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Career Orientations of New York State Assistant Superintendents for Instruction: A Quantitative Study

Abstract

This research study is an examination of the career orientations of assistant superintendents for instruction in New York State public school districts, excluding those in New York City. Career orientations represent an individual's self-perceived talents, needs and values and address the question of what drives and gives direction to a career over the long term (Schein, 1996). While ASI's are the district leaders primarily responsible for system-wide achievement of The No Child Behind Act (2001) accountability targets, less than a handful of research studies have focused on these crucial leaders. The purpose of the proposed study was to identify the career orientations of ASI's and examine the relationships between and among the orientations and other variables including personal demographic and professional profile characteristics. Using a quantitative research design, a single-stage sample of 364 public school district ASI's in New York State was surveyed. The findings suggest that over half of the NYS ASI's are relatively new to their role and hold service to a cause, general managerial competence, geographic and job security dominant orientations. The service to a cause orientation ranked highest suggesting ASI's perceive making a difference in the lives of students as a central value directing their career. Career plans and district types affected ASI's career orientations. The need for additional research studies exploring the relationship of career orientations to role functions was identified. Creating a professional organization aimed at supporting and enhancing ASI's would uphold the importance of the role and influence excellence in education for all students.

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Career Orientations of New York State Assistant Superintendents for Instruction:
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By

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of the requirements for the degree
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Supervised by

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Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. School of Education
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Dedication

This work is dedicated to my mother, Jacqueline A. McGinley, a woman who exemplifies strength, sacrifice and commitment to her children in the face of great challenge. The completion of this dissertation was made possible by her love, support, and encouragement. Because of her example, I have learned that anything is possible, given an unwavering focus and passion to succeed; to my sister, Susan M. McGinley, who encouraged and reminded me throughout the process that the ‘McGinley girls’ prevail due to their drive to positively contribute to the lives of others.

Biographical Sketch

Linda L. McGinley has served for sixteen years as an Assistant Superintendent for Instruction in the West Irondequoit Central School District in Rochester, New York. She attended Mercyhurst College and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts degree in 1978. After working as a one-to-one teacher assistant for a remarkable young woman at Ithaca High School, she attended the University of Rochester from 1983 to 1985 and graduated with a Master of Science degree in Developmental Disabilities. She accepted her first teaching position at Irondequoit High School as a special educator in 1985. She continued her passion serving students with special needs as an Instructional Specialist at Monroe #1 BOCES and earned her Certificate of Advanced Study in Educational Administration at SUNY Brockport. Before assuming her current role as an ASI, she served as principal of Listwood and Brookview elementary schools for five years, where she had the privilege of applying her passion for supporting the success of all learners in a district that shared the same value system. At the urging and encouragement of her dear friend and colleague, Dr. Susan J. Flood, she began doctoral studies in the Ed.D. Program in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College in the summer of 2009.

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Leadership and learning are indispensable to each other. –John F. Kennedy

The West Irondequoit Central School District is a community dedicated to excellence in teaching and learning and a belief that each child can reach his or her fullest potential. I would like to acknowledge the support of:

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Abstract

This research study is an examination of the career orientations of assistant superintendents for instruction in New York State public school districts, excluding those in New York City. Career orientations represent an individual's self-perceived talents, needs and values and address the question of what drives and gives direction to a career over the long term (Schein, 1996). While ASI's are the district leaders primarily responsible for system-wide achievement of The No Child Behind Act (2001) accountability targets, less than a handful of research studies have focused on these crucial leaders. The purpose of the proposed study was to identify the career orientations of ASI's and examine the relationships between and among the orientations and other variables including personal demographic and professional profile characteristics. Using a quantitative research design, a single-stage sample of 364 public school district ASI's in New York State was surveyed. The findings suggest that over half of the NYS ASI's are relatively new to their role and hold service to a cause, general managerial competence, geographic and job security dominant orientations. The service to a cause orientation ranked highest suggesting ASI's perceive making a difference in the lives of students as a central value directing their career. Career plans and district types affected ASI's career orientations. The need for additional research studies exploring the relationship of career orientations to role functions was identified. Creating a professional organization aimed at supporting and enhancing ASI's would uphold the importance of the role and influence excellence in education for all students.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The role of the district in interpreting and mediating policy for school administrators and teachers has never been more important. The role of public school teachers and administrators in the United States, influenced by the 2001 reauthorization of the federal Elementary and Secondary Education Act, No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001, Sec. 1001, 3), requires the alignment of policies around teaching, learning, and raising student achievement in a context of high accountability (Rorrer & Skrla, 2005). In the current policy context dominated by themes of accountability and performance standards, Togneri and Anderson (2003) describe the critical role of district level leadership:

The efforts of heroic principals, innovative charter schools and inspiring classroom teachers who single-handedly turn around low-performing schools or classrooms are to be zealously applauded and encouraged, but ultimately their efforts produce isolated islands of excellence. Large scale improvement requires systemic effort of the kind that is best accomplished at the district level. A system wide approach to improving instruction, a district curriculum aligned with state standards and assessments, using data to guide decisions, redefining leadership, implementing a strong accountability system, embedding professional development and making the commitment to sustain reform are clear and concrete actions enacted only through strong district leadership. (p. 3)

The need to understand key leadership actions and responsibilities at the district level that result in increased academic achievement is apparent. Waters and Marzano's 2007 meta-analysis study of district level leadership responsibilities most highly correlated with student achievement underscores the critical role of instructional leadership at the district level. The study reveals that superintendent or district level leadership practices do significantly correlate with positive student achievement. Those district leadership responsibilities correlated with student achievement are highly representative of school improvement processes. The processes include goal setting, board adopted, non-negotiable goals for student performance and instruction; achievement monitoring; and the appropriate use of resources to match instructional goals (Waters & Marzano, 2006). These findings suggest that increased school and student achievement success is optimized when superintendents and district office leadership staff focus their efforts primarily on school improvement priorities (Waters & Marzano, 2006). Whitner (2009) identifies that in a majority of districts, the district leader primarily responsible for the oversight of the instructional program and, therefore, these school improvement initiatives, is the assistant superintendent for instruction (ASI).

Background of the Study

History of the Role of the ASI

While the scholarly literature is substantial with respect to the role of the superintendent, there is a noticeable absence of studies related to the assistant superintendency (Cetorelli, 1997; Leach, 2009). Pajak, Adamson, Rhoades (1989) calls for more in-depth investigation of the central office supervisor of curriculum and instruction and provides a historic perspective to explain why the role has not been

adequately researched. His research reveals that the school district central office instructional supervisory position first emerged during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century as urban districts centralized and grew larger. Literature published during the 1930s and 1940s by the Department of Supervisors and Directors of Instruction and during the 1940s and 1950s by the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development was concerned with advocacy for John Dewey's tenets, specifically the role of reflective practice, cooperative problem solving, and democratic leadership. Pajak et al. posits that, by the early 1960s, the field of supervision and leaders responsible for carrying out the supervisory functions of teachers was specifically defining supervision as an expression of democratic leadership. That is, district level supervision was conceived more in terms of democratic process than organizational structure. Empirical research on the district central office supervisory role is characterized as meager, citing that most studies of district supervisors of curriculum and instruction have been doctoral dissertations, usually focusing on identifying task functions, and the earliest available research was completed during the 1960s (Klein, 1969). Moreover, a variety of titles such as associate or assistant superintendent for curriculum or instruction, supervisor of instruction, curriculum coordinator or director, and director of instruction are applied in various school systems to describe roles that carry out very similar functions (Hall, Putnam, & Hord, 1985).

Harris (1963) identified ten tasks encompassing a range of supervisory responsibilities that directly or indirectly affected the quality of instruction in K-12 organizations. These tasks included developing curriculum, creating procedures for instruction, staffing, provisioning of materials, managing facilities, coordinating in-

service education, inducting new staff members, implementing special services and supervising, and evaluating.

An Association for Curriculum and Development (ASCD) task force was formed in the 1980s because the number of district-wide instructional supervisors had slowly but steadily declined (Costa & Guditis, 1984). In its final report, the task force concluded that district supervision was primarily related to the role of change agent but also found that a clear, concise definition of the parameters of the role remained elusive and idiosyncratic.

The restructuring movement of the 1990s and the site-based management regulations resulted in bypassing central offices as the main agent of change and channeled resources directly to schools and classrooms raising new questions about the relevance of the district central office supervision of curriculum and instruction (Busch et al., 2004). Studies of the district level central offices mainly focused on regulatory functions, such as whether staff met licensure requirements (Gamson, 2009). Research concerning supervisors of instruction are noticeably absent during this period. Of the studies conducted, they have used quantitative tools to examine the regulatory functions of the role and have primarily used survey methodology to outline functions and perceptions of role functions as the focus of the research (Smith, 1990). No studies during this period analyzed the underlying skills, actions, talents, and motivations of district level leaders responsible for the instructional program. In recent decades, however, various federal legislation acts have culminated in an unprecedented demand for district office administrators to implement standards-based, curriculum reform efforts in order to achieve and accelerate improved student performance.

Influence of Legislation on the Role of District Leadership

The publishing of the National Commission on Excellence in Education's report, *A Nation at Risk*, in 1983 resulted in a series of legislative actions by states establishing mandates, accountability directives, and an expanded federal and state role in the governance of educational systems that had previously been the jurisdiction of local education authorities (Bell, 1993; DeBray, McDermott, & Wohlstetter, 2005). The commission's report claimed that public education was characterized by a "rising tide of mediocrity," and focused on five recommendations concerning content: standards and expectations, time usage, teaching, leadership, and financial allocations. As a result, national goals for education were adopted by the president and the governors (Crosby, 1993). In 1994, the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known as Goals 2000 or Improving America's Schools Act (IASA), required states with districts receiving Title I funds to set academic standards and test whether students were meeting standards. By 1994, 42 states had created content standards and 30 were developing performance standards (DeBray et al., 2005). While IASA required states to identify Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) requirements and corrective action for districts failing to achieve it, states were provided opportunity to determine how and when to support schools toward improved student performance.

The passing of the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 includes more stringent testing and accountability provisions than IASA. The NCLB Act requires each state to set content and achievement standards in core subjects, implement annual standardized assessments to identify students' progress toward the standards in grades 3-8 and one high school assessment, develop targets for performance on the tests, and implement a set

of interventions with schools and districts that do not achieve the targets (Kim & Sunderman, 2005). The accountability provisions of the law are designed to narrow the achievement gap, especially those between “minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” (NCLB, 2001, Sec. 1001, 3). The AYP requirements are imposed to guarantee that all schools and their students achieve the same standards in reading and mathematics by 2013-2014. The law outlines achievement in terms of “annual measurable objectives (AMO), indicating a minimum percentage of students who must meet proficiency.” As a result, efforts to improve student academic performance in public school districts has accelerated and intensified (Rice & Roellke, 2008). Moreover, President Barack Obama’s 2010 blueprint for reforming the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) outlines a new set of reform policies that maintain robust accountability, increase expectations for national career and college-ready standards, and places a new focus on growth models of assessment (Domenech, 2010). These changes, recently adopted by the NYS Department of Education in the form of regulations, require the district level assistant superintendents for instruction to respond to and implement new college and career ready standards, develop new interim assessments aligned to the new standards, create evidence-based instructional models and supports for teachers, negotiate new principal and teacher evaluation systems using student achievement data, and apply new data systems to inform achievement planning and comply with reporting requirements (Stein, 2002). The role of successful districts in responding to these requirements describes elements including: (a) alignment of curriculum and instruction and consistent leadership regarding instructional practice; (b) professional development; (c) interpretation of data sets to

concretely support teaching; and (d) modification, organization, and resource allocation targeting additional services and assistance to schools in need (David & Shields, 2001; Massell, 2000; Steineger & Sherman, 2001). A district's ability to build capacity for improvement and implement actions resulting from this accountability context depend on the capabilities of district office leadership, especially the assistant superintendent for instruction, primarily responsible for teaching, learning, and student performance.

Changing demographics, a growing diversity, deregulation in the forms of vouchers and charter schools, power decentralization and increased accountability with no authority describe the forces changing the role of the superintendency (Houston, 2001). While studies describe three dominant roles of the superintendency as instructional, managerial, and political, Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001) assert that superintendents spend most of their time and energy in the managerial and political dimensions. These dimensions require that districts operate effectively with minimal conflict and negotiate with multiple constituencies to seek approval for increased fiscal resources and programs. Cuban's (1998) study revealed that the interpersonal aspects especially related to the managerial and political dimensions of the board and community consume much of the superintendent's day. The changing role of the superintendent and the increased policy expectations for governance, finance, and accountability necessitate that responsibilities for implementing the Elementary and Secondary Educational Act (ESEA) and NCLB requirements be relegated to the assistant superintendent for instruction.

The critical role of district-level instructional leaders in successful student performance reforms is emerging, but most research studies are of the superintendent's role and:

when researchers have looked beyond superintendents to study the work of other central office administrators they tend to report how '*the district*' participates in teaching and learning improvement, significantly masking the various people and work practices of other central office administrators. (Honig, Copland, Rainey, Lorton, & Newton, 2010)

Research describing the importance of central office administrators' knowledge of expert instruction as foundational to successful standards-based curriculum reforms is emerging (Spillane & Thompson, 1997; Stein & Nelson, 2003). Because NCLB requires district office leaders to effectively mediate and interpret policy implementation for individual schools so that performance targets are reached or exceeded, the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction becomes paramount. Surprisingly, less than a handful of studies focus specifically on describing specific effective strategies employed by the assistant superintendent for instruction or other designated district-level leaders responsible for instructional improvement (Grove, 2005; Honig, et al., 2010).

Theoretical Rationale

Student-learning Cultures

Elmore and Burney's (1997) research described the district leader's role in generating a culture of commitment to improving teaching and the student performance of all students. Firestone's (2009) research explored effective tactics district level leaders use to implement *student-learning* cultures. In student-learning cultures, instruction is

considered complex and changeable, requiring greater decision making by teachers resulting in the perspective that teachers are professionals. As well, student-learning districts engage in problem solving and knowledge construction throughout the organization to determine how best to organize and build capacity for research-based instruction. A strong vision of student learning and instructional improvement resonates throughout the actions of all constituents, including the belief that all children, especially those from underrepresented groups and low-income homes, can learn and achieve at high levels. Trust is developed among staff and depends a great deal on an internalized sense of accountability and an effective and creative means to build leadership capacity. A pattern of social relations reveals student-learning cultures rely less on centralized authority and more on collaboration, shared leadership, and trust among leaders at all levels. Firestone (2009) focuses on two aspects of culture: (a) the content of expectations, including ideas about teaching and learning and ideas about how people work together and (b) the extent to which expectations are shared. In student-learning cultures, groups of individuals internalize their own goals for improvement and accept accountability, enacting processes for improvement that are flexible and situational. Interpersonal capacity is developed when groups of people embrace solving problems together through active reflection, consultation with one another, and a learning orientation (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000). The social aspect of professional learning is emphasized. Not unlike students learning from one another, teachers and administrators create new knowledge by exploring models of exemplary practice with colleagues and embedding those enhancements into their own repertoire. In student-learning cultures, the patterns of social relations rely on collaboration, shared leadership and trust. Professional learning involves

a deeper integration of data use and curricula to solve issues of instruction.

Organizational capacity building requires structures and systems that foster personal learning and facilitate collaborative learning. A learning community is created through structures, processes, and power relationships that are designed to strengthen professional learning (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000). District office leadership places an emphasis on reciprocity and providing service and support as well as the demand for accountability (Supovitz, 2006). While nonexistent in the current literature base, studies aimed at identifying the underlying talents and abilities of the assistant superintendent for instruction responsible for implementing these processes would be timely and informative.

Sustainable Leadership

Successful reform initiatives in an accountability context require leadership coherence and sustained effort. Fullan, Bertani, and Quinn (2004) identified districts whose culture included professional learning communities within and across schools. These district cultures are exemplified by district level leaders who understand the change process and the corresponding lateral capacity-building strategies whereby schools learn with and from each other. Fullan (2006) describes “systems thinkers in action” who commit to achieving greater sustainability by changing the context of the system so that all leaders of the system interact with the larger goals of the system to work on similar issues. Hargreaves and Fink (2003) describe beliefs and actions that leaders implement to bring about sustainable improvement.

Leaders develop sustainability by how they approach, commit to and protect deep learning in their schools; by how they sustain others to promote and support that

learning; by how they sustain themselves in doing so, so that they can persist with their vision and avoid burning out; and by how they try to ensure the improvements they bring about last over time, especially after they themselves have gone. (p. 8)

Exploring the underlying beliefs and talents the assistant superintendent for instruction holds and employs when working with school level leaders to build these pivotal capacities (personal, interpersonal, organizational) may lead to a deeper understanding of how school districts support, improve, and sustain improvements in student learning.

