Minding the Gap:

Librarians and Career Pathways in Community College Administration

by

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ABSTRACT

The community college leadership pipeline is a source for concern in the face of anticipated retirements, yet most administrators come only from the ranks of classroom faculty, not from the full spectrum of all faculty. Librarians, whose experiences lend themselves to many administrative duties, seldom advance into administrative positions. This study was centered on the development of a career coaching intervention by which participants from a subset of California community college libraries received guidance from administrators who had previously been librarians. The aim was to see whether such an intervention could increase administrative skills, improve self-efficacy to perform in administrative roles, increase perceptions of the desirability of attaining such positions, and lead to greater intent to move onto such career pathways. The study found that a career coaching program had mixed success at addressing the study aims, but that it also opened space for librarians alone to explore other leadership and professional growth opportunities. The research argues for the restaging of such a career coaching program, centered on librarians only, so as to encourage their advancement, whether into administrative ranks at their community colleges or otherwise.

It would not have been possible to juggle the program and my work and home lives without the constant, unwavering support and love from my husband, Conrad Paulson. I am so grateful for all the times you picked up takeaway or absolved me of dishwashing, laundry, and other household duties so that I could spend hours immersed in readings, discussion boards, and drafts, for all the times you listened while I waxed on about my research idea, findings, obstacles, and progress. May you never have to hear the word "homework" from my lips again once this is all done. You are a rock and more. I love you, Conrad, and dedicate this to you. Snacks and each other, always.

Van Woodcock, thank you as well for the love and encouragement you have given these past years and for how you (and Olive!) have provided welcome respite from the toil of the process. I am so grateful for all you share with me, and I hope I show that.

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I think it's that people feel they can't advance like that. The system is against them already, and I don't know how to break outside of people just lying and saying just, just do it. Don't, don't think if that's, that's the choice, if they don't choose you, it's not your choice. Other people make that choice for you. I think many times in so many disciplines we allow ourselves to be self-marginalized, and the only way to stop that is just put your hand up and say, "Hey, I'm here".
  Cycle 0 interview participant 7, personal communication, March 28, 2019

Based on my observation from working as a librarian in higher education for 20 years, there is an absence of librarians among the administrative ranks in colleges and universities. From a perspective inside libraries, librarians often feel as though we occupy a core position on campuses—both physically and organizationally. After all, library workers interact with almost every unit at colleges and universities—academic affairs, student services, fiscal services, facilities, and more—and may possibly be in contact with any and all students. This scope to our work lends itself to the cultivation of substantial campus networks and to the potential for developing a broad understanding of the institutions as a whole. In short, librarians, as we see ourselves, would seem to be well-positioned to gain the sort of overview of colleges and universities that is useful preparation to be candidates for upper administration. Despite this perspective, there are few examples of librarians who have advanced into administrative positions at their institutions or at other colleges. In making sense of this observation and in determining the accuracy of the perception arising from it, it is important to understand factors that are intrinsic to librarians: librarian perceptions of the qualities that lead to career paths in administration, librarian intentions to access those career paths, and librarian self-efficacy

in considering administrative careers in higher education. Exploring what is inherent to librarians in higher education insofar as it might either position them for such careers or constrain them and developing a mechanism for coaching librarians is the problem of practice at the core of this study.

In my Cycle 0 research, I interviewed a college administrator who had begun his academic career as a librarian. He had this to say: "I think we actually have the skills more than many academic disciplines for the role as an administrator because of our detail-oriented nature. … We uniquely see both sides of our enterprise" (Cycle 0 interview participant 7, personal communication, March 28, 2019). Librarians, in other words, acquire a skill set and even a perspective that should position them as suitable candidates for career advancement at their institutions and elsewhere. The value in undertaking this research is the possibility of unlocking a potential and skilled pool of librarians who could serve the community colleges well as administrators.

Larger Context

Community colleges play an important role in higher education in the United States. In 2019, 11.8 million students nationwide were enrolled in 1044 two-year institutions (American Association of Community Colleges, 2021). Those students earned 878,900 associate degrees, 619,711 certificates, and 20,700 baccalaureate degrees in 2018-2019 (American Association of Community Colleges). Community college students account for 41% of all undergraduates in the United States, including 56% of Native American undergraduates, 53% of Hispanic undergraduates, and 43% of African American undergraduates (American Association of Community Colleges). Administration within the community colleges thus has an impact on a considerable

population of students, and issues of administration thereby matter to the educational goals of many.

Researchers in educational administration have raised concerns about the leadership pipeline and leadership succession across the community college platform multiple times in the past twenty years (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002; Phillippe, 2016; Shults, 2001; Tekle, 2012; VanDerLinden, 2004; Weisman & Vaughn, 2007). More recent data from the American Council on Education, as cited in the American Association of Community Colleges & Association of Community College Trustees (2018) white paper *Executive Leadership Transitioning at Community Colleges*, indicated that in 2016 more than 50% of community college presidents had plans for imminent retirement. The potential impact on millions of students as leadership at their institutions seek new presidents and other administrators is tremendous. Filling so many positions in community college leadership requires consideration of the pathways to administration as well as of the composition of the pools of potential candidates. In short, where do new administrators come from and how do they set out on the leadership path?

In the national landscape of community colleges, the California Community Colleges are collectively the largest higher education system in the nation (California Community Colleges, 2021), accounting for 2,324,918 students in 2019-2020 (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, n.d.). The system consists of 116 colleges that are distributed across 72 districts across the state. The districts roughly correspond to municipalities in some instances (e.g., Pasadena City College) or counties in others (e.g., Cuesta College in San Luis Obispo County). Although the concerns over leadership in

community colleges at a national level inform this study, the large size and population of the California Community College system position the system as the broader context for this problem of practice.

The California Community College system is unified under a statewide chancellor (California Community Colleges, 2020), but each district has its own organizational structure in place. Although that structure may vary somewhat from one district to another, typically each college's administrative team is led by a superintendent or president. Among the assistant superintendents or vice presidents there is usually one designated for academic affairs (or instruction, as the office is called at some colleges) and one for student services. Beyond those three positions, the colleges each employ numerous other administrators at different levels from additional vice presidents to deans of schools or divisions. As is the case with all other institutions of higher education that accept federal funding, each institution within the California Community Colleges is subject to accreditation through the Accrediting Commission for Community and Junior Colleges (ACCJC). The ACCJC accreditation standards mandate that each college provide learning resources, including library services, to students (ACCJC, 2019). This means—in practice—that aside from the administrative positions noted above, each college has a library and at least one librarian.

The employee status of librarians at community colleges across the country varies in that at some institutions, librarians may be classed as support staff, or classified employees, while at others they may have faculty status. In the California Community Colleges, however, all full-time librarians have faculty status irrespective of the college where they may work. In practice this means that librarians enjoy and exercise the same

rights and responsibilities as do other faculty, including earning tenure through the same structure as classroom faculty. This further means that librarians in California Community Colleges are eligible for leadership roles that include chairing departments, faculty committees, faculty associations (union bargaining units), and academic senates. Because of the faculty leadership possibilities that are open to librarians and because librarians are faculty with no differentiation in status from faculty who teach in classrooms, it is reasonable to assume that librarians should also be part of a population of potential leadership candidates from which the colleges may cultivate future administrators.

The larger context for the study looks at administration of community colleges in California, a state in which 10% of all public community colleges in the United States are found (US Department of Education, 2017). As in the rest of the country, the source for future leaders for the California community colleges is a concern. Research on pathways to community college leadership has demonstrated the continued prevalence of the traditional classroom faculty entry point and subsequent progression higher through the chief academic officer's position (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002; Keim & Murray, 2008; McKenney & Cejda, 2000). This means that the 424 full time librarians at the colleges (Council of California Community Colleges Chief Librarians, n.d.) are at a disadvantage in proportion to the 18,787 other faculty with whom they work (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, n.d.). That small percentage of librarians (2.20%) among all California community college faculty suggests that it is easy for librarians to be overlooked in a larger pool of faculty. The potentially distinctive strengths that librarians could bring to administrative positions would be lost. Moreover,

this leads to a deficit of role models of librarians who have moved into such positions. Taken together, these argue for attention to be paid to the career development needs of librarians so that they might follow a pathway into administration.

Local Context

Within the community college system, though there is frequent collaboration among the colleges, there are few examples of formal and long term sustained regional cooperatives across community college district lines. One exception to this is found among the libraries that work together through the Council of California Community College Chief Librarians (CCL) (Council of California Community Colleges Chief Librarians, n.d.), a collective that has a formal working relationship with the statewide community college system. The CCL, as a body, cooperates on matters of common interest across its members, such as consortium-wide purchasing arrangements. An elected board governs the CCL; membership on the board includes regional directors. The College of the Canyons (COC), where I am head librarian, along with nine other community colleges[1] is represented on the board as part of the West Central region.

The West Central colleges range in setting and size. Some, such as Bakersfield College and College of the Canyons, are in larger urban and suburban settings in southern California. Others serve smaller cities, such as Santa Barbara City College. Taft College is an outlier, serving a town of fewer than 10,000 residents in western Kern County. The colleges' libraries themselves vary as well, by size or collection focus or number of sites. A key variation in terms of this study is in the staffing and management of the library. In

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[1] The colleges in the West Central region are Allan Hancock College, Antelope Valley College, Bakersfield College, College of the Canyons, Cuesta College, Moorpark College, Oxnard College, Santa Barbara City College, Taft College, and Ventura College.

some cases, there is an appointed head librarian or an elected library department chair who manages the library. In other cases, there is a dean with more direct responsibility for the library. The number of full-time librarians at each college in the region is generally small, ranging from one each at Taft College and Oxnard College to five librarians at COC.

The relatively short distances among most of the libraries in the region have enabled growing communication among them, such as discussion of shared interests by electronic means, face-to-face meetings, and shared trainings and workshops. Although there are other community colleges that lie closer to COC, there is no recent history of regular cooperation or communication between COC library and the community college libraries outside the West Central region. Because of the proximity of most of the colleges and the history of collaboration and communication among them, the libraries in the West Central region community colleges collectively form the local context for this research study.

Personal Context

In early 2013 I moved from Chicago, where I was a department head in the library at a large, research-intensive state university, to the College of the Canyons (COC). COC is the only community college in the Santa Clarita Community College District which encompasses the bedroom community of Santa Clarita and surrounding unincorporated areas of Los Angeles County. The college has two campuses, each with its own library facility. As head librarian at the college, I am responsible for the library's strategic direction as well as its daily operations (on both campuses) which include managing the budget, schedule, and facilities. In practice I am the library manager but in actuality,

because of the constraints of contracts negotiated by the bargaining units at the college, technically the Dean of Educational Technology, Learning Resources, and Distance Learning manages the library staff and has signing authority for budgetary items. Despite this formal organizational structure, I am sometimes mistaken by colleagues on campus, including other faculty, as an administrator. Moreover, since my position is one of only a handful of 12-month faculty positions on campus, it has even greater semblance of an administrative role. The work of the position – dealing with offices on campus ranging from Facilities to Purchasing to Human Resources to Academic Affairs to Student Services in one capacity or another – means that it often *feels* like my position is an administrative position. It is, however, a faculty position with all of the rights, responsibilities, and constraints that being a member of faculty entails.

Although there are advantages to remaining a faculty member, such as the security of being part of a bargaining unit, I have long been interested in a career beyond that and beyond libraries in higher education. The opportunity to contribute to decision making at a level above the library and with greater impact on the educational pursuits of our students has had great appeal to me. Consequently, in March 2016 I applied to a leadership development program, Admin 101, sponsored by the Association of California Community College Administrators (ACCA). My application package included support from administrators at my own college. I had scholarship monies from the Council of Chief Librarians, California Community Colleges (CCL) to use. I was a relatively new library director, three years into the position and thereby within the five-year window to qualify, and I had an excellent record of leadership in professional associations. Nonetheless, I was rejected.

The ACCA program had room for 72 participants, and there were 75 applicants. I was one of only a few who did not get in. When I returned to the CCL to thank them for their support and recommend that they offer the monies to someone else, I was told privately by a colleague from another library that librarians typically had difficulty gaining entry to the Admin 101 program. Priority, in her observation, was instead given to those who had come up through the classroom ranks. The message that the rejection implicitly thereby sent me was that librarians were fine to stay in libraries at the colleges, but seeking a position with greater administrative responsibility was not a career path for us. This set me to ponder the suitability of librarians for careers in higher education administration. I began to wonder how many had started down that road and why so many seemed not to do so.

Justification for the Study

There is evidence to support my observation of an absence of librarians from administrative ranks. The colleges in the West Central region exemplify that absence. Table 1 shows the educational background for the President/Superintendent, the VPs for Academics and for Student Services (because libraries are typically placed organizationally in the reporting lines for one or the other in the California Community Colleges), and for the dean under whose responsibility the library falls. As of the end of 2019, I had identified 38 filled administrative positions across the ten colleges. Of those 38, where information was available on the academic background of the incumbent, at no college was there an administrator in those key positions who held a library degree. This complete absence does not even rise to the low 2.20% threshold that librarians account for in terms of the overall faculty body in the system. For the colleges in the West

Central, the most logical first step onto the administrative pathway for librarians—the dean under whose jurisdiction the library falls—has been closed to librarians. In short, we have not been entrusted to be our own administrators.

The American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (2017) has determined that the most typical pathway to the presidency (41% of presidents) is to come through positions in academic affairs. Qualifications for administrative positions are set locally as opposed to statewide. A glance at a pair of postings in fall 2018, each searching for applicants for hiring pools for vice presidents of instruction (equivalent to academic affairs), showed that there were certain qualifications that were commonly required or at least desired (ACCCA, August 24, 2018; September 21, 2018). One of these desired qualifications was a doctoral degree. As Table 1 shows, most of those at the vice president level or higher held a doctoral degree and a slim majority of deans did as well. The other typical qualification was classroom experience. Given the relationship of the position to the teaching departments, this qualification aligns with an understanding of curriculum and instruction on community college campuses. Though the qualifications were desired, they may have been a barrier to librarians on campuses. Unlike many instructional fields such as history, English, or the sciences where doctoral degrees are more commonly held, the terminal degree for librarians is the master's degree in library and information studies (MLIS). There are few librarians who pursue and achieve a doctorate. With respect to the classroom experience qualification, while librarians often teach one-shot instruction sessions, few teach courses, develop curriculum, and have standard instructional experience. Based on those two

Table 1.

Degree information for select administrators at West Central region colleges

College	President / Superintendent		VP Academic		VP Student Services		Dean overseeing library	
	Library Degree?	Doctoral degree?	Library Degree?	Doctoral degree?	Library Degree?	Doctoral degree?	Library Degree?	Doctoral degree?
Allan Hancock	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes
Antelope Valley	Not found	N/A	Vacant position	N/A	Not found	Yes	No	Yes
Bakersfield	No	Yes	No	No	Not found	Yes	No	Yes
Canyons	No	Yes	No	Yes	Not found	Yes	No	No
Cuesta	Not found	Yes	Not found	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Moorpark	No	No*	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes
Oxnard	No	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	Yes
Santa Barbara	No	Yes	No	Yes	Position does not exist	n/a	No	Yes
Taft	No	Yes	Not found	No	No	No	Position does not exist	N/A
Ventura	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes

* Incumbent holds a JD. For the purposes of this study, that degree is not treated as a doctoral degree since it is the entry degree in legal education.

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qualifications, librarians are already at a disadvantage in attaining certain administrative positions. Wanting to understand that disadvantage and other factors related to librarian career advancement, I undertook two cycles of interviews.

Cycle 0 – Interviews with Administrators

The data from the West Central Region supported my observation that librarians are absent from administrative career pathways in the community colleges, even from positions that oversee the library. Moreover, the data seemed to suggest that a doctoral degree is preferred for hiring into administrative positions in the California community colleges. In order to explore more deeply, I turned to administrators themselves, looking to those who have come through libraries into administrative positions as well as administrators who did not to better understand what career pathways into those positions might look like. While there were examples of librarians who have continued into administration across the state, there were none in the West Central region. Consequently, the Cycle 0 study drew upon participants from outside that region in order to ensure a full complement of participants.

Table 2 provides information on the set of administrators who participated in the interviews. There were eight interview participants drawn from community college administrator ranks, seven from the California community colleges. The participants were evenly divided between those with library backgrounds and those without. Their areas of responsibility ranged from the associate dean level up to the chancellor of a multi-college district and included at least one participant from outside of the typical reporting lines for the library, which are usually through the vice-president for instruction or the vice-president for student services. Participants were evenly divided between

women and men. Though seven of the eight participants hold a doctoral degree – and the

eighth is nearing completion of such a degree – the pool was not selected with this

characteristic in mind. Three of the women (and none of the men) identified as members

of visible minorities though ethnicity and race were not considerations in constructing the

pool. There were no other personal or educational characteristics that determined the

composition of the pool or that were noteworthy from the results of the interviews.

Table 2.

Cycle 0 interview participants

Date	Position	Area of responsibility	Library background	Doctorate	Gender	Visible minority
15-Mar-19	Vice-President	Student Services	No	Yes	Female	Yes
18-Mar-19	Dean	Learning Resources	Yes	In process	Male	No
18-Mar-19	Associate Dean	Learning Resources	Yes	Yes	Female	Yes
18-Mar-19	Vice-President*	Student Success	Yes	Yes	Female	No
20-Mar-19	Vice-President	Fiscal Services	No	Yes	Male	No
28-Mar-19	Vice-President	Student Services	No	Yes	Female	Yes
28-Mar-19	President	Administration	Yes	Yes	Male	No
29-Mar-19	Chancellor	Administration	No	Yes	Male	No

* Interview participant was at a community college outside of California

The Cycle 0 study used a semi-structured interview process. Each interview

consisted of six questions (Appendix A) with allowance for follow-up questions to probe

responses more thoroughly. The interview questions accounted for three concepts:

participant educational and career background, qualities and competencies needed for

administrative work, and challenges or any other issues facing those who want to enter

administrative career pathways. Following the interviews, I coded the transcripts, then

reviewed the codes to provide some standardization. Based on this coding, I was able to

determine several prevalent themes across the responses:

1. Competencies for administrative positions

2. Desired credentials for administrative positions

3. Gaps in training to become administrators

4. Grooming of administrators

5. Personal qualities

6. Traditional versus non-traditional career pathways

There were additional, useful points of information gleaned from individual interviews.

The qualities, including competencies, that are necessary for administrator

positions were mentioned in many of the responses. The competency most often

mentioned was communication skills, though among them the participants spoke to the

importance of such other skills as strategic planning and time management. By contrast

to competencies, which are skills that may be acquired, the personal qualities that

participants felt that administrators should have were qualities that are more intrinsic to

the individual. Indeed, a number of the participants provided insight into what they

thought their own personal qualities were. A sense of humor was a shared trait among

multiple interview subjects, but there were unique ones as well, as when Cycle 0

interview participant 8 (March 29, 2019) mentioned needing stamina. Overall, though,

participants identified a varied set of competencies and personal qualities needed to be an

administrator.

Consideration of what competencies and personal qualities an administrator

should possess leads to a related area of discussion: professional development.

Participants mentioned the relationships they had benefited from and how they now try to provide development opportunities for junior colleagues. The corollary to the discussion of the benefits of grooming potential administrators is the acknowledgement that they possess gaps in their knowledge and skill sets. A stark example came from Cycle 0 interview participant 1 (March 15, 2019) who noted, "Project management skills. If I could run my own doctoral program in community college leadership, that's one of the things that I would teach." Indeed, not all who advance into administrative careers have had the education or training to prepare them. Instead, experience and even longevity led to promotion without necessarily equipping the new administrators with the tools needed. As Interviewee 2 (March 18, 2019) stated,

> I think oftentimes in community colleges someone who is an excellent
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> professor gets promoted or in the library a great librarian then may
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> become the director the manager of the library. That's not always the best
>
> decision. They might have all that knowledge. But I think there's a
>
> different skill-set when it comes to actually leading and managing people.

The responses suggest that not all administrators who enter the role do so as well-prepared as they should be.

As for pathways into administrative careers, each of the participants spoke to their own. Although a couple of them had spent entire careers in community colleges, most had worked in 4-year institutions as well. All but one had had classroom experience, with the most senior administrator in the pool noting, "I think teaching experience is beneficial for CEOs, and anybody can get teaching experience if they just make that effort" (Cycle 0 interview participant 8, personal communication, March 29, 2019). Even

those who had not followed a pathway into administration from the classroom agreed on the value in having had that experience.

The predominance of the traditional pathway into administration from the classroom was not without its critics, however, both among those with the library background and those without. As Cycle 0 interview participant 2 (March 18, 2019) stated

> It's going to be a challenge since [they're] going to look at you as the dean of the library. And so, when [they're] hiring for vice presidential positions often times people want to see some of that instructional background. Fortunately, I can talk to that, but still, I'm coming from the library, and there is I think some form of the stigma that that's a dean of a different type.

His response reflected his concerns for his own ambitions. Cycle 0 interview participant 1 (March 15, 2019), who came from the classroom, assessed the conventional administrative career pathway more succinctly: "Just because you're good in the classroom doesn't mean you're good as a manager, and it's been like that for a long time." Although almost all of the participants had included instruction in their toolbox of career experiences, not all of them necessarily saw it as providing skills or experience that a community college administrator may need.

Of all the Cycle 0 interviews, the one with participant 7 (March 28, 2019) was the most helpful in shaping my thinking on how to proceed with this study. Although the participant was not the only one to have come from libraries, he was the librarian who had ascended to the highest position in a community college. As such, his perspective on

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community college administration and of how librarians may fit into such careers came from an especially high-level, global perspective of such institutions. In his view, the traditional pathway from the classroom into administration and any other factors that are external to librarianship itself are not the only things that hold librarians back. Rather, he suggested that librarians do that to themselves: "We have our own hard time of articulating our uniqueness to the rest of the campus. So, we self-isolate ourselves." In other words, the argument that librarians have much to offer as potential administrators is a difficult one to make if we cannot make others understand the work that we do, the impact of that work, and how that work centers us within college networks. As the epigraph for this chapter indicates, it is incumbent on librarians to announce our interest in and ability to take on administrative roles.

The Cycle 0 interviews proved valuable in gaining an understanding of career pathways into community college administration through the examples that were shared. More importantly, they were critical to deciding a direction for this study. Although the interview data spoke to obstacles that librarians (and others) might face from outside their experiences, the data also addressed the skills and inherent traits that lead to career advancement. With this in mind, I turned my attention to librarians themselves and the need to explore their perceptions of administration and of their own potential.

Cycle 1 – Interviews with Librarians

Where the Cycle 0 research process consisted of interviews with 8 community college administrators, the 4 interview subjects in Cycle 1 were librarians in the California community colleges. Because I had planned to focus on the West Central region for the intervention in a later study cycle, and I did not want to introduce bias from

the interviewing process into the intervention participant pool, I tried not to include librarians from the region in the Cycle 1 interviews. However, the difficulty of securing interview participants led me to include one in the Cycle 1 pool. That same interviewee subsequently participated in the career coaching program at the heart of this study, though they did not comment on their engagement in the Cycle 1 research in any of the components of the program. The interviews took place in autumn 2019. The participants were divided evenly between women and men, which was atypical of a profession that skews significantly (82.1%) toward women (Data USA, n.d.). None of the participants held positions of responsibility over their library, such as being a head librarian or library department chair. All of the participants identified as persons of color, which is atypical of a field in which 85.9% of librarians identify as white (Data USA, n.d.). All but one had worked in libraries for fewer than ten years.

As in Cycle 0, the librarian interviews involved a semi-structured approach. The questions (Appendix B) touched on four conceptual areas: personal background, the role of librarians at their colleges, perspectives on leadership, and career ambitions. Following transcription of the interviews, I engaged in initial and then focused coding. That resulted in a set of twelve focused codes, Table 3.

The focused codes and interview data suggested a few noteworthy findings. A key starting point was this: librarians may not actually aspire to careers in administration though they may aspire to leadership. This was captured in the prevalence (25 instances) of the focused code "Modest career aspiration" and was also hinted at in the code "Disconnect from administrative work" (4 instances). Instead, the positions the participants aspired to were more modest in nature, such as department chair, which is a

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Table 3.

Cycle 1 interview focused codes in descending order

Focused code	Occurrence
Librarians as engaged on campus	30
Librarians as outsiders	27
Modest career aspiration	25
What leadership means	25
Further education	20
What administration is	16
Librarian identity	13
Value of community colleges	8
Leadership development	7
Library versus college administration	7
Alienation	5
Disconnect from administrative work	4

faculty position. For one participant, for example, the work of administrators was unappealing:

> … when I think about like administration, it goes more into like HR stuff and I am not interested in the HR stuff. …. if they were an administrative position where I could still focus on librarian type duties, I'd be interested in that. But if it was something where it was like a manager of people, I don't think I would be interested in that. (Cycle 1 interview participant 1, personal communication, October 1, 2019)

The responses from the other participants were cautious in nature, admitting that a career move was a (distant) possibility, not a current consideration. Where there was some interest in administrative work, the interview participants still did not aim too high: a deanship was the limit of their collective aspirations: "I go back and forth on that. I

mean, I think, I think eventually I might want to be a dean" (Cycle 1 interview participant 4, personal communication, October 17, 2019). And while they were unsure of administrative career paths, there was more commitment among them to continuing in roles as librarians and faculty members at their colleges. The interview responses that addressed career aspirations seemingly answered a fundamental question of why librarians seldom become community college administrators: they do not want to. This may be true of most teaching faculty as well, and yet, the ranks of administrators – as Table 1 shows – come from the teaching faculty. This Cycle 1 finding was a critical one to follow up on in the intervention.

The modest career aspirations of the participants became more interesting when juxtaposed with the second finding, that they were interested in acquiring credentials that could lead to administrative careers. This was reflected in the focused code "Further education" (20 instances). When it came to formal, for-credit education, one participant was already enrolled in a doctoral program, and every participant indicated at least some interest in additional schooling. Salaries were the driving motivation. By way of context, in the California community colleges it is typical for faculty to be able to move to more lucrative columns on a salary scale based on accumulating further higher education credits. The interview participants were plain about taking advantage of this arrangement: "I have been planning very recently, or very soon, to take community college classes, but only for the purposes of, like, being upgraded to a higher salary rate within my district" (Cycle 1 interview participant 3, personal communication, October 15, 2019). Although administrative careers also lead to higher salaries, the ability to earn more while retaining the protections of faculty status appealed to the participants.

A third, important finding indicated that the librarians identified with their work in libraries and less so as faculty members or with their faculty colleagues. Three of the focused codes addressed this theme: "Librarian identity" (13 instances) "Librarians as outsiders" (27 instances), and "Librarians as engaged on campus" (30 instances). Committee work was the typical means for the librarians to build relationships with other colleagues, as well as teaching library instruction sessions. Beyond that, however,

> … there are a lot of social factors where it feels like the faculty
>
> community is not very close or we don't interact as often and we don't
>
> interact often enough… to create, to create like meaningful relationships.
>
> …. there is a little bit of an, an isolation feeling …. (Cycle 1 interview
>
> participant 3, personal communication, October 15, 2019).

The disconnect between librarians and other faculty was sometimes palpable in the interviews. By contrast to their relationships on campus outside of the library, the participants felt deeper connection with the work they do in the library. This was reminiscent of Heath and Heath's (2010) Identity Model of Decision Making which suggests that who we are, or rather how we identify as who we are, influences the decisions we make. In other words, librarians might not choose an administrative career path because they see themselves solely as librarians working in libraries, not as potential administrators or even, to some extent, members of a broader college community. The interview responses suggested that this would be a fruitful line of subsequent inquiry.

An unexpected finding from the interviews and subsequent coding was the suggestion that the primary barrier to librarians becoming administrators in the California community colleges rests with the librarians themselves. Although I have previously

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indicated that, based on my experience and observation, there is a lack of both regard for librarians and opportunity for them, it seems that there may also be some lack of aspiration among librarians either to attain administrative positions or to identify as potential administrators. This contrasts with my own interests in such a career while the data from the West Central region might suggest that few other librarians share that interest with me. The strong sense of identity as librarians, as the Cycle 1 participants evidenced, would presumably be inherent to individuals in the profession and may contribute to an explanation of why it is that librarians are largely absent from administrative ranks. Yes, librarians do pursue credentials that could set them on career pathways upward, but the motivation for attaining credentials lies in the potential for financial gain, not in the ability to promote. The implication for an innovation designed to support librarians in pursuing leadership opportunities is that it would have to persuade them of the worth, the desirability, of moving into administrative roles.

Research Questions

The study examines the perception, intentions, and beliefs that are particular to librarians as they pertain to accessing career pathways in community college administration. The mechanism of a career coaching program is the device by which those perceptions, intentions, and beliefs are both assessed and potentially changed. The purpose of the study is to determine what impact the career coaching intervention has on librarians in so far as they are interested in and feel prepared to gain access to career pathways in community college administration. The research questions that will guide this study are

RQ 1: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' (a) administrative skills and (b) self-efficacy as a potential administrator in the California community colleges?

RQ 2: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' sense of (a) both the feasibility and desirability of attaining and (b) intent to seek administrative positions in California community colleges?

Chapter 2

Theoretical Perspectives and Research Guiding the Project

In 1968 librarian Robert Munn wondered if academic administrators
thought about the library and upon investigation he concluded, 'They
(administrators) do not think much about the library at all' [p. 52]. Until
recently, I have always been disappointed and skeptical of Munn's
conclusion. Now, it saddens me to admit he was right.

Deemer 2007 (p. 26)

The previous chapter established that in the context of a wave of vacancies in

community college administration, there is a lack of librarians moving into these

positions. This study addresses the questions surrounding an absence of librarian

movement into such leadership roles through the lens of Social Cognitive Career Theory

(SCCT), which derives from the earlier work of Bandura (1996, 2005), connecting career

development with his examination of the influence of environment and self-realization on

learning. In addition to these theories, there are auxiliary theories that relate to the

development of aspects of the study but do not fully frame it: Credentialing Theory,

Human Capital Theory, Trait Theory of Leadership, and the Identity Model of Decision

Making. In the context of this study, however, it is interesting to consider what each of

those theories has to say about career pathways. Figure 1 shows the relationship between

SCCT, as the framing theory, to the specific components of the research as well as how

the auxiliary theories fit. The first sections of this chapter offer exploration of SCCT and

its parent theory, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), then a briefer discussion of the

auxiliary theories. These sections are followed by a discussion of the implications of the

theories on the study.

