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Mentoring of Special Education Administrators

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MENTORING OF SPECIAL EDUCATION ADMINISTRATORS

by

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ABSTRACT

Mentoring powerfully develops human potential but little has been known about mentoring in special education administration. Because mentoring has a centuries-long record of success, because of the importance of special education administrators, and because of the paucity of empirical knowledge on mentoring in special education administration, this study examines mentoring in the special education administration community.

The population for the study was approximately 1,465 practicing special education administrators in the state of California identified by the Center of Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE). Electronic mail was used to introduce the on-line survey, *Mentoring for Special Education Administrators*. The instrument was a 19-item questionnaire designed specifically to address the research questions of the study. There were 158 who responded to the survey, out of which 142 surveys were used for analysis.

Findings were described as frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations, as appropriate. To determine statistically significant differences between groups, ANOVA, including repeated-measures, and Chi-Square were used at a statistical significance threshold of $p < 05$. A post-hoc Tukey's least squared was used to localize for differences.

Findings from this study indicate mentoring is flourishing within the special education community. About three-quarters of special education administrators are providing mentoring to non-administrative special education professionals, and about half are mentoring other special education administrators. There were no statistically

significant differences in the rates of mentoring between males and females, and, no significant difference between mentoring and earlier acquisition of a special education administrative position. Special education administrators who have been mentored since entering special education administration were much more likely to mentor others. Psychosocial support was rated higher by those mentored than career development, but both functions were rated above average by respondents. Sharing one's skills, professional obligation, and seeing someone succeed were found to be significant as encouragers to mentoring. On average, respondents disagreed with the impediments as deterrents to mentoring.

Recommendations include more professional development activities inclusive of special education administrators, allowing individuals to make smoother, and more successful career transitions, without the isolation and lack of training that currently plagues the field of special education.

Dedication

This dissertation is lovingly dedicated to the late Genevieve Kay McDonald, my

grandmother, who taught me the value of perseverance, hard work, and independent

thinking. She always believed in me and encouraged me to pursue my dreams.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

Mentoring can be defined as a supportive learning relationship, wherein an experienced professional develops a protégé over time as with Socrates to Plato; Yoda to Luke Skywalker in the Star Wars saga; and Helen Keller and her mentor, Ann Sullivan, a particularly salient example of the invaluable role of mentoring in special education. Mentoring powerfully develops human potential (L. M. Hall, 2001), but little is known about mentoring in special education administration. Special education administrators are important because special education administrators have complex, challenging responsibilities with legal, moral, civic, and economic ramifications. Because of these challenges, special education administrators may greatly benefit from mentoring, parallel to mentoring successes in law, religion, medicine, business, and education (Playko, 1991). Because mentoring has a centuries-long (L. M. Hall, 2001) record of success, because of the importance of special education administrators, and because of the paucity of empirical knowledge on mentoring in special education administration, the present study examines mentoring in the special education administration community.

Background for the Study

Public Law 94-142 or the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EAHCA) was enacted in 1975 to meet the needs of approximately eight million students nationwide with disabilities (Bristo, 2001). These students were excluded from school, had unidentified disabilities, or had to travel great distances to receive special education services (Bristo). The EAHCA set new and far-reaching mandates for the needs of students with disabilities. The EAHCA has been the federal law governing all special

education services in the United States since its inception in 1975 (deBettencourt, 2002). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act established "complex requirements that are sometimes difficult to effectively implement at the state and local level" (Purcell, 2002, p. 20). Public Law 94-142 was amended in 1990 to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The 1990 Individuals with Disabilities Education Act recognized the right of each disabled student to a free appropriate public education (FAPE) and modified the original P. L. 94-142 act written by Congress in 1975 (Council for Exceptional Children [CEC], 2002).

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act was subsequently reauthorized in 1997 with a number of new provisions including an emphasis on early intervention as opposed to the discrepancy model of identification (Purcell, 2002). With the latest reauthorization of IDEA in November, 2004, there is pressure on school districts to follow guidelines of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) when implementing IDEA (Ralabate & Foley, 2003). As illustrated in the preceding history of reauthorizations and revisions, the intent of IDEA has been the same, that is, to protect the rights of students with disabilities. Prior to 1975 state and national programs were in existence mainly to offer services to the mildly and moderately handicapped. The Los Angeles School District wrote a report making recommendations for special education in 1960 regarding how special education students were served (Winzer, 1993). More recently, the National Council on Disability, charged with monitoring federal statues and programs pertaining to individuals with disabilities, has reported to Congress many effective improvements in the quality of the public education received by millions of American children with disabilities (Bristo, 2001). Today, nationally, there are approximately seven million

students with disabilities under 13 handicapping conditions receiving services and other educational interventions through IDEA (Bristo).

The monumental task of developing, implementing, and monitoring special education services under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act is specifically assigned to local school district management. In districts, individuals typically designated as coordinators and directors are charged with the administration of special education programs. The complexity of the legislation and associated statutes demands the special education administrator be knowledgeable about IDEA's processes and procedures. With the challenges of expertise in special education law and the supervision of professional and ancillary staff, personnel preparation becomes paramount. Unless management staff is provided with on-going training, special education children and services will fail resulting in a profound loss of human potential and huge legal risks impacting programs district and statewide (Purcell, 2002). Key among the spectrum of management training is the essential collaboration between general and special education teachers and administrators to assure that high quality educational programs are accessible to all students regardless of disability (Lashley & Boscardin, 2003). To support special education administrators in the daunting task of developing, establishing, and monitoring special education programs and services, this study supports mentoring as a training tool for preparing and supporting special education administrators.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to explore how common mentoring is in the special education administrative community in California, including how many special education administrators have been mentored and how many mentor others.

Gender differences in the base rates of mentoring were also explored among special education administrators. The study describes the mentoring, including gender of the mentor, length of the mentoring relationship, influence of the mentor, and the function the mentoring served. The study investigated whether mentoring reduced the time to acquire an initial special education administrator position. Furthermore, factors that encouraged and discouraged special education administrators to engage in mentoring were identified. The following research questions guided the study:

Research Questions

1. How common is mentoring among California special education administrators?

2. Are there gender differences in the base rates of mentoring among special education administrators?

3. Do special education administrators who have been mentored tend to mentor other special education administrators?

4. Does mentoring decrease the amount of time it takes for a special education professional to acquire a special education administrative position?

5. How do mentees describe the content of the mentoring relationship including gender of the mentor, how long mentored, influence of the mentor, and function of the mentoring?

6. What factors encouraged or discouraged special education administrators to engage in mentoring?

Significance of the Study

The significance of the study is there exists a paucity of research describing

mentoring in the special education administration community (Goad, 1996). We need a

detailed description of the state of affairs in the special education administrative

community (Goad, 1996; L. M. Hall, 2001). The second significant reason for the study

was to explore a possible strategy to train special education administrators so there is

better retention in the field of special education administration. Mentoring could be the

tool to decrease isolation among special education administrators thus encouraging

special education administrators to stay in the field (Goad, 1996). Mentoring could be the

tool to promote other special education personnel into the field of special education

administration and decrease expected shortages of personnel.

The significance of the study can be conceptualized by examining the challenges

and areas of concern a special education administrator faces that could be addressed

through mentoring (Goad, 1996). An administrator of special education programs meets

difficult challenges due to: job complexity, lack of adequate training, isolation from other

administrators, role ambiguity, and shortage of applicants (Goad). Responsibilities can

include, but are not limited to, legal issues, the selection, development, and evaluation

of personnel, fiscal management, program development and evaluation, parent and

community relations and curriculum and instructional services (Goad).

Job Complexity

Job complexity of the special education administrator position is thought-

provoking. Not only is the special education administrator required to translate law and

plan for compliance, but also has to be skilled in interpreting the potential impact of

significant court cases on policy and practice within the school district (Cline & Necochea, 1997). In California there are additional, more restrictive requirements for delivering special education services increasing the tasks for administrators (California Department of Education, 2003). For example, there are more restrictive criteria in California with regards to assessment of special education students. Administrators in charge of special education are usually responsible for developing appropriate programs with tight budgets. Special education administrators must also be familiar with advocacy, fiscal management, hiring, evaluating, and developing special education personnel; curriculum and instruction, discipline as it relates to special education, policy and planning, and working with the community (Goad, 1996). There is also increasing pressure on special education administrators to follow No Child Left Behind (NCLB) guidelines and build connections between this new law and IDEA (Purcell, 2002). In addition, there is pressure to base practices on addressing the over identification of culturally-diverse children entering special education programs (Webb-Johnson, Artiles, Trent, Jackson, & Velox, 1998). Today, schools must provide students with disabilities appropriate access to the general curriculum and effective instructional support. Special education administrators need to know how to accommodate disabled students in response to the recent demand that U.S. schools have received to successfully integrate students with disabilities in the regular classroom (Glynn & Jackson, 2004). As schools implement policies that integrate students with disabilities into the general education classroom and curriculum, special education administrators have a vital role in providing leadership for these efforts (Lashley, 2002). The study is significant because mentoring

could assist administrators with unraveling of the complexities of the job of the special education administrator (DiPaola & Walther-Thomas, 2003; Goad, 1996).

Lack of Adequate Training

The rhetoric of educating all children and leaving none behind has not yet resulted in an educational or preparation system that merges the knowledge traditions of general and special education to bring new knowledge and improved practices to bear on the education of students with disabilities (Lashley, 2002). In fact, many stakeholders are now in the midst of looking at how to prepare administrators, what we teach them, and what criteria to use to determine if educational leaders are prepared to handle or are handling the many emerging challenges of public education. Many states and organizations have developed or adopted standards that articulate a growing consensus about the knowledge, skills, and dispositions requisite to successful school leadership (Murphy & Shipman, 1999). The Interstate School Leadership Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) set of comprehensive standards are used by several states to guide leadership development and include:

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by facilitating the development, articulation, implementation, and stewardship of a vision of learning that is shared and supported by the school community.

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by advocating, nurturing, and sustaining a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff professional growth.

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by ensuring management of the organization, operations, and resources for a safe, efficient, and effective learning environment.

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by collaborating with families and community members, responding to diverse community interests and needs, and mobilizing community resources.

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by the success of all students by acting with integrity, fairness, and in an ethical manner.

- A school leader is an educational leader who promotes the success of all students by understanding, responding to, and influencing the larger political, social, economic, legal, and cultural context (Association of California School Administrators [ACSA], 1996; Murphy & Shipman, 1999).

In California, there are the six California Standards for Educational Leaders (CPSELS) which are aligned with the ISLLC standards. The California Commission on Teacher Credentialing uses CPSELS for candidates seeking an administrative credential. The idea behind the development of standards for educational leaders is that it would be the foundation to a support system for new administrators (Siskiyou County Office of Education [SCOE], 2002). The six CSPELS include:

- Develop and implement a school/community vision of learning.

- Establish and sustain a school culture and instructional program conducive to student learning and staff development.

- Ensure organization, operations and resource allocation to promote learning.

- Promote success of all students through the use of community resources; incorporate family and community expectations

- Model a code of ethics and develop leadership capacity

- Use the larger political, social, economic, legal and cultural context (SCOE, 2002)

Although there are currently no national standards for special education adminis-trators, the work of ISLLC and the CPSELS are motivated by a concern that existing preparation programs and support for new administrators are not preparing them for the tasks at hand (Dembrowski, 1997; SCOE, 2002).

Concerns About Existing Programs

Several concerns about typical existing preparation programs of educational administrators have been reported (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000). A lack of communication and collaboration between the university preparing the administrators and the school districts hiring the administrators was found (Leithwood & Duke, 1999). There was evidence that preparation programs needed more variation in approaches to learning in order to respond to adult learning needs. In addition, the content of the curriculum in the programs studied did not always appear relevant to the needs of the school districts. There are only a few university programs that even offer advanced degrees in the administration of special education (Krueger & Milstein, 1997). In addition, newly licensed administra-tors had minimal field experience prior to employment (Krueger & Milstein). Most preparation programs are focused on aspiring principals, so if those programs are not meeting the needs of new principals it is less likely that they would adequately train

administrators of special education who also have an exhausting list of responsibilities. Regardless of whether a state requires knowledge of special education for certification, all administrators must be afforded opportunities to acquire updated special education information on a periodic basis (Valesky & Hirth, 1992). According to Goad (1996), a survey conducted by Arick and Krug in 1993 given to special education administrators found 42% of the administrators were not certified in special education administration. Another 24% had less than one term of teacher training and less than 1 year of teaching experience in special education. In California, it is estimated that 20% of district-based special education administrators are not fully certified (Center on Personnel Studies in Special Education [COPSSE], 2004). The study is significant because it could establish better training methods for special education administrators.

Isolation

School administrators typically have a limited number of peers with whom to collaborate. Daresh and Playko (1991) suggest mentoring as an effective tool to deal with the isolation that may be felt by new administrators. Mentoring enables individuals to find a colleague who will be available to assist with difficult problems (Daresh, 1995). In special education, there are fewer peers than one would have as a school level adminis-trator; sometimes a single individual is assigned by a district for administering special education (McClish, 2003). Administrators of special education are often in the position where there is no one else with the needed expertise within the same school system (Goad, 1996). In Special Education Local Area Plans, better known as SELPAs, adminis-trators from surrounding districts typically meet monthly with a SELPA director. The SELPA is a consortium of neighboring school districts that collaborate to provide a full

range of special education programs for students residing in the region (McClish, 2003).

One of the functions of the SELPA is to provide support to colleagues. However, based

on the researcher's personal experience, the meetings are usually held monthly (instead of

daily or weekly contact with cohorts) and not geared to administrators needing to learn

how special education functions in their own district. The current study is significant

because results suggest that mentoring could greatly decrease the isolation experienced by

special education administrators.

Shortage of Applicants

Many stakeholders are concerned about the nationwide shortage of applicants for

positions as school administrators. A survey done by the National Association of

Elementary School Principals (NAESP) and the National Association of Secondary

School Principals (NASSP) affirmed that there is a shortage of qualified candidates for

principal vacancies in the United States (NAESP & NASSP, 1998). Central office

administrators and superintendents cited several factors that discouraged potential

principal applicants. Some of these factors include compensation that is considered

inadequate to the responsibilities of the position, the stress of the job, and the long hours

required. The California School Leadership Academy (CLSA) and the Association of

California School Administrators (ACSA) have joined together to address California's

statewide shortage of applicants for positions as school administrators (Girard

Foundation, 2000).

Special Education Administrator Shortages

Special education administrator shortages have not yet been determined (Lashley

& Boscardin, 2003). Yet, there is a shortage of applicants in almost all professions of

special education (COPSSE, 2004). Retaining for the whole field is difficult, which

impacts the number of available candidates for special education administration. The

Council of Exceptional Children (SEC) in conjunction with the Council of Administra-

tors of Special Education (CASE) is developing national competencies that would be

applied to accredit training programs by the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher

Education (NCATE; Lashley & Boscardin, 2003). The movement for standardization

across the United States would facilitate more accurate determination of special education

administrator shortages (Lashley & Boscardin). Some statistics are available. In Virginia,

high turnover has been seen with special education administrators in local school districts

(in Virginia school districts are called divisions). During the 1992-1993 school year, there

were eight new administrators in special education. In the 1993-94 school year, there

were 17 new special education administrators (Goad, 1996). The next year brought 16

new administrators and 8 for the beginning of the 1995-1996 school year (Goad). Based

on this, out of 133 school divisions, the rate of turnover ranged from 6.0% to 12.8%

(Goad). In 1999, in the state of Maryland, there were expected vacancies of 25% of the

Director of Special Education position statewide, and 30% was expected for the next year

(Paonessa, Alloway, & French, 2005). In California, statistics provided by the Center for

Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE, 2004) for the 2002/2003 school year

indicate that out of approximately 1,465 special education administrative/supervisory

positions about 5% were vacant, yet no information was available on how many of the

1,465 positions were new hires.