Studies reveal that more than one-half of those individuals serving as assistant superintendents for instruction are either nonaspirants or undecided with respect to career aspirations toward the superintendency. As a result, a large number will likely remain in the district level instructional and curricular position, available to provide sustained leadership toward the achievement goals of NCLB. Given the relative importance of the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction to student achievement, the need for these leaders to remain in their role to provide consistent, sustained leadership is clear. The paucity of studies that examines why they remain in the role or are undecided with respect to the logical next step in the career path imbues further research to understand the career identities and orientations of assistant superintendents for instruction. This proposed study is both warranted and timely.

Career Anchors

Career anchors provide a broad view of what is important to an individual by combining talents, motives, and values. Other career models focus exclusively on motivation (Holland, 1997), talents (Arthur, Hall, & Lawrence, 1989a) and less on values

(Feldman & Bolino, 1996). Because career anchors include a consideration of lifestyle factors, Arnold (2004) posits that the theory may provide a more all-encompassing view of an individual's career aims. The main utility of the theory is that career anchors, representing an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career, act as a stabilizing force to guide or constrain future career decisions (Schein 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). Edgar Schein's Career Anchor Theory (1978) integrates the individual and the organization's needs in the career process. The career anchor consists of one's talents, basic values, and an evolved understanding of needs as they relate to a career. Schein defines an anchor as "that one element in a person's self-concept, which he or she will not give up, even in the face of difficult choices" (1990, p. 18). As individuals accrue occupational and life experience, their self-concept forms to function as an anchor, a stabilizing force that represents the values and motivations they must keep when faced with a choice. The anchor metaphor is useful when individuals are faced with making career decisions that require them to weigh the demands between personal and work life because the anchor serves as a steadying force. When individuals view the potential career or situation as inconsistent with their needs, talents and values, they will be constrained and remain anchored to the environment more congruent with the stable self concept. Likewise, when the potential work environment is perceived as consistent with the career anchor, it informs the person's decision to achieve more positive career outcomes, specifically in areas of job effectiveness, career satisfaction, and job stability (Schein, 1978).

In contrast to other career models, career anchors provide a broad view of what is important to an individual by combining talents, motives, and values. The main utility of

the theory is that career anchors, representing an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career, act as a stabilizing force to guide or constrain future career decisions (Schein 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000).

Schein (1980) identifies internal careers as the “activities designed to help individuals develop a clearer self-concept around their own career activities, a set of plans that make sense to the individual” (p. 358). The internal career represents individuals' goals and in relation to their professional life and how accomplishments are judged. Career anchors address the question of what drives and gives direction to a career over the long term and shift the responsibility for career management from the organization to the individual. Schein (1985), DeLong (1982), and Derr and Laurent (1989) regard the internal career as “a more stable, longer term and deeper definition of work identity than just occupying a job or being a part of an organization” (Schein, 1985, p.4). They agree that one's career self-identity involves a subjective viewpoint about the role one assumes in work and life. The internal career focuses on what people want or think is important as well as what people believe they can accomplish (Ngokha, 2000). Moreover, Schein (1978) suggests that employees who possess a deep understanding of self and clear goals will experience career success. Schreuder and Coetzee (2006) define career success as “a comprehensive and psychological judgment stemming from individuals' career orientation and consisting of their own beliefs, interests and values about work and life.” Career orientations assist people to decide whether to remain in a specific career, the duration of stay, or to move to a different field. A career orientation exists inside the individual, is learned from accumulated work experience, involves the

interplay of abilities, motives, and values in an individual's self-concept and serves to limit, steady, and integrate an individual's career (Schein, 1978, 1990, 1996).

Schein's career anchor theory, therefore, may provide a lens for understanding the talents, motivations, and values of the assistant superintendent for instruction and may uncover underlying reasons why assistant superintendents for instruction select to remain in the role for the duration of the career, as opposed to deciding to ascend to the superintendent role. A major gap in the research concerns the study of career orientations and administrators in the education field. While studies of teachers' career anchors have been explored, it is not known whether the findings from those studies of teachers actually apply to the career identities of administrators whose work lives and career paths differ significantly from those of teachers. Only one research study has been conducted with educational administrators and that included a dissertation on the career anchors of principals (Puryear, 1996). A research study that considers the career orientations within the education discipline, specific to district administrators and the assistant superintendent for instruction, is warranted.

Studies reveal that some occupations demonstrate dominant career orientations while others identify career profiles of needs, talents, and motives. Various studies of managers in different occupations did not reveal a pattern of dominance. Determining whether career orientations of the assistant superintendents for instruction are dominant and, if they are dominant, what are they dominant around and do they remain stable over the career of the assistant superintendent or do they shift with different work experiences, would be important concepts to understand.

Problem Statement

District leaders are pivotal in creating a culture that supports student learning and facilitates sustainable improvement in student achievement (Fullan, 2005). The No Child Left Behind Act has accelerated and intensified the need for districts to demonstrate effects of standards-based reform as measured by high stakes assessment results (Kim & Sunderman, 2005). Building the capacity for district-wide improvements in instruction and student achievement requires significant involvement and service by district office staff. District level leaders must exercise essential leadership throughout the system to bring about these sustained improvements (Honig et al., 2010). Understanding the talents, beliefs, interests, and values of the key district leaders, namely the assistant superintendent for instruction, whose responsibility is to bring about this sustained improvement in teaching and learning, has the potential to inform educational leaders who seek to facilitate such improvements.

The assistant superintendent for instruction is the district-level leader responsible for school improvement and for building others' capacity in the system to strengthen and sustain improved performance achievement, yet, little is known about these district-level leaders (Cetorelli, 2007; Leach, 2009; Honig, et. al, 2010). Moreover, a substantial number of these leaders choose to remain in this career, opting not to ascend to the role of the superintendent, the next logical position (Leach, 2009). Career anchors represent an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career and describe what motivates and shapes direction over time (Schein, 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). The internal career is regarded as a stable, long-term definition of work identity focusing on a person's self-identity. This career orientation exists inside the individual and is learned

from accumulated work experiences consisting of their beliefs, interests, talents, and values (Coetzee, 2006). While career anchors of teachers have been studied and one study of principals has occurred (Puryear, 1996), there have been no studies of district-level administrator's career orientations. Studying the career anchors of assistant superintendents for instruction would explain the underlying motives, needs, and values that assistant superintendents for instruction hold and would inform the nonexistent research base about these district-level leaders. Determining the career orientations of the assistant superintendent for instruction would also contribute to the field in describing how they influence the capacity of others in the organization to bring about stronger student learning cultures and sustained improvement in academic achievement.

Significance of the Study

Despite the fact that the scholarly literature is replete with studies that describe the critical role of district-level instructional leadership, there is a paucity of studies specific to the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction and this study would fill that void. This study adds to the literature regarding the question of why so many do not aspire to the superintendency but, more importantly, could inform the knowledge base about the experiences and orientations currently held by those in the role of assistant superintendent of instruction. Because the assistant superintendent for instruction's work life is primarily concerned with issues of teaching and learning, remaining in the position may afford increased sophistication in the specialized area leading to the opportunity to develop deeper expertise and achievement of greater perceived positive career outcomes. These career outcomes may also relate to their perceived effectiveness in building personal, organizational, and interpersonal capacities to foster a student-learning culture

and sustain academic improvement. The superintendent role, the next logical career step for an assistant superintendent for instruction, encompasses leadership of varied areas of the organization and problem solving of unpredictable circumstances that may distract from the underlying need and motive to develop disciplinary expertise in depth. The superintendent role closely mirrors the managerial competence anchor requiring leadership during uncertain times and greater involvement in the political sphere of schooling. The dominant self-concept of the assistant superintendent may be to develop technical and functional competence in depth, thereby, anchoring talents, abilities, and needs to the functions associated with that specialized role.

This study expands upon Schein's theory of career anchors by studying a new population, district-level educational administrators and contributes to the theoretical applications of career anchors. For purposes of this research study, career orientation and career anchor terms are used interchangeably.

Statement of Purpose

The overall intent of this study is to develop an understanding of the career orientations of assistant superintendents for instruction to determine the underlying motives, talents, needs, and values that accompany their leadership for sustainable improvement in teaching and learning. The primary purpose is to identify the career orientations of NYS assistant superintendents for instruction (excluding New York City). A secondary purpose is to examine the relationship between identified career orientations and certain personal demographics and professional profile characteristics, including years in the role, highest education degree earned, terminal career plan, and district type. A quantitative survey design was employed.

Research Questions

The quantitative research questions for the study were:

R1. What are the career orientations of NYS assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City?

R2. What is the relationship between career orientations of NYS assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those New York City, and years of service in the role?

R3. What is the relationship between career orientations of New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City, and gender?

R4. What is the relationship between career orientations of New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City, and current district type?

R5. What is the relationship between career orientations of New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City, and career plans for duration of career, including intent to remain in position, ascend to the superintendency, or to no longer work in the role?

Glossary of Terms

Career Anchors: an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career describes what motivates and shapes direction over time (Schein, 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). The internal career is regarded as a stable, long-term definition of work identity focusing on a person's self-identity. Career anchors describe the career orientation an individual holds and is a construct that is developed from accumulated work experiences consisting of their beliefs, interests, talents, and values (Coetzee, 2006).

Career Orientations: pattern of job-related preferences that remain fairly stable over a person's work life (Schein, 1974).

District Office: the office that serves as the administrative center or central headquarters (Honig et al., 2010).

Professional learning communities: teams that embody collaborative cultures, within and across schools, and that engage in rigorous inquiry into teaching and learning (DuFour, 2004; Fullan, 2005).

Student learning cultures: a term coined by Firestone (2005) to describe district cultures that are student-learning oriented by influencing three core processes: (a) professional development, (b) curriculum, and (c) data use.

Superintendent: administrator with executive oversight of the school district.

Sustainable leadership: processes and practices of leadership that create long-term improvements in student achievement. It is the capacity of the school system to engage in the complexity of school improvement (Fullan, 2005).

Summary

The challenges of implementing standards of excellence and increasing achievement levels for all students are shared amongst all districts (Muller, 2004). Consistent and sustainable leadership at the district-level regarding teaching and learning practice is necessary to create and implement supports for change (Honig, et al., 2010). This chapter provides a framework for exploring the career orientations of the assistant superintendents for instruction, a key leader in district-level leadership, in relation to their role in effecting sustainable improvements in teaching and learning and establishes the purpose of this study. The concept of career anchors and its relationship to one's internal

career motivations, talents, values, and needs is summarized. Establishing a student-learning culture within a district and the need for sustainable leadership approaches to realize this type of culture is introduced. Terms relevant to the study are defined.

The next chapter summarizes the relevant literature regarding the career anchor as a measure of career orientations and related topics, including the role of assistant superintendents in leading sustainable improvements, district-level practices necessary for student-learning cultures to thrive, and the role of the district office in leading school improvement in an accountability context. Chapter three provides a detailed plan of the research method, including research context, participants, and the instruments that were used in the study. Chapter four presents the research findings. Chapter five discusses the interpretations of the findings.

Chapter 2: Review of the Literature

Introduction and Purpose

The review of the literature begins with a summary of theoretical and empirical findings related to the assistant superintendent role in the standards and accountability movement. The research regarding studies on the role of district office in educational reform, including developing student learning cultures, is discussed in detail especially in relation to the history of the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction. Sustainable leadership as a means of enhancing systemic change is introduced. The research on career anchors, as a means of understanding the career orientations of assistant superintendents for instruction, specifically their attitudes, motivations, talents, and needs, is discussed in detail. Change arising from the mandates included in the Nation at Risk and the subsequent reauthorization of the Elementary Education and Secondary Act: No Child Left Behind (2001) were a focus of this study. An overview of these mandated changes as they relate to the accountability context's impact on the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction is reported. The implication for assistant superintendents for instruction and the career identity they hold is discussed. The chapter concludes with a summary of the research question and relevance of the study.

The Role of District Office in Educational Reform

The 21st century state and federal policy context of standards-based reform and accountability systems for schools have resulted in a renewed research attention to the district role in educational reform evidenced by several studies of district-level and

district-wide efforts to improve student achievement. Prior to the 1990s, research studies overlooked and some even dismissed district central office staff as considerable actors for systemic educational reform (Anderson, 2003; Rorrer, Skrla & Scheurich, 2008; Supovitz, 2006). Smith and O'Day (1991) characterized the research emphasis between 1980 and 1990 as focusing on the schools as the locus of federal and state policy influence through decentralization and bottom-up change processes. The achievements of schools and teachers, state and federal policymakers, and private entities were emphasized during this time period.

Elmore (2004) reported that research regarding the role of the district office in improving student performance conducted before the 1990s revealed little district-level emphasis on curriculum and instruction issues or support for principals to successfully lead instructional initiatives. In his review of research studies conducted in the 1980s, he reports “key decisions on curriculum and teaching passed from states to districts, from districts to principals, and from principals to teachers, with little effective focus or guidance” (p. 116). Elmore (2004), citing the growing prominence of national standards and assessments, called for research into the role of district office in impacting systemic reform:

If states play a more aggressive role in setting goals outlining curriculum requirements, underwriting teacher education and professional development consistent with these goals and requirements, and monitoring individual schools based on how well students are learning academic content, what role will districts play? (p. 98)

Rorrer et al. (2008) conducted a meta-analysis of the existing research on the district's role in educational reform since 1984. For purpose of their review, the term *district* referred to the superintendent, school board, and building level/central administration. The research centered explicitly on studies that examined the district as the focus of analysis, as opposed to the school, including aspects related to the role of the district in reform. Their analysis reviewed 81 peer refereed articles, 4 book chapters, 16 policy-related reports, and 9 other research papers. A thematic analysis produced four all-important roles of districts: instructional leadership, orienting the system, creating cohesive policies, and developing equity as a priority.

Instructional leadership at the district level includes inducing will (Berman, 1985; Daresh, 1991; Elmore & Burney, 1997; Firestone, 1989; McLaughlin, 1987) and building capacity (Firestone, 1989; Fuller & Johnson, 2001; Honig & Hatch, 2004; Massell, 2000; Spillane & Thompson, 1997). McLaughlin (1987, 1990) cited the district's need to generate will in order for federal and state policy reforms to drive successful reform. Daresh (1991) described how districts generated will by overtly dedicating resources to improve teaching and learning, demonstrating ongoing consideration of the viewpoint of others, cognizance of self and consistency, and predictability in communications and actions. Establishing and communicating a vision and mission and developing goals to support instruction (McLaughlin & Talbert, 2003; Murphy & Hallinger, 1988), were examples of district-level actions. To act on the will, district leaders intentionally build capacity intentionally by mobilizing personnel, promoting the vision, marshalling resources, monitoring the reform effort, and consistently applying a combination of pressure and support (Firestone, 2009). While each of these studies illustrates how

districts create conditions for success through the lens of instructional leadership, none of the studies focuses specifically on the motivations, beliefs, or talents of the assistant superintendent for instruction responsible for instructional program reform and oversight.

Aligning the district's structures and processes with goals for instructional improvement, referenced as reorienting the organization, is cited as centrally important in various research studies on district reform (Honig, 2003; Murphy & Hallinger, 1988; Peterson, 1997). Peterson (1997) studied districts in California with a greater than average performance on state assessments and who proactively create organizational structures that ensure district office leaders provide tangible support to school leaders. Structures for small communities that demonstrated frequent instructional dialogue or concrete regular talk about teaching and learning between and among district leaders, school leaders, and teachers were cited as evidence of a shift of culture to a professional community in three Georgia districts (Pajak & Glickman, 1989). Elmore and Burney's (1997) case study of New York City's Community School District #2 empirically illustrated how a focused, multi-stage, system-wide effort for instructional improvement and change can be achieved when organizational processes and structures are designed to allow for sharing expertise, setting clear expectations, and decentralizing. Only the superintendent and principal's leader behaviors were a focus in these studies. In a majority of districts, the district leader primarily responsible for the oversight of the instructional program, and therefore these school improvement initiatives, is the assistant superintendent for instruction (Whitner, 2009). Studying and illuminating the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction would inform the generalizability to a wider set of districts.

District leaders are increasingly responsible for implementing federal, state, and local policy, and this expectation has heightened and intensified since the passage of No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001). The NCLB Act included accountability provisions to close the achievement gap between “minority and non-minority students, and between disadvantaged children and their more advantaged peers” (NCLB, 2001, Sec. 1001, 3), thus establishing an equity focus as the hallmark of the reform. Honig and Hatch (2004) describe successful coherence strategies as integrating, as opposed to imposing, external policies into the core aspects of the district’s vision for instructional improvement. Describing a process of *crafting coherence*, the researchers studied how school leaders and district leaders engage in a process of negotiation in order to merge external policy requirements with school goals and satisfy external demands. Honig and Hatch posit that district leaders engage schools to strategically use multiple, external demands to promote their goals and actions, with central office leaders serving in a support, rather than an authoritarian role. Exactly how school district leaders, specifically the assistant superintendent for instruction, approach providing this support is an important area of untapped research.

