05$). This suggests that non-superintendents feel that organizational and student related challenges are significantly greater than do superintendents. Table 5 presents the statistics for the MANOVA for job challenges; organization and student-related issues.

Table 5

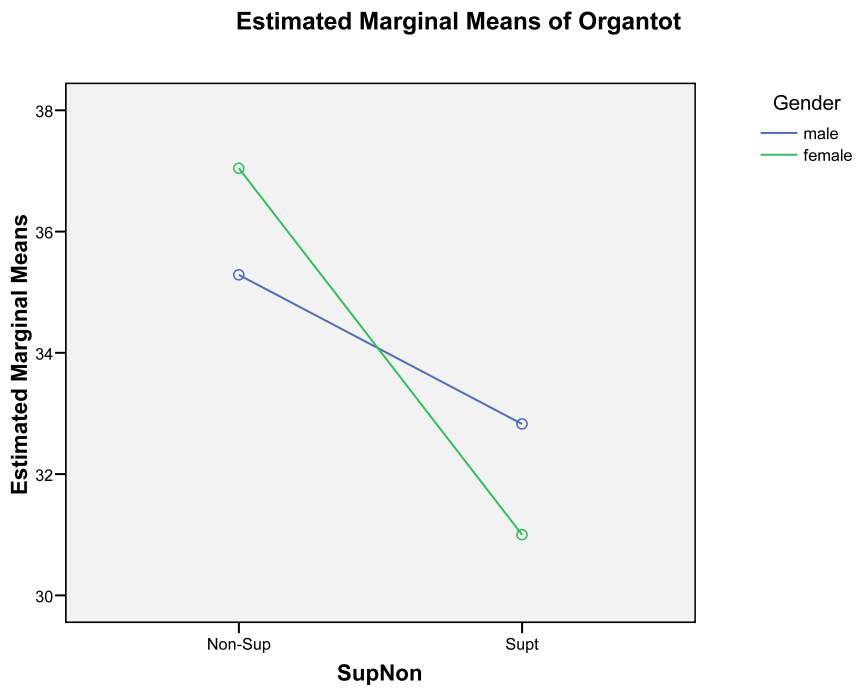
MANOVA Statistics for Job Challenges of Organization and Student-Related Issues

	Supt	NonSupt	<i>F</i>	<i>Df</i>	<i>p</i>
	M(sd)	M(sd)			
Organizational	32.45(4.9)	36.14(4.5)	23.76	1(163)	.000
Student- Rel.	18.97(4.1)	20.47(4.4)	3.80	1(163)	.05

The MANOVA also suggested a significant interaction between gender and position for the organizational category. ($F=8.00$; $p=.08$) For non-superintendents, females see organizational issues as a greater challenge whereas for superintendents, males see organizational factors as a greater challenge. Figure 2 illustrates this interaction.

Figure 2

Interaction of Gender and Position for Organizational Challenges



CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION

Challenges in the superintendency in Kansas have increased over the last few years due to budget issues and the requirements of No Child Left Behind. Still, the importance of the superintendent's leadership cannot be underestimated when it comes to student achievement (Water & Marzano, 2006). Nationally and locally the number of applicants for the superintendency continues to drop (Fultz, 2006; Glass & Franceschini, 2007). As stated previously, superintendents begin their careers as teachers and are promoted through the ranks. There is a shortage of applicants pursuing district level license and, as a result, fewer are motivated to seek the superintendency (Fultz, 2006). Who, then, will step up to lead our schools in the coming years? Several state studies have been done concerning the superintendency and motivational factors. Some (Volp, 1993; Dlugosh, 1994) explore attitudes, employment issues such as insurance and retirement. Other research (Price, 1992, Winter, et al., 2007) examined supply and demand. In a recent study, superintendents in three states were asked why they wanted to become superintendents. No studies have been done in Kansas concerning motivating factors for applying to the superintendency. Motivation theory may explain those factors.

Motivational theory (Dichter, 1964) and the subcategories of content (Maslow, 1943), process (Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964), and environment (Bowditch & Buono, 1997) can help explain reasons district licensed personnel chose to pursue or not to pursue a superintendent position. Motivational content theory (Maslow, 1943) helps explain what is motivating about applying for the superintendent's position. Content theory energizes behavior. Motivational

process theory (Adams, 1963; Vroom, 1964) helps explain the challenges surrounding the superintendent's position. Vroom (1964) postulated that if a person believed that she could do a job then she could, all things being equal. If a potential superintendent felt that she was up to the challenges and tasks of the superintendency, then she would be more likely to apply. Motivational environmental theory (Bowditch & Buono, 1997) seeks to look at what may sustain behavior over time. What a superintendent likes about the job or has potential for liking a job may influence her decision to apply for the superintendent's position.