Figure 1. Theoretical framework and relationship to the study.
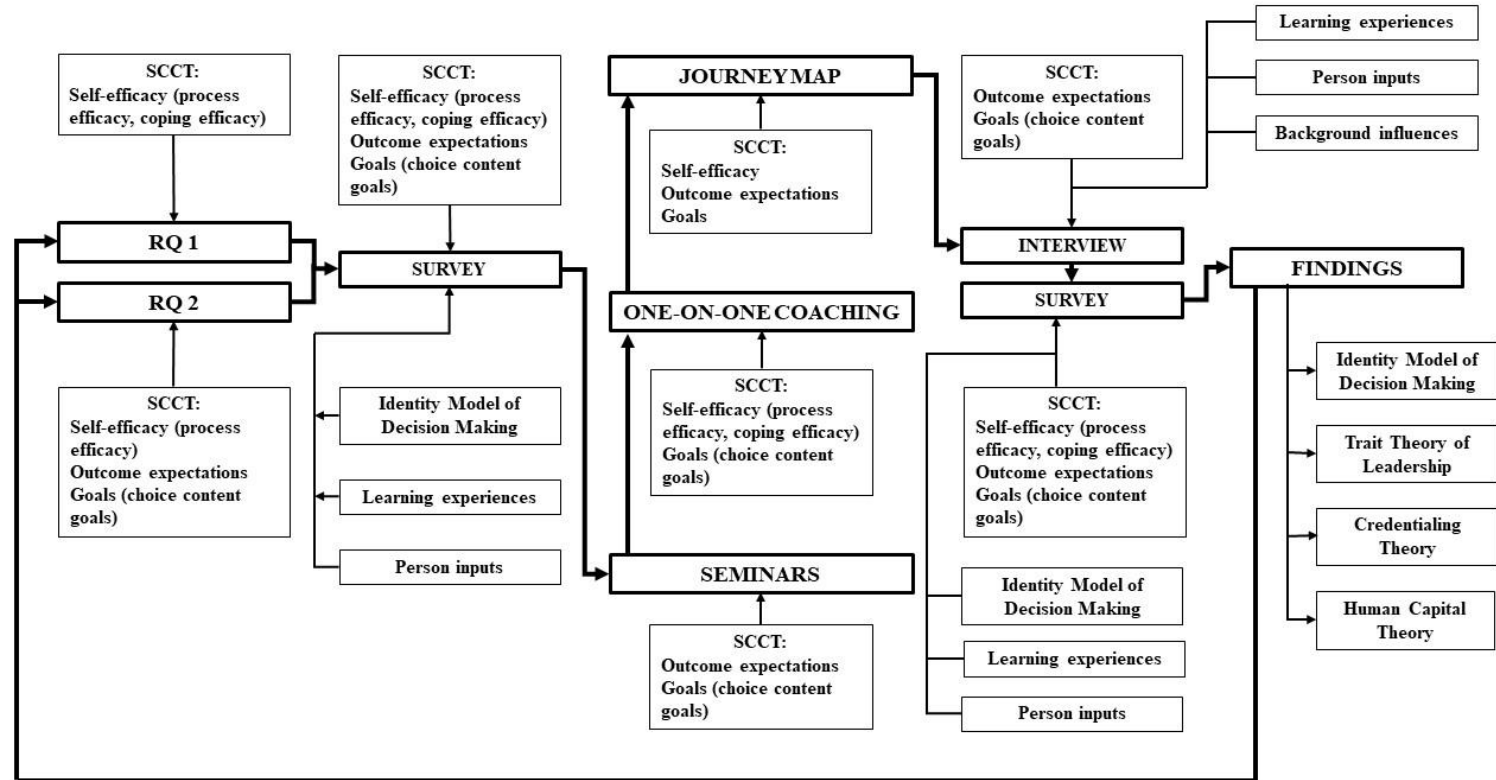
After the examination of the theoretical framework, there follows a section that discusses the body of research related to the study. To date there has been no research that specifically addresses matters of librarians in community college administrative positions. There are, however, two related areas of research: (a) what has been studied and written about community college leadership and administration, both in California and in a national context, and (b) what has been studied and written about academic library leadership and administration. In the absence of research to address the role of librarians in community college administration, it becomes necessary to explore each of these other areas in turn. This body of literature does not strictly connect to the theories that underpin this study – in many instances, especially in the library literature, there is no reference to guiding theories at all – but serves instead to contextualize the study and to support the need for the research.

Social Cognitive Career Theory

To understand Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), it is necessary first to introduce its parent theory, Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), which arises from the work of preeminent psychologist Albert Bandura. Whereas SCT looks at learning more generally, SCCT extends Bandura's (1986) work into the area of career development by focusing on three components: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals. Further exploration of each component follows in a later section. Although SCCT clearly builds upon the notion of self-regulation as expressed in Bandura (1986), it has implications beyond a traditional learning (classroom) setting and on the aspirations of those, including librarians, who may seek advanced career paths in community colleges. This

section begins with an overview of SCT before providing an examination of SCCT as it relates to the study.

Social Cognitive Theory

Social Cognitive Theory originated as Social Learning Theory in the 1960s, and shifted into its present identity in the 1980s (1986). Bandura based SCT on three core tenets that have reciprocal relationships one to another: person, environment, and behavior (Figure 2, as adapted from Lough, Pharr, & Guerin, 2016). The first of these, person, encompasses a few concepts that are especially germane to this study. Self-efficacy addresses the belief in one's capability to achieve a certain performance. Outcome expectations are what a person believes the results of achieving that performance will be like, what effect that achievement will have. Goals speak to intentions to strive for and attain such a performance achievement. All three of these concepts contained within the tenet of person are of particular importance in the subsequent development of SCCT.

A starting point for thinking of SCT in relationship to career advancement for librarians is with the concept that modeled behavior is more effective for learners when the learners believe that the models bear similarities to them. In terms of career advancement, this suggests that those who wish to access pathways to administration positions will look to and learn more from those they feel came from a similar background or whose pathway reflects the learners' aspirations. Moreover, they will come to view those career pathways as valid choices for themselves. In other words, librarians will be more likely to learn from and emulate the career decisions of those who have come from library backgrounds and have subsequently promoted up and out of

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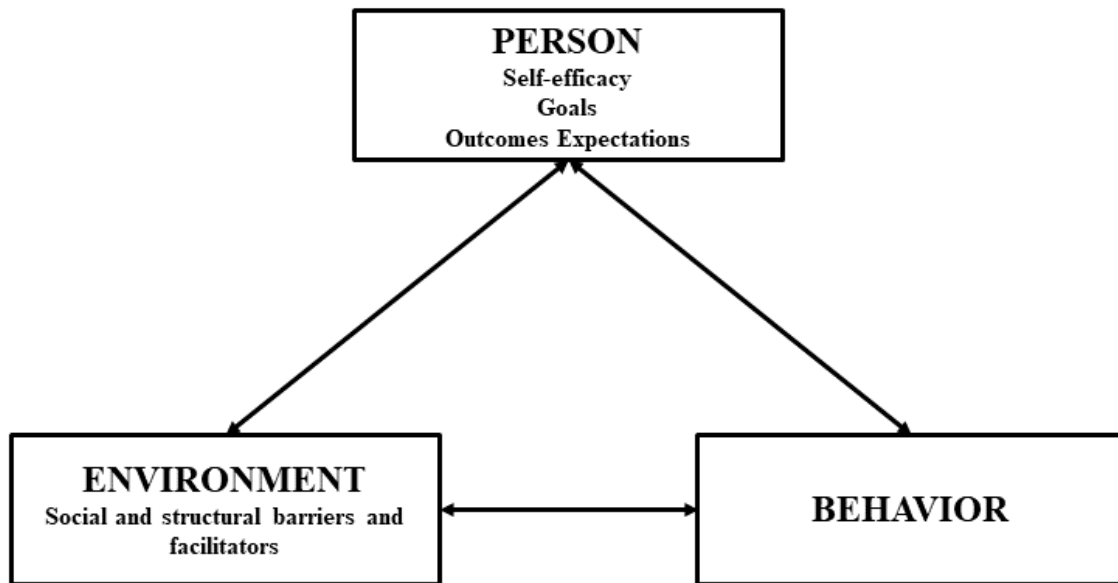
Figure 2. Relationships of components of Social Cognitive Theory

libraries in community colleges. This assumes, of course, that environmental factors are

not barriers to accessing those career pathways. Although Bandura's (1986) theory

emphasized the importance of modeled behavior in the learning process, a shortage of

models will affect the success of the learners. As the data from the examination of the

local context made clear, across the state and looking at the deanship level, there are at

least some role models for librarians. Looking higher into community college

administrative structures, however, there are fewer models for librarians to follow, and

fewer librarians are thus likely to seek such career paths. In this way, the reciprocal

relationship among environment, person, and behavior (Figure 2) is demonstrated

through the case of librarians and community college administrative careers.

Given that learners model themselves on the behaviors and actions they observe,

programs such as mentorships can provide opportunities to learn. In California, there is a

longstanding program for future leaders in the community colleges, provided by

ACCCA, the Association of California Community College Administrators (n.d.).

Valeau (1999) was the first to attempt an assessment of the program, approximately a

decade after its establishment, determining that a majority of participants rated the

program as a good experience, if not entirely successful at leading to career promotion.

Working with Boggs in a 2004 study, Valeau subsequently explored the perspectives of

mentors in the program. This time, their findings were overwhelmingly positive with

over 90% of mentors indicating that the experience was a successful or satisfying one

(Valeau & Boggs, 2004). Taken together, the two studies indicated that there is a

mutually beneficial relationship – an instance of reciprocity – in such mentoring

programs. They also suggested some implications for the Career Advancement Coaching

for Librarians innovation: the interaction between the librarians and administrators needs

to be of sufficient quality, especially since the quantity will be modest, and there will

need to be attainable outcomes for the participants, such as a checklist of skills,

experiences, and knowledge to acquire. Finally, the two studies also hinted at the

statewide scale to which the innovation in this study could grow. Though neither study

used SCT as a theoretical framework, it is possible to draw a connection between their

work and what SCT has to say about modeled behaviors.

In his work Bandura (2005) also addressed what he identified as instances of

fortuity. In much the same way that learners cannot control for all potential disruption to

the environment, neither can those who seek promotion into administrative positions

account for conditions beyond what job postings may indicate. They can, however,

prepare broadly for the possibility of career advancement. In doing so, they become

more adaptable, able to respond when fortuity calls for it. This study seeks to provide a certain preparation specifically for librarians, providing them insight into what they need in order to attain administrative positions. As Bandura noted, "People also make chance work for them by cultivating their interests, enabling beliefs and competencies. These personal resources enable them to make the most of opportunities that arise unexpectedly" (p. 20). No study can control the circumstances at multiple institutions that lead to hiring decisions. However, the intervention has been designed to increase the ability of participants to take advantage of unforeseen opportunities should they arise, not least by means of making the participants more attuned to the possibilities for administrative careers as well as reinforcing their sense of self-efficacy, helping them to develop outcome expectations derived from actual experiences, and encouraging them to establish such goals.

Overview of Social Cognitive Career Theory

As a theory, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) purports to explain how self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals interrelate insofar as they influence career development. The framework, developed by Lent, Brown, and Hackett (1994), originally focused on those three components. Figure 3, an adaptation of Brown, Lent, Telander, and Tramayne (2011), shows the relationship amongst them, indicating how components (capitalized) may influence one another.

To understand the model's proposition, we can turn to Singh, et al. (2013) who restated it elegantly:

> the model predicts that self-efficacy and outcome expectations act
>
> indirectly on goals through their influence on interests. If one perceives

mastery of the skills necessary to an occupational area and believes that

positive outcomes will result from engaging in that behavior, interests are

predicted to develop in that occupational area" (p. 283).

In other words, SCCT extends the person component of Social Cognitive Theory (Figure

2) into the area of career development, demonstrating that self-efficacy and outcome

expectations have an effect on goals. Those three components may be interrelated, but

they are no less distinct. As Singh, et al. further noted,

Confidence that one can accomplish a task is distinct from the

expectations one has about the result of such behavior. Both of these are

separate from interest in the area, the goals to engage in such behavior,

and the actions necessary to implement those goals" (p. 283).

To a lesser extent, as Gushue and Wilson (2006) wrote, later applications of the model

account for "how social context may exert a crucial influence on these cognitive factors

and, consequently, on the development of career interests and career choice" (p. 115).

What is frequently common to applications of an SCCT framework, however, is that it
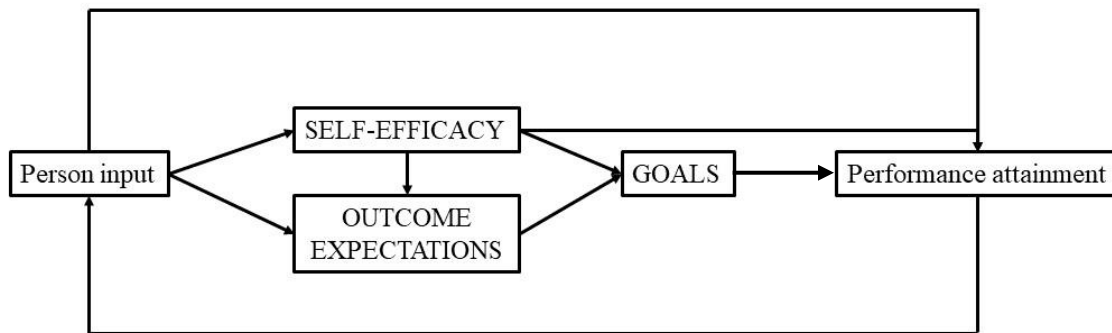
Figure 3. Performance model of Social Cognitive Career Theory.

usually takes into consideration the person input – the factors that are inherent to a person

that may influence decision making in a career context. Overall, though, the literature

varies in the degree to which it addresses environmental factors and even person input,

there is a generally consistent focus on the self-efficacy component in much of the

research. SCCT is thus a useful lens by which to examine the beliefs – in one's self

especially – of individuals in a setting that involves career decision making. In this case,

that would mean librarians and consideration of their potential career paths into

community college administration. Ultimately, all three components of the SCCT model

– self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals – were integrated with this study, albeit

to varying extents. Explanation of each of the three follows.

Self-efficacy

As noted, it is frequently the case within the literature that research using an

SCCT framework addresses the self-efficacy component of the theory, particularly as it

connects to the individual rather than to context or to the environment (Singh, et al.,

2013). It has been posited that this may be the result of how self-efficacy traces back so

clearly to the work of Bandura (Burgener, 2017). This first component speaks to one's

own belief in their abilities to do something: "Self-efficacy expectations can be

conceptualized as the expectations that one has about one's abilities to complete a task or

tasks related to a specific goal" (Yeagley, Subich, & Tokar, 2010, p. 31). Self-efficacy

has been demonstrated to have a positive correlation with goal setting (Yeagley et al,

2010), and greater self-efficacy lends itself to actions that result in goal attainment,

Figure 2. What is more, it is not a static thing, tied only to one point in time or

experience. Instead, self-efficacy can change and increase through learning experiences,

such as a career coaching program (Wells & Kerwin, 2017). Understanding participants'

sense of self-efficacy in this study was addressed through the survey as well as in the

one-on-one coaching component of the intervention and in the career journey mapping

tool that was used in the interview component, Figure 1.

Outcome Expectations

Outcome expectations, the second original component of the SCCT model,

addresses "the imagined consequences of performing particular behaviors" (Lent, Brown,

& Hackett, 1994, p. 83). That word "imagined" is critical – outcome expectations may

differ greatly from the actual consequences. Those imagined consequences may vary

widely to include "extrinsic reinforcement, self-directed consequences, and performance

processing" (Wells & Kerwin, 2017, p. 129). In other words, they may come through

such mechanisms as performance reviews, bonuses, or commendations, among others.

This is not to say that all outcome expectations are positive. As Burgener (2017) noted,

they may also be negative or even both positive and negative. Figure 3 shows that self-

efficacy influences outcome expectations, while the expectations themselves, as with

self-efficacy, also influence goals. Within the literature that draws upon SCCT as a

framework, outcome expectations often take a back seat to self-efficacy, unsurprising

perhaps in view of the influence self-efficacy has on outcome expectations. Nonetheless,

as Figure 1 shows, outcome expectations were a consideration in the design of most of

the components of the intervention and data collection: the pre- and post-intervention

surveys, the seminars, the interviews, and the journey mapping. Based on the insights

shared by the presenters and coaches as well as on the reflections shared in the

interviews, participants were expected to develop and revise expectations of what careers in community college administration might entail.

Goals

The third component, goals, speaks to career decisions that people make based on their sense of self-efficacy and on the outcome expectations that they hold. As Wells and Kerwin (2017) asserted, "Given that goals are influenced by one's outcome expectations, when an individual has a positive outcome, they are more likely to set and achieve that goal" (p. 129). Burgener, (2017) meanwhile, suggested that by acquiring abilities and experiences, people craft career goals for themselves that take advantage of those abilities and experiences. This speaks to an intention of the career coaching intervention: by undergoing the experience of the coaching program and using it both to bolster their knowledge and to signal to them to how to increase and improve their abilities, participants should be more inclined to set goals related to the intervention. That is, the participants should develop stronger intentions of accessing administrative career pathways. In the literature, goals have been less of a focus than the other two components of SCCT, particularly self-efficacy, perhaps because how to get to goals has been seen as worth exploring more than what the goals are. In this study, consideration of what goals the participants have vis à vis careers in community college administration informs each module of the intervention as well as the data collection through surveys and journey mapping.

Critiques of Social Cognitive Career Theory

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) is not without its limitations. It may be that the criticisms of the parent theory, Bandura's Social Cognitive Theory, should apply

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here: the theory is too broad-reaching and fails to account for the extent to which

background or environmental factors may influence learning (LaMorte, 2019). There has

been similar criticism of SCCT. Burgener (2017), for one, noted that the theory has not

been stretched to sufficiently account for social and socioeconomic variables. This is

critical, because as Wells and Kerwin (2017) asserted, "Environmental factors, such as

barriers (e.g., discrimination) and supports (e.g., facilitators), have been strongly

associated with the concepts of self-efficacy and choice goals" (p. 129). Accordingly, in

designing the survey for implementation in the study, I accounted for certain factors,

including age, gender, education, and institutional support. Another criticism of SCCT as

a theoretical model suggests that in its use, it can lead to greater focus on barriers to

career achievement rather than supports (Burgener; Gushue & Whitson, 2006). The

theory, moreover, is still relatively young, and it has not yet found wide application

beyond non-white populations and across multiple fields (Dickinson, 2007). Nor has it

gained a foothold in some disciplines, including in library and information sciences

(LIS): searches in the Library, Information Science & Technology Abstracts and the

Library Literature & Information Science Index databases for the theory in the spring of

2020 yielded 3 and 0 results respectively. It should be noted, however, that from a

theoretical perspective, few within LIS have paid attention to career development. These

criticisms point to shortcomings to keep in mind in examining the findings of this study

through the lens of this theory.

Summary

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) derives from one of the core tenets of

Social Cognitive Theory (SCT), person, and focuses on the relationships among self-

efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals to inform career decisions. Gushue and

Whitson (2006) stated that "SCCT underscores the important role played in career

development by cognitive variables, such as self-efficacy and outcome expectations" (p.

115). This aligns with the research questions at the core of this study, which inquire

about issues of self-efficacy, perception (outcome expectations), and intention (goals)

among librarians in community colleges. SCCT thereby provides the theoretical

framework for this study on administrative career paths for librarians in higher education.

Auxiliary Theories

Although Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) forms the framework for the

study, other theories connect to at least some aspects of the research or informed its

development. In the early exploration of this problem of practice and as I became more

familiar with education theory, I considered other potential frameworks, individually and

in combination. At later stages, as I developed the intervention and the data collection

tools, I looked at additional models. I ultimately decided to frame the study using SCCT,

but I include discussion of four other theories here. In a sense, they function as auxiliary

theories, contributing to the understanding of the research without fully framing it. Those

four theories are as follows: Credentialing Theory, Human Capital Theory, Trait Theory

of Leadership, and the Identity Model of Decision Making.

Credentialing Theory

Among the earliest theories I considered was Credentialing Theory. Dating back

to the work of Max Weber (1951) a century ago, Credentialing Theory has a long history

in the social sciences. More recent work by Brown (2001) centered it within the field of

education and established four propositions within the theory:

1. What credentials signify is more cultural than technical in nature.

2. Credentials stand in for the actual knowledge and skills that they represent.

3. Credentials become the entry points for accessing positions in the job market.

4. Credentialing inflation has resulted in both expansion of education and hiring difficulties.

Brown (2001) cited the work of Labaree (1997), and the connection between the two is apparent in the last of Brown's propositions that Credentialing Theory has brought about educational expansion. As Labaree noted, social mobility has been a prevalent educational goal in the past and is yet again preeminent. It is an individualistic goal that puts the needs of educational consumers, such as those seeking doctoral degrees for the sake of advancement, above public needs. This is not to say that aspiration to promote upward into administration is wrong, even if it requires additional credentials to do so. The work of Bereiter and Scardamalia (1993) spoke to the constitutive problems of professions of experts; that is, what is the core issue or problem that those who work in a profession try to address or solve. In the case of those who aspire to community college administrative posts, there may be a sincere focus on the constitutive problem of providing sound education to the students. On the other hand, it is also plausible that reasons of social mobility drive librarians and others to secure the credentials that could be applied toward career advancement.

Credentialing Theory posits that credentials actually matter when it comes to achieving administrative positions at community colleges. Indeed, the Cycle 0 interviews with community college administrators suggested as much, with one of the participants admitting to pursuing a doctorate because of the advice they were given that it would be

helpful to their career advancement ambitions. Moreover, the data in Table 1 show that 29 of the 38 administrators in the West Central Region do, in fact, hold a doctoral degree, which indicates a likelihood that the degree contributed to attaining the position. In developing the survey for the study (Appendix C), I decided to ask the intervention participants for their perceptions of requirements for the doctorate and other credentials as well as for the credentials that they possess, are in the process of attaining, or plan to earn. These questions, however, do not address any of the components of SCCT so much as they ask about person inputs and learning experiences (Figure 1). This study neither measures any correlation between credentials and achievement nor the perception of credentials by those who hire administrators. More critically, the intervention does not provide any particular credential for the librarian participants that might lead to them advancing into administrative careers. As such, while the theory was important in shaping my thinking of the study in its earlier stages, Credentialing Theory cannot frame the study as a whole. Instead, the findings from the intervention may permit me to comment on Credentialing Theory in turn.

Human Capital Theory

The other theory that informed my earlier thinking in the development of the research was Human Capital Theory. Human Capital Theory derives from the fields of economics and management through the work of economist Gary Becker (1964) and has since found a place in educational policymaking (Netcoh, 2016) and even in relation to preparation for careers in community college administration (VanDerLinden, 2004). The theory suggests that career advancement results from investments by individuals, not organizations, in activities and educational pursuits that provide greater skills and

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knowledge. Such investment makes the individuals more valuable to an organization, which leads to rewards including promotion. In writing on Credentialing Theory, Brown (2001) noted that it conflicts with what Human Capital Theory has to say about the educational job market. By contrast to Credentialing Theory, which looks at the degrees or certificates that stand for skills, knowledge, and experience, Human Capital Theory emphasizes those three attributes instead.

A critical aspect to Human Capital Theory is that it speaks to the value that employers place on activities such as earning degrees or certificates or even new skills (VanDerLinden, 2004). The theory suggests that employees who engage in such activities will be rewarded for them. In a sense, then, the theory connects to the outcome expectations component of SCCT: do librarians who earn doctoral degrees or other credentials expect that doing so will lead to career advancement? The survey questions accommodate the possibility for this outcome expectation (Appendix C). This study does not look at career advancement for librarians from the employer side of the issue, however. Were that the case, Human Capital Theory would have greater potential for being a significant part of the theoretical framework. It may be, however, that the findings of the intervention will provide some insights that connect back to consideration of Human Capital Theory.

Trait Theory of Leadership

Following the Cycle 0 and Cycle 1 interviews, I began pondering the place of librarian stereotypes, of personality traits that may be inherent to librarians rather than what they may learn and acquire. In the SCCT model, Figure 2, these predispositions may be thought of as analogous to the person input. To account for these, I turned to the

Trait Theory of Leadership (TTOL), which addresses characteristics that are intrinsic to individuals. Leadership potential would, therefore, be an innate trait. Cohens and Harrison (2016) summarized TTOL as follows:

> The theory identifies the specific personality traits that distinguish leaders from non-leaders. It is based on the premise that leaders are "born, not made," rather than being developed through learning. This theory also focuses on characteristics that are linked to successful leadership across a variety of situations.

What, then, are the characteristics that are typical to librarians in terms of their interest in and ability to become successful leaders at their institutions? And what are the characteristics that are typical of librarians in terms of their uninterest in and inability to become successful leaders at their institutions?

Librarianship, as a profession, has long wrestled with the issue of a collective self-image in the face of stereotypes of librarians. While hipster or sexy librarian archetypes have more recently emerged, as Keer and Carlos (2015) noted,

> There are numerous librarian stereotypes, with the most recognizable being the middle-aged, bun-wearing, comfortably shod, shushing librarian. …. The original librarian stereotype, which was superseded by the introduction of his prudish sister, was that of the fussy (white) male curmudgeon (p. 38).

More recent research has sought to address issues of librarian stereotypes (Klein & Lenart, 2020; Williamson & Lounsbury, 2016). It may be an occasional diversion for those of us within the profession to consider the reality (or not) of the meek, mousy,

rulebound librarian stereotype, but it would be interesting to consider what the implications of fitting such a stereotype would be for the potential for the population of community college librarians to attain administrative positions. Using the lens of TTOL, we would expect that those librarians who do not exhibit leadership traits will be unlikely to aspire to or succeed in such careers. Meanwhile, TTOL suggests that those librarians who make the transition into community college leadership must surely possess certain traits as suggested by the theory.

There are serious limitations to the application of TTOL, not least of which is its age as a theory, having existed in some form since the work of Carlyle in the mid-19th century. Critics such as Halaychik (2016) and Ortega (2017) have argued that it has not adapted well to modern concepts such as gender, socioeconomic inequity, and the effects of privilege. Moreover, as Cohens and Harrison (2016) pointed out, the theory does not explain why it is that those who possess what are typically considered leadership traits do not rise to a level of leadership. Although SCCT accommodates consideration of proximal environmental influences, those barriers or supports that may affect career choice goals and actions, TTOL does not. Stogdill criticized this omission and instead suggested a situational model of leadership wherein leadership arises according to opportunity for it, not according to traits a person may have (Cohens & Harrison, 2016; Northouse, 2018). Finally, TTOL addresses the characteristics that are inherent to individuals whereas the purpose of this study, while engaging individual participants, is to explore a problem as it relates not just to the individual participants but also to a population. The intervention does provide opportunities for participants to examine and express what traits they perceive within themselves, and in that sense, it is a lens into

some of what TTOL addresses. Nonetheless, the theory does not provide a sufficient framework for the study at hand.

Identity Model of Decision Making

Consideration of TTOL led to the fourth auxiliary theory, the Identity Model of Decision Making. I encountered it in the writings of Heath and Heath (2010) who, in turn, cited the work of James March (1994) as key to the development of the model. In this mode of decision making, individuals make choices based not necessarily on what may be best for them but according to how they identify: by family, age, religion, profession, and more. Social templates, according to March, shape individual sense of self in a couple of critical ways. First, the templates define the essential nature of an identity, such as the essential identity of being a librarian. Society looks broadly at the profession and identifies it by means of particular characteristics, including stereotypes of meek and mousy rule-bound personalities. Librarians, as a subset of society, define themselves as well, valuing such things as a commitment to a service ethic or the championing of intellectual freedom. In this way, traits of a member of a profession are defined not by what is inherent to the individual but by what the social template has come to dictate. Second, the templates are, as March called them, "prepackaged contracts" (p. 64). There are rewards in acting according to an identity, not least of which is acceptance and approval from within the profession. This suggests that librarians in academic settings continue to act as librarians rather than as (potential) administrators because of the reward of ongoing validation by their own professional community. For all that there may be greater authority or higher salaries or other rewards in moving out of librarianship

and into administration, becoming disconnected from the librarian identity may be too great a price for individuals to be willing to pay.

March (1994) also recognized that individuals hold multiple identities at once, and that there may be factors such as recency or past experience that inform which identity shapes decision making. What is of particular interest for a higher education setting is the role of organizations in guiding individuals as to the appropriate identity for decision making. Organizations, such as community colleges, provide cues through position titles, physical structures on campuses, uniforms, and more. More critically, organizations provide models for individuals to use:

> New workers and managers model themselves after more experienced
> ones. They imitate. They emulate. They learn. Every organization, as
> every society, provides leaders, teachers, and priests who serve in
> positions that are socially highlighted to model prototypical behavior and
> to save others the trouble of deriving it. The modern term is 'mentoring,'
> a concept that combines the cognitive and motivational aspects of
> modeling identities (March, 1994, p. 72).

What we might infer from this is that community colleges exercise a certain control over who benefits from mentoring based on particular identities. Librarians are not only affirmed in that identity by the social contract within their own profession, but they may also be relegated to that identity in a community college organization that sees them only as librarians, not as potential administrators. The combination of the two results in barriers that work against the self-efficacy that is a component of SCCT.

The literature in the field of librarianship has not given consideration to March (1994) or similar thinking in relation to research on librarian careers. The concept of identity, moreover, has seemed more confined to matters of stereotype and individual traits, as previously noted. The identity model, however, has had more impact on parts of this study than other auxiliary theories. First, because the concept of identity arose during the Cycle 0 and 1 interviews, the pre- and post-intervention surveys ask about how participants identify. An initial draft of the survey asked respondents about whether they identified as a librarian above all in their work or as a college faculty member. In a test of the survey, no respondents disagreed that they felt more like a librarian although at least a few disagreed that they felt more like a faculty member. The revised survey (Appendix C) asked respondents whether they identified primarily as a librarian, a faculty member, or a college employee. Once again, there was no disagreement with the first, but responses to the other two identities were more mixed. The survey test responses would seem to affirm what was learned from the interviews and justify the inclusion of such questions in that part of the study.

By contrast to SCCT, the Identity Model of Decision Making cannot scaffold the entirety of the study; however, it can account for person inputs, background and environmental influences, and proximal environmental influences (Figure 3). Although the other auxiliary theories were important in guiding development of the study, the identity model fits more comfortably than the others as a complement to SCCT in the theoretical framework for the research. The model posits that how we make decisions is based on identities that we hold in relation to particular circumstances and as shaped by factors such as organizational models and cues. If librarians, as faculty members at the

community colleges, can understand their identities beyond libraries and as having access to the powers, privileges, and responsibilities of faculty members, it may awaken them further to a belief that they have potential beyond being librarians.

Implications

The first of the two research questions guiding this study asks the following: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' (a) administrative skills and (b) self-efficacy as a potential administrator in the California community colleges? Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) readily connects to this particular question. After all, self-efficacy is one of the three components on which the theory is predicated (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). Self-efficacy suggests that belief in being able to do the work of an administrative position is critical to actually doing it as well as pursuing an administrative position. Through the lens of SCCT, career coaching will presumably result in increased belief within each participant in their abilities. Although it may be the case that SCCT does not address skill development, the intervention did not include a skill development component, just skills assessment. Participants learned what skills they may need to gain or strengthen in order to pursue administrative careers. That understanding, in turn, was expected to feed back into an increased self-efficacy to do administrative work at their colleges. In this regard, then, SCCT frames the first research question fully.

The second research question asks the following: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' (a) sense of both the feasibility and desirability of attaining and (b) intent to seek administrative positions in California community colleges? In this instance, it is

instructive to turn to the two other components of SCCT: outcome expectations and goals (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994). The idea of outcome expectations addresses what it is that someone thinks will be the result of a career decision, what a librarian perceives would be the outcome of a choice to try to access an administrative career pathway. The intervention explored what participants thought would be required of them. Additionally, by having current administrators speak about their career pathways, the intervention also informed participants about what they might expect from administrative careers. Meanwhile, the goals component of the theory suggests that goal setting will "increase the likelihood that desired outcomes will be attained" (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, p. 84). In this way, SCCT speaks to intentions, thereby connecting back to the research question. SCCT suggests that setting a goal of becoming a college administrator reinforces what else is needed (e.g., skills, understanding of the position) to achieve such a career. Study participants may, therefore, set such a goal and begin the work of achieving it.

The intervention, a career coaching program for community college librarians, was built around three activities: a short series of seminars about administrative careers, one-on-one career counseling, and one-on-one interviews that involved the creation of a career journey map. The seminars were intended to be a catalyst for sparking interest in administrative careers, thereby guiding participants toward establishing goals. The one-on-one counseling was designed so that participants would receive guidance on how to complement their skills, knowledge, and experience in order to become better candidates for administrative positions. This activity was, therefore, planned to instill in the participants a realistic belief that they can attain career goals, i.e., self-efficacy. These

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first two activities would also address outcome expectations, directing participants to realistic expectations based on the experiences and knowledge of the administrators who were to work with them. The third activity, the interview and creation of the career journey map, were designed to encourage the participants to reflect on their education, careers, goals, and participation in the program. It thus provided insight into their sense of self-efficacy, their expectations, and their goals. In summary, then, the component mechanisms of SCCT provide scaffolding to all parts of the intervention.