In summary, while the last 20 years has experienced some attention to studies at the district level to reveal the impact of districts in accelerating educational reform, the assistant superintendent for instruction has not been studied specifically. No studies analyzed the underlying skills, actions, talents, and motivations of the assistant superintendent for instruction, despite the fact that research demonstrating the importance of central office administrators’ knowledge of high-quality instruction as foundational to successful reform is well established (Stein & Nelson, 2003).

Sustainable Leadership

Davies (2007) posits that the current accountability context promotes leadership for short-term measures of success rather than long-term capacity. Recognizing that leaders need to realistically react to short-term accountability targets, he proposes that leaders must focus on major learning concepts and essential outcomes. Hargreaves and Fink (2003) stated that “sustainable educational leadership and improvement preserves and develops deep learning for all that spreads and lasts, in ways that do no harm to and indeed create positive benefits for others around us, now and in the future” (p. 33). Based on a qualitative longitudinal study of change in eight high schools in New York and Toronto, Hargreaves and Goodson (2003) conducted 250 interviews, collected documents, and observed teachers and leaders to document educational change over time. Seven fundamentals of sustainable leadership emerged: (a) depth as preserving what is most important as a stated and justifiable purpose; (b) breadth as guaranteeing that system-wide improvements are shared and distributed; (c) endurance as lasting over the long term, not just under one leader’s tenure; (d) justice as evading mistreatment and advancing value and support of others; (e) diversity as fostering and promoting inclusivity; (f) resourcefulness as purposefully renewing staff’s vitality so initiatives avoid burn-out; and (g) conservation as building on the achievements of the past and inspiring a hopeful future. Coburn (2003) synthesized the literature (19 empirical studies, 18 position papers, and 10 descriptive reports) regarding challenges of sustainability of education reform due to multiple and conflicting priorities, ever-changing mandates, and high turnover rates of teachers and administrators (Berends, Bodilly & Kirby, 2002; Cuban, 2003; Hargreaves & Fink, 2003). Recent studies suggest that administrators’

depth of knowledge of instruction may play an important role in districts' capacity to sustain change (Coburn & Meyer, 1998; McLaughlin & Mitra, 2001). A professional community that provides ongoing learning opportunities (McLaughlin & Mitra, 2001), knowledgeable and supportive school leadership (Murphy & Datnow, 2002), connections with other schools or teachers engaged in similar reform (Muncey & McQuillan, 1996), and coherence between the district policy context and the reform (Datnow, Stringfield, McHugh & Hacker, 1998) all contribute to teachers' ability to deeply understand and sustain the reform in spite of new demands and changing contexts. Fullan, Bertani and Quinn (2004) identified districts whose culture included professional learning communities within and across individual schools. These district cultures are exemplified by district level leaders who understand the change process and the corresponding lateral, capacity-building strategies whereby schools learn with and from each other. Fullan (2006) describes "systems thinkers in action" who commit to achieving greater sustainability by changing the context of the system so that all leaders of the system interact with the larger goals of the system to work on similar issues. Understanding how district assistant superintendents for instruction perceive their role in facilitating depth of understanding in sustaining reform is an area in need of examination. Moreover, studies reveal that more than one-half of those individuals serving as assistant superintendents for instruction will either remain in their career or are undecided relative to aspirations for ascending to the superintendent position (Leach, 2009). Exploring the beliefs, values, and talents that assistant superintendents for instruction hold and employ when working with school-level leaders will likely lead to a deeper understanding of how school districts support, improve, and sustain improvements in student learning.

Career Anchors

A career orientation exists inside the individual, is learned from accumulated work experience, involves the interaction of abilities, motives, and values in an individual's self concept and acts to limit, steady, and unify an individual's career (Schein, 1978, 1990, 1996). Schein's career anchor theory evolved from a twelve-year longitudinal study of 44 male graduate students who already had 10-12 years of work experience, in the Masters Degree Program in Management, at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology. The research methodology included both surveys and interviews. Schein conducted a number of in-depth, semi-structured interviews with participants to explore their career paths and the reasons they made particular career decisions. Each of the alumni was tracked for a ten- to twelve-year period and interviewed at three additional times after the initial interview. The measurement consisted of in-depth interviews concerning career decisions made by the alumni and the rationale behind changes in career or companies/institutions (Schein, 1990). Schein's qualitative analysis identified patterns that had formed over time in participants' career histories regarding reasons they gave for career choices. Career anchors developed as a means for describing the variety of explanations provided by the graduates as they advanced in their careers. Based on the data collected in this initial study, five career anchors were originally identified. The published studies do not report exactly what qualitative approach Schein used to analyze the career history data and define the five anchors. The original research on career anchors was conducted by Schein and his graduate students. Fourteen master's theses supervised by Schein applied his theory and these studies relied exclusively on interview data (Grzywacs, 1982). More women were included in these studies and, while

participants were also all managers, they were drawn from varied management fields (Schein, 1990).

Schein and DeLong (1982) developed the Career Orientations Inventory (COI), a 48-item questionnaire designed as an assessment of an individual's career anchor. Participants included 320 male graduates from Brigham Young University. The research used the COI to refine Schein's original five descriptions of anchors and concluded that the questionnaire measured a central part of the concept of career anchors, "career orientation," and the career anchor was defined as a composite of one's career orientation and self-perceived talents. The original inventory tested the five original anchors and three additional anchors were identified: Identity, Variety and Service. The COI has been modified, but the precise revision process is not documented so it is difficult to analyze exactly why the inventory changed. A 40-item version is commercially available assessing the nine predominantly identified career anchors (Schein, 1993). Schein's results inform how a person's career identity is formed as distinguished from an initial career choice. In addition, he contends that future career decisions are impacted as an individual matures and the anchor becomes stable. The nine career anchors are described in Table 2.1.

Anchor Structures

While Schein conceived of five and, later, nine career anchors, there has been considerable debate in the field about the number of anchors that are empirically supported. Studies over the past 30 years have identified as few as three and as many as eleven career anchors (Custodio, 2000; Ramakrishna & Potosky, 2001; Tan & Quek, 2001).

Table 2.1

Definitions of the Nine Career Anchors

Anchor	Definition
General Managerial Competence	Excited by analyzing and solving organizational problems that are overarching, uncertain and complex. Likes mobilizing others toward common goals. Energized by crisis situations.
Technical Functional Competence	Excited by developing depth of content expertise. Prefers advancement only in area of technical expertise.
Entrepreneurial Creativity	Motivated by the ability to create and initiate their own projects or new ventures.
Geographic Security	Needs opportunities to remain in stable or fixed locations.
Job Security	Needs long-term stability, good benefits and is willing to embrace organizational values and norms.
Lifestyle	Needs balance of career and personal life. Prefers organizations that have flexible family programs and values.
Autonomy	Needs situations free of organizational constraints. Desires freedom to set own schedule and work pace.
Service to a Cause	Motivated by sense of service for impacting a greater good. Desires to align work activities with personal value of improving society.
Challenge	Motivated by overcoming major obstacles and competing to win. Defines career in competitive terms, solving problems that are almost unsolvable.

Note. Adapted from *Career anchors: Discovering your real values*, by E. H. Schein,

1990, San Diego, CA: Pfeiffer & Co.

A 48-question career orientations inventory (COI) was developed in collaboration with DeLong (1982) to assess the eight generally recognized career anchors. However, several versions exist and adapted versions have been used in various studies. Custodio's (2000) research of 116 academic executives in four state universities in the Philippines used a 40-question version of the COI corresponding to nine anchors, separating the security anchor to consider geographic and job security. Igarria and Baroudi (1993) used a 25-item short version of the COI with 198 members of a data processing management association yielding nine anchors. Jiang and Klein (1999/2000) used a 35-item, 5-point scale with 101 entry-level information systems engineers to render nine anchors.

Danziger, Rachman-Moore, and Valency (2008) were among the first researchers to conduct studies using a large, varied sample (n=1847). Their sample was taken from students enrolled in an MBA program and represented Israeli adults from a wide variety of organizations. The COI administered was the same one used in Schein's original research. Similarly, Yarnall (1998) collected data from 374 employees of a service organization in the UK who represented a range of occupations in a sample separated by age, grade, and length of service. Schein's published COI was used, and a quantitative design to analyze the data using exploratory factor analysis confirmed an 8-factor structure. Principal axis factoring with varimax rotation suggested that the 8-factor structure accounted for 47.45% of the variance. The findings from this study made the 8-factor COI originally published by Schein a viable and acceptable measure. In summary, various studies to identify and describe the number of career anchors has revealed a range of empirically identified factors; however, for the past 30 years, most of the research has

interpreted results using eight or nine anchors (separating the security anchor into job and geographic security).

Two studies examined the reliability of the measure by considering internal consistency (Brindle & Whapman, 2003a) and test-retest reliability (DeLong, 1982). The COI is considered an instrument with high internal validity and reliability (Burke, 1983; Custodio, 2000; DeLong, 1982; Wood, Winston, & Polkosnik, 1985). Applying the COI as a measurement of career anchors for research purposes is regarded as an acceptable and reliable practice by researchers (Burke, 1983; Custodio, 2000; Erdogmus, 2004; Marshall & Bonner, 2003; Ramakrishna & Potosky, 2001).

Multiple Career Anchors vs. Dominant Career Anchors

Studies also contrast with one another regarding Schein's proposal that individuals possess one dominant anchor that emerges and drives their career decisions. Feldman and Bolino (1996) assert that Schein created a contrived mechanism for guaranteeing that only one career anchor would be dominant by designing the questionnaire to produce only one career anchor. "On a purely statistical level, arbitrarily adding extra points to higher ranking items forces a distinction which does not exist in the raw data; correlational analysis of ipsative scales can lead to fallacious conclusions" (Feldman & Bolino, 1996, p. 105). These researchers suggest reconceptualizing the career anchors into clusters that are talent based, value based and need based, allowing for multiple and complementary career anchors to emerge. Several empirical studies support the notion of clusters or multiple career anchors (Chang & Lin, 2008; Erwee, 1990; Kniveton, 2004; Suutari & Taka, 2004; Wong, 2007).

Of the above studies, three involved samples of managers using designs including interviews in order to delve deeper into the individual's reasons for identifying multiple anchors. Kniveton (2004) studied 540 managers from varied occupations in the UK who had a mean age of 27; of the sample, 269 were males and 271 females. The subjects were grouped according to occupations and they completed an inventory derived from Schein's revised 40-item questionnaire. A five-point scale was designed and the scores on each scale were recoded as totals adding to ten. A split half reliability test was conducted for each of the scales independent of one another. The reliability coefficient for any scale was .88. Following the completion of the questionnaire, participants engaged in an unstructured dialogue to explain reasons for their career choices. A number of questions were added to inquire about themes. These questions involved current job satisfaction, perceptions of one's role in the organization, understanding of job requirements, views of changes in work activities, career advancement opportunities, and alternative work placements. For individuals who achieved a dominant career anchor and also reported a high degree of career satisfaction, the two were related to determine whether compatibility was indicated. Eighty-one percent of the participants' job role/position approximately fit their career anchor. Rather than holding a single career anchor, it was noteworthy that most participants in the study inclined toward a career profile with two or more anchors competing for top rating. These included dedication and service to a cause and general managerial anchors. When participants were asked to reflect on why they chose specific anchors, some trends were revealed between participants based on age differences. Younger participants were concerned with the

talent-based anchors (management and technical skills) while older participants were concerned with autonomy or values-based anchors.

The Information Technology (IT) field has had a number of studies involving career anchors, and several of them reveal that multiple career anchors or career anchor clusters exist between and among employees. Using component factor analysis, Crepeau, Crook, Goslar, and McMurtrey (1992) grouped IT employees' career anchors to include (a) *leadership*, which involved managerial competence, service/dedication, identity, and challenges/variety; (b) *achievement*, which involved career training opportunities, acknowledgement, and social support; and (c) *flexibility*, which involved choice of hours and work setting. Ituma and Simpson (2007) revealed that IT employees in Nigeria grouped in six clusters: being steady, free, balanced, in-charge, marketable and challenged. In a study of female professionals in the IT field, to better understand their underrepresentation, a set of career anchors was identified (Quesenberry & Trauth, 2007). The women were from the States of Massachusetts, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania (central). The three predominant career anchors were technical competence, managerial competence, and organizational security. Combinations of career anchors driving the women's careers were revealed. An examination of the reasons behind these expressed anchor orientations was not sufficiently studied but would be of benefit to both the individuals and their organizations.

In contrast to the above studies that support the concept of multiple primary anchors for individuals, several recent studies support Schein's contention that a dominant anchor surfaces to inform career decisions, namely the *lifestyle* anchor. This anchor was found to be a dominant for individuals in three research studies (Danziger &

Valency, 2005; Hardin, Stocks, & Graves, 2001; Marshall & Bonner, 2003). In the quantitative study of 1,847 Israeli men and women enrolled in MBA programs who completed Schein's COI, the dominant anchor for both men and women was lifestyle. The researchers posited that the result may signify a growing desire of working adults to maintain equilibrium between the different aspects of their lives including work, family, and leisure. They also inferred that the criticality of family amongst Israeli's may have contributed to this result. The average age of the participants was 42.5 years and the sample characteristics included 48% males and 51% females. Overall, the sample was somewhat more educated than the Israeli population, with only 31% not having an academic degree. The participants in the sample were heterogeneous in gender, age, and type of employment (self-employed or salaried). A hypothesis that women would hold the lifestyle anchor as dominant was not supported. This hypothesis was tested using cross tabulations and a chi-square significance test. The distribution of career anchors resulted in only 31% of the respondents scoring dominant for the lifestyle anchor. The service, general management, and entrepreneurship anchors were infrequent; each yielding only 4 - 5% of the sample. The second most dominant anchor was technical functional. The presence of dominance for the lifestyle anchor had implications for organizations concerned about reducing turnover intentions. The study resulted in suggestions for implementing flexible structures that allow for work-life balance of employees.

Similarly, in Marshall and Bonner's (2003) study of 423 graduate students registered in management courses in several countries and who had changed jobs as a result of workforce reductions, the students identified lifestyle as their most dominant

career anchor. The lifestyle anchor was dominant across three geographic regions: Australia, Asia, and Europe. These results were determined through descriptive analysis, lagged correlation analysis, and regression analysis to conduct initial tests of the bivariate relationship between age, geographical regions, career anchors, and the experience of workforce reduction. Significant correlations were revealed between culture and the career anchors of lifestyle ($p=0.119$, $p <.01$) and age and lifestyle ($p=0.077$, $p <.01$). Schein's original research in the 1970s did not identify lifestyle as a dominant anchor for his participants. In this study, lifestyle was the dominant anchor for all age groups, except for those participants who were the oldest and youngest. The finding suggests that there may be a substantial change in values and desires occurring in the workplace regardless of culture and age of workers.

Most striking, the primary anchor of a sample of U. S. Certified Public Accountants (CPAs) were found to hold lifestyle as their dominant anchor as well (Hardin et al., 2001). In a quantitative study of 1,140 CPAs selected from the membership of the North Carolina Association of CPAs, randomly identified as working in public accounting, governmental accounting, and management accounting, the lifestyle anchor was found to be primary in all three primary job settings. Participants were asked to volunteer for a brief follow-up interview and 107 complied. The demographic characteristics of the sample were 66% male and 34% female, 69% of whom had a bachelor's degree. The mean age was 39 with a range of 23-67 years. The mean number of years in the position was 6.8 years, and the income levels revealed 67 % of the participants earned between \$25,000 and \$75,000 annually. The hypothesis that no career anchor would be clearly dominant was not supported. This hypothesis was tested

using a chi-square goodness-of-fit test. The lifestyle anchor, which was primary for 47% of the respondents, far exceeded what might have been expected by chance (chi square=465, $p= 0.00$). The researchers proposed that the large proportion of CPAs demonstrating a primary lifestyle anchor may have been influenced by the current marketing strategies of firms promoting a family-friendly workplace for employees. Given the larger sample size and the median age of the participants, it may be inferred that early to mid-career workers are exhibiting internal drives that strive to balance personal and professional lives. In previous career studies, these stages are typified by interest in externally recognized benefits and reward systems such as promotion. Further research across varied occupations and with larger samples was suggested to determine if the results can be generalized.