In summary, the current study is significant because it could impact mentoring

among special education administrators, thereby improving the training special education

administrators receive. In addition, administrators could be more expert in their field as a result of mentoring. Potentially, mentoring could save money as there would be fewer problems with retention of administrators who are no longer isolated. With better trained special education administrators who are better at problem-solving the complexities of the job, the lives of students with disabilities would be improved.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited in that the study only utilizes school districts in California, so generalizability to other states is uncertain. Another limitation is that the response rate was lower than expected. The group of special education administrators is spread out across the state and accessing them was difficult. The researcher attended several meetings to recruit special education administrators in an attempt to increase the response rate. Conferences of the Council of Administrators in Special Education (CASE) and the Student Services and Special Education Council of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) were also utilized to recruit members to participate in the study. In addition, the survey was available on-line at the Datacurious website making it easier to get the survey out to the special education administrator community. The study was further limited by the observational design. It was not a longitudinal research design. There was no pretest, no control group, no random assignment, and no experimental manipulation. Without experimental manipulation, it is impossible to definitely attribute cause and effect from any independent variable to differences in the dependent variables. Finally, another limitation of the study was that the study could not promise anonymity, only confidentiality. In order to increase response rate, the principal investigator accessed e-mails of the respondents through school district websites. However, the identifying

information of the participants was kept separate from the participants' responses. In addition, the responses were coded which assured confidentiality and minimized bias.

Definition of Terms

The study used the following operational definitions:

1. Special education administrator refers to an individual whose main responsibility in a local education plan area is to lead, supervise, and manage the provision of special education and related services for students with disabilities. They are identified by their membership in the professional organization of the California Council of Administrators of Special Education (CASE) or in the Division of Pupil Services and Special Education of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA) or by SELPA directors.

2. Mentoring refers to a reciprocal relationship between two people in a similar job (special education administration), where a more experienced special education administrator shares with a new special education administrator those details, instructions, and support needed to succeed in the job.

3. A mentor is defined as someone in the education profession who has had a positive and influential effect, in either a formal or informal capacity upon the career progress of an individual in the field of special education administration.

4. A mentee is a special education administrator who has received mentoring services to teach, support, guide, and advise them in their special education position.

5. Career development functions are aspects of mentoring which enhance career advancement (L. M. Hall, 2001; Kram, 1985). Career development function was described for this study as the mentor providing sponsorship, exposing an individual to professional connections, and providing challenging opportunities.

6. Psychosocial support functions are those aspects of mentoring that enhance an individual's sense of accomplishment, identity, and effectiveness in a profession (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial support for this study described the mentor as an encourager, advisor, supporter, friend, and as someone who helped the mentee develop personal talent. These psychosocial support functions enhance the overall competence of the developing professional (L. M. Hall, 2001).

Outline of the Dissertation Research

The following chapter provides a review of relevant literature regarding: (a) benefits of mentoring, (b) history of mentoring, (c) theoretical foundations of mentoring, (d) the functions of mentoring, (e) mentoring in education, (f) mentoring in educational leadership, and (g) mentoring in special education administration. Chapter 3 provides the specific methods by which the research questions were addressed, including compliance with ethical guidelines. Chapter 4 explains the results of the study, including demographic data as well as data based on the research questions that were developed for this study. Chapter 5 provides a summary of the dissertation and discussion of the findings and the implication of those findings for the field of special education administration.

Chapter 2

Review of the Literature

Historical Perspectives

Mentoring is one of the oldest forms of learning, having been around for centuries (Murray, 1991; Szumlas, 1999). The term mentor meaning enduring originated from Greek mythology (Murray, 1991). Odysseus from Homer's epic *The Odyssey* readies to leave for his long journey to defend Troy. He appoints his trusted employee, Mentor, to advise and counsel, Telemachus, Odysseus' son (Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2001). At that time, it was customary to pair younger males with older males in an attempt to teach values (Murray, 1991). From Homer's literary description, one captures the image of a wise and patient counselor shaping and guiding the life of a young colleague (Daresh, 1995; Gibson, Tesone, & Buchalski, 2000; Goad, 1996; Murray, 1991). Homer's story reflects one of the oldest attempts to facilitate mentoring. The story demonstrates that humans learn skills, culture, and values directly from other humans (Murray). The Middle Ages saw the extensive use of mentors or masters. The masters would apprentice young boys in a particular trade or craft. The master/apprentice relationship was very personal and many times the young boy lived with their master/mentor (Murray). In the Industrial Age, there was the birth of unions and the focus changed to worker against employer. Thus, began the decline of the master/apprentice relationship and the development of the employee/employer relation-ship (Murray). Organizational changes such as downsizing, restructuring, teamwork, increased diversity, and individual responsibility for career development are contributors to the resurgent interest in mentoring in the 1990s (Sosik & Lee, 2002; Trestan, 1999).

Hundreds of books, journal articles, papers and reports have been published on mentoring in various careers, professions, and arenas (Daresh & Playko, 1991; Gibson et al., 2000; L. M. Hall, 2001; Kram, 1985; Levinson, Darrow, Klein, Levinson, & McKee, 1978; Murray, 1991). Among some of the numerous mentoring-type relationships recorded through out history are philosophers Socrates to Plato and Aristotle; artists Bing Crosby to Frank Sinatra; Tina Turner to Mick Jagger; civic leaders Richard Nixon to George Bush, Sr.; business entrepreneurs Harland Sanders to Dave Thomas; and poets Ralph Waldo Emerson to Henry David Thoreau (Peer Systems, 2002).

Mentoring Defined

Mentoring has been defined in many ways by researchers (L. M. Hall, 2001; Kartje, 1996). Mentoring is described as an interpersonal relationship that evolves over a period of time between a senior or more experienced person and a junior or more inexperienced person (Gibson et al., 2000). Mentoring is a sustained relationship that develops between an experienced veteran in a profession or career with a novice new to a profession or career (Allen & Eby, 2004; Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000; Murray, 1991). Szumlas (1999) goes further to describe mentoring as a professional development tool that has reciprocal effects. Both the protégé and mentor undergo identity transformations. For the protégé, the transformation is complete when he or she no longer works under the tutelage of a mentor (Szumlas). For the mentor, the basic act of assisting an inexperienced newcomer to the profession can transform him or her to a higher level of achieving within the organization (L. M. Hall, 2001; Szumlas, 1999). Mentoring fosters risk-taking and experimenting with new ideas. Mentoring creates learning opportunities where the novice learns from the experienced (Vincent & Seymour, 1995). Mentoring is a living, breathing

process that focuses on people and changes lives (Dalcourt, 2002). Mentoring is a cultivating endeavor that helps individuals mature and encourages action much like "tilling the soil" cultivates the land (Dalcourt). Mentoring is described by Ralph Waldo Emerson, poet, philosopher and mentor like this: "My chief want in life is someone who shall make me do what I can" (Peer Systems, 2000).

Importance of Mentoring

Mentoring is critically important in the growth and development of individuals (Kram, 1985; Parmley, 2001; Szumlas, 1999). Mentoring effects change which can contribute significantly to the career development of employees (L. W. Hall, 2000; Kram, 1985). Mentoring is generative for mentors who see themselves doing something useful and making a contribution (Szumlas, 1999). Mentoring assists organizations with job satisfaction of employees and, therefore, more productive employees (Fagan & Walter, 1982; Levinson et al., 1978; Mobley, Jaret, Marsh, & Lim, 1994). Mentoring is important because mentors learn to understand their protégés and protégés blossom under the tutelage of their mentors (L. W. Hall, 2000; Murray, 1991). Mentors can provide valuable advice from experience. Mentors can serve as an advocate, bring opportunities to the attention of the mentee and write letters of recommendation. Mentors give advice for sticky situations, challenge the mentee academically and professionally, console in times of disappointment and celebrate in times of success (Dalcourt, 2002).

> Mentors are guides. They lead us along the journey of our lives. We trust them because they have been there before. They embody our hopes, cast light on the way ahead, interpret arcane signs, warn us of lurking dangers and point out unexpected delights along the way. (Daloz, 1986, p. 1)

Functioning as experts, mentors provide authentic, experiential learning opportunities as well as an intense interpersonal relationship through which social learning takes place (Treston, 1999). The importance of mentors and mentoring in the field of special education administration is yet to be determined.

Why is Mentoring Common?

Mentoring is common because it benefits all who are involved including mentee, mentor, and the organization (Dalcourt, 2002). The literature is full of studies supporting mentoring in a multitude of professions and arenas (Murray, 1991). Mentoring occurs in almost every profession including law, religion, medicine, business, and education (Pereira, Valentine, & Wilson, 2002; Playko, 1991). Yet, there is a paucity of research documenting mentoring in special education administration.

Benefits of Mentoring

There are numerous benefits of mentoring for mentees (Goad, 1996). The benefits include skill development, increased self-confidence, increased productivity, greater job satisfaction, and reduction of isolation (Goad). Friendship was identified as a benefit based on a study of mentoring among teachers, police officers, and nurses (Fagan & Walter, 1982). In mentoring among female executives, 97% of the respondents identified mentoring as assisting their careers (Vincent & Seymour, 1995). Exchange of ideas and support and guidance were identified as benefits of mentoring in a study of aspiring administrators (Dunlap, 1990). Levinson et al.'s study (as cited in L. M. Hall, 2001; as cited in Valeau, 1999) in adult development of 40 men found that mentoring facilitated the psychological growth of the mentees. From a sample of 254 managers, being a mentee was associated with a more positive job experience (Baugh, Lankau, & Scandura, 1996).

The greatest benefit of mentoring is that mentors challenge mentees to develop their full potential (Vincent & Seymour, 1995).

A key to benefits for mentors is exposure to a professional new to the profession (Goad, 1996). By contact with the new person, the mentor is exposed to new ideas and new perspectives (Daresh & Playko, 1991; Goad, 1996). Other benefits of providing mentoring include personal satisfaction, enhanced self-esteem, prestige within the organization, feeling of accomplishment by helping others, and examining one's own skills while helping others (Dalcourt, 2002; Green, 1989; Vincent & Seymour, 1995). Mentees advance the mentor's career by offering assistance such as finishing a project (Vincent & Seymour). Assigning mentees to special projects can build the mentor's reputation for getting things done (Vincent & Seymour). Mentors aid in retention by providing clarity and perspective to the novice employee (Dalcourt, 2002).

Mentoring not only benefits the employee (mentee) and mentor but benefits the organization (Bahniuk & Hill, 1998; Goad, 1996; Kalbfleisch, 1998). Mentoring is an effective method for helping an individual realize his/her potential within the context of the organization (Goad, 1996; Murray, 1991). The mentor and mentee interact; in turn, they influence and are influenced by the organization (Murray). Retention among administrators, increased productivity, greater job satisfaction, and less job burnout are all benefits for an organization (Goad, 1996; Murray, 1991; Triple Creek Associates, 2002). Another positive benefit to the organization is a tendency for protégés to pick up positive traits of the mentor (Fagan & Walter, 1982). In a study of mentoring among teachers, nurses, and police officers, there was a significant tendency for mentees to develop the traits of discipline and hard work (Fagan & Walter). Mentors do not invest for personal

profit but for that of the individual and the institution in which they are personally

invested (Dalcourt, 2002). Cost effectiveness is a positive benefit for organizations with

mentors carrying out mentoring responsibilities in addition to their regular job duties

(Murray, 1991).

Adult Development Theory and Mentoring

Adult development is the theoretical foundation supporting mentoring (Goad,

1996; L. W. Hall, 2000; Levinson et al., 1978; Vaillant, 2003). According to adult

development theory, adults pass through a number of stages as they grow and develop

(Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996). Erikson postulated a psychosocial development theory to

cover human development from birth through old age. Each stage builds upon each other

and focuses on a challenge or crisis. The central feature of adulthood has been identified

as "generativity versus stagnation" (Goad, 1996; Erikson, 1997). Generativity is the

caring for and contributing to the life of the next generation (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall,

2000). Generativity is a natural, age-sequenced evolutionary stage of psychosocial

development that includes a concern for improving the world for the next generation

(Pereira et al., 2002). Erikson (1997) outlines a widening commitment to take care of

others and proposes that young adults need guidance from mature adults. Levinson et al.'s

(as cited in Goad, 1996) descriptive study of adult development based on a sample of 40

men, stresses the importance of a young man finding a suitable mentor to assist with the

transition into adulthood. Vaillant's (2003) study of 95 Harvard male graduates found that

most successful men had been both protégés in a mentor relationship and mentor to

others. Mature adults grow and develop through the assistance to the younger generation

(Erikson, 1997). The contribution of the mature adults "encompasses growth, creativity,

and productivity, and thus a generation of new beings as well as of new products and ideas" (Erikson, p. 67). Having established one's values and a close relationship with another person, the adult now wants to pass on what he or she has learned through productive work and through nurturing the next generation (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000).

Empirical studies have confirmed the significance of mentoring and the concept of generativity (Goad, 1998; L. W. Hall, 2000; Jacobi, 1991; Vaillant, 2003; Whitaker, 2000). In a group of 103 teacher mentors from three school districts in Philadelphia, mentoring was reaffirmed as a way of achieving generativity (Stevens, 1995). Police departments in Houston, Fresno, Miami, and several other cities have developed Field Training Officer (FTO) programs. In a typical FTO program, a young officer graduates from the training academy and is assigned to a veteran police officer (his FTO) for a probationary period, usually 3 to 6 months. The FTO guides, trains, and passes on his skills to the novice in the official and unofficial aspects of police work (Dade County Public Safety, as cited in Fagan & Walter 1982; Fresno Police Department, as cited in Fagan & Walter). In a study of 142 firefighters, mentoring was recommended as an opportunity for long-term workers to develop new skills and pass on their skills to rookies (Traut, Larsen, & Feimer, 2000). Mentoring is a means for experienced mentors to fulfill their need for generativity by facilitating the socialization of a new employee or student (Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996). Kram (1985) suggests that mentors have the opportunity to fulfill generative needs by passing on wisdom and developing their sense of competency and self-worth. Seasoned special education administrators could provide support,

encouragement, and new ideas to the newcomers to fulfill generative needs (Goad, 1996; Kram, 1985).

Adult development in women was originally based on a masculine image (Gilligan, 1982). Freud's psychoanalytic theory struggled to resolve differences in women and men eventually explaining women's development as compromised in terms of the man (Gilligan). The criticism of women by Freud is also seen in the work on moral development by Piaget and Kohlberg (Gilligan). Moral development and maturity is derived from the study of men's lives (Gilligan). Erikson (1997) did observe differences in the development of men and women. Erikson's (as cited in Gilligan) theory saw men reaching identity as a function of separateness, whereas women reached identity through relationships with others. Yet Erikson's psychosocial development theory did not take into account women's growth through relationships. In his eight stages of development he identified attachments as impediments to development as was described in the case of women (Gilligan, 1982). In women's development into adulthood many researchers now see relationships and caring as central concepts in women's adult development, where affiliation, caring, and interdependence are primary functions (Allen & Eby, 2004; Gilligan, 1982; Kram, 1985). Kram (1983) supports that the relationship fulfills a psychosocial function identified by trust, emotional support, counseling, role-modeling, acceptance, and affirmation.

