

**DROPPING STONES IN STILL WATERS:
ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION FOR EDUCATION EQUITY**

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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine whether administrator preparation programs effectively prepared administrators for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. The study facilitated the reflections of eleven Aboriginal administrators; six non-Aboriginal administrators; and five Aboriginal teachers concerning the preparation of administrators for work in increasingly diverse schools. The reflections explored the specific skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with high Aboriginal enrollments.

Data was collected with the aim of informing praxis. Participants volunteered to take part in focus groups, and where necessary the researcher implemented additional means of collecting data. Volunteers were asked to reflect on (a) The effectiveness of their preparation for administration in schools with high Aboriginal enrollments; (b) the necessity for changes to existing preparation programs; (c) the skills and knowledge necessary for work in increasingly diverse schools; and (d) proposed changes to the preparation of administrators. Research data formed the foundation for ascertaining changes to the preparation of administrators for the sake of education equity.

Research findings suggested that administrator preparation programs have not adequately prepared administrators for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. Participants concluded that there was a need for changes to occur in the preparation of administrators. As well, they also identified the specific skills and knowledge, and the personal qualities that were essential for work in increasingly diverse schools. Finally, the research study suggested ways of informing praxis that included examining both the personal and institutional commitments and responsibilities required

for changes to occur in the preparation of administrators for education equity. These commitments and responsibilities included undertaking reflective practices on individual cultural frames; and strategic planning with a diverse stakeholders group to ascertain changes to existing programs that would facilitate the inclusion of an education equity focus in the core of administrator preparation.

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CHAPTER ONE

THROWING STONES IN STILL WATERS

As a storyteller, I always begin my stories the same way . . . a long time ago. A long time ago I stood beside a lake. It was still. In the lake I could see the reflections of both shore and sky. An eerie silence enveloped that place. In the distance lightning flashed quietly. In my hand, I held a smooth round stone; I could feel its warmth. I rolled it between my palms, closed my eyes, and then I threw it out over the water. My eyes flew open, and I searched the water's surface for the place where the stone fell. There, I could see the water forming rings, extending, changing the surface, and transforming the reflections. I waited for those rings to touch my feet and then I smiled.

My grandmother Myra left Little Pine Reserve in her teens to pursue teacher training at the Normal School. When she returned, married and raised her children, she did not realize how that one original decision would change the direction of her family's development. Of her ten children, five attended post-secondary institutions. Three of those became teachers and/or administrators. Of her grandchildren, six went to post-secondary institutions; three are teachers or administrators. My Kokum (grandmother) threw stones in still waters by choosing to become an educator. The ripples from her dropped stones now touch her family members; her one decision forever transformed our own expectations for ourselves.

Historically, decisions were made about the education of Aboriginal people. These decisions, too, sent ripples throughout our communities, and what was reflected back was shameful. Today, the stones being thrown in waters are transforming the way in which we examine Aboriginal education. What is being reflected now is hope.

BACKGROUND: COYOTE THE TEACHER

Do you remember that one about Coyote? Oh, that one could make some mischief. There was this time then, when Coyote, he was a woman. I better start this the right way. I always start my stories the same way. A long time ago. . .

A long time ago there was this Coyote who was a woman. That Coyote, eh, he could change her shape. Well, this one time she became a teacher. Yes, a teacher working in a school, not so big but not so small either. That Coyote she told us so. She told us about how there was lots of Indian kids there, just like her. She laughed when she told us the story about how some of the other teachers would come to her, when they had a problem with one of them Indian kids. She'd laugh then, and show us how she said, "Well, I got this white kid in my room, why don't you deal with him then?" And quieter, "No, we can't do that, for we're here to teach them all, and don't you know that I'm here for all the children?"

She told of the time, when the principal he got all them other Indian and Metis teachers together, to talk about how to provide programs for the staff to better understand them Indians and Metis. Those Indian and the Metis too, they got together, made a plan. On the day that they come together with the other teachers, they told their stories. One spoke about growing up Metis in the city, one about growing up Indian in the city. One spoke about growing up in an Indian family that farmed, and the other about growing up with his Auntie on the reserve, in the old way. They spoke for some time, some of them teachers they cry. The principal he just cross his arms over his chest, he frown. Like this. His face it slowly turn purple.

Those other teachers they say, “I see, you’re not all alike.” That principal, he didn’t say anything. Them Indian teachers and the Metis too, they just shook their heads and said “Will he ever learn?”

(laughter)

That Coyote, she liked teaching in that school. But, she caught wind of a new job. She worked for the Board Office as an Educational Consultant. Teaching people about Indian and Metis. Hmm.

She told of the time she go to a school to visit with the teachers, give them resource materials to use with the kids. That time, she saw that there was lots of Indian kids there. They smiled at her, they knew she was like them too. The principal, he call her up. Give her hell for coming to his school; “We don’t need you, we treat all the children the same.” She sighed at that and tried to quiet the rage inside her.

We aren’t the same.

Coyote she grew quiet when she spoke again. Her eyes they get big. She pulls her shawl around her tightly. She told us about how one time she found herself with many of the parents, Aunties and Kokums too, of all them Indian and Metis children. They were all around her, looking at her and speaking. They asked how come when the kids are teased at school nobody do anything about it? They asked how come when the kids are pushed around at school nobody do anything about it? They asked how come when the kids are late they are punished? They asked how come the school has no Indian and Metis teachers? They asked how come the school got no books about Indian and Metis children? They asked how come . . .

Coyote, she turned in the center of the circle, looked at each one of those people. She dried her tears, and spoke. "I've taken the hands of the other teachers, them Indians and them Metis too. We hold hands and we envision, and we plan and we work. We see things changing, slowly maybe, but changing just the same. Take our hands."

They reach for her then, and pull her to the circle. She sat with them to smudge. The people share their stories. Coyote nodded, I hear you.

One mother she was angry, she cried as she shared her story. She lifted her fist and shake it at the air; "Them Principals when will they ever learn?"

Coyote lowered her head, and coughed. The people looked to her.

"Them Principals, it's really not their fault. Look, they only started to tell our stories in the school in my lifetime. Them principals, they didn't learn about us in elementary. They didn't learn about us in high school. They didn't learn much about our culture, language, or history in them teacher education programs. They didn't learn about us in their administrator preparation. It's really not their fault."

"You're right." The people turned to see a holy man; he nodded his head and repeated, "You're right." He went on, "We need to invite them to the circle too, to learn from us, and so that we can learn from them as well."

Coyote, she call them times, "Dropping stones in still waters." She's dropping stones still they say. She's gone to the University now to do her Master's in Educational Administration. They say she'll write her thesis soon.

Hey! Hey Coyote! Welcome, api (sit down).

I was just talking about you.

INTRODUCTION

Context of the Research

A long time ago Coyote was standing at the edge of a lake. It was still. She could see the reflections of both shore and sky. But things looked strange. At her feet she could see a reflection of herself. But when she looked at the reflection far away in the water she could see something entirely different . . .

The province of Saskatchewan is rich in its human diversity. Indian, German, English, French, Metis, Ukrainian, Asian and many others form the foundation for this richness.

Moving into the 21st century, there are predictions of an increasing shift in the diversity of our population. The Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations (FSIN) reported that Saskatchewan's Aboriginal population would grow to 13.5 percent of the total population by the year 2006 (FSIN, 1997). The impact that this demographic shift would have on education was predicted to be great, whereby, "one-third of all new school entrants [would] be Aboriginal, with the vast majority being Indian" (p. 13).

For post-secondary institutions offering both teacher training and administrator preparation programs it is essential to plan now in order to prepare school-based personnel adequately to work in our changing communities. The FSIN says that training should include programs and educational initiatives "that will be relevant, applicable and sensitive to Aboriginal needs" (1997, p. 90).

As a teacher, an Educational Consultant, and an urban Aboriginal parent, I have seen that the majority of teachers, administrators, and support staff in Saskatoon

who have contact with Aboriginal children are not Aboriginal themselves. In the 1996-97 school year the Saskatoon Board of Education (SBE) employed 1144 teachers, 56 of whom were of Aboriginal ancestry. Bouvier (1996) reported that for the 1996-97 school year 315 teachers of Aboriginal ancestry worked in provincial schools in Saskatchewan out of a total of 10,134 full-time teachers. Her statistics did not include First Nation schools where higher Aboriginal employment rates would occur. The Saskatoon Board of Education employed one administrator (self-declared) of Aboriginal ancestry out of a total of 100 in the 1996-97 school year. Provincial statistics on Aboriginal administrators have not been collected at this time; however, unofficial estimates are that there were five Aboriginal administrators working in provincial schools. This number appeared to be low due to the fact that provincially data collection relied on Aboriginal peoples self-declaring their ethnicity. In the United States, Pavel found that 70 percent of administrators working in schools with high Indian populations [were] Non-Indian (1992, p. 26).

While it was important to note that the majority of school employees in contact with Aboriginal children were non-Aboriginal, we cannot conclude that these individuals were unwilling to grow personally and professionally in their knowledge about Aboriginal people. The Education Equity report, compiled annually by the Saskatoon Board of Education, provided a summary of education equity initiatives undertaken each year. The 1997 Education Equity report found that many non-Aboriginal teachers working for the Saskatoon Board of Education expressed a need for information that would assist them in working with Aboriginal people. Teachers and administrators stated that they required “personal knowledge of native culture, language, customs, lifestyles,

literature and songs” (SBE, 1997). Both employee groups reported that it was necessary to have an “understanding [of] the impact of urban, reserve and rural environments on [the] traditions and the heritage of our [Aboriginal] students...” (SBE, p.19). They felt this information was necessary to assist them in their duties as teachers and administrators. They identified their curriculum needs as including “appropriate activities, resource material acquisition, locally developed lessons and units, information on appropriate evaluation methods, support services availability, and [a] reference list of human resources” (SBE, p. 19).

While I was in my role as teacher and consultant, my colleagues expressed to me that the information that they sought as teachers and administrators had largely been neglected in their formal educational experiences. These teachers and administrators attended schools in which there was little to no information provided about Aboriginal people. The lack of information extended to their elementary, secondary and to their post-secondary training in teacher and administrator preparation programs. As a result, school systems had to compensate by providing professional development opportunities to their staff in the area of Indian and Metis Education.

Historically, education administrator preparation programs have not provided administrators with the skills necessary for work in diverse communities (Capper, 1993; Noley, 1991; Shakeshaft, 1990), simply because that had not been a priority at any level of education. As the changing demographics in the province become more evident, there may be administrators who identify a need for information about Aboriginal people, as had been reported by the Saskatoon Board of Education. Perhaps, the time to plan for

inclusion of information about Aboriginal peoples in the preparation programs of administrators is upon us.

As a graduate student of Aboriginal ancestry I assumed the challenge of presenting Aboriginal perspective in a meaningful way in education administration. This challenge was not without its struggles. I found that frequently I had to “culturally negotiate” (Mohatt, 1994; Stairs, 1994) my way through the education administration program. Stairs (1994) suggested that cultural negotiations were “essentially a narrative modeling of education, with a full setting, intentions, and goals which make meaning.” Stairs continued by stating “the concept of negotiation as used here might be understood as cultural constructivism: the fundamental view that cultures do not stop still and further that cultural change or cultural evolution does not operate on isolated societies but always on interconnected systems in societies variously linked” (p. 156). Finally, she writes, “Cultural negotiating requires individuals to examine self, the surrounding culture, and community” (p. 156). She also stated that cultural negotiating was the “negotiation of identity as it evolves through interactions of individual and surrounding cultures, and between cultures” (p. 167).

Calabrese & Barton (1994) echoed Stairs’ understandings of the cultural negotiating processes. They stated, “We need to continually examine our background experiences for hidden assumptions, recognizing that all our relationships and ideas contain our history as men and women, our histories of race and ethnicity, and our history of social class” (p. 131).

Through my own cultural negotiations, I had to undertake critical reflections of my own world-view, within the confines of the organizations in which I studied and

worked. This thesis, in turn, becomes an expression of the cultural negotiating process. It provided me with the opportunity to formulate an understanding of the historical limitations imposed by the dominant paradigms in education. This process assisted my growth in understanding how to approach integrating Aboriginal world views into the preparation of administrators so that the predominantly non-Aboriginal administrators in the province may more adequately create school visions with equity in the forefront of their educational planning.

Personally, I have been exposed to course content in my preparation for administration that reinforced the ethics, philosophies, and principles of mainstream white society by representing the educational community as being gender, racially and socially homogenous. I was, therefore, validated when reading Capper (1993) who wrote “I knew that the literature and research I had studied in Educational Administration, both theoretically and practically, failed to address the range of ‘others’ I had experienced as a teacher, administrator, and researcher . . .” (p. 2). Like, Capper, I too felt this way. As a student, I had observed how students, teachers and administrators had been addressed in a manner that presented them as similar, homogenous groupings. The human diversity was generally not recognized or acknowledged. As a graduate student in educational administration, I was acutely aware of the lack of culturally sensitive preparation that I had received. I was concerned that mainstream administrators may feel woefully inadequate in working more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations.

Banks (1996) wrote, “The assumption within the Western empirical paradigm is that the knowledge produced within it is neutral and objective and that its principles are

universal” (p. 7). The information presented through the literature that I was required to read in my administrator preparation largely assumed universal transferability. Yet, primarily white males wrote the research presented in my educational administration program. Their research was written and presented in a manner that assumed generalizability. In my case, like Capper, I found that the research requirements did not reflect the range of “other” that I was: woman, First Nations, mother, student, teacher, consultant, researcher.

An example of Banks’ observations on the empirical paradigm would be the perceptions of “who” educators are, as presented in education administration. Unfortunately, too often “educators” have been presented in both an androcentric and eurocentric manner. Shakeshaft (1990) states, “A not-so-subtle barrier for women and minority graduate students is the instructional materials they must read . . . discussions are most often presented using male pronouns, in textbooks or films illustrations with pictures of white males” (p. 221). Generalizations then, of teachers and administrators, were made as presented through the course content. The assumptions presented were that all students were a homogenous group, that teachers were a homogenous group, etc. These homogenous groupings reflected the eurocentric and androcentric norms presented by the producers of the knowledge base.

In response to the androcentric and eurocentric manner in which issues in education were addressed, I was faced with the decision to undergo personal cultural negotiations in regards to addressing the inequity presented. Frequently, it was I who raised my hand to point out that men and women perceive issues differently; it was I who pointed out that people make assumptions based on the combination of ethnicity, gender,

and social histories. As a result, I often felt that my classmates and sometimes my professors viewed my input as “harking on the equity bandwagon.” My comments were sometimes met with “rolled eyes.”

In my experience, when I addressed the need for equitable content in one of my early classes, I was told to undertake independent study on the topic or to find equitable content to share with my professor and classmates. The burden for identifying equitable content was placed back on my shoulders: the student, the minority, and the woman. I would have preferred the option of working together to identify the content, instead of being pushed to the margins once more. The end result of these negotiations was that I struggled to feel accepted in an organization that viewed my contributions as outside of the norm. The combination of content and faculty were a profound limitation upon my feelings of marginalization. First, as a student rarely had I been exposed to cultural or gender perspectives in the content of my administrator preparation program. Content tended to be both androcentric and eurocentric in nature. Second, in my experience, the faculty did not reflect the ethnic diversity of our larger community. The end result of not having the perspective and not having a diverse faculty was that minority students such as myself were required to negotiate for inclusion of our perspectives in the course content. The struggle for inclusion reminded students like myself of our place along the margins.

The lack of equitable content; the reinforcement of androcentric and eurocentric perspectives in the curriculum; the necessity to undertake cultural negotiations about my chosen responses to these issues; and the lack of exposure to a diverse faculty, resulted in my personal feelings of not being prepared to work in our diverse community.

Presently, I feel ill prepared to communicate the necessity for institutional changes as I lack competence, confidence and the vocabulary to do so. If I feel that way, as a graduate student of Aboriginal ancestry, then surely other educational administrators must feel inadequately prepared for the changing face of our classroom and our schools.

By conducting this research, I wished to investigate whether educational administrators received the training necessary to work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. In addition, I wished to identify the skills and knowledge that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators, as well as Aboriginal teachers identified as important for work in schools with diverse populations. These identified skills and knowledge assisted me in the process of informing praxis. I believed that by engaging in this research, I contributed to the growing literature on equity in administrator preparation.

Sitting Bull once said, "I have advised my people thus, if you find anything good on the white man's road, pick it up. But when you find something bad, or that turns out bad, drop it, leave it alone" (Mohawk as cited in Hill, 1992, p. 37). As I reflected on Sitting Bull's words, the researcher sends a challenge to you: if you see something good on the Indian road, pick it up.

General Research Problem

Coyote thought for a long time about why things looked so odd. She ran further along the shoreline and looked down into the water. She could see herself. But again, off in the distance the reflection in the water looked very different. She sat down and scratched her ear. In the water at her feet a small round stone poked out of the water's surface. She

reached with one elegant paw and stepped onto the rock. She peered into the water and again saw herself. But again the reflection further off in the distance was very different. She turned to the shoreline and searched for a stone that she could carry. She picked one up in her mouth, and stepped into the water, dropping the stone in the still waters.

The purpose of this study was to determine the nature of the preparation received by educational administrators for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. The study facilitated the critical reflections of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal school-based administrators, and Aboriginal teachers concerning the quality of administrator preparation for education equity. These reflections explored the specific skills and knowledge that participants identified as necessary for administrators to work more effectively in diverse communities with increasing Aboriginal populations.

Data were collected with the aim of informing praxis. Research data formed the foundation for ascertaining the changes to administrator preparation programs that would provide administrators with the skills and knowledge necessary to work in communities with ever-increasing Aboriginal populations.

Research Question

Based on the FSIN demographic prediction that “one-third of all new school entrants will be Aboriginal, with the vast majority being Indian” (1997, p. 13), this study was designed to determine whether administrators have received the preparation necessary to work effectively in schools with high Aboriginal populations. The study was also designed to inform praxis by suggesting changes to the skills and knowledge that frame the preparation of educational administrations. The proposed changes were

anticipated to provide educational administrators with information necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal enrollments. The purpose of this study is addressed through the following questions:

1. Do administrators feel that their administrator preparation programs adequately prepare them for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
2. Should administrator preparation programs adapt to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for work in increasingly diverse schools?
3. What skills and knowledge are identified as being important in working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?
4. What changes to administrator preparation would participants identify as important in the preparation of administrators for education equity?

Significance of the Research

In assessing the value of conducting this research, which was intended to inform praxis, there were internal and external implications. Internally, I wanted to develop further my skills as a researcher. These skills were valuable to me in the continuous process of formulating a personal vision of education. The research process was anticipated to confirm and validate some of the ideas that have been influenced by my own research as well as employment and lived experiences.

Internally, I have had to “culturally negotiate” my way through graduate studies. Even this late in my program, I have negotiated between writing this thesis in a way that would be familiar to the review committee, and writing in a manner that was reflective of

my understandings of traditional knowledge. This thesis was not in the traditional format advocated by the University of Saskatchewan. It does not look like the thesis samples outlined on the University's web-site. It does not look like the scores of theses that I examined. Nor should it.

This thesis has been written in a manner that I am familiar with, the oral tradition. In developing this thesis I drew from my personal strengths as a storyteller to create a body of work that had rhythm and power, as a story well told has rhythm and power. In this way, I have been able to validate what I have learned from my family, my elders, and my community. I attempted to show equal respect for traditional knowledge on the one hand, and western knowledge on the other. Neither have been presented as the best, but I tried to present them equally.