Schein (1996) recognized that shifting social, political, and economic factors may influence the dominance of particular career anchors. In the United States during the 1990s, a growing number of dual career situations and the need to integrate personal and family concerns led to an overall pattern of a shift toward more autonomy and concern for self, resulting in what Schein refers to as a preoccupation with lifestyle. He maintains this trend is a healthy development for individuals and a challenge for organizations whose traditional views of organizational position and advancement will need to shift to being based more on expecting the employee to be more self-reliant, responsible, and self-monitoring as more work will be completed at home.

Career Anchors and Career Outcomes

Studies demonstrating positive congruence results include Nordvik (1996), who conducted a quantitative study using a large heterogeneous sample (1063 participants

across equal representations of gender and a wide-range of occupations) and determined that compatibility between the occupation and the career anchor resulted in employees' perceptions of optimized job outcomes. Igbaria, Greenhaus and Parasuraman's (2008) mixed method study of managers determined that for participants whose career anchor matched their job setting, they were more satisfied and more inclined to remain in their roles. Danziger and Valency (2005) conducted a quantitative study in Israel on a large heterogeneous sample, including gender, age, and varied job roles to determine whether the relationship between individuals' jobs and their dominant career anchor has an effect on job satisfaction. The variable of congruence was determined as "the most important aspect that your job satisfies" (p. 297). The study validated the assumption that the dominant anchor impacts career paths and confirmed the hypothesis that congruence between jobs and anchors leads to positive job satisfaction.

Career Orientations of Teachers

Three research studies attempted to understand the applicability of career anchors in the field of teaching. DeLong (1984) compared the career orientations of rural and urban educators in Utah to explore reasons why teachers may decide to remain or leave the profession. Of the 377 urban and 153 rural educators, they came from both elementary and secondary assignments, ranged in age from 22 to 61 years, and completed the Career Orientations Inventory (COI). A factor analytic approach was employed to determine the internal validity of the questionnaire. Results indicated that eight career orientations clustered together for the sample population. One group of teachers was shown to value managerial activities, autonomy, and variety while the second group's factoring revealed security and technical competence as dominant career orientation

clusters. Findings suggested that the group of teachers with technical competence and security career orientations may be motivated by feeling competent in their respective disciplines, experiencing satisfaction in understanding that others recognize them as outstanding faculty. Other faculty valuing managerial activities, autonomy, and variety may require school districts to provide more varied career ladder opportunities to retain individuals seeking leadership roles. Organizational turnover in the educational field may be related to an organization's ability to provide enough career ladder options to meet the needs of teachers holding different career orientations. The researchers suggested that individual satisfaction and organizational effectiveness are not achieved without a career structure to meet those needs.

Tan and Quek (2001) studied the variety of Singapore educators' dominant career anchors to understand the relationship between those dominant anchors with intrinsic and extrinsic satisfaction and turnover intentions. Of the 160 teachers who participated in the study, 45% were in the 20-30 year age group from six K-12 randomly selected schools in Singapore. Nearly 42% of the teachers were novice and had taught less than five years. Measures included an adapted version of Schein's (1990) 40-item COI to measure career anchors. Teachers in the sample held all eight anchors and 33.13% of the sample possessed more than one dominant orientation. The educators' career orientations included lifestyle (38.13%), service (25.63%), or security (20.63%). Few educators demonstrated managerial competence as their primary anchor. Findings revealed Cronbach's alphas greater than .70 except for technical competence where alpha = .59. Three anchors were statistically dominant: lifestyle (38.13%), service (25.63%), and security (20.63%). Only 1.88% of the sample held the managerial orientation and less

than 10% of the sample held the technical/functional anchor. Multiple regression analysis suggested that the more dominant the security anchor, the higher the person's perception of extrinsic satisfaction. The findings revealed that educators holding a secure career orientation perceive teaching as a career that provides stability and praises those who remain in the profession. Service and autonomy anchors were primary among teachers and this was significant in explaining intrinsic satisfaction. The strong, positive relationship between the service orientation and measures of intrinsic satisfaction revealed that teachers' service-oriented needs and values correspond to their satisfying teaching career. Cammann, Fichman, Jenkins, and Klesh's (1979) studied career orientations predicted by teachers' intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction and turnover intention. They administered the Intrinsic Rewards Satisfaction Scale from the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire to measure intrinsic job satisfaction and the Michigan Organizational Assessment Questionnaire to measure extrinsic job satisfaction. A 4-item measure adapted from Shore and Martin (1989) assessed turnover intention. Multiple linear regression was calculated to predict participants' career orientation based on their job satisfaction and turnover intention. Intrinsic satisfaction increased as the service anchor revealed more dominance, and these findings were statistically significant. Multiple linear regression for turnover intentions was only marginally significant. Higher scores on the technical functional anchor were correlated with low scores on turnover intention. The dominance of the autonomy anchor was significant in predicting turnover intentions. Results indicated that teachers who valued their technical expertise may hold an intention to remain in the career while those who valued their autonomy may be predicted to leave the profession. Unlike the study of educators in the United States

sample, few Singapore educators selected the managerial anchors (technical functional or general). This may be attributed to data revealing scarce advancement opportunities to management throughout Singapore's school systems. The study revealed only 3% of all educators move into administrative or managerial careers.

Surgeliene and Stanisauskiene (2009) conducted a qualitative study to investigate the main factors determining a teachers' career development in Lithuania. Fifteen currently working teachers across seven different disciplines were selected to determine unbiased attitudes towards teachers' career-determining factors using interview methodology. The teachers were of different ages, years of work experience, and geographical locations in the City of Kaunas, Lithuania. The investigative sample was non-stochastically selected and the obtained data was processed by qualitative content analysis. The key questions asked were, "what internal motivation is most important in your career?" and "what is the influence of changes in the aftermath of educational reform on your personal career?" Respondents were also asked to assess their careers in the context of Schein's career anchors (1996). The investigation revealed that the most important and most frequently occurring anchors of teachers' careers were service/dedication and technical/functional competence. The researchers concluded that the teacher's career is mainly based on vocation and desire for being an expert in one's field. Teachers identified the external factors of knowledge of information technologies and competence in collaboration as those most impacting their career as a result of the national educational reform efforts.

The three studies of career orientations of teachers revealed some similarities and differences. Two of the studies examined the relationship between teacher career anchors

related to turnover intentions, predicting that teachers may remain in the teaching field when their dominant career orientation anchor corresponds to the organization's ability to provide enough career flexibility to meet the needs that the anchor expresses. Across the three studies, technical functional competence and service career orientations were dominant for teachers and were related to their perceived job satisfaction. In addition, in two of the studies, a relationship between the service career anchor orientation and teachers' intrinsic job satisfaction was a major finding. The lack of studies of career orientations of school or district administrators reveals a significant gap in the literature. While it may seem appropriate to generalize career anchor findings of teachers to educational administrators because the context is the same, the role of teacher and administrator is sufficiently different and may make generalizations about career identity or orientation insufficient.

Career Orientations of Educational Administrators

A major gap in the research concerns the study of career anchors and administrators in the education field. Only one study of career anchors and educational administrators was identified, a doctoral dissertation, researching the career anchors of North Carolina principals (Puryear, 1996). A modified, 44-item COI was administered to 142 principals across three counties to identify dominant career anchors. Factor analysis revealed that principals demonstrated varying degrees of acceptance of six anchors. Challenge, identity, autonomy, technical competence, organizational, and geographic security were identified as the most dominant anchors. Primary and secondary anchors were identified although secondary anchors varied greatly.

Summary

The past 20 years have resulted in a heightened accountability context for improved student learning (Rice & Roellke, 2008). Federal and state policy initiatives require school districts to publicly report improvement targets, and when progress is not made, sanctions may result inclusive of reconstitution as well as opportunities for school choice. Studies have indicated that the role of districts in educational reform is paramount with respect to ensuring strong leadership, clear organizational goals, cohesiveness of policy implementation, and a commitment to equity (Rorrer et al., 2008). Several studies reveal that the current accountability context requires sustainable leadership for long-term change, orchestrated at the district level, so that all leaders interact with the larger goals of the system (Davies, 2007; Fullan, 2006). A pivotal leadership position in school districts that is largely responsible for implementing these educational policies is the assistant superintendent for instruction. Studies of district leadership's effectiveness in responding to the increased demands of the reforms have begun to emerge, but none relate directly to the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction.

This chapter summarizes the major research literature relating to the concept of career orientations termed as *career anchors* by Schein (1978, 1990, 1996) as a means of making operational the internal career and its association with career success. The anchor serves to drive and constrain career decisions and choices signifying the psychological factors involved in the process of making career decisions. The anchor acts as a stable force when individuals are faced with crucial life and career decisions representing the values and concerns the individual refuses to relinquish (Custodio, 2000; Schein, 1978). Functioning as a way of evaluating organizational experience, the anchor identifies “areas

of contribution and generates criteria for work settings that people desire to function in and develops criteria for success by which people measure themselves” (Kanye & Crous, 2007, p.84). The work values and career motives are found to be significantly associated with their ideal career patterns about the meaning of and the preferred form and direction their careers should take (Coetzee & Schrueder, 2002). No studies to date have analyzed the underlying beliefs, values, talents, and motivations of the assistant superintendent for instruction, despite the fact that research is well established in the need for understanding the role and impact of district level leaders in creating and sustaining educational reform (Stein & Nelson, 2003).

While studies of the career anchors of educators was discussed in this literature review, it is not known whether the findings from those studies of teachers actually apply to the career identities of administrators whose work lives and career paths differ significantly from those of teachers. While many studies of business managers and career anchors were reviewed, the research is minimal when applying the construct to administrators in the field of educational administrators. A research study that considers the career orientations within the education discipline, specifically to district administrators and the assistant superintendents for instruction, is warranted. The quantitative inquiry in this study seeks to address gaps in knowledge related to understanding the career anchors of assistant superintendents for instruction under conditions of intense school reform and accountability contexts. The next chapter provides a detailed plan of the research method to include research context, research participants, and the instruments that were used in this study.

Chapter 3: Research Design Methodology

General Perspective

District leaders are pivotal in creating a culture that supports student learning and facilitates sustainable improvement in student achievement (Fullan, 2005). The No Child Left Behind Act has accelerated and intensified the need for districts to demonstrate effects of standards-based reform as measured by high-stakes assessment results (Kim & Sunderman, 2005). District-wide improvements in teaching and learning require substantial engagement by their central offices in helping all schools build their capacity for improvement, and district-level leaders exercise essential leadership throughout the system to bring about these sustained improvements (Honig et al., 2010). Understanding the talents, needs, and values of the key district leaders, namely the assistant superintendent for instruction, whose responsibility is to bring about this sustained improvement in teaching and learning, has the potential to inform educational leaders who seek to facilitate such improvements.

The assistant superintendent for instruction is the district-level leader responsible for school improvement and for building others' capacity in the system to strengthen and sustain improved performance achievement, yet little is known about these district-level leaders (Cetorelli, 2007; Honig et al., 2010; Leach, 2009). Moreover, a substantial number of these leaders choose to remain in this career, opting not to ascend to the superintendency, the next logical position (Leach, 2009). Career anchors represent an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career and address the question of what

drives and gives direction to a career over the long term (Schein, 1996; Van Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). The internal career is regarded as a stable, long-term definition of work identity focusing on a person's self-identity. This career orientation exists inside individuals and is learned from accumulated work experiences consisting of their beliefs, interests, talents, and values (Coetzee, 2006). Measured as a career anchor, the career orientation of teachers has been studied, but there have been no studies of central office administrators' career orientation. Studying the career anchors of assistant superintendents for instruction would explain the underlying motives, needs, talents, and values that assistant superintendents for instruction hold and how they influence the capacity of others in the organization to bring about stronger student learning cultures and sustained improvement in academic achievement. This study was completed to answer the research questions pertaining to New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding New York City:

1. What are the career orientations of New York State assistant superintendent for instruction, excluding New York City?
2. What is the relationship between career orientation and total years experience in the assistant superintendents of instruction (ASI) role?
3. What is the relationship between career orientation and gender?
4. What is the relationship between career orientation and district type?
5. What is the relationship between career orientation and career plan?

A quantitative method was used in this study. A descriptive, correlational, cross-sectional design was applied. Creswell (2009) describes quantitative research as a means for examining relationships between and among variables and testing theories. The variables

are measured through the use of instruments so that numbered data can be analyzed by employing statistical procedures. The knowledge that is developed is based on careful measurement. The research seeks to “advance the relationship among variables and pose this in terms of questions or hypotheses” (Creswell, 2009, p. 7). A postpositivist lens is used in this study, as the researcher desired to use empirical evidence to answer the research questions. Survey research, descriptive in nature, “is used to describe the characteristics of a population by directly examining samples of that population.” (Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005, p. 101). Quantitative research seeks to produce results that are statistically reliable, valid, and generalizable (Creswell, 2009).

The survey research employed in this study was planned to explore the relationship between independent variables (school district profile, personal demographics, and professional profile) and dependent variables (career orientations). The 25-question, short-form career orientations inventory (COI) developed by Igbauria and Baroudi (1993) was used to measure dependent variables and a set of additional questions measured independent variables.

Research Context

The research context for this study included public school districts and Boards of Cooperative Educational Services (BOCES) in New York State (NYS), excluding New York City, who employ a central or district office administrator whose K-12 responsibility and authority is to oversee the program of instruction. The most common title assigned to this individual is assistant superintendent for instruction or assistant superintendent for curriculum and instruction. District-level administrators responsible for the instructional program may also hold authority for other functions in the school

district including personnel, technology, assessment, and professional development. District-level administrators with combined responsibilities in these areas related to instruction were also included in this study.

The participants were drawn from NYS public school districts, excluding New York City. NYS has 697 public school districts and 37 BOCES, excluding New York City. Schools within NYS represent a range of economic and demographic conditions and include urban, rural, and suburban contexts. Four city school districts have enrollments over 125,000 students: Buffalo, Rochester, Syracuse, and Yonkers. School districts in 57 cities have enrollments under 125,000 students. The majority of school districts in NYS are situated in rural and suburban areas, referred to as central school districts. There are 459 K-12 central school districts, and their enrollments are less than 25,000 students. The BOCES are regional education centers that provide shared educational programs and services to school districts.

Research Participants

Those holding the role of assistant superintendent for instruction have primary responsibility for district-wide oversight of the curriculum and instruction program of studies for grades K-12. A variety of titles exist for central office administrators responsible for oversight of the instructional program. For purposes of this study, those currently practicing and holding titles of assistant superintendent for instruction or curriculum or titles demonstrating district-level oversight of K-12 curriculum and instruction leadership were included in the sample. This criterion was established to ensure that participants have similar role expectations and experience to meaningfully contribute to the study. The study included participants who are new or have several

years experience in the role. A single-stage sampling procedure was implemented. In single-stage sampling, the researcher has access to names in the population and can sample the people directly (Creswell, 2009).

The study involved surveying 364 NYS assistant superintendents for instruction or district-level administrators responsible for K-12 instruction. The roster of possible respondents was obtained from three sources and developed over a period of one month from November 2010 to December 2010. First, the researcher approached the New York State Education Department (NYSED), Office of Information and Reporting Services, to provide a listing of current assistant superintendents from their Directory of Public and Non-Public Schools and Administrators in New York State. This listing, generated from annual Basic Educational Data System (BEDS data, included superintendents, principals, and very few assistant superintendents. Next, the researcher consulted the 37 BOCES and 697 school district websites and directories linked by the NYSED website to create an excel spreadsheet of participants. To identify the district-level administrator responsible for K-12 instruction, a search of each district's website was conducted. This included searching for the administrator, title, and email address in the staff directory and/or the program tabs for district office staff or the curriculum, instruction, or professional development office. Finally, the researcher consulted the NYSED Office of Educational Management to obtain the current Administrative Salary Report and cross-referenced the participant list with this database. These steps allowed the researcher to compile a complete list of all known NYS assistant superintendents for instruction and their verified email addresses. Where email addresses were not accessible, the researcher called the school district or BOCES and obtained the email address. One week prior to

commencement of the data collection, the researcher sent an email to the potential participants from a work address to identify herself as an assistant superintendent to incent participation. Thirty-two email addresses were returned as undeliverable, causing the researcher to contact school districts to obtain correct email addresses. It is acknowledged that the lists may not have been completely accurate, given that individuals listed in the directories and websites may have retired, left the position, were on a personal leave, or were inadvertently omitted.

Instruments Used in Data Collection

Career Orientations Inventory

The Career Orientations Inventory (COI) survey, developed by Schein (1990, 1996, 2006) is an instrument that measures an individual's dominant career anchor. The original COI is a 40-question, self-report survey aimed at measuring eight career anchors of individuals that are clustered into talent-based anchors (technical/functional competence, general managerial competence, and entrepreneurial creativity); need-based anchors (autonomy/dependence, security/stability, and lifestyle); and value-based anchors (service/dedication to a cause and pure challenge).

