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RESEARCH ARTICLE

PERCEPTIONS OF THEIR ACADEMIC TRAINING FOR THE HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT FUNCTIONS OF THEIR ROLE

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Abstract

The principal manages many employees, including teachers and other certified staff. Therefore, they need to receive specialized training toward this end. Unfortunately, previous research has shown that many principals do not receive this training and education. This study explores principals' perceptions of the academic training they received. Specifically, the study examines their thoughts and opinions regarding how well they were trained for their role's human capital management functions. This study utilized a mixed-method survey research design to obtain information from a sample of PK-12 school principals. The researchers employed a 25-item online questionnaire to assess the principals' perceptions of the principal preparation programs they participated in before initiating their principalship. This questionnaire included open- and close-ended questions to evaluate their perceptions and thoughts. One-Way ANOVA was used to analyze Likert-style data and explore the perceptions of completing a human resource capital management course. A thematic qualitative analysis was also used to identify and analyze themes within qualitative data. The findings revealed that respondents shared the same desire to complete a human capital management course, principals with varying degrees of experience perceived their master's degree in educational leadership as preparing them for the post of principal in the same way, and principals must believe they have the relevant knowledge and skills to help them perceive that they are operating as efficient and effective human capital managers.

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Introduction:-

This research study explores factors surrounding a school principal's ability to function as a human capital manager and the essential academic preparation needed for effective performance in this capacity. The study examines principals' perceptions of their academic preparation for their role as human capital managers. According to Liu et al. (2017), a human capital manager is any person within an organization entrusted with overseeing human capital functions. The primary role of the human capital manager is to recruit and train employees, manage talent, and appraise performances (Liu et al., 2017). It is expected that principals of schools learn how to embody this human capital manager role through the academic preparation they receive. Academic preparation is defined as a person's life-long skills development, utilizing a proactive approach that focuses on achieving personal and professional growth (Hepworth et al., 2018).

This study explores principals' perceptions of their academic preparation for their role's human capital management functions. It determines how they view their academic preparation to be human capital managers. The research question for this study focuses on how principals perceive the effectiveness of their academic preparation concerning their role's human capital management functions. This study hypothesizes that school principals perceive that they are not fully academically prepared for the role of human capital manager, as they may lack specific training and education in areas related to human capital management, such as personnel selection/recruitment, evaluation, and training and development. Conversely, principals who perceive their academic preparation as inadequate are less likely to implement effective human capital management practices, which may lead to teacher turnover, low morale, and poor student outcomes. Therefore, it is hypothesized that a positive relationship exists between principals' perceptions of their academic preparation for human capital management and their perceived effectiveness in managing human capital in schools.

Methodology:-

The study utilized a mixed-method survey design, incorporating qualitative (subjective and narrative) and quantitative (objective and measurable) components. This approach was chosen to provide a comprehensive understanding of how principals perceive the effectiveness of their academic preparation regarding managing human capital in their role. A mixed-method survey design allows more robust data to address the research question.

Population and Sample

This study focuses on principals currently employed by PK-12 schools in the United States, with the population of interest being those who have received academic preparation for their role. The sample of participants for this study was selected using a combination of convenience sampling and purposive and homogenous sampling. The sample can be considered a convenience sample because it was collected from school principals willing to participate in the study. At the same time, the sample was purposive and homogenous because the researchers specifically targeted principals with a graduate-level education to ensure that the sample was composed of individuals who met the research criteria.

The participant recruitment strategies for this study included a clear and concise recruitment message that was disseminated electronically and explained the study's purpose, the benefits of participation, and the rationale for their participation. The researchers utilized the internet and social media, including Google Ads, Twitter, and Facebook, to share the study information and request principal participation throughout the United States.

Instrumentation

The study utilized an online questionnaire that consisted of 25 items to gather data from current principals who voluntarily participated in the study. Analysis suggested a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.899, indicating that our construct has high reliability. The questionnaire included open- and close-ended questions to assess participants' perceptions of the principal preparation programs they completed before assuming their role. The questionnaire also gathered information on participants' years of experience, education level, and desire for future professional development. The study excluded participants who did not provide consent, were not currently employed as a principal, or did not meet the minimum educational requirements for participation. The questionnaire included Likert-style questions to rate participants' previous education, academic preparation, and future professional development related to managing school-based human capital. Additionally, the study included open-ended questions to gather participants' perceptions on the necessary skills and knowledge for managing school-based employees, elements to include in a professional development course, and relevant ongoing professional development in human capital management.

The survey's first seven questions collected demographic information from participants, such as their current employment status, years of experience, and geographic location. The study excluded participants who did not meet the minimum educational requirements or had not completed coursework related to educational leadership. The questionnaire used Likert-style questions to assess participants' perceptions of their previous education, academic preparation, and future professional development related to managing school-based human capital. The survey also included open-ended questions to gather participants' perceptions on the necessary skills and knowledge for managing school-based employees, elements to include in a professional development course, and relevant ongoing professional development in human capital management.