Externally, I hoped that this study would contribute to the development of "Aboriginal training policies . . . in Saskatchewan" (FSIN, p. 146). Remember Sitting Bull's comment, "If you see something good, . . . pick it up." My aim was to create a story for the reader's critical reflection. The story was not to be treated as a prescriptive solution to issues pertaining to administrator preparation for education equity, but were written to provide "food for thought" for the reader to reflect upon. These reflections could result in the readers' decision to assist in the development of Aboriginal training policies. The reader would be an active participant in that she or he alone would draw conclusions from the research and make the decision on how to apply the information shared. In that way, I attempted to stay true to the pattern established in the oral tradition as well as postmodern research.

In the oral tradition, it was common for the storyteller to not tell you the answer or the moral to the story. The storyteller recognized that the listener was smart enough to find the answer herself/himself. The answers might arise and be recognized by the listener upon reflection, usually when the time was right. With the hope of informing praxis, the recommendations from this research may be put into action when the time is right.

In postmodern research, the writer struggles not to fall into modern patterns by stating in a grand narrative form the “prescription” or solution to the problem. English (1997) states “A postmodern outlook of educational administration would avoid bringing a new centrist position to educational administration” (p. 15). Later, he writes, “Postmodernists have so far resisted the temptation to formulate any doctrine that would replace the monologue of modernism except denial of modernist tendencies” (p. 17). It was the denial of modernist tendencies that the researcher struggled with in the process of writing this thesis. To this end I struggled in anticipation of what would be written in Chapter Five.

Assumptions

In writing this thesis the following assumptions were made:

1. This study assumed that the participants would have some experience working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations.
2. This study assumed that Aboriginal administrators and teachers would provide different perspectives than the Non-Aboriginal administrators.
3. This study assumed that work in a multi-cultural setting requires different skills and knowledge on the part of the administrator.

4. This study assumed that the focus group process would provide the necessary data to determine what information about Aboriginal education was provided through the administrator preparation programs.
5. This study assumed that administrator preparation programs seek to develop programs that best meet the needs of administrators in our changing province.
6. This study was not an evaluation of any graduate program in educational administration.

Delimitations

The research is delimited by the following considerations:

1. This research was delimited to three specific groups of participants. One focus group consisted of non-Aboriginal, school-based administrators who had undertaken graduate studies; another group consisted of Aboriginal administrators, and the last group consisted of Aboriginal teachers. In this manner, the researcher was able to triangulate the responses from these three groups.
2. The research was delimited by locations. Focus group participants were selected from communities with high Aboriginal populations, including La Loche, Buffalo Narrows, North Battleford and Saskatoon.
3. The research was conducted during the months of April and May, 1998.

Limitations

The study has the following limitations:

1. The respondents were reflective of a “snap shot” or a brief “point in time” of a small group of participants who may not be representative of the larger population.
2. The research limited the participants to only the designated groups and did not include Directors of Education, Faculty members, teachers of non-Aboriginal ancestry, and Aboriginal parents or community members.
3. Data collection were limited by the experiences of the participants, some of whom were relatively new to work in schools with high Aboriginal populations.
4. Data collection may have been limited by the levels of trust among the focus group participants, which may have hindered or enhanced their responses.
5. The ethnicity of the researcher may have limited or enhanced the levels of trust among the focus group participants dependent on the participants’ ethnicity.
6. The levels of expertise of the researcher may have limited the quality of data collection and analysis.
7. The results of this study are not generalizable in the traditional sense.
8. Low attendance in the Non-Aboriginal administrator group limited the type of data collected.

9. Some of the respondents did not have graduate studies experiences, and could only reflect on the types of skills and knowledge they identified as important for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations.

Definition of terms

With respect to the study, a number of terms required definition.

Administrator Preparation. For the purpose of this study, the administrator preparation program is the Educational Administration program available as Graduate level courses.

Culture, for the purpose of this research was defined by Banks (1988) "... as a strategy for survival". (p. 13). Banks, continued by stating

Most social scientists view culture as consisting primarily of the symbolic, ideational, and intangible aspects of human societies. Even when they view artifacts and material objects as a part of culture, most social scientists regard culture as the way people interpret, use, and perceive such artifacts and material objects. It is the values, symbols, interpretations, and perspectives that distinguish one people from another in modernized societies and not artifacts, and materials objects and other tangible aspects of human societies (p. 13).

In particular, the researcher defined culture in this case as the values, symbols, interpretations and perspectives of Aboriginal peoples. Her aim was to recognize the inherent individual differences that exist amongst Aboriginal peoples.

Marginality is defined by a variety of researchers, including Freire (1985) who wrote, "He who has been made marginal, or sent outside society, as well as a state of

existence on the fringe of society” (p. 64). The margins of society may be defined in political, social, economic terms or by race, creed or sexual orientation. Often, marginalized peoples fall into one or more of these fields. Yu (1996) refers to “marginal men as cultural translators” (p. 167). McGee Banks (1996) states, “marginal man lives in the borderlands, in between two cultures, unable to be fully a part of either” (p. 263).

Cultural Negotiations as defined by Stairs (1994) are, “...essentially a narrative modelling of education, with a full setting, intentions, and goals which make meaning”. Stairs continues by stating,

The concept of negotiation as used here might be understood as cultural constructivism: the fundamental view that cultures do not stop still and further that cultural change or cultural evolution does not operate on isolated societies but always on interconnected systems in societies variously linked. (p. 156)

Equity “is the freedom, the fairness, the justice, the unbiased opportunity to become that must be extended to every child and every staff member” (Harris & Kendall, 1990). And “equity is fairness; justice for the individual taking into account his or her unique situation” (Watkinson, 1996).

Education Equity was defined by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission (1996) as

... A program designed for the employment of teachers of Aboriginal Ancestry. Education Equity must be distinguished from Affirmative Action. Affirmative Action is a program designed for the employment of women, people with disabilities and members of visible minorities.

Education Equity differs from an Affirmative Action program in that it contains additional components that are specifically related to education. These components are (a) parental involvement, (b) cross-cultural training, (c) recruiting and retaining Aboriginal teachers, (d) policies and procedures and (e) Aboriginal content in the curriculum. The Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission approves annual reports compiled by participating school divisions. (p. 124)

Aboriginal. A person of North American Indian or Metis ancestry. People who refer to themselves as Indian or Metis base this definition on both legal definitions of Indian and Metis people and through self-declaration (Saskatchewan Education, 1989, p. 23).

Focus Group is to “conduct a group discussion that resembles a lively conversation among friends or neighbors” (Morgan, 1988, p. 22). “A focus group is a group of approximately ten to twelve people, sampled from a client population, who are asked to discuss and share their ideas . . .” (Einsiedel, Brown & Ross, 1996, p. 7).

Organization of the Thesis

In this chapter, the problem of the study is outlined. Chapter Two includes a review of literature related to the topics of education equity and administrator preparation. The methodology used to conduct the research is in Chapter Three. In Chapter Four, the research findings are identified. Finally, Chapter Five, offers a summary of the research study, an analysis of the data, and conclusions based on the findings. Chapter Five also includes recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF LITERATURE: COYOTE TELLS HER STORY

It was growing late and Coyote was working up a sweat. Her jaws hurt. She looked into the water and saw the rocks she had placed there at her feet. Behind her she heard a cough, and she turned. There stood Deer, Rabbit, and Eagle, watching. "Coyote," said Eagle, "we've made a fire, Astum; come smoke with us. Tell us about what you have learned today". Coyote leaned towards the fire, warming her front, then turned and warmed her backside too. She smiled at the warmth of fire and friends. "Hmm," she said. "I dropped stones in the water today. Each one I dropped made rings that extended out to the shoreline." Coyote scratched her ear, and thought, "I wonder what would happen if I threw them in at the same time?" She smiled at that and yawned.

In the preparation for writing this thesis, the researcher experienced some difficulties in identifying relevant literature that would aid in understanding the topic. There was a lack of research on the preparation of administrators for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations. The lack of research necessitated an examination of literature on the broader topic of equity.

The review was comprised of literature that enabled the researcher to understand better the disconnection between administrator preparation and education equity issues. The researcher, in her struggles to contextualize what was read, found that the issues of administrator preparation and education equity were similar to throwing single stones in the water. The first stone fell and transformed the surface with its concentric rings; the second stone fell into the water and competed with the first fallen stone for room for its

rings to spread. In that way, the two stones competed for the right to transform the surface. Administrator preparation has been the dominant ring while equity issues have been competing for inclusion in the circle of what formed the knowledge base of administrator preparation. The problem is that traditionally, administrator preparation programs have not accommodated education equity issues into the core of program delivery. As a result, the principles of education equity struggle for legitimacy in the content of administrator preparation.

This literature review examined research that was framed primarily on critical theory. The authors wrote generally about issues specific to the topics of equity and diversity in the preparation of administrators. The literature pointed primarily to restraints imposed by the dominant paradigm, and the interceptions of equity (feminist, multicultural, and Aboriginal) perspectives in education. The researcher has grown in her understanding of the power of paradigm and the manner in which the paradigm has hindered the inclusion of equity issues in administrator preparation. The researcher also learned how individuals involved in the education of Aboriginal peoples may use the developments made in feminist and multicultural education as stepping stones to self-determination in Aboriginal education.

Background

The population of Aboriginal people in this province is increasing at a rapid rate. As a parent, teacher, and consultant I was alarmed by the great disparity between the number of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators. The Saskatoon Board of Education employed one Aboriginal administrator out of a total of 101 school-based administrators. In Saskatchewan, unofficial estimates put the numbers of Aboriginal

administrators who worked in provincial schools at five. Provincial estimates appeared low, for they included only schools under provincial jurisdiction, and did not include First Nation schools. The researcher recognized that statistics for First Nation schools reflected a very high representation of Aboriginal educational leaders. This alarm was echoed in other communities as well. Research conducted by Noley (1991) in the United States found that “for the most part, Native students in the last century and the present have attended schools . . . administered by Non-Natives” (p. 3). To reiterate, we are experiencing a demographic shift in Saskatchewan that predicts an increasing Aboriginal population; at the same time we have no documented evidence of recruiting that has supported equity of representation amongst administrators in this province.

The educational administration program has given me a general understanding about themes such as change, leadership, and policy, yet the administrator preparation program, in the words of Shakeshaft (1990), have not “incorporated equity into the central core of what an administrator should know” (p. 213). Shakeshaft’s statement was echoed in the research conducted by Carr (1997b) who found “many principals noted that they did not receive training in equity in the faculties of education, or as a teacher, or during their supervisory preparation . . .”(p.44). Noley (1991) stated that “preparation programs generally offered adequate preparation neither to Native or Non-Native . . . administrators to serve Native students” (p. 4). More specifically, research conducted by Heller, Conway & Jacobson (1993) found that “51 percent of 1123 administrators rated their administrator preparation as fair or poor” in terms of multicultural competency (as cited in Milstein et al. p. 9).

In summary, there were two main issues that drew me to undertake research in this area. The first issue was that the majority of administrators in this province are non-Aboriginal, while at the same time we are experiencing a rapidly increasing Aboriginal population. Second, I felt that there were few opportunities for administrators to learn about Aboriginal people.

The inclusion of a literature review that examined the paradigms of educational administration preparation was essential to addressing the following question: How do we achieve administrator preparation for education equity?

Two Stones, Two Paradigms: Two Rings Competing

This section examined the power of the paradigms that have formed the often-contradictory bases of knowledge for administrator preparation and education equity. Like Coyote, I dropped stones in still waters to examine why administrator preparation did not better reflect education equity.

The Dominant Paradigm of Administration Preparation

Administrator preparation programs have traditionally been founded in positivist epistemology (Scheurich, 1995; Capper, 1993, Cherryholmes, 1988). Positivist epistemology was focussed on maintaining the norm and upholding existing traditions. Guba & Lincoln (1994) in their examination of positivism, said,

an apprehendable reality is assumed to exist, driven by immutable natural laws and mechanisms. Knowledge of 'the way things are' is conventionally summarized in the form of time and context free generalizations, some of which take the form of cause-effect laws (p. 109).

The focus was on the replication of findings to prove the “truth” that lay within. Denzin & Lincoln (1994), in their discussion on the uses of positivism, stated: “In the positivist version it is contended that there is a reality out there to be studied, captured, and understood” (p. 5). Cherryholmes contended, “The goal is to tell it like it is and not like one wishes it to be” (p. 22).

Cherryholmes declared, “the purpose of the positivist metanarrative was to write a story or set of rules characterizing positive knowledge” (p. 9). “Research findings based on a positivist epistemology are usually stated in a prescriptive manner” (Cherryholmes, p. 16). Cherryholmes continued with a discussion on the limitations of functionalism, which included “telling things as they are, however, is a subtle endorsement of things as they are . . .” (p. 22). Functionalism denied alternative interpretations based on gender, race, and social class, and this “ideological neutrality” effectively defined which information was “valued and disvalued; included or excluded” (Cherryholmes, p. 23).

Functionalism assumed that “the existing social order and its institutions [are viewed] as legitimate and desirable” (Capper, 1993, p. 11). Scheurich used the terms functionalist and positivist in an interchangeable manner.

Administrator preparation based on the functionalist paradigm, expressed that there was “one best way” (Banks, 1996; Cooper & Boyd, 1987) or preferred way to do things. This paradigm assumed that organizations were operating well and, therefore, they were studied from the perspective that they required only fine-tuning. The underlying structures and roles were never questioned.

The inclusion of information on paradigms was essential to an exploration about why administrator preparation programs have traditionally been unable to effectively

incorporate equity into the core of their programs. In the functionalist paradigm culture, class and gender were not issues for study. Functionalism viewed organizations as classless, and racially and gender “neutral” (Cherryholmes, 1988, p. 37). Shakeshaft (1987) stated:

The underlying assumption [of research in educational administration] is that the experiences of males and females are the same, and thus research on males is appropriate for generalizing to female experience. In developing theories of administration, researchers didn't look at the context in general and, therefore, were unable to document how the world was different for women. (p. 148)

Scheurich (1995) contended that “when the male-biased knowledge is understood, it takes little additional consideration to see that a similar point can be made with regard to racial bias” (p. 24). Scheurich cites Gordan, Millar, & Rollack (1990) who stated

insufficient attention has been given to the impact of unique cultural, ethnic or gender experiences on the development of . . . the social systems by which behavior is expressed. This neglect is probably the result of androcentric, culturocentric, and ethnocentric chauvinism in Euro-American and male dominated production of social science knowledge (p. 25).

He continued “that any currently existing knowledge base in educational administration and any current suggestions for the appropriate categories for a knowledge base are also race biased” (p. 25). Scheurich (1995) concluded by pointing out three main arguments that address why it would be difficult for traditional administrator preparation programs to undergo a paradigm shift. Scheurich's arguments were:

1. The knowledge base in administrator preparation programs are dominated by the positivist or functionalist paradigm, which effectively excludes alternatives such as interpretivism or critical theory;
2. The knowledge in educational administration is biased toward males and thus works to exclude feminism, female perspectives, and the promotion of women in educational administration;
3. Racial bias is embedded in knowledge production in the social sciences and by extension in educational administration. (p. 25)

The core knowledge base in traditional administrator preparation programs reflected an androcentric and eurocentric focus. The prime producers of the knowledge base were primarily white and male (Calabrese & Barton, 1994; Capper, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1990, Scheurich, 1990). Calabrese & Barton stated that environments that support “the norms, myths, creeds, and structures . . .” (p. 130) of the producers of the knowledge base characterize exclusive administrator preparation programs. Later, they continued by stating,

We can recognize this traditional sense of exclusion in many educational leadership programs where the professors are traditionally white and male. This excludes different voices from influencing the dynamics of recreating a knowledge base to shape the leadership of schools. (p. 130)

The positivist paradigm left little room for challenges to the norm, myth, and creed. Parker & Shapiro (1993) found that minority calls for school reforms that better serve their needs and aspirations were met with calls of insurrection. They continued by exploring how educational leaders who are socialized to the dominant paradigm view

these calls for reform as a revolution to be quashed. The end result of the positivist paradigm and ultimately the exclusive practices was that traditional administrator preparation programs propagated class, racial, and gender bias (Shakeshaft, 1990; Sizemore, 1990).

The exclusive practices and bias characterized within the dominant paradigm failed to prepare administrators to be effective leaders in increasingly diverse communities by not including within the dialogue of administrator preparation topics that reflected diversity issues. The dominant paradigm in educational administration has resulted in a “Cycle of Exclusion” of issues of equity in the knowledge base of what administrators should know. The “Cycle of Exclusion” was an attempt on the part of the researcher to contextualize what was read in the review of literature.

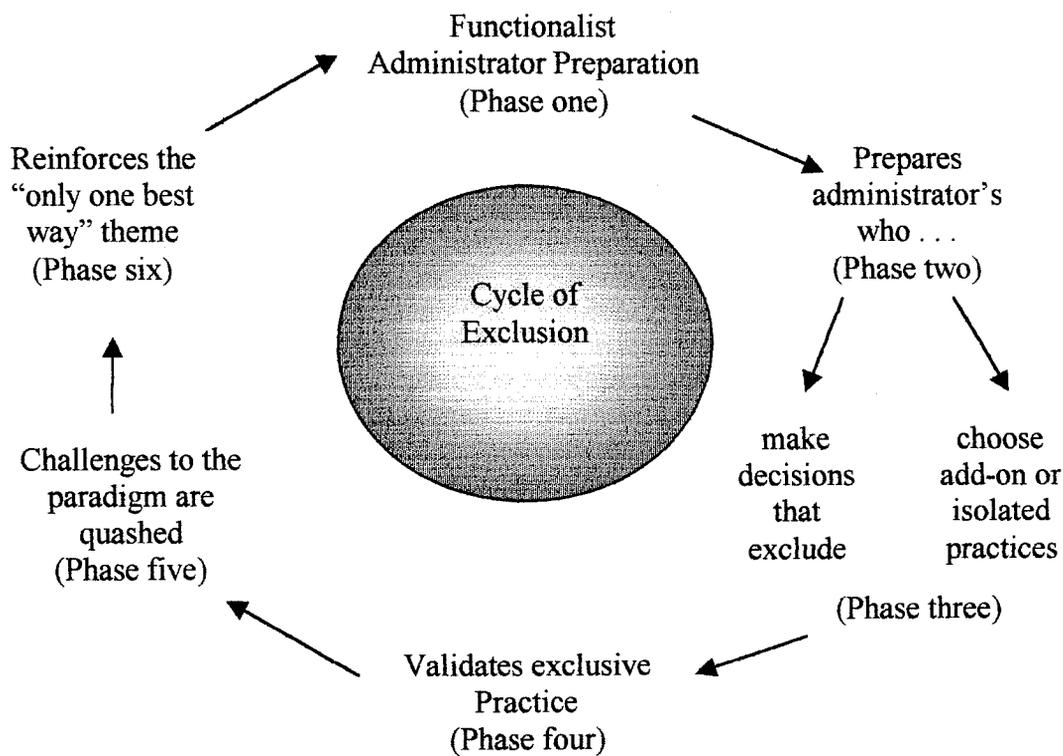


Figure 1 - The cycle of exclusion: A researcher's conceptualization

In traditional administrator preparation programs there was a cycle of exclusion whereby issues of equity were not addressed in the core knowledge base of educational administrator preparation. The paradigm of traditional administrator preparation programs advocated for exclusive practices by propagating an androcentric and eurocentric curriculum. In turn, administrators were not adequately prepared to make equitable decisions in their roles as administrators; which validated exclusive practices; which quashed challenges to the paradigm. Ultimately the paradigm was reinforced. To further explain, each stage in the cycle was outlined as follows.

In the cycle of exclusion (Figure 1), the first phase outlined that administrators who were prepared in the dominant paradigm were not exposed to theory that acknowledged diversity. Class, gender, and race bias were reinforced through the content, which formed the core knowledge base of administrator preparation (Shakeshaft, 1990; Sizemore, 1990).