Mentoring Others

Mentoring others has been identified through theories in adult development for both men and women as an important component of career and life stages. In relationship to adult development theory is the tendency of those who have mentored to mentor others

(L. W. Hall, 2000). Vaillant (2003) found that most successful men had been both protégés in a mentor relationship and mentor to others. In a study of female executives from business (managers, supervisors, accountants, sales agents, entrepreneurs), from the healthcare industry (nurses, doctors, physical therapists), and from education and government (administrators, directors, professors) who had mentored, 77.8% were former mentees (Vincent & Seymour, 1995). The same study further indicated that women are as willing to mentor as men, indicating generativity works across gender. In a study of mentoring among women in business, women who had been mentored were almost twice as likely to mentor others (Pruden, 1998). A significant relationship was found between one having received mentoring and the tendency to mentor others in a study of the relationship between mentoring and the initial acquisition of the elementary principalship (L. W. Hall, 2000). In other words, those elementary principals who had received mentoring were much more likely to act as mentors to others in the profession than those who had not received mentoring. Another study of special education administrators in rural east Texas found that half of those mentored went on to mentor others (Irby & Brown, 1994). Experienced mentors fulfill their need for generativity by developing and socializing an inexperienced newcomer (Goad, 1996). Mentoring builds capacity by nurturing, guiding, and supporting the next generation (Goad, 1996; L.W. Hall, 2000).

Influence of Mentoring on Women

The influence of mentoring on women was supported in a study by Avon Products, Inc. (Pruden, 1998). Results of the Avon *Mentoring Matters Survey*, reveals that mentoring makes a decided difference in career advancement and business success of women. Revealing that 68% of women 18-29 have had mentors, the survey indicates that

mentorship of women is on the rise (Pruden). Avon conducted its *Mentoring Matters Survey* via the internet to over 2,000 female and male respondents, in order to explore the trend of mentoring among women in business and women small business owners. Among the key findings were:

- Women who have had mentors are almost twice as likely as other women to mentor someone else.

- More than half of women entrepreneurs have had mentors, and of these, nearly half (48%) had mentors who were also women.

- Among women owning small businesses and who have had mentors, an overwhelming 94% say that the experience was "Crucial/Very Helpful" to their success.

- There is significantly more mentoring of women in senior management (81%) than of women in the small business arena.

The roles, functions, and importance of mentoring, as well as related gender issues, were examined in a study of business school graduates from two major American universities (Dreher & Ash, 1990). Career success and mentoring experiences were examined in relation to gender, economic success, promotion, and compensation satisfaction (Dreher & Ash). Researchers hypothesized that the mentor connection enabled the protégé to access informal social and informational networks, while providing essential modeling of important managerial skills. Data were collected through the *Pay Satisfaction and Mentoring Questionnaire*. A 500 person stratified, matched male-female sample was drawn, yielding a final analysis sample of 320. When results were compiled, men and women reported similar frequencies of mentoring from senior officials. The primary

difference, with or without consideration of gender, was that annual income was higher for men. Researchers concluded that, in the corporate environment, mentoring was equally available to males and females and that a positive relationship between mentoring and career success did exist (Dreher & Ash).

Role of Mentoring on Career Outcome

Numerous researchers have discussed the role of mentoring on positive career outcomes for protégés (L. W. Hall, 2000; Kram, 1985; Levinson et al., 1978). In an ambitious and complex descriptive study, Kram (1985) examined the mentor relationship within a hierarchical corporate structure and its contribution to early and mid-career development. She studied 18 pairs of younger and older managers' relationships in different phases of development. Younger managers' work history and experiences with older managers were explored in intensive 2-hour interviews (L.W. Hall, 2000; Kram, 1985). During the first interview, the manager would identify a senior manager significant in his/her development, after which successive interviews with the protégé and the named mentor took place, detailing how the relationship had developed and how it had fit into the mentor's career (L. W. Hall, 2000). The study established that the most frequently observed function, sponsorship of successful protégés, was mutually beneficial to both mentor and protégé (Kram, 1985). Sponsorship enhanced the sponsor's credibility and respect within the organizational structure. In a study of gender differences in mentoring in the military, student protégés identified the career function of coaching as the primary benefit derived from a mentoring interaction (Knouse, Smith, Smith, & Webb, 2000). A key finding in a study of mentoring Hispanic women was that Hispanic women benefitted in an increase in the scope of their job responsibilities and the status of their position

(Amabicia, 2005). Vincent and Seymour (1995) further studied the effects of mentoring on careers. When studying the responses of mentors/nonmentors to a survey, the researchers found that 62.6% of mentors felt their careers had been assisted by their efforts with the mentees. In a study of special education teachers, Whitaker (2000) found a statistically significant difference between the perceived overall effectiveness of the mentoring and the first year teacher's plans to stay in special education. In a study of 316 elementary principals, 83% had benefitted from mentoring and of those protégés, 83% found mentoring essential in the acquisition of the initial elementary principalship (L. W. Hall, 2000). It is an empirical question as to whether special education administrators find mentoring important to the acquisition of a special education administrative position.

Mentoring Functions

Mentoring is identified in the literature as serving various functions (Allen & Eby, 2004; Dougherty, Lee, & Turban, 2000; Goad, 1996; James & Murrell, 2001; Kearney, Orrego, Plax, & Waldeck, 1997; Kram, as cited in L. W. Hall, 2000). A definition of mentoring functions which includes career advancement functions and psychosocial support functions has been provided in the widely-cited qualitative work of Kram (as cited in Dougherty et al., 2000). Career development functions of mentoring are described as sponsorship, professional socialization, advocacy, teaching, coaching, protection, exposure, and challenging work. The career development functions facilitate the mentee's acquisition of new skills and new knowledge within an organization (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Dougherty et al., 2000; Kram, as cited in L. W. Hall, 2000; Sosik & Lee, 2002). In studying business school graduates in the corporate environment, a positive relationship between mentoring and career success was found to exist (Dreher & Ash,

1990). True mentoring is not only about career development (Rymer, 2002). The mentoring relationship also fulfills a psychosocial support function defined as trust, emotional support, shared problem-solving, counseling, acceptance, and affirmation (Allen & Eby, 2004; Kram, as cited in L. W. Hall, 2000). In a study of assigned mentoring relationships involving 139 educators and 43 mentors, aspiring educational administrators received psychosocial benefits but limited benefits in terms of career advancement functions (Goad, 1996). Based on a sample of 200 superintendents in a study of mentoring and the superintendency, a statistically significant difference at the .05 level between the male mentor/male protégé group and the male mentor/female protégé group existed for the psychosocial function of friendship (L. M. Hall, 2001). Jacobi (as cited in Ward, West, & Isaak, 2000) has identified three psychosocial functions of mentoring that helped reduce stress: (a) professional development, (b) emotional support, and (c) role modeling. In a qualitative study of assigned and unassigned mentoring relationships of first year special education administrators in Virginia, Goad (1996) reached several conclusions about the functions of the assigned mentoring relationships. The assistance offered to the mentees ranged from specific information to general survival strategies. Benefits identified by the mentees included the career functions of increased knowledge, increased confidence, establishment of a network, reduction of isolation, promoting retention, and greater job satisfaction (Goad). Both parties (mentors and mentees) saw benefit of having contact with another special education administrator (someone in the same position). From that commonality, mentors and mentees were able to problem-solve situations or difficulties together and pool resources. In the realm of psychosocial functions, the relationship offered a mechanism for reducing stress and improving coping skills (Goad).

Mentoring in Educational Leadership

The mentoring process in educational leadership is just beginning to be explored. Many practitioners report that they need more assistance to make a smoother transition into their administrative roles (Dunlap, 1990). Mentoring can be beneficial to mentees aspiring to become administrators and for practicing administrators who are ready to share their knowledge and skills with others (Dunlap). The use of mentors to assist educational leaders is a powerful tool that may be used to bring about more effective school practices. The emergence of effective mentoring as professional development could help districts develop new administrators into effective, well-prepared leaders (Playko, 1991). Mentoring teaches roles and socializes adults into leadership positions (Cline & Necochea, 1997). It is crucial then for mentoring to be included in the selection, development, and preparation of future school leaders (Cline & Necochea, 1997; Milstein & Krueger, 1997). About 20 states have mandated mentoring programs requiring all beginning administrators to participate in some type of induction program (Daresh, 1995). In one San Diego County district, the "Leadership Academy for Site Administrators" was established in support of the emphasis on instruction (San Diego City Schools, 2002). It is a collaborative project involving the district, two universities, and the County Office of Education. Part of the program involves mentoring of new and inexperienced principals. A mentor is a veteran principal who has demonstrated excellence in instructional leadership. The role of the veteran principal is to assist new principals in deepening their knowledge and skill and to foster continuous improvement of leadership efforts through various reflective and problem-solving activities (San Diego City Schools). The program as of yet does not take individuals aspiring to be special education administrators. In

Pavan's (as cited in L. W. Hall, 2000) 1986 statewide Pennsylvania study of 622 (N = 1,324) incumbent and aspiring public school administrators, respondents were asked to identify the sex and role of three mentors and to rate their value to the protégé in terms of career and psychosocial functions. These two categories followed a paradigm similar to that which Kram (1985) used in her research for *Mentoring at Work: Developmental Relationships in Organizational Life.* Career functions included sponsorship, coaching, access to power groups, information and opportunity provider. Psychosocial functions included counseling; providing support, encouragement, and friendship; role modeling; and facilitating the move from classroom to administration. Fewer aspiring administrators than incumbents reported having mentors. Surprisingly, despite the fact that women in the study held only a little more than 3% of both the secondary principalships and superintendencies, and only 16.9% of the elementary principalships, women reported being mentored as often as men (L. W. Hall, 2000). Using survey methodology, L. W. Hall studied the relationship between the type of professional mentoring received and other predictors of an individual's acquisition of the elementary principalship. One of the findings included the fact that 83.5% out of 316 elementary principals received some form of mentoring. Qualitatively, respondents spoke highly of the mentoring they received. An emerging theme from a qualitative study of special education administrators using one-on-one interviews was to have another person with whom to share ideas and anticipate job scenarios and problem-solve (Goad, 1996). In a qualitative study using grounded theory technique, Parmley (2001) discovered several themes when obtaining perspectives from females in special education administration. Analysis of the responses revealed strong support for mentoring. One statement made by one of the women: "I

really wish that I have been fortunate enough to have a mentor. However, I didn't" and

another woman commented: "I have never had a mentor. I do have a supervisor who is

trying to give me more responsibilities and help me learn more about her position, but not

for my job. Maybe I have a mentor in the broadest sense of the term" (Parmley, p. 81).

Mentoring in Special Education Administration

The prevalence of mentoring in special education administration is unknown.

There is, however, some limited research looking at mentoring as a professional develop-

ment tool for special education administrators. Irby, Brown, Bull, and Montgomery

(1995) did a pilot investigation with 15 special education administrators in small or rural

school districts in East Texas. Respondents were given a 31-item questionnaire where one

of the sections centered on the respondents' views and experiences with mentoring.

Eighty percent of the respondents rated mentoring from important to very important.

About one-third of the respondents had been mentored, and about half of those (47%)

indicated that they had been mentors. Although the sample was small, it follows along

with other studies where mentoring is seen as an important component to one developing

in their career (Dunn, DeWaters, & Williams, 1996; Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000). In

examining the mentoring relationships of special education administrators, Goad (1996)

recommends a mentoring program where mentees and mentors are assigned. The study

reinforced basic principles from the literature in establishing a formal program:

1. Identification of the need for mentoring and common goals developed.

2. Participation of mentors and mentees needs to be voluntary.

3. Choice in selection of mentoring partner.

4. Mentoring needs to be a part of the professional development program in the district.

5. Orientation for mentors and protégés.

6. Facilitation of assigned relationships.

A statewide, formal training program has been developed in the state of Maryland called the Special Education Leadership Academy to identify potential special educational leaders as a solution to the shrinking pool of special education administrators statewide. It is funded by the State Department of Education in Maryland with support from John Hopkins University, and mentoring is an important component of the academy. In its sixth year of operation, the academy has trained 74 administrators, and end-of-the-year evaluations for the last 5 years indicate that all participants in the academy rate mentoring as a 9 on a point scale ranging from 1 to 10 (Paonessa et al., 2005). Twenty-eight of the graduates have been promoted into leadership positions in both general and special education. Follow-up of the graduates is expected.

Of course, quantitative research in special education administration is still dismally limited. A general observational study of the status of mentoring in the special education community would be imperative before recommendations for mentoring programs could be recommended in California.

Conclusion

Induction into a new position, whether it is at the start of one's career or a change occurring during a career shift, is a traumatic experience. The desire to gain assistance from colleagues can be quite high, but seeking help is difficult for many reasons especially in the complicated and often litigious arena of special education administration

(Goad, 1996). Prior research on the mentoring of special education administrators is limited. With the shift to emphasis on inclusion and instruction in the core curriculum (Bass, 2000; Purcell, 2002) it is more imperative that staff development and training of special education administrators occur to improve the quality of instruction for all of our special education students. Mentoring has shown its effectiveness, its benefits, and popularity as a training tool in many other professions including education (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000; Murray, 1991; Sosik & Lee, 1998). More information is needed on the prevalence of mentoring among special education administrators. The study added much needed research to the field of special education administration. It determined the prevalence of mentoring for special education administrators in the state of California and examined the likelihood of a mentored special education leader providing mentoring to a new special education administrator. In addition, the study examined the relationship between acquisition of a special education administrative position and mentoring. With the complex nature of special education, mentoring may be the key to creating a job that is more palatable.

Chapter 3

Methodology

Overview

The primary focus of the current study was to explore mentoring in the special education administrative community in California, including how many special education administrators have been mentored and how many mentor others. Gender differences were explored among special education administrators who provided mentoring and among those who received mentoring. The study also investigated whether mentoring reduced the time to acquire an initial special education administrator position. The study described the mentoring received, including the gender of the mentor, length of the mentoring relationship, influence of the mentor, and the function the mentoring served. Finally, factors that encouraged and discouraged special education were identified. As such, the purpose of this chapter is to describe the design and methodology used in the study. The chapter delineates the population and sample and identifies the research procedures, instrumentation, and statistical methods that were used in the data analysis.

Participants

The sample was drawn from a population of approximately 1,465 practicing special education administrators in California public schools kindergarten through 12th grade identified by the Center of Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE, 2004). The population of special education administrators are college-educated with at least a baccalaureate degree and at least 3 years experience as a teacher, pupil personnel professional (i.e., school psychologist), a health services professional (i.e., nurse), or a library services professional. In California, before an applicant can pursue or obtain an

initial administrative service credential, one must obtain a teaching or service credential.
A valid basic California teaching credential, a pupil personnel services credential, health
services credential, a library services credential, a designated subjects credential with a
baccalaureate degree, or a clinical rehabilitative services credential is required before
obtaining an administrative services credential (San Francisco State University [SFSU],
2005). A minimum of 3 years of successful full-time teaching, pupil personnel service,
health service or library service experience (or combination) in public schools or private
schools of equal status is also required (SFSU). Special education administrators would
follow the same college and experience requirements to become an administrator.

The special education administrators were identified through Special Education
Local Plan Area (SELPA) directors (McClish, 2003), membership in the Student Services
and Special Education Council of the Association of California School Administrators
(ACSA), membership in the Council of Administrators in Special Education (CASE),
and through the individual websites of California public schools available through the
California Public School Directory (Content Providers, 2005). Data were collected during
the months of August 2005 through January 2006.

Research Design

The research design for the study was a cross-sectional observation that initially
describes the frequency of mentoring among special education administrators in Califor-
nia (Howell, 2002; Keppel, 1991). Data were collected through the use of self-reported
survey procedures. Survey research has been documented as the most frequently used
methodology in descriptive educational research (Kerlinger, as cited in L. W. Hall,
2000). In fact, "surveys are frequently conducted for the purpose of making descriptive

assertions about some population" (L. W. Hall, p. 25). Additionally, such sample surveys permit collection of information from a larger sample then interviewing (Sudman & Bradburn, 1982).

Instrumentation

The survey instrument created exclusively for the study was *Mentoring for Special Education Administrators Survey* (Appendix A). The survey contained 19 items including demographic information. The researcher designed the survey based on the outcomes desired from each of the research questions.