Data Analysis

We collected 230 survey responses from current school principals. The data were analyzed using Microsoft Excel and SPSS. We conducted descriptive statistics to explore the relationship between principals' academic training and their perception of preparedness for their role's human capital management functions. Quantitative measures were computed using descriptive statistics for questions 3 through 11 in the survey. In addition, for questions 3 through 10, frequencies and proportions of each category were tabulated, showing how common specific categories were among the participants.

For Likert-style questions 12 through 22, the data collected were analyzed using ANOVA (analysis of variance) to investigate the difference in ratings for each aspect of human capital management among principals based on their current employment because it can be used to test the significance of differences between three or more groups or variables (Howell, 2007). The study collected Likert-style data, commonly used in research to measure the attitudes and opinions of participants. The researchers investigated the differences in mean scores of the Likert-style questions.

Finally, for questions 23 through 25, qualitative measures were computed in Microsoft Excel. The National Association of Secondary School Principals guided the work of Hoyle et al. as essential skills that school principals need to be successful in today's schools. Therefore, applying the work of Hoyle et al. (2010), The 10 Skills for Successful 21st Century School Leaders were used to define the themes used to code responses in Question 23. Applying Liu et al.'s (2017) definition of human capital management, four themes of human capital management were used to define the themes used to code responses in questions 24 and 25.

Results:-

A total of 230 principals were surveyed for this study, but 26 respondents were excluded from the final sample due to various reasons such as not agreeing to consent in question 1, not currently working as a principal in question 3, or not meeting the educational requirements in questions 9 and 10. Therefore, the final sample size for the study consisted of 204 principals.

The primary objective of this study is to understand principals' perceptions of the training they received in human capital management. The quantitative results presented here show the differences in principals' perceptions based on different groupings, such as by the type of school, geographic region, or experience. Four participants did not provide their perception of whether their master's degree prepared them for employee management and was excluded from the calculations. Demographics analysis of the respondents suggested that the highest percentage of respondents (n=81, 40.7%) were principals of high schools, followed by principals of elementary schools (n=61, 29.9%). The lowest number of respondents (n=27, 13.2%) were principals of other P-12 settings, while only one of the respondents did not mention their type of school.

Demographics of Respondents

Analysis suggested that most respondents (n=34, 65.7%) had experience between 1 to 7 years. Whereas only 5.9% (n=12) of the respondents indicated, their experience was less than one year. Most of the respondents (n=84, 41.18%) were principals of public schools from urban areas, followed by principals of private schools (n=33, 16.18%) that were also in urban areas. None of the principals identified as working in suburban charter schools. The lowest number of respondents remain from other P-12 schools from all three areas, i.e., urban, suburban, and rural.

Further analysis also suggested that out of all US states, 83.7% of the respondents belonged to 18 US states, i.e., California (22), Florida (18), Georgia (17), Alaska (11), and Texas (9). Arizona (8), Arkansas (8), Alabama (8), New York (8), Maryland (7), Colorado (6). New Jersey and Illinois (5 each), Hawaii and Indiana (4 each), and the District of Columbia, Connecticut, and Kentucky (3 each).

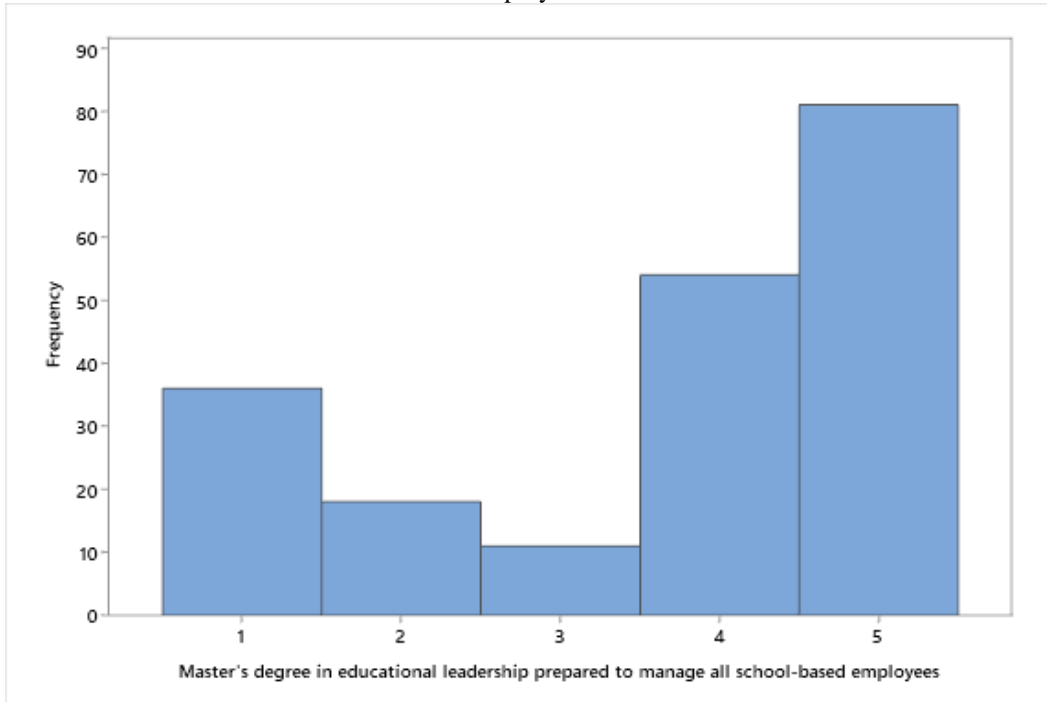
Principal Perceptions of Whether Master's Degree Prepared them to Manage All School-Based Employees