Exclusive preparation practices in phase one (Figure 1) created a situation in phase two where administrators were not adequately prepared for work in diverse communities. In 1997, the Saskatoon Board of Education in their annual Education Equity Report recognized that school-based administrators had a need for information important to their roles as educational leaders in schools with diverse populations. Administrators generally had few opportunities through formal education or through professional development to acquire the knowledge that they identify as valuable in fulfilling their roles as instructional leaders.

Limited access to the information administrators required results in the general "cultural illiteracy" of educational leaders (Claassen, 1998; Closson, 1998; Vajpayee,

1996; Wigers, as cited in Noley, 1991). Claassen referred to cultural **literacy** as the ability to interpret the diversity issues of our world. As well, he referred to one's ability to reflect on personal cultural frames and the cultural frames of others. On the other hand, Closson referred to cultural **illiteracy** as the problem that arises when individuals are unable to interpret the world around them.

In my own experiences as a student in Kindergarten to Grade twelve in the provincial school system, I was denied access to culturally relevant content. When cultural content was included, it was introduced in an isolated or additive fashion. This information tended to be of the "dinner, dances and dress" variety. At the end of my formal education I recognized my own cultural illiteracy, in that I knew very little about Aboriginal people historically except for what I learned at home, and I knew very little about any other culture. The educational leaders, in their attempts to create grand narratives about who Canadians were, and ultimately who people from Saskatchewan were, had marginalized Aboriginal peoples to making contributions only in the area of food, dress and dance. At the same time, educational leaders of the time denied non-Aboriginal people access to information that would help them to work more effectively with Aboriginal people.

Historically, in Saskatchewan, universities have not accommodated Aboriginal perspectives in their programs. There have been programs in isolation, such as the Native Studies programs, Native law programs, and the Indian Teacher Education Programs. It was only in the past few years that integrated programs have been available to students. There was a mandatory cross-cultural education course introduced in 1994 for undergraduate students in the College of Education. This delay in inclusion at our

university has led to Aboriginal content in administrator preparation being relatively nonexistent. There were, however, two Education Indian (Ed.Ind.) courses available through the department of Educational Administration at the University of Saskatchewan. These options dealt specifically with administration in Band and Northern schools. Yet, there was nothing available to assist administrators working in both urban or rural school systems in providing appropriate programs or developing policies that reflected a sensitivity to students of Aboriginal ancestry.

The resulting lack of inclusion in the core knowledge of administrator preparation programs has created, in Capper's (1990) words, a pool of "administrators [who] are deficient because they have neither the knowledge to comprehend, nor the skills to respond to the problems experienced by non-white students" (p. 80). The "cultural illiteracy" of administrators was reflected in that "many principals are unwilling to deal with antiracist education issues because they were unable to do so" (Carr, 1997b, p. 44). Ultimately, administrators were caught in a cycle of exclusion whereby it becomes difficult to access information about diversity issues because the paradigm effectively denied them access to this information.

Other theorists refer to cultural competencies or cultural cognitiveness. Jones (1993) defined cultural competency as "a skill that allows individuals an opportunity to become competent in the area of cultural differences, issues of oppression, group dynamics, and power relations . . ." (p. 9). Jones stated that "cultural competency is about action. It asks an administrator to explore a) awareness of self; b) awareness of others; and c) awareness of mutual, interaction on the individual, culture, institution, and political levels" (p. 9).

Banks (1988) stated: "cultural cognitiveness occurs when individuals or a group are aware of and think about their culture or microculture as unique and distinct from other cultures or microcultures within a society" (p. 83). To be culturally cognitive one needed the ability to take actions that indicated an awareness and judgement of ethnic cultures. Administrators were thus required to undertake reflections on how their assumptions, perspectives, and insights were used as screens to view and interpret the knowledge and experiences that they encounter in schools with increasingly diverse student bodies. In that manner they were able to plan effectively for the futures of schools. Cultural literacy, competence, and cognitiveness were developed when educational leaders who produced the knowledge base in educational administration chose to be inclusive practitioners (Banks, 1988; Calabrese & Barton, 1994; Fulmer & Frank, 1994; Morris, 1994; Reyes, Velez & Pena, 1993).

Educational leaders are expected to provide vision for their school systems (Barth & Pansegrau, 1994; Ripley, 1994). Croghan & Lake (1990) asserted that educational leaders "are expected to understand how to establish educational goals; how to involve others in decision making; and how to effectively communicate" (as cited in Chance & Ristow, p. 6). When multicultural and gender perspectives have not been dealt with in their training, administrators often develop educational plans that do not reflect equitable practices (Capper, 1993; Donmoyer, Imber, & Scheurich, 1995).

By drawing on research conducted by Capper, Croghan & Lake, Donmoyer, Imber, & Scheurich, and others, the researcher came to understand that educational leaders could be limited by their cultural illiteracy or competencies, from establishing goals that reflected equitable practices. The lack of a cultural consciousness left

educational leaders feeling inadequate in involving others in decision-making for they found it difficult to communicate with racial, and gender different peoples. They were simply unable to act upon the inequity that they work within. Earlier, I had noted how I personally felt ill prepared to communicate the necessity for institutional change. I stated that I lacked competence, confidence and the vocabulary to do so (p. 9). By contextualizing my experiences in the cycle of exclusion, I have come to understand why I felt that administrator preparation was not preparing me for education equity.

Administrators making additive or isolated program choices characterize phase three in the cycle of exclusion (Figure 1). Chance & Ristow (1990) stated that "school based administrators hold the key to success for a student population that has been too often neglected and ignored" (p. 20). However, their cultural competency prevented them from recognizing that the "key" was in their hands. The key was their ability to choose inclusive paradigms that facilitated the needs of a diverse population. The end result was that administrators establish programs and policies that were add-on or isolated in fashion, simply because they were unable to establish programs that promoted cultural awareness. Banks (1996) wrote that the contributions and additive approaches in education are "problematic because groups such as women, African Americans, and people with disabilities remain on the margin . . ." (p. 339). Additive program initiatives were ineffective in promoting the transformations necessary for reform that would benefit all of the stakeholders in education.

Additive programs were those that were simply added-on to the list of offerings available. Add-on program initiatives in schools included offering a single lesson or unit that offers another perspective. Add-on programs usually failed to address the quality of

integrated study in all other curriculum areas (i.e., the policies and procedures of a school that make it a welcoming environment for Aboriginal students) and failed to examine equitable staffing practices. The assumption was that the additive programs would take care of the problems of retaining students.

Another example of an additive program was the Education Equity Program monitored by the Saskatchewan Human Rights Commission. School systems involved in Education Equity can hire preferentially, employees of Aboriginal ancestry. School systems involved in Education Equity must provide cross-cultural staff development opportunities, curriculum integration, and must report on initiatives that benefit student retention. However, because of its treatment as an add-on policy, there were misunderstandings about the purpose of the Education Equity initiative.

School divisions, including the Saskatoon Board of Education, encouraged teachers and administrators to complete reports that were used to represent a system wide perspective in Education Equity. Administrators reported that they were unclear about why the policy was aimed at Aboriginal peoples specifically, and not all minorities (SBE, 1997). Administrators reported that they were not familiar with how to involve Aboriginal parents in decision-making (SBE).

Teachers reported that they had adopted additive approaches to curriculum integration. Examples of their integrated practices included teaching a unit on Indian or Native studies, playing a traditional game, and having dancers come in to their schools (SBE).

Professional development in the area of Aboriginal education was provided in an add-on or isolated fashion. It was reported that teachers and administrators attended the

AWASIS conference (a conference organized by Aboriginal educators for those involved in Aboriginal education) as well as sessions on teaching Aboriginal children. By providing professional development opportunities and classroom instruction in isolation or in an additive manner, the system continued to marginalize Aboriginal content to being relevant only to curriculum issues or to issues where problems need to be addressed. An example of a problem identified in the Education Equity report was how to encourage Aboriginal parental involvement. The problem arises in that the definition of **family** is very different in many of the Aboriginal homes that I was familiar with. As well the data collected in the SBE Education Equity report did not take into account the range of “other” that some Aboriginal families experience (e.g., poverty, wealth, addiction, abuse, transience, and diversity of value for education).

In phase four of the cycle of exclusion (Figure 1), there was validation of the existing practices. It was through the replication of the results within the dominant paradigm that researchers could find truth (Cherryholmes, 1988; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Guba & Lincoln, 1994). This replication, in turn, became an unintentional advocacy for the exclusive practices that existed. Therefore, those working within the paradigm may be limited by their own cultural competencies or illiteracies (Wigers, 1991; Closson, 1998) from being able to even recognize the inequities of the present practices.

In phase five, (Figure 1) challenges to the paradigm were quashed. The dominant paradigm in educational administration propagated biased practices in education by advocating only that which could be replicated (Cherryhomes, 1988; Denzin & Lincoln, 1994; Donmoyer, Imber & Scheurich, 1995; English, 1997; Shakeshaft, 1990). It was

through this replication that existing practices were reinforced. Alternative or “otherist” theories were silenced or viewed as revolutions in academe (Parker & Shapiro, 1993). Slaughter (1997) wrote about the extensive manner in which feminist and visible minorities, and advocates for these two groups, were silenced historically, for their attempts to bring equity to higher educational institutions. The silencing that Slaughter presented included faculty firings, faculty being branded as traitors, and the denial of employment for their views. The paradigm ensured that no challenges were allowed to proceed.

Researchers such as Capper, Cherryholmes and Prestine, contend that the paradigm in traditional administrator preparation programs have made it difficult to integrate education equity initiatives into the core of preparation for administrators. Within the dominant paradigm the central core of the knowledge base was not questionable (Capper, 1993; Cherryholmes, 1988). Prestine (1995) wrote:

A final possible danger in using the functionalist approach lies in students construing their notion of preparation programs around the assumption that a given knowledge base represents **the truth** and all that they need to do is write it down, study it, and pass a test on it to be competent administrators. (p. 271)

Administrators are faced with teachers, students, and a community in which diversity of class, gender, and race is abundant. Administrators were able to make decisions that were only additive in nature because they had not been exposed to equity issues in their preparation (Shakeshaft, 1995). These decisions unintentionally excluded or isolated individuals along the margins, which promulgated validity for exclusive practices and effectively silenced those people who did not fit into the established norm.

The end result of the cycle of exclusion was that it was very difficult to challenge the dominant paradigm. The “only one best way” theme of functionalism reinforced the oppression of people from differing gender, race, and social groups. Those who questioned the paradigm were viewed with contempt and labeled outliers, or, as Banks (1996) writes they were labeled “others” (p. 81).

Within the cycle of exclusion, there was little chance for outliers or others to challenge the paradigm. When outliers did raise their concerns, they were effectively “silenced,” as in the case of Ahmad (1996). Ahmad culturally negotiated and made the choice to raise her concerns about racial bias in the curriculum content with a faculty member. In response to Ahmad’s complaints her professor responded with patronizing comments. When Ahmad pursued the topic she was reprimanded for being a trouble-maker. Ahmad summarized her experiences with the administration as being hostile, suspicious, and patronizing.

Parker & Shapiro (1993) question and reject traditional organizational theory grounded in functionalism as models for administrator preparation. The paradigm, they found, was self-serving in that it validated the norms, myth, creed and structures established by predominately “white male academics”. They went on to show how these norms, myths, creeds and structures limited access by graduate students to information about marginalized peoples.

This concludes the section on the paradigm of traditional administrator preparation programs. The first stone has been dropped. What was reflected in the water were the limitations imposed by the traditional educational paradigm. Traditional administrator preparation programs did not effectively adapt emerging theories of gender,

race, and class within the parameters of the dominant paradigm. This paradigm provided one view of “truth” (Prestine, 1995) and on perceptions of what was the norm (Cherryholmes, 1988). The result of the traditional administrator preparation programs has been that administrators were not typically exposed to equity issues in the core of the knowledge presented (Capper, 1993; Carr, 1997; Noley, 1991; Scheurich, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1987, 1990). The paradigm effectively denied access to issues of equity to the dominant group, while at the same time silencing those along the margins.

Emerging Theory: Equity Paradigm

The second stone dropped was the equity stone. For the sake of understanding issues of Aboriginal education equity, the researcher selected to portray issues of equity (gender, and ethnicity) under the heading of the Emerging Theory - Equity paradigm. More recently emerging theories have impacted on educational administration, in particular feminist, post-structural, and critical theories. These emerging theories have resulted in modifications to the dominant paradigm for the sake of education equity.

There was a lack of literature on the topic of administrator preparation in the area of Aboriginal education, which necessitated the decision to portray general issues of equity. The equity paradigm encompassed the three voices (lenses) of gender, multiculturalism, and Aboriginal perspectives on education. These voices (lenses) were expressed through research founded on emerging theories. This section examined the paradigms from which these three lenses emerge. Later in the chapter, the researcher attempted to build a framework for understanding the interconnections between the issues of equity and their implication on the preparation of administrators.

Capper (1993) classified critical theory with feminist post-structural theory and interpretivist theory under the umbrella of emerging theory. She affirmed that a multiparadigm approach, including emerging theories in educational administration was essential for developments to be made in the social-reconstruction of education. Critical theory was most frequently referred to when presenting issues of equity. Capper identified critical theory as "concerned with suffering and oppression, and critically reflect[ing] on current and historical social inequities" (p. 15).

Tierney (1992) stated "critical theory offers explanations of the world and how to change it toward a goal based on social justice, emancipation, and empowerment" (p. 34). Critical theory involved the researcher making sense of organizations by examining the implicit practices, structures, and agencies of the organization. Critical theory, according to Tierney, accepted:

- 1) that research is value laden;
- 2) that organizations are made up of individuals who hold competing interpretations of reality;
- 3) that conflict naturally exists, and the role of the critical theorist is to unearth this conflict and provide opportunities of voice for the silenced and oppressed; and
- 4) that knowledge is contested terrain circumscribed by influences of power. (p. 39)

Feminist post-structural theories, in Capper's (1993) words:

refer to the interactions and contradictions among subjectivity, power, language, and unquestioned underlying assumptions (i.e., common sense) that are used to examine "how power is exercised" (Weedon 1987) and the potential for change.

From this perspective, power relations are viewed through subjectivity in terms of

identity, experience, process, access, and selection; power itself, in terms of conflict and dissensus, covert modes of domination, and resistance to power; and language and its authority, history, and availability. The interactions among subjectivity, power, and language contribute to “commonsense” assumptions about the constraining and enabling aspects of social life. (p. 18)

Capper (1993) in her exploration of the interpretivist paradigm concluded that “organizations are socially constructed and exist only in the perceptions of people” (p. 11). In this paradigm, participants were facilitated in the process of critically reflecting on their belief systems, attitudes, and assumptions underlying their practices. Capper asserted the need to facilitate the critical reflections of “people along the axis of oppression” (Capper, 1993, p. 2).

The following sections outline the three lenses of Education Equity: the gender lens, the multicultural lens, and the Aboriginal education lens. The sections were included to form a framework for understanding emerging theory. An understanding of Aboriginal perspectives in educational administration was grounded in the research conducted for the sake of gender equity and multicultural education.

The gender equity lens. There have been two distinct waves of the women's movement (Slaughter, 1997). The first in 1920 was a direct result of women struggling to receive the right to vote. The second wave, in the 1980s was a result of women's struggles to open new career opportunities.

Slaughter (1997) outlined how the functionalist nature of academe in the late 1800s and early 1900s inhibited the women's movement from directly improving opportunities for women in the academy. While the student body during that time period

reflected a greater proportion of women, faculty implemented "women's programs" or gender-segregated programs to address the perceived needs of female students. The delivery of add-on or isolated programs is still evident today, whereby gender studies is offered as an add-on program, and the inclusion of the female perspective in core content is elusive.

In my experience as a graduate student the inclusion of gender perspectives in education administration was infrequent. For example, feminine interpretations of change theory, leadership, and school effectiveness were not easily accessible. In one humanist graduate course, women wrote four of twenty-three required readings. When I identified a need for growth in the area of feminist interpretation, my professor suggested that it was my responsibility as a student to identify and search for readings on this perspective. For the most part, class discussions were conducted in a manner that reflected gender, racial, and social neutrality.

In educational administration, the focus of research presented to students was primarily "androcentric" (Capper, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1990, 1995; Ortiz & Ortiz, 1995; Ikpa, 1995; Papalewis, 1995). Research failed to acknowledge the female perspective in educational administration. The theories that emerged from this androcentric perspective may be irrelevant to women and minority peoples, and for the majority, may reinforce the idea that "other" theories were not valid.

A failure to include the perspectives of women in the core content of administrator preparation has failed to provide both male and female administrators with the understandings necessary to work more effectively with women in education (Shakeshaft, 1990; 1993; 1995). For example, Shakeshaft, found that in the supervision

of staff, women were not provided with the kinds of feedback that would assist women in their professional development. She found that women were not encouraged to the extent that men were to pursue further studies or promotions. Shakeshaft also found that male teachers exhibited more hostility towards women in leadership positions, than they would towards male leaders. An inclusion of these types of examples in administrator preparation would provide both males and females with the understandings necessary for work in diverse schools.

Capper (1993) suggested that feminist post-structural theory might be an avenue for engaging in discourse that would encourage feminine voices to be heard. Capper stated that feminist post-structural theories "refer to the interaction and contradictions among subjectivity, power, language, and unquestioned underlying assumptions that are used to examine power and its potential for change" (p. 18).

The lessons learned by the researcher reiterated the power of the dominant paradigm in effectively excluding women's voices in the academy and the need to acknowledge that additive and isolationist approaches have not worked to bring about equity. In conclusion, the research indicated that emerging theories, such as feminist post-structural theories, were an avenue through which women's voices may be heard.

The multicultural lens. This section examined information on the multicultural movement. Historically, the voices of minority peoples have been silenced in education as a result of the dominant paradigm in education. The schools' major function has been the socialization of young people into the greater society. This function was achieved through the implementation of a paradigm that historically excluded issues of class, race, and gender. In the dominant paradigm, whereby only the "one very best way" of doing

things was honored, anyone who exhibited “other” characteristics was marginalized or expected to assimilate. Ververde and Brown (1988) provided a historical overview of the multicultural lens. They pinpointed two distinct phases in the development of an ethnocentric school philosophy. The first phase followed the American revolution: “The U. S. political leaders at the time *desired* to ensure the establishment of patriotic citizenry and a common national identity” (p. 144). The politicians of that time based their plans for education around the Protestant work ethic. That ethnocentric focus to education lasted for a century.

The second phase was the development of the ethnocentric school philosophy. This began in the 1880s when increasing immigration to the United States required the acculturation of people into the American way of life. The goal was to create a melting pot whereby individuals would merge into one distinct cultural group. Ververde and Brown concluded their historical overview of the eurocentric school philosophy by stating that as more diverse cultural groups came into the United States

public schools frequently distorted in their curricula the contributions of some immigrant groups, and also of colored native groups by omitting or negatively interpreting their cultural heritage and the parts they played in the building of America. (p. 144)

The eurocentric nature of education propagated a body of literature that presented minority peoples as being culturally deficient (Tierney, 1992). As a result, minority peoples were segregated in the educational process. The goal of the dominant paradigm was to make everyone the same; this was facilitated through exclusionary and assimilative processes. These processes were evident in historical examinations of

minority involvement in Canada and the United States (Valverde & Brown, 1988; Carr, 1997a; Slaughter, 1997). In the United States, segregated schools for African American students left a legacy of inequity, marginalization and role conflict (Ahmad, 1996; Mirza, 1996; Pollard, 1997; Valverde & Brown, 1988; Wilson, 1995).