Related Research

Research at the intersection between librarianship and careers in administration of community colleges is scant. Little has been published that examines the movement of librarians into administrative positions in higher education overall. A rare example is what Deemer (2007) has written about his own experience in moving into an associate deanship in a university setting. It is an opinion piece, however, and does not point to a larger body of additional, related literature for the reader to explore. Since its publication, the article has been cited a handful of times in articles that center on library management. This lone example of non-research writing about librarians in college and university administration demonstrates a serious gap in the literature. Accordingly, it is necessary to delve into the research corpus on community college leadership and administration separately from that on academic library leadership in order to find scholarship on the career pathways into higher education administrator positions.

Community College Leadership and Administration

Recent research into issues of community college leadership and administration has focused on three areas in particular. The first of these is the impending wave of

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retirements that has been predicted for the administrative ranks of community colleges and the corresponding need for a pipeline to fill vacated positions. Agencies and scholars have predicted the vacancies since the late 1990s (Keim & Murray, 2008; Shults, 2001; VanDerLinden, 2004). The impact on community colleges will be substantial, with a loss of institutional memory and experience to guide them. More importantly, the turnover in the administrative ranks will affect the education that the colleges deliver to their students as new leadership brings with it new approaches.

The substantial number of openings to come in community college administrative positions raise the question from where will potential applicants come. Another way to look at that question is to ask whether there is a typical pathway into leadership roles in community colleges or what the range of pathways is that are more likely to lead to these positions. Community college administrators usually come from the classroom ranks though the body of research I examined did not indicate a single disciplinary background that is more likely to produce these leaders (Amey, VanDerLinden, & Brown, 2002; Keim, 2008; Keim & Murray, 2008; McKenney & Cejda, 2000; Schulz & Lucido, 2011). The literature includes examination of all ranks of community college leadership including presidents, chief academic officers, chief student services officers, chief enrollment officers, and deans. In no case did the authors note that librarianship or library and information science was present in the educational and career backgrounds of any of the administrators in the studies.

Although a classroom background has often been a desirable qualification for leadership positions in community colleges, job postings within the California community colleges hint at another: a doctoral degree (ACCCA, 2018, August 24;

ACCCA, 2018, September 21). Research dating back to the 1990s suggests as much, with a seminal study showing that 62% of chief academic officers held a doctorate (Townsend & Bassoppo-Moyo, 1997). A decade later, that had grown to 70% (Keim & Murray, 2008). The degree is not as prevalent among chief student affairs officers, but at 48%, it is far from uncommon (Keim, 2008). The research on the educational backgrounds of community college administrators offers less guidance on the actual relevancy of the doctoral degree to the work that these administrators carry out. Moreover, it is clear from the large number that do not hold the degree that a doctorate may not actually be necessary to be an administrator. Possession of the degree may provide access to administrative positions, though, and rather than actually indicate what skills or knowledge a potential administrator possesses, it comes merely to symbolize them instead (Brown, 2001). The desirability of the doctoral degree for attaining upper administrative positions in the colleges becomes a clear example of how credentialing influences hiring decisions in higher education. Although advanced degrees can and do impart useful knowledge to potential leaders in the field, though they are not the only indicators of potential.

This leads to the second issue in the research into community college leadership and administration: the characteristics and competencies that potential leaders and administrators will need in order to fill open positions. Although job postings indicate what specific qualities are sought among candidates for administrative positions, there are more formally established leadership competencies put forward by the American Association of Community Colleges (AACC) (2018). These competencies are comprehensive, including specifications for faculty as well as administrators since

leaders may be found in any of those ranks. Researchers have since looked to the AACC

competencies in exploring issues in community college leadership (Aalsburg Wiessner &

González Sullivan, 2007; Reille & Kezar, 2010; Wallin, 2012), though the literature also

accommodates other models for needed skills, knowledge, and competencies (Brown,

Martinez, & Daniel, 2002; Schulz & Lucido, 2011; Townsend & Bassoppo-Moyo, 1997).

None of the studies cited here used TTOL as a lens, and by focusing on competencies,

these studies suggest how pathways to leadership can sidestep suppositions about what

inherent characteristics may predict about success in administrative careers.

The complement to the research on the characteristics needed for earning a

position in higher education leadership is the body of studies on what is needed to ensure

retention and success in those positions. Support for administrators is not always

forthcoming or entirely suited to the needs of the subjects (Preston & Floyd, 2016).

Consideration of how best to scaffold administrative success leads to the third issue at the

core of the research into community college leadership: the development opportunities

and activities that are needed so that future leaders and administrators may reach their

potential. This subset of the literature thus connects back to the self-efficacy component

of SCCT. Aside from what onus there is on individuals to take advantage of these

programs though, they must have organizational or institutional foundations. Colleges,

consortiums, and professional associations have all implemented various strategies, and

the literature includes studies into both the efficacy of a number of programs and the

reflections of participants on their experiences (Reille & Kezar, 2010; Valeau, 1999;

Wallin, 2012). Of particular interest are studies that look at where opportunities for and

experiences with professional development differ based on characteristics such as gender

(Cejda, 2006; VanDerLinden, 2004). Because Human Capital Theory links career advancement to investments made by individuals to provide themselves with skills and knowledge, discrepancies in opportunities will have sizeable impact. If the pipeline to community college leadership is already at least partially confined to those with desirable backgrounds and degrees, then inequities in needed support and professional development may further dissuade a broader range of candidates from seeking positions.

The research into community college leadership and administration demonstrates a continued need for a reliable pipeline to satisfy the constant churn in positions. Mastering competencies matters in attaining such administrative roles, but so does earning credentials in various instances. Accessing leadership pathways in community colleges is scaffolded by the development activities that colleges can provide. Notably, those who reach administrative positions benefit from programs designed to ensure that they have skills and knowledge needed for the work. There are numerous examples of leadership development and retention programs locally and nationally, though there are inequities in terms of gender as to who takes advantage of them. The overall body of research into community college administration and leadership is rich. It does not however, include specific mention of the role of librarians. The intersection of administration with the profession of librarianship has been left unexplored.

Library Leadership

The research on academic library leadership as it relates to this study focuses on four core issues, starting with the very concept of how leadership looks in what is considered a service profession. The second issue centers on the development of academic library leaders. Understanding where these leaders come from parallels the

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understanding of the pipeline for community college administrators already outlined. The third core issue for exploration draws upon the literature that examines reasons why librarians may not seek out leadership or management roles. Fourth and finally, although the body of research on librarians moving into higher education administration is nonexistent, a relevant issue within the literature addresses how librarians may still— while remaining in positions in the library—exert influence in their institutions. It should be noted, however, that although there is a large body of research in the field of education that focuses on community college administration, a weakness in the literature related to academic librarianship is that it is seldom specific to community college librarians. Most of the studies cited in this section therefore look at librarians more generally in higher education or draw upon librarian populations in four-year institutions instead.

Although librarians are classed as faculty within the California community college system, there are characteristics to their positions that set them apart from classroom faculty, such as contractual language or types of evaluations used. Other distinguishing characteristics are inherent in the profession itself: the facilitation of information seeking and the fulfillment of information needs. Librarians, in other words, support students, augment and enhance pedagogy at their colleges, and provide service to the campus at large. The equation of service with servility can sit uneasily with notions of management or leadership, which in turn has made it difficult for researchers to frame research into library leadership using theoretical models (Fagan, 2012), if they even accept the construct as a valid one (Brundy, 2018). Critical examination of leadership in the profession may inform the understanding of why librarians choose not to follow such

career paths although SCCT may suggest reasons of self-belief and actualization for such choices.

Irrespective of whether all librarians feel suited for leadership, Cycle 0 participants spoke to the desirability of librarian voices and perspectives in greater number in administrative roles. The research instead speaks to administration of libraries themselves. Just as is the case with the research into community college leadership, the literature on library leadership includes a focus on where future library administrators will come from as well as suggestions for tapping more diverse populations of newer and younger librarians (Ly, 2015). Identifying the pool, however, is just one step. Consideration must be given to development activities such as leadership institutes and mentorship opportunities (Arnold, Nickel, & Williams, 2008). As a profession, librarianship will need to determine what pathways to leadership exist and then work not just to introduce librarians to them but also to ensure that the librarians are equipped with needed skills and knowledge.

That librarians may not feel suited to assume leadership positions is one reason why they may hold themselves back from applying. Another consideration is job satisfaction: the notion that librarians are happy with where they are in their careers and do not harbor ambitions to progress upward and out of the library. This may also be expressed through the concept of job plateauing by which librarians achieve a certain level and decline to progress further (Neville & Henry, 2017). This research area finds parallel in exploration of community college faculty careers and the reluctance there of some to surrender satisfying careers in order to join administrative ranks (Ward & Wolf-Wendel, 2017). In other words, it is not necessarily the case that librarians are shut out

from attaining administrative positions but instead sometimes a situation wherein they do not see the same rewards of promoting upward that they see in their current work. They are content where they are professionally.

In fact, it may be fine for librarians to remain where they are, in libraries. A last area of the literature that addresses why librarians may not need to move into administration examines the influence of the profession within their larger academic institutions (Gwyer, 2009). Instead, they can turn to other organizational leadership tactics to impress upon college administration what libraries and librarians contribute to the college. One such tactic, rational persuasion, whereby the librarian "uses logical arguments and factual evidence to show a proposal or request is feasible and relevant for attaining important task objectives" (p. 481) was deemed to be effective at influencing those at a higher level in the institution. Gwyer drew upon the work of Yukl (2006) to share additional strategies for effective influence laterally from the library. Boatright (2015), meanwhile, addressed not just how librarians can use principles from business to develop leadership skills and strategies, but also recognized that leadership is not the sole province of the library director. In other words, it is possible for more than a sole library faculty member at each community college to influence decisions that are made above and outside the library. This suggests one further reason why librarians have not advanced into administrative careers: they may be able to achieve their goals within the larger organization to their satisfaction without leaving the library.

Although there is much that has been written about leadership within an academic library context, not enough has been written about community college librarians. This, in conjunction with the paucity of research on librarians moving into higher education

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administration, makes it clear that there is a gap in the literature to be addressed. Moreover, what has been written about leadership in academic libraries is inconsistently connected to theoretical frameworks or even criticizes and doubts the concept of leadership altogether. Although the literature on community college administration provides insight into the pathways to those positions, the literature on library leadership instead hints at why librarians may not be accessing those very pathways.

Summary

A review of the literature demonstrates two important things. First, more than a gap, there is a yawning chasm when it comes to understanding academic librarian careers outside of libraries. It is tempting to attribute this to an utter lack of librarians on these career paths, as Table 1 might hint, but the Cycle 0 interviews established that there certainly are librarians who have moved into administrative positions at their institutions within the state of California, and surely there must be others elsewhere. Compounding the matter, this study looks at community colleges, about which there is far less written. A cursory search of library and information science (LIS) and education databases reveals the enormous disparity. Comparatively little has been written about the careers of community college librarians. The literature review laid bare that deficiency. This research is a small step toward filling the gap.

Second, research in LIS is sometimes lacking in the use of theory to provide frameworks for the studies that are published. Illustrative of this is a recent issue of *College & Research Libraries*, a leading, peer-reviewed journal in the field. The July 2020 issue included seven articles, only two of which clearly identified and addressed a theoretical framework. Spot checking other recent issues showed that that ratio was not

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unusual. An outcome of this absence is that it becomes difficult to apply a theoretical

framework that derives from LIS. Instead, it becomes necessary to turn to other

disciplines. In this instance, psychology is that discipline. Social Cognitive Career

Theory (SCCT), the theoretical framework for this study, is an extension of Social

Cognitive Theory, which was developed by influential psychologist Albert Bandura. The

discussion to follow in the next chapter will demonstrate how consideration of SCCT has

been interwoven throughout the development of the intervention.

Chapter 3

Method

Interviewer: So where are the new administrators coming from?
Respondent: They're coming from the faculty ranks, but they're not well
prepared. They struggle when they get to the to this level.
                    Cycle 0 interview participant 1, personal communication, March 15, 2019

The previous chapter detailed the theoretical underpinning for the study, and

grounded it in the existing body of research. Social Cognitive Career Theory not only

informed the development of the research questions and, ultimately, the interpretation of

the outcome of the study, but it also shaped the innovation to be implemented. The

literature, meanwhile, provided models for the innovation. In the chapter that follows, I

describe the setting for the innovation as well as its steps, the data collection, and the data

analysis. The method used was in service of answering the two research questions: how

and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians

affect librarians' (a) administrative skills and (b) self-efficacy as a potential administrator

in the California community colleges and how and to what extent does implementation of

Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' sense of (a) both the

feasibility and desirability of attaining and (b) intent to seek administrative positions in

California community colleges?

Action Research

Action research is predicated on action, reflection on that action, then a new cycle

of action. It is an iterative process by which a researcher moves from identification of an

idea, through planning to acting and reflecting, then evaluation and on to further planning

and action. Various models present this as a spiral (Mertler, 2017), and indeed, from

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conception through the work of Cycles 0 and 1 and on to the innovation, the research entailed a process of circling back to think, plan, and do again.

This study exhibited all of the key characteristics of action research as described by Creswell and Guetterman (2019): a practical focus, the educator-researcher's own practices, collaboration, a dynamic process, a plan of action, and sharing research. Though the study was not grounded in a classroom as might be typical of much educational research can be, it had implications for the leadership pipeline in higher education. Although I was not a participant, the study spoke to my own career interests in administration and the work that I can do to access that pathway. There was collaboration in the innovation in the inclusion of current community college administrators as presenters and coaches. The study had already involved cycles of actions, namely the interviews and coding activities that informed the context as well as the design of the innovation. The development of the coaching innovation was the plan of action established to address the problem of practice I had identified. Finally, the results of the research were to be shared through this dissertation with the potential for dissemination through other venues as well. All in all, the topic and the associated study fit the characteristics of action research.

Setting

As noted in the first chapter, the local context for the study included the college where my library is situated as well as the surrounding West Central region of the California community colleges. The region encompasses ten colleges in area north of Los Angeles stretching from the coast at Santa Barbara, inland to Lancaster, and north to San Luis Obispo. The colleges vary in size and setting and include rural (e.g., Taft

College), suburban (e.g., College of the Canyons), and urban (e.g., Bakersfield) campuses. The libraries at the West Central region colleges were the source for the participant pool.

The distribution of the potential participant pool across a region of the state meant that virtual activities would be easiest to manage because they would minimize the demand for travel by the participants and researcher. Compliance with the constraints placed on the research by the COVID-19 pandemic that began in 2020 and continued through the intervention period further necessitated working through virtual activities. Accordingly, the sole setting for the study was online, using the Zoom platform that is available to all faculty in the California community colleges. All three innovation components took place in this setting.

Participants

The study participants were full-time librarians, which means that they were also faculty members at their respective colleges. As Table 4 shows, across the West Central region there were 32 such librarians, including the researcher, at the time of recruitment to the study (Council of Chief Librarians, California Community Colleges, n.d.). Although 82.1% of librarians in the United States are female (Data USA, n.d.), there is a higher proportion of male librarians in the region (31.25%) than nationally (17.9%). Though it would have been desirable to have the participants reflect the gender balance in the region or nationally, the proportion was ultimately a function of who responded to the invitation. Instead, the study sample was purposeful. All librarians in the region were invited to participate by means of an email invitation sent out in early December 2020, and those who were interested self-selected. Beyond the requirement of being a full-time

library faculty member in the region, there were no other restrictions on participation in the innovation. Librarians from my own college were welcome to participate were they interested. The innovation was capped at 12 participants, and ultimately there were eight. None of the participants withdrew from the study before its completion, and all participants completed all three of the program activities as well as the pre- and post-intervention surveys.

Table 4.

Full time librarian population in the West Central region

	Librarians		
College	Female	Male	Total
Allan Hancock College	3	1	4
Antelope Valley College	1	2	3
Bakersfield College	4	1	5
College of the Canyons[a]	3	2	5
Cuesta College	2	1	3
Moorpark College	3	0	3
Oxnard College	0	1	1
Santa Barbara City College	4	1	5
Taft College	1	0	1
Ventura College	1	1	2
Total	22	10	32

a. Numbers include the researcher (male)

The participants came from four of the colleges in the region, and there were multiple participants from three colleges. Table 5 shows the key demographic characteristics of the study participants. All but one of the librarians were women, which was a disproportionate ratio based on the numbers in the region but closely aligned with national figures for gender identity in the profession. Among them, there was a range of

Table 5.

Demographic characteristics of study participants

	Participants	
Category	Characteristic	Number
Gender identification	Female	7
	Male	1
Age range	25-34	1
	35-44	2
	45-54	3
	55-64	2
Years in California community colleges	0-5	4
	6-10	3
	11-15	1
Years in libraries	0-5	0
	6-10	4
	11-15	3
	16-20	1
Degree earned	Bachelor's degree	8
	MLIS or equivalent	8
	Other master's degree	1
	Other certification	3

ages, experience in libraries, and experience in the California community colleges. All of them had the requisite master's degree to be a librarian whereas only one had any other advanced degree. There were otherwise no noteworthy participant characteristics to be accounted for in the study.

The Identity Model of Decision Making suggested that recruitment might be a challenge if individuals in the pool viewed themselves as librarians only and not also as potential administrators. It was therefore incumbent on me, as the researcher, to make the case in inviting them that careers in administration could benefit them in the long run

as well as benefiting librarians and libraries in the community colleges in general. Ultimately, it was not necessary to make an especially strong case – the invitation to participate spelled out the benefits to each in terms of gaining opportunities to network, reflect, and receive coaching. Between that and what was presumably interest in the study itself, there was enough incentive for recruiting sufficient pool of participants to the coaching program.

Coaches

The career coaching program relied on the involvement of community college administrators who have a background in libraries to act as presenters and coaches. These administrators were drawn from a broader geographic distribution across the state than the participants in order to account for the relatively small number who have become administrators. As there are currently no administrators with the required library background in the West Central region from which the participants were drawn, there was less chance that a professional connection would already be established between the participants and the administrators.

In late November 2020, I sent an initial invitation (Appendix D) to several administrators whom I knew, and from the ones who responded, I was able to collect additional names for further recruitment efforts in December of that same year. The final number of invitees was still relatively small (17), indication of how few librarians have gone into administrative positions in the California community colleges across the state. Of those seventeen, four responded that they were willing to contribute to the study with one withdrawing shortly thereafter for personal reasons. The three administrators who acted both as presenters and coaches were

- Dr. Timothy Karas, Superintendent/President Mendocino-Lake Community College District

- Dr. Pearl Ly, Dean, Social & Behavioral Sciences, Palomar College

- Dr. Mary-Catherine Oxford, Dean, Learning Resources & Education Technology, Santa Rosa Junior College

The presenters thereby represented administrators not simply at the level of the dean responsible for the library but also at a level of responsible for an entire college district.

It would have been ideal to have had one participant per coach, but each of the coaches was willing to work with more than one librarian in the intervention. Each of them was also willing to both present a web session and take on the one-on-one coaching. Moreover, because of issues in trying to coordinate schedules for all eight participants, the web sessions were each offered twice in back-to-back time slots. The coaches graciously gave of their time for that as well. In advance of scheduling any of the activities, I shared an orientation document (Appendix E) with the coaches and then held a one-hour discussion with them all. I remained in communication with them throughout the intervention, too. For their part, and as their schedules permitted, they attended each other's web sessions and contributed to the question-and-answer portions when appropriate.

Role of the Researcher

During the study, I assumed the roles of observer, facilitator, and administrator of data collection tools (surveys, journey maps). In these roles, I undertook multiple activities. I facilitated and observed the seminars and the one-on-one consultations that were the first two components of the intervention and made journal entries based on what

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I saw and heard. In the case of the interviews, I took a more active role, questioning the participants, writing notes, recording the sessions, transcribing the recordings, and coding the transcriptions. Outside of those three components, I administered the pre- and post-intervention surveys. Though I wrote the interview guide (Appendix F) as well as the survey instrument (Appendix C), I did not write the content of the seminars, only provided parameters to the presenters for what they should cover.

With respect to the participants in the study, I was an insider. Like the participants, I am a full-time faculty member in the library at my community college, which makes us peers with no authority over each other. Because of the working relationships among the libraries in the region as well as other opportunities for the community college librarians to interact professionally, it was possible that I would be previously acquainted with some of the participants; this ultimately proved to be the case though I did not previously know all of them. My own career ambitions in college administration made me a more than dispassionate observer, however, and as a librarian, I stood to benefit from what I learned from the innovation components. As such, my role became akin to a participant observer (Schensul, 2008), forming my own relationship with the administrators who delivered the content of the innovation as well as with the librarians who participated.

Action Plan

Given a situation in the California community colleges where so few librarians advance into administrative positions, especially beyond deanships, support is needed for those who may be considering such a career move. The question, though, is what sort of support would best scaffold the ones who attempt to gain a foothold on this path? Within

the state, there are examples of support and development programs that are available to librarians, though not exclusively designed for them (Reille & Kezar, 2010; Valeau, 1999; Valeau & Boggs, 2004). Data indicating the degree to which librarians have been included are unavailable but it is reasonable for one to anticipate that the numbers are low based on the number of librarians who have entered administrative careers. Although increased integration of librarians into broader community college leadership development opportunities might benefit librarians through access to larger networks, integration is not necessarily easy to achieve. As one Cycle 0 interview subject suggested, librarians experience isolation within their colleges despite the work they do across unit lines on campuses (March 29, 2019). In part, this results from how librarians detach themselves and their units, viewing their work as specialized. Although there are mentorship and other career development programs for current and potential community college administrators who seek advancement, there are no programs specific to librarians. In a competitive environment where those from classroom backgrounds have the advantage of numbers, there needs to be space for encouraging leadership to come from other parts of community colleges. The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program offered that space as well as useful activities and strategies for its target population to draw upon in considering whether and how to promote upward into community college administration.

The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program was designed to be conducted within the approximate time span of a semester, or sixteen weeks. During that time, there were three components: a series of three webinars about careers in community college administration, one-on-one coaching sessions based in part around a

review of the participant's curriculum vitae (CV), and individual interviews that used a career journey mapping instrument (Figure 4). The program was bracketed by pre- and post-innovation surveys to measure changes in perceptions, intentions, and self-efficacy. Codes developed from examination of a set of six job postings on the Association of California Community College Administrators site in March 2020 shaped the content for the first two components (Table 6). A detailed description of each component follows.

Table 6.

Coding derived from administrative position job postings

Code	Definition	Instances
Education/Credentials	Degrees, certificates, coursework (e.g., Doctorate, certification in educational leadership)	4
Experience/Work History	Specific positions, types of positions, years of work (e.g., 5 years of increasing responsibility, classroom experience)	13
Intangibles	Inherent characteristics (e.g., temperament, demeanor)	18
Knowledge	Expressed as knowledge of, familiarity with, or understanding of concepts or situations (e.g., knowledge of Ed Code, familiarity with labor relations)	54
Skills	Specific abilities that can be acquired and nurtured (e.g., computer skills, language skills)	30

Component 1 – Seminars

As Figure 4 shows, Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT), an extension of Bandura's (1986) Social Cognitive Theory developed by Lent et al. (1994), informed the design of each of the three components of the intervention. SCCT addresses choices in pursuing career goals, the expectations of what achieving those would mean, and the self-efficacy to try. Thus it was that the first component, a trio of online, synchronous seminars, set the stage for exploring choice content goals and the knowledge and skills

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that inform them. It also drew in outcome expectations, using the experiences of the

presenters, current administrators in the California community colleges to better shape

what the participants might imagine to be the result of accessing administrative career

pathways. The focus of the webinars was on the three themes that Table 6 indicated were

the most frequently coded in the job descriptions: Knowledge, Skills, and Intangibles. In

particular, the focus on Intangibles, or inherent characteristics, in the third session

hearkened back to the Trait Theory of Leadership and its assertion that leaders are born,

not made, thereby providing an opportunity for discussion of how the participants

perceived themselves as leadership material, as potential administrators. The

administrator presenting the session provided content based on the assigned theme. My

role was to facilitate the session and to observe it, writing researcher notes in a journal for

subsequent coding, Figure 4.

Component 2 – One-on-One Coaching

The second component involved one-one-one coaching sessions between a

participant and an administrator. Two of the coaches worked with three participants

each, while the third worked with two. Coaches were assigned by random draw. As with

the first component, the exploration of choice content goals as they fit the SCCT

framework was one consideration in designing the activity. Another consideration,

however, was self-efficacy, which was manifested in two aspects: process efficacy, the

"perceived ability to manage generic tasks necessary for career preparation, entry,

adjustment, or change across diverse occupational paths" (Lent & Brown, 2006, p. 16),

and coping efficacy, the "beliefs in one's ability to negotiate particular domain-specific

obstacles" (Lent & Brown, 2006, p. 16).

Figure 4. Schematic of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians intervention.

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┌─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┐
│   Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians innovation   │
└─────────────────────────────────────────────────────────┘
                            │
                            ▼
              ┌─────────────────────────┐
              │   Pre-innovation survey  │
              │      (quantitative)      │
              └─────────────────────────┘
                            │
                            ▼
┌──────────────────────┐   ┌──────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ SCCT:                │──▶│ 1.  Seminars │──▶│ 1. Researcher journal│
│ Outcome expectations │   └──────────────┘   │    (qualitative)     │
│ Goals (choice        │           │          └──────────────────────┘
│ content goals)       │           ▼
└──────────────────────┘   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
┌──────────────────────┐   │ 2. One-on-one    │──▶│ 2. Researcher journal│
│ SCCT:                │──▶│    coaching      │   │    (qualitative)     │
│ Self-efficacy        │   └──────────────────┘   └──────────────────────┘
│ (process efficacy,   │           │
│ coping efficacy)     │           ▼
│ Goals (choice        │   ┌──────────────────┐   ┌──────────────────────┐
│ content goals)       │   │ 3. Interview/    │──▶│ 3. Transcription,    │
└──────────────────────┘   │    journey map   │   │    journey maps      │
┌──────────────────────┐   └──────────────────┘   │    (qualitative)     │
│ SCCT:                │──▶        │               └──────────────────────┘
│ Outcome expectations │           ▼
│ Goals (choice        │   ┌─────────────────────────┐
│ content goals)       │   │  Post-innovation survey  │
└──────────────────────┘   │      (quantitative)      │
                           └─────────────────────────┘
                                       │
                                       ▼
                           ┌─────────────────────────┐
                           │       Data analysis      │
                           └─────────────────────────┘
                                       │
                                       ▼
                           ┌─────────────────────────┐
                           │        Findings          │
                           └─────────────────────────┘
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The first step in the coaching activity entailed having the participants share their curriculum vitae (CV) with their coach for review. This enabled the focus of the intervention to shift to the other coded themes as listed in Table 6: experience/work history and education/credentials. By focusing on those, the intervention would permit the coach to address with the participant the latter's process and coping efficacies. Each participant was also directed to share with the coach a short set of questions or discussion points related to careers in community college administration. The coach and participant then met virtually using the Zoom platform so that the administrator could provide some career guidance specific to the participant. The CV was an initial tool to illustrate for both parties not only the participant's career pathway to date but also what gaps there might have been in skills, knowledge, and experience. Based on the conversation, the participants would gain advice regarding further recommended professional development activities, learning opportunities, and work experiences to bolster their CVs.

I observed the coaching session scheduled for each pairing. In the event that further online meetings or communication took place, I asked each participant-coach pairing to provide me with written accounts and reflection, though none did so. Through this process the foundation of a mentorship may have been laid, but the librarian-administrator relationship in this component was to be focused on individualized career advice as opposed to the establishment of a formal mentorship. My role in the sessions was to facilitate and observe, writing researcher notes in a journal for subsequent coding, Figure 4.

Component 3 – Interviews with Journey Maps

The final component to the intervention was a set of interviews with each of the participants, again conducted virtually using the Zoom platform. The interviews were based on a set of guiding questions (Appendix F). I recorded the conversations so as to extract transcripts for subsequent coding. As Figure 4 shows, SCCT again informed the design of this intervention component. The interviews provided an opportunity for the participants to reflect on and share their experiences in the intervention and how they were thinking about both goals and outcome expectations. In addition to the discussion prompts, the structure of the component was shaped by a journey mapping activity (Annamma, 2017; Journey Mapping, 2019; Kumar & LaConte, 2012; Meyer & Marx, 2014; Nyquist et al., 1999; Powell, 2010). Prior to the interviews, the participants were given guidelines (Journey Mapping, 2019, p. 58) for visual presentation of their career pathways to that point as well as encouragement to draw the map of how they believe their careers will continue. They were to complete the maps before the interview so that they could share them as part of those discussions, referring to them when needed. The maps became part of the qualitative data that I collected from this component (Figure 4). My role was as interviewer in this component of the intervention. Because I was more active in this component than in the first two, I made researcher notes after the session, but I was unable to journal my observations during the session (Figure 4).

Measures

The assessment of the intervention incorporated four sources of data: pre- and post-innovation surveys, researcher observation journals, interview transcripts, and career journey mapping. The first of the four, the surveys, yielded quantitative data to be

examined and triangulated with the qualitative data collected. As for qualitative data, the

journals and the interview transcripts entailed coding in order to determine themes that

could be distilled from the codes while the career journey mapping provided visual data.

Exploration of each of these measures follows.

Survey

The quantitative aspect to the study involved measuring the perceptions and self-

efficacy of librarians as they pertain to attaining administrative positions. Based on a

lack of appropriate pre-existing tools or surveys, I developed my own survey tool, the

Community College Leadership and Administration Characteristics Questionnaire, which

sought to measure librarian perceptions of the traits and qualifications that are necessary

or desirable for accessing career pathways in administration. The survey questions

probed for understanding of participants' own traits and qualifications and inquired after

opportunities for librarians to develop such characteristics.

The survey (Appendix C) was based upon an initial draft I developed in Cycle 1

and that included only two constructs. Following feedback from others in the program, I

reconsidered and split a third construct off from the second. As a result, a construct of 15

items became one of 11 and one of 6 with the former asking about personal traits and the

latter asking about opportunities for developing the traits. Following testing of the

survey, I revised it again, keeping the three constructs, but changing the items within

them, increasing them to 31 in total. Construct 1 related to the characteristics and

qualifications for attaining administrative positions in the community colleges. The

construct was informed by the self-efficacy component of SCCT, especially the notion of

process efficacy. I assigned it the descriptive term AdminQual. Construct 2 related to

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personal characteristics, aspirations, and identity. The construct was informed by person

input, as discussed in relation to SCCT, as well as the Identity Model of Decision

Making. I assigned it the descriptive term PersonalQual. Construct 3 related to the

development of characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations. The construct was

informed by learning experiences, as discussed in relation to SCCT. As Singh, et al.

(2013) expressed it, "workplace supports in the form of developmental opportunities

played a greater role in shaping efficacy beliefs and outcome" (p. 291). That notion

describes the intention in seeking responses to the items in the third construct. I assigned

it the descriptive term QualDevelopment.