The first two items on the survey were a practice set designed to allow the respondent to become familiar with the presentation and format of the survey. The questions were: do you work in special education, and, rate the complexity of special education on a scale of 1 to 10. The questions were related to the field of special educa-tion so participants would not notice differences between the practice set and the actual survey items. Unrelated practice questions may have resulted in confusion for the respondent.

Items 1 through 6 on the survey were the demographic statements regarding gender, credential categories, current position, years as a special education administrator, and years in special education prior to acquiring the initial special education administra-tive position. Questions 7, 8, and 9 specifically asked the respondent whether or not they were mentored. Each question represented a time period during the career of the respon-dent when mentoring could have occurred. The time periods were before entry into special education administration, since entering special education administration, and currently receiving mentoring. These questions were designed to track mentoring

activities, if any, that an administrator experienced as a mentee. A respondent checked "yes" or "no" to questions 7, 8, and 9. If the respondent had been mentored then questions 10, 11, 12, and 13 asked the respondent to describe the mentoring relationship in the following terms: gender of the mentor, number of years the mentoring relationship lasted, level of influence from the mentor for the mentee to progress toward an entry special education administrative position, and the function of the mentoring: career development versus psychosocial support. Question 10 was a self-reported choice for gender of the mentor, and question 11 required the respondent to fill-in the number of years of the mentoring relationship. Level of influence (question12) was reported on a 4-point Likert scale rated from minimally influential to absolutely influential. Questions 13a and 13b were created to purposely elicit mutually exclusive responses to differentiate between career development and psychosocial support functions (L. M. Hall, 2001; Kram, 1985). Career development function was described as the mentor focusing on career development, providing sponsorship, exposing an individual to professional connections, and providing challenging opportunities. Psychosocial support function described the mentor as an encourager, advisor, supporter, friend, and as someone who helped the mentee develop personal talent. The respondent described on a point scale of 1 to 10 how much of the mentoring received was career development and how much was psychosocial support. Questions 14 and 15 elicited responses regarding the mentoring special education administrators provided as mentors to special education professionals. The participant responded "yes" or "no" to mentoring nonadministrative special education professionals and to mentoring administrative special education professionals. If the respondent indicated "no" on questions 14 and 15, the respondent was asked to respond

to questions 16a-g, impediments to mentoring. The factors rated as impediments included: too time consuming, no experience yet in the field, no viable candidates in the district, need to maintain own position and not create competition, not being asked to mentor, and expectation that others achieve position through own initiative. Impediments were rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." Only those who had mentors responded to question 16, but all respondents were asked to respond to Questions 17 a-g, encouragers to mentoring. The factors rated as encouragers included: seeing others succeed, sharing skills, recalling events from one's own career, meeting professional obligations, learning new skills from mentees, and learning new information from mentees. Encouragers were rated on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree."

The on-line survey was nine pages in length. The informed consent for the study was the first page of the survey. The second page explained the study including a statement of confidentiality. Page three contained the two practice questions. The remaining six pages contained the survey questions 1-17. Sudman and Bradburn (1982) have discussed that the saliency of a topic increases the response rate. Mentoring in education is currently a very salient topic in California. It is believed that the current research study validates the saliency of mentoring for special education administration, a profession that has become more complicated and challenging over the years.

Variables in the Study

Variables used in the study included gender, which was used to determine the extent of male and female differences in mentoring of special education administrators. Administrative credentials held were the self-reported choice of Certificate of Eligibility,

Tier I or Preliminary, Tier II or Professional, or No Administrative credential. Other

credentials held were self-reported using a fill-in-the-blank format on the survey. Title of

the current position held was the self-reported choice of Director of Special Education,

Director of Student Services, Coordinator of Special Education or Student Services,

Assistant Superintendent, Program Manager, Supervisor, Program Specialist, and Other

(respondent was asked to type in their position). The number of years to acquire the initial

special education administrative position was recorded by the respondent in a fill-in-the-

blank format for question 6.

Validation of the Instrument

Face and content validity of the *Mentoring for Special Education Administrators*

Survey was established after the survey was reviewed by a panel of administrators

familiar with special education. The panel, specialists in the content being measured, was

asked to judge the appropriateness of the items on the instrument. The following ques-

tions were presented to the panel: Did the items cover the breath of the content area? Did

the instrument contain a representative sample of the content being assessed? Were the

items in a format that was appropriate for those using the instrument? Several changes

were made to the questionnaire, based on input from the panel who reviewed the docu-

ment on several occasions. One significant change was to decrease the number of

questions. The initial instrument contained 67 questions which would have greatly

increased the time needed to take the survey. The final instrument that was downloaded

into the website contained 19 questions. In the demographic section, race/ethnicity was

removed as several of the judges did not feel it was an important demographic to the

study. A question asking highest education-base degree was also removed since in

California all administrators must have a completed 4-year college education plus additional schooling to be an administrator. Based on that information, the highest education-based degree did not seem relevant. In the initial instrument, the format for the number of years in the special education profession and in administration was a range of years. The final change was to make number of years a fill-in-the-blank where the respondent typed in a number. The panel felt the fill-in-the blank was easier for the participant and avoided confusion. This change was field-tested before final changes were made to the format of the survey. Additional corrections were made to wording and format after the pilot study was conducted in July 2005.

To validate the reliability of the instrument, a pilot study was conducted among a group of educational personnel familiar with special education. The main purpose of the pilot was to assess reliability of the interface. This included verifying that wording of questions was clear, the possible answers were easy to identify, and the participants could easily divulge the appropriate information. Based on input from those who took the pilot, two practice questions were added at the beginning of the survey to allow respondents practice with the response format to further avoid confusion for the respondent. The questions were do you work in special education, and, rate the complexity of special education on a scale of 1 to 10. The questions were related to the field of special educa-tion so participants would not notice differences between the practice set and the actual survey questions.

Technology

Technology required for the current study was a computer and the Internet. The survey was available online at the Datacurious website. In addition, the Datacurious

website operated on-line 24 hours per day, 7 days per week, and data were backed-up daily, ensuring reliability of participant scores. The data gathering interface was standardized and the visual appearance was identical across internet browsers, reducing bias and fostering consistency within and between participants (Datacurious LLC, 2002). For a relatively low cost, Datacurious assists researchers in publishing a survey online (Datacurious LLC). The survey for this study was imported and formatted into the website, and the design features of Datacurious assisted with additional formatting. It was expected that the response rate to the survey was increased with its availability online. According to Dillman (1999), using electronic mailings greatly increased the overall response rate for an instrument. After sending out one survey via e-mail to university faculty on a Friday afternoon, 25% of the surveys were returned by the following Monday (Dillman). Most districts in California had e-mail systems and access to the internet which made this method attractive. Only one respondent requested a mail-out survey, but cancelled this request when they obtained access to the Internet. Whether via regular mail or electronically, the costs and time involved for administering the mail-out or electronic surveys was considerably less than trying to access respondents by phone or by conducting interviews (Dillman; Rea & Parker, 1997).

Compliance With Ethical Guidelines

The current study complied with ethical guidelines of the American Psychological Association (1997) and the University of San Diego, including confidentiality. The identifying information collected on the Datacurious (2002) website was kept completely separate from the participants' responses to the survey, and responses were randomly ordered so that confidentiality was maintained. Datacurious guaranteed that the data were

kept in a secure password-protected database, which was only accessible when the researcher logged into the account. Datacurious did not use, release, or sell any identifying information that was collected. Informed consent was part of the original e-mail/letter sent to special education administrators. An informed consent page was also at the beginning of the survey where the respondent had the choice of selecting "I agree" to continue with the survey or "I decline" and, therefore, withdraw from the study. Taking the survey indicated voluntary consent. Informed consent was needed even though the risk of the study was low and the study did not involve an at-risk population. The study was reviewed and approved by the Institutional Review Board on the Protection of Human Subjects at the University of San Diego. The study was also approved for dissemination by San Diego City Schools Research and Testing Unit. All procedures were followed to comply with meeting the district's guidelines for research.

Survey Procedures

After securing e-mail addresses, each SELPA director was sent a letter (see Appendix B) electronically describing the study, asking for their support, encouraging them to participate in the study, and asking them to distribute the web address of the survey to special education administrators within their SELPA. Contact information, including e-mail addresses of special education administrators and coordinators within each SELPA, was also requested of the SELPA directors. The Dillman (1999) systematic reminder method was utilized to increase response rate. About a week later, a second letter with the informed consent, explanation of confidentiality, and website address to the study was sent electronically (Appendix C) to SELPA directors. About 3 weeks later, a third electronic letter was sent to SELPA directors. The researcher networked with

colleagues in school districts and county offices of education across the State in an attempt to recruit special education administrators for the study. One SELPA director encouraged participation to other SELPA directors via a statewide listserv. In addition, the study was presented at one of the SELPA's monthly meetings to solicit support for the study. Districts were assured access to results of the completed study.

After 2 months, the response rate was dismally low; the California Public School Directory (Content Providers, 2005) was used to search for websites of each school district in the state. At each school district website, the e-mail address of each special education administrator was found. If there was no e-mail for the special education administrator identified, a phone call was made to the district requesting the e-mail address of the administrator. Each special education administrator, including SELPA directors, was electronically sent another letter explaining the research and asking for their participation (see Appendix C). Links were provided so that access was immediate to the survey website. Each administrator was sent the letter requesting participation with a link to the survey (http://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s= 11151) three more times. To further increase participation, the researcher attended two conferences (Council of Special Education Administrators and Student Services and Special Education Council of Association of California School Administrators) with a laptop that was connected to the internet so the website of the survey could be immediately accessed for conference participants. The web address of the survey was also available on business cards for conference participants to take with them for accessing the survey at a more convenient time or location. Every effort was made to encourage participation and ease access to the survey.

Once a respondent arrived at the website, there was a brief description of the survey and explanation of the significance of the study (see Appendix D). Upon completion of the survey, data were stored at the Datacurious website until the results were downloaded into a spreadsheet. Responses to the survey were monitored frequently. Datacurious sent out an e-mail notification for each five surveys submitted. After completion of the study, the responses were downloaded from the website spreadsheet into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software for data analysis.

Data Analysis

Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated, as appropriate, for each variable in the present study (Howell, 2002; Tukey, 1977) to organize, summarize, and describe responses obtained and to provide an overall picture of mentoring in the special education administrative community in California. This level of detailed description of the phenomenon as it naturally occurs was important, as opposed to studying the impacts of an intervention, because the present study was a cross-sectional, observational study (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 1998; Thakur, 2003). Key findings are presented in tables and bar graphs to aid the reader (Tukey, 1977). To determine statistically significant differences between groups, ANOVA (*t*-test), and Chi-Square were used to assess these research questions. Research question 6 required a repeated-measures ANOVA to test for differences among impediments and encouragers to mentoring, followed by a post hoc test to localize any differences within the factors that described impediments and the factors that described encouragers. All data analyses were conducted using SPSS for Windows (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences, SPSS Inc, Chicago, Illinois) and Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corp., Redmond,

Washington). All comparisons were made using a statistical significance threshold of $p < .05$ (Hinkle et al., 1998; Howell, 2002).

Research Questions

Research Question #1: How common is mentoring among California special education administrators?

This study describes the base rates of mentoring among special education administrators in California. Item 14 on the survey addressed whether or not a special education administrator had provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals. Item 15 addressed whether or not a special education administrator had provided mentoring to a special education administrator. A respondent needed to answer "yes" to at least one of the two items to be included in the sample of administrators that provided mentoring. Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated for survey questions 14 and 15 to determine how often mentoring was provided to nonadministrative special education professionals and to administrators of special education.

Research Question #2: Are there gender differences in the base rates of mentoring among special education administrators?

To determine if rates of mentoring between males and females were different or similar, scores were calculated for the special education administrators who mentored others. A respondent self-reported the choice of male or female on item 1 of the survey and checked "yes" or "no" on question 14, providing mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals. A respondent also checked "yes" or "no" on question 15, providing mentoring to special education administrators. Mentoring and gender were

tested with a 2 X 2 Chi-Squared (gender X mentoring) to see if providing mentoring was different between males and females. To determine if rates of mentoring between males and females were different or similar, scores were also calculated for the special education administrators that had been mentored. A respondent checked "yes" or "no" on survey items 7, 8, and 9 to indicate if they had been mentored prior to administration, since entering administration, or if they were currently being mentored. Gender and having been mentored (mentee) were tested with a 2 X 2 Chi-Squared (gender by mentee) to see if rates of receiving mentoring were different between males and females.

Research Question #3: Do special education administrators who have been mentored tend to mentor other special education administrators?

Survey questions 7, 8, and 9 addressed whether or not a special education administrator had been mentored. Survey question 15 addressed whether or not a special education administrator had provided mentoring to other special education administrators. A 2 X 2 Chi-Squared (mentored/not mentored versus mentee/not menteed) was used to determine if those who provided mentoring were mentored at greater rates than those who do not provide mentoring.

Research Question #4: Does mentoring decrease the amount of time it takes for a special education professional to acquire an initial special education administrative position?

An independent sample t-test was used to determine if the mean number of years to acquisition of a special education administrative position was significantly different as a function of the presence or lack of mentoring. Question 6 on the survey required a respondent to indicate number of years before entering the initial special education

administrative position. Number of years was compared to question 7, asking the respondent if mentoring occurred before the initial special education administrative position. The means of the two groups, those who received mentoring and those who did not, were compared to determine if receiving mentoring significantly decreased the number of years to acquire the initial special education administrative position. Significance was determined at the $p < .05$ level.

Research Question #5: How do mentees describe the content of the mentoring relationship including gender of the mentor, how long mentored, influence of the mentor, and the function of the mentoring?

Questions 10, 11, and 12 on the survey described the gender of the mentor, the length of the mentoring relationship, and level of influence provided by the mentor for the mentee to progress toward an administrative position. Frequencies and percentages were used to describe the mentoring as reported by the respondents for each question. An analysis of variance (ANOVA) was computed to determine if there were gender differences for the length of the mentoring relationship. Question 13 on the survey asked the respondent to rank on a point scale from 1 to 10 the abundance of career development function and of psychosocial support function received from the mentor. A paired sample t-test was used to determine if one function was rated higher than the other.

Research Question #6: What factors encouraged or discouraged special education administrators to engage in mentoring?

Question 16 on the survey was answered only by respondents who had provided mentoring and addressed the factors that encouraged a special education administrator to mentor. Encouragers included seeing someone they mentored succeed, the opportunity to

share one's successful skills and expertise, recalling events from one's own career, meeting professional obligations to encourage talented potential special education leaders, learning new skills from mentees, and learning new information from the mentees. Each factor was rated by the respondent on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." A repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to determine whether there were differences between the factors followed by post-hoc tests to localize the differences among the six items. Findings were considered statistically significant at the $p < .05$ threshold level.

Question 17 on the survey was answered by all respondents and addressed the factors that discouraged or impeded a special education administrator from mentoring. Each impediment was listed and the respondent asked to rate on a 4-point Likert scale from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree." The impediments listed included "mentoring is too time-consuming, no experience yet in the field, the district has no viable candidates for special education administration, need to maintain one's own position, not create competition, achieves the position through one's own initiative and others should do the same, and one not having been asked to mentor." A repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to determine whether there were differences between the factors and then a post-hoc analysis calculated to localize the differences among the six items. Findings were considered statistically significant at the $p < .05$ threshold level.

Chapter 4 discusses the results of the statistical procedures that were employed to address the research questions that guided this study.

Chapter 4

Results

The primary focus of this study was to explore mentoring within the special education administrative community in California kindergarten through 12th grade schools, which included how many special education administrators had been mentored, how many mentor others, and which factors encouraged and discouraged special education administrators from providing mentoring. Gender differences were explored among special education administrators who provided mentoring and among those who received mentoring. The study also investigated whether mentoring reduced the time to acquire an initial special education administrator position. In addition, the study described the mentoring, including the gender of the mentor, length of the mentoring relationship, influence of the mentor, and the function the mentoring served.