In educational administration, the focus of research presented to graduate students was primarily eurocentric (Heller, Conway, & Jacobson, 1993; Noley, 1991; Scheurich, 1995). As presented earlier, the feminist perspectives like the critical theorists explored here in the multicultural section, were either provided in isolation or not included in the core knowledge base of traditional administrator preparation programs. The failure to include critical theory in the core content of administrator preparation failed to provide any administrator with the understandings necessary to work more effectively in schools with diverse populations (Noley, 1991). White administrators were ill prepared to work in diverse communities (Noley; Carr, 1997b; Heller, Conway, & Jacobson, 1993) and minority administrators were ill prepared for the necessary cultural negotiations (Mohat, 1994; Stairs, 1994) that they experience as they struggled to work within organizations where cultural pluralism was not embraced. Minority administrators faced role conflicts (Valverde & Brown, 1988; Mirza, 1996; Ahmad, 1996), and marginalization (Mirza, 1996; Ahmad, 1996; and Wilson, 1995) as they struggled to validate their personal experiences as minority peoples working in organizations that were founded on a different ideology.

Further, the multicultural lens suggested that critical theory should be included in the current administrator preparation programs. It also suggested the importance of reflection on the part of faculty in administrator preparation programs. Reflective

practices would assist faculty in ascertaining their own levels of cultural understandings and would facilitate strategic planning for inclusion.

Aboriginal education lens. This section examined the historical overview of exclusive practices in Aboriginal education. The historical developments of Aboriginal education have been marked with **oppression**, **revolution**, and **renewal** (Archibald, 1995; Kirkness, 1992, Grant & Gillespie, 1993). **Oppression**, because Archibald, in her interpretivist portrayal of Aboriginal education identified, that for many First Nations Treaty Indians the cost of education was “enfranchisement and the loss of treaty rights” (p. 166). The key to understanding how the threat of enfranchisement was used required an understanding of the systematic institutionalism that characterizes the education of Indians historically. The residential school system was an enactment of an imposed assimilation policy. Enfranchisement and residential school experiences added up to significant negative factors impacting on ancestral experiences in education. Archibald summarized the oppression as including “formal, institutional and policy barriers to . . . education” (p. 167).

Archibald (1995) documented the **revolution** in First Nation education which was characterized by sweeping changes in the politics of the First Nation people. In the White Paper of 1969 the Federal Government proposed to transfer its responsibility for education on reserves over to the province. National protests launched a transformation of Indian education. The National Indian Brotherhood (NIB) responded to the White Paper with a study entitled Indian Control of Indian Education (1972).

The period of **renewal** began with Indian Control of Indian Education (NIB, 1972), which demanded Indian administration of educational programs for Indian people.

As well that document defined the purpose and goals of Indian control of education.

Battiste (1995) stated further

The purpose of Indian education was defined as salvaging Aboriginal languages, cultures, and societies, and of transmitting those cultures, with their unique understanding of North American ecology and their distinctive world-views (p. viii).

Archibald continued her interpretivist approach by outlining that the federal government in 1973 accepted formally Indian Control of Indian Education, and proceeded to fund the creation of regional cultural centres. These cultural centres provided a forum for research to be conducted that assisted in the development of curriculum, policies, and pedagogy which supported the implementation of control over Indian Education.

In the early 1970s, the federal government provided funding for teacher training programs to mainstream institutions. While these higher education programs were implemented to encourage Aboriginal participation, few universities adapted curriculum, policies and pedagogy (Archibald, 1995; Kirkness, 1992; Grant & Gillespie, 1993). The expectation was that Aboriginal students would assimilate into the mainstream institution. As frustrations grew among Aboriginal students, many universities began to address issues of recruiting, admission, and retention of Aboriginal students (Archibald). Increased Aboriginal enrollments meant that course content and support services also needed to be examined. Early initiatives in these institutions failed to acknowledge the need for programs that reflected Indian pedagogy, language, and traditions (Archibald). As a result, there were many difficulties with retention of Aboriginal students.

Aboriginal students were required to make cultural negotiations as they struggled to fit into the institution. For many, the lack of institutional changes and the cultural negotiations required, led a significant number of Aboriginal students to simply drop out.

The dominant paradigm in education has led to the isolation and assimilative treatment of women and people of color. Aboriginal people have been viewed as generally culturally deficient (Deyhle & Swisher, 1997; Skinner, 1991) in education. As a result Aboriginal perspectives have been considered only recently as important knowledge for inclusion in education. Researchers such as Archibald (1995), Battiste (1995), Deyle & Swisher (1997), as well as other emerging writers, are just now bringing to the forefront of the academy the availability of traditional knowledge and contemporary research contributions, that have never been available before. Emerging theorists drew from feminist post-structural, interpretive and critical theory traditions as a means to facilitate diverse voices being heard.

This brings closure to the section on the two paradigms competing for the right to transform the knowledge base in administrator preparation. This section included an examination of how both the dominant paradigm and education equity have been disconnected in traditional administrator preparation programs. The examination of why administrator preparation programs have not better reflected education equity was central to understanding how to inform praxis. The researcher drew the following conclusions: First, the paradigms in the social sciences have marginalized the issues of women and people of color (Ahmad, 1996; Banks, 1996; Capper, 1993; Chance & Ristow, 1990; Cherryholmes, 1988; Ikpa, 1995; Ortiz & Ortiz, 1995; Papelwis, 1995; Scheurich, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1987; Slaughter, 1990, 1997). Second, the dominant group has been denied

access to information about those people who have been marginalized (women, people of color, etc.) (Carr, 1997b; Capper, 1990; Donmoyer, Imber & Scheurich, 1995; Heller, Conway & Jacobson, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1990). Third, the researcher concluded that there was a need to expand the paradigm to include emerging theories as a means to facilitate discourse on the topic of equity in educational administrator preparation.

Specifically, in terms of the purpose of the study, a failure to include the perspectives of Aboriginal peoples in the core content of administrator preparation in the past failed to provide either white or Aboriginal administrators with the understandings necessary to work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations (Noley, 1991). Educational institutions providing administrator preparation need to embrace a philosophical commitment to equity in education. The question the researcher needed to ask next was, "How can administrator preparation programs plan for inclusion of equity issues in their existing preparation programs?"

AND TWO BECOME ONE:

TRANSFORMING ADMINISTRATOR PREPARATION

Coyote's eyes glowed yellow in the firelight. "In my mind I see those stones falling at the same time into the water. At first they form small rings, then as those rings meet, they form one large circle that expands and transforms the surface. That is what I think."

"Tomorrow, my friends, we will see."

In the last section of the literature review, there was an extensive exploration into why equity issues have not been integrated into the core of educational administration

programs. In order to address the question, how could administrator preparation programs plan for inclusion of equity issues in their existing preparation programs, it was essential to discuss the role that a paradigm shift played. Fortunately, the researcher could draw from the writings of such researchers as Banks (1996), Capper (1993), Scheurich (1995), and Shakeshaft (1990), to name a few. These academics modeled the way in which administrator preparation for education equity could be achieved. The issues that were addressed in this section of the literature review included the function of paradigm in choosing transformations in administration preparation, the personal responsibilities of the stakeholders, and practical ways to exercise transformation educational choices.

The Function of Paradigm in Facilitating Program Changes

A theoretical framework needed to be developed in educational administration programs that embraced education equity (Capper, 1993; English, 1997; Gay & Fox, 1995; Napier, Ford & Toy, 1994; Scheurich, 1995; Scott, 1990; Slaughter, 1997). However, unlike in the dominant paradigm, the theoretical framework was not one that posits all the answers for every institution. The theoretical framework was one that reflected the needs of the community and its unique stakeholders.

Educational administration programs needed to integrate postmodern and transformative educational research within the dominant paradigm at the core of their programs (Burnett, 1994; Capper, 1993; English, 1997; Gay & Fox, 1995; Napier, Ford & Toy, 1994). Capper claimed that multi-paradigm approaches that included critical theory (feminist post-structural, interpretivist) and structural approaches were to be used dependent on the circumstance. Capper stated further that, "a multiparadigm approach recognizes that all four theories (structural functionalism, interpretivist, critical theory,

and feminist post-structural) have limitations and that by combining approaches some of these limitations can be ameliorated” (p. 27). Dupuis & Gordon (1996) wrote that “postmodernism, [was] sometimes referred to in discussions on reconceptualization, constructivist learning theory, multicultural education, and/or feminist pedagogy . . . and may have included human rights, environmentalism and theological studies (p. 274). Postmodernism, was defined by English (1997) as a “polyglot group of different voices that merge only in their disdain and rejection of modernist perspectives and philosophy in educational administration (p. 5). English continued by characterizing postmodernism as accepting, a) multiple views of reality; b) knowledge is constructed not discovered; c) perception is a product of language and culture; and d) meaning is temporary. Dupuis & Gordon continued, “Postmodern educators continue to debate with conservative educators the need for studies of ethnicity, gender and self” (p. 283).

Banks (1996) stated, transformative approaches brought “content about culture, ethnic and racial groups – and about women from the margin to the center of the curriculum” (p. 339). Transformative approaches were both integrated and interpretive. Transformative approaches helped students “to understand how knowledge is constructed and how it reflects the experiences, values, and perspectives of its creators” (p. 339).

Banks asserted that,

in this approach, the structures, assumptions, and perspectives of the curriculum are changed so that the concepts, events, and issues taught are viewed from the perspectives and experiences of a range of groups, including men and women from different social class, ethnic and racial groups. (p. 339)

Educational administration programs could also embrace research contributions made in critical theory. Critical theory encouraged women and minorities to address current and historical inequities (Capper, 1993). Tierney (1992) suggested that critical theory was an avenue for engaging in discourse that would encourage Aboriginal voices to be heard. In this manner marginalized voices could be encouraged to contribute to academic knowledge. Tierney pointed out that in critical theory the focus was on empowerment, and the problem was creating organizational conditions for empowerment to occur.

Gay & Fox (1995) suggested a balance between an infusion of positivist approaches and the transformational. The positivist approach would advocate finding “the one best way” of suggesting changes to hiring practices, curriculum content, instructional strategies, and the administrative procedures of delivering preparation programs in education administration. The changes to the program could be achieved through strategic planning that included developing collaborative visions, philosophies, and mission statements that reflected a commitment to equity with all the stakeholders in the program. These statements clearly stated the institution’s position regarding racial and cultural differences. In effect, the positivist approach would be implemented to manage effectively the transformations in administrator preparation.

The research (Banks, 1996; Capper, 1993; Gay & Fox, 1995; Napier, Ford & Toy, 1994; Scheurich, 1995) suggested to the researcher that administrator preparation programs and professional development opportunities provided in the Province of Saskatchewan should model transformative approaches in the development of courses and conferences. Also these opportunities should consider Shakeshaft’s

recommendations. Faculty and educational leaders should become leaders in equity by encouraging critical explorations by people from the margins and by facilitating these voices to be heard through the courses offered. Educational leaders need to promote opportunities for the critical reflection on the personal culture of participants, and facilitate opportunities to explore the culture of others in a transformative manner.

The positivist approach would be balanced with a transformational approach that would focus on the leadership of all stakeholders in educational administration. The transformational approach would challenge the value assumptions and organizational climate with respect to ethnic, culture, gender, and social diversity of the program of educational administration. The goal would be to create a relational and mutually inclusive program, based on the leader inspiring and influencing stakeholders to do the right things.

The postmodern and transformative approaches would assist in finding new ways to work with the diversity in education. The transformative researcher's greatest fear was embracing the pitfalls of positivism by suggesting "the one best way" of doing things. In this manner, this researcher did not suggest one "best" way, but suggested that the reader "drop both stones into the water." Thus the approaches to facilitate educational reform in administrator preparation would reflect both "contextual and developmental" methods of pursuing the transformation (Gay & Fox, 1995).

Gay & Fox found that paradigmatic shifts were not without their challenges. (1995). They stated

once the paradigmatic shift from emphasizing cultural assimilation and academic passivity to cultural pluralism and social activism is implemented, it will

constitute a social revolution because it creates major changes in fundamental educational values, beliefs, structures and practices. (p. 24)

This “revolution” requires educational leaders to continue to grow in their understanding of change theory and leadership in these post-modern times (Walker & Walker, 1998) in order to support the movement.

Personal Responsibility

The reflections of the marginalized peoples could be applied to the knowledge base of educational administrator preparation. However, this has not been accomplished in the academy. Shakeshaft (1990) stated, “Departments of educational administration have traditionally failed to deliver . . . components of equity to their students” (p. 214). Educational leaders could be limited by their cultural competencies and may be unable to accommodate changes that would benefit all of the stakeholders of the institution (Shakeshaft, 1990; Parker & Shapiro, 1993). Delpit (cited in Tierney, 1992, p. 138) explained how “a culture of power” was exercised in higher education institutions by the maintenance of knowledge and authority by educators. Delpit continued by explaining how those who have power establish the rules or codes for participation in higher education. Eubanks, Parish, & Smith (1997) stated that “those with the power have not decided to share it” (p. 164). When those in power make the choice to examine critically their own practices, then the transformation begins. Napier, Ford & Toy (1994) made two major recommendations in order to assist in the process of incorporating inclusive perspectives in educational administration.

First, “increas[e] the baseline knowledge of faculty and educational leaders about cultural diversity by emphasizing the use of multiple perspectives” (Napier, Ford, & Toy,

1994, p. 192). Administrators were instructed to assume one of a multiple of perspectives that may not be their preferred thinking style. In this manner, they develop divergent thinking, their commonalities emerge, and they experience an opportunity to see from someone else's perspective. Second, "increase the level of consciousness of faculty and educational leaders in order to recognize that cultural diversity is an inclusive term" (p. 192). All stakeholders should come to recognize their own cultural influences (class, ethnicity, gender, race, etc.) and the impacts their culture has on their own decision-making.

Calabrese & Barton (1994) suggested that faculty members needed to undergo their own personal cultural negotiations. They wrote, "We need to continually examine our background experiences for hidden assumptions, recognizing that all our relationships and ideas contain our history as men and women, our histories of race and ethnicity, and our history of social class" (p. 131). Calabrese & Barton continued, "When we do this we fight off complacency, we also recreate or transform ourselves with the vision of effective leadership in mind (p. 131). Sanford (1995) stated, "only after administrator preparation programs have themselves engaged in this process of pedagogical self-analysis is it reasonable to expect that they will be able to teach aspiring administrators to do the same" (p. 188).

Transformative Choices in Administrator Preparation

Transformative choices in administrator preparation for education equity are integrated approaches. Shakeshaft (1990) declared that "equity in the preparation of school administrators must center upon both content and the environment in which the content is presented" (p. 214). The format for the presentation of this information was

not intended to be hierarchical or prescriptive, or to be taken as if the elements are disjointed. The researcher simply chose the format for ease of writing and for ease of understanding for the reader.

Integrating the Curriculum. Banks identified the goals of transformative approaches to the curriculum as having the following components: (a) helping students to develop an understanding of the complex ways in which the interaction of different ethnic, racial, and cultural groups have, result[ed] in the development of . . . culture and civilization; (b) helping students to understand how knowledge is constructed; and (c) helping students to learn how to construct knowledge themselves, including the formulations of interpretation, concepts and generalizations (p. 340). Banks (1996) clarified, “the transformative approach brings content about culture, ethnic, and racial groups – and about women – from the margin to the center . . .” (p. 339).

Banks (1988) stated, “Effective educational programs should help students explore and clarify their own ethnic identities” (p. 193). In that way, students had the opportunity to explore the concepts and issues of a wide variety of perspectives (gender, ethnicity, class, etc.). The implications were, that opportunities for reflective practices, simulations, and role-plays were necessary.

Banks also suggested that students needed to learn about others. That could be achieved through content integration. Banks (1991) identified four different approaches to content integration. They were:

1. Contribution Approach – The focus is upon heroes, holidays, etc.
2. Additive Approach – The content, concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the curriculum without changing the structure.

3. Transformative Approach – The structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to view concepts, issues, events and themes from the perspectives of diverse ethnic and cultural groups.
4. Social Action Approach – Students make decisions on important social issues and take actions to help solve them. (p. 26)

Napier, Ford & Toy (1994) contended that administrator preparation programs most commonly implemented additive approaches to equity issues. Banks (1991), Slaughter (1997), and Capper (1993) suggested that transformative approaches to curriculum integration are the most appropriate methods for facilitating equity in preparation. Sanford (1995) stated, “Rather than sprinkling existing syllabi with works of a few women and people of colour, courses in administrator preparation programs must, by example, present each topic in an inclusive way” (p. 188). Shakeshaft (1990) recommended organizing curriculum integration in two ways. One, ensure that the purpose of at least one required course in educational administration examined equity. That would facilitate examining the topic of equity in a rich manner and would serve to validate the role of the administrator in education equity. Two, integrate content from the perspectives of diverse population. For example, she contended that the topic of the supervision of teachers should explore communication styles, assumptions, and expectations from the perspective of ethnicity, gender and social class.

Shakeshaft (1990) suggested seven equity recommendations for administrator preparation programs. They were:

1. A required course on equity and schooling. This course should include:
personal values; conceptual, philosophical and societal issues of equity; equity

in student treatment and placement; and equity in curriculum and instructional materials.

2. Existing courses should be expanded to include women's and minorities' experiences in administration. Where materials are lacking, organizations such as UCEA, etc. should be involved in helping to prepare materials that focus on the relationships of gender and race to effective management.
3. Women and minority administrators should be brought to the classroom to discuss issues relevant to female and minority students.
4. Where possible, women students should intern with women administrators; minority students with minority administrators.
5. The number of women and minorities on faculties of educational administration should be increased.
6. Research on the styles of women and minority administrators should be supported and encouraged.
7. Workshops should be developed to help professors of educational administration incorporate materials on equity into their courses. (p.222)

Examining Faculty and Students. Faculty and students were identified as two key stakeholders in the developments suggested in administrator preparation for education equity. Yet, they were not the only key players. Scott (1990) stated

The reformation of higher education aimed at making colleges and universities more inclusive of minorities with regard to their student profiles, to the composition of their faculties and staffs, and to the content and importance of the pluralist ideal in curriculum must start at the top with the president. (p. 63)

Scott (1990) contended that the higher educational administrator must have a strong sense of their own privileges and must make a conscious effort to explore an understanding of other peoples' perspectives. These understandings must be balanced with the facilitation of the transformation. He continued by stating

The quest for equity in higher education requires higher education administrators to come to grips with the question of whether the ideals of pluralism and equity can find working expression in institutions that are deeply grounded in the traditions of White America. (p. 65)

The topic of educational leadership that embraced equitable practices was explored by many researchers (Banks, 1996; Capper, 1993; McCarthy & Willis, 1995; Scott, 1990; Shakeshaft, 1990; Slaughter, 1997). Slaughter identified the role that social movements played in transforming the academy. She drew from research on both the feminist movement and multicultural movements in the United States to explore the power of social movements to transform from the margins. She concluded that it was essential for universities to support and encourage marginalized peoples to write in a manner that reflects their personal cultural, social, and gender frames. As well, faculty played a major role in the sponsorship or mentorship of marginalized peoples when they invited collaboration in a variety of activities (Shakeshaft, 1990; 1993; 1995; Slaughter, 1997; Valverde & Brown, 1988). Faculty members played a key role by inviting participation of marginalized peoples in the transformative process.

Faculty members who were confident in their multicultural literacy/competency/cognitiveness were able to reach out to diverse populations (Banks, 1988; Claassen, 1998; Jones, 1993). Banks stated, "The challenge to faculty in

educational administration is how to facilitate effective instructional use of the personal and cultural knowledge that students bring to the academy and assist them to cross cultural boundaries” (p. 12).

Policies and Procedures. This section discussed implications to policy and procedural development that were recommended for transformations in administrator preparation. This section included a presentation of information on formal partnership arrangements and policies concerning recruitment.