Along with motivational theory, several other topics were examined: roles of the superintendent, gender, politics and district size. As stated earlier, the roles of the superintendent have changed dramatically in the last few years. These changes include higher accountability, mandatory standardized testing, highly qualified teacher requirements and adequate yearly progress goals (Lin, Baker, & Betebenner, 2002) along with staying ahead of new requirements. The politics of a community may make a difference as the superintendent tries to find a middle ground with competing ideas. Gender is also an issue. Many communities are not open to the idea of a female superintendent (Blount, 1998). Structures and norms where women are positioned in job queues such as assistant superintendent force women to adapt and exercise constrained choices and decisions (Mahitivanichcha & Rorrer 2006). District size may also make a difference in the way the district is organized. All of these different issues may make a difference to a person when trying to decide about applying for a superintendency.

First Research Question

What do current Kansas superintendents identify as motivating factors for pursuing a superintendent position? This question addressed motivation content theory. Motivational content

theories explain the drive behind the behavior. This is found in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs (1943). Maslow (1943) described five different levels of needs that drive behavior. When comparing superintendents' and non-superintendents' responses on the motivation part of the survey, there were no differences. No differences were found in respect to gender or district size. When superintendents and non-superintendents were asked to rank order their motivations for becoming or considering becoming a superintendent, the answers were the same. The number one answer for motivation for both superintendents and non-superintendents was that "the job would allow me to move the district forward" (esteem or ego). The second overall answer on motivation was providing the superintendent and non-superintendent financial security (security). The third overall answer on motivation for both was providing leadership (self-actualization).

Comments made by Kansas superintendents support motivational content theory. Examples of their motivation include:

"As a classroom teacher I was 'given' more duties that were administrative in nature by my building principal who was no longer able to fulfill those duties. I soon found that I was better than the administrators in my district and encouraged to pursue that as a career move. Also, with 4 children there was no other way to support them as I qualified for reduced lunches on my teaching salary."

This comment may indicate that this female superintendent was motivated by esteem or ego and the need for security in the form of a higher salary.

"I was born & raised in this community and have the community's best interests at heart. I am very passionate about the success of our students. I was asked to take the job when the BOE wanted to reduce the number of administrators. I serve also as secondary principal."

The above female superintendent seemed to have social and esteem or ego needs satisfied by both knowing the community and having achieved the superintendency. She also serves as the high school principal.

Another female superintendent felt very strongly about achievement in that there was no question that she could make a difference with students. "I didn't become an educator because I thought I could make a difference, rather because I knew I could make a difference."

All of these comments substantiate that superintendents tend to take superintendent jobs to satisfy a need described by Maslow (1943) as physiological, security, social, esteem or self-actualization. The motivator ranking comparison results also indicate that there are no differences between superintendents and non-superintendents in terms of meeting needs with their particular position. This notion of satisfying needs also applied in terms of gender and district size. There was no difference between superintendents and non-superintendents. Non-superintendents also take positions that satisfy their needs. If the non-superintendents are satisfied with their positions, there may be no reason for them to pursue a superintendent's position.

Second Research Question

What do superintendents like about being a superintendent? This question addresses environmental motivational theory. Environmental theories are those things that energize behavior. Bandura (1977) postulated that behavior could be influenced not just through psychological factors but also through environmental factors. Social learning theory suggests that individuals learn through others. One must want to reproduce the behavior that one sees.

The vast majority (87% of superintendents and 90% of non-superintendents) of participants rated their job satisfaction as high or very high. In terms of re-licensing for the superintendency,

91% of superintendents and 62% of non-superintendents felt that they would become licensed again. This may show dissatisfaction with non-superintendents concerning future job opportunities or in current job perceptions. When asked to rank what they liked about their present position, the number one reason that was stated by both superintendents and non-superintendents (43% of superintendents and 44% of non-superintendents) indicated that they had a positive impact on the student achievement. The second reason was the opportunity to build a team of educators (25% of superintendents and 37% of non-superintendents indicated this on their survey). The third highest reason was to have substantial impact on the direction of the district; 18% of superintendents and 33% of non-superintendents indicated this on their survey. The second and third reasons may show that non-superintendents feel that they may have more impact on the district's curriculum and thus more impact on student achievement and direction of the district.