As for how the survey measured what it purported to, AdminQual consisted of 12

items that each used a four-point Likert-like scale: To a great extent (1), Somewhat (2),

Very little (3), Not at all (4), Do not know (5). PersonalQual (13 items) and

QualDevelopment (6 items) each used a six-point Likert scale: Strongly Agree (1),

Agree (2), Neither agree nor disagree (3), Disagree (4), Strongly disagree (5), Do not

know (6). For all three of the constructs, participants had an option to respond to open-

ended questions that allowed the potential for them to address issues that might have

touched on self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals. In addition, there were

demographic questions to close the survey that asked about gender, age, years of

experience in libraries, and degrees held or underway.

Part of the development of the survey involved testing the tool and determining a

measure of its internal consistency reliability. As Fraenkel and Wallen (2005) explained,

the Cronbach Alpha is a statistic designed to assess that reliability. Accordingly, in

spring 2020, I invited 110 librarians from across the California community colleges to

take the survey. Of those, 28 completed it, a return rate of 25.45%. Following the

revisions to the survey, in summer 2020, I again invited another 110 librarians from

across the California community colleges to take the survey. In this case, 22 completed

it, a return rate of 20%. Table 7 shows the Cronbach Alpha coefficients for all three

constructs and for the survey in aggregate. The coefficients for the three constructs

pointed to varying degrees of strength for each. Looking at the three constructs, the

values for each were close to the overall value (0.891, 0.839, 0.896) and again in the

range that Taylor suggested is good. The outcome of the testing for internal consistency

reliability left me confident in the usage of the survey for this study.

Table 7.

Questionnaire estimates of internal consistency-reliability

Construct	Within Construct Items	Coefficient Alpha Estimate of Reliability
1: Characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions in the community colleges (AdminQual)	Items 1-12	0.891
2: Personal characteristics, aspirations, and identity (PersonalQual)	Items 14*a-f*, 16*a-d*, 18*a-c*	0.839
3: Development of characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations (QualDevelopment)	Items 20a-c, 21a-c	0.896

Researcher Journals

A critical source of qualitative data for the study came from researcher journals,

the collected field notes that detailed what took place (descriptive field notes) and the

insights I had at the time of the activity (reflective field notes) (Creswell & Guetterman,

2019). I was an observer in the first and second components, affording me opportunity to

write notes during the activities and in the immediate aftermath. The codes that I

developed in the Cycle 1 interviews (Table 3) provided structure for the notes: career

aspirations, continued education, disconnect from administrative work, engagement on campus, librarian identity, what leadership means, what administration means. In the third component, the interviews, I was actively engaged with each participant. As such, it proved crucial for me to write field notes as soon as possible upon completion of the activity. The notes then underwent coding. Charmaz (2014) recommended two rounds of coding, an initial round and then a focused round. This was similar to the practice I followed in coding job descriptions to determine thematic content for the first two components. As such, for all of the field notes I wrote, I followed a two-round coding process with a goal of deriving themes. These resultant themes were subsequently triangulated with the other data collected.

Interview Transcription and Coding

In Cycles 0 and 1, I engaged in individual interviews with community college administrators and librarians. Similarly, in the intervention, there was a round of interviews with each of the participants. I did not conduct any such interviews with the coaches, however. For the dissertation study, each of the participant interviews lasted approximately an hour with a structure provided by the guide I had developed (Appendix F) with allowances for digressions and diversions as appropriate. Part of the interview centered on the career journey map that the participant had shared with me prior to the interview. I recorded the interviews in order to be able to extract transcripts, which were coded in two rounds to develop themes, components, and assertions. The results of the coding were triangulated with the survey results, my researcher journals, and the career journey maps.

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Career Journey Mapping

The term "mapping" is often used in many contexts to construe meanings as in matching values to each other, but in the case of this study, it was the integration of a visual, cartographic medium into educational research to provide qualitative data. As Annamma (2017) wrote, "From geography, qualitative mapping expanded to include conceptual, social, and cognitive relationships in various fields and disciplines" (p. 38). As she further pointed out, "Maps also had the potential to interrogate the spaces between individuals and social structures…" (p. 38). Quantitative data, such as that collected from the pre- and post-intervention surveys, may tell us what a trend is, but a tool like the map is needed to explain why a trend is, how something came to be. This is valuable data that may complement and triangulate with an oral narrative (Meyer & Marx, 2014), contextualizing pieces of information. Annamma (2017) was respectful of her students who shared their maps, writing that their narratives were offered for discussion with the others, not for interpretation by them. This echoes the intention of the use of career journey maps planned for the third component of the innovation, for reflection by the participants as part of the interview process and in general. This made the career journey maps both useful data sources themselves as well as tools that facilitated exploration in the interview process.

Mapping as a concept is not unknown in the library and information science literature, though as in other disciplines, the focus is on a different population that we might observe rather than used as a tool to reflect inwardly. Customer journey mapping comes from the business world, especially retail, and has been used to look at library users' experiences with services and facilities (Samson, Granath, and Alger, 2017).

Tellingly, however, Annamma (2017) took advantage of mapping to explore inequities. Though my research did not seek to delve into more familiar examples of inequity, such as by race or ethnicity or gender or age, it did look into an imbalance in the pipeline from faculty to administration in the California community colleges.

Meyer and Marx (2014) provided an example of how data from journey mapping will be collected and used in the study. The maps their study participants crafted were included in the published article, and the authors triangulated the data from the maps (high or low points, positive or negative images) with the data collected from participant interviews. In a similar way, I triangulated the data from the maps with the results of transcribing and coding the interviews as well as my research observer journals and the data from the surveys. As Marx and Meyer and Nyquist, et al. (1999) demonstrated, mapping can function as both an activity in a research process and as a type of data. In doing so, they showed how the participants' voices may be heard alongside the other data that gets structured and/or filtered more extensively through the researcher (me). This was an especially critical reason for selecting career journey mapping for this study.

Threats to Validity and Credibility

Just as it was important to determine the reliability of the survey instrument that I had developed prior to deploying it with the participants, it is critical to address issues of study validity. Fraenkel and Wallen (2005) helpfully define the concept: "Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness, and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes" (p. 152). The two authors further point to how crucial validity is to research design and add that "The drawing of correct conclusions based on the data obtained from an assessment is what validity is all about" (p. 153). In developing this intervention,

there were three types of threats to validity that concerned me most: the novelty effect, the experimenter effect, and pretest sensitization.

The novelty effect threat to external validity suggests that observable changes in a dependent variable result from excitement over the newness of a program, and that in subsequent iterations of the program, there results will diminish just as the novelty will (Smith & Glass, 1987, p. 148). Because the career coaching intervention was new to librarians in the California community colleges, I anticipated enthusiasm for the introduction of the intervention would lead to a large pool of interested potential participants as well as heightened responses to the intervention activities among the eventual participants. That large pool did not materialize, however. Moreover, there was only one iteration of the intervention, so knowing whether the novelty effect affected external validity was not possible to determine. Were the program re-run in the future and outside of a research setting, it might be advisable to schedule iterations with some gap of time between them to allow the level of anticipation and enthusiasm to rebuild.

The experimenter effect threat to external validity suggests that the personality of the experimenter may motivate observable change in the participants rather than the treatment itself (Smith & Glass, 1987, p. 149). This threat seemed possible to me given my own relationship to the participants as one of their peers. This was somewhat mitigated by having content delivered in two of the components by non-researcher coaches. Granted, the personalities of the administrators who provided content in the seminars and who partnered with participants in one-on-one sessions may also have had an effect on the participants rather than the content of what they said. This was not quite the same as the experimenter (me) motivating change through my personality, though.

Where I was not a discreet observer but instead more actively engaged with the participants, as in the interviews, I was mindful of providing structure but otherwise keeping the focus on the participants themselves. It may have been advisable to have had a third party conduct the interviews on my behalf. Various constraints, including time and budget for hiring someone prevented that from being the case.

The pretest sensitization threat to external validity suggests that participants become aware of what the study will entail because of the pretesting, a result that cannot be generalized to other populations (pp. 152-153). My intervention did not include a test, but used a pre-intervention survey which may have alerted the participants as to what the coaching program sought to change and what I sought to measure at the end of the study. My hope was that in writing the survey questions, they were useful to me as the researcher but did not guide the participants as to how they should act within the coaching program.

Of the three threats I identified, the experimenter effect was the one of which I was most mindful. I was cognizant of the other two, but less concerned about them. In the analysis of the data and presentation of the results, I will account for any of these threats as appropriate.

It is also critical to address the credibility of the research, the data collected, and the analysis and findings. This is necessary to demonstrate the trustworthiness of the qualitative data. In order to establish credibility of this dissertation study, I used multiple strategies. First, I undertook triangulation of multiple sources of data, such as interview transcripts, researcher notes, and the career journey maps, to determine findings that were

true to the participants. This strategy was bolstered by the abundant use of participant quotations in this dissertation. Meanwhile, within the data analysis process, each level derived from the previous one. An example of this was how the coding moved from the initial phase to themes and assertions, with the link from the one phase to the next being traced forward and backward in the process. The outcomes of these strategies essentially established an audit trail similar to what Cope (2014) described, enabling others to review the transcripts, notes, and drafts that I collected and use them to assess my decision-making in the data analysis process.

Cope (2014) also addressed reflexivity, describing it as how a researcher's context can affect the research process. I was particularly cognizant of this during the dissertation study. As a community college faculty librarian from the target region in California and as someone who has had my own interests in an administrative career, I cannot help but have certain biases. Accordingly, at each stage of the intervention, I wrote notes documenting how I felt about what I was observing and how what I heard was affecting how I thought of my day-to-day work and career. In coding the qualitative data, I reflected on those notes and coded them as well. The process of analyzing the qualitative data thereby included a needed mechanism at each level to account for how my personal context might intersect with the research process. I return to this in discussion of the relationship of the findings to my personal context in Chapter 5.

As with the case of addressing threats to validity, ensuring the credibility of the study was an important consideration. The strategies I used have been well-established as sound practice in qualitative research. Taken together, they indicate that there should be trust in the credibility of the research.

Procedure

The study was conducted over several months beginning in late 2020 and lasting through much of the spring semester in 2021 (Table 8). The pre-implementation phase took place in November and December of 2020. Following approval of the intervention by the university's institutional review board (Appendix G), the first step was the recruitment of the administrators who acted as presenters and coaches. The long lead time allowed for the recruitment was deliberate in case there was difficulty in locating and securing those coaches. The first round of invitations (Appendix D) went out late in November, and once I had collected additional names, a second round of invitations was sent in early December. It was not until early in January that I had confirmations from four administrators, each offering to both present a web session and coach participants. On the heels of that came the recruitment of participants. I sent out invitations (Appendix H) to every full-time librarian at each of the colleges in the region in early December, and by January, 8 had responded affirmatively. With the cohort in place, I invited the librarians to take the pre-innovation survey (Appendix C). Meanwhile, in mid-January I

Table 8.

Innovation timeline

Time frame	Action
Nov.-Dec. 2020	Recruited presenters/coaches
Dec. 2020	Recruited librarian participants
Jan. 2021	Surveyed participants
Jan. 2021	Provided orientation to the presenters/coaches
Feb.-Mar. 2021	Conducted group seminars
Mar-2021	Conducted one-on-one coaching sessions
Apr. 2021	Conducted participant interviews
Apr. 2021	Surveyed participants

shared the orientation document (Appendix E) with the coaches and held an orientation

for them together later that month. Subsequent to that session, one coach withdrew from

involvement in the study. The participants and coaches in place, I moved into

implementation of the career coaching program.

Scheduling of events proved to be challenging, even given the online environment

we worked within. Getting all eight participants together for a web session was not

possible. Fortunately, the coaches each agreed to offer the same content in back-to-back

sessions, each with four participants attending. The three sessions took place using the

Zoom platform, one pair per week, in the last week of February and first two weeks of

March. Dr. Ly presented the first (Knowledge), followed by Dr. Karas (Skills), and Dr.

Oxford (Intangibles). Each session lasted approximately one hour, and I recorded each.

This was especially helpful given that across the three weeks, scheduling conflicts

occasionally arose for a few participants, and they needed to view the recordings to see

what they had missed. At the outset of each session, I introduced the coaching program,

had each participant introduce themselves, and then introduced the presenter. The

sessions consisted of about twenty to thirty minutes of presenter content, including slides,

followed by a question-and-answer period for the remainder of the session. During that

time, I took notes. At the end of the session, I gave a preview of the next session or

activity and thanked them all.

The one-on-one coaching sessions began in the third week of March and were

completed in the fourth. Prior to the sessions, the participants shared their curriculum

vitae (CV) and discussion points with their coach. The sessions lasted approximately an

hour each and took place using the Zoom platform. I started each session with a brief

welcome and then turned off my microphone and video so that I would be less present in the Zoom room and able to focus on writing notes instead. At the end of the session, I previewed the next activity for the participant. I also let the coaches know that their active engagement in the coaching program ended with this component, and I thanked them for their contributions.

The third component, the interviews, took place during the second week of April. Two weeks prior to that, I sent the participants brief guidelines on the career journey mapping exercise (Appendix I) and asked them to share the maps with me in advance of the interviews. I used the Zoom platform for the interviews and recorded each. Each interview lasted approximately one-hour, and for most of them, where time permitted, there was a post-interview conversation that focused more on our work settings than on following-up on the study itself. Following the interviews, I sent the participants the link to the survey (Appendix C). All eight had completed the survey by the end of the third week of April.

Despite some scheduling difficulties, the career coaching program adhered to a timeline that kept it within a semester. In scheduling the components, I was cognizant of the time needed for the coaches to prepare their presentations and review documents sent to them by the participants. I also allowed for the extent to which the participants needed to make time for preparing their documents as well as taking the survey and developing their career journey maps. It was also important not to demand too much commitment of time from them in any given week – all of them were working full-time and doubtless had non-work interests and obligations to balance with that. As such, I was intentional about spacing out the components over multiple weeks. Although it is possible and

perhaps even desirable to envision an iteration of the career coaching program being held in a condensed time, such as a day-long preconference, this implementation of the program seemed not to place an undue burden on the schedules of the participants, the coaches, or the researcher.

The implementation of the Career Advancement for Librarians coaching program yielded an abundance of data, both qualitative and quantitative in nature. In the chapter that follows, I address the analysis of the data and what they had to say about the intervention.

Chapter 4

Data Analysis and Results

Interviewer: Could you speak to any impact or effect that the career coaching program might've had on your own thinking about career goals and how to achieve them?
Respondent: Well, I think it's kind of given me a nudge that I needed, because as I said, I've been thinking about this for a long time. But I almost feel if I didn't have this nudge, I'd probably just still be thinking about it and not moving forward. And so, and sometimes, you know, we need, we need that push. And so I think this has been a catalyst for me personally.
<div align="right">Coaching program participant 3, personal communication, April 13, 2021</div>

In chapter 3, I outlined the development and implementation of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians intervention. At the completion of that program, there was a substantial body of data to be analyzed. The findings from that data address the two research questions upon which this study was designed. At the outset of the chapter ahead, I describe the processes by which I analyzed the data. What follows then are four sections in which I address each of the two components of the two research questions, sharing the findings that correspond to the question component. Those two research questions are as follows:

RQ 1: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' (a) administrative skills and (b) self-efficacy as a potential administrator in the California community colleges?

RQ 2: How and to what extent does implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' sense of (a) both the feasibility and desirability of attaining and (b) intent to seek administrative positions in California community colleges?

The chapter closes with discussion of other significant findings from the analysis of the data.

Data Analysis Procedures

The post-intervention activities took place in spring 2021, beginning with the analysis of the data. Interpreting the data collected over the course of the career coaching program entailed transcribing and coding the recordings from the interviews, coding the researcher observer journals, and conducting statistical tests on quantitative data from the pre- and post-innovation surveys. The results of the analyses were then triangulated in order to determine whether the data were complementary.

Qualitative Analysis

The first part of the data analysis was the coding of the researcher journals. By comparison to the interview transcripts, these were shorter and easier to code. They also mostly corresponded to the first two intervention activities; thus, I essentially approached the coding in a chronological order. I had written the journals during the webinar and coaching sessions as well as after the interviews. The entries for those first two were lengthier, reporting on the content of the sessions, the interactions I observed, and my own reflections on what I observed. The journal notes for the interviews were briefer, capturing my reflections but leaving the content of the interviews to the transcripts instead. As was the case with the Cycle 1 interviews, the coding followed the model suggested by Charmaz (2014) and involved first developing initial codes and then focused codes. In coding the later journal entries, I relied on focused codes I had already developed for the earlier ones, adding new focused codes when necessary. Throughout the process, I engaged in free coding rather than resorting to a coding software, switching

between Word files for reading the transcripts and parsing them into sections that each required a code and Excel files for coding those sections, using the latter software to sort the codes when needed. Once I had completed coding the journals, I collected a complete inventory of the focused codes I had used and documented their frequencies of use.

The second step in the data analysis was to code the transcripts from the interviews. I had captured the transcripts from the recordings of each interview through the Zoom platform, and I cross-checked them with the results from passing each recording through the Transcribe app on another device. The second transcription served to clarify any confusing results in the first (for example "light brain" as the transcription for the word "librarian"), and where needed, I returned to listen to the original recording to resolve issues. For each of the transcripts, I then followed a similar coding procedure to what I did with the researcher journals. In Word, I parsed the participant responses so as to arrive at chunks of content. I then pasted the chunks into a table in Excel and proceeded to generate initial codes. Once I had done that for all eight interview transcripts, I began the process of developing focused codes. For the round of focused coding, I took advantage of the inventory of codes from the researcher journals and used those codes where appropriate. Nonetheless, it was necessary to generate additional codes. By the end of the focused coding of the interview transcripts, I had generated 129 focused codes.

At this point, I turned to the pre- and post-intervention survey results to look for responses to the open-ended questions. There were not many of these; while all eight participants had responded to each of the questions seeking responses on a scale, it was

rare in the pre-intervention survey for any of the five questions to received responses

from more than half of the participants. There were more responses to the same

questions in the post-intervention survey, but in no case were there responses from

everyone. Consequently, the initial and focused coding of the qualitative data from the

surveys was relatively simple to carry out and resulted in no additional focused codes.

Following the completion of all of the initial and focused coding, I used Excel once again

to sort the codes and thereby determine what themes were arising from them. That

resulted in 22 themes on an initial pass, which I distilled to 14 following further

consideration (Table 9). Having determined themes arising from the coding of the

qualitative data, I then took the step of writing assertions rooted in each of those themes.

For some themes, there were multiple assertions, for others there was only one. Where

Table 9.

Distilled themes

Theme	Occurrences
Stepping onto an administrative career path	261
Focus on current work situation instead of the future	258
Participants' context	244
The structure, content, and execution of the coaching program	243
Deterrents to advancement into administration	193
Professional enrichment other than through careers in administration	155
Self-efficacy	136
Goals	110
Personal and societal factors that influence participants' career decision making	107
Incentives to advancement into administration	85
Leadership traits	63
My role as a researcher versus my position as a participant peer	29
Skills	21
Participant identity	20

the codes, themes, and assertions relate to the research questions or other important findings, they are included in this chapter.

One final source of qualitative data remained: the participants' career journey maps. During the interviews, I asked the participants to share their maps. Their own words about the maps and the experiences and goals the maps represent are, thus, captured in these data. This was a critical reason for using the mapping activity, to give room to their voices rather than only rely on my interpretations of what they said. As such, I did not code the maps or write journal notes about them. Instead, I use them in this chapter in writing brief case examples for some of the participants, illustrating what they said and what I heard by including the maps themselves.

Quantitative Analysis

I chose to code the qualitative data before analyzing the quantitative data from the two surveys because I did not want any insights or assumptions based on the surveys to influence the coding activity. Therefore, once I had completed the coding and derived themes and assertions, I turned to analysis of the survey data. The first step in the process was to compute a new variable for each construct. Those three constructs were as follows: (a) characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions in the community colleges (AdminQual); (b) personal characteristics, aspirations, and identity (PersonalQual); and (c) development of characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations (QualDevelopment). Using SPSS, I was able to generate a new variable based on the mean for each construct in the pre-test survey and in the post-test survey. I was then able to generate descriptive statistics for those new variables, Table 10.

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Table 10.

Descriptive statistics for computed means of survey constructs

Construct	Min.	Max.	Mean	Std. Deviation
Construct 1 AdminQual (pre-test)	2.08	2.83	2.54	0.302
Construct 1 AdminQual (post-test)	2.25	3.42	2.77	0.424
Construct 2 PersonalQual (pre-test)	3.08	4.38	3.63	0.384
Construct 2 PersonalQual (post-test)	3.23	4.23	3.75	0.323
Construct 3 QualDevelopment (pre-test)	1.33	4.00	3.17	0.868
Construct 3 QualDevelopment (post-test)	2.00	4.00	3.38	0.596

Note: for all constructs, $n=8$

As shown in Table 10, there was a minor difference in means for each construct from the pre-test to the post-test. It is instructive to recall that for AdminQual, the scale was as follows: 4 = to a great extent; 3 = somewhat; 2 = very little; 1 = not at all; as well as an option to indicate "do not know" (there were no such responses in either survey for this construct). For the other two constructs, the scale was as follows: 5 = strongly agree; 4 = agree; 3 = neither agree nor disagree; 2 = disagree; 1 = strongly disagree; as well as an option to indicate "do not know" (there were no such responses in either survey for PersonalQual, but there were instances in each survey for QualDevelopment). Given these scales, it was anticipated that respondents would score higher (more positively) as a result of the intervention. The data in Table 10 indicate that there was a small, observable increase to each of the means.

Once I had generated the descriptive statistics for the survey constructs, I was able to determine whether the differences in means from the pre-test survey to the post-test survey could be explained as the result of the intervention. To do so, I ran each pair of means using a paired sample t-test, again using the SPSS software, Table 11. The results showed that for the first survey construct, AdminQual, the participants demonstrated

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Table 11.

Paired sample t-test for computed means of survey constructs

| | Paired Differences | | | | |
Construct Pair	Mean	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
AdminQual (Pre-test) - AdminQual (Post-test)	-0.23	0.165	-1.389	7	0.21
PersonalQual (Pre-test) - PersonalQual (Post-test)	-0.12	0.119	-1.051	7	0.33
QualDevelopment (Pre-test) - QualDevelopment (Post-test)	-0.21	0.136	-1.528	7	0.17

stronger belief, M = 2.77 on the scale in the post-test than in the pre-test, M = 2.54. The

paired sample t-test found this difference to be not significant, *t*(7) = -1.389, *p* = 0.21.

Similarly, for the second survey construct, the participants indicated stronger agreement,

M = 3.17 on the scale in the post-test than in the pre-test, M = 3.38. The paired sample t-

test found this difference to be not significant, *t*(7) = -1.051, *p* = 0.33. As for the third

survey construct, the participants again indicated agreement with the items more strongly,

M = 2.63 in the post-test than in the pre-test, M = 2.83. Once again, however, the paired

sample t-test found this difference to be insignificant, *t*(7) = -1.528, *p* = 0.17. Together,

the statistical testing suggests that although we may discern a difference in the means

obtained for each construct from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention

survey, we cannot state with confidence in any instance that the difference is attributable

to the intervention.

Reflection on the results of the statistical analysis led to a further, challenging

realization. Although I had designed the survey around three constructs and tested the

reliability of each, Table 7, I had not adequately mapped the survey constructs to the

research questions. This became apparent in trying to address each component of the research questions in subsequent sections of this chapter. Consequently, it became necessary to isolate specific items within the survey constructs instead of looking only at the constructs themselves. So, for each component I re-ran descriptive statistical analysis, including frequencies, for subsets of items within the survey. I then determined the results of paired sample t-testing on those same subsets. I present the results of that statistical testing in each of the four sections that address the components of the research questions later in this chapter.

The data analysis process for this mixed methods study uncovered a wealth of findings that relate to the research questions as well as having implications beyond them. For example, there was a theme arising from the coding that pertained to the design and implementation of the intervention; rather than address the theme in this chapter, I will return to it and a few others in the discussion reserved for chapter 5. Still, there are rich findings to be shared. What follows is more detailed presentation of data analysis and findings in specific areas.

Impact of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians Program

Exploration of the findings from the data analysis centers on the two research questions, each of which includes two components. The sections that follow address those four parts in order.

Administrative Skills

The first of the two research questions asked, in part, about whether and to what extent the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program would affect participants' administrative skills. The first of the three program activities, the trio of

webinar sessions, included one that was focused on the skills needed to be a community college administrator. Despite this, however, discussion of administrative skills was negligible throughout most of the intervention. Unsurprisingly, then, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program did not have a measurable effect on the participants' administrative skills. This was borne out in the quantitative data and affirmed by what the qualitative data indicated.

None of the three survey constructs mapped completely to the part of the first research question that asked about administrative skills. In fact, within the survey, there was only one item relevant to this question. This was a shortcoming in the design of the survey. Items 14a-f centered on participants' perceptions of their characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions, and item 14b specifically asked the degree to which they agreed with the following statement: I possess administrative skills. There was a shift from the pre-intervention survey, $M = 3.75$ to the post-intervention survey, $M = 4.00$ that was suggestive of stronger agreement with that statement after the completion of the intervention. This was also reflected in the distribution of responses. A paired sample t-test, Table 12, found that we cannot state with certainty that the discernible change in the means from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey was not caused by factors other than the intervention, $t(7) = 1.528$, $p = 0.17$.

Although the survey should have been designed to account for how the participants perceived their administrative skills before and after the intervention, the qualitative data indicate that such skills may not have been foremost on their minds in any case. Across the coding of the researcher journals, survey qualitative responses, and

Table 12.

Paired sample t-test for survey item 14b

| | Paired Differences | | | | |
| | | | | | Sig. (2-tailed) |
Item Pair	Mean	Std. Error Mean	t	df	
Item 14b (Pre-test) – Item 14b (Post-test)	-0.25	0.164	-1.528	7	0.17

participant interviews, codes related to skills recurred infrequently, resulting in two

focused codes, one theme, and two assertions, Table 13.

Table 13.

Codes, themes, and assertions: administrative skills

Focused Code	Theme	Assertion
Administrative skills	Skills	With one notable exception, participants did not focus on administrative skills in the components that followed the webinar centered on that topic.
Code Switching	Skills	The skill that received the most attention in the coaching program, code switching, applies as much to administrative work as to how librarians navigate their broader organizations.

The first assertion states the following: With one notable exception, participants

did not focus on administrative skills in the components that followed the webinar

centered on that topic. It thereby captures what I observed as the relative lack of content

and discussion addressing administrative skills throughout most of the intervention

components save for discussion of code-switching, which Dr. Karas introduced to the

participants in the webinar he led. Code-switching is perhaps familiar from other

contexts and refers to the practice of changing between languages or varieties of

languages depending on the situation. In this case, Dr. Karas was referring to the need

for librarians to learn to frame their work in manners that their classroom faculty

colleagues and administrators would understand. Or, as he expressed it, "switching from 'librarianism' to 'administrativism'" (Karas, personal communication, March 3, 2021). So, for example, where librarians speak in terms of providing reference support to students at the reference desk, he encouraged participants to describe this for classroom faculty as analogous to meeting with students during office hours. Code switching was not the only skill that Dr. Karas included mention of in his webinar. Among others, he spoke about written and pedagogical skills. The participants did not return to any of these in subsequent intervention components, however. The only one that came up again was code switching.

The second assertion raises the question of the value to participants of skills that may only have real application to administrative work versus ones with broader workplace use. The assertion states that the skill that received the most attention in the coaching program, code switching, applies as much to administrative work as to how librarians navigate their broader organizations. This was reinforced in the skills webinar session by Participant 4 (March 3, 2021) who commented on what they saw as the importance of the concept to librarians needing to advocate for the library among various populations at their campuses. Outside of the webinar session, there was further mention in some of the activities of how librarians can use code switching. In the coaching sessions, for example, the concept came up in relation to rewriting parts of participants' resumes so that those outside of the library, including administrators, can understand better what it is that they accomplish in the library, as was the case for Participant 3 (March 16, 2021). Thus, code switching may yet be a strategy for applying for administrative positions. On the other hand, other conversation about code switching

circled back to using it in day-to-day work for library advocacy on campus. Such was the case in the coaching session in which Participant 1 (March 18, 2021) engaged. In that conversation, they spoke with their coach about using code switching to rebrand what it is that libraries do so as to make non-library colleagues grasp library services more readily. Although the skill has clear application to making a move into administrative careers and then functioning effectively at those higher levels, the participants also used their encounter with code switching to consider deploying it while working in their present roles.

Case Exploration: Participant 2

Participant 2 has worked in libraries for several years, mostly in the community colleges, but in other types as well. Securing a tenure track position in a community college library was a career goal for them, but having achieved that, they have not yet established further career ambitions insofar as those might be attaining particular positions. They referred to this in their interview (April 12, 2021):

> I hit the main goal, and I just didn't really think that much about the other
>
> opportunities that could come up if I wanted them to, as I moved on. I'm
>
> not a person who really thinks that much about the future. So, I'm not
>
> really good at mapping my career journey because it could change like
>
> that if I discover something else I'm interested in or something, something
>
> becomes appealing for some reason.

Both in one of the webinar sessions (March 10, 2021) and in their one-on-one coaching session (March 26, 2021), Participant 2 expressed a certain reluctance to move into administrative positions, indicating that they did not want the burden of such titles and

work and that they were not especially willing to leave the library behind. By the time

of their interview with me, however, they expressed at least a mild interest in

eventually reaching the position of library department chair and, as an outlying

possibility, a deanship:

> … as far as my career, you know, my ambitions, I just kind of wait and
>
> see, see where I'm at in five years. I'm not, like I said, I'm not one of those
>
> people who, who really is, like, I want to be a dean or I want to be, you
>
> know, I could go either way. I think I could do the job and I think I could
>
> do the job well, but I'm not sure that that's where my heart would be (April
>
> 12, 2021).

This was affirmed by the inclusion of the possibility on their career journey map (Figure

5) in the Career Advancement box set for the year 2025 or later.

If we imagine the eight intervention participants as situated on a continuum

ranging from little interest in an administrative career to great interest, Participant 2

would stand closer to the former end than the latter. Viewed this way, they may not have

been typical of the entire pool. They did, however, exemplify the interest expressed

across the pool of participants in the skill of code switching. In my researcher journal

notes, I captured how, in their coaching session, Participant 2 (March 26, 2021) said that

the discussion around code switching was thought-provoking and helpful. What is more,

it seems that they had talked with another participant in between intervention activities

and reported to me that the other participant had spoken of already using the skill to good

effect in conversations with faculty. Participant 2 returned to discussion of code

Figure 5. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 2

My Career Journey Map

Where it began and where it's going….

Graduate with my Masters in Library and Information Science

MLIS Degree

Reach goal of becoming a tenure track librarian at a community college.

Career Milestone

Pursue additional educational opportunities related to the profession. Possible opportunities include post graduate certificates in library management or digital services.

Educational Advancement

.Satisfy my career goals and consider the best avenue for my career legacy as I move toward retirement.

Looking to the Future

2012

2020

2025+

2011

2015

2022+

2030+

Obtained Librarian Position

Obtained first professional librarian position as Technical Services Librarian at a public library

Service to the Profession

Increased participation in professional organizations including becoming a chair for an American Library Association committee. .

Career Advancement

Begin pursuing possibilities for career advancement.. Consider department chair; department head, or dean positions. .

switching in their interview (April 12, 2021), stating that "it helped me reframe in a way how I approach how I talk to people about the library. They followed that declaration by observing

> You know, I guess we can't expect the faculty to, to, you know, adapt to
> the library language. It's going to be, we're going to have to adapt to
> theirs. So, I thought that was really, you know, taking your ego out of it
> and talking about the library in instructional terms. So, I really liked that.

However else Participant 2 (and the others) may have benefited from the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program and used it to shape consideration of their future career, learning how to wield code switching in the workplace was a concrete takeaway. At least one type of administrative skill encountered in the intervention seemed to be of real use to the participants.