Research on equity in educational administrator preparation called for systemic policy changes that support equity (Capper, 1993; Gay & Fox, 1995; Napier, Ford & Toy; 1994; Scott, 1990; Walker & Walker, 1998). These policy changes reflected the formal partnerships that universities made as well as policies changes pertaining to recruitment and curricular. Noley (1993) discussed the universities’ responsibility in meeting the commitment to provide services to the community. He affirmed that partnerships with American Indian organizations were essential for transformations in higher educational institutions to occur. He continued by examining the need for both mainstream institutions and Aboriginal organizations to find common ground for pursuing partnerships and underscored that this required invitations on the part of both systems. Noley recommended that mainstream universities strategically plan to seek partnerships with Aboriginal organizations while on the other hand Aboriginal organizations also needed to plan strategically for ways in which to partner with mainstream universities. Noley (1993) found that these types of partnership were mutually beneficial in that

[Aboriginal] communities have the research agendas and the universities have the resources lacking on the reservations. The universities have faculty seeking

research opportunities and American Indian communities have information needs that must be met. (p. 26)

Faculty who actively sought diversity in their student cohorts and faculty membership, modeled equity in the core of their strategic plans (Napier, Ford, & Toy, 1994; Walker & Walker, 1998). Napier, Ford, & Toy (1994) identified, specific strategies used to ensure recruitment and retention of a diverse student cohort. They recommended:

Revising mission and /or goal statements to reflect a need to improve gender and cultural diversity; making recruitment visits throughout the district; actively pursuing potential candidates through contact with school divisions; using minority students to recruit other minority students; encouraging informal student support groups; conducting yearly reviews to ensure that issues related to women and minorities are included in the curriculum; conducting one faculty meeting a month to identify students experiencing difficulties and consider ways to assist these students. (p. 191)

At the Congress of Social Sciences and Humanities Conference in Ottawa, Rees (1998) presented on the topic of equity in recruitment and hiring processes in the academy. She stated that in order to achieve equity of faculty membership, faculty needed to work with minority community members to create a process for recruitment of faculty members. She spoke passionately about the need to involve community members in defining the criteria, process, and guidelines for recruitment for equity. She recognized how collaborative planning addressed limiting factors that may have hindered applicants from target groups. Specifically, she reflected on how issues such the physical

accessibility to the building could limit applicants from undertaking an interview. She found that in this collaborative planning fashion, limitations could be addressed prior to the implementation of recruitment processes. She spoke about the participants' conscious efforts to use language that was inclusive. The process was slow to develop yet she stated that there were rewards for these efforts. She concluded by commenting on how she felt that they provided a more equitable format for achieving equity in the hiring practices of her organization. Faculty could implement concrete changes that would work towards the transformation of the administrator preparation programs to provide education equity for all.

What I learned from this section was that the first stone that needs to be dropped is my personal intent. If I intend to provide educational opportunities that truly prepare all administrators to work effectively in increasingly diverse communities, then I need to keep at the forefront of my intent, a desire to learn about diversity issues. Then I could model, integrate, and evaluate equity in the core of my research and instruction. I need to declare openly and consciously my commitment to equity and proceed with educational plans that reflect reverence for the responsibility that comes with the decision. I need to trust that when decisions are made that they invariably will create a ripple effect that could transform the content and conceptual framework in educational administration.

When an understanding of self is achieved, then it is essential for faculty members, who wish for the transformation of the academy, to acknowledge and learn about others. They then needed to view their roles through the "other" lens, and to consider how to move effectively to an inclusive paradigm. Faculty would need to facilitate opportunities for others to reflect critically and to ensure that minority voice

were at the core of strategic planning for future operations. There needs to be a conscious embracing of paradigms that move away from androcentric and eurocentric practices in higher education.

Faculty members involved in the preparation of administrators must move beyond class, race, and gender bias in curriculum content. They must work to integrate critical considerations of social class, racial, and gender diversity in all aspects of preparation. In this way the ineffective use of androcentric and eurocentric approaches could be avoided.

Gay & Fox (1995) suggested that faculty could address the framework of administrator preparation by facilitating underrepresented voices being heard in the academy. Faculty could begin to examine critically the culture of their organization (values, structures, expectations, and procedures) to identify levels of inclusivity. In this manner, the transformation could begin.

Summary

By writing the literature review in this manner the researcher believed that a framework was established for examining why there have been inequities in the core knowledge base in administrator preparation. The inequity was primarily due to the nature of the dominant paradigm in traditional administrator preparation programs. The paradigm reinforced both androcentric and eurocentric research practices.

When faculty members attempted to be inclusive, the tendency was to implement add-on or isolated initiatives. It was important to note that educators did not consciously attempt to be exclusive, however, their cultural competency limited them from providing

opportunities that prepared administrators adequately to lead in schools with diverse populations.

Research showed that major paradigm shifts in academe had been a direct result of outlier protest. The role of faculty then becomes, to support and encourage critical, interpretivist and feminist explorations by those along the margins.

The elders that this researcher has worked with in the past have reminded her frequently, “everything in balance, my girl.” And so in this way it was suggested that one manner of adapting the administrator preparation programs could be to balance both positivist and transformative approaches. Postmodernism, transformative approaches, and critical theory form a multiparadigm approach of emerging theory. Research on this topic clearly indicated and points to multiparadigm approaches to adapting administrator preparation (Burnett, 1994; Capper, 1993; Fulmer & Frank, 1994; Greenberg, 1996; James, 1997; Morris, 1994; Orlikow, 1995; Valverde & Brown, 1988; Wilson, 1995).

Like a dropped stone in still waters the integration of diversity philosophy should permeate the context of administrator preparation for education administrator programs to become transformed. Morris (1994) suggested viewing a humanistic paradigm that recognized the “human culture” as the product of the struggles of all humanity. The metaphor that he suggested was not the melting pot, but the puzzle. In a puzzle, each separate piece was unique. When laid together all the pieces formed a harmonious whole. This researcher would like to suggest the metaphor of stones dropped in still waters. Two stones (administrator preparation and education equity) maintain their identity while transforming the surface.

Uh, Huh. I had this dream last night. That one you know that they call Coyote, she come to me. She smile, we had tea. She told me her story about stones in the water. She pointed with her wet nose and spoke "You makin' any sense of that stuff you're writing?" I remember laughing and said "Some". I shrugged my shoulders, looked into my tea. She was gone. I woke this morning . . . trying to make sense of it all. Making sense of it all. I need to try and make some sense of this. "Hmm..."

CHAPTER THREE

METHOD AND DESIGN: COYOTE AND FRIENDS DECIDE TO FIND OUT FOR THEMSELVES

Coyote, she smoked with Eagle, Rabbit, and Deer. They asked her questions until the fire grew quite low. "Uh, Huh" rabbit said at last and nodded her head. She curled up, backside to the fire and slept. "Come," said Eagle to Coyote and Deer. "It is night. Get some rest. Tomorrow, we will go to the lake, let us see for ourselves what this is all about."

In this chapter, the research strategy and methods used for data collection and analysis were outlined. The procedures for ensuring research ethics were also outlined.

Research Methodology

This research was qualitative, and was conducted using naturalistic paradigms. The research utilized qualitative research methods which recognized "multiple, socially constructed realities" (Glesne & Peshkin, 1992, p. 6). Qualitative researchers regard "their research task as coming to understand and interpret how the various participants in a social setting construct the world around them" (p. 6). The researcher's role was to set the stage to encourage the "emic" or the "insiders' point of view" (p. 7) to emerge. The researcher facilitated the participant's critical reflection on the topic presented to them. The researcher, in turn, played the role of interpreter to translate the data collected. The qualitative research method, which was naturalistic and descriptive, attempted to identify the patterns that emerged from reflection on the part of the participants. Those patterns

reflected a particular point of view, at one point in time, of a group of people working in similar situations.

The Purpose of the Research

The purpose was to determine whether administrators received the training necessary to work in schools with increasing Aboriginal enrollments. Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators were asked to reflect on the effectiveness of their training for work in diverse schools. They were asked to identify the skills and knowledge they presently possess; to identify the skills and knowledge that they feel is important in working in diverse communities; and envision the core knowledge for an administrator preparation program with equity at its core. The input from these two groups was triangulated with information acquired by conducting a third focus group, with Aboriginal teachers. The Aboriginal teachers were asked to reflect on administrators whom they viewed as working effectively in schools with high Aboriginal populations. Aboriginal teachers in that focus group were asked to identify the skills and knowledge necessary for administrators to work effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations.

Data Collection Methods

Data collection was conducted through the use of focus groups. The goal of using focus groups was to “conduct a group discussion that resembles a lively conversation among friends or neighbors” (Morgan, 1988, p. 22). The focus group questions were designed to carry the dialogue necessary to establish synergy among participants. A

synergistic dialogue among participants ensured that data collected in this process provided “insight into perceptions, feelings and attitudes” (Einsiedel, Brown, & Ross, 1996, p. 7) that formed a pattern. The focus group also “allow[ed] a topic to be explored more fully, resulting in unusual ideas and suggestions” (p. 26). In that way the researcher was able to “get a sense of how people perceive the subject at hand” (p.7).

It was necessary to provide the participants with an opportunity to share their experiences in order to add to the depth of the dialogue that could occur. A facilitator who encouraged the individual’s participation could achieve depth of dialogue. “The goal is to obtain observations that give the researcher an understanding of the participants’ perspectives on the topic . . .” (p.55). This perspective was only a snapshot of a particular understanding at one point in time.

The researcher chose the focus group method to facilitate discussion by administrators on preparation for education equity. The advantages of using the focus group method to conduct research included the following: (a) the direct involvement of the participants provides the moderator the opportunity to seek clarification; (b) the synergy of the group adds depth and insight to the data collected; (c) as the focus group proceeds participants grow more comfortable in their desire to disclose information on the topic; and (d) the focus group is comparatively easy to conduct in comparison to other qualitative research methods (Greenbaum, 1993; Einsiedel, Brown, & Ross, 1996).

The disadvantages of using the focus group method to conduct research include: (a) focus groups are not in natural settings; (b) the researcher has less control over the results; (c) differences may exist between the behaviors of individuals and groups; and (d) the researcher recognizes that individuals perceive “differently based on our histories

as men and women, our histories of race and ethnicity, and our history of social class” (Calabrese & Barton, 1994, p.131). These differences may have impacted on the data collected (Greenbaum, 1993; Einsiedel, Brown, & Ross, 1996).

An area of concern for the researcher was that as a visible minority, participants may have assumed that the researcher was Aboriginal and thus they may have tailored their responses to the research questions so as not to offend or appear “racist” or “stereotypical” in the eyes of the researcher. The researcher did not self-identify during the research process and assured the participants that their responses should reflect their honest opinions about the questions discussed.

The researcher hoped that the process would serve to provide participants with the opportunity to reflect critically on their particular skill and knowledge requirements. In turn, this opportunity may have impacted on the way in which they exercise their power, authority, and ability to empower when they return to their schools. A final result could be the identification of specific information that could lead to the changes in the administrator preparation programs. The information gained from these focus groups could aim to transform administrator preparation for education equity.

Setting for the Study

The focus groups were conducted in communities with higher concentrations of Aboriginal people. The locations were selected as a convenience sampling of participants in three locations. The settings for the focus groups included La Loche (Aboriginal teachers), North Battleford (Aboriginal Administrators focus group), and Saskatoon (Non-Aboriginal administrators and Aboriginal teachers focus group as well as

interviews with individuals who may have been Aboriginal teachers or Non-Aboriginal administrators). The groups met in a variety of locations including a Tribal Council office, a school board office and the researcher's home. Interviews where necessary, were conducted in participants' schools, over the phone or by e-mail.

Focus Group Participants

Participants for this research project fell into three different groups. A comprehensive breakdown of participants is included (Appendix A). The first group was made up of seven Aboriginal teachers. The second group consisted of ten Aboriginal Administrators working in First Nation schools in the jurisdiction of the Battleford Tribal Council. The third group included six non-Aboriginal administrators currently employed in school as either Principals or Vice-Principals. They were administrators who are currently working in schools with high enrollment of Aboriginal students, but who are not employed in First Nation (reserve) schools.

The Researcher

The researcher is a First Nation woman from Little Pine First Nation. I am an urban Indian, who has attended elementary and secondary schools in the provincial school system. I am married to Cam Willett and we have three enchanting children. Our oldest daughter, Alina is a high school student. Our son, Jordan was in kindergarten this year. Our youngest daughter, Tara is pre-school age and attends a local home daycare.

I was privileged to have parents who were themselves students. My mother and I attended our undergraduate program at the same time. She has a Bachelor of Social Work. My father was also a student, who attended Law for a period of time. Education has always been a priority for our extended family. I have an aunt who is working on her doctoral program and other family members who are teachers, principals, government workers, and students. My husband, a fellow graduate of the Indian Teacher Education Program, is also a graduate student in Educational Technologies.

I am a graduate from the Indian Teacher Education Program (ITEP) from the University of Saskatchewan. I am a storyteller and I have worked as a teacher, and educational consultant for the Saskatoon Board of Education.

I am conscious of the privilege of having a supportive, educated partner, who respects the commitment I have made to both my family and further education. I recognize the privilege of having a strong support network of friends. I am thankful for our caregiver, Shirley who cares for our children. I am thankful for the privilege of having mentors whom support and nurture my graduate pursuits. I am conscious of the role these individuals play in the success that I have experienced in my studies.

I am very aware of the responsibilities that I have as an Aboriginal educator. These responsibilities are ones that I have chosen to assume, they include my personal commitment to learn more about traditional knowledge, and the dominant knowledge base in education. I am committed to being a role model to students and teacher about the importance of education equity in all aspects of education. I believe my role is to provide a bridge to understanding for both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal stakeholders in

education. This role can best be assumed when I grow in my confidence and competence in understanding issues of equity in education.

I am a graduate student who has been accepted to undertake doctoral studies at the University of Arizona in Tucson for the fall of 1998.

Data Collection Procedures

In the initial stages, written documentation outlining the study was distributed to senior administrators in the communities selected for the study. These administrators provided the researcher with written confirmation of permission to proceed with the research.

Data collection procedures included the use of audio recordings of the discussions of the focus group participants. Transcriptions were made based on the recordings. However, low attendance at the focus groups required additional data collection methods to be implemented. The researcher conducted telephone interviews, received e-mail responses, and completed five interviews with participants who were unable to attend the focus groups.

The focus group tapes were transcribed and triangulated with data collected using the additional methods. It was the hope of the researcher that by implementing numerous data collection approaches she would be able to triangulate participant responses to seek out the raw data that emerged from each of the questions that led the research. The raw data "represents exact statements of focus group participants [and others] as they responded to specific topics in the discussion" (Krueger, 1994, p. 131). The raw data were organized in summary format and initial themes were identified. These summaries

were then sent back to participants for verification, clarification and deletion as necessary. Participants were asked to respond to the initial themes that the researcher identified; they were also asked to suggest other thematic arrangements.

Instrument

The instrument selected included the focus group interview guide (Appendix B). The focus group discussions were recorded by audiotape. The tapes of the focus group in turn produced transcriptions. The transcriptions and the tapes were used to ensure validity of the researcher's interpretations of what was being presented. The researcher also used a questionnaire, (Appendix C) to collect demographic information about the participants. Open-ended questions were asked that yielded more precise responses that complemented the data collected during the focus group. As well, the researcher used field notes to record themes as they emerged during the focus group interview. When further clarification was necessary, a telephone contact was made with the participants.

Data Analysis: Coyote Makes a Discovery

Coyote showed the others how when she dropped the stones in the still waters, the water's surface rippled and extended, distorting the reflections. She watched Eagle point with one great wing to the surface of the water, tracing in the air the patterns that he saw. A circle in a circle, in a circle . . . Eagle turned to the shore and picked up his own stone, motioned for the others to pick one up as well. They waited for the surface to become smooth again, then took turns dropping their stones. Coyote smiled, and a laugh escaped her lips. "Come, we must tell the others what we have learned today."

Data analysis of the focus group interaction required the researcher to “organize what *they* have seen, heard, and read so that you can make sense of what *they* have learned (Glesne & Peshkin, p. 127). The researcher aimed to organize the themes that emerged through the dialogue of the participants in an accurate manner. The themes were organized within the context of the questions asked. Specifically, each set of answers were grouped according to the question asked. The researcher then looked for “common phrases, concepts, ideas” (Einsiedel et al, p. 72) that emerged within the interview questions. The researcher looked for specific examples provided by the participants. The researcher listened for words that were given specific emphasis by participants. And last, the researcher was conscious of the non-verbal clues that participants made during the focus group interview questioning; these were recorded in the field notes.

Upon verification of the organization of the data, the researcher developed a color-coded system and coded the data for further organizational purposes. Color-coding facilitated the identification of like phrases or ideas. In this manner the researcher aimed to extend the data analysis process from simply summarizing the data to engaging in an in-depth content analysis of the themes that emerged during the focus group discussions.

An analysis of the demographic information (Appendix B) included a breakdown of data on the six elements of the questionnaire. This information was integrated into the core of the data presented, as well was used as supportive documentation in the researchers interpretations.

The themes emerging from the combination of questionnaire, focus group, and literature review provided the researcher with a content analysis; in turn, the content

analysis provided a direction for future developments in the area of Education Equity in administrator preparation programs.

Ethics

I applied to the University Advisory Committee on Ethics in Human Experimentation for permission to conduct the research (Appendix D). Ethical guidelines were observed throughout the study to safeguard the interests of each participant.

Participants were volunteers who submitted their intention to participate to the researcher. All participants signed a consent form for interview (Appendix E). At any time during the research process participants could opt out of participating. Participation in the project was on a voluntary basis. Anonymity of the participants was provided through the use of pseudonyms where necessary. Participants were informed that focus group interviews would be audio-taped. Tapes were transcribed and transcriptions became the property of the researcher and advisor. Tapes and transcriptions are held in a secured storage for a minimum of five years in accordance with the University of Saskatchewan guidelines. Research summaries were provided to participants.

Summary

The researcher selected naturalistic paradigms to guide the study. The study implemented the focus group method of data collection, but supported data collection with interviews, on-line discussions, and phone calls. Data analysis required the development of a framework that encouraged naturalistic and interpretive responses of both the participants and the researcher. Ethical protocols were maintained throughout the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

FINDINGS: COYOTE MAKES A DISCOVERY

Coyote showed the others how she dropped the stones in the still waters, They watched as the water's surface rippled and extended, distorting the reflections. They all watched Eagle point with one great wing at the surface of the water. He traced in the air, with his wing tip, the patterns that he saw: a circle in a circle, in a circle . . .

Eagle turned to the shore and picked up his own stone, motioning for the others to pick one up as well. They waited for the surface to become smooth again; then they took turns dropping their stones. Coyote smiled, and a laugh escaped her lips. "Come, we must tell the others what we have learned today."

Introduction

This chapter reports on the findings of the study. The first section explains the rationale behind the method of presentation. The second section introduces the participants. The third section presents the themes that emerged through the data collection process and facilitates the voices of the participants to be heard.

Rationale

In Chapter Three, the researcher identified a desire to implement a naturalistic and phenomenological presentation of the research data. Owens (1982) stated that the naturalistic paradigm is based upon "inductive thinking and is associated with phenomenological views of knowing and understanding social and organizational

phenomenon” (p. 3). The researcher selected a naturalistic presentation with the aim of presenting the research in what McMillan & Schumacher (1997) define as a “holistic approach using a multiplicity of data to provide an understanding of the divergent values of a practice from the participants’ observations” (p. 554). The multiplicity of data was evident in the wide choices of data collection methods employed.

The phenomenological approach strived to analyze the data “to provide an understanding of a concept from participants’ perspectives and observations with the participants in a selected social situation” (McMillan & Schumacher, p. 554). The social situation, in this case, was administrator preparation for education equity. However, in an attempt to maintain “order” and to avoid becoming overwhelmed by the diversity of rich data collected, the researcher chose to follow Krueger’s (1994) systematic analysis process which “forced the researcher to examine and challenge her assumptions” (p. 129). This process included the following stages:

1. Reading transcriptions and field notes one category at a time
2. Developing a color coded system and coding the data for the organization of the summaries
3. Sorting the data into coded categories
4. Sending out draft summaries for verification
5. Seeking clarification from advisor

The focus group method of data collection was employed. Low attendance required additional data collection methods to be implemented. One of the limitations of using the focus group method was that the researcher cannot control the participation of the respondents. The researcher planned for a formal invitation, follow-up phone calls

and email reminders for the participants. However, participation was still low. The researcher conducted telephone interviews, received e-mail responses, and completed five interviews with participants who were unable to attend the focus group.