For this study, career orientations were measured using a 25-item, short-form COI developed by Igbauri and Baroudi (1993). Eight demographic questions, designed specifically for this study were added (see Appendix A). The short-form COI survey tool was selected because of its streamlined process that does not require each respondent to apply an additional weighting to their responses. This survey tool is based upon nine career orientations, which include those developed by Schein (1978, 1985). In this survey, the security orientation is split into two separate anchors: geographic and job

security. All 25 items contained on the short form are taken from the original COI survey (Schein, 1985) and are considered to be of equal value. A five-point Likert scale is used to measure the nine career orientations. Items 9 to 23 range from 1 (*of no importance*) to 5 (*centrally important*). Items 24 to 33 require respondents to indicate the extent that each of the items relate to their career preferences, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (*not at all true*) to 5 (*completely true*). The 25 items are categorized in the following manner: three statements correspond to technical/functional, general managerial, entrepreneurial/creativity orientations; two statements each correspond to job security and geographic security; and three statements correspond to autonomy, lifestyle, challenge, and service orientations. The order of the items within each orientation is determined on a random basis.

Total scores obtained for each of the nine subscales of career anchors are summed and averaged to yield a mean score for each career anchor or orientation. The orientation that yields mean scores above 3.0 are regarded as dominant career orientations.

The survey, properly citing the original author Dr. Edgar Schein (personal communication, June 30, 2010), was administered electronically (see Appendix B). Permission to use the short-form version of the COI was secured from Dr. Jack Baroudi (personal communication, September 7, 2010) and proper citation was included on the electronic survey (see Appendix C). Dr. Magid Igbauria, co-author of the COI short form, is deceased

Reliability of the COI. Applying the COI as a measurement of career anchors for research purposes is considered an acceptable and reliable practice by researchers in the

field (Burke, 1983; Witt, Kacmar, Carlson & Zivnuska, 2002 ; Custodio, 2000; Erdogmus, 2004; Marshall & Bonner, 2003).

Custodio (2000) and Sumner, Yager, and Franke (2005) described the COI as a well-established instrument with demonstrated high reliability (Custodio, 2000; Sumner, 2007; Sumner et al.,2005). In these studies, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were used to examine scale reliability for items intended to measure each construct. Ellison and Schreuder (2000) reported internal consistent reliability estimates for various scales. The internal consistent reliabilities were identified as moderately high for all scales, with the exception of somewhat lower reliabilities for the technical/functional and lifestyle career orientations scale: (a) technical/functional (0.59), (b) general management (0.71), (c) entrepreneurship (0.75), (d) autonomy (0.75), (e) challenge (0.70), (f) security (0.78), (g) lifestyle (0.64), and (h) service (0.73). Test-retest reliability was established by Steele (2009).

Extensive evidence of the reliability of the short-form instrument was established in two separate field studies (Igbauri & Baroudi, 1993). The dimensionality of the instrument as proposed by Schein was confirmed in the first study of Instructional Technology managers. Using factor analysis with varimax rotation, the dimensionality was tested again and confirmed using a different population. Criteria used to identify and interpret factors were that a given item should load .50 or higher on a specific factor and no higher than .35 on other factors. Internal consistency reliability scores using Cronbach's alpha coefficients established reliability of the scale.

Validity of the COI. Discriminant validity for the short-term measure's factor structure and construct validity of the short form was tested and confirmed across two

studies of Information Systems employees (Igbauria & Baroudi, 1993). Construct validity was established by testing the linkages between the short-term measure and measures of other variables using instruments evaluating career satisfaction.

Procedures for Data Collection

After receiving approval for the study from the St. John Fisher College Dissertation Committee and the St. John Fisher Institutional Review Board (IRB), email invitations were sent to potential participants regarding the purpose of the study requesting their participation. The email also included information regarding the right of refusal and contact information for questions regarding the study (See Appendix D).

The method for collecting data used in this study was through electronic survey (Dillman, 2007). Qualtrics survey software, licensed through St. John Fisher College, was used to provide a secure means of producing the survey, emailing and collecting responses, and reviewing results.

The first step in the data collection included emailing an invitation to participate in the survey, via Qualtrics.com to the list of New York State (NYS) assistant superintendents for instruction who represent all known professionals in these roles in NYS. The invitation letter contained a link to the online survey. The researcher had no contact with the participants other than through the email invitation. The electronic invitation letter outlined the requirements of the study as well as one's right to withdraw at any time. The letter of consent, in electronic format, assured participants of voluntary participation and anonymity to the researcher. They were also advised to print a copy of the consent form for their records. The electronic survey commenced with a question asking participants if they willingly agreed to participate in the survey. The survey was

programmed to allow those who answered yes to continue and for those who did not provide permission, the survey was automatically closed. The online survey software was programmed to ensure that neither the researcher nor anyone involved with the survey could capture identifiable Internet addresses. The e-mail contact for each assistant superintendent for instruction was anonymously coded to track surveys sent and received. To increase the response rate, a follow-up email was sent to each assistant superintendent for instruction one week after the initial invitation and then one week later for continued non-responses.

The survey was open during a 48-day period from Tuesday, January 11, 2011 to Wednesday, February 23, 2011. Of the 364 potential respondents, 170 completed responses were received to the survey during this time. Reminders were sent via email on two occasions in an attempt to improve response rates. After the first reminder, 137 district-level leaders had completed the survey. After the second reminder, 33 additional district-level leaders had completed the survey, for a final response rate of 46%.

Data Analysis

Survey data was compiled by the researcher and statistical tests were conducted using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), Version 16.0 for Windows. Computer-generated data from the Qualtrics.com site for the short-form COI survey responses were entered into the SPSS statistical software program to analyze and produce descriptive results.

Eight demographic professional and personal profile questions providing a forced choice response concerned the participant's total number of years worked in public education, total number of years worked in the ASI position, the highest level of

education completed, plans for the duration of the career, public district type, gender, age, and race/ethnicity. Each of the responses was assigned a numerical value. Statistical analysis, which included frequencies, provided a demographic profile of the ASI in New York State, excluding New York City.

The procedure to answer question number one “*What are the career orientations of NYS Assistant Superintendents of Instruction*” included calculating a career orientation score for each participant for each of the nine categories of anchors (technical/functional, general/managerial, entrepreneurial/creativity, autonomy, lifestyle, security-job, security-geographic, challenge, and service). Survey items 9 to 33 were questions taken with permission from the short-form Career Orientations Inventory (Igbauria & Baroudi, 1993). A five-point Likert scale was used to measure the nine career orientations. Items 9 to 23 ranged from 1 (of no importance) to 5 (centrally important). Items 24 to 33 required respondents to indicate the extent that each of the items relate to their career preferences, using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all true) to 5 (completely true) (See Appendix E). All items were considered to be of equal value and each of the responses was assigned a numerical value between one and five with the highest score being more positive. The mean and standard deviation of these orientation scale scores were determined by averaging the survey question item scores corresponding to the orientation scale. A pre-study assumption was that mean orientation scores above 3.0 would indicate a priority orientation for ASI’s and that general managerial and technical functional orientations would be the only orientations that achieve a score above 3.0.

To determine the relationship between the orientation scales, a bivariate Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation test was conducted. Pearson’s correlation coefficient (r) is a

measure of the strength of the association between the two variables (Huck, 2008). This test indicates the strength of the relationship between variables in the sample. Correlation coefficients can range from -1.00 to +1.00, and a value of 0.00 represents a lack of correlation. The size of the value of the coefficient indicates the strength of the relationship between variables. Cohen (1988) suggests a value from .10 to .29 indicates a small relationship, a value from .30 to .49 indicates a moderate relationship, and a value of .50 to 1.0 indicates a large relationship.

Research questions two through five were answered using a one-way multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) test. The relationship between career orientation scores (dependent variables) and the number of years in the assistant superintendent for instruction role, gender, district type, and career plan (independent variables) were identified by calculating a MANOVA. The MANOVA is used to test the significance of a linear relationship of independent variables on explaining more than one related dependent variable. In this study, when conducting the analysis, there is only one independent variable and nine dependent variables. This test is necessary when we use more than one dependent variable which is correlated, provided some basic assumptions are met. If the MANOVA is significant, it is customary to interpret the univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) tests to know which of the dependent variables (career orientations) are determined by the independent variables (participants' characteristics).

The basic assumptions that must be met include the homogeneity of variance-covariance structure, normality of the responses, and independence of the participants' responses from each other. Homogeneity of variance-covariance matrices was tested using a Box's M test. Significance values larger than .05 indicate that homogeneity was

met. If Box's M test was significant, the MANOVA was inappropriate to use and the univariate tests were used to explore the relationships recognizing that this will increase the risk of detecting significance inappropriately. If there is a correlation between independent variables, any statistical conclusion for a univariate test based on one dependent variable may carry over to other dependent variables. Normality was met due to the sample size being greater than 20 (Pallant, 2010). Independence of data assumption was met through data collection procedures where respondents were unconnected from one another. In addition, through the Qualtrics database, responses were kept confidential.

For research questions two, three, and five, it was hypothesized that the independent variables will affect the dependent variables. Years of experience in the role of ASI, gender, and career plan of ASI's were hypothesized to affect career orientation. It was hypothesized that research question four, district type, would not affect career orientation.

Summary

The assistant superintendent for instruction is the district-level leader responsible for school improvement and for building others' capacity in the system to strengthen and sustain improved performance achievement, yet little is known about these district-level leaders (Cetorelli, 2007; Honig et. al, 2010; Leach, 2009). Moreover, a substantial number of these leaders choose to remain in this career, opting not to ascend to the role of the superintendent, the next logical position (Leach, 2009). Career anchors or orientations represent an individual's internal (as opposed to external) career and address the question of what drives and gives direction to a career over the long term (Schein, 1996; Van

Vuuren & Fourie, 2000). This quantitative study collected information that quantifies the career orientations of the assistant superintendents for instruction in NYS, excluding New York City, and informed how demographic and personal profile characteristics impact the career orientation. A descriptive, correlational, and cross-sectional design was applied. The short form Career Orientations Inventory was used to collect information on the nine career orientations including technical functional, general managerial, autonomy, job security, geographic security, entrepreneurial creativity, challenge, service, and lifestyle.

Chapter 4: Results

Research Questions

As stated in Chapter 1, the purposes of this study were to examine the career orientations of the New York State assistant superintendents for instruction (ASI), excluding New York City, and to determine if there is a relationship between the career orientations and certain professional and institutional demographic factors. Little to no research exists relative to the assistant superintendent for instruction role, despite the influence the district leader in this role has in the current reform efforts. This study is expected to inform the scholarly research field relative to the ASI's demographic profile and career orientation. The chapter is organized in terms of the five specific research questions posed in Chapter 1. The research questions answered in this chapter concern the New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City and follow:

1. What are the career orientations of New York State (NYS) assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding those in New York City?
2. What is the relationship between career orientation and total years experience in the ASI role?
3. What is the relationship between career orientation and gender?
4. What is the relationship between career orientation and district type?
5. What is the relationship between career orientation and career plan?

Data Analysis and Findings

Demographics

The link to the electronic survey, via Qualtrics.com, was sent via e-mail to all known public school district assistant superintendents for instruction or district-level leaders of instruction in New York State, excluding New York City. The survey was open during a 48-day period from Tuesday, January 11, 2011 to Wednesday, February 23, 2011. Of 364 known public school assistant superintendents for instruction, a total of 170 completed surveys were submitted, for an overall response rate of 46%. Before examining the findings related to the first research question, the personal and professional demographic characteristics of the research participants for the survey are presented. These descriptive statistics correspond to survey items 1 to 8 and were calculated using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software as frequency distributions and percentile ranks. The eight demographic survey questions included total number of years worked in K-12 public education, total number of years worked in the role of assistant superintendent for instruction, highest level of education completed, career plan, district type, gender, age, and race/ethnicity. This analysis, which included frequencies and percentages, provided a demographic profile of the assistant superintendent in NYS, excluding New York City.

Total years worked in public education. Table 4.1 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics pertaining to total number of years worked in K-12 public education in response to survey question one.

Table 4.1

Frequencies for Total Number of Years Worked in K-12 Public Education

Range of years (n= 172)	Totals
21 years and beyond	113 (66.0%)
16 to 20 years	36 (21.0%)
11 to 15 years	18 (11.0%)
6 to 10 years	4 (2.0%)
1 to 5 years	1 (0.6%)

The most prevalent number of years worked for participants in this study was between 21 years and beyond. Two-thirds of respondents (66%) worked in public education for 21 years and beyond, and nearly all (87%) worked for 16 years and beyond. These findings indicated that assistant superintendents for instruction in this study were an experienced group of educators.

Total years worked in the ASI role. Table 4.2 presents the frequency distributions of the total number of years worked as an assistant superintendent or district leader for instruction. The data from survey question two indicate that the majority of respondents have worked in their role for ten years or less. Slightly more than one-half of the respondents (54%) worked for only 1 to 5 years, and just over one-quarter of the respondents (27%) worked for 6 to 10 years in the role.

Table 4.2

Frequencies for Total Number of Years Worked as an Assistant Superintendent for Instruction

Range of years (n= 171)	Totals
21 years and beyond	4 (2%)
16 to 20 years	10 (6%)
11 to 15 years	19 (11%)
6 to 10 years	46 (27%)
1 to 5 years	92 (54%)

Taken together, the data in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 indicate that for this group of assistant superintendents or district-level leaders for instruction, 87% have served as educators for 16 or more years, while 81% of respondents have served in the role of ASI for only 10 years or less. As a group, the ASIs, while possessing many years experience in education, more than one-half are relatively new to their role as the district’s leader for instruction.

Highest level of education completed. The frequency distribution for highest level of education completed is presented in Table 4.3 and is based on the responses to survey question three. Slightly more than one-quarter have earned their doctoral degree (27%) and the majority (60%) has earned their Certificate of Advanced Study, a degree beyond the Master’s level. The data indicate that the ASI population in this study is a highly educated group of administrators.

Table 4.3

Highest Level of Education Completed Frequencies

Diploma types (n= 172)	Totals
Doctoral degree	46 (27%)
Certificate of Advanced Study	103 (60%)
Master's degree	23 (13%)

Career plans. Table 4.4 presents the frequency distribution for career plan, the fourth question designed to ascertain the respondents' intentions to remain in the position of ASI, ascend to the superintendent role, or seek a different role for the duration of their career.

Table 4.4

Career Plan Frequencies

Career plan (n= 171)	Totals
Remain in position of ASI	79 (46%)
Ascend to superintendent role	73 (43%)
Other	19 (11%)

The data indicates that the ASI population in this sample is nearly split in their desire to remain in the role and to ascend to the superintendent role. *Other* career plans were not specifically identified through the survey question and the number of respondents identifying other was only 11%.

Current public district type. Table 4.5 presents the frequency distributions for the current public district type in which each ASI or district leader of instruction was employed.

Table 4.5

Current Public District Type Frequencies

District type (n= 171)	Totals
Rural	50 (30%)
Suburban	99 (58%)
Urban	11 (6%)
BOCES	11 (6%)

The data from survey question five, presented in Table 4.5, indicate that 58% of the respondents worked in suburban school districts while 30% were employed in rural school districts. An equal percent of respondents worked in urban (6%) and BOCES settings (6%).

Gender frequency distributions. The frequency distributions of male and female respondents are reported in Table 4.6. More than two-thirds of the respondents were female (69%) compared to males (31%).

Table 4.6

Respondents' Gender Frequencies

Gender (n=171)	Totals
Male	53 (31%)
Female	118 (69%)

Age range. Responses to survey question seven are reported as frequency distributions for age range of respondents and are presented in Table 4.7.

Table 4.7

Respondents' Age Range Frequencies

Age range (n = 172)	Totals
64 years or over	3 (1.7%)
55 to 64 years	54 (31.0%)
45 to 54 years	69 (40.0%)
35 to 44 years	43 (25.0%)
25 to 34 years	3 (1.7%)

As seen in Table 4.7, the majority of participants (73%) were 45 years of age or older and one-third (33%) of the participants were of retirement age in NYS. Slightly more than one-quarter (27%) were under the age of 44.

Race and ethnicity frequency distributions. Table 4.8 presents the frequency distributions for race and ethnicity of respondents.

Table 4.8

Respondents' Race/Ethnicity Frequencies

Race/ethnicity (n= 169)	Totals
White/Caucasian	162 (96.0%)
African American	5 (3.0%)
Hispanic	1 (0.6%)
Other	1 (0.6%)

Of the 169 respondents to survey question eight, the majority were White/Caucasian (96%) and 3% were African American. Only 1% of the ASIs were Hispanic and 1% *other*. The *other* category was not defined in the survey but may include multiracial respondents.