Chapter 4 offers a presentation and analysis of the data collected in the research. This chapter reports descriptive data from the study to accurately describe the respondents who participated. Findings associated with the analyzed data are organized and reported by each of the six research questions. A review of the findings is given in the chapter summary.

Participants

The population for the study consisted of 1,465 practicing special education administrators in the state of California identified by the Center of Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE). Electronic mail was used to introduce the survey and to provide web address access to special education administrators. Data were collected from respondents at the Datacurious website during the months of August 2005 through

January 2006. There were 158 special education administrators who responded to the survey, representing 10.8% of practicing special education administrators working in California. However, 13 of the surveys were deemed nonusable due to noncompletion. In addition, 3 surveys were submitted after the compilation of the data and were not included. As such, the final sample consisted of 142 respondents which represented 9.7% of the population.

Demographic Profile of the Sample

Survey items one through six on the web-based questionnaire were demographic statements that described the sample from which the data were taken. Gender, years in special education administration, current job title in special education, current administrative credential held, and other credentials were all part of the demographic data obtained from participants.

Survey results indicated that of the 142 respondents, 69.7% were female and 30.3% of the respondents were male. Females outnumber males in education as teachers, elementary principals, and as central office administrators (L. M. Hall, 2001). However, in the group of statewide SELPA directors, 58% are female and 43% are male (California Department of Education, personal communication, August 22, 2004), which suggests that females were slightly overrepresented in the sample of special education administrators who responded to the survey.

The mean number of years in the special education administration profession for the total group of special education administrators who responded to the survey was 9.4 years, the corresponding number of years for females was 9.1 years and 10.1 years for males. However, the mean number of years in the special education profession prior to

their initial special education administrative position was 11.3 years for females and 9.4 years for males, suggesting that males are promoted faster into special education administration.

The most frequently reported job title currently held by the special education administrators was "Director of Special Education" (25.0%). The second most reported title was "Coordinator" (12.0%), and third was the "Director of Student Services" (11.3%). There were 39 missing responses from this item. In analyzing the data, it was discovered that the "Other" category for the current job title was not recording responses when a respondent keyed into the response blank for "Other." Due to a software malfunction, the write-in job titles were not retrievable from the database. The researcher was unable to verify the job title of the 39 respondents. Therefore, out of a sample of 142, there were only 103 responses for job title.

The current administrative credential held by almost half of the respondents (46.0%) was the highest level of certification in educational administration for the state of California, the Professional Administrative Credential (Tier II). Another 17.0% had obtained a Preliminary Administrative Credential, and 3.5% had a certificate of completion, the initial certificate issued to individuals who have just completed an administrative program. There were 11.3 % who held no administrative credential and 9.2% held an out-of-state administrative credential.

Before an applicant can pursue or obtain an initial administrative service credential, one must obtain a teaching or service credential in California. Valid teaching or service credentials in California include a basic teaching credential, a pupil personnel services credential, a health services credential, a library services credential, a designated

subjects credential with a baccalaureate degree, or a Clinical rehabilitative services credential (SFSU, 2005). One of these is required before acquiring an administrative services credential. In this study, a teaching credential in general education was listed as the most frequent "other credential" held by respondents, with 37% of the sample holding a regular education credential in multiple subjects, general education, or single subject. A teaching credential in special education accounted for 32% of the sample. A Pupil Services Credential which authorizes an individual to practice as a school psychologist or counselor was held by 17% of the respondents. A credential to practice Speech and Language Therapy (Clinical Rehabilitative Services) was held by 11% of the sample. Other credentials reported included out-of-state credentials or college degrees. More than one nonadministrative credential was held by 23% of the respondents.

Findings

Findings associated with the analyzed data are presented in relation to the six research questions posed in the study. The overall distribution of responses to each question is reported, followed by a narrative and, in some cases, a tabular analysis of the response for the question. All statistical analyses were performed using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences) and Microsoft Excel (Microsoft Corporation), and an alpha level of .05 was used throughout the analysis.

Research Question 1

How common is mentoring among California special education administrators? The first research question describes the base rates of mentoring others among California special education administrators. Question 14 from the survey asked if a respondent provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals. Of the 142

respondents to the survey, 75.4% provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals and 24.6% did not mentor. Question 15 from the survey asked if a respondent provided mentoring to administrative special education professionals; results revealed that 52.8% of the sample provided mentoring to special education administrators while 47.2% did not. The data support that the mentoring provided by special education administrators is typically given to those special education professionals in nonadministrative positions.

Research Question 2

Are there gender differences in the base rates of mentoring among special education administrators? Gender differences were explored between special education administrators who received mentoring as mentees. This was examined at three time periods: before their entry into special education administration, since entering special education administration, and those administrators who are currently receiving mentoring.

Gender differences before entry into special education. The gender differences of special education administrators who received mentoring before entering an administrative position were studied. The results of the survey showed that 9 male respondents (20.9%) noted they were mentored before assuming a special education administrative position. Of the female respondents, 32 (32.3%) received mentoring before assuming an administrative position. The difference between male and female responses, however, was not statistically significant, chi-square $(df = 1) = 1.9, p = .17$, which suggests that males and females are similar in the rates of mentoring that each group received.

Gender differences since entering administration. Special education administrators in the second time period were those mentored since entering the administrative

position. The survey showed that 14 male respondents (33.0%) noted they were mentored during their administration and 67.4% were not. Of the 99 female respondents, 47 (47.4%) indicated mentoring, and 53.0% of the females have not mentored since entering the administrative position. However, the difference between male and female responses was not statistically significant, chi-square ($df = 1$) = 2.7, $p =.10$, which suggests that males and females who were mentored since entering an administrative position are similar in the rates of mentoring each group received.

Gender differences: currently receiving mentoring. The survey results showed that 10 (23.2%) of the males were currently being mentored as special education administrators and 77.0% of the males were not. Of the female respondents, 25 (25.2%) are currently mentored as administrators, and 75.0% of the females are not currently receiving mentoring as an administrator. This difference was not statistically significant, chi-square ($df = 1$) = .06, $p = .80$, which suggests that males and females who are currently receiving mentoring in an administrative position are similar in the rates of mentoring received.

Summary of gender differences of mentoring received. There was no significant difference between males and females in rates of mentoring received. Males and females were similar in rates of mentoring received before entry into special education administration, since entering administration, and those currently being mentored.

Gender differences of mentoring provided. Gender differences between special education administrators who provided mentoring to others was also examined among special education administrators who provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals and those administrators who provided mentoring to special

education administrators. Frequencies, percentages, and chi-square analysis were used to analyze the data and the results were reported in the text.

Special education administrators who mentored nonadministrators. Results from the group of special education administrators who provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals were analyzed for gender differences. Of the 43 male respondents, 33 (77%) provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals, and 23.2% did not mentor. Of the female respondents, 74 (75%) provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals, and 25.2% of the females did not provide mentoring to the nonadministrators. This difference between male and female responses was not statistically significantly, chi-square $(df = 1) = .06, p = .80$, suggesting that males and females who provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals were similar in their rates of mentoring.

Special education administrators who mentored administrators. Results from the special education administrators who provided mentoring to other administrators in special education were also analyzed for gender differences. Of the 43 male respondents, 21 (49.0%) provided mentoring to special education administrators, and 51.1% of the males did not. Out of the 99 female respondents, 54 (55.0%) provided mentoring to special education administrators, and 45.4% of the females did not provide mentoring. This difference, however, is not statistically significant, chi-square $(df = 1) = .40, p = .53$, suggesting that male and female special education administrators mentor special education administrators at similar rates.

Summary of gender differences of mentoring provided. There was no significant difference between males and females in rates of mentoring provided. Males and females

were similar in rates of mentoring provided to nonadministrative special education professionals and to special education administrators.

Research Question 3

Do special education administrators who have been mentored tend to mentor other special education administrators? Special education administrators who mentor others (provide mentoring) was explored at three time periods when an administrator could have been mentored. The time periods were before their entry into special education administration, since entering special education administration, and those administrators currently receiving mentoring. Frequencies, percentages, and chi-square analysis were used to analyze the data to see if there was an effect of being mentored on the tendency to mentor others.

Mentored before entry into special education. Results indicate out of 41 special education administrators, 26 (63.4%) provided mentoring and were mentored before their initial entry into special education administration. Out of the 41 respondents, 15 (37.0%) did not provide mentoring and were mentored before their initial entry into special education administration. However, the difference between these two groups was not statistically significant, chi-square ($df = 1$) = 2.6, $p = .11$. As such, mentoring received prior to the initial special education administrative position did not effect mentoring other special education administrators.

Mentored since entering administration. Results indicate out of 61 respondents, 43 (70.5%) were mentored since entering special education administration and also provided mentoring to other special education administrators. Out of the 61 respondents, 18 (29.5%) were mentored since entering special education administration, but did not

mentor others. This difference was statistically significant, chi-square ($df = 1$) = 13.41, $p < .0001$. As such, those special education administrators who had received mentoring since entering special education administration were more likely to mentor others than the group who was mentored before entering special education administration and the group that was currently being mentored.

Currently receiving mentoring. Out of the 35 respondents, 21 (60%) of the special education administrators were currently receiving mentoring and also mentored other special education administrators. There were 14 (40.0%) who were currently receiving mentoring but did not mentor others. This difference was not statistically significant, chi-square ($df = 1$) = 1.0, $p = .33$. As a result, special education administrators who were currently receiving mentoring did not have an effect on mentoring others.

Research Question 4

Does mentoring decrease the amount of time it takes for a special education professional to acquire an initial special education administrative position? The mean number of years that it took an individual to acquire the initial special education adminis- trative position was computed for those administrators mentored before entry into the special education administrative position. As shown in Table 1, the mean number of years for acquiring the position was 12.3 for the 41 respondents who had been mentored prior to the initial administrative position. For those respondents who were not mentored prior to entry into administration, the mean number of years was 10.1. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) that compared the dependent variable, mean number of years prior to acquisition of the initial special education administrative position, and whether mentoring was or was not received (independent variable), did not show a statistically significant

difference between the means, $F(1, 141) = 2.4$, $p = .12$. The results indicate that mentoring prior to acquiring the initial special education administration position does not decrease the amount of time to acquire the initial special education administrative position. Although not statistically significant, those not mentored before the initial special education administrative position acquired the administrative position in less time.

Table 1. *Years in Special Education Before Administration*

Group	Mean	Standard deviation
Mentored before administration[a]	12.3	7.3
Not mentored before administration[b]	10.1	7.8
Total	10.7	7.7

[a]$n = 41$. [b]$n = 101$.

Research Question 5

How do mentees describe the content of the mentoring relationship including how long mentored, the influence of the mentor, and the function of the mentoring? The data for this research question were taken from 80 individuals who were mentored and represented 56.3% of the sample. The remaining 62 respondents reported not being mentored. Descriptions of their most significant mentor were reported by those mentored. Of the 80 respondents, 63.8 % described their significant mentor as female and 36.3 % reported their mentor as male. Respondents reported receiving mentoring an average of 3.5 years. Results show the average time for females to receive mentoring was 3.9 years

and 2.5 years for males. An ANOVA was calculated between gender and how long mentored. The scores did not show a statistically significant difference between the means of males and females, $F(1, 79) = 2.1, p = .15$. Influence of the mentor was reported by 20.4% as being "very influential" in the respondent's (mentee) progress toward an initial special education administrative position, and 12.0% reported the mentor as "absolutely essential." Minimal influence of the mentor for the special education mentee in progressing toward the administrative position was reported by 14.8% of special education administrators and moderate influence was reported by 16.2%.

Career development and psychosocial functions. The career development and psychosocial functions of mentoring were ranked on a scale of 1 to 10 by respondents who had participated in a mentoring experience as a mentee. Career development function was described as the mentor focusing on career development, providing sponsorship, exposing an individual to professional connections, and providing challenging opportunities. Psychosocial support described the mentor as an encourager, advisor, supporter, friend, and as someone who helped the mentee develop personal talent. Respondents rated career development function using a point scale that ranged from 1, which represented individuals that had received no career development, to 10, which corresponded to receiving an abundance of career development. The psychosocial support function was rated similarly from no support to an abundance of support. This information is shown in Figures 1 and 2, which illustrate the frequency and percentage of responses to each of the two functions. The mean of the career development function was 6.6 on a 9-point scale (mid-point = 4.5) ranging from "No help in career development" to "lots of career development," which suggests that respondents generally received career

development from their mentors. The mean of the psychosocial support function was 7.2

on a 9-point scale ranging from "No psychosocial support" to "lots of psychosocial

support," suggesting that the respondents generally received psychosocial support from

their mentors. A paired sample t-test was used to determine whether a significant

difference existed between the career development function and the psychosocial support

function. The difference between the means of the two groups was significant, $t = 2.4$,

$p < .02$. These findings suggest that mentees generally received both psychosocial

support and career development, and relatively more psychosocial support than career
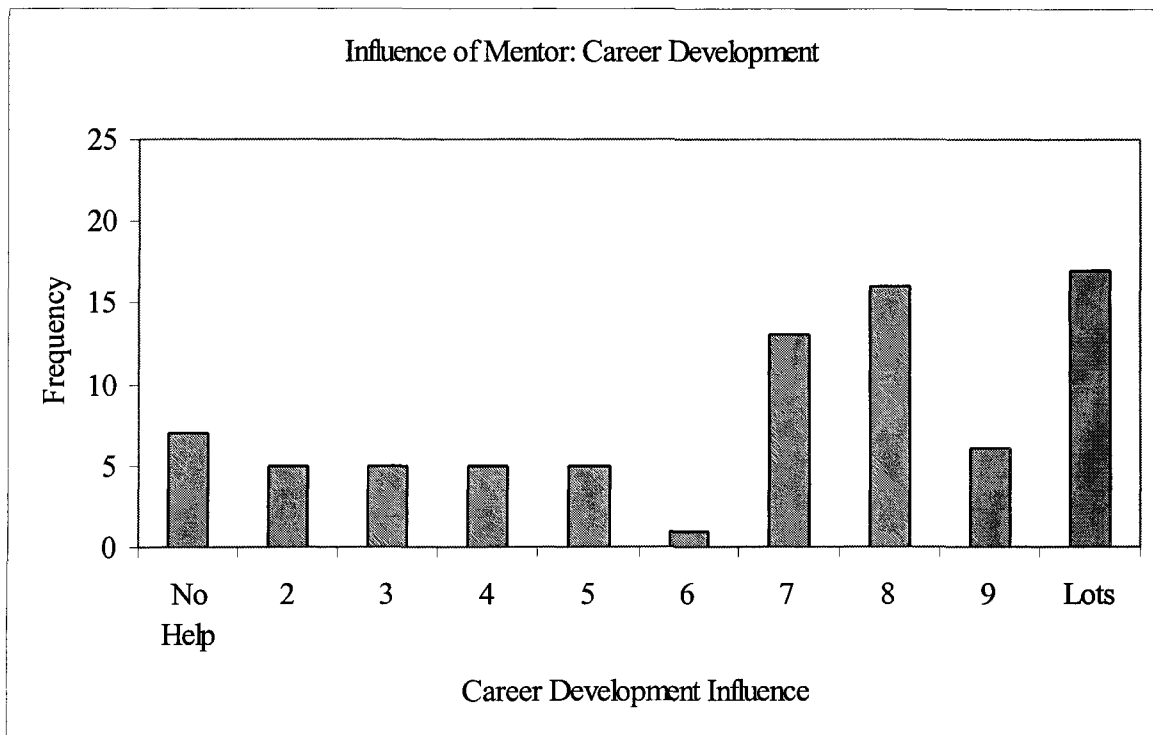
development.