The focus group tapes were transcribed and triangulated with data collected using the additional methods. It was the hope of the researcher that, by implementing numerous data collection approaches, she would be able to triangulate participant responses to seek out the raw data that emerged from each of the initial questions. The raw data “represents exact statements of focus group participants [and others] as they responded to specific topics in the discussion” (Krueger, 1994, p. 131). The researcher aimed to present the raw data across the three different groups, in order to create a topology that described the common experiences of the participants that represented a multiplicity of perspectives. The raw data were organized in summary format and initial themes were identified. These summaries were then sent back to participants for verification, clarification, and deletion as necessary. Participants were asked to respond to the initial themes that the researcher identified. They were also asked to suggest other thematic arrangements. Upon verification of the data, the researcher developed a color-coded system and coded the data for further organizational purposes.

Section three, Findings, presents the themes that emerged from the data collection process. The purpose and corresponding questions formed a framework for presenting the participants’ contributions to the research.

The primary purpose of this research was to determine whether administrators received the training necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal enrollments. The questions that were used to guide my research in this area, as identified

in Chapter One included:

1. Do administrators feel that the present administrator preparation programs adequately prepare them for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
2. Should administrator preparation programs adapt to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for work in increasingly diverse schools?

The secondary purpose of this study was to ascertain the skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. Once identified, these could frame changes to existing administrator preparation programs in order to better prepare administrators for work in diverse communities, with increasing Aboriginal populations. The questions that were used to guide the research in this area included:

1. What skills and knowledge are identified as being important in working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?
2. What changes to administrator preparation would participants identify as important in the preparation of administrators for education equity?

The framework for presentation of this data will be focussed on the narrative form. Key questions were italicized and were followed by direct quotations from the participants. The researcher's interpretations of the data completed the framework. This form of reporting the data was referred to as the interpretative model of data presentation (Krueger, 1994). The advantage of presenting data in that fashion was that it quickly collapsed the data, facilitating the reader to come to terms with the research undertaken.

As well, there was a greater depth in the analysis process, which challenged the assumptions of the researcher once more. An analysis of the demographic information (Appendix A) was integrated throughout the presentation of the data.

Participants

The participants in this research were from three distinct groups of people. In total, twenty-three participants were involved in the study. The researcher involved seven Aboriginal teachers in urban and northern settings. On average, the teachers had eleven years of teaching experience. Ten Aboriginal administrators working in both First Nation Schools and non-First Nation schools were volunteers for this study. Six non-Aboriginal administrators working in urban and northern settings participated in the data collection process. On average, the administrators had five years of administrative experience. All three groups discussed the importance of administrator preparation for education equity and the importance of this research on praxis in this area.

Findings

Administrator Preparation for Education Equity

The study's primary purpose was to determine the effectiveness of administrator preparation for education equity. The driving question for this section was "*Do administrators feel that the present administrator preparation programs adequately prepare them for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?*"

During the focus groups, administrators generally responded that their administrator preparation programs did not adequately prepare them for work in diverse

communities with increasing Aboriginal populations. One Aboriginal respondent stated, "For me it wasn't effective at all. They don't even touch on that (on the reality of reserve life, social and personal problems experienced by Aboriginal people). They don't teach that in graduate studies classes." A different respondent added, "I didn't see anything, it's Eurostyle [Eurocentric] basically." Another Aboriginal administrator responded, "I don't think Educational Administration does a good job preparing administrators working in school divisions with high Aboriginal populations." An Aboriginal administrator reflected the same opinion when he said:

When I think of it now, I don't think there was enough, but [in the one Aboriginal Education class] if it were not for the fact that I am an Aboriginal person, what I had taken there would have been enough for anybody. It was very basic for administration in an Indian band or an Indian school; but certainly it wasn't enough.

An Aboriginal administrator stated:

I think more could be done or should be done; whether it's as a part of your PGD (Post-Graduate Diploma) program, or in administrative [preparation], or whether it's the conscious efforts on the part of the school division to have some kind of program, or professional development for administrators to understand Aboriginal people, to understand culture, and the involvement in the culture.

A non-Aboriginal respondent said that he found that "some of the courses I have taken really haven't helped much." A second, non-Aboriginal participant stated, "I don't think there was anything specific about working in Aboriginal settings or working with

Aboriginal students in any of my ten [Graduate courses in Educational Administration] classes.” In the same discussion, another Aboriginal participant offered these insights:

My undergraduate degree certainly was good for me in terms of that kind of preparation; multicultural, cross-cultural, examining history. At the Master's level, I received my Educational Administration degree. In fact, when I am thinking back on it, I can't remember clearly our conversation directly dealing with the topic... ever.

To clarify this point, the researcher drew from the information gathered using the Likert scale in the questionnaires. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators were asked to rate the quality and quantity of Aboriginal content in their preparation programs. Five administrators out of seven who had already taken some course work in Educational Administration, rated the quality of Aboriginal content in their administrator programs as poor. When asked to rate the quantity of Aboriginal content in their administrator preparation program, seven rated the content as very little to none. Comparatively, five administrators out of eight whom had attended the FSIN Administrator Short Courses rated the program good to excellent.

When Aboriginal teachers were asked to reflect on the question, “*How well-prepared administrators are for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?*” one teacher responded, “the majority are not prepared at all to deal with the Aboriginal population”. Another Aboriginal teacher stated, “They are often ignorant, and do not make the effort to understand the Aboriginal population.” Lastly, another participant found that, “On the whole, I would say most are unprepared.”

To clarify the data presented, the researcher asked further probing questions to

administrators in both non-Aboriginal and Aboriginal focus groups: a) *Can you identify the formal administrative preparation that you have undertaken?* Administrator responses to this question were varied. Aboriginal administrators generally stated that they had undertaken the FSIN short course, while some had attended the Masters program in Educational Administration. One Aboriginal administrator responded, “I went to Saskatoon to attend university to do my post-graduate diploma.” Another stated, “I completed two FSIN short courses, one STF short course, and my Masters in Educational Administration.” Others said that they had “No formal training” at all.

Non-Aboriginal administrators had similar responses to the Aboriginal administrators in that they had also undertaken a variety of training opportunities in their administrator preparation. One responded stated, “I took the Saskatchewan [Saskatchewan School-Based Administrators] principal short course – Module One.” Another spoke about their training as having included a “Masters of Education in Curriculum”.

A second probing question was asked to determine fully the extent of training opportunities that participants had undertaken. The administrators were asked:

b) *What other forms of administrator preparation have you undertaken in the area of Education Equity?*

Non-Aboriginal administrators discussed the importance of school division and community-driven professional development opportunities that were available. One person responded:

I was lucky enough to go to a one-day cultural sensitivity program offered by someone who worked for the family social services. It was a good program. I

(had) just started my present assignment. It gave me a lot of background.

Another participant in this particular focus group stated, "Probably some of the best things I learned were (while) attending the community schools conference, going to the sessions they offered there." In that same vein another responded:

Almost the best thing that I had done is to sit down at the community schools conference and listen to people telling stories. Sitting down, having coffee, and listening. The elders and other leaders could come into undergraduate classes and just sit and talk. It doesn't have to be a formal program, just telling the stories of what you want, what your dreams are.

Administrator preparation programs have not traditionally included Aboriginal perspectives in the core of their knowledge base. Administrators, however, do seek out their Aboriginal staff members for the day to day assistance they require in working with increasing Aboriginal populations. For example, when Aboriginal teachers were asked: c) "*Where do administrators receive information to work more effectively in schools with changing populations?*" teachers stated, "From the Native teachers, teacher aids, people in the community. Yes, they are the experts supposedly." Another said, "[Administrators] ... also learn through the children and parents." And lastly, one commented, "Or they talk with your consultant because she will do the Indian (things) for you." Aboriginal teachers spoke about how non-Aboriginal administrators attempted to find information that would assist them in their roles as educational leaders in schools with high Aboriginal populations. Administrators turned to Aboriginal peoples for the answers that they desired. However, Aboriginal teachers expressed that they felt marginalized to knowing information only about Aboriginal issues, and not having experiences to share

on general educational issues of their schools.

The necessity of change in administrator program. This section was guided by the following question: *Should administrator preparation programs adapt to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for work in increasingly diverse schools?* Administrators in the focus groups agreed that it was essential for adaptations in administrator preparation programs to occur, as if it were common knowledge. While few spoke specifically about the issue, many nodded their heads, one responding, “Yes, Yes, Yes”, at the focus group of Aboriginal administrators. The necessity for adaptations to existing programs was unanimously agreed upon in both the Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal administrator focus groups. Aboriginal teachers also agreed with the necessity for changes to occur in the training of administrators.

Administrators were generally pleased to reflect on this question. Though both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal participants were positive about the necessity for changes to existing preparation programs, they also voiced their concerns. One Aboriginal administrator stated:

I think given the demographic (changes) both our universities in this province have to look at the Master's level in our field, providing some kind of half-class on cross-cultural awareness. I think we need to be aware of the First Nations culture and at the same time we have to be aware of the things we have just talked about; about the complexity of it. There [are] no seven steps to deal with it.

Another non-Aboriginal administrator's concern was evident in the statement “I think it would be really dangerous if we take our training and say, ‘This is what an Aboriginal person is’ because I see such a diversity, and I think it is healthy that there is a

diversity among all people.” Administrators generally expressed a desire to not marginalize the topic of Aboriginal perspectives in administrator preparation.

While administrators and teachers identified a need for change in the preparation of administrators for education equity, they spoke at length about the systemic barriers to the implementation of this plan.

Systemic Barriers. Participants spoke about faculty needing to educate themselves about issues of equity. For example, one respondent stated, “What we took at the University and what really happens in a (school) are completely different”. Another participant stated that, “...in order for changes to happen systemically, they (educational leaders) must be aware.” An administrator suggested “there should be a system wide emphasis on a theme like anti-racism.” Another said educational leaders “...have to advocate for inclusive professional development. We not only have to educate the administrators but also educate the teaching staff [faculty] because these two go hand in hand.”

One Aboriginal administrator shared this story:

Our organizations must model the value of thinking in a diverse manner. What I shared with (name) from the (Administrator organization) was the fact that having a conference on equity in education, none of the presenters were of Aboriginal ancestry. Why?

Later in the interview, he said, “I don't think [the point] is to simply accommodate (Aboriginal perspectives), but it is to bring some balance to the existing provincial scene on administration.” Participants in all three groups spoke about how Aboriginal education issues cannot simply be curriculum issues for schools. They spoke passionately about the

need for inclusive education to reflect our policies, procedures, delivery, and hiring practices as well. In this manner, administrator preparation programs can adequately prepare administrators for the changing demographics in our province.

Informing Praxis in Administrator Preparation

During this portion of the study two questions guided the researcher as outlined in Chapter One, (a) *What skills and knowledge are necessary for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?* and (b) *What changes to administrator preparation programs would participants identify as important in the preparation of administrators for education equity?*

Skills and Knowledge Necessary. Respondents provided a wealth of data on the topic of skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations. They reflected on their own experience and in the case of the teachers, they spoke about effective administrators that they knew. Probing questions to access rich data included the following:

1. *Could you describe an effective administrator in a school with high Aboriginal populations?*
2. *Could you describe an ineffective administrator?*
3. *What skills and knowledge do administrators presently have that assists them in working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?*
4. *What skills and knowledge are necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?*

From these probing questions, the researcher interpreted themes that emerged.

Participants in all three groups provided insights into the **personal qualities, skills, and**

knowledge they defined as necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations.

The researcher interpreted from the participants responses that effective administrators in schools with high Aboriginal populations generally had four key **personal qualities**: (a) a strong sense of personal identity; (b) an interest in Aboriginal perspectives; (c) a sensitivity to cultural issues; and (d) an ability to choose equitable educational practices. Participants spoke generally about the need for the administrator to have a strong sense of their own identity. One teacher said, “good administrators understand who they are, their roots, their values ...” Later, another teacher responded, “They also are conscious of their own privileges”.

Participants identified the importance of the administrator having “a genuine interest in First Nation people.” A non-Aboriginal administrator had this to say about an administrator they had worked with:

He had an interest [in Aboriginal issues] and he was respectful . . . open minded, encouraging and a good listener, and as an educator he was a strong person. He had high expectations of himself, of the people he worked with, the staff and the kids.

A teacher spoke about how a strong sense of self impacts on how “(name) recognized their own weaknesses and was able to ask for assistance.”

Respondents shared how in their experience, good administrators who were confident in their own abilities were able to act in a sensitive manner towards others. A non-Aboriginal administrator reflected:

I think more along the lines of being sensitive, more of sensitivity, more of an

understanding as opposed to teaching or administrating in non-Aboriginal schools, you do this way; teaching and administrating Aboriginal schools, you do that way. I don't think there is this dichotomy.

While one Aboriginal administrator stated the need to have “A sensitivity to all cultural issues, not only Aboriginal issues”, a non-Aboriginal administrator found that a more general sensitivity to student diversity was necessary. She stated that one needs “a sensitivity to students who are hurting; either because of poverty or because of their home life, or they are hungry or whatever.”

The Aboriginal teacher group discussed whether these four qualities could be taught. One respondent expressed her concerns when she said, “You can't really train someone to be like that. I think you can't train someone to have people skills, to be a warm sincere person.”

Another important quality in an educational administrator from the point of view of Aboriginal teachers was sensitivity. One stated:

Non-Aboriginal people are coming in and demanding respect immediately no matter who they are. Whereas, Aboriginal teachers (and administrators) won't demand it, but work towards that by showing respect.

Respondents concluded that administrators who felt good about themselves, were able to make changes to administrative practices to ensure the school was inviting for Aboriginal children, parents and community members. A teacher explained, “The administrator here, anybody who likes to comes in, they are welcomed, and the principal greets them at the door. He usually takes his time to show them around.” Teachers spoke about the dynamics of making the school a good place for Aboriginal people, but

they also spoke about the importance of administrator visibility in the community. The teacher explained:

The effective one was actually the one that made enough effort to go and participate in the community events. They made the effort to talk to the staff about community expectations. They actually (were) very receptive to anybody coming in and giving ideas on what was needed. They tried to coordinate the school activities with the community events and had everybody involved.

On the other hand, when Aboriginal teachers were asked to comment on ineffective administrators in schools with high Aboriginal populations, they stated that “Some of them hate their jobs. They’d rather not be there. If you didn’t go into their office, [they would be] happy.” Ineffective administrators are inaccessible in the school either because you can’t find them or because they aren’t helpful. One teacher said that in her teaching experience, “they are ineffective because they are so phony, putting up this big, big front, and not really being themselves.” The teachers spoke openly about the fact that some administrators they had worked with had denied the need to know anything about Aboriginal children except when they needed to solve problems associated with the behavior and learning needs of the Aboriginal child. One teacher said that administrators are ineffective when they are “... not open; if they have a problem, they get aggressive. Then they try to hide from their feelings.” The teachers spoke of the fact that some administrators who have little access to information about Aboriginal people are quick to make assumptions. For example, one teacher said that administrators are “Always blaming (or excusing behavior) on the home (poverty).”

The teachers' conversation changed, and they generally agreed that administrators are very well intentioned, yet are unable to make equitable decisions. One responded:

That's what I am finding that they aren't being ignorant purposely. I know that they just don't know any different. They really don't. And they don't have any interest (in learning about Aboriginal people). They don't have a reason to because they don't think they are ever going to know a Native person.

Another stated that in her experience

...most people naturally either have people skills or they don't. They can be acquired, but in a situation where you are immersing yourself in another's way of thinking, culture, etc. you need to feel comfortable with what you are doing and truly believe in the cause. If not, the uncomfortableness is sensed and the person and their efforts are not taken seriously.

The participant's responses to questioning in this area provided unanticipated answers. The researcher, in her drive to inform praxis, had focussed primarily on the "teachable" skills and knowledge in administrator preparation, and was surprised to find that the emphasis on the part of the participants was more on personal qualities that individuals bring to the role as administrator. The researcher's interpretations of the data collected in this section included an emphasis on the importance that administrators know who they are as individuals, know their own culture, and in some cases know their own privilege. When administrators have a keen self-awareness, they are then free to be respectful, sensitive, and inviting. They are also more likely to take the risk of becoming actively involved in their community, particularly in an Aboriginal community.

This section presented participants' responses to questions on the **skills and**

knowledge they identified as necessary for work as an administrator in schools with high Aboriginal populations. Participants in all three groups were asked *“What skills and knowledge are identified as being important in working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations? And “What skills and knowledge do administrators presently have that assists them in working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?”* Respondents in all three groups agreed that the most essential **skill** for an administrator would be strong communication skills. An Aboriginal administrator stated

If there is anything as an administrator, Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal, what is the one thing that they need working in a predominately Aboriginal community, it is the ability to communicate.

A non-Aboriginal administrator reflected that in his experience

Communication is another area in terms of sometimes it is the language barrier, in particular with kids coming from reserves. Expressions are different than the kids use in the city. Taking it literally, they would be different things than what you think. So you learn to listen while you talk and ask questions in a variety of ways, restating. Those are the important things for all children.

Administrators were also conscious of the power of language. One participant summed up the need be aware of this power when she stated, “[an] awareness or ability to speak, to learn, or be sensitive to Aboriginal languages. That's a big plus because we still have in the North many parents who speak the language of their First Nations.”

Participants in the focus groups often gave one-word responses to these particular questions. Respondents placed a very high priority on the communication aspect of the skills question. As a result, the bulk of the transcriptions were dedicated to the discussion

of communications skills. Additional skills emerged from the data and were reorganized thematically by the researcher. Other personal skills identified by administrators and teachers included leadership, risk taking, organizational skills, being prepared, being energetic, expressing joy, being involved in the community, facilitating a team approach, being open minded, knowing how to create a welcoming climate, and the ability resolve conflict. At first glance these skills seemed generic and necessary for administration in all schools. One non-Aboriginal administrator concluded

The skills are the same as in a non-native population. I found that when I began work on a First Nation, the skills I used were generic. It didn't matter if you were in a First Nation school or a non-native school. The skills required are the same.

The importance of communication skills is an essential skill identified by the participants. They also spoke in a more general manner about the importance of both managerial and leadership abilities. These skills may appear to be a universal requirement for educational administrators.

The two questions posed to the participants also asked them to reflect on the **knowledge** required by administrators for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. A respondent commented, "Individuals who want to acquire knowledge are already doing so. You need to feel comfortable with what you are doing, and truly believe in the cause . . . people know whether you are phony or not." This comment reflected the opinions of the group of Aboriginal teachers who elaborated on this comment and followed with nods and verbal agreement.

The comments about the knowledge necessary for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations have been grouped thematically, but represent the data collected

in all three groups. The themes that emerged included, (1) Awareness of Self and others, (2) Awareness of Cultural Diversity, (3) Community Awareness, (4) Historical issues in Aboriginal communities, and (5) Contemporary Aboriginal issues.

1. Awareness of Self and Others. Participants in all three groups recognized the importance of being conscious of one's own culture and values that you bring with you to the community, this is essential knowledge for the administrator. One Aboriginal administrator commented, "those values need to match the ones of the community that you are working for." Aboriginal administrators and teachers placed a great deal of importance on the administrator having a strong sense of self, for they believed that made the administrator able to reach out and be sensitive to the needs of others. A non-Aboriginal administrator commented that "they need to recognize their role and how they will address the situation (changing demographics) and be prepared to face the challenges."