Survey Results: Research Question One

Career Orientations of ASIs

The first research question was: What are the career orientations of New York State assistant superintendents for instruction, excluding New York City? Career Orientations Inventory (COI) mean scale scores were calculated for each of the nine career orientation scales (technical functional, general managerial, autonomy, geographic security, job security, entrepreneurial creativity, service, challenge, and lifestyle). Table 4.9 presents the means and standard deviations of the career orientation scale scores.

Table 4.9

Means and Standard Deviations of Career Orientation Scale Scores

COI scale	Items per scale	N	Mean (SD)
SV	3	168	4.5 (0.57)
SEJ	2	171	3.5 (0.95)
GM	3	171	3.5 (0.81)
SEG	2	168	3.3 (1.20)
CH	3	169	3.0 (0.88)
LS	3	168	2.7 (0.78)
TF	3	169	2.5 (1.10)
AU	3	171	2.5 (0.85)
EC	3	168	2.1 (0.88)

Note. SV=Service to a Cause, SEJ=Job Security, GM=General Managerial,

SEG=Geographic Security, CH=Challenge, LS=Lifestyle, TF=Technical Functional,

AU=Autonomy, EC=Entrepreneurial Creativity.

Eight of the orientation scores have means ranging from 2.1 to 3.5. The service orientation score (SV) falls outside this range with a mean of 4.5. Given the pre-study assumption that orientation scores above 3.0 indicates a priority of this group, and that general managerial (GM) and technical functional (TF) would be the only orientations above 3.0, the results actually indicate that four of nine career orientation means (SV, SEJ, GM, and SEG) were above 3.0. Orientation scores above an average rating of 3.0

were selected as dominant because they represented the orientations about which participants felt were most important or true.

Relationships among the career orientation scales. To determine the strength of the pairwise relationships among the nine career orientation scales on the COI for this population of assistant superintendents for instruction, a Pearson product moment bivariate correlation was calculated and is summarized in Table 4.10. All correlations were small to moderate ($r_s < +/- .43$) with one exception. A strong positive correlation ($r(168) = .69, p < .001$) was found between the lifestyle and autonomy orientation variables. The results indicate that, for this population of assistant superintendents for instruction, all career orientations are distinct from one another except for the lifestyle and autonomy scales.

Survey Results: Research Question Two

Career Orientation and Years of Experience in the ASI Role

The research question regarding the relationship between career orientation and total years experience in the ASI role was tested using a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA). The assumption of homogeneity of variance and covariance was tested (Box's M $p = 0.40, p > .05$) and not rejected. For purposes of this analysis, the number of years in the ASI role was recoded from the independent variable with five levels to three levels in order to run the statistical test. The recoded independent variable included levels of 1 to 5, 6 to 10, and 11 or more years. The data indicate that the multivariate effect of years of experience in the role is not significant: $F(\text{Wilks' lambda}) (18, 312) = .716, p > .05$. As a result, further univariate analysis was not tested. This finding contradicts the hypothesis that career orientation is affected by years of experience in a particular role.

Table 4.10

Pearson Product Moment Bivariate Correlations between Scores on Career Orientation Scales

Orientation	TF	GM	AU	SEG	SEJ	EC	SV	CH	LS
TF		.13	.29**	.24**	.43**	.02	-.02	.07	.37**
GM			.29**	.14	.15	.33**	.10	.35**	.24**
AU				.32**	.36**	.27**	.11	.23**	.69**
SEG					.27**	.00	.02	.10	.38**
SEJ						.10	-.02	-.09	.40**
EC							.18*	.27**	.38**
SV								.18*	.08
CH									.18*
LS									

Note. **p<.01. *p<.05 (2-tailed).

TF=Technical Functional, GM=General Managerial, AU=Autonomy, SEG=Geographic Security, SEJ=Job Security, EC=Entrepreneurial Creativity, SV=Service to a Cause, CH=Challenge, LS=Lifestyle orientations.

Survey Results: Research Question Three

Career Orientation and Gender

Research question three, What is the relationship between gender and career orientations was addressed in the results of a one-way MANOVA examining how males and females differ on career orientations. The assumption of homogeneity of variance

and covariance was tested (Box's M $p=0.41$, $p>.05$) and not rejected. The multivariate effect (MANOVA) of gender was $F(\text{Wilks' lambda}) (9, 158) = 1.290$, $p = .246$, $p>.05$. No statistically significant differences were found between males and females on career orientation. As a result, further univariate analysis was not tested. There is a discrepancy between these findings and the hypothesis that gender would affect career orientation.

Survey Results: Research Question Four

Career Orientation and District Type

Research question four, What is the relationship between district type and career orientations, was addressed through the MANOVA. Three levels of district types served as the independent variables for this analysis: suburban, rural, and urban districts. Less than 1% of respondents were from urban districts. Results indicated $F(\text{Wilks' lambda}) (18, 290) = .964$, $p >.05$. This showed no significant difference between groups on any of the career orientations of those whose district type was suburban, rural, or urban.

As indicated above, the original analysis included three levels of district type. Due to the small number of participants (less than 1%) from urban districts, we recoded the independent variable to two district types (suburban and rural) to conduct a multivariate analysis of variance test. The assumption of homogeneity of variance and covariance was tested (Box's M, $p=0.99$, $p >.05$) for the recoded independent variable and not rejected. The multivariate effect MANOVA of district type was $F(\text{Wilks' lambda}) (9, 137) = 1.819$, $p = .07$. The multivariate effect of district type (two levels) on career orientations was mildly significant. Follow-up univariate analysis of variances (ANOVAs) were conducted to determine if there was a statistical significant difference in mean score

between each career orientation and the mean scores for the two district types. Significant findings are presented in Table 4.11.

Table 4.11

Univariate Analysis of Variance for Effect of District Type on Career Orientations

Career orientation	p	F	District type		Cohen's <i>d</i>
			Suburban	Rural	
GM	.078	(1, 145) = 3.14	3.62 (0.76)	3.38 (0.76)	.31
SEG	.006**	(1, 145) = 7.66	3.51 (1.21)	2.92 (1.25)	.49

Note. *F* ratios are Wilks' approximation of *F*s.

p* < .05, *p* < .01.

These results were interpreted with caution given the *p* = .07 significance level for the multivariate test. The univariate effect for the GM anchor (.078) was mildly significant for those who work in suburban districts. The univariate effect for the geographic security (SEG) anchor (.006) was significant for those who work in suburban districts. Suburban compared to rural respondents had significantly higher SEG scores and marginally significantly higher GM scores.

To determine the importance of the impact of ASI's suburban district location on the SEG career orientation, the effect size statistic was calculated. Cohen's *d* represents the proportion of the variance in the dependent variable (SEG career orientation) that can be explained by the independent variable (suburban district type). Cohen's *d* values range

from .2 (small), .5 (medium) to .8 (large) effects. The value of the effect size for SEG is .49 and is comparable to Cohen's *d* medium effect size of .5. Expressed as a percent, 49% of the variance in the geographic security orientation is explained by district type. The effect size of GM for suburban districts is .31, a small effect size according to Cohen's *d*. This result contradicted the hypothesis that district type would not affect career orientation.

Survey Results: Research Question Five

Career Orientation and Career Plan

Research question five, What is the relationship between career orientation and career plan, was explored using a multivariate analysis of variance test. Prior to conducting the MANOVA, the career plan independent variable was recoded to include two career plan levels (intent to ascend to the superintendent role and intent to remain in the ASI role). This recoding occurred because the third level, *other*, had a small cell size of 19 and lacked meaning without explanation. The assumption of homogeneity of variance and covariance was tested (Box's $M_p = .20$, $p > .05$) and not rejected. A significant multivariate effect was found $F(\text{Wilks' Lambda } (9,140) = 4.99$, $p < .05$).

Follow-up univariate ANOVAs were conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in mean scores between each career orientation and the mean scores for the career plan. Significant results are presented in Table 4.12. Technical functional (TF) and job security (SEJ) scores were higher for those who intended to remain in the ASI role compared to those who intended to ascend from their role. In contrast, general managerial (GM) scores were higher among *ascenders* than *remainers*.

Table 4.12

Univariate Analysis of Variance for Relationship between Career Plan and Career Orientation

Anchor	<i>p</i>	<i>F</i>	Career plan		
			Remain	Ascend	Cohen's <i>d</i>
TF	.002**	(1, 148) = 9.50	2.80 (1.12)	2.27 (1.00)	.47
GM	.000**	(1, 148) = 12.80	3.35 (0.85)	3.80 (0.64)	.59
SEJ	.013*	(1, 148) = 6.32	3.77 (0.80)	3.41 (0.98)	.41

Note. *F* ratios are Wilks' approximation of *F*s.

p*< .05, *p*<.01.

Effect size statistics show that the difference in career orientations between these two groups of ASIs were not trivial. The effect size for TF to remain in the role is .47, approaching Cohen's *d* medium effect size of .5. There was a medium effect for assistant superintendents for instruction whose career orientation is TF to remain in their role. The effect size for SEJ to remain in the role was .41, a medium effect size according to Cohen's *d*. There was a relative impact of remaining in the role for ASI's with the SEJ orientation. The effect size for GM to ascend to the superintendent role was .59 indicating there was a medium effect for assistant superintendents for instruction whose career orientation is GM to ascend to the superintendent role. These findings provided

support for the hypothesis that at least one of the career orientations would be affected by career plans.

Association between career plan and gender. A post-hoc test was conducted to determine if there was an association between career plan (intent to remain or ascend) and gender. A Pearson chi-square test was used to determine whether differences between observed and expected frequencies of variables were statistically significant. Findings are presented in table 4.13.

Table 4.13

Observed and Expected Frequencies of Males and Females and Career Plan

<u>Gender</u>	<u>Count</u>	<u>Career plan</u>			
		<u>Remain</u>		<u>Ascend</u>	
		N	%	N	%
Male	Observed	20	39	32	62
	Expected	27	52	25	48
Female	Observed	59	59	41	41
	Expected	52	52	48	48

Note. Pearson Chi Square $\chi^2 (1, n=152) = 5.78, p = .02, C=.19$

For this population, males and females differ in career plans greater than one would expect. The data indicate that females desire to remain in their role more than expected. Likewise, males desire to ascend more than expected. A Pearson chi square test for independence (with Pearson's Contingency Coefficient) indicated a significant association between gender and career plan, $\chi^2 (1) = 5.78, p = .02, C = .19$. A greater percentage of females intend to remain in the role of ASI, and this association is

significant; a greater percentage of males intend to ascend to the role of superintendent, and this association is significant as well. While the association is significant, the contingency coefficient effect size value of .19 is considered a small effect using Cohen's *d* criteria.

Summary of Results

Overall, the group of assistant superintendents for instruction (ASI) in New York State who participated in this study were an experienced group of educators, having worked public education for 21 years and beyond, yet over one-half of them were fairly inexperienced in the ASI role having served in the role for only one to five years. A majority of ASIs were 45 years of age or older, and one-third were of retirement age. Most participants in this study were of White/Caucasian ethnicity and were employed in suburban and rural school districts. As a group, they were highly educated and were nearly split in their desire to remain in the ASI role and to ascend to the superintendent role.

The data suggests that the career orientations of service, general managerial, geographic and job security were those most dominant for this population of ASIs. In examining the relationship between certain demographic and professional profile characteristics and career orientations, results indicated that the number of years ASI's have worked in the role and gender had no significant effect.

Significant effects were found between district type (rural or suburban) and career orientations as well as between career plans and career orientations. The ASIs working in suburban districts, compared to those working in rural districts, had significantly higher

geographic security orientation scores and marginally significant general managerial orientation scores.

Significant difference between groups was revealed on at least one of the career orientations of those who desire to remain or ascend (career plan). The ASIs who intended to remain in the role had higher technical functional and job security orientation scores compared to those who intended to ascend to the superintendent role. In contrast, ASI's general managerial orientation scores were higher among those intending to ascend. Effect size statistics between the two groups of ascending and remaining ASIs were not small. A significant association was found between gender and career plan. Though the effect size is small, a greater percentage of females in this study intended to remain in the role of ASI while a greater percentage of males intended to ascend to the role of superintendent.

Chapter 5: Discussion

The results of this study indicated that assistant superintendents for instruction (ASI) in New York State possessed all nine career orientations, four of which were dominant: service to a cause, general managerial competence, job, and geographic security. The respondents were an experienced group of educators having worked in public education for 21 years and beyond. A majority were female, fairly new to their role, and approaching retirement age. Also, they were mostly Caucasian and, as a group, lacked diversity of race or ethnicity. They were highly educated and nearly split in their desire to either remain in the ASI role or ascend to the superintendent role. A statistically significant difference in mean scores between career orientation and career plan was found. The ASIs intending to remain in the role held higher technical functional competence ($p < .01$) and job security ($p < .05$) orientations, and the effect size for both was medium. The ASIs intending to ascend to the superintendent role held higher general managerial competence orientation scores ($p < .01$), and the effect size was medium. A significant association was found between gender and career plan revealing that a greater percentage of females in this study intended to remain in the role of ASI, while more males intended to ascend to the role of superintendent. Significant effects were also found between district type (i.e., rural or suburban) and career orientations, although results were interpreted with caution given a $p = .07$ significance level for the multivariate test. Suburban ASIs, compared to rural colleagues, held significantly higher geographic

security orientation scores ($p < .01$) and marginally significant general managerial ($p = .078$) orientation scores, with medium and small effect sizes, respectively.

The findings and recommendations of this study provide a lens for understanding what drives and gives direction to the ASIs careers over the long term, including what influences their decision to either remain in the role or ascend to the superintendent role. This chapter will explore the implications of the findings of this research study in comparison to previous theory and research on career orientations of professionals, including those in educational settings. Limitations of the study will be discussed and opportunities for future research will be identified. The chapter will conclude with recommendations for professional practice and policy.

Discussion of Findings in Relation to the Literature

ASI Dominant Career Orientations

Based on the results related to research question one, New York State ASIs held all nine career orientations, and four of the orientations were dominant for this population. Mean scores above 3.0 were considered dominant orientations indicating they were mostly true or important for this population of ASIs. Dominant orientations ranged between mean scores of 3.3 and 4.5. The service to a cause, general managerial competence, job, and geographic security mean scores were 4.5, 3.5, 3.5, and 3.3, respectively.

Feldman and Bolino (1996, 2000) categorized Schein's (1978) orientations into three distinct groupings: talent based, need based, and value based. Talent-based orientations center on an individual's work talents and the type of work one is involved in on a day-to-day basis. General managerial competence, technical functional competence,

and entrepreneurial creativity orientations were identified as talent based. Need-based orientations center on an individual's motives and needs and involve how one desires to structure a career to fulfill basic personal desires in their lives. Geographic security, job security, lifestyle, and autonomy orientations were described as need based. Finally, value-based orientations center on an individual's attitudes and motivations involving how one identifies with the purpose of their career. Service to a cause and challenge orientations were identified as value based. The dominant profile identified in this study suggests that ASIs as a group hold talents in the area of general managerial competence, values consisting of service, and dedication to a cause, and they exhibit needs for both job and geographic security. No other studies of managers revealed the same dominant profile with the exception of one study of information service (IS) managers (Crepeau et al., 1992), where a closely related profile was revealed. Like ASIs, the IS managers in the held security, general managerial, and service to a cause dominant orientations, in addition to the challenge orientation. This similarity may be explained by the context in which the managers' careers were situated. The population of IS managers came from a variety of work settings, including 40 % government and military agencies, 31 % financial institutions, and 29 % other organizations including health care. The similar orientation profile of ASIs in public education and IS managers working in government, military, and health care organizations may be attributed to both being public servant leaders who apply interpersonal and managerial skills to contribute to a greater good. While ASIs in this study also held a challenge orientation at a mean score of 3.0, the service to a cause orientation ranked highest of all career orientations at a mean of 4.5, signifying its importance as the most strongly held value orientation. This finding

suggests that ASIs hold service to a cause as their highest orientation because they perceive making a difference in the lives of students as the central feature of what gives direction to their career, beyond the value of overcoming challenges encountered along the way.