As stated earlier, the superintendent position has been typically thought of as a male-dominated position. Men spend about ½ the time as teachers in the classroom as women do before seeking administrative positions (Glass, et al., 2000). There were clear differences in the results when looking at gender. Females scored significantly higher on liking the position than their male counterparts, whether being a superintendent or not. As stated earlier, the glass ceiling effect, lack of mentoring, and community resistance are themes that surround the absence of women in the superintendency (Blount, 1998;(Dana & Bourisaw, 2006)

An interesting and unexpected result in the study was the three-way interaction among position (superintendent/non-superintendent), gender and district size. Male superintendents in the large districts like their job better than those in the small districts whereas male non-superintendents in the small districts like the job better than non-superintendents in the large districts. On the other

hand female superintendents in small districts liked their job better than the female superintendents in large districts whereas the opposite is true for non-superintendents. For these latter females, women in large districts think they would like the job of superintendent more than women non-superintendents in smaller districts.

Another way of stating the interaction might be: for males in small districts both superintendents and non-superintendents are similar in terms of liking their job. In large districts however, there is a large difference between superintendents and non-superintendents; in these districts, superintendents like the job more than non-superintendents think they would. The opposite is true for females: both superintendents and non-superintendents in large districts are similar in terms of liking their jobs. The difference for females is in the small districts; there is a big discrepancy between superintendents and non-superintendents. Female superintendents like the job while non-superintendents score much lower about thinking they would like the superintendent's job.

The glass ceiling effect, lack of mentoring, board or community resistance and lack of appropriate preparation were cited by Blount (1998) and Dana & Bourisaw (2006) as reasons for the absence of women in the superintendency. Perhaps the lack of applicants may give Boards of Education as well as the community in small districts the motivation to provide mentoring and preparation and removing resistance. This may in turn lift the glass ceiling effect that may still be around in larger districts. In small districts, the superintendent does many or all of the jobs that in larger districts are departmentalized to different individuals. This may be a reason there is a similarity for female superintendents and non-superintendents in large districts. The superintendent in a small district may be the transportation, food service, maintenance and finance director. This

may give her the opportunity to hone her skills in all areas. In terms of looking at district size, gender and position, consideration should be given to past experiences and the ability to learn new jobs as well as interest in the community. Comments made by Kansas superintendents about the environmental motivational part of the survey were as follows:

“I get to help more students.” This male superintendent believes that his help will help students achieve.

“I really never aspired to the superintendency. I am glad that my career has gone the direction that it has, but I never considered it when I began my administrative degree.”

Motivational environmental theory (Volp, 1993) indicates these superintendents are successful because they consider themselves successful. They have been able to reproduce the positive behavior for a superintendent.

“The high visibility can be both a positive and a negative. In a small or average size school district in Kansas you are always the superintendent.” This superintendent understands that if he performs well in the role then he will be rewarded. In this case, the superintendent felt that district size made a difference.

Environmental theory addresses factors that sustain behavior over time (Bowditch & Buono, 1997). A person’s likes certainly sustain behavior over time, which means a person must like what she does in order to continue doing those behaviors.

Third Research Question

What do superintendents see as challenges? This question addressed motivational process theory. Motivational process theories are those things that direct behavior. Motivational process theory from Vroom (1964) is known as the expectancy theory and work from Adams (1963) is

referred to as equity theory. Vroom (1964) postulated that assuming all things being equal, if a person believed that she can do a job, then she could. These challenges will be discussed in four sub-categories: organizational challenges, economic challenges, personnel related challenges, and student related challenges.

Organizational challenges. Organizational challenges address those issues that are political in nature; such as, working with Board of education members, the community or teachers/parents, high stakes testing, and curriculum and instruction.