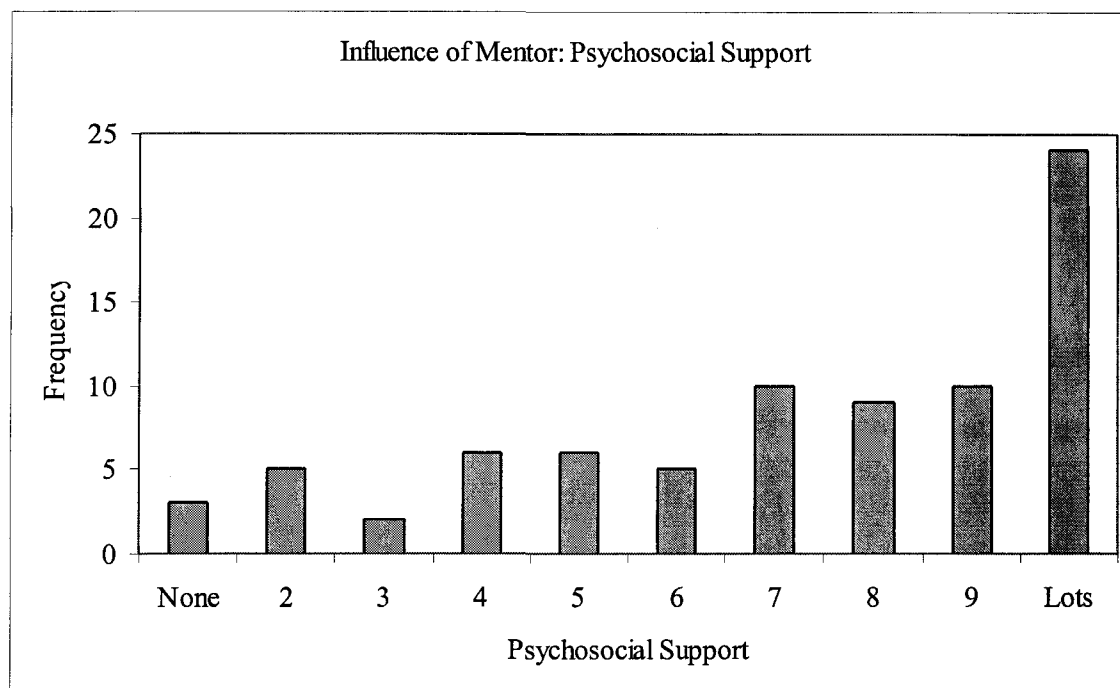*Figure 1*. Influence of mentor: Career development.

Figure 2. Influence of mentor: Psychosocial support.

Research Question 6

What factors encouraged or discouraged special education administrators to

engage in mentoring?

Encouragers to mentoring. Factors that encourage one to mentor were rated on a

4-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. All six factors were rated by

the 117 respondents who had provided mentoring to others. The respondents rated seeing

others succeed; sharing skills; recalling events from one's own career; meeting profes-

sional obligations; learning new skills from mentees; and learning new information from

mentees. On average, respondents showed agreement with the six factors as encouragers

to mentoring. As illustrated in Table 2, each factor had a mean less than 2 (1 = strongly

agree and 2 = agree). Means less than 2.5 indicate agreement. A repeated-measures

ANOVA was calculated to see if there were significant differences between the six

factors, $F(6, 111) = 242.0$, $p < .0001$. This was followed by a post-hoc Tukey's least

squared to localize the differences among the six items (Howell, 2002). Seeing someone I

mentor succeed, sharing skills, and meeting professional obligations were similar to each

other as encouragers to mentoring and significantly different from recalling events from

one's own career, learning new skills from mentees, and learning new information from

mentees.

Table 2. *Encouragers to Mentoring*

Encouragers	Mean
Seeing others succeed	1.5
Sharing my skills	1.6
Recalling events	1.8
Meeting professional obligation	1.5
Learning new skills from mentee	1.8
Learning new information from mentee	1.7

Impediments to mentoring. Impediments to mentoring were rated by all 142

respondents ($N = 142$). The factors rated as impediments included: too time consuming;

no experience yet in the field; no viable candidates in the district; need to maintain own

position and not create competition; not being asked to mentor; and expectation that

others achieve position through own initiative. Each factor was rated on a 4-point Likert

scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. There was agreement by the

respondents that none of the factors were impediments to mentoring since the means for

each of the impediments leaned towards disagreement. As illustrated in Table 3, all of the means were above > 2.8 (3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree). Means above 2.5 indicate disagreement. A repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to see if there were significant differences between the six factors, $F(6, 136) = 1788.0$, $p < .001$. This was followed by a post-hoc Tukey's least squared to localize the differences among the six items. In general, respondents disagreed with all of the impediments. Respondents disagreed the most with the impediments of maintain own position and no experience, followed by achieve through own initiative, no viable candidates, too time-consuming, and, finally, not asked to mentor.

Table 3. *Impediments to Provide Mentoring*

Impediments	Mean
Too time-consuming	2.8
No experience	3.6
No viable candidates	3.1
Maintain own position	3.7
Achieve through own initiative	3.4
Not asked to mentor	2.8

Summary of Findings

The population for the study was approximately 1,465 practicing special education administrators in the state of California identified by the Center of Personnel Studies in Special Education (COPSSE). There were 158 special education administrators who responded to the survey. This is approximately 11.0% of practicing special education

administrators working in California. However, the ultimate sample size was 142

respondents which represented 9.7% of the population. Data from demographic

statements indicated that of the 142 respondents, 69.7% were female and 30.3% were

male. The mean number of years in the special education profession prior to the initial

special education administrative position was 11.3 years for females and 9.4 years for

males, suggesting that males acquire the initial administrative position faster than

females. The most frequently reported job title currently held by the special education

administrators was "Director of Special Education" (25.0%). The second most reported

title was "Coordinator" (12.0%), and third was the "Director of Student Services"

(11.3%). The current administrative credential held by almost half of the respondents

(46.0%) was the highest level of certification in educational administration for the state of

California, the Professional Administrative Credential (Tier II). In the study, a teaching

credential in general education was listed as the most frequent "other credential" held by

respondents with 37% of the sample holding a regular education credential in multiple

subjects, general education, or single subject. A teaching credential in special education

accounted for 32% of the sample. A Pupil Services Credential which authorizes an

individual to practice as a school psychologist or counselor was held by 17% of the

respondents. A credential to practice Speech and Language Therapy (Clinical

Rehabilitative Services) was held by 11% of the respondents.

Findings from the six research questions should be viewed with caution since the

sample size was small; however, mentoring is alive and well within the special education

administrative community. Mentoring provided by special education administrators to

nonadministrative special education professionals was reported by 75.4% of the 142

respondents. Mentoring provided to special education administrators was reported by 52.8% of the sample. The study also looked at the frequency of mentoring provided to special education administrators. Results show that 29.0% of the respondents reported being mentored before entering special education administration. Another 43.0% reported being mentored since entering special education administration, and 25.0% were being mentored currently. Special education administrators reported not being mentored as frequently as providing mentoring to others.

Males and females were similar in rates of mentoring received before entry into special education administration, since entering administration, and those currently being mentored. There was no significant differences found between males and females in rates of mentoring received. In addition, males and females were similar in rates of mentoring each group provided to nonadministrative special education professionals and special education administrators. There were no significant differences between males and females in rates of mentoring provided.

Mentoring of others is much more likely to occur when a special education administrator has experienced mentoring after entering special education administration. Results indicate that 70.5% of the sample was mentored after entering special education administration and provided mentoring to others, while 29.5% were mentored, but did not provide mentoring. The difference between the two groups was statistically significant. Mentoring others is less likely to occur when a special education administrator was mentored before administration or if the administrator is currently being mentored.

Mentoring before entry into special education administration did not decrease the amount of time to acquire the initial special education administrative position. There was

no statistically significant difference between mean number of years prior to acquisition of the initial special education administrative position, and whether mentoring was or was not received. Although not statistically significant, those not mentored before entering special education administration acquired the administrative position in less time.

There were 80 individuals who were mentored, representing 56.3% of the sample. Results showed that most of the significant mentors were identified as female. The number of years mentored averaged 3.5 years with 3.9 reported for females and 2.5 reported for males. There was no significant difference in the number of years mentored between males and females, yet males appear to be mentored for less time. Over half (57.5%) reported the mentor to be very influential or absolutely essential in the respondent's (mentee) progress toward an initial special education administrative position.

Career development function described the mentor who focused on career development, provided sponsorship, exposed an individual to professional connections, and provided challenging opportunities. Psychosocial support described the mentor as an encourager, advisor, supporter, friend, and as someone who helped the mentee develop personal talent. Each of these functions was rated on a 10-point scale, where 1 represented no career development or psychosocial support and 10 represented an abundance of career development or psychosocial support received from the mentor. Results show that the mentor was described as providing more psychosocial support as opposed to career development. However, as reflected in Tables 2 and 3, both psychosocial and career development functions were rated high by all respondents.

Factors that encourage individuals to mentor were rated on a 4-point Likert scale from strongly agree to strongly disagree. These factors were rated by the 117 respondents who had provided mentoring. The respondents rated: seeing others succeed; sharing skills; recalling events from one's own career; meeting professional obligations; learning new skills from mentees; and learning new information from mentees. A repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to see if there were significant differences between the six factors, $F(6, 111) = 242.0, p < .0001$. This was followed by a post-hoc Tukey's least squared to localize the differences among the six items. On average, respondents agreed with all of the factors as encouragers to mentoring. As illustrated in Table 2, the mean was less than two for all of the factors (1 = strongly agree and 2 = agree). However, seeing someone I mentor succeed, sharing skills, and meeting professional obligations were rated high as encouragers to mentoring and were significantly different from the other factors. These three factors were seen as strong encouragers by special education administrators to provide mentoring.

Impediments to mentoring were rated by all 142 respondents in the sample. The six impediments rated included: too time consuming; no experience yet in the field; no viable candidates in the district; need to maintain own position and not create competition; expectation that others achieve position through own initiative; and, not being asked to mentor. A repeated-measures ANOVA was calculated to see if there were significant differences between the six factors, $F(6, 136) = 1788.0, p < .001$. This was followed by a post-hoc Tukey's least squared to localize the differences among the six items. As illustrated in Table 3, all of the means were above > 2.8 (3 = disagree; 4 = strongly disagree). The respondents, on average, disagreed with the six factors as impediments.

The relationship was statistically significant, $F(6, 136) = 1788.0, p < .001$. Respondents

disagreed the most with the impediments of maintain own position and no experience,

followed by achieve through own initiative, no viable candidates, too time-consuming,

and, finally, not asked to mentor.

The findings of the present study on mentoring in special education administration

have important implications for the field of special education administration. Chapter 5

summarizes the study and discusses implications for the discipline of special education.

In addition, conclusions, limitations of the study, and recommendations for future study

are reported.

Chapter 5

Summary, Discussion, Conclusions, and Implications for Future Research

Summary

Mentoring is a powerful factor in developing human potential, but little is known about mentoring in special education administration (L. M. Hall, 2001). Special education administrators have complex and challenging responsibilities dealing with legal, moral, civic, and economic matters. Because of these responsibilities, special education administrators would greatly benefit from mentoring, parallel to mentoring successes in law, religion, medicine, business, and education (Playko, 1991). Because mentoring has a centuries-long (L. M. Hall, 2001) record of success, because of the importance of special education administrators, and because of the paucity of empirical knowledge on mentoring in special education administration, the present study examined mentoring in the special education administration profession.

The purpose of this study was to examine mentoring within the special education administration community in California in kindergarten through 12th grade public schools and the role of gender and its relationship to base rates of mentoring. The study also investigated the relationship between receiving mentoring and the tendency to mentor others in the profession. Additionally, the study investigated whether receiving mentoring reduced the time to acquire an initial special education administrative position. This study described the mentoring received by the respondents, including gender of the mentor, length of the mentoring relationship, influence of the mentor, and function of the mentoring. Finally, the study examined factors that encouraged and discouraged special

education administrators from engaging in mentoring. To that end, the following research

questions guided the study:

1. How often is mentoring provided by California special education

   administrators?

2. Are there gender differences in the base rates of mentoring among special

   education administrators?

3. Do special education administrators who have been mentored tend to mentor

   other special education administrators?

4. Does mentoring decrease the amount of time it takes for a special education

   professional to acquire a special education administrative position?

5. How do mentees describe the content of the mentoring relationship including

   gender of the mentor, how long mentored, influence of the mentor, and

   function of the mentoring?

6. What factors encouraged or discouraged special education administrators to

   engage in mentoring?

Theoretical Framework for Mentoring

The theoretical framework for this study was developed through an extensive

examination of the literature on mentoring as it relates to the special education profession.

The literature reports numerous studies supporting mentoring in a multitude of profes-

sions and arenas, including law, religion, medicine, business, and education (Murray,

1991; Pereira et al., 2002; Playko, 1991). The literature identifies the psychosocial model

of adult development as the theoretical basis supporting mentoring in many of the

professions (Erikson, 1997; Murray, 1991). Mentoring is popular because it benefits all

who are involved in the process including mentee, mentor, and the organization

(Dalcourt, 2002). Findings from the current study of special education administrators are

supported by adult development theory (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000; Levinson et al.,

1978; Vaillant, 2003). Erikson (1997) outlined a widening commitment to take care of

others and proposed that young adults need guidance from mature adults. Having

established one's values and a close relationship with another person, the adult passes on

what he or she has learned through productive work and through nurturing the next

generation (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000). Mentoring is a means for experienced special

education administrative mentors to fulfill their developmental needs by facilitating the

socialization of a new special education administrator (Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996).

Mentors have the opportunity to pass on wisdom, and develop their sense of competency

and self-worth (Kram, 1985). In addition, seasoned special education administrators

provide support and encouragement to the novice special education administrators (Goad,

1996).

Summary of Procedures

This study employed a cross-sectional observation that examined mentoring

within the special education administrative community in California kindergarten through

12th grade schools (Howell, 2002; Keppel, 1991). *The Mentoring for Special Education*

Administrators survey was used to collect data for the study. The survey instrument was

a 19- item questionnaire developed by the researcher and was available on-line. A pilot

study of the survey was conducted to ensure wording of questions was clear, the possible

answers were easy to identify, and the participants could easily divulge the appropriate

information. The survey was located at the Datacurious website which operated on-line

24 hours per day, 7 days per week. Data were copied and stored daily at the website, ensuring reliability of participant scores. The data gathering interface was standardized and the visual appearance was identical across internet browsers, reducing bias and fostering consistency within and between participants. The survey was approved for dissemination by several California SELPA directors, the San Diego Unified School District, the Association of California School Administrators, the Council of Administrators in Special Education, and the Institutional Review Board of the University of San Diego. There were 158 special education administrators who responded to the survey. This represented 10.8 % of practicing special education administrators working in California. Thirteen of the surveys were deemed nonusable due to noncompletion. Three additional surveys were submitted after the compilation of the data and were not included. The data analysis was completed on the remaining 142 surveys which represented 9.7% of the population. Data from the returned surveys were recorded into a database at the Datacurious website and transferred to the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) and Microsoft Excel for statistical analysis.

Frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations were calculated, as appropriate, for each variable in the study (Howell, 2002; Tukey, 1977) to organize, summarize, and describe responses obtained and to provide an overall picture of mentoring in the special education administrative community in California (Thakur, 2003). This level of detailed description of the phenomenon as it naturally occurs was important, as opposed to studying the impacts of an intervention, because the present study was a cross-sectional, observational study (Hinkle et al., 1998; Thakur, 2003). Key findings were presented in Chapter 4 using tables and bar graphs to aid the reader (Tukey, 1977).

To determine statistically significant differences between groups, ANOVA (independent

t-test), repeated-measures ANOVA, and Chi-Square were used. In addition, to localize for

differences the repeated-measures ANOVA was followed by a post-hoc Tukey's least

squared to localize the differences among the six factors that represented encouragers or

impediments to mentoring. All comparisons were made using a statistical significance

threshold of $p < .05$ (Hinkle et al.,1998; Howell, 2002).