2. Awareness of Cultural Diversity. Respondents found that an awareness of cultural diversity greatly benefited the administrator. One participant responded

...based on my experiences, the knowledge necessary is somewhat different. An administrator should have knowledge on Indian culture (beliefs, values, etc.), customs (funerals, etc.) extended family, family dynamics, etc.

An Aboriginal teacher stated, "I think the knowledge is the cultural knowledge, (and later) the knowledge of the culture of the community. I don't think it's so much of knowledge of Aboriginal culture as much as the knowledge of the culture of the community because I think there is a difference."

A non-Aboriginal administrator found that "knowledge about the traditions and

values of the communities that (we work near). Information about protocols. Acceptance and understanding of the importance of some students to attend ceremonies.” Those types of information were important for conducting the managerial and leadership requirements necessary to lead in a school with high Aboriginal populations. For example, one administrator was unsure of the local protocols for inviting Elders to participate in different activities. In one particular community a specific protocol may be necessary when inviting Elders to attend a breakfast, and another protocol would be required when the administrator was seeking input for planning. Protocol expectations differ from community to community and between tribal groups. In the case of this administrator, an awareness of the different protocol expectations would have expedited the process considerably.

3. Awareness of Community. Participants affirmed the importance of the administrator being aware of their community. Awareness was achieved through inviting participation of the community in the school and through the active participation of the administrator in the community. The Aboriginal participants spoke of the importance of making relationships in reference to the Aboriginal communities that they are familiar with. The participants from the north, spoke about how many administrators coming to the north for the first time bring with them their own “cultural baggage”, and that their particular “cultural baggage” doesn’t necessarily work in northern communities. One northern respondent stated “They need to know what the community is like, what kind of community they are going into, and how long the education system has been in the community, what backgrounds the parents of the students have, they have to know a little bit of the culture. You have to try to understand the community.”

An Aboriginal teacher found that “they need to understand how important becoming a member of the community is (socializing, being visible).” One Aboriginal administrator stated

you rely a lot on the local people, the experiences and the directions, (community leadership, elders, etc.) to find out what the communities want. Know who the elders are or at least know who might know this information. Know the protocols attached with different elders.”

A non-Aboriginal administrator spoke openly about his experiences working in schools with high Aboriginal populations

First of all, it is trying to make sure that parents feel comfortable to talk to me. I still haven't learned how to do that yet. Many of them, if I come to their home, they feel tense. I can sense that. They are very reluctant to come to school. Many of them just won't or don't. I found bringing the doughnuts, muffins a really smart idea. That's much appreciated and seen as good manners. I also found that if I can initiate the contact before there is trouble, but that's good with any family, but there is a lot of distress out there that is there to begin with.”

All participants were very aware of their desire not to stereotype Aboriginal peoples, they attempted to identify the skills and knowledge yet they were conscious of being prescriptive in their reflections. This concern was addressed by one responded who contends “Once again, there is such a wide range in the Aboriginal population as well as in non-Aboriginal population.” Another non-Aboriginal participant said

We can't make assumptions that Aboriginal children know their own culture . . . with the poverty, drugs and substance abuse and violence (in some of our

communities, some Aboriginal children . . . have told us that they are really culturally unaware.

4. Knowledge of Historical Issues. Participants in all three groups, but primarily the groups with Aboriginal members were very clear about the kinds of historical understandings that are necessary given our changing demographics. Aboriginal administrators heard a respondent identify a need for “awareness generally of treaty issues, self-governance issues. Give them the history of Indian education, how was it done traditionally by the traditional elders. They should know about the residential schools (to understand more accurately the contemporary social issues).” Another aboriginal administrator said

They should understand about treaty agreements, on Treaty Land Entitlement and its implications for the school tax base. More information clarifies the positions of First Nation governing bodies in the province, more information stops the misinformation out there.

5. Understanding Contemporary Issues. Participants of Aboriginal ancestry played a key role in identifying the contemporary issues. An Aboriginal teacher stated the “Importance of cultural integration for the purpose of cultural preservation and linguistic preservation.” She alluded to the major role that administrators play in validating the curriculum initiatives that would aid in Aboriginal self-determination. She also spoke about the need to have a clear vision for their own role in Aboriginal education, she concluded “They don’t need to teach these Native kids about their culture. They need to know how to integrate that culture into the way that those people think.”

The comment of validating the curriculum initiatives was echoed by another

Aboriginal teacher who said, "For sure one of the things that I want to do is to incorporate the Aboriginal worldview compared to the European worldview."

Aboriginal participants also addressed head on, issues of racism, discrimination and stereotyping. One teacher shared her story

My school is so underground. You don't deal with things face to face. You hide it. My principal took some calls and parents came in because (they thought) I was talking too much about racism. I was dealing too much about this racism thing. Then my principal wouldn't let me deal with it."

This teacher expressed that the principal was unable to deal with the issue of racism because he had little experience with it in his own life. She continued by reiterating how the principal decided to deal with the racism issue himself, and how he denied her the opportunity to participate in the process of resolving the issue. Ultimately, she felt marginalized and powerless by the choices of her administrator. The Aboriginal teachers spoke passionately about the need to have administrators who could speak openly about racism and discrimination, but also who were able to respond to racial incidents.

A contemporary issue discussed at length by the non-Aboriginal members dealt with the issues of poverty. One responded stated

(Recognition that) those who are in distress, the common thread, we all know is poverty. So there are a lot of myths out there with regards to the correlation between being Aboriginal and having a lot of these problems.

Lastly, the respondents in all the groups spoke of how there are no simple solutions to these issues, nor are there any prescriptions. The decisions of the

administrator must be reflective of the community that they live in. One respondent concluded

I think that one very important lesson I had learned is that there is no one right answer with any approach. The First Nation people you deal with are a broad spectrum of people and reflect the greater society. So I don't go in with a preconceived notion of this is the right approach of how to deal with First Nation people. I think you just have to be patient like you are when dealing with any human being. You find out what they are about, and you go from there.

Participant's Recommendations for Changes to the Delivery of the Preparation Programs. Administrators were asked to brainstorm some possible changes to the delivery of administrator preparation. The questions that led this discussion included (a) *“What training needs do participants identify as necessary to develop an equity focus in administrator preparation programs?”* And (b) *“How would participants like equity issues addressed in the preparation of administrators?”* Respondents differed in their responses to the extent that changes should occur. A participant stated, “This type of content [content with an equity focus] should be mandatory at the Master’s level – given our changing demographics.” Another participant expressed a need to pursue a “constructivist-based program” in educational administration.

Largely, the issue of paradigm was not a part of the dialogue amongst the participants involved in the study. Generally, they were concerned about the **personal commitment, curriculum content, faculty and resource people, and acquiring hands-on experiences.** Participants stated they would like to see the following specific changes

occur:

Personal commitment to learn. Respondents placed a great deal of emphasis on the administrator's personal commitment to grow in their knowledge about equity issues. Awareness of own culture and sensitivity to other peoples' culture (implies reflective practices). From an Aboriginal participant,

They [administrators] have to acknowledge their own privilege and powers. I think they need to realize that they are no longer making the decisions for the Native people. They need to work in partnership with Native governments. They need to deal with their white center, they need to get past to the core of what it means to be a white person, and they need to pass their comfort zone. They need to understand that their whiteness is white privilege. It's a privilege to be white. Participants for all groups spoke about the importance of being proactive in growing in awareness of differing perspectives. One respondent stated "We are going to have to be prepared to make some contact, be proactive." A teacher said "Be proactive – you need to read, and distribute and share what you read to everybody so they can all continue to grow, too. As teachers, as Aboriginal people, (and administrators) we have a role in it. One of the things that we can do is to influence (each other)." A non-Aboriginal administrator observed, "We have so many cultural events in Saskatoon, why can't they make an effort to go out there?" An Aboriginal administrator invited others to "learn more about the Aboriginal culture. [By doing so] they will have a chance to have the cultural sensitivity, that they will have a chance to visit the elders as we have, to understand what their roles are."

Aboriginal teachers identified their own personal responsibility in this process,

and they remain committed to answering questions about Aboriginal culture and traditions were appropriate. However, they don't wish to be abused simply because of their ethnicity. They recognize that they need to impart invitations to non-Aboriginal people, especially for those who are making an effort to understand. One Aboriginal respondent concluded, "I know in our school we had the whole staff go for the sweat. Our principal and vice-principal also went. They really enjoyed it. They really liked the experience."

Curriculum content. Participants were conscious of the need to promulgate additive approaches. They desired to see changes to curriculum content "both in an isolated or additive fashion and in an integrated manner." However they were also conscious of the need for changes on campus to facilitate changes for students. One person responded, "Those people (university students) should have an equal amount of introduction of the type of content (cross-cultural) at the university level. This must be mandatory." One change that was suggested by an Aboriginal respondent was that

There should be a cross-cultural section in the (administrator preparation) program. (It should include) cross-cultural training, Indian studies, mandatory Native studies, give them a history of Indian education, how was (education) traditionally done by the traditional elders, the community... get them to reserve schools, let them live on the reserve, let them know the reality of reserve life.

Many participants made course content suggestions which included presenting information about band governance, the role of education authorities, role and responsibilities of the Board, Indian studies, mandatory Native studies, the history of Aboriginal people in Canada, and traditional knowledge courses were also suggested.

Specifically one respondent stated “I just want you to put in there that Indian politics should be discussed there.” “Some (cultural) protocols, how to approach Indian traditions and culture, a lot of Indian cultural stuff to be included i.e.: resource people coming in, elders, Chief & Council members, First Nation School board members, principals, and even students” were also suggested by a participant. An Aboriginal teacher suggested, “There should be a class, there should be an 835 course for administrators. Why not? They are living in the environment that is changing.”

One respondent voiced her concerns by stating “A course is not going to do it all. There needs to be a continuum that includes other activities including visits with elders.” As well, another participant echoed this one by saying program changes needed to include “more sensitivity training” with discussions on the “Sensitivity and awareness of their own language. They have to learn to tone down their language because a lot of people they are dealing with are not well educated, they use these big, long words in their letters. Some (Aboriginal people) can't read it.”

A teacher suggested that much of this could be achieved by the “use of simulations or case studies to challenge administrators in training to be inclusive in their educational planning.” Another participant echoed this comment when they stated that it was important for administrators to “Recogn[ize] the diversity among Aboriginal people, culturally, linguistically, and socially”. Another stated

If they are unaware of that (racism, stereotyping and discrimination) they are unable to act on those issues as they arise in the school. Maybe the issue of racism is to be something that really needs to be addressed, we cannot avoid this. Later, Aboriginal teachers suggested specific instructional materials for this topic

(Richard Cardinal: Diary of an Indian Child; For Angela; both from the National Film Board)”. Teachers and administrators concluded their discussions with the following comments: “We have come from a very Euro-centric one way of doing things. I really do think we need to become more sensitive to other ways people do things.” And another said

You know what I think would be really interesting, look at diverse cultures, and look at what is culture. To understand what a culture is all about and the degree to which a person from outside of a culture, like the teacher and administrator can best understand how to bring people within that group of shared meaning-making into the arena of learning. Of caring and valuing some of the things that we need to value as a social beings living in close proximity.

Implications on staff recruiting. Respondents contend that administrator preparation programs need to address the faculty and resource people selections as well as the student cohort decisions that are made, in order to facilitate education equity. Respondents want informants who are experienced in the area, one respondent commented “have Aboriginal people there who know some of the history, something to do with multiculturalism, and ESL [English as a Second Language].” Respondents identified the need for “Aboriginal Faculty and resource people. (And later) the money to support honoraria for resource people.” As well as, “find[ing] the community elders” to provide a framework for understanding issues in Aboriginal education.

Respondents also identified that a diverse faculty and student cohort would facilitate opportunities for “. . . mentoring, maybe a First Nations principal (with a non-Aboriginal graduate student/ or principal) going to a band meeting, home visit, board

meeting, Treaty Land Entitlement meeting, etc. just to get the real feeling and experience as to what it is all about there."

Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators discussed diverse graduate cohorts. "In some of the classes, I was the only Aboriginal, in a predominately non-native group." A non-Aboriginal respondent reflected that there was much learning that occurred when minority classmates shared their perspectives in class. Diverse student recruiting was suggested by the participants.

Hands-on experiences. "Administrator Preparation programs should include internships, like there is for teacher preparation." Specifically respondents would like to see internships or practicums in communities with high Aboriginal populations. For those that chose to undertake a practicum "it would be good experience to put them in a band school situation or tribal council office as a director. That will give the experience of working with Aboriginal people before they actually do go out there." Aboriginal teachers said "I really like the idea of work experience... they definitely need the work experience as part of their course."

Summary

The purpose of this study was twofold. First, to determine whether educational administrators received training necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. Second, to identify possible changes to the existing administrator preparation programs.

To summarize the first purpose, participants found that their administrator preparation programs did not adequately prepare them for work in diverse communities with increasing Aboriginal student bodies. Administrators confirmed they had undertaken

diverse administrator preparation opportunities including graduate work in education (Educational Administration courses or Educational Curriculum) and participation in short courses and conferences. Generally, these opportunities did not provide participants with the skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations.

Second, participants identified the importance of adapting administrator preparation programs in light of our changing provincial demographics. Participants identified the importance of the administrator being conscious of their self: privileges, assumptions, and language. They expressed that a personal commitment by administrators was necessary for those who work in schools with high Aboriginal populations.

Respondents were aware of systemic barriers that would impede the transformation that they foresaw. Participants suggested systemic changes that could be implemented in the formal training opportunities for all administrators. Key to addressing the systemic barriers was the need to invite Aboriginal stakeholders to take part in the decision making process. Strategic planning could then be undertaken to address curriculum content, faculty and graduate cohort recruitment, instructional strategies, and policies and procedures.

Like a stone dropped in still waters, the question asked had a broad spectrum of answers. Generally, the participants offered concrete suggestions for transforming administrator preparation programs. Participant suggestions were valuable in ascertaining ways to inform praxis in the preparation of administrators for education equity.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Coyote walked towards the water, bowed her head, and drank deeply. She stretched and yawned, circled twice, then she lay down. Her elegant paw dipped into the water. She smiled. She looked out at the darkening sky. In the distance she could hear the others laughing and sharing stories. She turned over onto her back, and looked up into the night sky. "It's been a busy day," she thought. She wondered at all that she had learned, and tried to make sense of those things that still eluded her. She rose, stretched once more, and walked along the waters' edge into the darkness . . .

Summary

This study was undertaken with two equally important purposes in mind. First, to determine whether educational administrators have received the training necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. The second purpose was to determine the skills and knowledge identified by participants as necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal enrollments. The researcher, in her role as interpreter, used the data collected about the skills and knowledge to frame recommendations for changes to administrator preparation programs. It was hoped that the research findings would inform praxis on the preparation of administrators. As there was little literature on this topic, it was also desirable for this study to be a stepping-stone for establishing a research-based foundation on which to develop administrator preparation programs that adequately prepare administrators for education equity.

Twenty-two participants were selected from communities with high Aboriginal populations. These communities included urban and northern communities in the province of Saskatchewan. Participants were volunteers who fell into one of three groups: (a) Aboriginal teachers; (b) Aboriginal administrators; and (c) Non-Aboriginal administrators. These participants had experience working in schools with high Aboriginal enrollments.

Originally, participants were invited to participate in a designated focus group. However, low attendance necessitated that the researcher use additional data collection methods including personal interviews, telephone interviews, and responses collected via e-mail. Contributions provided by participants in the focus group discussions were taped and transcribed. Individual interview notes were documented in the researcher's field guide. All participants filled out a demographic survey that included two Likert scales for determining both the quality of administrator preparation for education equity and the quantity of Aboriginal content in the participants' administrator preparation.

Raw data were organized in summary format and initial themes were identified. These initial themes and summaries were sent back to participants for verification, addition, deletion or clarification. Some participants suggested additional thematic arrangements. Upon verification of the summaries, the researcher implemented a color-coded system for the purpose of further clarification and organization of the themes within the data. This final breakdown was presented extensively in Chapter Four, and will not be reiterated in depth in this chapter.

Conclusions & Discussions

This section examines the researcher's conclusions under two distinct topics, (a) the effectiveness of preparation for education equity; and (b) informing praxis on administrator preparation for education equity. Upon examining the literature review and the research findings, some commonalities emerged. Consequently, the summarized information provided in the literature review will be integrated with responses from the participants. Conclusions made from the findings of this study are presented.

Effectiveness of Preparation for Education Equity

For a number of administrators, the graduate program did not prepare them adequately for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations. Participants' comments and ratings provided on the Likert scale confirmed that administrators did not perceive themselves as adequately prepared for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal enrollments.

The literature review indicated that, traditionally, administrator preparation programs have been generally ineffective in integrating any issues of equity into their core knowledge base. Specifically, Noley, (1991) found that "preparation programs generally offered adequate preparation neither to Native or Non-Native . . . administrators to serve Native students" (p. 4). Typically, administrator preparation programs have been unable to effectively incorporate issues of equity into the core knowledge base. Traditional administrator preparation programs have generally denied access of diverse perspectives.

The paradigm created a cycle of exclusion, whereby issues of equity were not effectively integrated in the core of educational administration. The dominant paradigm

has marginalized issues of equity (gender, ethnicity, etc.) and mainstream individuals have been denied access to information about marginalized peoples.

Adapting Administrator Preparation Programs

Given the changing demographics in Saskatchewan, research participants identified a need for changes to occur in the preparation of administrators who serve our Province. The literature review, examined through the three lenses of equity, revealed that attempts made to adapt educational practices for the sake of inclusion have been largely additive or isolated in nature. This, in turn, has allowed the exclusion of traditionally marginalized perspectives to continue. The researcher concluded that the theoretical framework needed to be adapted in order to address programs for education equity. It was recognized that shifts in the dominant paradigm are necessary. In contemporary administrator preparation programs, attempts are being made to integrate critical theory, feminist, and interpretivist research into the existing paradigm.

Informing Praxis

Originally, the researcher had undertaken this study with the aim of informing praxis in the **content** of administrator preparation. However, the researcher concluded that in order to inform praxis in a meaningful way, changes must be addressed in a multiparadigmatic fashion. The two key features that emerged both in the literature review and in the study were; (a) personal; and (b) institutional commitments to change.

First, the skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations were identified before the researcher could move to inform praxis. A surprising outcome not anticipated by the researcher was the importance that

both the literature review and the participants in this study placed on the value of a personal responsibility to continued development in equity issues. The research (Calabrese & Barton, 1994; Napier, Ford & Toy, 1994; and Sanford, 1995) concluded that it was necessary for individuals to undertake reflective practices to better understand their own personal values, assumptions, and privilege. Reflective practices were essential for individuals involved as educational leaders to further develop personal cultural cognitiveness or consciousness.

The participants in the study reiterated the importance of being conscious of the individual lenses that frame educational intention. In that way, educational leaders were better prepared to respond sensitively to the perspectives of others. Respondents identified that in that way, educational leaders would be able to identify their role in implementing systematic change for the sake of equity.

Participants in the study identified the importance of having good cross-cultural communication **skills**, organizational skills, being able to facilitate a team approach, creating a welcoming climate, and conflict resolution. However, it must be noted, that the researchers (Capper, 1993; Scheurich, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1990) said that these types of educational plans must incorporate in their core, the goal of education equity.

The **knowledge** participants identified as essential for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations included: (a) awareness of self and others; (b) awareness of cultural diversity; (c) community awareness; (d) historical issues in Aboriginal communities; and (e) contemporary Aboriginal issues.