Self-efficacy as a Potential Administrator

The first of the two research questions not only asked about administrative skills, it also asked how and to what extent implementation of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians intervention affected librarians' self-efficacy as a potential administrator in the California community colleges. There was no single component to the intervention that solely mapped to self-efficacy; however, as Figure 1 shows, self-efficacy was a consideration in the design and development of the one-on-one coaching and the career journey mapping activities. The term itself did not arise in any single activity according to my researcher journal notes and the transcripts, though. Unlike the case for administrative skills, then, it took deeper interpretation of codes and themes to determine the relationship of the intervention to participant self-efficacy.

Based on the quantitative data collected through the surveys, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program did not have a measurable effect on the participants' self-efficacy as potential community college administrators. This was not entirely affirmed by what the qualitative data indicated, however. As was the case with determining impact on administrative skills, none of the three survey constructs mapped completely to the part of the first research question that asked about self-efficacy. In fact, within the survey, there were only two items relevant to this question. Once again, this points to a flaw in the design of the survey tool.

Items 14a-f centered on participants' perceptions of their characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions, and items 14e and 14f specifically asked the degree to which they agreed with the following statements: I consider myself to be a leader at my library; I consider myself to be a leader at my college. Leadership is not synonymous with administration, and these two items do not entirely map to self-efficacy, but in the context of the survey, these two items were the closest to asking about participant belief in their ability to do the work of administration. In short, they are imperfect indicators but the only ones available in the quantitative data.

There was a shift from the pre-intervention survey for both item 14e, M = 3.87, and item 14f, M = 3.13, to the post-intervention survey, item 14e, M = 4.13, and item 14f, M = 3.38 that was suggestive of stronger agreement with the two statements after the completion of the intervention. This was also reflected in the distribution of responses. A paired sample t-test, Table 14, found that it cannot be stated with confidence that the discernible difference in the means of each pair was the result of the intervention and not of other factors, $t(7) = -1.528$, $p = 0.17$ in both instances for items 14e and 14f.

Table 14.

Paired sample t-test for survey items 14e and 14f

| | Paired Differences | | | | |
| | Mean | Std. Error Mean | t | df | Sig. (2-tailed) |
Item Pair					
Item 14e. Pre-test - Item 14e. Post-test	-0.25	0.164	-1.528	7	0.17
Item 14f. Pre-test - Item 14f. Post-test	-0.25	0.164	-1.528	7	0.17

As was the case for the question of the effect of the program on participants'
administrative skills, the survey should have been better designed to account for how the
participants perceived their self-efficacy as potential community college administrators
before and after the intervention. Analysis of the qualitative data, however, indicated that
their self-efficacy (as expressed in other terms) was still somewhat accounted for in the
study. Derived from the coding of the researcher journals, survey qualitative responses,
and participant interviews were a set of codes related to self-efficacy. Table 15 presents
four of the more prevalent focused codes, two themes, and two assertions with further
discussion to follow.

Table 15.

Codes, themes, and assertions: self-efficacy as a potential administrator

Focused Code	Theme	Assertion
Models to follow	Deterrents to advancement into administration	The participants did not imagine that advancement into administrative roles was a career option because of the absence of models to follow.
Realizing potential	Self-efficacy	
Self-confidence		
Self-awareness	Self-efficacy	The program provided space for participants to reflect on their qualities and characteristics that might – or might not – lend themselves to careers in community college administration.

Engaging community college administrators who had come from library backgrounds to be coaches in the program was a deliberate tactic to introduce the participants to actual examples, though as mentioned in the previous chapter, the pool from which to draw was limited. There simply are so few former librarian administrators in the California community college system and, as Table 1 showed, none in the West Central region from which the intervention participants came. In short, there has been a paucity of models for the participants. After all, even if the participants had known any of the three coaches beforehand (and based on my observations of their interactions as well as the interviews, only one of the participants knew any of the coaches prior to the program), that's still a very small number of potential other examples for them to have previously looked to as models. This sets the context for the first assertion related to self-efficacy: The participants did not imagine that advancement into administrative roles was a career option because of the absence of models to follow.

The exception to this assertion was Participant 4. They distinguished themselves in part by already having taken on levels of responsibility at their library and college beyond what most of the other participants had. They were also at the brink of moving into administration, already looking at job postings, seeking advice, and preparing for applications. In this regard they were at the opposite end of the administrative career interest continuum from Participant 2, who had expressed reticence about moving onto such a path. Participant 4 knew all three coaches prior to the program thanks to having done work at a statewide level. That experience also introduced them to other administrators who had come out of libraries. Seeing and knowing those models was instructive for them:

I just watched and I thought, can I do that? Could I do that? Could I see

myself in that role? And how will I grow to that? And so many of the

things I've been doing, going back for a second master's degree … was

part of that step (Participant 4, personal communication, April 13, 2021).

Participant 4 did not solely credit having had models for having inspired them to strive

for administrative roles, but it was apparent that knowing and watching these others who

had come from libraries awakened them to the belief that they, too, could reach for such

career goals.

For the other participants, the program was the first exposure to models of

librarians who had moved into the college administration. This experience proved

illuminating for them. Where previously they had not known of the potential for moving

upward and out of the library, they certainly realized that potential as a result of the

intervention. For example, as Participant 1 (April 12, 2021) stated in their interview,

Before this, I did not see a lot of opportunity for, for movement either

because we have, like, we have a department chair and that's pretty much

it. I never really realized that I could actually go do something else. I

didn't have to stay in the library.

A similar insight came from Participant 5 (April 14, 2021) in their interview:

I don't know if you remember with the interview with my mentor, and she,

she was kind of like, what do you mean you can't be in administration?

She's like, I'm a unique scenario being young and, you know, moving

forward so quickly and ambitiously, and she really planted a seed of like,

well, maybe. So I leave it open.

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The outcome for Participant 5 of their direct interaction with a coach was the awareness that a career in administration was a possibility not just in general but for them specifically. Their mention of a seed being planted and of being open nods at least a little in the direction of self-efficacy as a potential administrator.

The diverse range of career experiences as recounted by the coaches was commented on by the participants, further fueling how they were thinking about administrative career paths. Participant 6 (April 14, 2021), in their interview, noted that the models the coaches represented included both deliberate, planned career paths as well as ones that were built on benefiting from the serendipity of opportunity arising. In short, whether participants identified with one type of another, there was a model for them to draw upon. Participant 2 (April 12, 2021), meanwhile, gained from the coaches the realization that it was limiting for the participants to think of future career paths as being possible only at their current institution:

> So, I've only worked as far as a community college at one institution. So,
> I only know how my institution works and my administrators and my, you
> know, at my institution. So, I think that it, having that outside perspective
> made me realize that, oh, things can operate differently elsewhere. So
> even though you might not fit into the administrator position at the place
> I'm at, I might somewhere else.

Satisfaction with their current workplaces was something multiple participants addressed, and I will return to that later. Still, the awareness that careers can lead elsewhere was not lost on them.

Having models of librarians as administrators in place was a first step. Realizing that they each had potential to follow a similar career pathway into advancement came next for the participants. Then followed the belief that they were capable of working in administrative positions, that self-efficacy as potential administrators that the program was designed to improve and that was alluded to by some of the other participants in their interviews. Having seen classroom faculty move into deanship positions over the library, one librarian commented in their interview, "I didn't think that I could, I didn't think that could actually oversee another department. Of course, I've got as much education and experience as they do. I don't know why I never thought that, but I never did" (Participant 1, personal communication, April 12, 2021). This expressed understanding that their education and experience rendered them capable of carrying out the work of administrators contrasted with what I had observed among the participants earlier in the intervention when the possibility had only just been introduced. Participant 2 (April 12, 2021) was even more specific in their reflections on what capabilities they had that would serve them well in administration when asked during their interview:

> I think that I've gotten really good with dealing with a budget, dealing
>
> with people, being the, a diplomat, you know, position, kind of being able
>
> to deal with different personalities and all that. I think that that's the kind
>
> of a skill that comes with being a librarian as you get used to dealing with
>
> lots of different types of people and, and reading people really well.

It was telling to hear the connection Participant 2 made between what they had gained from being a librarian to the belief that they could apply that knowledge and skills to being a dean.

A final, meaningful aspect to introducing the participants to these particular administrators as coaches and models was captured by Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) in their interview:

> I think having women has, like, it brings, that it brings a different,
> different perspective, especially women that have families and have
> children, because that's something that, it, I mean, it's difficult to balance.
> …. And just having women that can relate to kind of those experiences
> and show, like, it's still possible that you can do this, like, that you can
> push through and you can become a leader.

In a profession that is overwhelmingly female, with a pool of participants in which seven of eight were women, Table 5, it was valuable to provide models who were women and who had children and home life considerations to balance with careers. Seeing these particular coaches' career paths further awakened the participants to their potential as librarians and as women. As Participant 7 further commented: "It's, it's inspiring and it's really helpful." I will return to the related issue of work and home balance in a later section.

If the effect of the intervention on participant self-efficacy as potential community college administrators is somewhat positive but hazy, we can at least draw from the data that, as the second assertion states, the program provided space for participants to reflect on their qualities and characteristics that might – or might not – lend themselves to careers in community college administration. By contrast to Dr. Ly (February 24, 2021) who commented in her webinar that she moved into management without having tenure because she was confident in her hard work and abilities, the participants were less

certain of themselves at the outset of the program. For Participant 4 (March 18, 2021), this was expressed through the sense that they had done the things that are beneficial to a career countered by a lingering feeling at the back of the mind as to whether they had done enough. By the time of the interviews, though they had been able to take the time to consider their varied characteristics, both alone and through the one-on-one consultations with their coaches.

In conversation with me at the end of the intervention, participants were able to speak more fully about specific traits. Participant 7 (April 15, 2021), for example, looked at their strengths and what it is that they bring to their current workplace:

> So, within the library, I think I am, I'm, I mean, I'm kind of the most
>
> organized and, I'm the planner. And so, I kind of, I kind of see myself as
>
> kind of pushing us to, to make plans and make goals.

They did not, however, connect reflection on that particular strength to advancement into administrative careers. That was not the case for a couple of other participants who commented on their strengths as well. Participant 3 (April 13, 2021), for example, spoke about their sense of humor and how it would be an asset in administration. In these instances, the participants were able to link their increased self-awareness to realization of their potential for advancement upward.

Participants did not solely focus on their positive qualities, however. They also reflected on and shared with me what they saw as their limitations, their weaknesses:

> The weakness for me would be, I really take on too much. Like, you
>
> know, I need to shut it off. And it's in that position, I think you can easily,
>
> and in some institutions probably be expected, to keep it on all the time.

And that's not probably particularly healthy for a person, especially for

someone like me who needs downtime (Participant 2, personal

communication, April 12, 2021).

Participant 2, as previously noted, was among the most reluctant to consider a career in

administration, and this reflection on what they perceive as a weakness explains that in

part, viewing as they did an administrator position as being on-duty all hours, seven days

a week. Another participant, meanwhile, compared themselves to their current

department chair and found themselves lacking:

I have discovered this last week that I'm not very diplomatic. I have, I

have very low tolerance for, I guess I'm really kind of a go with the flow

kind of person. …. And then my department chair is so diplomatic and

answers the questions, but does it in a very nice way. And that's

something I wish I could do because I don't do that. I've just, like I said, I

have a very low threshold for, for that, I have learned (Participant 1,

personal communication, April 12, 2021).

Concerns about what personal characteristics would mean for career advancement were

shared by multiple participants. Overall, although the participants demonstrated how the

program provided them the space to reflect on their qualities, the result did not

necessarily sway them toward advancement into administration.

Case Exploration: Participant 8

Participant 8 is working in their first position in a community college, but has had

previous experience in other academic libraries. Their career has included instances of

being given supervisory and other larger responsibilities but not usually with

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commensurate titles or pay. Thus, for all that there have been high points in their library

career, they have felt particular disappointment and discouragement through their

experiences with past positions. That led to some conversation with their coach about

having had to put on masks at work, suppressing who they were because of the demands

of those positions and the culture of those libraries (March 23, 2021), a type of

experience written about by Montoya (1994) among others. In their current workplace,

Participant 8 was more outspoken, asking more questions. They indicated that they felt

more comfortable at their library.

The exposure to models in the program was something that Participant 8 (April

15, 2021) expressed appreciation for, if only because they "like to hear about people's

trajectories." As they went on to say, "not that I'm comparing myself, but just learning

about kind of, you know, where people started and where they see themselves going is, is

kind of helpful for me." Not unlike the other participants, seeing those who had been

librarians rise to levels above and outside of the library was illuminating for Participant

8, showing them that there was that possibility, which did not mean that their new goal as

a result of the program was to strive for the same ranks as Dr. Karas. As Participant 8

commented,

> I don't think I could have this position and then try and jump and be, you
>
> know, the chancellor of a complete community college. But knowing that
>
> someone, you know, I know there were like two or three steps in between,
>
> but knowing that someone has done it with the MLS, as well as the EdD,
>
> but, you know, even still, when you, when your identity, your main
>
> identity is as a librarian.

Even if those highest ranks of administration were not likely career aspirations for them, Participant 8 took from the program that it was a possibility for a librarian to achieve. In truth, Participant 8 was similar to Participant 2 in not expressing strong ambition to become an administrator. This was evident in their career journey map, Figure 6, as well as in their interview responses (April 15, 2021). Moreover, their selections for Items 14e and 14f on the survey were unchanged from pre-intervention to post-intervention. If we take those survey items as surrogate for self-efficacy, then it would seem that the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program did not seem to affect Participant 8's sense of that as a potential community college administrator in part because they were among the least interested in such a career, but also because they already possessed a sense of being a leader:

> So, through the course of my career and also attending a lot of these
> professional development opportunities, leadership happens at every
> different point. And I do still consider myself a leader, even though I
> might not be in a traditionally categorized leadership role. So, I'm all
> about leading kind of from the middle right now.

For Participant 8, the coaching program was another leadership development opportunity to explore, and while it did not match their career path as expressed on their map, it did at least introduce them to models and the possibilities the models represented.

Feasibility and Desirability of Attaining Administrative Positions

In a similar manner to the first research question, the second question also had two parts, the first of which asked how and to what extent implementation of

Figure 6. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 8

Career Roadmap
From Start to Finish

MILESTONE
Work in college library; participate in

MILESTONE
Summer internship at the ... (2 years)

MILESTONE
Accepted into MLIS program:

MILESTONE
ARL Initiative to ...

MILESTONE
First job at ... as Research and Collection Development Librarian

MILESTONE
Participant at the ...

MILESTONE
New position as ...

MILESTONE
Supervisory role: Unit Head for the ...

MILESTONE
New position as Social Sciences & Ethnic Studies Team Librarian at

MILESTONE
Supervisory role: Social Sciences Team Leader at

MILESTONE
Participant in the ...

MILESTONE
Program Fellow

MILESTONE
New role as Tenure-track Librarian at

MILESTONE
Receive and maintain tenure at ... or another CCC

MILESTONE
Pursue another degree (MFA or Ed.D)

MILESTONE
Ongoing participation on professional and institutional committees

MILESTONE
Retire at age 55. Resume part-time work as adjunct instructor

Career START

Career FINISH

2005

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Pre-career

Early Career

Mid-career

Pre-Retirement

Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affected participants' perception of the feasibility and desirability of attaining administrative positions. Unlike the research question components examined in previous sections of this chapter, one of the survey constructs mapped directly to this one. Construct 1, AdminQual, related to perceptions of the characteristics and qualifications needed to move into such career paths. As the data in Table 10 indicated, there was a change in the participants responses from the pre-intervention survey, M = 2.64, to the post-intervention survey, M = 2.77. It was not possible, however, to state with confidence that this difference was attributable to the intervention itself based on the result of a paired sample t-test , Table 11, $t(7) = -1.389$, $p = 0.21$.

Although one of the survey constructs mapped to this research question component, I also found it instructive to look more closely at two survey items much as I had done for the previous question components, in this case items 6 and 12. Item 6 asked participants to indicate agreement with the following statement: Librarianship is a viable career path to becoming an administrator at my college. Item 12 asked a nearly identical question but in relation to the California community colleges as a whole instead. Although the remaining items in the AdminQual construct asked about other conditions, such as possession of a doctoral degree, in relation to the perception of the feasibility of attaining administrative positions, these two items specifically point to the perception of librarianship itself as being a viable path. There was a modest shift in whether this was true for the participants at their own colleges from the pre-intervention survey, M = 2.13 to the post-intervention survey, M = 2.38. The shift was more dramatic for the participants when asked about all California community colleges, pre-test M = 2.38 and

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post-test M = 3.00. By using a paired sample t-test, Table 16, to test, I found that for

Item 6, it was not possible to state with confidence that the difference was the result of

the intervention and not caused by other factors, $t(7) = -1.00$, $p = 0.35$. For item 12,

however, it is possible to state that the intervention led to change in the perception of the

participants regarding the viability of librarianship as a pathway to administrative careers

in the California community colleges, $t(7) = -2.38$, $p = 0.05$. From this we might infer

that the participants were not confident that librarianship could lead to administrative

careers at their own colleges but quite possibly could elsewhere instead.

Table 16.

Paired sample t-test for survey items 6 and 12

	Paired Differences				
Item Pair	Mean	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Item 6. Pre-test-Item 6. Post-test	-0.25	0.250	1.000	7	0.35
Item 12. Pre-test–Item 12. Post-test	-0.63	0.263	2.376	7	0.05

Based on the quantitative data collected through the surveys, the Career

Advancement Coaching for Librarians program had modest effect at best on the

participants' perception of the feasibility of attaining an administrative position in a

community college. Unfortunately, the qualitative data did not capture much from the

participants regarding their thinking on why it might be more feasible at another

institution rather than their own. Participant 1 (April 12, 2021) indicated in their

interview that any goal of being a dean would not be achieved at their current institution,

but they did not expand on that nor explain why they think it would be more feasible

elsewhere by comparison. As for the participants' perception of the desirability of

advancement, the survey design failed to account for that. There were no quantitative

data that specifically corresponded to that aspect of the research question. The qualitative

data, on the other hand, went further in addressing both the feasibility and the

desirability. From those data we can see that the Career Advancement Coaching for

Librarians program uncovered perceptions of both deterrents and facilitators to both

feasibility and desirability. Coding of the researcher journals, survey qualitative

responses, and participant interviews yielded multiple relevant codes. Presented here are

ten of the more prevalent focused codes, four themes, and four assertions, Table 17.

Table 17.

Codes, themes, and assertions: feasibility and desirability

Focused Code	Theme	Assertion
Reasons to promote	Incentives to advancement into administration	Although the coaches spoke to why it was desirable for librarians to move into administration, the participants did not themselves articulate those same reasons.
Supports	Incentives to advancement into administration	The availability of support structures and supportive individuals in the workplace and elsewhere in the profession bolstered the sense of feasibility and desirability of attaining administrative positions.
Disconnect from library Happiness Job security Loneliness	Deterrents to advancement into administration	
Work and home balance	Personal and societal factors that influence participants' career decision making	The program uncovered but did not fully provide persuasive strategies to address multiple deterrents to the desirability and feasibility of attaining administrative positions in the California community colleges
Career logistics	Stepping onto an administrative career path	
Assuming responsibility Leadership programs	Stepping onto an administrative career path	Leadership opportunities in participants' libraries and on their campuses provided insight into the feasibility and desirability of continued and deeper engagement.

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In the lead up to the start of the program, I engaged in a recruitment process in search of coaches, followed by an orientation session for them. It was clear from the conversations involved that the coaches themselves saw a need for and a value in having librarians move into administrative positions. This was also apparent in what they had to say to the participants. What was notable, however, is that although the coaches spoke to why it was desirable for librarians to move into administration, the participants did not themselves articulate those same reasons.

Much of the reasoning the coaches provided for the desirability of a move into administration centered on being able to move past frustrations brought about by their organizational situations. For example, Dr. Ly (February 24, 2021) told the participants in her webinar that she had become tired of trying to convince her dean and convince others in administration above her and instead wanted to be able to make decisions herself. She later stated in that session that she had not wanted to accept a career in libraries where she would be susceptible to having to work for a terrible dean, so leaving the library front lines to become a dean herself was a worthwhile decision. This perspective was echoed by Dr. Oxford (March 10, 2021) in her session wherein she told the participants that though she loved and missed being in the classroom, she had grown too frustrated with being a faculty member and seeing inequities, such as in policy development. In a subsequent coaching session, Dr. Ly (March 26, 2021) addressed how her decision to move into administration was about the impact she could make, giving examples of how being at the table with other administrators enables her to be part of decision making including frequent instances during the COVID pandemic. The

coaches' strongest argument for advancement centered largely on the ability of librarians to have a better say over what affects libraries – and more – at their colleges.

For their part, the participants did not share that same point of view. In their thinking on reasons or incentives for moving into administrative positions, the notion that they would be able to advocate for libraries better or make better decisions than an administrator not from libraries almost never came up. In the webinar sessions, there may have been some nods of agreement, and Participant 3 did verbally affirm what Dr. Oxford (March 10, 2021) had to say about poor leadership over libraries based on their observation and experience. Otherwise, however, the participants did not link their reflections on the leadership at their institutions with the desirability for attaining administrative positions. Participant 1 (April 12, 2021), for example, described their administrator by saying, "Yeah and he, bless his heart, I mean he's, he's very capable, but he's basically he's, he's supportive of us, but he doesn't know what we do." Meanwhile, Participant 6 (April 14) told me "I will say that, you know, for the most part, I have been really supported by our dean, but I do feel like the library is often overlooked." In neither case did the participant continue on to say that such situations had them considering whether they could better fit the role themselves. The webinars and the coaching sessions provided the participants with the coaches' reasons for wanting to move into administration, but through their interviews, the participants showed that they did not share those reasons.

None of this is to say that the participants did not at all see either the feasibility or the desirability of attaining administrative positions. Indeed, it was being able to point to the availability of support structures and supportive individuals in the workplace and

elsewhere in the profession that bolstered that sense of feasibility and desirability. The coaches themselves were examples of supports, what with each of them using the coaching sessions to invite the participants to take advantage of these newly established relationships for advice and networking beyond the one-on-one session and even past the completion of the intervention. The coaches further provided insights into workplace and other types of supports. Dr. Ly (March 26, 2021), for example, spoke about getting mentoring from her dean while Dr. Oxford (March 17, 2021) expanded on that possibility, advising the participants to be specific with their goals and needs when they approach deans and others for that mentorship. Dr. Oxford (March 10, 2021) also addressed the need for support systems outside of work: family members who are supportive, for example, or the use of paid services to help maintain the home or childcare. Based on my observation of Dr. Oxford's session where discussion of these supports arose, the conversation resonated well with the participants.

The participants agreed that the impact of sufficient supports was helpful in making career decisions. Participant 3 (March 16, 2021), for example, lauded their department chair in their coaching session, crediting the chair with being encouraging and supportive. Following from that, in their later interview Participant 3 (April 13) spoke of aspirations to further education and of attaining a deanship. Professional support outside of the workplace was something that participants also welcomed. In their interview, Participant 6 (April 14, 2021) spoke about trying to get involved with library associations as a means of furthering their careers and wishing that those more highly placed in associations could be more supportive of newer members. In cases such as the ones the participants related, getting support in a variety of professional endeavors,

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including career paths into administration, was seen as a boost to the feasibility of advancement.

Although the intervention introduced the participants to reasons for and incentives to pursue careers in community college administration, it was perhaps inevitable that they should encounter and consider potential disincentives as well. Thus it was that, as the third assertion states, the program uncovered but did not fully provide persuasive strategies for overcoming multiple deterrents to the desirability and feasibility of attaining administrative positions in the California community colleges. This started from the coaches themselves, whose candor I noted and expressed admiration for in my researcher journal notes. Among the things that they pointed to were the feelings of being disconnected from the library and of loneliness in their administrative position. Dr. Karas (March 3, 2021), for one, thought it may now be so long since he was a library faculty member that he no longer missed it as much as he used to. He did, however, caution the participants that the higher they rise in college administration, the fewer people they will have as peers for support. Dr. Ly (February 24, 2021), related how organizationally, she will soon have the library removed from her area of responsibility, leaving her unsure of what that will mean for her own identity as a librarian. Dr. Oxford (March 10, 2021), meanwhile, was blunt in her warning: "Oh my god, being a leader is so lonely." She continued by telling the participants that the people you are around most in administrative positions are the ones with whom to be the most guarded. The coaches also spoke to logistical issues, such as moving locations or dealing with transitions in the state retirement system, as well as how the job security of tenure is hard to relinquish. All in all, none of the coaches sugarcoated the pitfalls of advancement.

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Discussion of other potential deterrents arose from the participants themselves, including in the one-on-one sessions where they had the opportunity to ask the coaches not just about the problems but also about strategies to mitigate them. Participant 4 (March 18, 2021), for example, spoke about their concerns with the logistics of moving family for an administrative position given that they had school age children. Their coach's advice in this instance, however, was encouraging but not particular, suggesting the development of a general plan then thinking through the specifics. The participants revealed other, deeper concerns to me in the interviews as well, such as when Participant 8 (April 15, 2021) spoke about wanting to preserve a work and home balance that they feared would be imperiled by the demands of an administrative role:

> So for me, I'm really interested, interested in a work-life balance and pursuing things outside of my profession. Like, I feel like I've been able to do a lot of things and have a lot of opportunities. …. And so now I'm, you know, at a point in my life and also in my career where I just want to be happy in the role that I'm in. But I also, when I go home, I want to be able to put that aside until the next day.

The perception that administrators are on duty at all hours every day by contrast with the comfort of set contractual hours for faculty was a disincentive for others as well.

The codes and examples that I captured under the theme of "deterrents to advancement into administration" went beyond what I have presented in support of the third assertion. All in all, the number of coding instances regarding those reasons outnumbered those related to incentives by a 126 to 85 margin. The participants expressed apprehension about the desirability of advancement, and the coaches, in turn,

were honest with them about why that apprehension might be warranted. This was especially evident in the coaching session in which Dr. Oxford (March 17, 2021) told Participant 7 that deans have no power, that the work is exhausting, and that the job description almost does not matter because the job requires the dean to pivot and change and act as a shock absorber for those under them. Confronted with such straight talk, it would not be unexpected for any participant to consider the prospect of advancement more feasible than actually desirable.

Leadership and administration are related but not equivalent concepts, however, the conversations in the intervention that centered on leadership led to the fourth assertion: Leadership opportunities in participants' libraries and on their campuses provided insight into the feasibility and desirability of continued and deeper engagement. That is, exploring their own leadership and taking on more responsibilities in their workplaces were potential means by which the participants might more readily see the feasibility of advancement into administration as well as the desirability of doing so.

In her webinar, Dr. Ly (February 24, 2021) spoke about leadership and provided the participants with a listing of leadership programs as well as insight into what she saw as their relative merits. This part of the webinar caught the interest of the participants particularly strongly, and those who had coaching sessions with Dr. Ly took advantage of that to press her for further details. Participant 5 (March 15, 2021), for example, began by wanting to use their coaching session to get some guidance on implementing information literacy programs. Dr. Ly, in response, redirected Participant 5 to think about how they (and the library through them) could become leaders on campus in that area. Participant 6 (March 26, 2021) was interested in the leadership programs

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themselves, and Dr. Ly was able to advise them on which programs would be more suitable for them at current stage of their career versus which could come later. Participant 6 had never engaged in such programs before despite being aware of them, but in their interview (April 14, 2021), it was clear that they were thinking more and more of the possibility:

> Pearl laid out so many great options that I just don't know why I wouldn't do something like that at this point. And I know it's a little different because maybe that's something that most people do early in their career, but you know, whatever, I'm here right now. And if I, if that will be helpful to me now, then why not?

Meanwhile, even those who did not have a one-on-one coaching session with Dr. Ly were struck by the opportunities she mentioned. Participant 8 (April 15, 2021), for example, had known of leadership programs at a national level but was appreciative of learning about programs specific to community colleges for future consideration. Leadership development, independent of development of potential as an administrator, was viewed by all as feasible and desirable.

Although engagement in development programs is one route to greater leadership, assuming responsibility in the library and on campus is another. Of course, not all such instances are voluntary. Sometimes, as Participant 8 (April 15, 2021) put it, people are 'voluntold,' presented with something as an opportunity when it is really an obligation. Other instances may not be a case of stepping forward to claim leadership so much as being surrounded by people who step back, unwilling to take on a role or responsibility, as Participant 4 (April 13, 2021) told me about their position at their library. Although

the 'voluntold' experience for Participant 8 was not always positive, Participant 4 has learned a lot from being the only person not to retreat from such responsibility.

There were participants, though, who wish to step forward and seek out responsibility and positions. In their career journey map, Figure 7, Participant 6 not only glanced toward engagement in leadership programs but also toward being a leader through the development of online library resources in the near term and a leader in professional association work in the longer term. Similarly, Participant 3 showed interest, through their career journey map, Figure 8, in such work as chairing a campus committee, becoming library department chair, and also serving at a regional or state level. Meanwhile, Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) indicated in the interview that they have already assumed certain responsibility in their library by taking over development and maintenance of library policies at their college. None of these activities the participants mentioned would necessarily lead to an administrative role, but any or all could provide the participants with at insight into the feasibility and desirability of some sort of deeper engagement or even advancement.

Case Exploration: Participant 5

Participant 5 has worked in libraries for several years but in the community colleges for fewer than that. Of all the interviews, theirs was the one wherein I was quizzed the most about the doctoral study, about the doctoral program, and about my own career path. The session felt the most conversational of all of them. Participant 5 was open to the possibility of advancement into administrative work, but they spoke strongly about why it would not be altogether feasible or desirable. As Participant 5 (March 15,

Figure 7. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 6

CAREER JOUNEY

ADVENTURES IN LIBRARIANING

1-5 YEARS	5 -10 YEARS	10-15 YEARS	20 YEARS
• Complete Tenure Process • Leadership training • Continue to grow the programs we have started with buy in from students/faculty • Continue developing online learning for library and be a leader in community colleges in this effort • Present at Conference or Publish • Choose and begin Masters Program or EDD	• Complete chosen educational program • Take on leadership roles beyond our individual college. Perhaps within the state or through ACRL • Continue growth at ▮▮▮▮▮ • Learn Spanish or sign language	• Use further education to support continued growth in my career. I am not sure yet what specifically this will be, but I know with my personality type, I will want to continue to grow. • Potentially take on a part time teaching job in addition to regular job • Closer to the 15 year mark reduce work load to 10 months, instead of 11	RETIRE!

Figure 8. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 3

2021) told their coach, their current position and the ones that came before it happened

They have been pulled along by serendipity rather than planning their career from one

position to the next.

There was evidence in that particular one-on-one coaching session that the

intervention has had some impact on the participants, if Participant 5 is indicative of the

cohort. Prior to receiving the study invitation, Participant 5 (March 15, 2021) had not

really considered a potential career in administration. In the time that followed, through

the webinars to the coaching session, they learned about the possibility and rethought

what it was that they could attain. In the session, then, they expressed to their coach

interest in what they had been introduced to, a mark in favor of feasibility and desirability

of such a career path.

By the time of my interview with Participant 5 (April 14, 2021), they were

perhaps no less open to the possibility of advancement into such a career given an

opportune situation, but they conveyed less of a sense that they found it desirable. Their

career journey map, Figure 9, did not include any future plans for advancement or even

for leadership development or taking on additional responsibilities, ending instead at their

current position. Indeed, of all of the participants, they spoke the most about their

happiness with their current work. They had found their dream job, and they were

unapologetic about having done so:

> So that's why I think I took that long route, a circuitous route to getting to
>
> my dream job, but I literally am. So, I, yeah. I don't know what to tell
>
> people who are unhappy. I'm like, I'm sorry, but I'm not.