To examine mentoring within the special education administrative community, the

results are discussed in this chapter in relation to the research questions that were

examined.

Discussion

The first research question explored the base rates of mentoring within the special

education administrative community. Findings indicate that mentoring provided by

special education administrators in California is prevalent. While most special education

administrators are mentoring nonadministrative special education professionals, mentor-

ing is still occurring. Of the 142 respondents to the survey in this study, 75.4% provided

mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals, and 52.8% provided

mentoring to special education administrators. This study does not indicate which special

education professionals are being mentored by special education administrators, but

considering the shortage in many of the special education professions, it is advantageous

that special education administrators are mentoring professionals in the field. The

literature is replete with studies supporting mentoring in almost every profession includ-

ing law, religion, medicine, business, and education (Murray, 1991; Pereira et al., 2002;

Playko, 1991). Special education administration can now be added to the research as a

discipline where mentoring is occurring and practiced (Goad, 1996; Lashley & Boscardin, 2003).

Gender differences among special education administrators were explored and results indicated that males and females were similar in the rates of mentoring. This fact was true even though females outnumber males in the field of special education administration (L. M. Hall, 2001; Parmley, 2001). Mentoring has been equally available to men and women. Based on a review of the literature, mentoring has shown similar frequencies among men and women. In a study from the business world looking at mentoring, a 500 person stratified, matched male-female sample was drawn, yielding a final analysis sample of 320. When results were compiled, men and women reported similar frequencies of mentoring from senior officials. Researchers concluded that in the corporate environment, mentoring was equally available to males and females (Dreher & Ash, 1990). In a study of the relationship between mentoring and the initial acquisition of the elementary principalship, no significant differences were found between males and females receiving mentoring (L. W. Hall, 2000). These studies substantiate that mentoring of special education administrators is occurring regardless of gender and that males and females show similar rates of mentoring.

Examination of the literature supports findings that individuals who have been mentored tend to mentor others (L. W. Hall, 2000; Pruden, 1998; Vaillant, 2003; Vincent & Seymour, 1995). Mentored special education administrators also tended to mentor other special education administrators. In this study, 70.5% of the special education administrators who were mentored after entering special education administration reported that they provided mentoring to other special education administrators. Findings

support that special education administrators want to foster those in their profession which parallels closely with the concept of generativity explained in the literature review (Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000; Kram, 1985; Valliant, 2003). Special education administrators have the opportunity to fulfill generative needs by mentoring others, which is significant for a profession plagued with many personnel shortages. Mentoring could multiply dramatically the number of available special education administrators in the profession, as seasoned special education administrators provide encouragement, support, and ideas to newcomers (Goad, 1996).

The group of special education administrators who were mentored prior to the initial special education administrative career showed no statistically significant differ-ence between being mentored and mentoring others. A possible explanation is that the respondent's mentoring experience prior to special education administration may have been related to another educational position or career move. It could also be that the job of the special education administrator is so complex that a true understanding of the depth of the responsibilities does not take hold until an individual is actually working in the position. This reason could also explain why those currently mentored, the other group of mentored special education administrators, are not mentoring others. The special education administrator position requires so much detailed knowledge that someone currently being mentored would not understand all of the complexities to mentor other special education administrators. Mentoring can help to evolve potential candidates for special education administration; therefore, mentoring others who go into special education administration is absolutely necessary. More candidates for special education

administration might be available if recruitment and a mentoring process precedes a special education administrative position.

This study examined the relationship between mentoring and the acquisition of the initial special education administrative position. Using ANOVA, no statistically significant difference was found between the dependent variable, mean number of years prior to acquisition of the initial special education administrative position, and whether mentoring was received (independent variable). The results indicate that mentoring prior to the initial special education administration position does not decrease the amount of time to enter special education administration. Results are similar to a study on the elementary principalship, where the data indicated no significant differences between mentoring and earlier acquisition of the initial elementary principalship (L. W. Hall, 2000). Mentoring did not speed up the time for an individual to acquire a special education administrative position. In fact, those mentored prior to entering special education administration were mentored for a longer period of time suggesting that mentoring was sought out by individuals who understood the complexities of the job, and, subsequently, took longer to acquire the special education administrative position. In this study, mentoring does not appear to be a factor in decreasing the amount of time it takes for a special education professional to acquire the initial special education administrative position. Yet, mentoring seems essential for comprehending the job responsibilities in a particularly complex field, such as special education administration (L. W. Hall, 2000; Playko, 1991).

The description of the mentoring relationship in this study was taken from 80 special education administrators who were mentored and could describe their most

significant mentor. About 64% of those mentored described their mentor as female. This is not surprising since women dominate the field of education as teachers, elementary school principals, and central office staff (L. M. Hall, 2001). The mean length of the mentoring relationship was 3.5 years. For females, the mean length of the relationship was 3.9 and for males 2.5. Although the difference is not significant, it does suggest that females may have longer relationships with their mentor. Over half of the respondents rated the influence of a mentor as very influential or absolutely essential for an individual to obtain an initial special education administrative position. Another 14.8% reported that the mentor had minimal influence on acquisition of the initial special education administrative position.

The most significant element of the descriptions of the mentoring, as described by the respondents, was that both male and female special education administrators rated their mentors above average on the two functions of mentoring — career development function and psychosocial support function to mentoring. However, psychosocial benefit was statistically rated higher by special education administrators. Since most mentoring occurred after an individual entered special education administration, and because of the complexity of special education administration, special education administrators required the psychosocial support to enhance an individual's sense of accomplishment, identity, and effectiveness in the profession (Kram, 1985). Psychosocial functions also tended to include emotional support, role modeling, counseling, acceptance, affirmation, and friendship. These psychosocial functions enhanced the overall competence of the developing professional (L. M. Hall, 2001). Special education administrators face a myriad of complex job responsibilities including legal compliance, fiscal management,

hiring, evaluating, and developing special education personnel; curriculum and instruction, discipline, and policy and planning (Goad, 1996). It appears that providing psychosocial support is important to special education administrators so they may successfully address the many challenges that they face, including the ability to make difficult decisions on a daily basis required for serving students with disabilities.

In contrast, career development function emphasized aspects of mentoring which enhanced career advancement (L. M. Hall, 2001; Kram, 1985). Career functions included sponsorship, professional socialization, advocacy, teaching, coaching, protection, exposure, and challenging assignments. Career development functions were not rated as high by the respondents since most of the mentoring occurred for a special education administrator after acquiring their administrative assignment. It was assumed that an employed special education administrator is not as invested in career advancement, and, therefore, requires mentoring that is more of the psychosocial support function. This is not to imply career functions were not key factors in this study, as both career development and psychosocial support received a high rating. A study on career development and psychosocial support of superintendents found that protégés rated their mentors favorably with above average scores on both career development and psychosocial support (L. M. Hall, 2001). The career development functions facilitated the mentee's acquisition of new skills and new knowledge within an organization (Crampton & Mishra, 1999; Dougherty et al, 2000; Kram, as cited in L. W. Hall, 2000; Sosik & Lee, 2002).

In the study, three factors were reported as major reasons for special education administrators to mentor: seeing others' success; sharing skills; and meeting professional obligations. These three factors were rated significantly higher (stronger agreement with

the statement) than other factors (learning from mentees, recalling events from my own career, professional obligation), although it is important to note that special education administrators generally agreed (rather than disagreed) with these factors as encouragers to mentoring. As supported from the literature review on the psychosocial model of adult development, these encouragers appear to emphasize that adults are interested in improving the world for the next generation (Erikson, 1997; Pereira et al., 2002). Mentoring is a means for experienced mentors to facilitate the socialization and growth of a new employee (Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996). Seasoned special education administrators foster the success of others with support, encouragement, and sharing of new ideas with novice special education administrators (Goad).

The study also provides empirical evidence that not all special education administrators are mentoring. The study measured six potential impediments to mentoring, and included: mentoring was too time consuming; no experience yet in the field; no viable candidates in the district; need to maintain own position and not create competition; not being asked to mentor; and expectation that others achieve position through own initiative. There was agreement among participants that none of these factors were impediments to mentoring, as the average respondent disagreed with each of these factors as an impediment. The important question of why some special education administrators fail to mentor remains unclear.

Conclusions

The following conclusions are summarized here based on the analyses of the data obtained from the *Mentoring for Special Education Administrators* survey:

- Mentoring by special education administrators is prevalent. Most of the mentoring is being provided to nonadministrative special education professionals.

- Special education administrators who were mentored since entering the special education administrator profession are much more likely to mentor other special education administrators. Those mentored prior to the initial special education administrative position are less likely to mentor others.

- There were no statistically significant differences in the rates of mentoring between males and females. Women and men are mentoring at similar rates.

- Special education administrators described their most significant mentor as female, and the mean length of the relationship was 3.5 years. Over half of the respondents rated the influence of a mentor as very influential or absolutely essential for one to obtain an initial special education administrative position.

- Psychosocial support function was rated significantly higher by those that were mentored than career development function; however, both were rated above average by all respondents.

- Three factors were found to be significant as encouragers to mentoring: sharing one's skills, professional obligation, and seeing someone succeed.

- Impediments to mentoring were significantly related to each other but none were rated by the respondents as significant impediments to mentoring.

- There was no significant relationship between the mean number of years to the initial acquisition of the special education administrative position and mentoring.

- The findings and conclusions drawn from this study are limited to the population of special education administrators within the state of California.

Implications for the Special Education Administration Discipline

According to numerous researchers (Goad, 1996; L. M. Hall, 2001; L. W. Hall, 2000; Leithwood & Jantzi, 2000; Levinson et al., 1978; Mobley et al, 1994; Murray, 1991; Parmley, 2000; Playko,1991), complex organizations seek strategies, methods, and activities to recruit, develop, and sustain the most promising leaders. Mentoring has been identified as a professional development activity to accomplish such a goal (Daresh, 1995; L. W. Hall, 2000; Murray, 1991). Special education administration is particularly complex due to four challenges faced by individuals in special education administrative positions: complexity of responsibilities, isolation, lack of adequate training, and shortages in the field (Goad, 1996). Therefore, it is reasonable to believe that special education administrators would benefit from mentoring; yet, there was little research to describe mentoring within the special education administrative community (Goad, 1996; L. W. Hall, 2000).

The current study provides a detailed description of the types of mentoring that are occurring within the discipline of special education administration. Evidence from the study suggests that over half of the respondents reported receiving mentoring and described their mentor as very influential or absolutely essential. In addition, those who had been mentored since entering the field of special education administration were much more likely to mentor others. Of the 142 respondents in the sample, 75% provided mentoring to nonadministrative special education professionals, and another 52.5%

provided mentoring to other special education administrators. This is particularly salient for a field plagued with personnel shortages. An implication of the study is that special education professionals have the potential of attracting others into the field by providing mentoring. By establishing a mentoring relationship, special education administrators can use their strengths, skills, and knowledge to assist aspiring, new, or incumbent special education administrators. Mentors pass on knowledge and values and assist others with career development and psychosocial support (Erikson, 1997; Goad, 1996; L. M. Hall, 2001). This process also allows the special education administrative mentor to grow professionally and meet developmental needs which is likely to encourage retention in the field. Interactive relationships, such as in mentoring experiences, have the potential of providing special education administrative mentors a feeling of professional and personal satisfaction (Goad, 1996; L. M. Hall, 2001; Kirk & Olinger, 2003).

Findings from this study also indicate that mentoring relationships have the potential to provide career development opportunities and psychosocial support for new and aspiring special education leaders. If these relationships and functions are critical to the performance of special education administrators, then the potential exists for individuals to make smoother, faster, and more successful career transitions without the isolation and lack of training that currently plagues the field. More leadership programs or professional development activities inclusive of special education administration could provide additional training and mentoring support for aspiring special education administrators.

Given the diverse backgrounds of those who enter special education administration, it seems logical that professional development activities should vary to account for

differences in the educational background of those in the field. The demographics from the study show that 37% of special education administrators were trained in general education as evidenced by a general education teaching credential, and 32% accounted for those individuals with a special education teaching credential. A difference in the educational training of these two groups implies that professional development activities, including mentoring, may need to be varied to meet the needs of special education administrators. Professional development activities should be focused on priority challenges faced by special education administrators that are unique to the job, including, but not limited to, complicated legal issues revolving around the implementation of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA), personnel issues related to dwindling numbers of available trained special education professionals, fiscal management of limited resources, and the essential collaboration between general and special education to assure high quality programs. Unless management staff is provided with on-going training, special education services to children with disabilities will fail, resulting in a profound loss of human potential and huge legal risks impacting programs at the district and state level (Purcell, 2002).

The study strongly supports the use of mentoring in special education administration. Findings from the study also indicate that mentoring actually increases the number of years before an individual enters the field of special education administration. This finding supports that individuals who desire mentoring and who self-select a mentor take a longer time to complete their mentoring experience.

Another implication derived from the study is related to the complexity of the special education administrative position. Frequently occurring complicated issues

requiring advanced knowledge and problem-solving skills, might require mentor support over longer periods of time and can result in a longer mentoring period.

Another implication that evolves from the study pertains to the need for mentoring in SELPAS and school districts due to the need for special education administrators to handle complex issues at these levels in particular. When SELPA directors or superintendents grapple with funding decisions related to mentoring, they might consider the benefits of their investments. Mentoring is not only a valuable resource for novice special education administrators, but also a growth-promoting experience for mentors as well. Ultimately, the benefit of supporting mentoring impacts students with disabilities and the overall delivery of special education services within a school district or SELPA.

Limitations of the Study

The study is limited in that the data were gleaned from school districts in California; therefore, caution must be exercised when generalizing these results for application in other states or regions. Another limitation is that the response rate was lower than anticipated. Despite the use of technology to ease access to the survey, it was quite difficult to obtain responses for this investigation. The special education administrators who were surveyed were geographically dispersed throughout the state, resulting in access difficulties. The Datacurious website worked across browsers; however, several respondents indicated that they experienced difficulties in opening the survey on-line. The impact that this may have had on the response rate is unknown. In addition, the website was not available over a period of at least 3 days; again, it is not known what effect this may have had on the response rate.

Another limitation of the study is related to the instrument, *The Mentoring of Special Education Administrators* survey. It was used specifically for data collection and subject to personal fluctuations of the respondents. The survey was not standardized and has no empirical validity or reliability. Response patterns must be interpreted with care. The study was further limited by the observational design. The study was conducted over 6 months and was not a longitudinal research design. There was no pretest, no control group, no random assignment, and no experimental manipulation. Without experimental manipulation, it is impossible to definitely attribute cause and effect from any independent variable to differences in the dependent variables.

Recommendations for Future Research

The results of the study provide a good starting point for further investigation into the area of special education administration and mentoring practices. There has been very limited research in the special education administration arena; therefore, it is recommended that the study be replicated with a larger pool of respondents. Investigations into mentoring practiced in special education administration in other states would generate a larger sample and would support generalization of the findings to a broader population.

Although this study was conducted statewide, it did not take into account differences in mentoring between rural and urban school districts. Rural districts have unique difficulties accessing professional development activities due to their geographical locations, and there is typically one special education administrator for the entire district (Irby et al., 1995). Urban school districts are larger and more contained in a specific city or location with usually several special education administrators managing special

education programs. Future study might explore differences in mentoring of special education administrators between rural and urban school districts.

The demographics from the study show that 37% of the sample was trained in general education as evidenced by a general education teaching credential, and 32% accounted for those individuals with a special education teaching credential. There could be differences between these groups, as general educators are taught more about content of a curriculum area, while special educators are trained on how to individualize instruction, including strategies and techniques to accommodate the student with a disability. Future research could explore differences between these two groups to justify how mentoring or other professional development activities could be altered to meet the needs of each group. Professional development activities may need to be approached differently based on the educational training of the special education administrator.