Motivational process theory explains motivating factors by looking at job effort and job equity. By making decisions concerning job effort, a question could be: is it worth the effort? Job equity describes the balance between what a person puts into the job and what a person gets out of it. There was a highly significant difference ($F=23.76$; $p=.000$) between superintendents and non-superintendents in terms of organizational challenges. Non-superintendents indicated that these were greater challenges than their superintendent peers, which may keep non-superintendents from applying for superintendent positions. The researcher examined the questions addressing politics, curriculum and high stakes testing separately and found that for all three there was a similar difference between superintendents and non-superintendents. Thus, it appears that all areas of organizational challenges are equally daunting for non-superintendents.

There was also a significant interaction between gender and position ($F=8.0$; $p=.08$). Non-superintendent females see organizational challenges as a greater issue than their male peers; however, once in the superintendency, female superintendents do not see organizational challenges as great an issue as their male counterparts. Female superintendents like the superintendency once they get into it but they do not seem to be going after the job. Mentoring female non-

superintendents by successful superintendents may help those non-superintendents feel more confident in their ability to be successful as a superintendent.

All but one comment was made by male superintendents; they provide additional information for the statistical findings. The first examples are by those superintendents who are male:

“As an experienced superintendent, we are dealing with budget and other issues more numerous and more serious than ever in my career. The stress and demand for leadership (without winners) is extreme. I feel for the novice leaders who have little background to draw upon as they make decisions, with little experience or confidence to project possible outcomes.”

This addresses the political governance of organizational challenges and substantiates what Adams (1963) posits about balancing job input and job output.

“If I was working with the original members of my BOE I would be more satisfied. I am now micromanaged which negatively impacts the enjoyment of my job.”

“ I enjoy being a CEO, making final decisions is an awkward question. In our district most decisions are made as a team. It is very rare that I make a decision without input from the BOE, teachers, other administrators, support staff, parents and community.”

These two quotes address the politics of organizational challenges and support the research of Glass and Franceschini (2007) that high levels of satisfaction are related to being rewarded on the job.

“We create the atmosphere in which we choose to work! I choose a very positive and upbeat style. Seems to work well even for those who choose to be annoyed at the least little bit of a challenge.”

This supports what Vroom (1964) postulated about motivation process theory in terms of whether or not a particular job performance is attainable.

The last comment comes from a female, who wrote: “The superintendency is very complex. In a small district, the daily tasks are varied and depend on one's ability to switch quickly between areas of responsibility (i.e., community relations, information technology, financial status, curriculum and instruction). I don't have the option to relegate these areas to others.”

This addresses all areas of organizational challenges and again supports Glass and Franceschini (2007) that superintendents in small districts report high interest in the work and tasks of the superintendent.

Economic challenges. Economic challenges deal with funding. This includes funding in general as well as funding supporting academic achievement, how the funds are implemented, funding as it applies to property, socio-economic status of students, and demographics. There were no significant differences within any of the groups. This may indicate that all parties, whether superintendent or non-superintendent, male or female, or large or small district, agree that there is a problem with funding and they all see it as a challenge that may be beyond their control. The following comments echo this idea:

“With budget cuts and more demands, the superintendency has become much more challenging.”

“A district-level administrative position is a challenge at this time with budget cuts and lack of funding.”

“The last 3 years of state financial disarray has taken the fun out of this job.”

“Sure, I would enjoy this job more without the constant financial stress we have faced over the past two years.”

All of these comments seem to support the idea of how funding is adversely effecting the job of superintendent. This seems to be the opinion no matter what role in the district one serves.

Personnel-related challenges. Personnel-related challenges include dealing with personnel ethics, inservices on personnel ethics, finding highly qualified teachers, and having highly qualified teachers increase student performance. Again, no significant differences were found among the groups. There were also no comments made in reference to any issues dealing with personnel ethics or finding highly qualified teachers.

Student-related challenges. Student related challenges include educational diversity and student discipline. For this challenge, there were significant differences found between superintendents and non-superintendents, suggesting that non-superintendents consider these as greater challenges than do superintendents. Again, the researcher subdivided the questions into the two groups for this area: student diversity and student discipline. The findings were similar for both indicating that non-superintendents found both student diversity and student discipline more challenging than do superintendents. Generally, most assistant superintendents work with curriculum and the academic areas. In fact, the one non-superintendent who commented indicated the following: “I am an Associate Superintendent with primary responsibility for the Operations side of the school district...” There may be no desire to work with student issues in terms of discipline as a superintendent would. There are often times political fallout when students are disciplined or not disciplined depending on how the community sees the issue. Two comments

suggest the difficulties of this challenge: “Very stressful work” and “ The superintendency isn't for everyone :)”

While there exists an adequate number of qualified district level non-superintendents, the analysis did not uncover all of the reasons why one would be licensed as a superintendent but not be motivated to apply to be a superintendent. For many of the non-superintendents, it appears that they enjoyed their assigned duties (See Table 3).