Was their current role truly perfect? Participant 5, like the others, could point to issues with such things as needing to make the library more visible to others on campus. On the other hand, of all of the participants, they spoke most positively about their administrator – glowingly, in fact. So much for wanting to be dean so as not to have to contend with a dean who did not understand and support the library!

Despite this great happiness at work, Participant 5 (April 14, 2021) remained open to possibility. They were cognizant, after all, that things around them at work could change:

It's like, I, I have found my place. I love where I'm at. Does that mean I'm going to love it in five years? Maybe. Maybe not. So I do want to leave it open, and thanks to you and this project I'm even considering it. I would not have, I would have kind of considered this as my I'm done.

Advancement into administration was not out of the question, then, for all it was an unlikely pursuit. Instead, Participant 5 shared a very different goal, one that wasn't featured on their career journey map, Figure 7: "I'm going to work here for the next 15 years and then I'm going to retire and I'll be done." Happy to the end of their career, in the library, or so they seemed to assume. This cheer extended to their thoughts on the intervention itself, telling me: "I love everything that happened. It was such a surprise. And this is why I don't plan stuff. Cause I just kind of like, oh well, let's try it." For all that I had expected the intervention to shift the participants' perceptions and intents, I cannot help but be delighted that Participant 5's enthusiasm for their current role and duties remained intact.

Figure 9. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 5

Intent to Seek Administrative Positions

The last part of the second research question asked about whether and to what extent the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program would affect participants' intent to seek administrative positions. The webinar structure did not provide much opportunity or an especially comfortable space for participants to disclose their intentions, but the one-on-one coaching and the interviews did. Career aspirations were at the heart of the intervention, and yet, despite this, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program did not have a measurable effect on the participants' intent to seek such positions. This was borne out in the quantitative data from the survey, though the qualitative data painted a more complex picture of what the participants intended.

As was the case with other parts of the research questions, none of the three survey constructs exactly mapped to the part of the second research question that asked about intent to seek administrative positions. Instead, within the survey there was a set of items relevant to this question. This was once again a shortcoming in the design of the survey. Items 16a-d asked participants to indicate their intentions to work in an administrative position in the future, with each item positing a 5-year block of time later than the previous one: within the next 5 years, 6-10 years from now, 11-15 years from now, or at a point greater than 15 years from now. The data suggest that in the nearer term, up to 10 years from now, the participants expressed greater intention of working in administration in the post-intervention survey within the next 5 years, M = 2.88; in the next 6-10 years, M = 2.75 than in the pre-intervention survey, within the next 5 years, M = 3.25; in the next 6-10 years, M = 2.88. The data also suggest, however, that in terms of

career advancement at later points in the future, there was either no change or even a shift in intention away from advancement from the pre-intervention survey, in the next 11-15 years, M = 2.75; greater than 15 years from now, M = 3.25 to the post-intervention survey, in the next 11-15 years, M = 3.00; greater than 15 years from now, M = 3.25. Paired sample t-testing, Table 18 showed that the p-values for the four pairs ranged from $t(7) = 1.158$, $p = 0.29$ for the paired Item 16a means to $t(7) = 0$, $p = 1.00$ for the paired Item 16d means, between which there was no difference at all. This suggests that we cannot state with confidence that any change in the means from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey was not caused by the intervention.

In retrospect, there was a further issue with the design of the survey that clouded the results of the quantitative data analysis. Items 16a-d asked the participants whether they would be working in administration, not whether they intended to seek to do so. Although we might view the two as essentially analogous, one thing that the items as written, fail to account for is the age of each participant at the time of the intervention. How far off their eventual retirement will be would depend in part on how old they are now. In the California community colleges, faculty are eligible for retirement at age 55. As shown in Table 5, two of the eight participants had already reached that age while three more were within ten years of it. As such, it is unsurprising that the responses about career plans for 11 or more years in the future might not have indicated intent to be working in administration or, indeed, to be working at all. The issue of retirement is one I will return to in discussion of the analysis of the qualitative data that relate to this question.

Table 18.

Paired sample t-test for survey items 16a-d

| | Paired Differences | | | | |
Item Pair	Mean	Std. Error Mean	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Item 16a. Pre-test – Item16a. Post-test	-0.38	0.324	-1.158	7	0.29
Item 16b. Pre-test – Item 16b. Post-test	-0.13	0.295	-0.424	7	0.69
Item 16c. Pre-test – Item 16c. Post-test	-0.25	0.453	0.552	7	0.60
Item 16d. Pre-test – Item 16d. Post-test	0.00	0.327	0.000	7	1.00

The survey data do not provide sufficient insight into the effect of the intervention on the intent of the participants to seek administrative positions, but the richer qualitative data do cast some light on their aspirations. Coding of the researcher journals, survey qualitative responses, and participant interviews yielded multiple codes related to self-efficacy. Presented here are three of the more prevalent focused codes related to this question, one theme, and two assertions, Table 19.

The first of the two assertions states that the participants, rather than intending to seek administrative positions, were more inclined to continue to consider and explore the possibility of doing so further if they were interested in such positions at all. They were open to knowing still more about such opportunities and thinking further about them but not yet at a point of being deliberate in planning and preparing for such career paths by the end of the intervention. The clearest exception among them was Participant 4 (April

Table 19.

Codes, themes, and assertions: intent to seek administrative positions

Code	Theme	Assertion
Career aspirations	Goals	Rather than intend to seek administrative positions, participants were more inclined to continue to consider and explore the possibility of doing so further if they were interested in such positions at all.
Legacies Retirement	Goals	Retirement and their final professional legacy were end goals that accommodated intent to seek administrative careers but did not center that possibility.

13, 2021), who was already at the cusp of applying, seeking advice and being headhunted for positions according to his responses in our interview. The others, however, were not as far along in forming and acting on such intent. In their coaching session (March 16, 2021), for example, Dr. Karas asked Participant 3 if they had been applying for director or dean positions. The response back was that no, that was future thinking, not the present. This was also the case for Participant 6 who gave the impression in their coaching session (March 26, 2021) that they were in an exploratory period at the moment, considering options rather than pursuing them. None of the other participants had applied anywhere or even mentioned looking at specific positions even if there were cases, as with Participant 1, where the coach let them know about current openings in the one-on-one session (March 18, 2021).

The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program may not have quantifiably pushed the participants toward intent to seek administrative positions, but it did leave them with an understanding of a possibility they might not have known before. As Participant 2 (April 12, 2021) stated, "Prior to this, I probably would've said, Oh, never in a million years. No, thank you, I'm never going to do it. Where now I'm thinking, well, maybe I'll, I'll explore and, you know, look at it." The interest in at least

exploring was there. On the other hand, it was clear that after a short intervention, and even with a new grasp of the potential, not all of the participants were yet sure of what and whether to explore. Instead, they were uncertain of next steps. Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) was one such example, telling me in their interview,

> And then I think from there, I just, I don't know, like, I feel like that's
>
> where, like, kind of my, my road's kind of split. Like I could just continue
>
> on being a librarian and, you know, do my best as a librarian and, you
>
> know, that would be it, or I could, I could try to pursue something.

Indeed, in terms of intent, the participants ranged across a continuum of responses, from Participant 4, already actively looking, to Participant 5 who was, as previously noted, open to possibilities of any sort (including administrative positions) but beyond that uninterested in actively exploring. Still, there was a sense from many of the participants that they were interested in learning more for themselves post-intervention.

The participants, to varying degrees, may have been open to or interested in exploring the possibility of administrative careers, but they seemed to have given considerable thought to a more distant point in time. So it was that, as the second assertion has it, retirement and their final professional legacy were commonly articulated end goals that accommodated intent to seek administrative careers but did not solely center that possibility. Given that more than half of the participants were either within a decade of reaching retirement age in the state retirement system or had already reached the age of 55, hearing about such reflection on how their careers would end was not surprising. I, too, am in those later age brackets and spend a large amount of time planning for that point in life. I understand that impetus.

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Figure 10. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 7

Retirement was a feature on more than half of the career journey maps. Among them, there was some variation in how it was represented. Participant 2, Figure 5, mentioned both their career legacy and retirement whereas Participant 6, Figure 7, simply and emphatically punctuated that endpoint, writing "retire" in all capital letters followed by an exclamation point. Participant 7 illustrated the concept of retirement with a depiction of themselves leaping or dancing with joy, Figure 10. Meanwhile, Participant 8, the youngest of the cohort, pointed to the target age of 55 on their map, Figure 6. Of those three, only Participant 2 included the consideration of seeking a deanship, and not even as the final step on their map, which instead looked toward what their career legacy would be. The question then is, retirement from what position?

Retirement had one further implication that may connect better to the feasibility and desirability of seeking administrative positions: leaving a faculty position for a position elsewhere carries risk of losing out on an investment in the state retirement system. Perhaps because most of the participants were not yet at a point of actively seeking positions, I heard this concern from only Participant 4 (April 13, 2021) in their interview. For them, they may aspire to advancement, but they commented on the financial risk of starting a new phase of a career at their age, 45-54 years old, especially insofar as opportunities may lie outside California. If there were to be such a move outside of the retirement system, the time should probably have been earlier in life. This placed some limitations on any intention to seek positions across a broad geographic range.

Whatever the position, achieving a higher, administrative one did not seem to be the ultimate endpoint for the careers of the participants, just a possibility. Those who

spoke of the end of career were more focused on simply having attained personal

satisfaction and having done their work well, no matter the position. Participant 2 (April

12, 2021) told me in their interview

> You know, I mean, as much as I talk about not being particularly
>
> ambitious, I still want to know that I'm doing a good, you know, I still
>
> want to do a good job. So, I want to make sure of that because for me,
>
> when I came into this position, it, the last person left it very well and I
>
> hope I've made even more improvements on it.

Even Participant 4 (April 13, 2021), who was the most intent on career advancement by

comparison to the others, had their end of career legacy in mind:

> You know? I think, you know, I look back and I've got grandkids and
>
> things like that. I think that's what I'll be. I think that's what I'll enjoy
>
> right on, and I'll enjoy the experiences and the, um, I think the lessons I've
>
> learned, but, you know, the titles won't mean as much at the end of the
>
> career, as it were, as it would be the person that I've become.

Participant 4 may have been the one among the cohort with the strongest intent to seek

administrative positions, but their career map, Figure 11, showed the importance of

service, faith, and family in their lives. Each took was set in equal position to profession

and scholarship, making it clear that, indeed, their legacy as a person and not as a title

was sincerely paramount.

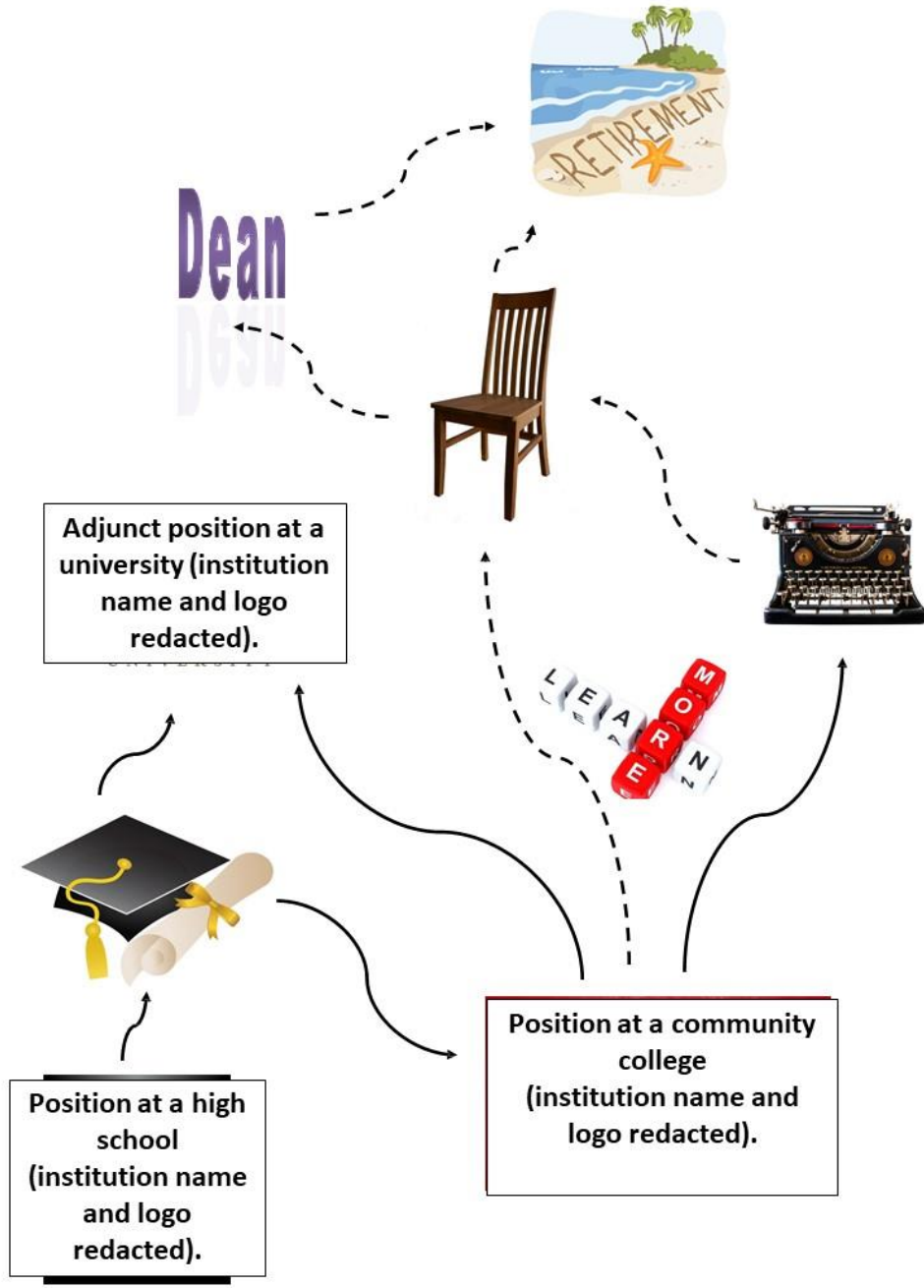*Figure 11. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 4*
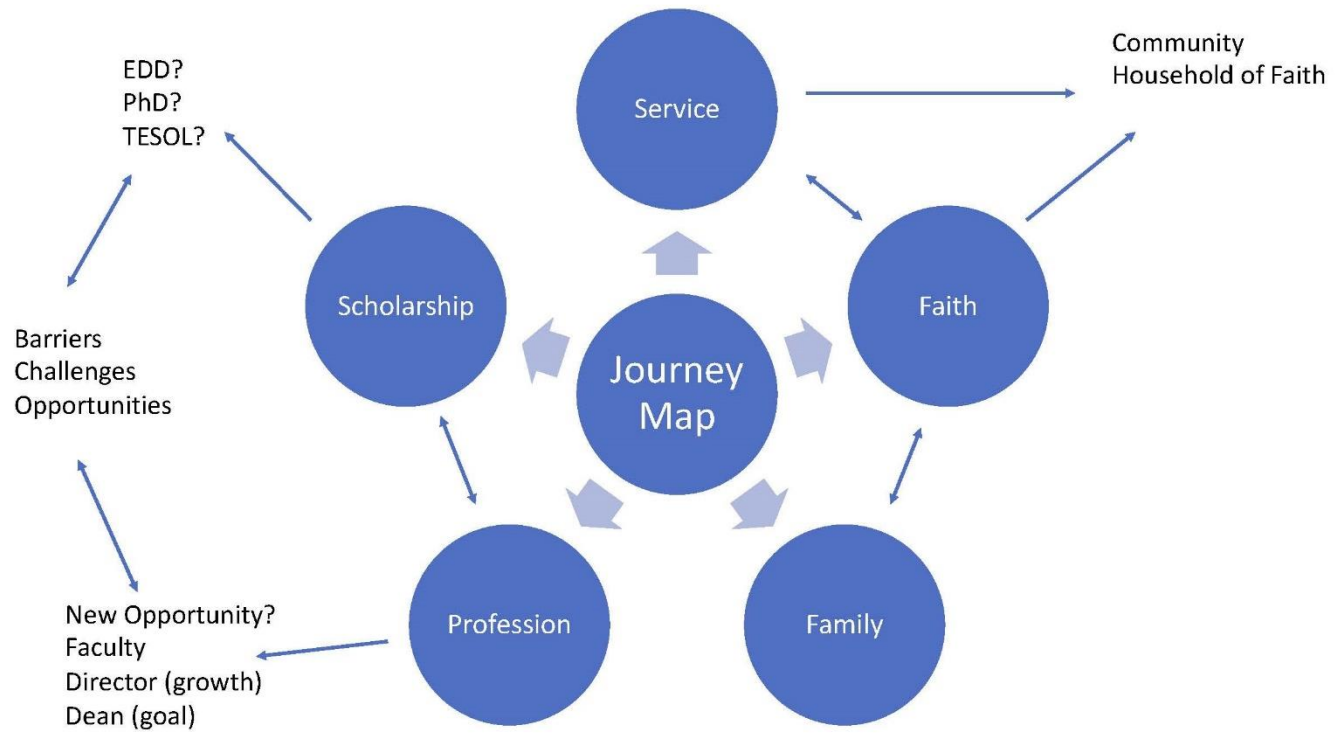
Case Exploration: Participant 1

In terms of intentionality about seeking an administrative career, Participant 1 was second only to Participant 4. They were one of the two members of the cohort in the oldest age bracket represented, 55-64, and they had worked for several years in the California community colleges and for over a decade in libraries. In my interview with them, Participant 1 (April 12, 2021) spoke a lot of their student focus at work, at the ways in which they prioritize student learning. If there was something that was sure to be part of their eventual end-of-career legacy, it was that emphasis on how the library could support students.

As with others in the study group, Participant 1 also pointed to retirement in crafting their career journey map, Figure 12. Where Participant 7 used a happy, leaping figure to represent the joy of reaching that point, Figure 10, Participant 1 drew upon beach imagery to convey a sense of relaxation and paradise, a reward earned at the end of a career. Where they differed from the others who included retirement as an ending to the map is in taking a path way through either a deanship or at least a department chair position. This contrasts with Participant 7 who illustrated indecision and the potential to remain in a career as a librarian and with Participant 2 who only suggested in their map, Figure 5, that they would consider advancement, not necessarily seek it. Participant 1 mapped two routes to retirement, and whether as a faculty department chair or as a dean, advancement would happen on the way there. They affirmed this in their interview, telling me "I don't plan to go till I'm about 65, but okay. But yeah, so, but I would like to leave as either as either the chair or the Dean. I would love that" (Participant 1, personal

Figure 12. Career journey map (redacted), Participant 1

Dean

RETIREMENT

Adjunct position at a university (institution name and logo redacted).

LEARN MORE

Position at a high school (institution name and logo redacted).

Position at a community college (institution name and logo redacted).

communication, April 12, 2021). In their case, the vision of retirement accommodated

moving beyond being a librarian more clearly than for most of the others.

For all that Participant 1 aspired to advancement, they also recognized that

satisfaction at the end of a career did not strictly derive from attaining a particular

position or earning a loftier title. As they told me in their interview (April 12, 2021),

prior to becoming a librarian, they had had a fulfilling career in another field.

Circumstances outside of their control brought that career to an end, but they expressed

happiness with what they had accomplished there. Replicating that feeling at the end of

their time in academia even irrespective of advancement was desirable to them:

> I would like to, I would like to, you know, leave on a high note. I left
>
> [previous field of work] on a high note. You know, I'd really like to do, I
>
> would like to do the same with this now. I'm not saying that, you know,
>
> being a, you know, being a librarian might not be a high note, but I, that's,
>
> that's how I would like to leave it. It's like, Oh, I did what I did,
>
> everything I could.

For Participant 1, attaining a higher position was a goal, and maintaining and furthering a

student focus while doing so was critical, but underlying these career considerations was

the hope that they could look back and feel they had tried to the extent that was possible.

Other Findings

The previous sections addressed how the quantitative and qualitative data both

answered and failed to answer the research questions I had developed to guide this

research. The data, however, told me things other than what those two questions asked.

Some of what I learned from observing the activities and interacting with the participants

informs the discussion to follow in Chapter 5, particularly as it relates to possible future

iterations of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program and to my own

career interests and aspirations. Some of the data pointed to smaller findings that are of

niche or lesser interest or might otherwise need a follow-up study to flesh out more fully.

Finally, there were some codes and themes that were so prevalent by the end of the

analysis that it is worth considering them even if they do not correspond to one of the

research questions. In this section, I will address those data. As shown in Table 20, there

are six focused codes, two themes, and two assertions to present in this section. The

quantitative data from the pre- and post-intervention surveys correspond to these

qualitative data to a limited extent only.

Table 20.

Other codes, themes, and assertions arising from the qualitative data

Focused code	Theme	Assertion
Campus engagement Disconnect from campus How others view librarians Interactions with admin	Focus on current work situation instead of the future	The program provided a place for librarians to share current work experiences and concerns and seek advice and understanding.
Association engagement Further education	Professional enrichment other than through careers in administration	Participants used the program to reflect on how to enrich their professional lives beyond advancement into administration or pursuing leadership training and opportunities.

The career coaching program was designed to have a forward-thinking outlook,

encouraging the participants to consider what their future career paths would be,

especially as those paths might involve advancement into college administration. Future

career plans, it seems, cannot be divorced from current career situations. So it was that the program, as the first assertion states, provided a place for librarians to share current work experiences and concerns and seek advice and understanding. This assertion derives mainly from coding of what the participants had to say in their interviews, though related content in the coaching sessions was coded in a similar way. On re-reviewing my journal entries for the coaching sessions, however, I came to realize that the use of such codes in the first two sessions tended to point to content, to things that the participants said, that was still focused on advancement into administration. By contrast, the use of those codes in the interviews more commonly represented what the participants had to say about their day-to-day work lives. Thus, the interview component of the intervention allowed space for the participants to reflect not on their careers going forward but where they are and what they contend with now. Moreover, as the four codes that map to the first assertion suggest, much of what the participants were thinking about was interrelated.

Table 20 lists the codes alphabetically, but a better starting point for discussion of the first assertion may be with the shared sense of disconnect from participants' campuses. Across the interviews, six of the eight participants brought this up as an issue. The sense, moreover, is not strictly that they, as individuals, feel disconnected, though mention of that also bled into the conversation. Instead, they spoke to how the library as a unit was isolated from others on campus no matter where it fit organizationally, or that the library and its services were taken for granted at their colleges, unappreciated for what they contributed. The word "overlooked" was used by more than one of the study

participants. Participant 1 (April 12, 2021) captured this shared sense of disconnect as such:

> I see us as one of those entities where we can reach every single faculty.
> We can, we can reach every single student, but yet no one else seems to
> see that. And it's very frustrating. So, I see us as a very integral part of
> campus because we touch, we can be everywhere and touch so many
> different, you know, we can touch every department, we can touch every
> student. But yet no one else wants to see that.

This circles back to the Cycles 0 and 1 interviews that established, for the context of this study, how centrally the library sits in the college operations and how unrecognized the potential of the centrality of the library remains.

Other participants, while professing their feelings of being disconnected, were more charitable in their views on how or why the library was isolated from other parts of campus. Participant 2 (April 12, 2021), for example, stated in their interview, "I think that the institution feels we're very important, but doesn't really understand what we do or why we do it." The result is that the library gets overlooked, including, as they suggested, when there are funds to be disbursed. Still, at least they felt that the college valued the library. Participant 6 (April 14, 2021), meanwhile, felt that "Many faculty and administrators are on board," but that it was incumbent on the library to do more to grab the attention of classroom faculty and administrators. Participant 6 also pointed to the problem of the library being overlooked when it comes to budgetary matters. In their view, the library had its fans and supporters on campus, but perhaps not enough of them.

How others view librarians was related to that sense of campus disconnect, though it seemed to capture more of the perception of the individuals working in the library, including the participants themselves, rather than of the organizational unit itself. Discussion of this should be prefaced by understanding how it was that the participants viewed themselves. The data in Table 21 indicate that above all, they most strongly identified primarily as librarians, as part of the library. After that, they next most strongly identified as college employees. The least agreement, though no disagreement was expressed, was with the statement that they identified primarily as faculty. In fact, from the pre-intervention survey to the post-intervention survey, agreement with identifying as faculty weakened, with two fewer participants strongly agreeing with the statement at the end of the intervention than at the start.

The status of librarians as faculty was a sticky issue, and it was interesting and even dismaying to note how many of the participants referred to classroom colleagues as instructional faculty because that is how classroom faculty refer to themselves on many campuses. Given the instructional aspects to library work and given that many of the libraries represented in the study fall under the chain of command of the chief instructional officer at the college, it was unfortunate that the participants 'othered' themselves from their faculty colleagues in such a manner. Still, for all that the participants may not strongly identify as faculty, for them being seen fully as faculty remained a concern. Participant 8 (April 15, 2021), for one, acknowledged that because librarians provide services to students, others on campus may consider them to be part of student services organizationally rather as part of instruction. It was apparent to them, however, that when it comes to the non-library faculty on campus, "at the back of their

Table 21.

Self-identification in the workplace

Identity statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Do Not Know
18a. I primarily identify as a librarian in my work. (Pre-test)[a]	7	1	0	0	0	0
18a. I primarily identify as a librarian in my work. (Post-test)[a]	7	1	0	0	0	0
18b. I primarily identify as a faculty member in my work. (Pre-test)	3	4	1	0	0	0
18b. I primarily identify as a faculty member in my work. (Post-test)	1	6	1	0	0	0
18c. I primarily identify as a college employee in my work. (Pre-test)[a]	2	6	0	0	0	0
18c. I primarily identify as a college employee in my work. (Post-test)[a]	2	6	0	0	0	0

Notes: for all items, *n*=8

a. Although the distributions for these items remain unchanged between the pre-test and post-test, in each case participants changed their responses from the one survey implementation to the next.

mind … they're not really seeing us as equals on equal footing." The frustration that the participants felt about being perceived this way paralleled that same feeling about the library not being understood as a campus unit.

Much of what was said in relation to how librarians are viewed arose from the interviews, but a compelling counterpoint came from Dr. Karas (March 26, 2021) in one of the coaching sessions. When asked by Participant 2 about whether he was perceived differently as an administrator because he came from the library as opposed to the classroom, Dr. Karas leaned into the upside of experiencing that perception. Librarians, he responded, are viewed as not having a vested interest in interdepartmental squabbles or other situations at their colleges. As such, he was able to speak freely in a variety of situations, and others would not find offense in what he said. For better or worse, Dr. Karas also shared, being a librarian in the administrative ranks makes him memorable. For those participants who do not eventually advance into administration, being memorable may not be as attainable a status. Still, the insight into how librarians may be seen as a neutral party is one that any of the participants could potentially exploit on their respective campuses.

It is encouraging that, despite expressing feelings of being disconnected, overlooked, misunderstood, and othered at their colleges, multiple participants addressed wanting to engage further on campus. Interest in undertaking such activities came up during the one-one-one coaching sessions as well, though in those instances they were largely directed at career advancement rather than having a current work focus. Moreover, while engagement on campus may also be linked to non-administrative leadership roles, that was not always the expressed interest of the participants. Indeed,

Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) spoke about an interest in getting involved with their

college senate but made sure to clarify that, in the context of this study on career

advancement, they were looking just to get involved, not necessarily to ascend to the

senate presidency. Participant 1 (April 12, 2021), meanwhile, juxtaposed wanting to

increase their campus engagement with the limitations of working at home during the

COVID pandemic: "I would have probably signed up for another committee. I just

didn't know what this, you know, working from home. I just didn't know what all of that

was going to entail." There was some acknowledgment of spillover benefits to getting

involved, including increasing library visibility on campus, but for at least some of the

participants, being involved was its own worthwhile pursuit.

In view of how participants felt that they and their libraries were perceived at their

colleges, I assumed that they had had a range of negative – or neutral at best –

interactions with administrators. Of course, not all administrators are the same from

college to college. Moreover, experiences with administrators also varied according to

the participants' roles in their libraries (were they a department chair or otherwise?) or on

campus (what committees did they sit on?). Certainly, I heard some expressions of

apprehension about interactions with administrators, especially ones other than the dean

responsible for the library. The intervention, however, helped ameliorate that, it seems:

Just the whole fact that the administrators are often sort of perceived to be

above you as faculty and in charge of things. I think having spent three

hours with administrators alleviated maybe some of my, I don't, not really

insecurity, but intimidation of maybe communicating with administrators

at our own college, if that makes sense, just like, just knowing, like, I don't

know, I mean, people are people no matter what, but it just kind of helped

in that way, in my mind, in some ways also in a more practical way

(Participant 6, personal communication, April 14, 2021).

That same participant also expressed comfort with speaking not just to their dean but to other deans as needed, so it seems that any anxiety over communicating with administrators would have been with those more highly placed.

For other participants, interactions with administrators were less fraught. I have previously related how enthused Participant 5 was about their relationship with their dean. Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) also greatly appreciated how their dean interacted with them and the rest of the library faculty:

It's great. She, she, like explicitly said, you know, I trust you guys, you've

done this, you know what you're doing with the library, like come to me

with questions, problems and things like that, but she kind of just leaves us

to do our own thing.

Interactions extended further upward within organizations. Participant 3 (April 13, 2021) has built a rapport with their college president by means of some committee work. For them, they found the connection to be positive, and they were happy to have become a known entity to someone at that level. That growing reputation at their college was one that they wanted to nurture among other administrators and classroom faculty. That there were a number of examples of positive interactions between the participants and administrators was pleasurable to learn.

The range of experiences and feelings related to interactions between the participants and administrators at their colleges suggested that there was some positive

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disposition toward the participants workplaces. Still, in coding the qualitative data, I counted more than twice as many instances of content that related to a sense of disconnect, 37, as of interactions, 16. The collective set of negative feelings about their own and their libraries' places at their colleges was the more prevalent and perhaps stronger sentiment about current workplace topics among those that the participants used the program to discuss.

Space for sharing their views on their current work situations was a useful if unintended characteristic of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program. The participants also took advantage of the program to look forward. As the second assertion states, participants also used the program to reflect on how to enrich their professional lives beyond advancement into administration or pursuing leadership training and opportunities. What I heard across the three component activities, but especially in the interviews, was their thinking on career and professional options that did not involve additional responsibility or titles but instead was rooted in the things from which they might derive satisfaction or a sense of achievement. What follows describes two of the more commonly expressed means, but there were others mentioned by individuals only, such as writing for the profession (Participant 1, personal communication, April 12, 2021).

For some of the participants, giving back to librarianship by means of professional association engagement seemed like it would be a satisfying pursuit. A few had already dipped their toes in that water, participating in committee work at a regional or national level. This was depicted, for example, on the career journey map created by Participant 2. As they told me in their interview (April 12, 2021), they did not set out to

chair a committee, they simply had a goal of service to the profession. The two of us

shared a laugh during that part of the interview when I asked if they had ambitions to lead

a national association, but no: "I probably would never strive to, to go to the president of

the ALA [American Library Association]. That wouldn't really be my thing." It would

be interesting, however, to learn from the participants at a later date how and to what

extent they did pursue association engagement.

Association engagement involves contributing time and knowledge to a larger

body, but the participants who take on such activities may benefit from them as well.

Participant 6 (April 14, 2021) told me that they had previously felt discouraged from

association engagement in previous positions if only because there was no model for such

engagement among their colleagues there. They have since undertaken some specific

work in an association and shared that even though they felt they were helping others by

doing that work, they had in turn come away from it having learned a great deal. They

did not indicate whether what they learned would apply to their workplace or otherwise,

but they were plainly happy to have experienced such a benefit. For their part,

Participant 7 (April 15, 2021) looked back on past work with a regional association and

hoped that they might one day engage in similar work again. They told me that they

found the in-person networking opportunities to be valuable. Post-pandemic, this will be

something they will pursue again, time permitting. Association engagement was not an

ambition shared by all of the participants, but it evidently was prized by at least some of

them.