Service to a cause. My research study revealed the most dominant orientation held by ASIs was service to a cause. Schein (1990) described service-oriented individuals as holding self-directed interests to contribute to the lives of others, seeking out and embracing opportunities for influence even if it involves a change of employment. Service-oriented individuals advance in the organization to positions that allow them to fulfill values that better the lives of others. This ASI research study affirms the importance of service to a cause orientation in educators as demonstrated in two studies of teacher orientations (Surgeliene & Stanisauskiene, 2009; Tan & Quek, 2001). The teacher studies suggest that a fundamental principle held throughout a teaching career is to impact and shape the lives of generations of students. The path to an ASI role is through the ranks of teaching, corroborating the ASI's firmly held value of shaping the lives of others, directly influencing staff throughout the organization to achieve a greater impact in the lives of students. Fullan (1993) described the relationship teachers hold between moral purpose and change:

Moral purpose or making a difference in the lives of children concerns bringing about improvements. It is, in other words, a change theme. Moral purpose keeps teachers close to the needs of children and youth; change agency causes them to develop better strategies for accomplishing their moral goals. (p. 2)

Although administrators, my study suggests that ASIs and teachers share a service orientation to children, committed to implementing strategies for change that improve students' lives.

Tan and Quek (2001) described service-oriented individuals as being primarily interested in holding responsibility and authority for influencing policies related to one's values. Federal accountability policies resulting from No Child Left Behind (NCLB) (2001) and recently adopted New York State Education Department regulations require ASIs to implement a range of mandates in the areas of curriculum, instruction, and assessment and to be accountable for those efforts. To successfully achieve staff buy-in and ownership of mandates, ASIs often communicate the reform agenda by contextualizing the accountability as a moral imperative, despite the system's imperfections. To successfully implement these initiatives, district-level leaders, namely ASIs, execute concrete action steps while continually inspiring others to understand how their work advances the learning for students (Marzano & Waters, 2007). My research findings suggest ASIs rely on their service-to-a-cause orientation to create a culture of commitment throughout the district, so they may employ system-wide strategies to improve teaching and learning for all students, similar to those identified by Elmore and Burney (1997). Moreover, a firmly held service-to-a-cause orientation may contribute to an ASI's ability to establish an equity focus and close the achievement gap that exists between underrepresented and disadvantaged students and their peers (Davies, 2007). The orientation of service to a cause enables ASIs to move beyond mandate compliance and meaningfully frame the reform as a call to duty, drawing upon and appealing to teachers' sense of service and commitment to students.

General managerial competence. The ASIs in this study held the general managerial competence as second highest dominant orientation, yielding a mean of 3.5 on the Career Orientations Inventory (COI). Schein described general managerial, competence-oriented individuals as desiring complex, multi-faceted, interconnected work with high levels of responsibility and authority (1990). Described as a talent-based orientation, general managerial employees are willing to solve complex, system-wide issues and possess inter and intrapersonal skills that enable them to effectively do so. These skills comprise analytical, interpersonal, and intergroup skills coupled with a strong emotional competence (Schein, 1978). To satisfy the need for competence in complex activities of system-wide management, they seek out career experiences “that enable them to develop the self-image that they had the skills and values necessary to rise to top general management levels” (DeLong, 1984, p. 52).

While many studies of executive-level leaders across careers revealed general managerial competence as an orientation (Igbauria & Greenhaus, 1991; Kniveton, 2004; Schein, 1996), not all held the orientation as dominant. Of interest, Puryear’s (1996) study of principals found that building or school-level leaders held technical functional competence, as opposed to general managerial competence, as the dominant, talent-based orientation. Puryear’s study is the only other research study of career orientations of educational administrators. While this makes the certainty of comparisons difficult, the results of this study suggest differences between ASIs and principals in their self-perception of talents that give direction and anchor them to their respective administrative roles. This may be explained by the broader context within which ASIs must currently lead.

Honig (2006) posits that contemporary education policies differ in complexity from those of the past eras arguing that requirements for systemic, deep, and large-scale improvements have replaced the delivery of specific or discrete programs, procedural changes, and the meeting of basic minimum performance standards. Contemporary policy goals that impact student performance may involve various organizations and persons across organizations for effective integration of programs and services, including families, neighborhoods, businesses, and communities (Honig & Jehl, 2000). Assistant superintendents for instruction are primarily responsible for implementing NCLB's policy goals and responding to the accountability provisions. The policy context demands district leaders who are willing to confront the challenges and mediate the resistance of constituents in order to achieve short- and long-term performance improvements (Hess, 1999). Schein's (1990) talent-based general managerial competence orientation is consistent with the skills an ASI must exercise in the current complex accountability context: a passion for analyzing and solving problems under conditions of uncertainty and challenge, stimulated (rather than exhausted) by situations of resistance.

Moreover, the ASI's possession of the general competence orientation matches the requirement to work with a variety of constituencies to build pivotal capacities of others through personal, interpersonal, and organizational strategies (Mitchell & Sackney, 2000). Schein describes the general managerial (GM) orientation as being primarily motivated by mobilizing others to reach common goals (Schein, 1990). The ASIs effectively assume a support and teaching role, rather than authoritarian stance to motivate and build the capacity of others (Honig & Hatch, 2004). Successful reform requires sustained effort and the ability of leadership to provide service and support in

addition to the demand for accountability (Supovitz, 2006). Successful ASIs effectively design the system to foster student-learning cultures. Student-learning cultures involve groups of individuals across a system who embrace and internalize goals for improvement, accept accountability, and learn with and from each other (Firestone, 2009). General managerial, competence-oriented ASIs use their sophisticated interpersonal skills to design student-learning cultures by mobilizing individuals within and across organizations to achieve and implement common goals.

Job security. Job security oriented individuals hold employment security and tenure in a job or organization as a main concern and may also demonstrate loyalty and a desire to spend their career within a particular organization (Schein, 1978, 1990). In this research study, job security yielded a mean score of 3.5, the same mean score as the general managerial competence orientation, suggesting that job security is of high importance to ASIs. Feldman and Bolino (1996) conceptualized the security orientation as a needs-based anchor. Three of four studies of career orientations of educators found the Job Security (JS) anchor as dominant (DeLong, 1984; Puryear, 1996; Tan & Quek, 2001). Government employees and civil service employees routinely held job security orientations in Schein's studies (1990, 1996). The results suggest that ASIs in New York State hold their tenure status and pension benefits as a need because they are state employees and belong to organized professional employment organizations. This study also revealed that 81% of ASIs in New York State have over 21 years of education experience, indicating that they are close to the maximum benefit afforded by the New York State Retirement System of retirement with no penalty after 30 years.

Geographic security. The mean score for the geographic security orientation for ASIs in this study was 3.3. In relation to other need-based orientations, ASIs held security for job and location more strongly than needs for autonomy or lifestyle balance, both of which earned means less than 3.0, earning mean scores of 2.5 and 2.7, respectively. Security-anchored orientations were revealed in other studies of executives in different occupations (Crepeau et al., 1992; Kniveton, 2004) as well as studies of educators (DeLong, 1984; Tan & Quek, 2001), although some studies combined the job and geographic security orientations to achieve a composite orientation, making comparisons difficult.

Career Orientations and Years of Experience in the ASI Role

A majority or 81% of the ASIs in New York State have worked in their role for ten years or less. More than half of the ASIs are in the first five years of the role, indicating that they are fairly new to the role. In this study, results of research question three indicated that years of experience in the ASI role had no significant effect on the career orientation.

Career Orientations and Gender

More than two-thirds of the ASI participants in this study were female. The results of research question four indicated that the gender of participants in this study had no effect on career orientation. Puryear's (1997) study of principals in North Carolina revealed an effect of gender on variety-oriented principals. Female principals held the variety orientation more strongly than male principals. Later studies re-named the variety orientation as the challenge orientation. In career studies outside of the education field, gender differences were found in Marshall and Bonner's (2003) study of graduate

students in business. Australian male graduate business students who held general managerial, creative entrepreneurial, and technical functional orientations were represented in greater numbers compared to female students. Similarly, in Danziger and Valency (2005), a significant difference in all but two anchors, technical functional and job security, was revealed. Danziger and Valency's study found the percentage of women with lifestyle as their dominant anchor as twice that of male participants. Both of these studies were situated outside of the United States, making comparisons difficult due to the possibility of differing cultural expectations.

Career Orientations and District Type

Research question four revealed that ASIs in this research study who were employed in suburban districts had significantly higher geographic security orientation scores when compared to ASIs in rural districts, and the effect size was a medium effect (Cohen's $d=.49$). This finding suggests that suburban ASIs desire to remain in suburban area districts and may be reluctant to assume similar or different roles in urban or rural areas. This may be due to the perception of greater opportunities for higher salaries or advancement opportunities. This finding was not congruent with the previous study of school principals (Puryear, 1997). Principals working in rural districts in North Carolina experienced higher geographic security scores compared to their suburban and urban counterparts. The difference in these findings may be due to the nature and scope of the responsibilities of the roles of administrators in different district types or the opportunities for career advancement and should be considered for future research studies.

Although mildly significant ($p=.078$), suburban ASIs experienced higher general managerial scores when compared to colleagues in rural districts, and the effect size was small (Cohen's $d=.31$). Although these results should be interpreted with caution due to the significance level, the variance may be due to differing role responsibilities ASIs experience in suburban and rural districts. District size may account for the distribution and scope of role responsibilities that suburban district and rural ASIs are responsible and accountable for assuming. Suburban districts are typically larger in size and experience fewer financial constraints than ASIs in rural districts where resources are more dependent on state aid. As a result, ASIs in suburban districts may experience different opportunities and responsibilities that impact the general managerial competence orientation.

Career Plans and Career Orientations

Findings from this study appear to suggest that career orientation is a significant factor in differentiating New York State ASIs' decisions to remain in the role for the duration of their career or to ascend to the superintendent role. In answer to research question five exploring the relationship of career orientation to ASIs' career plans, ASIs intending to remain in their role were significant for holding the technical functional career orientation compared to those who held the general managerial orientation and intended to ascend to the superintendent role. The effect size statistics showed that the difference between orientations of these two groups of ASIs was not trivial; medium effect sizes were calculated for both groups. Leach (2009) studied assistant superintendents in New York State and found that only one-third desired to ascend to the superintendent role. The New York State Council for School Superintendents'

(NYSCOSS) most recent 2009 snapshot survey researching the superintendent role in New York State integrated findings and posed the following research question:

Given the stress and increasing challenges inherent in the superintendency, the steadily increasing trend in satisfaction with the superintendency as a culminating career choice is counterintuitive. Does this indicate that the people who chose to enter the superintendency are “special” personalities? Individuals who invite and enjoy the stress and challenge of the position, who gain satisfaction and gratification from solving difficult problems? People who work with a variety of constituents and are motivated by seeing their vision come into reality no matter the personal stress and frustration that may incur? These may be questions for a future Snapshot study (Terranova, Rogers, Fale, & Ike, 2010, p. 30).

My study’s findings may serve to inform the scholarly literature to explain reasons for the shrinking applicant pool for superintendents, despite the ASI role serving as a direct pipeline to the superintendent role. Schein (1990) described general managerial competence oriented individuals as those who “will not give up an opportunity to climb to a high level in the organization to enable themselves to integrate the efforts of others and be responsible for the output of the organizations” (p. 530). Desiring the power and achievement of top roles and positions, GM-oriented individuals were described as perceiving that their “competencies lie in their ability to analyze problems and remain emotionally stable and interpersonally competent” (DeLong, 1984, p. 52). In contrast, technical functional competent orientations “are more concerned with the intrinsic content of their work and will not give up the ability to apply their skills in an area of

expertise and to continue to develop those skills to a higher level” (Tan & Quek, 2001, p. 531).

It may be argued that ASIs holding a technical functional career anchor perceive that they might be required to relinquish their technical expertise in curriculum and instruction if they ascend to the superintendent role. Assistant superintendents for instruction work closely and are in direct proximity with the superintendent to view the role differences between the ASI role and the superintendency, especially specific to the degree of responsibility and impact exercised in the technical areas of teaching and learning in comparison to responsibilities for the district’s community relations, personnel functions, fiscal health, and board management. Indeed, changing demographics, a growing diversity, deregulation in the forms of vouchers and charter schools, power decentralization, and increased accountability with no authority describe the forces changing the role of the superintendency (Houston, 2001). While studies describe three dominant roles of the superintendency as instructional, managerial, and political, Nestor-Baker and Hoy (2001) assert that superintendents spend most of their time and energy in the managerial and political dimensions, skills directly associated with the general managerial competence career orientation. As a result, superintendents’ interpersonal and emotional competence skills are exercised regularly to minimize conflict and successfully negotiate with multiple constituencies to seek approval for increased fiscal resources and programs. Cuban’s (1998) study revealed that the interpersonal aspects especially related to the managerial and political dimensions of the board and community consume much of the superintendent’s day. It can be argued that the changing role of the superintendent and the increased policy expectations for

governance, finance, and accountability necessitate that the responsibilities for implementing the Elementary, Secondary Educational Act (ESEA) and No Child Left Behind (NCLB) requirement be relegated to the assistant superintendent for instruction. To the technical-function oriented ASI, these responsibilities focus primarily on strategies for improving teaching and learning and rely heavily on deep knowledge and expertise. Successful achievement in producing student performance improvements in this policy context may also increase the technical, functional-oriented ASIs' expert status amongst their peer groups.

Job Security and Career Plan Differences

In addition to the talent-based orientation differences in ASIs who desired to remain in the role as opposed to ascending to the superintendency, the needs-based career orientation, job security, was significant for explaining the variance between those ASIs who intended to remain in the role as opposed to ascension. Security-oriented individuals hold concern for employment security and desire organizations that provide stability, supply benefits, and have concern for job tenure (Schein, 1990). Several educator studies revealed job security as dominant orientations (DeLong, 1984; Puryear, 1996; Tan & Quek, 2001). A difference between the ASI role and superintendent role involves tenure rights. Superintendents negotiate contracts with Boards of Education and tenure rights are abdicated. The ASIs may perceive that job security is significantly compromised upon assumption of the superintendent role, although data shows that turnover rates in the NYS superintendency are caused by a late-age entry factor rather than poor relations between superintendents and boards of education (Terranova et al., 2010). Nevertheless, the job

security oriented ASI may feel anchored to the role due to the concern for giving up tenure rights.

Gender and Career Plan

A post hoc test was conducted to determine the effect of gender on ASIs' career plans. Findings suggest that, for this population, males and females differ in career plan greater than one would expect. More than expected, females desire to remain in their role, and more than expected, males desire to ascend, and the association was significant. A greater percentage of females intend to remain in the role of ASI, and a greater percentage of males intend to ascend to the role of superintendent, and this association is significant as well. These results corroborate previous findings related to the 2009 NYS Superintendent Snapshot Survey conducted by the New York State Council on School Superintendents where 63% of superintendents in New York State are male. Women as a proportion are growing in their entry to the superintendent role as evidenced by an increase of 7% to 37% between 2000 and 2009 (Terranova et al., 2010).

Summary of Findings in Relation to the Literature

My study revealed that respondents held all nine career orientations, but service to a cause, job, geographic security, and general managerial competence were identified as dominant and were considered most true or important for the respondents. The service to a cause orientation is corroborated in studies of teachers and suggests that ASIs, like teachers, perceive making a difference in the lives of students as a major driver of what gives direction to their career (DeLong, 1984; Tan & Quek, 2001). The dominance of the general managerial competence orientation is consistent with an ASI's need to exercise leadership skills within challenging and complex conditions present in the current

accountability reform efforts. No relationship was revealed between ASI career orientations and gender or years of experience in the ASI role. Significant effects were found between ASIs in suburban and rural districts. Suburban district ASIs held significantly higher geographic security orientations and marginally significant general managerial orientations.

Findings from this study appear to suggest that career orientation is a significant factor in differentiating New York State ASIs' decisions to remain in the role for the duration of their career or to ascend to the superintendent role. This study's findings may inform the research base to partially explain reasons for the shrinking applicant pool for superintendents, despite the ASI position serving as a direct pipeline to the superintendent role. The ASI's in my study did not hold challenge, lifestyle, technical-functional, autonomy, and entrepreneurial orientations as strongly; new research may explore variables impacting dominant and less dominant ASI career orientations.

Limitations

Limitations of this study include the omission of New York City from the sample population of ASIs and the use of the short form COI. This research study collected data from a sample of New York State ASIs excluding those employed in the New York City schools' educational system. While statistically significant findings were identified, care should be taken in generalizing the findings to those district-level leaders employed in the New York City schools. The administrative structure of New York City made it difficult to ensure that New York City's district-level administrators' role functions were similar to those outside the city due to differences in size and organizational duties. A future

study specific to studying the career orientations of New York City district leaders whose scope of responsibility are similar to ASIs outside of New York City may be considered.

This research study used the short-form as opposed to long-form COI to determine career orientations of ASIs. While the construct, content validity, and reliability of the short form measure was demonstrated in previous studies (Igbauria & Baroudi, 1993), future studies using the long form could be compared to determine if results are similar. Conducting a study using the long form may not yield response rates at the same level as this study, however, due to the necessary increase in time required for completion.