Limitations

The limitations in this study would include the following: First would be the lack in the number of females in the superintendency. Researchers must be tentative in arriving at conclusions when there were only 15 female superintendents who responded to the surveys. Second, when fewer than 50% of the participants respond, it is difficult to generalize because the number who didn't respond may change the outcome of the study. A third limitation is the length of the survey; it may have given some of the participants a moment to pause in giving up some valuable time. Budget cuts may have had a negative effect on filling out the survey. Superintendents and non-superintendents may feel that they don't have the time or inclination to answer the survey. A related issue was the fact that, although all respondents filled out the “like the position” part of the survey, some neglected to fill out the motivation and challenges sections of the survey. Again, this lack of data may have changed the results. A fifth limitation is that, although the results provide some information regarding the differences between superintendents and non-superintendents, quantitative results may have limited what may have been more in-depth insight.

Implications

Results of these surveys have several implications. Fultz (2006) found that there is a smaller pool of applicants pursuing the district level license and, as a result, pursuing the superintendency. It is important for local Boards of Education to understand the perspective of current superintendents and potential superintendent candidates.

Liking the job. This researcher hypothesizes that female superintendents in small districts like their job because they are better able to build relationships with both students and the community. This may not be the case in large districts. Boards of Education and community members in small districts may give the female superintendent both time and support to build her skills for both the job as well as for the expectations of the community. Boards of Education and communities may need to think in terms of growing with a superintendent rather than expecting one that is ready made for their district. Sometimes Boards of Education may experience confusion as to what their role is in terms of running a school district. Whether or not a superintendent likes the job or thinks they will like the job in the case of the non-superintendent will depend on both the gender as well as the size of the district.

Challenges. In terms of organizational challenges, males do not see many differences in them whether they are a superintendent or a non-superintendent. Males may have more role models in how to handle organizational challenges. Because of the fewer numbers of female superintendents, females do not have the same advantage and may choose to handle the organizational challenges in different ways. Once females become superintendents, they do not see organizational challenges as quite the issue. Female non-superintendents do see the organizational

challenges as an issue. Mentoring (Dana & Bourisaw, 2006) could play a huge part in allowing the non-superintendent to see that organizational challenges can be handled in a positive way.

In terms of student-related challenges, there were differences between superintendents and non-superintendents. Non-superintendents reported this significantly higher than superintendents. There may be stress on the part of the non-superintendent to take care of the student-related issues as a part of their job. The superintendent may be shielded from most student-related issues. Since non-superintendents may also deal with curricular issues, the sensitivity may go beyond pranks in or out of the classroom and deal with a system issue.

Future Studies

Future studies may include a qualitative study looking in depth at a few superintendents and non-superintendents from small to large size school districts in terms of job satisfaction and challenges of the position. This would allow a researcher to hear actual voices from the field in order to determine what are some issues of motivation for non-superintendents. Another study may be the motivational aspects or the challenges of the job that were not covered by this survey which might uncover some areas of motivation that are difficult to quantify. A third area needs to address females and the superintendency. This research showed some differences in beliefs exist between females in large and small districts. There are also gender differences in terms of organizational challenges. These reasons could be discovered more readily through qualitative studies.

Conclusion

A standard quantitative design study employing three surveys was used to identify motivating factors leading district level licensed personnel to choose whether or not to apply for the superintendency. Motivational theory, including the subcategories of content, process and

environment, served as the framework for identifying features of district level positions that are, for qualified individuals, motivating or not motivating in their decision to apply for district level administration including the superintendency. A three-part survey was given to examine three areas of motivation: a) What motivates a person to become a superintendent; b) What the person likes about the superintendency; c) What the person sees as the challenges of the position. Data were analyzed using ANOVA and a MANOVA. Results found differences between superintendents and non-superintendents in regards to organizational challenges and student-related challenges. Non-superintendents found both organizational and student-related challenges more challenging than did superintendents. There also was an intriguing interaction between position, gender and district size in liking the job. Males were similar in small districts but different in large districts whereas females were similar in large districts but different in small districts. These are, indeed, important implications to consider for Boards of Education when hiring a superintendent. Boards of Education serve students' academic interests; attracting highly skilled superintendents will potentially have an impact on student achievement (Glass & Bjork, 2003).