Of all of the things that the participants considered pursuing to enrich their

careers, the one that was most discussed according to the number of times I used the

corresponding code, surpassed only by the catch-all term "context," was further education. The coaches brought it up in the webinars, and the participants asked questions about it. Mention of it was even more frequent in the one-on-one coaching sessions, and then more again in the interviews. Every participant but one accounted for it in their career journey maps, and that one exception, Participant 5, only depicted their past journey, not a roadmap for their career to come. Indeed, according to their interview, Participant 5 (April 14, 2021) was interested in pursuing degree work to extend their knowledge in different areas such as instructional design. They also told me,

> If I'm going to consider a master's, that master's is going to just, I'm not
>
> stopping at the master's, I'm just going to do the doctoral program. If
>
> something comes up that could potentially be a master's, I'm not doing a
>
> master's. I'm, we're just going to go full, full hog.

In short, there was palpable enthusiasm for further education even if not all of the participants yet knew what it was that they wanted to study.

It was true that the coding for further education was applied in a number of instances to content that linked further education to career advancement. This was not always the case, however. As I observed with participants in the Cycle 1 interviews, some of the intervention participants saw the financial advantage of using further education to move to more lucrative pay scale columns. In fact, some had already done just that. Participant 3 (April 13, 2021), for example, spoke appreciatively of the content of equity coursework they had already taken, but admitted that the bump in pay that resulted was no less welcome. Salary was not a motivating factor for everyone, however. Participant 1 (April 12, 2021) told me that they were already most of the way over on the

columns of their college's pay scale, so there was less of a salary increase to be realized by expending the cost of pursuing additional degree work. Still, there were other educational opportunities that interested them, commenting that the time working away from the library during the COVID pandemic had afforded them some opportunity to learn about new platforms and skills. Quite simply they wanted to learn as much as they possibly could, an ongoing goal for them. Learning, in their case, was for neither salary nor career advancement but for the enjoyment and practicality of doing so.

Further education might be a path to higher salaries or a means of satisfying intellectual curiosity, but at least one participant viewed it as a route to eventual career alternatives. Participant 8 had indicated on their career journey map, Figure 6, the possibility of degree work in their future, including a doctorate in education. That suggested at least some interest in advancement since the degree is one that is common to a number of administrators in the California community colleges. Moreover, in their interview, Participant 8 (April 15, 2021) admitted to wanting to pursue degree work for the salary gain. What is notable, though, is that they also mentioned, and before the doctoral degree, on their map is a master's degree in fine arts, MFA. The idea of earning an MFA is part of what they identified as "the long game," telling me

> So I, in the back of my head, I'm also thinking about retirement and, and,
> you know, adjunct, and, you know, if I get an MFA, maybe I can teach
> creative writing classes, you know, something like that at a, at a campus.
> So that's where I am with the MFA aspect.

In this regard, Participant 8 was an outlier. None of the other participants shared similar such plans. Just the same, it was interesting to hear from a participant in a career

coaching program centered on librarian advancement into college administration discuss instead the possibility not just of other career pursuits than administrative work, but pursuits that took them outside of librarianship as well. This example suggests just how well the program made space for the participants to consider a wide range of career-related matters, whether advancement or otherwise.

Summary

At the outset of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians intervention, my expectation was that the program would have a particular effect on the participants, resulting in them evidencing more positive views about career paths into college administration. I anticipated that they would be more interested in seeking the positions, that they would believe themselves capable of working as administrators, and that they would believe that attaining such goals was realistic. I thought that the program would have a strong focus on advancement from start to finish, and that I would see evidence of its success in the survey results and in the qualitative data. I did not find unambiguous evidence of any of these.

The intervention was not a failure. It is true that the quantitative data could not support a case that the program could be said, with confidence, to have had the predicted effects on the participants. It is also true that the qualitative data were mixed, in some instances suggesting that what I had expected from the intervention did, in fact, happen while in other instances, a different and even unexpected result was the outcome. The analysis and findings in this chapter point to discussion to come in the next regarding the value of the program and how it might be revised and restaged as well as what the implications of the study are for librarians and career pathways in community colleges.

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Chapter 5

Discussion

Respondent: I think also having a college president, as it were, a librarian that's grown through the ranks, I think that is, that is just wonderful for all of us to see, right. That we don't have to – I think that sometimes with librarians, we feel like, well, this is it. This is your world, right? And to help us see past that, I think is really important. It's really important for the profession, as well as for the system as a whole.
Coaching program participant 4, personal communication, April 13, 2021

This chapter includes discussion of the implications of the intervention and the resulting data in relation to the theoretical framework; in application to the larger, local, and personal contexts identified in chapter 1; and in terms of the structure of the program and how that might change should there be, and there should be!, future iterations. It concludes with a response to the research questions that underpinned the study.

Relationship with the Theoretical Framework and Auxiliary Theories

As outlined in chapter 2, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program was designed using a Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) framework. SCCT derives from Bandura's (1996) seminal Social Cognitive Theory and applies it to the domain of career development. Based on the data analysis, there is more to say about one particular component of SCCT than about others. Following the discussion of SCCT in relation to the intervention, there is a short examination of an alternative theory that might have otherwise provided a compelling lens by which to examine the intervention. In chapter 2, I also nodded toward the influence of four auxiliary theories in the development of the program. This section concludes with a brief account of what the outcome of the intervention has to say about each of them.

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Social Cognitive Career Theory

In Figure 1, I illustrated how I connected SCCT to the two research questions, to each activity of the intervention, and to the data collection tools. In developing the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program, I had posited that the webinar and one-on-one coaching activities would bolster the participants' belief in their abilities to do administrative work. This would be reflected in the career journey maps as well as captured in the surveys and interview data. The webinars would also contribute to how the participants conceived of outcome expectations for administrative career paths while the career journey maps would be the means by which the participants could express those expectations. The data from the surveys and interviews would also address outcome expectations. As for goals, each activity within the intervention would provide an opportunity for the participants to set, explore, and revise them. The data collection tools would provide further insight into goals as well. In short, the intervention accounted for all three components of SCCT: self-efficacy, outcome expectations, and goals.

At this point, it is helpful to recall the relationship among the components of SCCT. Looking back at Figure 3, we see that person inputs, which may include characteristics such as gender or personality, influence both self-efficacy and outcome expectations. The findings in chapter 4 affirm the relationship between person inputs and those two components. Take, for example, personality. In analyzing the data from the webinar session on intangibles (March 10, 2021), I used the code "introverts" twelve times, a reflection on how three of the participants self-identified that way in the session whereas one of the coaches present spoke about their own struggles with showing overt

charisma. Charisma was one of the key traits that the webinar leader that day, Dr. Oxford, spoke to, and yet from my observation, it was apparent that identifying as being introverted and fear of needing to be charismatic was holding back at least some of the participants. They seemed to demonstrate less belief in their abilities to be administrators because of an aspect of their personalities.

As for outcome expectations, person inputs again were influential. Seven of the eight participants were women. In the webinars conducted by Dr. Ly and Dr. Oxford, those women were able to interrogate their thinking on what it means to be a woman in administration and share their thinking with two women who are in such positions. Thus, they were able to discuss matters such as work and home balance, especially as it pertains to childcare. They were able to discuss the sexism that the coaches have faced following their moves into administration. They were able to discuss expectations for how women in administrative positions need to present themselves, even when they are not at work. The conversations were frank, and I wrote in my researcher journals at the time that I was struck by how honest the presenters were about the gendered burdens they have had to shoulder. What that means, however, is that the webinars might have engendered within participants negative outcome expectations of administrative careers based on their gender.

Self-efficacy can influence outcome expectations, but the two are otherwise distinct components. Believing that one *can* do the work of an administrative position may not coincide with an expectation that the work will be worth doing. The two components, in turn, act on goals. That is to say, as Singh, et al. (2013) explained, the coupling of a belief in a mastery of skills and of an expectation that positive outcomes

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will occur drives interest in a career direction. In the SCCT model, this leads to the development of career goals, which, in this intervention, were predicted to be along college administrative career pathways.

Every component of the intervention, activities, and data collection included consideration of self-efficacy. This focus on self-efficacy throughout the study coincides with the literature which has historically focused largely on this particular component. The suggestion by Wells and Kerwin (2017) that learning experiences can result in changed or increased self-efficacy was at the root of the prevalence of this SCCT component in the program. Unsurprisingly, I recorded instances of codes related to self-efficacy for the qualitative data collected from all three activities. Based on that the coding, I developed two assertions related to self-efficacy. First, that the participants did not imagine that advancement into administrative roles was a career option because of the absence of models to follow. Second, that the program provided space for participants to reflect on their qualities and characteristics that might – or might not – lend themselves to careers in community college administration. These assertions pointed to the value of designing a program such as Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians within the SCCT framework. That is, the program allowed for the participants to see others like themselves stepping onto administrative career pathways. It also allowed them to conceive of how they were not just qualified to take on such positions, but to believe in their abilities to do so. Though the data analysis related to self-efficacy yielded mixed results, it did suggest that the program provided support for participants to increase their belief in their abilities to do the work of administrators.

As previously mentioned, in the intervention the participants were introduced to content and included in discussions that should have influenced outcome expectations. It is my suspicion that those expectations did, indeed, change, but also that they did not necessarily change for the better. Of course, as Burgener (2017) commented, outcome expectations are not solely positive in nature. They can also be negative or a mix of positive and negative. Although consideration of outcome expectations was integrated with most parts of the intervention, as has been the case with this component across the body of literature involving SCCT, outcome expectations were somewhat overlooked in favor of self-efficacy in the intervention design and implementation. That is not to say, however, that the data did not give indication of outcome expectations. Although I did not probe as specifically for them as I might have in the survey or interviews, the distillation of themes related to incentives and deterrents relate to participants' expectations of careers in community college administration. Given that I mapped 85 instances of coding to the former and 193 to the latter, we can assume that a more negative, if mixed, view of outcomes of moving into administration was shared among the cohort. This would work counter to the effect of any increased self-efficacy on the goals that the participants developed as a result of the intervention in driving career goals toward an administrative pathway.

Goals have been the least examined of the three components of SCCT in the literature, but in relation to this study, they were something of the point to it. After all, the intervention was designed so that it might be possible to answer whether the coaching program increased intent to access administrative career pathways. It was evident, however, just from the career journey maps that the participants, as a cohort, did not

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share a common vision of a career goal of advancement into community college administration. Intent among them to pursue such a career path did show some increase by the end of the intervention, but just as there were participants who used the coaching program as an environment in which to explore such an interest, there were others who were not entirely persuaded and instead used the program to explore professional growth outside of administrative careers or even leadership roles. This suggests that future iterations of the program might be adapted so that an increased intent becomes one possible desirable outcome of the coaching, not the only one, which may in turn increase potential interest in participation. Further, participant goals could be explored not just at the completion of the intervention but at the outset as well. I will return to this point in discussion of the program format and future re-implementation in a later section of this chapter.

Social Cognitive Career Theory proved to be a useful framework for designing the intervention. Looking at the results through the lens of SCCT, we can see that the mixed outcomes found through the data analysis and, indeed, as expressed in the future career aspirations of the participants were to be expected based on the person inputs, the impact of the intervention on self-efficacy, and what the intervention contributed to outcome expectations for attaining positions in administration. There was an imbalance, however, in the extent to which each of the components of SCCT were integrated into the coaching program and could be examined through analysis of the data collected. Were the intervention to be restaged, it might be revised so as to give more attention to outcome expectations, goals, or both. It also might be reframed with another theory instead of SCCT. In the next section, I briefly explore how Possible Selves Theory might

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have worked had it been used to scaffold the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program.

Possible Selves Theory

Possible Selves Theory originates in the work of Markus and Nurius (1986) in the area of self-knowledge. The two defined possible selves as follows: "Possible selves are the ideal selves that we would very much like to become. They are also the selves we could become, and the selves we are afraid of becoming" (p. 954). Individuals can hold a multitude of possible selves, and these may work in coordination or be in conflict with one another. Markus and Nurius ascribe two functions to possible selves (p. 955). First, they act as incentives or deterrents to future behavior. This would have had tremendous connection to the intervention, as the assertions captured in tables 15 and 17 demonstrate. Second, they enable a person to be able to evaluate current circumstances through the lens of the possible self. This was not the intention behind the design of the intervention; however, analysis of the qualitative data led to the assertion that the program provided a place for librarians to share current work experiences and concerns and seek advice and understanding. That being the case, the use of possible selves as a means to assess current work situations could have been a helpful mechanism. Thus, a brief examination of Possible Selves Theory already demonstrates how it might have been used to support the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program.

Looking beyond the definition and functions of possible selves, it should be noted that they are malleable, sometimes temporary, and prone to changes in the individual's environment (Markus & Nurius, 1986). Even those short-lived selves can have a lingering influence on how an individual evaluates their current situation. This also

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suggests that by immersing participants in a new environment like the coaching program, there may yet be an impact to be realized at a later point. Markus and Nurius further asserted, "When certain current self-conceptions are challenged or supported, it is often the nature of the activated possible selves that determines how the individual feels and what course the subsequent action will take" (p. 961). In other words, when librarians are challenged to consider administrative careers or at least supported in considering such advancement, the possible selves that they envision as a result determine whether they might move onto those pathways. I am, therefore, left wondering whether the study participants did any such visualization of their possible selves beyond what the career journey maps suggested and, if so, to what extent and what that visualization might result in. This in turn has me contemplating how I might otherwise have designed the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program in a Possible Selves Theory framework.

Rethinking the program so as to fit it to a different theoretical framework is enabled both by hindsight and the data analysis laid out in the previous chapter. One example of how to apply a Possible Selves framework comes from Plimmer and Schmidt (2007), whose study provided a five-step plan for applying the theory to work with adults who are transitioning careers. Their study population does not precisely match my own in that regard – I was working with adults who ranged in interest from not having given much consideration to career goals, including transitioning out of libraries, to actively looking for administrative positions. Nonetheless, there is some strong correspondence between the five steps Plimmer and Schmidt outline and the intervention I designed, with one notable exception. The first step the two authors propose, identifying possible selves and making connections (p. 105), was missing from my intervention design. The pre-

intervention survey may have captured some of this, but not explicitly. What is more, I did not look at the pre-intervention survey results until the data analysis phase of the study, so I would not have accessed any indication of possible selves within the survey data. The second step, providing information and guidance (p. 105), maps to the webinars and the one-on-one coaching. The third step, finding the fit (pp. 105-106), also maps to the one-on-one coaching. The fourth step, focusing on strengths and possible futures (p. 106), and the fifth step, developing positive pathways (p. 106), both map to the career journey maps activity. This is not to say that the activities that could be matched with Plimmer and Schmidt's steps in a Possible Selves framework did so entirely well. I think, for example, that in this other framework, the career journey maps would have looked different, and the discussion that drew on them would have involved reflection on possible selves rather than simply on end goals. Still, it is intriguing to think of how the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians intervention would have differed or remained unchanged if developed with this other framework in place.

Social Cognitive Career Theory (SCCT) proved to be sufficient for scaffolding this study even if the components of that theory that were not all equally integrated with the intervention. Cursory exploration of Possible Selves Theory demonstrates that it, too, might have provided a suitable lens for the research. Part of the appeal for me is captured by Plimmer and Schimdt (2007): "Discussing possible selves with clients generally encourages a focus on who a person wants to be rather than what they want to do" (p. 95). Reading that, I found myself questioning the extent to which the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program placed emphasis on doing: the skills needed by administrators, the resume building through adding education and experiences,

and the details of what work life is like for administrators. Looking back, and in view of

what the data had to say about librarian identity, in an intervention designed through a

Possible Selves framework I might have emphasized who the participants would be as

administrators instead of the work they would take on. Such an approach would

presuppose a participant population whose members had each already articulated

aspirations of working in administration, which would differ from the population that I

worked with. Again, hindsight and the benefit of data enable me to contemplate such a

possibility, but they cannot change the approach I took, based as it was in SCCT.

Auxiliary Theories

There were four theories that informed the development of this study from

problem of practice to intervention, though none of the four fully framed it:

Credentialing Theory, Human Capital Theory, Trait Theory of Leadership, and the

Identity Model of Decision Making. I addressed each of them in chapter 2 and suggested

that at the completion of the intervention, there would be something to be said in relation

to each of them. This proved to be somewhat true. The latter two theories came to mind

more often in my observation of the program activities and in coding the data. The

former two, however, ultimately had little bearing on the implementation of the study, the

analysis of the data, or the consideration of the outcomes.

Credentialing Theory places an emphasis on the symbolic nature of credentials

and suggests that those credentials, such as academic degrees, come to be valued more

than the skills and knowledge that the credentials are supposed to indicate. The

curriculum vita review that took place in the second webinar activity, the one-on-one

coaching, would have been a place for discussion of credentials to arise. This was not the

case, however: in my observation of those sessions as well as of the other program activities, the emphasis was instead placed on how librarian skills would translate to an administrative pathway. The coaches did address the advantages and value of possessing advanced degrees, but this was as much in order to acquire knowledge that could be applied to a position as it was to have a credential to qualify for the position. As for the participants, according to the survey, three planned to undertake an advanced degree or had one underway. The journey maps indicated that others might join those three. The motivations they expressed, however, were not about credentials but instead about learning, self-improvement, and salary increases. All of this suggests that although I had once looked to Credentialing Theory to predict degree-seeking behavior in relation to career decisions, credentials were not especially important to the participants nor even to the coaches themselves and that future iterations of the career coaching program need not focus on them.

Human Capital Theory posits that, contrary to Credentialing Theory, institutions place value on the acquisition of skills, knowledge, and experience. In chapter 2, I noted that this study does not look at the employer side of the hiring equation, and as such, this theory would have limited application. What was clear from the intervention, however, is that the participants themselves place value on acquisition of those three attributes. That was apparent in their journey maps, in what they said in the interviews, and in their one-on-one coaching sessions. For their part, the coaches also placed importance not on credentials but on what credentials would represent, which is why the webinar sessions focused on skills, knowledge, and intangibles. Moreover, if we think of the coaches, all of them administrators, as surrogates for their employers, then we might assume from the

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coaches' contributions that the colleges would also value professional growth among the librarian participants. A further suggestion of that lies in the salary scales mentioned by multiple participants: undertaking further education results in an actual pay increase at the various colleges. In the end, however, there was not a discernible connection derived from the data analysis between decision making by the participants about administrative careers and the extent to which their colleges invested in human capital.

Leadership traits were a more recurrent theme throughout the program. Indeed, I recorded 63 instances of that term as a distilled theme, Table 9. Despite this, what I heard did not closely align with the notion contained within the Trait Theory of Leadership which arises from Carlyle's (1840) assertion that traits are inherent, not instilled. Dr. Oxford was perhaps the most outspoken of the coaches in refuting this idea, telling the participants in her webinar on intangibles that traits can be learned and that the belief that leaders are born is a white and elitist perspective (March 10, 2021). The coaches, moreover, emphasized other leadership traits. For example, Dr. Karas (March 16, 2021), in his coaching session with Participant 3, spoke to how humor fits with leadership. Dr. Oxford, meanwhile, included in her webinar discussion of the value of traits, such as empathy, that are more often associated with women, something that especially resonated with the female participants in the session. In short, what the coaches identified and the participants appreciated was a perception of leadership traits that was at least somewhat antithetical to the Trait Theory of Leadership, reinforcing the critiques of the theory and pointing to how the program could instead instill a more modern set of leadership traits in participants.

As was the case for leadership traits, participant identity was one of the themes I distilled from the coding, occurring 20 times, Table 9. Identity was something that I asked about in the survey, and as Table 20 showed, the participants identified strongly as librarians more so than they did as college employees or faculty. Meanwhile, the data analysis in chapter 4 showed that there were deterrents to choosing advancement in administration bound with issues related to identity: the fear of being disconnected from the library on the one hand, and happiness in their current positions. Decision making was not wholly linked to librarian identity, however. Although identity as faculty was the weakest of the three choices, the participants nonetheless indicated that the privileges that come with faculty status influenced their thinking. These would include such things as the security of tenure status and the advancement in salary based on further education. That the participants made decisions based on more than one identity is not incongruous with the model, which allows for individuals to hold multiple identities (March, 1994). It was ultimately apparent that, as I noted in chapter 2, the Identity Model of Decision Making may have accounted for person inputs, such as their identification as librarians; background and environmental influences, such as their shared sense of librarians being isolated from others on their campuses; and proximal environmental influences, such as opportunities for career enrichment connected to librarian and faculty identities in the intervention. The Identity Model of Decision Making did not scaffold the entire study, but based on the development of the intervention and findings from it, the model merits continued consideration in relation to at least some aspects of it.

The auxiliary theories were contributors to the development of my thinking about librarian careers in community college administration. Moreover, they were touchstones

in the creation of the coaching program. As such, it is important to account for them in this chapter, even if only briefly. To varying degrees, however, the auxiliary theories proved to be cul-de-sacs branching off from the path. Future iterations of the coaching program need not be structured, implemented, and interpreted through those frameworks.

Application to the Larger Context

In describing the larger context in chapter 1, I remarked on the importance of community college education in providing access to higher and career and technical education to millions of students in the United States yearly. I also noted that there has been concern for some time now over the leadership pipeline in community colleges across the country. This study did not use the national setting as its larger context, however, drawing instead on the robust and sizeable California community college system. In concluding the Larger Context section of chapter 1, I presented numbers that showed that librarians make up a scant 2.20% of the full-time faculty population in the statewide system. In among the 18,000+ faculty members overall (California Community Colleges Chancellor's Office, n.d.), each of whom is theoretically a potential future administrator, the relatively small number of librarians is lost. It is unimaginable, given the ratio of classroom faculty to librarians, that any career development program aimed at community college faculty would accommodate a niche population of librarians and account for what makes them unique among the larger faculty body. The development of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program, therefore, addresses the need for a space, activities, and networking to be shared among librarians only.

Librarians do not need a safe space in order to participate in career-oriented professional development – it is not as though there is anything threatening about being among our faculty colleagues. Think, however, of a lone librarian in a small cohort in which all of the other participants are classroom faculty, or perhaps a few librarians in among a larger group of classroom faculty whose experiences are generally shared no matter what they teach. Classroom faculty can bond over matters of curriculum and syllabi development, grading, and building relationships with a set of students seen repeatedly, among other things. How do they relate to a librarian placed in a program alongside them, especially if they are not at the same college, and how does the librarian relate back in turn? The burden gets placed on the librarian to bridge the gap, which circles back to the code switching that Dr. Karas discussed in his webinar (March 3, 2021). In an environment that is predominantly or exclusively populated by librarians, however, there is a shared language and familiarity with the sorts of experiences each has known. Add in how the participants in this intervention spoke about feelings of being disconnected from other units and other colleagues at their colleges, and the need for a librarian space to explore career advancement becomes more pronounced. The coaching program contained within this study was that space, and although it may not have resulted in all participants intending to seek careers in administration, it did accommodate substantive mutual discussion of careers, leadership, professional growth, and current work situations.

Application to the Local Context

The local setting for the study was the West Central region of the California community colleges, which encompasses ten colleges in an area north of the city of Los

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Angeles and includes my own. In the justification for this study, I drew attention to the administrative ranks at those colleges, Table 1, and how none of the key administrators positioned over the library possessed a degree in the field. The intervention was a small step toward one day changing that, recruiting participants from the region and introducing them to the potential for them to become administrators. In other words, the coaching program had at least a bit of direct application to the local context. It is noteworthy, however, that the intervention did not attain the reach that I would have hoped, with participants coming from only four of the ten colleges. The impact of the intervention thus became even more local in nature than first proposed. Were there to be future iterations of the coaching program, my hope is that librarians from still more colleges in the West Central region – and beyond – would participate.

Because my own college, the College of the Canyons, was included in the local context, it feels appropriate to share in this section some of my own reflections about my work setting that I recorded during the intervention. At various points what I was hearing made me wonder how I would support any of my own librarians should they harbor aspirations for careers in community college administration. Moreover, as I observed the coaching session between Dr. Oxford and Participant 8 (March 23, 2021), I asked myself how I could include consideration of career goals in administration among the library support staff as well. After all, why should the content of this program not benefit others who work in the library? Faculty are not the only ones at the community colleges with the potential to become administrators! As the equivalent of the department chair in my library, I want to be sure to nurture what ambitions the members of my library team express to me. A first step, then, is learning from them what aspirations they have, and to

do that, I would need to establish an environment as comfortable for my staff as the coaching program seemed to have been for the participants. This puts me in mind of how Participant 4 commented in the third webinar (March 10, 2021) that they were nervous about tipping their hand regarding seeking out opportunities for fear of negatively affecting relationships with those to whom they reported. Creating space for my staff to share with me their career goals will need to be respectful of such concerns. The intervention otherwise has pointed me to the supports and incentives that I can provide: networking connections, alerts to opportunities, and professional development support. If I cannot run an exact version of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians in my work setting, I can at least borrow from what I observed over the course of the study.

Application to the Personal Context

My own personal aspirations and the roadblock I encountered in exploring the possibility of an administrative career were the early motivators for me in what eventually became this study. In chapter 1, I related this aspect of the personal context for the intervention. Throughout the implementation of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program, I made note of my own reflections as they pertained to how to think of my career. In a sense, I was a silent or even passive participant in my own program, benefiting from the content alongside the actual participants. Indeed, while observing the second webinar (March 3, 2021), I wrote myself a note wondering if I should have taken my own survey before and after the intervention to see whether it might capture any changes in my thinking over the course of the intervention. All in all, there were lessons for me, should I decide to try to attain a position in administration, contained within my study. I describe a couple of those below.

The intervention provided not just the participants with practical guidance, but me as well. For instance, observing Dr. Karas working with Participant 3 in their one-on-one coaching session (March 16, 2021), I began contemplating how I would need to restructure my curriculum vita were I to try to apply for an administrative position in the future based on what he was advising the participant. That was not the only thing that I took away from listening to Dr. Karas. As with the other participants, I was struck by what he had to say in his webinar about code switching (March 3, 2021), and I intend to add it to my methods for communicating about the library with others on campus. The other coaches also shared content that spoke to my career interests. For example, in the first webinar (February 24, 2021), Dr. Ly listed off a number of organizations and programs that could be tapped for career and leadership development. Some of these were new to me, and I was appreciative of hearing about them. Dr. Ly also shared with the participants the understanding that mentors do not only come from formal programs, and she talked about strategies for tapping administrators that the participants knew for mentorship. She and I subsequently engaged in some private conversation wherein we returned to the idea of that sort of do-it-yourself mentorship, leaving me mulling over the potential mentors in my own network. Content such as this left me wishing that someone years ago had offered me an opportunity to get engaged in a career coaching program not unlike this one.

The results of coding the qualitative data uncovered the importance to the participants in using the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program as a space in which to share and discuss issues with the coaches, with each other, and with me. As an observer, I was using it in a similar if silent way. In the coaching session

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between Dr. Ly and Participant 6 (March 26, 2021), I found myself reflecting on how what Dr. Ly had to say connected with my own current work situation. The specifics of the moment related to the COVID pandemic that we all were having to contend with in our work lives during the timeline of the intervention. Dr. Ly was extolling the advantages of being at the table at her college as one of the administrative team in such a crisis. At my college, our dean has worked hard to balance the needs and interests of the library with those of the college and its students as a whole over the course of the pandemic. And yet, what Dr. Ly was saying reinforced some of the thinking that led to me to undertake this study: if librarians want their interests and concerns to be known, then their voices need to be heard outside of the library, including on administrative teams. As with the participants, then, no matter the value of the intervention in shaping future career directions for me, there was also value in applying what I was taking from the sessions to my current day-to-day work. Developing and implementing the coaching program was beneficial to me, too.

Implications for Practice: Program Structure and Future Implementation

The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program may have had value to me as an observer, but the more important consideration is what the value it may have had to the participants indicates about the structure and future implementation of the program. In all, the participants were appreciative of the program no matter their career aspirations on exiting it. All of them, in their interviews, expressed this in some way or another. For example, I heard the following: "And this opportunity was just, it's a gift, honestly. So I, I truly, I am really grateful" (Participant 5, personal communication, April 14, 2021); "Just thank you for including me in it. It's been really great" (Participant

7, personal communication, April 15, 2021); "I think it was a really great activity to be a part of" (Participant 8, personal communication, April 15, 2021). Those comments were indicative of the enthusiasm the participants shared regarding their experience. Still, as gratifying as being told those things was, there are specific parts of the intervention that merit deeper examination. In this section I explore the successful aspects of the intervention, what might have been done differently, and what the future of this program could look like.

Successful Aspects

The intervention design and implementation had its challenges – scheduling was not easy to coordinate! – but all in all, the three component activities were carried out smoothly. The webinars were the easiest to set up and manage, and there were no comments from the participants regarding how they might be done differently. In that respect, they were a successful component of the intervention. Leaving aside the specific activities, though, it is instead instructive to look to a few characteristics of the program that should be emulated in future iterations: the inclusion of participants from multiple institutions, the intimate size of the cohort, and the balance of practical and lecture-style learning in the program.

In many action research studies, the setting for the intervention is one site only, such as a classroom or a school. In this study, however, I drew upon an entire region with the result that participants came from multiple colleges. This had the disadvantage of not allowing for control for certain environmental conditions – reporting lines varied from college to college, for example, as did perceptions of the library at the different colleges. On the other hand, this led to insights being shared about practices at other

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institutions. This proved revelatory for some of the participants. As Participant 2 (April

12, 2021) told me in their interview

> So, I've only worked as far as an, in a community college at one
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> institution. So, I only know how my institution works and my
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> administrators and my, you know, at my institution. So, I think that it,
>
> having that outside perspective made me realize that, oh, things can
>
> operate differently elsewhere.

Being able to learn from the coaches and other participants how things work at their

colleges was an unexpected benefit to participants in a program that came to be used to

explore current work situations. In the case of Participant 2, as it turned out, they were

talking about being able to move into an administrator role, something that they could not

envision being able to do at their own college. So it was that the outside perspectives

shared across the participant cohort in a program like this thereby lent themselves to the

intent of the program as well.

The participants in the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians may have

come from multiple institutions, but the cohort was capped in the planning stages at 12.

Ultimately, there were eight participants, a small number that made for a certain

intimacy. Among so few, it was easy for each individual to ask questions and engage

with the coaches. Participants were able to get to know each other a little, insofar as the

entirely online environment permitted, if they were not already acquainted. As

Participant 3 (April 13, 2021) commented in their interview:

> I just appreciate it, and to be able to do that on a more intimate level,
>
> because, you know, if it's a group of 50, it's, it's hard to do that, but since

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we've been doing this in some small settings, it's, it's made it easier to

make those connections and, you know, get those names and faces and

that sort of thing.

In truth, the smaller cohort likely made it easier on the coaches as well. This was seen in

the one group activity, the webinars. Scheduling issues meant that each of the webinars

was staged for half of the cohort in back-to-back sessions. The coach, therefore, had only

four participants in a session at a time, an easy number to have conversation with, and

while I noted that in the first webinar there was a little bashfulness on the part of the

participants, by the last, they were engaging with the coach more fully. All of which

suggests that future iterations of the program would benefit from capped enrollment so as

to offer a similar, intimate experience.