Changes to administrator preparation programs, identified as important for preparation of administrators for education equity, were diverse and suggested in a

wholistic manner. Research (Capper, 1993; Gay & Fox, 1995; Napier, Ford & Toy, 1994; Scott, 1990; Walker & Walker, 1998) examined institutional commitments that must be evident in the strategic plans made for the sake of equity. These strategic plans would examine and integrate the personal commitments and the skills and knowledge identified by participants, in a wholistic manner, throughout (a) the content; (b) the instructional strategies; (c) the diversity of faculty and the graduate cohort; (d) sources of information; and (e) policies and procedures.

Implications for Practice

Coyhis (1993) stated:

The leadership systems currently in place too often look at us *doing*, and they say *do* differently in order to change. But the Indian way says we're not human *doings*, we're human *beings*. If we want to change the *doing* in leadership, I need to change my being. And the way to change my being is to change my intent.

Organizational changes in administrator preparation can be achieved when individuals choose to become more knowledgeable on topics of equity, plan for ways to model and implement changes in their personal lives, and then work towards influencing others by their actions. The moment when they choose to change their intent is the moment when they drop the first stone in the waters. Only then can the ripples extend out over the surface of the water, transforming what was there and ultimately effecting the systemic barriers, curriculum, instructional practices, policies and procedures, and partnership arrangements that will lead to major changes in the preparation of administrators for the sake of education equity.

For ease of presentation the implications have been recorded in a thematic fashion. In no way does this format suggest a hierarchical approach to systemic change. While many of the implications suggested here are not transformative, they are essential stages in facilitating the integration of Aboriginal perspectives in the graduate program.

Systemic barriers. Addressing the systemic barriers that exist in administrator preparation programs must require a formal examination of these programs. Perhaps, in light of the changing demographics we are experiencing Provincially, now is a good time to create partnerships with external organizations such as the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations and the Metis Association of Saskatchewan, and other organizations that represent diverse populations. These partnerships would work together with the aim of developing a framework from which to examine future changes in the preparation of administrators for education equity. The partners could work together to evaluate the existing programs in terms of equity, they could create strategic plans to implement changes that would effect curriculum, faculty, instructional strategies, etc.

Curriculum content. Content needs to reflect diverse perspectives on topics in administrator preparation. Administrator preparation programs need to draw from multiparadigm perspectives that include critical theory, feminist, and interpretivist research. In this manner, students gain an understanding of equity issues as they apply across administration. In addition, there should be a conscious effort to implement transformative approaches to curriculum delivery rather than additive or isolationist approaches. Transformative approaches would assist all graduate students in growing in their awareness of cultural diversity that exists throughout the intersections of gender, class and ethnicity.

Graduate students need information that develops their understandings of cultural diversity, historical, and contemporary Aboriginal issues. Administrators need an understanding of the language, social protocols, and traditions of communities with increasing Aboriginal populations. Graduates need to understand the historical context of Aboriginal people in the province, in order to understand issues that impact on contemporary Aboriginal education. Specifically, participants in the study recommended: 1) that cross-cultural training be made a mandatory course and 2) that information on treaties and traditional knowledge, politics, racism, and the impact of residential schooling on contemporary education be integrated into the core of required course work.

Instructional strategies. Changes to the preparation of administrators call for reflective practices that would facilitate graduate students awareness of personal privilege, culture and “help students to explore and clarify their own ethnic identities” (Banks, 1988). Participants in all three research groups referred to the need to have an awareness of self and others in order to work effectively in schools with diverse populations.

By implementing transformative approaches, administrator preparation programs could expose individuals to content that reflected multiple perspectives, promote reflective practices, and facilitate hands-on learning experiences that encouraged individuals to challenge their personal cultural/social/gender frames. By doing so, individuals would be able to gain an awareness of the diversity that exists. They would be challenged in their preparation to create educational plans that reflect diverse perspectives.

Diverse faculty and graduate cohort. Participants expressed a need for recruiting, mentorship, and selection practices that reflected the importance of achieving education equity. The literature review suggested strategic planning that invites diverse stakeholders for the collaborative development of procedures that aim to ensure a diverse faculty and graduate cohort.

Forming partnerships. Educational organizations need to change to reflect the required skills and knowledge identified by the participants in this study. They can achieve these changes through strategic planning that includes forming partnerships with Aboriginal organizations (Noley, 1993; Rees, 1998; Tierney, 1992). These partnerships can work together with the aim of creating mutually beneficial learning opportunities for administrators in our province.

Policies and procedures. In the process of informing praxis, the researcher has sought to be wholistic. Having good intentions as an individual is a good starting point; however, institutional changes can only occur in an environment that supports these changes. Mission, vision and goal statements need to reflect institutional commitment to issues of equity. A framework needs to be developed in the institution that firmly states its commitment to education equity. Only then can education equity become an integral part of their policies and procedures.

Institutional changes can be achieved by the personal commitment of individuals who work within the organization. In the words of one of the participants “there are no seven steps to dealing with it.”

Recommendations for further research

As our population demographics continue to grow more diverse in the Province of Saskatchewan, it is apparent that we need to adapt administrator preparation programs to adequately prepare administrators to work within the diversity. Based on this study, it is recommended that further research should include:

1. A formal evaluation of the effectiveness of administrator preparation for education equity;
2. Interviews with Aboriginal parents and organizations to ascertain their perceptions of the skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. These perceptions could then be compared to the results of this study;
3. Mixed focus group interviews that include all the stakeholders (faculty, graduate students, parents, and Aboriginal representatives) who will plan collaboratively to frame a process of transforming administrator preparation;
4. Narrative research on the cultural negotiations of Aboriginal educational leaders working in school systems in the province;
5. Action research studies that investigate the process of implementing additive and integrated curriculum initiatives in educational administration;
6. A longitudinal study of the transformation process in educational administration as it strives for education equity;
7. A case study of the cultural frames that guide decision making in schools with high Aboriginal populations; and,

8. A comparative study to determine whether administrators are receiving adequate training from professional development opportunities that deal with issues in Aboriginal education. Participants could be interviewed as a follow-up to their participation in short courses offered by different professional organizations.

Postscript

In this section the research will continue her role as interpreter to the research and will strive to draw together lessons learned through the literature review and the research. I have learned that I play a major role in the process of “dropping the stones”. I am conscious of the need to clarify my intentions and my role in the process of transformation. I feel that I would best be able to contribute to changes in educational administration when I make a commitment to grow and become more knowledgeable in issues of equity. I intend to continue to be an advocate and model for inclusive practices in educational administration. I also feel a responsibility to continue to contribute to academic research knowledge on the topic of education equity in administrator preparation.

I feel a need to work with mainstream educational institutions, Aboriginal organizations, and individuals to form partnerships that would assist in the transformation. I would like to assist mainstream higher education institutions in accessing information about Aboriginal epistemology, leadership, and organizational structures. I am committed to working in collaboration with faculty members to plan for

transformative curriculum initiatives. I feel that I am growing in my knowledge, I am supportive in the change process, and I am sensitive to cultural diversity.

I am committed to modeling and advocating for multi-paradigm approaches in the delivery of administrator preparation programs. I feel a responsibility to writing in a postmodern and yet, traditional (in the Aboriginal sense) manner. I will continue to strive for balance in both the oral tradition and contemporary research approaches to communicating.

By making a firm statement of my intent, I can, in a postmodern manner, attempt to influence and not prescribe changes to existing administrator preparation programs. “If you see anything good . . . pick it up.” In this manner, I challenge you, the reader, to become an active participant by inviting you to reflect critically on the role you will assume in the preparation of administrators for education equity.

With the aim of informing praxis, I hope that changes will occur to the focus and delivery of educational administrator preparation programs. My hope is that my faculty committee will undertake their own cultural negotiations and transformations, with the purpose of providing the skills and personal knowledge to their graduate students to prepare them fully for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations. However, I fear that what is written in this thesis will be used as a prescription and less for reflection. My wish is that the content of the administrator preparation program will evolve in a way that presents diversity issues as an important part of the core knowledge base in administrator preparation. In this way, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal administrators will receive training that prepares them to work in diverse communities with increasing Aboriginal populations.

Moving On

. . . She could see the shadows of her friends dancing against the trees in the firelight. They were celebrating all that they had learned, and the friendships that had been made. With a shiver, she turned and climbed up the embankment out onto the prairie. Up above her head she saw the North Star and the northern lights on the horizon. She howled a greeting to them both. She watched awhile and listened. Then, smiling, she turned her back on all of them, and started walking southwards . . .

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Appendix A

Breakdown of Participants

APPENDIX A

BREAKDOWN OF PARTICIPANTS

Group	Respondent	Metis/First Nations	Years of experience	Graduate Experience
Aboriginal Teachers	A)	Metis	13	Post-Graduate Diploma
	B)	First Nations	11.5	None
	C)	First Nations	8	None
	D)	First Nations	12	Post-Graduate Diploma
	E)	First Nations	3	None
	F)	First Nations	12	None
	G)	First Nations	4	One course

Non-Aboriginal Administrators	A)	N/A	.5	None
	B)	N/A	10	Ph.D in Curr.
	C)	N/A	10	Masters Ed. Admin.
	D)	N/A	13	Masters EdCur.
	E)	N/A	6.5	Masters Ed.Admin.
	F)	N/A	4	Some grad. Classes in Ed. Admin.

Aboriginal Administrators	A)	First Nations	1	FSIN short course
	B)	First Nations	6	FSIN
	C)	First Nations	6	Some grad. Classes and a principals short course
	D)	First Nations	3	FSIN and Provincial Principals Short Course
	E)	First Nations	1	FSIN SC
	F)	First Nations	3	Masters; 2 FSIN SC's; and the provincial principals short course
	G)	First Nations	4	PGD; FSIN SC
	H)	First Nations	3	FSIN
	I)	Metis	7	Provincial SC
	J)	First Nations	10	PGD; short course both provincially and FSIN

Appendix B

Focus Group Interview Guides

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Non-Aboriginal Administrators Group

Preamble: The researcher will use the following format to conduct the focus group interviews:

Opening:

“I am doing this study in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan in order to identify the skills and knowledge important for work in our diverse communities, with increasing Aboriginal populations. The method of data collection will be audio taping the focus group discussion. I will make transcriptions based on the audio-tapes, and will make field notes as the discussion unfolds. In a focus group discussion, the aim is to create a lively discussion among friends. I want to get a sense of how you perceive the subject at hand. Are there any questions?”

Question #1. In what ways did your administrator preparation provide you with the skills and knowledge necessary to work in diverse communities with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- What sources of information were provided through course content?
- Who were the speakers?
- Describe the kinds of information learned from your classmates.
- What kinds of personal choices did you make in this area? (Read, conferences etc.)
- What sources of literature did you read? Who provided it?
- Did you write any papers in this area?

Question #2. Based on your work experience in an administrative position, what skills and knowledge can you identify are important in working with Aboriginal people?

Probes:

- What problems or issues have you encountered in your work with Aboriginal people?
- What do you feel is important knowledge to have about Aboriginal students, parents, teachers and the Aboriginal community in your community?
- What personal skills are necessary for working with Aboriginal people?
- What professional skills are necessary for working with Aboriginal people?

Question #3. Should administrator preparation programs adapt to provide the skills and knowledge necessary for working in increasingly diverse communities? Why or Why not?

- What are the benefits of an adapted program?
- What might the difficulties be?

Question #4. What changes to administrator preparation would you recommend that would provide future administrators with the skills and knowledge necessary to work in increasing Aboriginal school populations?

Probes:

- What changes to curriculum content of the Education Administration program can you recommend?
- What changes to format of the program?
- What changes to the student selections?
- What changes to faculty?
- What changes to class assignments?
- What changes to inservice opportunities?

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Aboriginal Teachers Group

Preamble: The researcher will use the following format to conduct the focus group interviews:

Opening:

“I am doing this study in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan in order to identify the skills and knowledge important for work in our diverse communities, with increasing Aboriginal populations. The method of data collection will be audio taping the focus group discussion. I will make transcriptions based on the audio-tapes, and will make field notes as the discussion unfolds. In a focus group discussion, the aim is to create a lively discussion among friends. I want to get a sense of how you perceive the subject at hand. Are there any questions?”

Question #1. I would like you to visualize on one placement in a school with high Aboriginal population. Now I would like you to reflect on an administrator who worked effectively in a school with high Aboriginal population. What made this administrator effective in that particular school?

Probes:

- What knowledge did this administrator have that made them effective in that school?
- What skills did the administrator possess that made them effective in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
- What are the qualities of an effective administrator in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
- (if necessary) Why is it difficult to identify effective administrators in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

- Think about an administrator who did not work effectively and talk about what skills and knowledge they possessed that made them ineffective.

Question #2. How do administrators acquire skills and knowledge that helps them to work effectively in schools with high Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- How do they apply their personal and professional skills in order to acquire further knowledge that assists them in their roles as administrators?
- How do they act on that knowledge?

Question #3. The demographics are changing, FSIN in a recent report predicted that the provincial Aboriginal population is increasing and that by 2006 the overall school population will consist of 1/3 Aboriginal students, with the vast majority being First Nations. With that in mind, what skills and knowledge do administrators require in order to work more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- What particular skills are necessary?
- What knowledge is necessary?
- What role does values play in the effectiveness of administrators working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Question #4. In response to demographic changes in the province, how can administrators be prepared today, for the increasing Aboriginal populations of tomorrow?

- How can new administrators be provided with the skills necessary to do their jobs effectively?
- How can new administrators be provided with the knowledge necessary to work more effectively?
- How can the issue of values be addressed?

Question #5. Apart from graduate training, what types of staff development do administrators require to work more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

FOCUS GROUP INTERVIEW GUIDE

Aboriginal Administrators Group

Preamble: The researcher will use the following format to conduct the focus group interviews:

Opening:

“I am doing this study in collaboration with the University of Saskatchewan in order to identify the skills and knowledge important for work in our diverse communities, with increasing Aboriginal populations. The method of data collection will be audio taping the focus group discussion. I will make transcriptions based on the audio-tapes, and will make field notes as the discussion unfolds. In a focus group discussion, the aim is to create a lively discussion among friends. I want to get a sense of how you perceive the subject at hand. Are there any questions?”

Question #1. What formal training did you undertake in preparation for your role as administrator in schools with high Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- Did you attend or are you attending a graduate program? Which one? Where?
- How effectively did this preparation prepare you for work in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
- What in-services/ workshops did you attend that has assisted you in working more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Question #2. Based on your work experience as an administrator, what skills and knowledge are necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

- In comparison to administrators that you have worked for in the past, what personal skills do you identify that assists you in working effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?
- Again, in comparison to administrators that you have worked for in the past, what knowledge do you identify that assists you in working effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?
- What role does your personal values play in working effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Question #3. Our provincial demographics are changing. FSIN in a recent report predicted that the provincial Aboriginal population is increasing and that by 2006 the overall school population will consist of 1/3 Aboriginal students, with the vast majority being First Nations. With that in mind, what skills and knowledge do non-Aboriginal administrators require in order to work more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- What particular skills are necessary?
- What knowledge is necessary?
- What role does values play in the effectiveness of administrators working in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Question #4. What changes to administrator preparation would you recommend that would provide all administrators with the skills and knowledge necessary for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Probes:

- What changes to content are required?
- What changes to course offerings are required?
- What changes to student body are required?
- What changes to instructional format of the programs required?
- What changes to faculty are required?
- What changes to entrance policy are required?
- What changes to evaluation are required?

Question 5. Apart from graduate training, what types of staff development opportunities do administrators require to work more effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Appendix C

Questionnaires

APPENDIX C
 QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ABORIGINAL & NON-ABORIGINAL
 ADMINISTRATORS

- a) Have you complete or are you taking an administrator preparation program? (circle) Yes No
- b) Where did you receive your administrator preparation (Education Administration Graduate Studies)? _____
- c) How many years of experience do you have in school based administrative positions?

- d) How many years have you been in your present school? _____
- e) The percentage of Aboriginal students in the school where you presently work is _____
- f) Use the following rating scale to identify the **quality** of **Aboriginal content** in your administrator preparation program.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
poor					neutral					excellent

- g) Use the following rating scale of the **quantity** of the **Aboriginal content** in your administrator preparation program.

0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
none					some					a lot

- h) What changes would you like to see in administrator preparation to improve the knowledge base of administrators in the area of Aboriginal education?

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ABORIGINAL TEACHERS

- a) How long have you been a teacher? _____
- b) How long have you worked in this particular school? _____
- c) What is the % of Aboriginal students in your present school? _____
- d) What skills are necessary for administrators to work effectively in schools with high Aboriginal populations?
- e) What knowledge is necessary for administrators to work effectively in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?
- f) Generally, how well prepared are administrators for work in schools with increasing Aboriginal populations?

Appendix D

Consent Form

Department of Educational Administration
College of Education
University of Saskatchewan
Saskatoon, Saskatchewan
S7N 0W0

PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

“Dropping Stones in Still Waters: Administrator Preparation for Education Equity”

Please read the following guidelines, which are designed to safeguard the interests of everyone taking part in the study.

The purpose of this study is to ascertain the skills and knowledge necessary for administrators who work in diverse communities with increasing Aboriginal populations. The object of the research is to triangulate the responses of three different groups (Aboriginal teachers, non-Aboriginal administrators, and Aboriginal administrators) who are presently working in schools with high Aboriginal populations to facilitate discussion on the topic of administrator preparation for education equity. The information gathered may be used to inform praxis in the areas of administrator preparation and the professional development of educational administrators; however, the researcher cannot guarantee that this information will be used. Participants will be provided an opportunity to reflect on their own administrator preparation and the impact it had on the decision making in schools with high Aboriginal populations. Participants will be able to contribute suggestions that may be used in the development of future administrator preparation and professional development opportunities.

1. Participation in this research is voluntary. A decision not to participate or withdraw at any time during the study will have no adverse affects on your employment.
2. You will have the opportunity to participate in a focus group with a maximum of 12 participants.
3. Participants will be asked to complete a questionnaire that may be used to provide demographic data on the research participants.
4. Each focus group will be tape recorded, and information gathered might be used as data for publication, conference presentations, or reports, which may result from the thesis.
5. After the tapes are transcribed, participants will be provided with a summary of the transcriptions, upon request. Participants may examine the summaries for accuracy and make changes where necessary. You will be provided with an enclosed, stamped envelope to return your responses to the researcher.

6. Tape recordings and transcriptions made during this study will be securely stored and retained for a minimum of five years in accordance with the University of Saskatchewan Ethics guidelines.
7. The researcher will guarantee the confidentiality of the participants in the writing of the thesis or any articles resulting from the thesis. The researcher will also guarantee anonymity of the participants, through the use of pseudonyms where necessary in the thesis, articles, or presentations that result from the thesis.
8. Confidentiality of the focus group can not be guaranteed due to the nature of the focus group format; therefore, participants are requested to maintain confidentiality in regard to the nature of the focus group discussions.
9. After the focus group session, you may be contacted and asked to provide further clarification with regards to themes or questions, which may arise during the transcription process.
10. Any questions, which you have about the research, can be directed to:

Shauneen Pete-Willett
 Graduate Student
 Educational Administration
 College of Education
 University of Saskatchewan
 (306) 955-6251 or 966-7711

Larry Sackney
 Faculty Member
 Educational Administration
 College of Education
 University of Saskatchewan
 (306) 966-7626

I have read and understood the above guidelines and agree to participate in the focus group. With these conditions, I hereby agree to participate in Shauneen Pete-Willett's study, "Dropping Stones in Still Waters: Administrator Preparation for Education Equity".

**Participant Consent
 (Researcher's Copy)**

Date: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Home Mailing Address: _____

Phone Number: _____

E-mail address: _____

Researcher's signature: _____

I have read and understood the above guidelines and agree to participate in the focus group. With these conditions, I hereby agree to participate in Shauneen Pete-Willett's study, "Dropping Stones in Still Waters: Administrator Preparation for Education Equity".

**Participant Consent
(Participant's Copy)**

Date: _____

Participant's Signature: _____

Researcher's Signature: _____