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

SURVEY

Part A

Demographics

The first part of this survey asks for the following information so that we can compare responses with different factors.

1. The number of years I have been a superintendent is _____.
2. The total number of years I have been in education is _____.
3. I am Male _____ Female _____.
4. My ethnic group is African Am. _____ Asian Am. _____ European Am. _____
Latino _____ Native Am. _____ Other _____
5. I would rate my overall job satisfaction as a superintendent as
Very Low _____ Low _____ Average _____ High _____ Very High _____
6. If you had it to do all over again, would you become a superintendent?
Yes _____ No _____
7. The number of students in my school district is Under 500 _____ 500-999 _____ 1000-2499 _____
2500-3999 _____ 4000-6000 _____ over 6000 _____
8. My age is Under 35 _____ 36-40 _____ 41-45 _____ 46-50 _____ 51-55 _____
56-60 _____ 60-65 _____ Over 65 _____
9. Currently, I am able to retire with full benefits.
Yes _____ No _____
10. All of my teaching experience has been in the state where I live now.
Yes _____ No _____

APPENDIX A (continued)

11. All of my administrative experience has been in the state where I live now.

Yes _____ No _____

12. This superintendency is my _____ (1st, 2nd, 3rd, etc.) superintendency.

Part B

What Do You Like About Being a Superintendent?

For each item below, please indicate how much you **LIKE** that aspect of your job. A “1” indicates a **WEAK** reason to like your job; a “5” indicates a very **STRONG** reason to like your job. Please circle a number from 1 to 5.

	WEAK			STRONG	
13. I have substantial input into the direction of the school district; to be part of the progress we make.	1	2	3	4	5
14. I have an opportunity to build a team of educators.	1	2	3	4	5
15. I have an opportunity to impact students.	1	2	3	4	5
16. I enjoy working with the Board of Education.	1	2	3	4	5
17. I enjoy the status of the job.	1	2	3	4	5
18. I get the opportunity to work with people I like.	1	2	3	4	5
19. I can make a difference in teaching and learning.	1	2	3	4	5
20. I can interact with a wide variety of people.	1	2	3	4	5
21. I am able to utilize the skills that I have.	1	2	3	4	5
22. I am able to work on a 12-month job, not a separate summer job.	1	2	3	4	5
23. I enjoy being a CEO, making final decisions.	1	2	3	4	5
24. I always have daily challenges in this job.	1	2	3	4	5
25. I can influence community decisions.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX A (continued)

- | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 26. I like the high visibility that this job has. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 27. I am in control of my daily schedule. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 28. I am paid well for this job. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 29. Other comments _____ | | | | | |

While you may feel that several of the above items are reasons why you like your job as superintendent, please **select the top three** and put the item number (13-28) of each reason below:

30. The number one reason from the list is number _____.
31. The second reason is number _____.
32. The third reason is number _____.

Part C

What Motivated You To Become a Superintendent in the First Place?

The second part of this survey deals with why you became a superintendent in the first place. While some reasons may be the same as those just discussed, there are some other reasons listed below, too. For each item below, circle 1 – 5 where “1” means that item was a **WEAK** motivator for you to seek the superintendency and “5” was a very **STRONG** motivator for you to become a superintendent.

- | | WEAK | | | STRONG | |
|--|-------------|---|---|---------------|---|
| 33. The job would provide me financial security. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 34. The job would allow me to help move the district forward. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 35. The job would enable me to live in a certain area. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 36. The job would enable me to provide leadership. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 37. Other superintendents I knew or worked for seemed to enjoy their work. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 38. The job would give me a broader span of influence than I had in a classroom or in a building level position. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 39. I thought I could do a better job than I had seen done. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX A (continued)

40. The job was a logical progression in my career.	1	2	3	4	5
41. I thought I would like working with the people in the office.	1	2	3	4	5
42. I wanted to be all that I would be (self-actualization).	1	2	3	4	5
43. I thought I could make a difference.	1	2	3	4	5
44. I had "paid my dues."	1	2	3	4	5
45. Other _____					

Again, look back through items and list the **top three reasons** that motivated you to become a superintendent (33-44)

- 46. The number one motivator from the list is number _____.
- 47. The second strongest motivator is number _____.
- 48. The third motivator is number _____.