It was deliberate on my part to design the intervention so that there was a balance

of lecture (the webinars) with the practical (one-on-one coaching) and tactile (in a sense –

the career journey maps would have been done on paper and in-person in a non-COVID

situation). My intent in doing so was somewhat informed by a desire to provide an active

and interactive experience for the participants rather than just a passive one spent

listening to the coaches. Moreover, the program left participants not just with new

knowledge but with usable outcomes. For one thing, all of them should now have

stronger resumes or curricula vitae. Participant 6 (April 14, 2021) spoke to that in their

interview:

What I really found helpful was the resume help because my resume's just

so outdated and it was great to have someone like that look at my resume

and say, you know, do X, Y, and Z and do this, and that's going to really

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help you. And I could see that so clearly. So I thought that was, I thought

what was great about the program was that there were very clear things

that were very direct and sort of tactile that were helpful such as the

resume help.

The other tool that the participants were left with was the career journey map.

Participant 2 (April 12, 2021), for example, told me that they were going to use the map

in the future as a tool for reflection on their path and on destinations ahead. The resume

and map were not the only things the participants took from the program, though. They

were simply the more tangible products. As Participant 6 expressed it, there were "the

softer elements such as just getting to spend time with someone that's worked their way

up to that and been quite successful and is from our field." From what I heard in the

interviews, the range and – more critically- the balance of types of activities and

takeaways from the intervention were welcomed by all. As with the inclusion of multiple

perspectives and the intimacy of size of the intervention, the balance of activities is an

aspect that should be repeated in the future.

Aspects Needing Revision

It is encouraging to realize that there were such positive aspects to the Career

Advancement Coaching for Librarians program. The intervention was not without

aspects that could have been altered and improved, however. For example, the

heterogenous group of participants may have been able to share differing perspectives,

but in some regards, they were too disparate a cohort. Meanwhile, the orientation I

provided the coaches left them with assumptions about the participants' aspirations that

were not specific enough to each individual. There was a suggestion that the career

journey mapping exercise was out of order. And then there was the issue of running a

program at a time when the pandemic forced all activities into an online environment. I

provide further exploration of each of these below.

The participants may all have come from community college libraries in the same

region, but there were important dissimilarities among them. In part, I failed to account

to such disparities because of the simple need to develop an adequate pool of participants.

Out of concern that there would be too few, that the pool would be too small, I invited

from across the entire West Central region all full-time faculty who had not had

experience in community college administration. There was no other requisite

qualification, whether length of career, type of experience, or even interest in a career in

administration. Indeed, the recruitment invitation (Appendix H) indicated that the

program was designed with a view to careers in administration but did not ask that

participants be particularly interested in stepping on that pathway. As a result of casting

such a wide net, there were participants who had engaged in activities at high levels at

their colleges and others who had yet done little on campus outside of their libraries.

Age, length of career, and education level varied among the participants as well, Table 5.

As a result, not all of them were able to relate to each other equally well as peers, not just

with comparable career goals but with similar campus experiences as well. This was

most egregious in the case of Participant 4 who told me, in their interview, that "there are

moments where I'm like, well, I could, I could be on their [the coaches'] side of this"

(April 13, 2021). They also commented to me that they wondered for whom the program

was designed, for senior faculty like them or for junior faculty like some of the others.

On reflection, I realized that future iterations of the coaching program should target more

specific subsets of librarians, such as department chairs or, by contrast, those who are newer to community colleges, but not such a broad mixture as in this iteration.

A second area for revision was in managing the assumptions of the coaches. When I interviewed Participant 8 (April 15, 2021), they told me

In terms of the one-on-one coaching, I didn't get as much out of that for a couple of reasons. And I think, and, you know, I had a conversation with someone else about this, but I think the coaches themselves thought that everyone who was kind of participating in this had the mindset that they were definitely going into admin. And so they, so they came at the resume. And one thing is, is like, and I've had very various experiences where the first thing someone wants to do and kind of a power position is critique me. And so when the coach, when one of the first things [they] said was like a negative, negative critique of my resume, that kind of like, I kind of shut down. I don't know if you saw it as a visibly, but it was kind of one of those things.

Participant 8, as shown in the previous chapter, was not one of the participants who was strongly interested in pursuing a career in administration. This, however, was not communicated to the coach beforehand, either by me or by the participant themselves. Instead, the coach worked from the assumption that all participants were looking to follow such a career path and approached the one-one-one session with that understanding. The fault for that is mine, stemming back to the orientation session, which should have made it clearer to the coaches that the participants would have varying

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and possibly low degrees of interest. In the future, there should be better communication to the coaches about the goals and interests of each participant.

In describing their dissatisfaction with the one-on-one coaching component, Participant 8 also offered a solution to the matter of the faulty assumption, a revision to the order of activities: move the career journey map exercise so that it is completed before the one-on-one coaching. The mapping was paired with the interview because, for the purpose of this study, it was also a data collection tool, but the suggestion to move it brings two advantages. First, it would enable the participant to reflect on their career path before meeting with the coach rather than only in reaction to what the coach might say. Second, by receiving the map in advance of the session, the coach can understand better how to tailor the session to the participant's particular journey. There would be less chance of faulty assumptions about career interests, and the coach would have a more holistic understanding of the participant's career interests than from simply looking at a resume that captures a history and perhaps little more. A revision to the intervention like this that could improve the communication between the coach and participant is worth considering.

The final area of improvement was one that derived from the difficult circumstances we have all had to contend with since early 2020. Due to the constraints on activities imposed by measures designed to mitigate the COVID pandemic, a program that was originally envisioned as having in-person components was moved entirely online. This was manageable for everyone, but it was not altogether desirable. As Participant 6 (April 14, 2021) told me when I probed for their thoughts on how the intervention could be revised,

And I think one thing that could be, and maybe it's sort of outside the

realm, but it would have been neat had we been in person, you know, I

think there would have been more small talk with the other librarians, that

kind of thing. So that's the only thing that I feel like I would have really

enjoyed. And we definitely don't all need, you know, a more, another

Zoom social with people that we don't really know.

If only we could have met in person for any or all of the activities indeed. I cannot

disagree with the participants who yearned for the chance to network with each other and

with the coaches without resorting to an online platform. In a non-pandemic time, while

some of the intervention may still have taken place digitally because of the geographic

spread of the West Central region, there would have been at least once opportunity to

meet face to face. With luck, future iterations of the Career Advancement Coaching for

Librarians program will be able to take place at least in part in a physical location,

bringing participants together face-to-face.

Considerations for Future Implementation

The desire among the participants for the networking opportunities that the

intervention offered and could improve upon was one of the indicators that extending the

program, restaging it for other community college (or university) librarian populations

would be welcome. Moreover, my sense of the career mentorships for librarians that are

currently in place is that they mostly remain rooted in librarianship, not looking beyond

the library to where else in the institution the librarians might find roles and exert

influence. Extending the program, however, does not only refer to offering it again for

other librarians. In their interview, Participant 5 (April 14, 2021) told me

I'm going to actually miss this and I would love it if this could be

something that could be more regular, you know, like just having these

mentors, these people that have done amazing things, it's such a privilege

to get, to pick their brains.

That enthusiasm argues for building out the program, enabling more points of contact

between the participants and the coaches. The single one-on-one coaching session was

designed to accommodate my own capacity for attending all such sessions, recording

them, and coding the data, but freed from that constraint, the coaching could include

more instances when the two sides could connect.

I have suggested a deepened version of the Career Advancement Coaching for

Librarians program with more contact points as one possibility, but a condensed,

intensive version of the intervention might also be viable. In the first webinar session

(February 24, 2021), I wrote the following note: "It will be interesting to see if this can

be reformatted as a one-day workshop. The overlap of content, the scheduling, the kinds

of questions that are foremost on the participants' minds all seem to argue for it." At that

time, I did not have a clear sense of what it might take to stage the webinars, then have a

coaching session, and include career journey mapping all in one day, and I actually have

doubts about the toll such an ambitious schedule would take on the participants and

coaches alike. On the other hand, I recognize that a program such as this would be easier

to schedule for one day rather than spread out over many, especially if participants are

drawn from multiple institutions. Moreover, by realizing it as a one-day workshop or

retreat, the intervention could transform into a format familiar to many, the pre-

conference. In considering extending the intervention's reach, it thus seems important

that it be adaptable to a variety of scheduling formats.

The notion that the coaching program can (and should) have a life after this

research study is an important one. The participants, as quoted earlier, appreciated the

opportunity greatly, even those who offered ideas for changing and improving the

program. In addition, those within librarianship with whom I have discussed the study

have been enthusiastic about translating it to other settings. The program could

potentially transcend community college librarianship and escape the California borders.

But then the question arises: who would run it? Participant 4 (April 13, 2021) suggested

that bodies like the Council of Chief Librarians, California Community Colleges might

do so, or that the statewide community college academic senate might be interested. For

my part, I have considered whether a professional association such as the Association for

College and Research Libraries, a division of the American Library Association, might be

amenable to staging iterations of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians

program in the future. Certainly, I can involve myself in times ahead to some extent.

What I hope, however, is that word of the program will spread, and that interested

individuals and organizations will read about this first effort and craft their own versions

of the program. In other words, they will undertake their own action research efforts

grounded in their settings. Ultimately, I hope that this program becomes a sustainable,

well-regarded professional development opportunity for librarians in many academic

settings. Librarians beyond this initial cohort of eight should be introduced to what

potential they may have as administrators in community colleges and elsewhere in

academia.

Conclusion

In late June, weeks after the conclusion of the coaching program, I received an email from Participant 3 (June 30, 2021). The cheerful message had this to say:

I wanted to say thank you for the inspiration your study provided and give

you an update. I am underway in my doctoral program (EdD.) in

Educational Leadership through [university name redacted], with a couple

of courses already under my belt. And, I was recently accepted into [name

of employer redacted]'s Leadership Academy! I believe my schooling and

the academy will work hand-in-hand to help me improve not only as an

individual, but my instruction, success for students, and ultimately build

bridges for improvements to our college community.

In a follow up message several days later, they added, "I feel like the coaching program was the nudge that I needed!" (July 6, 2021). The exchange conveyed to me a few things. First, it affirmed that the experience of the career coaching program had been a positive one. Second, the participant was taking steps to grow and develop in their careers. Third, while leadership was part of the growth, a career pathway into administration did not seem to be at this time. The enthusiasm of the message was welcome, but the content did not satisfy the hopes and expectations that underpinned the development of the career coaching program.

Was the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program a success? One way to consider that question is to decide whether the implementation of the program satisfied the research questions that guided the study. Those questions asked how and to what extent would implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians

affect librarians' (a) administrative skills and (b) self-efficacy as a potential administrator in the California community colleges as well as how and to what extent would implementation of Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians affect librarians' sense of (a) both the feasibility and desirability of attaining and (b) intent to seek administrative positions in California community colleges. According to the data analysis in chapter 4, however, we cannot firmly state that the intervention did address both research questions. In that regard, then, we also cannot firmly state that the intervention was a success.

On the other hand, the intervention yielded unexpected findings, particularly as they relate to librarian career choices that do not involve administrative careers. The program proved to be a desired librarian-centric space in which participants could come together, interact with coaches and each other, and think about the potential for their careers. It also undermined the notion that advancement upward is the best direction to take in everyone's careers while affirming that the landscape of careers in community colleges included numerous pathways. It focused on administration but landed on leadership, contribution to the college, and personal achievement as fulfilling endpoints for the participants. Above all, the coaching program was well-received by participants and coaches alike, and it deserves restaging with suitable revision. So it is that we can look at the research interest that led to the creation and implementation of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program and consider how there might be further exploration of and changes to the program so as to positively affect librarians' administrative skills, feeling of self-efficacy, sense of the feasibility and desirability of attaining administrative positions, and intention to seek them. At the same time, we can

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acknowledge that the program was beneficial to the participants no matter their eventual

career paths, and such beneficence is, in and of itself, a desirable outcome.

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APPENDIX A

CYCLE 0 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. What is your educational background?

2. To date, what has been your career path in academic institutions?

3. What qualifications are necessary for promotion to an administrative position in the community colleges?

4. What characteristics do you possess that positioned you for advancement to an administration position in the community colleges?

5. What barriers do you see for yourself and for others who desire an administrative position in the community colleges?

6. What other thoughts on attaining a community college administrative position would you like to share?

APPENDIX B

CYCLE 1 INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

1. Tell me about your educational background.

2. Tell me about your career in libraries so far.

3. I'd like to hear more about your career in community colleges.

4. What sort of professional development or continuing education have you undertaken?

5. Where does the library fit at your college?

6. How do you, as a librarian, view your place in the college?

7. What do you think other faculty think of the place of librarians and libraries at the college?

8. I'd like to hear your thoughts on library leadership and administration. What can you tell me about your thoughts on library administration or leadership in the college?

9. Where do you see your career progressing? In 5 years? In 10 years?

10. What ambitions do you have in libraries, higher education, or elsewhere?

11. Tell me about your aspirations for leadership.

APPENDIX C

PRE- AND POST-INTERVENTION SURVEY

Community College Leadership and Administration Characteristics Questionnaire

Introduction
        My name is Peter Hepburn. I am a doctoral candidate in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU) as well as a community college librarian myself. I am working under the direction of Dr. Elisabeth Gee of MLFTC on a study exploring career pathways for librarians in relation to higher education administration. As part of the data collection for that research, I have developed a survey tool. I am inviting respondents from among the full-time librarians in the California community colleges.

About the survey
        This survey is designed to explore your familiarity with characteristics and qualifications for leadership and administrative positions in the California community colleges. The survey consists of 4 sections and a total of 26 questions. We anticipate this survey to take no more than 15 minutes.

Questions or concerns
        If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Elisabeth Gee at Elisabeth.Gee@asu.edu or [phone number redacted] or Peter Hepburn at pdhepbur@asu.edu or [phone number redacted].

Thank you for your participation.

Before beginning the survey, please provide the last four digits of your personal phone number. This four-digit number is used as a code to provide you with anonymity in taking the survey. The number will be used by the researchers only and will not be shared in any presentation of the results of this survey or the study.

Characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions in the community colleges
For the purpose of this survey, we may define leadership and leaders as taking charge, whether formally appointed or informally chosen to do so, of goal setting and decision making for a group. We may define administrators as a class of employees in the California community colleges that includes positions of authority ranging from the president and chancellor, through vice presidents and on to deans and associate deans. Faculty, including librarians, would not be considered administrators.

Questions 1-6 ask about your perceptions of and beliefs about characteristics and qualifications that may be required or preferred for attaining administrative positions at

your college. For each of the questions, please indicate how true you believe the statement to be.

Q1. It is necessary to have leadership training in order to become an administrator at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q2. It is necessary to have administrator training in order to become an administrator at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 3. It is necessary to have a doctoral degree in order to become an administrator at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 4. There is a prescribed career path to administrative positions at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 5. There is a preferred career path to administrative positions at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 6. Librarianship is a viable career path to becoming an administrator at my college.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Questions 7-12 ask about your perceptions of and beliefs about characteristics and qualifications that may be required or preferred for attaining administrative positions in the California community colleges. For each of the questions, please indicate how true you believe the statement to be.

Q7. It is necessary to have leadership training in order to become an administrator in the California community colleges.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 8. It is necessary to have administrator training in order to become an administrator in the California community colleges.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 9. It is necessary to have a doctoral degree in order to become an administrator in the California community colleges
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q10. There is a prescribed career path to administrative positions in the California community colleges.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 11. There is a preferred career path to administrative positions in the California community colleges.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 12. Librarianship is a viable career path to becoming an administrator in the California community colleges.
I believe this to be true   To a great extent (1) Somewhat (2) Very little (3) Not at all (4) Do not know (5)

Q 13. Please provide additional comments on required or preferred characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions at your college and in the California community colleges.

Personal characteristics, aspirations, and identity

Q14. This question asks about your perceptions of your own characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions at your college and in the California community colleges.
Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.
Strongly Agree (1) Agree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree (5) Do not know (6)
1. I possess leadership qualities. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I possess administrative skills. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I have had leadership experience in my career. 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I have had administrative experience in my career. 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. I consider myself to be a leader at my library. 1 2 3 4 5 6
6. I consider myself to be a leader at my college. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q15. Please provide additional comments on your own characteristics and qualifications for attaining administrative positions at your college and in the California community colleges.

Q16. This question asks about your interests in and aspirations for attaining administrative positions at your college and in the California community colleges. Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.
Strongly Agree (1) Agree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree (5) Do not know (6)
1. I aspire to work in an administrator position in the next 5 years. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I aspire to work in an administrator position in the next 6-10 years. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I aspire to work in an administrator position in the next 11-15 years. 1 2 3 4 5 6
4. I aspire to work in an administrator position at a point greater than 15 years from now. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q17. Please provide additional comments on your interests in and aspirations for attaining administrative positions at your college and in the California community colleges.

Q18. This question asks about your self-identification in relation to your career at your college and in the California community colleges.
Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.
Strongly Agree (1) Agree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree (5) Do not know (6)
1. I primarily identify as a librarian in my work. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I primarily identify as a faculty member in my work. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I primarily identify as a college employee in my work. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q19. Please provide additional comments on your self-identification in relation to your career at your college and in the California community colleges.

Development of characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations

Q20. This question asks about what supports are available to you at your college in developing your own characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations for attaining administrative positions.
Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.
Strongly Agree (1) Agree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree (5) Do not know (6)
1. I have access at my college to leadership training. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I have access at my college to administrator career training. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I have access at my college to career mentorship. 1 2 3 4 5 6

21. This question asks about what supports are available to you in the California community colleges in developing your own characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations for attaining administrative positions.
Please indicate the extent of your agreement with the following statements.

Strongly Agree (1) Agree (2) Neither agree nor disagree (3) Disagree (4) Strongly disagree (5) Do not know (6)

1. I have access in the California community colleges to leadership training. 1 2 3 4 5 6
2. I have access in the California community colleges to administrator career training. 1 2 3 4 5 6
3. I have access in the California community colleges to career mentorship. 1 2 3 4 5 6

Q22. Please provide additional comment on supports at your college and in the California community colleges for development of your own characteristics, qualifications, and aspirations for attaining administrator positions.

Demographic information.
The questions in this section ask about basic personal information.

Q23. How do you identify by gender?
Male (1) Female (2) Non-binary (3) Prefer to self-describe (4)

Q24. In what range does your age fall?
18-24 (1) 25-34 (2) 35-44 (3) 45-54 (4) 55-64 (5) 65 and older (6) Prefer not to say (7)

Q25. What is your work experience?
0-5 (1) 6-10 (2) 11-15 (3) 16-20 (4) >20 (5)
Years in California community college libraries (post-Master's degree). 1 2 3 4 5
Years in libraries overall (post-Master's degree). 1 2 3 4 5

Q26. What is your education?
Degree earned (1) Degree in progress (2) Degree planned or under consideration (3) N/A (4)
Bachelor's degree 1 2 3 4
MLIS or equivalent Master's degree 1 2 3 4
Other Master's degree 1 2 3 4
Doctoral degree 1 2 3 4
Other certification 1 2 3 4

Closing
Thank you for your participation in the survey.

As a reminder, if you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Elisabeth Gee at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted] or Peter Hepburn at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted].

APPENDIX D

RECRUITMENT INVITATION FOR STUDY COACHES

Invitation to Administrators to Participate in a Study Related to Career Pathways in the Community Colleges

Introduction

My name is Peter Hepburn. I am a doctoral candidate in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU) as well as a community college librarian myself. I am working under the direction of Dr. Elisabeth Gee of MLFTC on a study exploring career pathways for librarians in relation to higher education administration. The study will include an intervention, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program. I am inviting administrators from the California community colleges to act as presenters and as coaches for participants in the program.

Overview of the intervention

The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program will take place in spring 2021, lasting for approximately 16 weeks. There are three components:

1. The first component of the innovation, a trio of online, synchronous seminars, will each feature a current administrator sharing their knowledge and experiences with the participants. Each session will have a particular focus: knowledge, skills, and intangibles. The administrator presenting the session will provide content based on the assigned theme. I will facilitate and observe the session, writing researcher notes for subsequent coding. Each session will last approximately one hour.

2. The second component involves one-one-one coaching sessions wherein the participants will first share their curriculum vitae for review by a current administrator. The coach and participant will then meet virtually so that the administrator may provide some career guidance specific to the participant. Based on the conversation, the participants will develop a checklist of further recommended professional development activities, learning opportunities, and work experiences to bolster their CVs. I will facilitate and observe the session, writing researcher notes for subsequent coding. Coach-participants pairs will be welcome to meet more than once, but I will observe only the first meeting. The first coaching session will last approximately one hour; subsequent sessions will be at the agreement of the administrator and participant.

3. The third component to the intervention will be one-on-one interviews using an online platform, such as Zoom, at the end of the innovation.

Your role in the intervention

As a current community college administrator, you would present a session, provide one-on-one coaching, or both. The content of the sessions would be based on themes that I provide, and the content would be developed in consultation with me. I will provide training and outlines to each of the administrators who provide content or provide coaching so as to ensure consistency among all of them.

The benefit to participation are the opportunities for you to reflect on career advancement in the community colleges and share that with junior colleagues, for you to meet a individuals or a cohort of potential leaders in the community colleges, and for you

to indicate your involvement in the study where it may be beneficial to your own career (in a performance review setting, for example). Your contributions also have the potential to enhance the experiences of community college librarians who are considering whether and how to apply for and attain administrative positions. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

Your contribution to the study will remain confidential with two exceptions, namely to participants in the study and to anyone whom you choose to disclose your participation to. Because of the need for participant and contributor anonymity, you will be asked to agree to non-disclosure of others' names or identifying information in addition to providing your own written consent to be involved in the study. Any of your identifying information will be stored separately from the data and deleted at the completion of the study.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate in or to withdraw from contributing at any time before completion, there will be no penalty whatsoever. You must be 18 years of age or older to be involved. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications, but your name will not be used. Please indicate your consent below.

Questions or concerns
If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Elisabeth Gee at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted] or Peter Hepburn at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted].

Thank you for your consideration.

Consent (check all that apply)
I consent to be a presenter of one of the group sessions. ☐
I consent to be a coach for one or more study participants. ☐

Non-disclosure (for those who consent to participate)
I agree not to disclose to anyone the names or other identifying information of study participants or of administrators contributing to the study without express written permission from those individuals. ☐

APPENDIX E

ORIENTATION DOCUMENTS FOR STUDY COACHES

Webinar Session Outline

The webinar component of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program is an opportunity for you to share your experiences, knowledge, and insights with the participants in the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program. Each webinar has a different theme: Knowledge, Skills, and Intangibles.

- Knowledge – defined as the educational (degree, certificate, or other coursework) foundation for a career in administration. This topic addresses the areas of understanding that an administrator will need in order to be successful.
- Skills – defined as the abilities and experiences that an administrator will need in order to be successful.
- Intangibles – defined as the personal characteristics that an administrator may need in order to be successful.

The theme for your session is [theme as assigned to administrator receiving the outline].

The webinar will last for approximately an hour. While I will facilitate the session, you will provide the content and respond to most questions. You are welcome to create slides or any other form of presentation that may be shared using the Zoom platform. The structure of the session will be as follows:

- Introduction (I will introduce myself and you)
- Your presentation (approximately 30 minutes)
- Questions/discussion (I will monitor the session for questions, you will respond to the questions) (up to 25 minutes)
- Next steps (I will let participants know about upcoming components)

As a reminder, I will also be observing the session and writing notes.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted].

Coaching Session Outline

The one-one-one career coaching component of the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program is an opportunity for you and the participant to discuss career aspirations in higher education administration.

Prior to the session, the participant with whom you have been paired should have shared with you two or three discussion points they would like to explore in relation to careers in higher education administration. They will also have shared their curriculum vitae (CV) with you for your review.

In the session, you should cover the following things:

- Introductions
- Participant discussion points.
- CV review and guidance on how to strengthen it
- Next steps (additional meetings, future correspondence)

The order in which you address discussion points and the CV review will be up to you as you deem appropriate. You will have an hour for the session, but more time is possible on agreement from all parties.

As a reminder, I will be observing the session and writing notes but not facilitating it or otherwise taking an active role. Should you and the participant agree to subsequent meetings, I will not observe those unless invited by both of you. Instead, I will ask that each of you provide me with a summary of those meetings.

Should you have any questions, do not hesitate to contact me at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted].

APPENDIX F

POST-INTERVENTION INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Interview will start by asking the participant for the identification number they provided in the first survey in order to link their responses.

1. Where does the library fit at your college?

2. How do you view your place in the college?

3. I'd like to hear your thoughts on library leadership and administration. What can you tell me about your thoughts on library administration or leadership in the college?

4. Using your career journey map, tell me about your educational background and career in libraries so far.

5. What sort of professional development or continuing education have you undertaken? Tell me about your reasons for it.

6. Using your career journey map, where do you see your career progressing? In 5 years? In 10 years?

7. What ambitions do you have in libraries, higher education, or elsewhere?

8. Tell me about your aspirations for leadership.

9. Finally, let's talk about the intervention activities, the presentations and the coaching. To what extent have you learned from them? What will you take away from them?

10. Is there anything else you would like to share?

APPENDIX G

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL FOR THE STUDY

ASU Knowledge Enterprise
Development

EXEMPTION GRANTED

Elisabeth Gee
Division of Educational Leadership and Innovation - Tempe
480/965-4284
Elisabeth.Gee@asu.edu

Dear Elisabeth Gee:

On 12/1/2020 the ASU IRB reviewed the following protocol:

Type of Review:	Initial Study
Title:	Career Coaching Program for and Study into Community College Librarians and Career Pathways into Higher Education Administration
Investigator:	Elisabeth Gee
IRB ID:	STUDY00012955
Funding:	None
Grant Title:	None
Grant ID:	None
Documents Reviewed:	• hepburn.IRBProtocol.30November2020.docx, Category: IRB Protocol; • recruitment_administrators_email_11-30-2020.pdf, Category: Recruitment Materials; • recruitment_participants_email_11-30-2020.pdf, Category: Consent Form; • supporting_documents_11-30-2020.pdf, Category: Measures (Survey questions/Interview questions /interview guides/focus group questions);

The IRB determined that the protocol is considered exempt pursuant to Federal Regulations 45CFR46 (2) Tests, surveys, interviews, or observation on 12/1/2020.

In conducting this protocol you are required to follow the requirements listed in the INVESTIGATOR MANUAL (HRP-103).

If any changes are made to the study, the IRB must be notified at research.integrity@asu.edu to determine if additional reviews/approvals are required. Changes may include but not limited to revisions to data collection, survey and/or interview questions, and vulnerable populations, etc.

Sincerely,

IRB Administrator

cc: Peter Hepburn
        Peter Hepburn

APPENDIX H

RECRUITMENT INVITATION FOR STUDY PARTICIPANTS

Invitation to Participants in the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program

Introduction

My name is Peter Hepburn. I am a doctoral candidate in the Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College (MLFTC) at Arizona State University (ASU) as well as a community college librarian myself. I am working under the direction of Dr. Elisabeth Gee of MLFTC on a study exploring career pathways for librarians in relation to higher education administration. The study will include an intervention, the Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program. I am inviting study participants from among the full-time librarians in the California community colleges.

Overview of the intervention

The Career Advancement Coaching for Librarians program will take place in spring 2021, lasting for approximately 16 weeks. There are three components:

1. The first component of the innovation, a trio of online, synchronous seminars, will each feature a current administrator sharing their knowledge and experiences with the participants. Each session will have a particular focus: knowledge, skills, and intangibles. The administrator presenting the session will provide content based on the assigned theme. I will facilitate and observe the session, writing researcher notes for subsequent coding. Each session audio will be recorded. Each session will last approximately one hour.

2. The second component involves one-one-one coaching sessions using an online platform, such as Zoom, wherein the participants will first share their curriculum vitae for review by a current administrator. The coach and participant will then meet virtually so that the administrator may provide some career guidance specific to the participant. Based on the conversation, the participants will develop a checklist of further recommended professional development activities, learning opportunities, and work experiences to bolster their CVs. I will facilitate and observe the session, writing researcher notes for subsequent coding. Coach-participants pairs will be welcome to meet more than once, but I will observe only the first meeting. There will be no audio-recording of the sessions. The first coaching session will last approximately one hour; subsequent sessions will be at the agreement of the administrator and participant.

3. The third component to the intervention will be one-on-one interviews using an online platform, such as Zoom. Participants will share journey maps that they have developed as part of the session. I will conduct the interviews, writing researcher notes for subsequent coding. The interview audio will be recorded. Each interview will last approximately one hour.

The study also includes a pre-intervention and post-intervention survey, each of which will take approximately fifteen minutes to complete. Total time obligation to participate in the study (including surveys) is approximately 5.5 hours over the course of 16 weeks.

Consent

The benefit to participation is the opportunity for you to reflect on and think more about the characteristics that position an individual for advancement into administrative ranks in community colleges. You will receive both informational sessions and coaching that could bolster your career plans. There is the potential for networking with peers and with community college administrators, which may also be beneficial to your career goals. The quantitative and qualitative data collected from you in the study will address the research questions underlying the study and shape the findings. Thus, there is potential to enhance the experiences of community college librarians who are considering whether and how to apply for and attain administrative positions. There are no foreseeable risks or discomforts to your participation.

The data collected in this study will be anonymized, and involvement by any participants will be kept confidential. The researcher will ensure that personally identifying information cannot be connected to participants in the reporting of the data from this survey. Any such personally identifying information will be stored separately and securely from the anonymized data and deleted at the completion of the study. The researcher will use the last four digits of participants' phone numbers to link data while preserving confidentiality. You will be asked to create that ID as the first step in the first survey and asked to provide it in the interview and the follow-up survey in order to link the data. The administrators who will present the sessions and provide the coaching have been required to agree to non-disclosure of your involvement. You may indicate your consent below for the administrators involved in the program to know your identity. Should you not consent, your identity will be concealed in any sessions involving the administrators.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. If you choose not to participate in or to withdraw from the study at any time before completion, there will be no penalty whatsoever. You must be 18 years of age or older to participate. Results from this study may be used in reports, presentations, or publications, but your name will not be used. Please respond to the question below to indicate whether you consent to participate in the study.

Questions or concerns
If you have any questions concerning the research study, please contact the research team – Dr. Elisabeth Gee at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted] or Peter Hepburn at [email address redacted] or [phone number redacted].

Thank you for your consideration.

Consent
By checking the box, you consent to participate in the study ☐

Additionally, by typing your name you consent to have your identity known to the administrators who will provide content for the webinars and who will act as your career coach. _____

APPENDIX I

CAREER JOURNEY MAPPING GUIDELINES

Career journey mapping
Guidelines

Journey mapping is the representation, in a graphic format, of your experience as you work to accomplish something of importance to you. These maps can depict your actual or ideal journey. In this case, the map will represent your career as it has taken place and as you envision it continuing.

The visual representation is up to you – you are welcome to present things as typical road maps or in any other illustrated manner that you see fit. You may use color or black and white. You may hand-draw the map or use tools or software to create it.

You and I are the only two people who will see the original map. Any identifying information – names of individuals or of institutions – will be redacted for reproduction and use in the dissertation.

Please share your map with me as in JPG or TIFF file format in advance of your interview with me the week of April 12. We will refer to the map over the course of the interview.

Some things to keep in mind:
- You decide where you want the map to begin and end. Ideally, the map should end at some career destination in your future.
- Plot the steps on your journey. You may use as many steps as you think appropriate to your career pathway. Label or otherwise identify each step.
- Include any other factors, conditions, or circumstances that you feel are important to telling your career journey story in the map.
- You are welcome to indicate emotional state for any step or point on the map.
- Dates are welcome but not critical for your map.

Let me know what questions you may have. I look forward to seeing your maps and to engaging with you in the interview conversations.

Thank you,
Peter

Peter Hepburn
[email addresses redacted]
[phone number redacted]