Recommendations for Future Research

This was the first research study on the career orientations of ASIs. This study included ASIs in New York State making it difficult to generalize these findings to ASIs nationally. Future studies of career orientations of ASIs on a national level are warranted. This study was a quantitative study, and it is recommended that future studies employ a qualitative or mixed methods inquiry to focus on exploring the experiences of New York State assistant superintendents for instruction whose career orientations differ. The interviews may uncover themes and factors related to reasons why general managerial oriented ASIs aspire to the superintendent role and technical functional oriented ASIs desire to remain in the role. The interviews could also uncover why differences in gender and career orientations exist for ASIs who intend to remain and those who wish to ascend. Moreover, a survey of career orientations of superintendents in New York State would identify differences and similarities of career orientations of superintendents and assistant superintendents. A qualitative study of career orientations of participant ASIs in

this research study after they ascend to the superintendent role may discern factors related to career orientations and further explain reasons why general managerial oriented ASIs are anchored more to the superintendent role than the ASI role.

In focusing on career orientations of ASIs and demographic and professional background characteristics, this study did not address other attributes or leadership characteristics that may be relevant to career-related decisions of ASIs, such as satisfaction with role functions or perceptions of efficacy in leading district-wide improvement efforts. This study did not consider the leadership skills and orientations of ASIs as factors that may be related to career satisfaction or career planning. Also, this study did not examine turnover rates of ASIs and factors impacting turnover intention. Future studies should consider exploring these variables to examine the relationship to ASIs' career orientations.

Given the dearth of research studies on the ASI role despite the leadership responsibilities for implementing major policies for improving student achievement, future studies should consider identifying successful strategies ASIs employ in implementing achievement initiatives.

Recommendations for Future Professional Policy and Practice

Preparation and Support for ASIs

This research study revealed that over half of the current ASIs are relatively new to their role, reporting one to five years' experience. A needs assessment of ASIs and by ASIs would identify differentiated professional development for ASIs at different stages of their careers. For various agencies and professional organizations, including the New York State Department of Education, the New York State Council of Administrators, the

American Association of School Administrators (AASA), the New York State Council of School Superintendents (NYSCOSS), and the New York State Association for Supervision, Curriculum and Development, designing formal professional development structures and opportunities specific to the knowledge and skill capacities of the ASI is timely and warranted. The design of institutes and mentor systems specific to the needs of ASIs, as they are currently structured for New York State superintendents, would serve to support early and mid/late-career ASIs. Of the above-mentioned organizations and agencies, only NYSCOSS has a formal structure and program targeted to the needs of ASIs. A major goal of NYSCOSS is to increase the skills and motivations of administrators who aspire to the superintendent role, due to the demonstrated need for expanding the applicant pool for superintendent positions (Terranova et al., 2010). Expanding the council's services to offer ASI institutes designed for first-year and second/third-year ASIs would support increased membership and satisfy needs of the 43% of ASI participants in this study whose career plan is to ascend to the superintendent role. The AASA has recently assumed responsibility for the national principals' associations of National Association of Elementary School Principals and the National Association of Secondary School Principals. This merger is an opportunity to design services and supports for ASIs since principalships are a major pipeline to the ASI role.

Superintendent Recruitment, Retention and Support Programs

Superintendent search consultants help boards of education find, attract and select a new school district superintendent. This study's findings may inform search consultants about personal and professional characteristics of ASIs who desire to ascend to the superintendent role. Nearly half of the New York State ASIs in this study intend to

ascend to the superintendent role and those who intend to ascend hold general managerial career orientations. Search consultants may integrate these findings into their search and selection strategies to optimize their recruitment processes and support the prospective candidacy of ASIs. Moreover, increasing school board members' awareness of the career orientations of potential candidates for the superintendency may serve to inform both the selection and retention processes. School board members' knowledge of the self-perceived talents, needs and values of superintendent candidates would better enable an effective match between individual and organizational needs and goals.

The differences between technical functional-oriented ASIs and general managerial competent oriented ASIs impacted whether ASIs entered the superintendent role. These findings have implication for preparation programs for the superintendent role in order to assist ASIs in understanding the talents, values, and needs associated with the superintendent role. The findings suggest that ASIs who are technical-functional oriented may view the superintendent role as a role that does not allow for continued depth of technical expertise. Network opportunities, mentorships, and workshops addressing the difference between perceptions and realities of the superintendent role may afford ASIs opportunities to better understand the superintendent role compared to their perceptions of the talents, values, and needs required for the role.

Establishing a Professional Organization for ASIs

Creating a professional organization specific to the New York State ASI role for the purpose of providing leadership and membership services is recommended. This research study identified that nearly one-half of the current ASIs intend to remain in the role for the duration of their career. Moreover, it is demonstrated that ASIs whose career

orientation is technical/functional were more likely to remain in their role for the duration of their career. The ASIs who hold a technical functional orientation need and value self-perceived competence and expertise specific to the technical aspects of their role (DeLong, 1982). Formal structures and services to support ASIs in maintaining and developing content expertise would support sustained leadership in the role, matched to the discipline and role-specific knowledge and skills. The current accountability context requires implementation of several recently mandated federal and New York State Department of Education policies and regulations for new common core standards and assessments and evaluation systems for teachers and principals. These mandated change initiatives in New York State require sustained leadership over time in order to impact student achievement. A professional organization aimed at supporting ASIs would develop a mission aimed at enhancing the ASI as a profession, uphold the importance of the role, foster collegiality and support among its members, and influence excellence in education of the children of New York State.

Moreover, regulations specific to the implementation of Race to the Top federal policies are currently underway. As implementers of these policies, ASIs are a crucial voice and should be formally considered for policy input and analysis. The AASA and NYSCOSS should consider committee appointments for policy advocacy. The NYSED should seek assistant superintendent for instruction representation on various committees charged with developing best practices for implementation of the reform initiative. This researcher was unable to obtain a current register of ASIs in New York State, signifying the lack of importance and status placed on this role throughout the state. It is

recommended that ASIs' voices be formally represented at the state level by establishing a registry and a means of direct communication to the field.

Executive Leadership College Preparation

This study examined career orientation differences between and amongst ASIs. Differences between orientations of ASIs who remain in their role and those who ascend to the superintendency have curricular implications for development of executive leaders at the college and university level. The dimensions of the talents, needs, and values related to career orientations of executive leaders should be embedded within administrative preparation programs to identify best practices related to the Interstate School Leadership License Consortium's Standards for School Leadership (ISLLC).

Recruiting Diverse ASI Leaders

The New York State Education Department, universities, school boards, and the New York State Council of School Administrators should focus on attracting and supporting racially and ethnically diverse administrators to public education. While the population in public schools K-12 is increasing in diversity, this study revealed that ASIs are not growing more diverse. The ASIs in this study were found to be 96% Caucasian, 3% African American, and 1% Hispanic. These findings are consistent with the race/ethnicity composition of New York State superintendents (Terranova et al., 2010). This finding should inform New York State agencies that greater emphasis needs to be placed on increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of ASIs. Increasing the racial and ethnic diversity of school and district leaders to address the needs of a more diverse student population is a moral and practical imperative. Strategic planning for recruitment and hiring practices to secure leaders from underrepresented groups needs to occur.

Recruitment and hiring efforts could be supplemented through ASI development programs, internships, and mentoring.

Conclusion

This study makes an important contribution to the professional role of assistant superintendents for instruction because, until now, no studies have attended to the career orientations and talents, values, and needs of this important educator. While the literature base is substantial with respect to the role of the superintendent and principal, there is a noticeable absence of studies related to the ASI (Cetorelli, 1997; Leach, 2009). This study begins to fill that void by contributing to the scholarly literature base as well as to practitioner knowledge.

The ASI is the district-level leader responsible for district-wide improvements in teaching, learning, and helping all schools build their capacity for improvement (Honig et al., 2010). The No Child Left Behind Act and Race to the Top federal initiatives have intensified the need for central office staff, specifically the ASI, to build capacity for academic improvement by exercising essential leadership throughout the system. The findings of this study focused on identifying the career orientations of ASIs and describing the motives, needs, and values they possess as they influence and impact the capacity of others in the organization to bring about sustained improvement in academic achievement. This study indicates the need for greater emphasis on these important educators who are primarily responsible for affecting the improvement in learning for generations of students.

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Appendix A

Research Instrument

1a. I have willingly agreed and given my consent to participate in this survey.

Yes No

1. What is the total number of years you have worked in public school education, k-12?

1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21 and beyond

2. What is the total number of years you have worked in the role of ASI or district-level position overseeing k-12 Curriculum/Instruction?

1-5 6-10 11-15 16-20 21 and beyond

3. What is the highest level of education you have completed?

Master's Degree Certificate of Advanced Study Doctoral Degree

4. Which statement reflects your plans for the duration of your career?

Remain in position as ASI or administrator overseeing K-12 Curriculum/Instruction Ascend to the superintendent role Other

5. What is your current public district type?

Rural Suburban Urban BOCES

6. What is your gender?

male female

7. What is your current age? (U.S. Census)

25 to 34 35 to 44 45 to 54 55 to 64 65 or over

8. What is your race/ethnicity?

White/Caucasian African American Hispanic Asian Native American Pacific Islander Other

For the following, rate how important the statement is for you.

9. The process of supervising, influencing and leading people at all levels is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

10. The chance to do things my own way and not to be constrained by the rules of an organization is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

11. An employer who will provide security through guaranteed work, benefits, a good retirement program, etc. is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

12. Working on problems that are almost insolvable is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

13. Remaining in my specialized area as opposed to being promoted out of my area of expertise is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

14. To be in charge of a whole organization is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

15. A career that is free from organization restrictions is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

16. An organization that will give me long-run stability is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

17. Using my skills to make the world a better place to live and work is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

18. Developing a career that permits me to continue to pursue my own life-style is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

19. Building a new enterprise is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

20. Remaining in my area of expertise throughout my career is

Not Important	Somewhat Important	Important	Very Important	Centrally Important
●	●	●	●	●

21. To rise to a high position in general management is

Not Important Somewhat Important Important Very Important Centrally Important

22. Remaining in one geographical area rather than moving because of a promotion is
 Not Important Somewhat Important Important Very Important Centrally Important

23. Being able to use my skills and talents in the service of an important cause is
 Not Important Somewhat Important Important Very Important Centrally Important

For the following, rate how true the statement is for you.

24. The only real challenge in my career has been confronting and solving tough problems, no matter what area they were in.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

25. I am always on the lookout for ideas that would permit me to start and build my own enterprise.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

26. It is more important for me to remain in my present geographical location than to receive a promotion or new job assignment in another location.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

27. A career is worthwhile only if it enables me to lead my life in my own way.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

28. I will accept a management position only if it is in my area of expertise.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

29. I do not want to be constrained by either an organization or the business world.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

30. I want a career in which I can be committed and devoted to an important cause.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

31. I feel successful only if I am constantly challenged by a tough problem or a competitive situation.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True

32. Choosing and maintaining a certain life-style is more important than is career success.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True
● ● ● ● ●

33. I have always wanted to start and build up a business of my own.

Not at all True Somewhat True True Very True Completely True
● ● ● ● ●

The Career Orientations Survey Short Form was developed by Drs. Igbauria and Baroudi in 1993 and was adapted from the original COI developed by Dr. Edgar Schein, 1978, 2006.

Appendix B

Email Letter of Permission to Use COI Survey

From: eschein@comcast.net
To: llm04439@sjfc.edu

If you are doing only research and not using the inventory for commercial purposes you have my permission to reproduce it from the published original provided you put the reference to the original on each sheet so that participants know where this came from. You should buy one copy of the latest booklets (2006) and copy the inventory from that. There are no other technical manuals. ed schein

On Jun 30, 2010, at 8:14 AM, McGinley, Linda L wrote:

Dear Dr. Schein,

I am a doctoral candidate in Executive Leadership at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York and I am interested in researching the career anchors of New York State public school administrators who serve in the role of the assistant superintendent for instruction. I currently serve in this capacity for a suburban school district. A third of New York State's assistant superintendents aspire to the superintendency while two-thirds are either undecided or are non-aspirants. It would be informative to the field to understand the career anchors of this group of administrators.

I would very much appreciate your permission to use the career orientation inventory (COI) in my research study. Can you please advise me regarding the ability to obtain the inventory and the technical manual and whether there would be a cost or other financial/legal considerations for using the inventory?

Thank you very much for your consideration of my request. I am happy to provide any additional information to assist you in making a decision. Please know that I would be more than pleased to oblige.

Sincerely,

Linda McGinley
(585) 336-2986

Appendix C

Email Letter of Permission to Use Short Form COI

From: baroudi@udel.edu

To: Llm04439@sjfc.edu

Good luck with your study.

Take care ,

JB

Jack J. Baroudi, Ph.D.
302-528-1505

On Sep 7, 2010, at 9:48 PM, "McGinley, Linda L" <llm04439@sjfc.edu> wrote:

Dear Dr. Baroudi,

I hope you enjoyed a wonderful long holiday weekend.

I appreciated your taking the time to talk with me last week about my dissertation research study and for permission to use the *short form* Career Orientations Inventory that you and Dr. Igbauria adapted from the COI originally developed by Dr. Schein and Dr. DeLong.

Just as I indicated to Dr. Schein when he granted me permission to use the published original COI, I will use the short form career orientation inventory only for research purposes and I will also provide appropriate citations in my dissertation study.

Sincerely,

Linda McGinley

Appendix D

Qualtrics Online Letter to NYS Assistant Superintendents for Instruction

Dear NYS Assistant Superintendent for Instruction or District-Level Leader of K-12 Instruction:

Please allow me to introduce myself. My name is Linda McGinley and I am a doctoral student in the Executive Leadership Program in the School of Education at St. John Fisher College in Rochester, New York. My dissertation study is to identify and examine the career orientations, otherwise termed as career anchors, of the New York State Assistant Superintendents for Instruction. The purpose of the study is to gain a broader understanding of the talents, needs and values of *the leader most responsible for the district-wide instructional program*. **To take the online survey, click on the survey link at the bottom of this letter.**

You are being asked to participate in the research because *you are responsible for K-12 Instruction in your district*. While your specific title may be a variation of the ASI title, you hold overarching responsibility for the instructional program district-wide. Surprisingly, the research literature specific to district level educational administrators serving in your role is practically non-existent. I believe that understanding the talents, needs and values of those holding these critical positions is warranted. I hope the findings of my study will contribute to the paucity of educational leadership studies relating to the Assistant Superintendents for Instruction, and will provide beneficial insight into what informs their career interests and orientations.

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked questions of a demographic and professional background nature, such as your gender, number of years experience in education and the type of school district you are currently employed in. You will also be asked questions about your career orientation, including perceived skills, values and needs. I have made every effort to construct a concise and resourceful survey for your consideration while assuring individual confidentiality and anonymity. Any reports or publications based on this research will use only group data and will not identify any participant as being affiliated with this project.

I estimate the survey will take about **five** minutes to complete. **To take the online survey, click on the survey link at the bottom of this letter.** The first survey question will ask you to provide informed consent and you are advised to make a print copy of this consent form for your records.

If at any time during the study you desire to withdraw or not answer any further survey questions, you may choose to exit the incomplete survey by closing your browser window. In addition, you may withdraw from involvement in this study at any point before March 1, 2011, even after completing this survey, by contacting me directly.

After providing informed consent, you may complete the survey. You must complete the survey in one sitting by February 2, 2011. The survey findings will be made available to you in an abstract by October 1, 2011.

Thank you for your time and effort.

Respectfully Yours,

Linda L. McGinley
(585) 336-2981
Llm04439@sjfc.edu

Follow this link to the Survey:

[\\${1://SurveyLink?d=Take the Survey}](#)

Or copy and paste the URL below into your internet browser:

[\\${1://SurveyURL}](#)

Follow the link to opt out of future emails:

[\\${1://OptOutLink}](#)

Appendix E

Survey Items Used to Answer Research Questions

Survey Items Used To Answer Research Questions

Research question	Survey item
1. What are the career orientations of the NYS ASIs, excluding New York City?	10-33
Service to a cause	17, 23, 30
Job security	11, 16
General managerial competence	9, 14, 21
Geographic security	22, 26
Challenge	12, 24, 31
Lifestyle	18, 29, 32
Technical functional competence	13, 20, 28
Autonomy	10, 15, 27
Entrepreneurial creativity	19, 25, 33
2. What is the relationship between career orientations and total years experience in the role of ASI?	9-33 and 2
3. What is the relationship between career orientations and gender?	9-33 and 6
4. What is the relationship between career orientations and district type?	9-33 and 5
5. What is the relationship between career orientations and career plan?	9-33 and 4