Part D

Present Challenges for a Superintendent

The fourth (and final) part of this survey asks about some of the challenges to being a superintendent. Use the following scale in answering the remainder of the statements:

- Almost Always a Challenge (80%-99%) = 5
- Most of the Time a Challenge (60%-79%) = 4
- Occasionally a Challenge (40%-59%) = 3
- Some of the Time a Challenge (20%-39%) = 2
- Seldom a Challenge (1%-19%) = 1

	Seldom				Almost Always
49. Political obstacles are a daily occurrence in my superintendency.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX A (continued)

50. Policy implementation can often exert forces that can be felt by teachers, students, staff, administrators, and parents.	1	2	3	4	5
51. Political challenges can make it difficult for my board and me to work closely together.	1	2	3	4	5
52. I feel as though I have to be a political strategist to get my job done well.	1	2	3	4	5
53. High stakes testing is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
54. High stakes testing is discriminative in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
55. High stakes testing is worthwhile in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
56. Curriculum and instruction is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
57. Curriculum and instruction practices in my district include vertical and horizontal alignment.	1	2	3	4	5
58. I feel as though I have to manage the curriculum in my school district to get my job done well.	1	2	3	4	5
59. Funding is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
60. Funding plays a major role in student academic performance in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
61. Federal funds are implemented by my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
62. My district is a property-poor district and this serves as a challenge in my superintendency.	1	2	3	4	5
63. Socio-economic status of students is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
64. Socio-economic status of students influences the student academic gap in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
65. Socio-economic status of students influences the teaching preference of privileged and non-privileged students in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5

APPENDIX A (continued)

66. The student demographics of my school district are a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
67. The student demographics of my school district have an Influence in my district's accountability ratings.	1	2	3	4	5
68. The student demographics in my school district are presently changing considerably.	1	2	3	4	5
69. Personnel issues are present challenges.	1	2	3	4	5
70. Personnel ethics is a top priority in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
71. Personnel ethics are a required in-service in my district.	1	2	3	4	5
72. Highly qualified requirements are a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
73. Highly qualified requirements are met by teachers and paraprofessionals in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
74. Highly qualified teachers increase student academic performance in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
75. I am very familiar with the highly qualified requirements of teachers and paraprofessionals.	1	2	3	4	5
76. Educational diversity is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
77. Educational diversity exists in classrooms in my district.	1	2	3	4	5
78. Educational diversity is frustrating for classroom teachers in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
79. Student discipline is a present challenge.	1	2	3	4	5
80. Student discipline offenses are increasing my district.	1	2	3	4	5
81. Student discipline influences student academic achievement in my school district.	1	2	3	4	5
82. I feel that stakeholders of my school district feel safe when it comes to our school environments.	1	2	3	4	5
83. Any additional thoughts?					

APPENDIX B

CONSENT



*Department of Educational Leadership
Campus Box 142, Wichita, KS 67260-0142*

CONSENT FORM

PURPOSE: You are invited to participate in a study that addresses Motivating Factors in applying for the Superintendency.

PARTICIPANTS SELECTION: There will be 289 superintendent and 500 non-superintendents sought to participate. You have been selected because you are a current superintendent or because you are licensed to be a superintendent in the state of Kansas.

EXPLANATION OF PROCEDURES: Your participation will consist of completing one on-line survey that should take 20-30 minutes of your time. The survey will ask for the following: what you like about being a superintendent, what motivated you to become a superintendent and the challenges of being a superintendent. Also we will ask for some demographic information so that we can compare you with different groups (e.g., gender, age, rural-non-rural).

DISCOMFORT/RISKS: During data collection, participants will be encouraged to be open to the researcher. The researcher will keep all responses confidential. There are no anticipated risks to the participants. All participation will be voluntary and participants will be appraised of the research purpose and their rights as research subjects.

BENEFITS: As a participant in this study, you may benefit by becoming actively aware of the positives and challenges of the superintendency as well as what motivated you to pursue this career. Also, predictions suggest a future shortage of superintendent candidates, thus the results of this study will help communities and school boards understand what motivates an individual to pursue this career.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Any information obtained in this study in which you can be identified will remain confidential and will be disclosed only with your consent.