There is a shortage of special education personnel in many positions and many special education administrators are mentoring nonadministrative personnel. In the study, special education administrators indicated that they spend more time mentoring nonadministrative special education professionals than administrators. Future investigation might explore which special education professionals are being mentored. Researchers might also examine whether there is a relationship between those being mentored by special education administrators and those who later enter special education administration.

Results from the study indicate that approximately half of the respondents from the sample are not mentoring. Yet, there was agreement among participants that none of the six impediments in the study were identified as impediments to mentoring. Future

research might focus on determining the factors that prevent special education administrators from mentoring. If impediments are identified, then, to the degree possible, districts and SELPAS could take steps to alleviate the impediments that are preventing administrators from mentoring.

Results of this study support the notion that mentoring is occurring in special education administration, although the type of mentoring received, whether formal or informal, is still unknown. The literature identified informal mentoring as typically established by two people, one having more experience in the field and the other a novice. It evolved by choice of the mentor/mentee (Goad, 1996; Parmley, 2001). Formal mentoring was identified as initiated through the support of a third party, such as a school district (Daresh, 1995; Goad, 1996; Murray, 1991). Future study might focus on the type of mentoring received and its effect on the mentoring relationship. Additionally, the dynamics of the mentoring relationship is ever evolving; therefore, it stands to reason that future research might also focus on elements of the mentoring relationship to reveal strategies, expectations, and functions necessary to increase effectiveness of protégés and mentors in special education administration. The study of mentoring relationships, and especially the specific strategies and functions that are imperative to the success of those in special education administrative positions, can serve to significantly inform the special education profession, resulting in the enhancement of mentoring programs for special education administrators.

Professional organizations, such as the Council of Special Education Administrators (CASE), and the Student Services and Special Education Council of the Association of California School Administrators (ACSA), have the capacity to facilitate the

development and understanding of a host of current trends and issues, including mentoring practices in special education. It is recommended that professional organizations support individuals as they prepare for special education administrative roles in schools and/or central offices; and that they support the delivery of meaningful professional development activities for these individuals. Organizations such as these have the capacity to recommend practices, policies, and legislation to ensure high quality programs for all students (ACSA, 2005).

One more important attribute of this study was the reliance on technology and the Internet to conduct the research. The use of a web-based survey rose out of a need to easily communicate with special education administrators who are dispersed throughout the State, and some in remote areas. The use of the Internet removed the barriers of space and time. While time and space were still factors, it was not necessary for the respondent to be available at the same time or place to answer the survey. In addition, since most of the school districts in the state had access to the Internet and e-mailing, the on-line survey offered an inexpensive method to disperse the survey. Datacurious.com worked consistently across browsers and despite spam blockers, e-mailing was efficient. The use of technology in this study gives rise to another recommendation for future research, and that is a study in the use of virtual mentoring in special education administration (Kirk & Olinger, 2003). Technology may offer many advantages to the mentoring relationship, including easy, informal access to mentors, and more regular feedback, as the virtual mentoring does not rely on two people being available at the same time, which could be particularly challenging for administrators in rural areas. Preliminary findings in the literature suggest that computer-mediated communication can be used to initiate and

sustain both peer-peer and mentor-protege relationships and alleviate barriers to

traditional communications due to time and schedule limitations, physical distances, and

disabilities of participants (Burgstahler, 2006).

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Appendix A

Survey From Datacurious Website:

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

Datacurious Website

Introduction to Survey

Special education administrators face an array of conflicting demands with policy and procedures driven by complex laws and regulations. To support special education administrators in the daunting task of developing and monitoring special education programs and services this survey examines mentoring as a tool to prepare and support the special education administrator. Confidentiality is assured as this survey is not asking for your name or any individuating information about you or your district. The study is blinded and Datacurious uses codes so your confidentiality is assured. Therefore it is important that you be completely honest, relaxed and candid.

Survey Name: Mentoring for Special education administrators

I work in special education administration.

C Yes

C No

I rate the complexity of special education administration on the following scale:

Extremely complex   Not At All Complex

C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇   C ◇

Page 2 of 8

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

Please circle the correct choice.

1. What is your gender?

◯ Female

◯ Male

2. Which administrative credentials do you hold? Circle all that apply.

◯ Certificate of completion

◯ Tier I/Preliminary

◯ Tier II/Professional

◯ Out-of-State

◯ None

◯ Other: Please type out.

3. Please list other credentials you hold:

_____   _____

_____   _____

4. What is the title of your current position? Circle one.

◯ Director of Special Education

◯ Director of Student Services

◯ Coordinator of Special Education/Student Services

◯ Assistant Superintendent

◯ Supervisor in Special Education

◯ Program Manager

◯ Program Specialist

◯ Other

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

5. How many years have you been a special education administrator?

_____ (Fill-in # of years).

6. How many years did you work in special education before acquiring your initial special education administrative position?

_____ (Fill-in # of years).

7. Before becoming a special education administrator for the first time, were you mentored in special education administration? **Please circle either 'Yes' or 'No'.**

Yes

No

8. Since becoming a special education administrator, have you been mentored?

Yes

No

9. Do you have a mentor in your current position?

Yes

No

If 7, 8, and 9 were all answered 'NO' please go to page 5.

Page 4 of 8

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

ollowing questions are to be answered **ONLY** by those **RESPONDENTS** who **were MENTORED**. e answer these questions in regard to your most significant Professional Mentor. If you were **NEVER** cred (a mentee) please proceed to next page (5).

What was the gender of your most significant mentor? Circle the answer that applies.

○ emale

○ Male

ow long were you mentored (in years) by your most significant mentor?

_____ (Fill-in # of years).

ow influential was your significant mentor in your progress in acquiring your initial special education ristrator position? (Circle one)

nallyModerately   Very   Absolutely
ential influential influential essential

○   ○   ○   ○

cr the next two questions please rate the career and psychosocial mentoring you received from your signficant mentor.

r function: My Mentor focused on my career development, provided sponsorship, exposed mt to ssional connections, and provided challenging opportunities.

help in reer opment	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Lots of career development
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

losocial function: My Mentor was an encourager, advisor, supporter, and friend. The mentor helped op my personal talent.

No losocial rport	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10 Lots of psychosocial support
○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○	○

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Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

Mentoring History--You as a Mentor

14. Do you mentor non-administrative special education professionals? Circle the one that applies:

Yes

No

15. Do you mentor special education administrators?

Yes

No

If 'No' answered to both statements please go to page 7.

Page 6 of 8

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

If you have not been a mentor **PLEASE** proceed to page 7.

16. Factors that ENCOURAGED YOU TO BE A MENTOR are shown below. Please indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with the statements. Circle the one that applies for each statement.

(a) Seeing someone I mentored succeed.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(b) The opportunity to share my successful skills and expertise.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(c) Recalling events from my own career.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(d) Meeting my professional obligations to encourage talented potential special education leaders.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(e) Learning new skills from the mentees.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(f) Learning new information from the mentees.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(g) Other factors:

Page 7 of 8

Mentoring for Special Education Administrators

17. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the statements regarding the impediments you experienced trying to be a mentor. Circle the one that applies for each statement.

(a) Mentoring is too time consuming.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(b) I have no experience yet in the field of special education administration.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(c) The district has no viable candidates for special education administration.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(d) I need to maintain my own position, not create competition.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(e) I achieved this position through my own initiative and feel that others should do the same.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(f) I have not been asked to mentor.

Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree

(g) Other impediments

Page 8 of 8

Thank you for your time and cooperation. Please turn in your survey!

Appendix B

Letters to SELPA Directors and Special Education Administrators

Introductory Letter to SELPA Directors (sent via e-mail)

August, 2005

Re: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151

Dear SELPA Director:

This letter is to inform you of a study in the area of mentoring for *special education administrators* in California. I am a doctoral student in Educational Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego and a special education administrator for San Diego City Schools. My focus is to determine the prevalence of mentoring among special education administrators in California, including gender differences in the base rates of mentoring. There is currently concern in the State about how educational leaders are prepared but the focus in research and program development has centered on new and aspiring principals. There is very little research on how special education administrators are prepared to handle the many intricacies and complexities of special education especially considering the myriad of laws and statutes governing special education in this State.

A survey has been developed for this study which is available online at https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151. Clicking on this web address will take you directly to the survey which only takes about 10 minutes. If you would be so kind as to take the survey yourself and then please forward this website address to those special education administrators in your SELPA who are responsible for administering special education programs. If you would prefer I can e-mail the special education administrators directly if you would forward e-mail addresses to me at dtoups@sandi.net. I have also attached a flyer about the study with the web address if it would be easier for

you to pass out the flyer at your next operations meeting. The survey does not keep identifying information of the respondents.

As the leader in your SELPA, I definitely want to keep you informed of this important study so please contact me at dtoups@sandi.net if you would like to receive information on the results of the study. If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to contact me at the above e-mail or I can be reached by phone during the day at 858 490-2770 ext. 2107 or in the evening at 858 530-2283. Thank you again for your assistance with this important study.

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Toups
Program Manager, SDCS
3401 Clairemont Drive
San Diego, California 92117

Introductory Letter to Special Education Administrators (sent via e-mail)

September, 2005

RE: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151.

Dear Special Education Administrator:

I am a doctoral student in Educational Leadership Studies at the University of San Diego and a special education administrator for San Diego City Schools. I am working on a research study in the area of mentoring. My focus is to examine mentoring in the special education administrative community in California. This study has been approved as a project for the University. Because you have been identified as a special education administrator, I would like your input.

This study uses a web-based survey to collect data. The survey asks about your experiences providing mentoring and being mentored. Please access the survey via the link. It takes approximately 10 minutes to complete and no follow-up is needed on your part. This survey allows you the opportunity to give feedback regarding mentoring for special education administrators who have very complex job responsibilities. Your input will be valuable in describing mentoring in the special education administrative community.

Participation in the study is completely voluntary and you may withdraw at any time. Your responses at the website will be kept separate from the identifying information and your individual answers will not be shared with anyone. No risks are anticipated. Please right click on the web address or paste the URL into your browser to access the survey: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s-11151.

If you have any questions or concerns please feel free to e-mail me at

dtoups@sandi.net or I can be reached at 858-490-2770 ext.2107 or 858- 530-2283.

Thank you in advance for you assistance!

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Toups,
Principal Investigator

Appendix C

Follow-Up Letters to SELPA Directors and

Special Education Administrators

Follow-Up Letter 1-SELPA Director

(sent via e-mail)

September, 2005

Re: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151.

Dear SELPA Director:

About a week ago, I sent you a link to a survey on mentoring of special education administrators. If you have already completed the survey and forwarded it to other special education administrators in your SELPA, thank you for doing so. Please disregard this message.

If you have not yet completed the survey, please do so by clicking on the link above or copy and paste the link into your browser. Or, if you have not yet passed this along to special education administrators in your SELPA, please forward this e-mail. The survey consists of 19 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. Your input is important and I appreciate your time.

If you have any questions, please contact me at: dtoups@sandi.net or by phone at 858-490-2782.

Thank you,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Letter 1-Special Education Administrator

(sent via e-mail)

September, 2005

Re: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151.

Dear Special Education Administrator:

About a week ago, I sent you a link to a survey on mentoring of special education administrators. If you have already completed the survey and forwarded it to other special education administrators in your SELPA, thank you for doing so. Please disregard this message.

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If you have any questions, please contact me at: dtoups@sandi.net or by phone at 858-490-2782.

Thank you,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Letter 2-SELPA Director

September, 2005

RE: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s-11151

Dear SELPA Director:

Recently, I sent you the above URL address for a survey on mentoring in special education administration that has been approved by the University of San Diego and San Diego City Schools. Thank you for responding to the survey and passing it along to other special education administrators in your SELPA.

I am trying to increase my response rate and need your assistance in getting more responses. If you have not yet taken the survey, **please** click on the web address above or paste the URL in your browser and it will take you directly to the survey. It only takes about 10 minutes. If the link fails, please turn-on your browser cookies (netscape: tools-> options; Internet explorer: tools->internet options->general ->settings). Then forward this e-mail to special education administrators in your SELPA.

If you would prefer, I can e-mail the special education administrators directly if you would forward e-mail addresses to me at dtoups@sandi.net. The survey does not keep identifying information of the respondents.

As the leader in your SELPA, I want to keep you informed of this important study so please contact me at dtoups@sandi.net if you would like to receive information on the results of the study or if you have any questions, or comments about mentoring. I can be reached at 858-490-2770 ext. 2107 if you need additional information. Thank you again for your assistance with this important study.

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Letter 2-Special Education Administrator

September, 2005

RE: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s-11151

Dear Special education administrator:

Recently, I sent you the above URL address for a survey on mentoring in special education administration that has been approved by the University of San Diego and San Diego City Schools. Thank you for responding to the survey and passing it along to other special education administrators in your SELPA.

I am trying to increase my response rate and need your assistance in getting more responses. If you have not yet taken the survey, **please** click on the web address above or paste the URL in your browser and it will take you directly to the survey. It only takes about 10 minutes. If the link fails, please turn-on your browser cookies (netscape: tools-> options; Internet explorer: tools->internet options->general ->settings). Then forward this e-mail to special education administrators in your SELPA.

If you would prefer, I can e-mail the special education administrators directly if you would forward e-mail addresses to me at dtoups@sandi.net. The survey does not keep identifying information of the respondents.

As the leader in your SELPA, I want to keep you informed of this important study so please contact me at dtoups@sandi.net if you would like to receive information on the results of the study or if you have any questions, or comments about mentoring. I can be reached at 858-490-2770 ext. 2107 if you need additional information. Thank you again for your assistance with this important study.

Sincerely,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Letter #3-SELPA Director

October, 2005

Re: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151

Dear SELPA Director:

In September, I sent you a link to a survey on mentoring of special education administrators. If you have already completed the survey and forwarded it to other special education administrators in your SELPA, thank you for doing so. Please disregard this message.

If you have not yet completed the survey please do so by clicking on the link https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151 or pasting the URL into your browser. Or, if you have not yet passed this along to special education administrators in your SELPA, please forward this e-mail. The survey consists of 19 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. I ask that you complete the survey within five business days. Your input is valuable and I appreciate your time for this important investigation. If you have any questions, please contact me at: dtoups@sandi.net or 858-490-2770 ext. 2107.

Thank you,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Follow-Up Letter #3-Special Education Administrator

October, 2005

Re: https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151

Dear Special education administrator:

In September, I sent you a link to a survey on mentoring of special education administrators. If you have already completed the survey and forwarded it to other special education administrators in your SELPA, thank you for doing so. Please disregard this message.

If you have not yet completed the survey please do so by clicking on the link https://www.datacurious.com/survey.php?s=11151 or pasting the URL into your browser. The survey consists of 19 questions and takes about 10 minutes to complete. I ask that you complete the survey within five business days. Your input is valuable and I appreciate your time for this important investigation. If you have any questions, please contact me at: dtoups@sandi.net or 858-490-2770 ext. 2107.

Thank you,

Deborah M. Toups
Principal Investigator

Appendix D

Survey From Data Curious Website:

Informed Consent Page

Survey From Datacurious Website:

Informed Consent Page

By clicking the "I agree" button below, I am granting my consent to participate in the study entitled "Mentoring in Special Education Administration". I am aware that I can withdraw from this study at any time with no penalty. I acknowledge that this study will not ask for my name or the name of my institution or any individuating information to personally identify me, so I can be honest and candid in my responses. I acknowledge that all data will be consolidated by codes only and that datacurious is responsible only for data transfer and not for the researchers' use of the data. I acknowledge that I will not be materially compensated, though I will know in my heart that participating in this study may further a good cause.

| I Decline | I Agree | Please place an 'X' through the box you are selecting.