APPENDIX B (continued)

REFUSAL/WITHDRAWAL: Participation in this study is completely voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not effect your future relations with Wichita State University. If you agree to participate in this study, you are free to withdraw from this study at anytime without penalty.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about this research, you may contact Dr. Linda Bakken, Educational Leadership Department, Wichita State University, Wichita, 67260-0142 or LindaBakken@wichita.edu. Also you may contact Charlene Laramore, 316.393.3581 or claramore@usd260.com. If you have any questions pertaining to your rights as a research subject, you can contact the office of Research Administration at Wichita State University, Wichita, KS 67260-0007, telephone 316-978-3285.

APPENDIX C

ITEMS ELIMINATED FROM THE ORIGINAL SURVEY

What Do You Like About Being A Superintendent?

“I enjoy the school culture.”

What Motivated You to Become a Superintendent?

“I wanted to go beyond the building administrator level.”

Challenges for a Superintendent

Organizational Challenges

“High stakes testing has increased academic performance.”

“Curriculum and instructional design is developed through teacher input in my school district.”

Economic Challenges

“I agree with NCLB act and its role to close the gap between privileged and non-privileged children.”

Personnel-Related Challenges

“The student demographics influence the AYP requirements.”

Student-Related Challenges

“I am familiar with the definition of educational diversity.”

The above questions were eliminated because they offered some redundancy and did not substantially effect the Cronbach Alphas for inter-item reliability.

APPENDIX D

COMMENTS FROM SUPERINTENDENTS AND NON-SUPERINTENDENTS FROM THE SURVEY

Comments from Superintendents:

“As a classroom teacher I was 'given' more duties that were administrative in nature by my building principal who was no longer able to fulfill those duties. I soon found that I was better than the administrators in my district and encouraged to pursue that as a career move. Also, with 4 children there was no other way to support them as I qualified for reduced lunches on my teaching salary.” (male)

“I was born & raised in this community and have the community's best interests at heart. I am very passionate about the success of our students. I was asked to take the job when the BOE wanted to reduce the number of administrators. I serve also as secondary principal.” (male)

“I get to help more students.” This male superintendent believes that his help will help students achieve. (male)

“I really never aspired to the superintendency. I am glad that my career has gone the direction that it has, but I never considered it when I began my administrative degree.” (female)

“The high visibility can be both a positive and a negative. In a small or average size school district in Kansas you are always the superintendent.” (male)

“As an experienced superintendent, we are dealing with budget and other issues more numerous and more serious than ever in my career. The stress and demand for leadership (without winners) is extreme. I feel for the novice leaders who have little background to draw upon as they make decisions, with little experience or confidence to project possible outcomes.” (male)

APPENDIX D (continued)

“I also serve as secondary principal and that part of the job has made things not as satisfactory some of the times when dealing with day-to-day issues.” (male)

“If I was working with the original members of my BOE I would be more satisfied. I am now micromanaged which negatively impacts the enjoyment of my job.” (male)

“ I enjoy being a CEO, making final decisions is an awkward question. In our district most decisions are made as a team. It is very rare that I make a decision without input from the BOE, teachers, other administrators, support staff, parents and community.” (male)

“I don't know the best answer, but the current system of a board of education is flawed and can have a negative impact on local education and even the state level. There ought to be requirements (e.g. attorney general has to have a law background) for boards of education.” (male)

“The superintendency is very complex. In a small district, the daily tasks are varied and depend on one's ability to switch quickly between areas of responsibility (i.e., community relations, information technology, financial status, curriculum and instruction). I don't have the option to relegate these areas to others.” (female)

“We create the atmosphere in which we choose to work! I choose a very positive and upbeat style. Seems to work well even for those who choose to be annoyed at the least little bit of a challenge.” (male)

“With budget cuts and more demands, the superintendency has become much more challenging.” (male)

“A district-level administrative position is a challenge at this time with budget cuts and lack of funding.” (male)

APPENDIX D (continued)

“The last 3 years of state financial disarray has taken the fun out of this job.” (male)

“Sure, I would enjoy this job more without the constant financial stress we have faced over the past two years.” (male)

“Very stressful work” (male)

“ The superintendency isn't for everyone :)” (male)

Comment from Non-superintendent:

“I am an Associate Superintendent with primary responsibility for the Operations side of the school district.” (male)