We first look to understand principals' perceptions of whether their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them to manage all school-based employees (question 12).

Figure 2 groups principals by four different types of schools: elementary school, middle/junior high school, high school, or other P-12 settings. The frequency and percentages of each category are provided as well. One participant did not provide their school type and was excluded from the calculations. Descriptive analysis indicates that 35.2%

(n=81) of the participants strongly agreed that their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them to manage all school-based employees. The histogram of responses from participants also suggested a bimodal distribution that is negatively skewed, indicating that the group of participants who strongly perceived that their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them to manage all school-based employees were more than those who rated their perception as lower on this question.

Figure 1:- Perception of IfTheMaster's Degree in Educational Leadership Prepares to Manage All School-Based Employees.



Note:The numbers 1-5 in Figure 1 represent a rating scale used to assess participants’ perceptions of whether their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them to manage all school-based employees: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Somewhat disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Somewhat agree, and (5) Strongly agree

Analysis revealed that most respondents who strongly agreed that their degree prepared them for the position of principal also strongly agreed that their degree prepared them for management of all school-based employees. However, only 0.5% (n=11) of the respondents somewhat disagreed that their degree prepared them to manage all school-based employees. Those who strongly disagreed that their degree prepared them for the position of principal also strongly disagreed that their degree prepared them for management of all school-based employees (n=28,14.0%).

Correlation Analysis of Principals' Perceptions of Preparedness for Human Capital Factors

Next, we conducted a correlation analysis of principals' perceptions of preparedness for human capital factors to determine if there was an association between the perception of principals who think that their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them for the position of principal (Q11) and their preparedness for management of all school-based employees (Q12), for selection and recruitment of all school-based employees (Q14.1), for evaluating all school-based employees (Q14.2), for training and development of all school-based staff (Q14.3) and for retaining school-based staff (Q14.4).

Table 1:- Correlation Analysis of Principals' Perceptions of Whether Their Master's Degree in Educational Leadership Prepared Them for the Position of Principal.

		Degree Prepared for the Position of Principal
Q12 Management of all school-based employees	Pearson Correlation	.834**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

	N	200
Q14.1 Selection and Recruitment	Pearson Correlation	.707**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	200
Q14.2 Evaluating	Pearson Correlation	.635**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	197
Q14.3 Training and development	Pearson Correlation	.653**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	199
Q14.4 Retaining	Pearson Correlation	.543**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	202

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The correlation analysis indicated that principals' perception that their master's degree in educational leadership prepared them for the position of principal has a strong positive correlation with their perception of their preparedness for management of all school-based employees ($r=0.834$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), for selection and recruitment of all school-based employees ($r=0.707$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), for evaluating all school-based employees ($r=0.635$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$), for training and development of all school-based staff ($r=0.653$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$) and for retaining school-based staff ($r=0.543$, $p\text{-value}=0.000$).

Principals' Perceptions Concerning Current Employment as a Principal

Next, a One-Way ANOVA was carried out to investigate whether ratings differed on master's degree preparation for the discrete human capital management factors.

Table 2:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Whether Their Master's Degree in Educational Leadership Prepared Them for Human Capital Management Concerning Current Employment.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q11	Degree Prepared for the Position of Principal	Between Groups	24.562	3	8.187	3.874	.010
		Within Groups	416.364	197	2.114		
		Total	440.925	200			
Q12	Management of all school-based employees	Between Groups	18.665	3	6.222	2.762	.043
		Within Groups	439.285	195	2.253		
		Total	457.950	198			
Q14.1	Selection and recruitment	Between Groups	21.568	3	7.189	4.217	.006
		Within Groups	332.422	195	1.705		
		Total	353.990	198			
Q14.2	Evaluating	Between Groups	19.365	3	6.455	3.879	.010
		Within Groups	319.507	192	1.664		
		Total	338.872	195			
Q14.3	Training and development	Between Groups	6.524	3	2.175	1.299	.276
		Within Groups	324.748	194	1.674		
		Total	331.273	197			
Q14.4	Retaining	Between Groups	3.727	3	1.242	.648	.585
		Within Groups	377.865	197	1.918		
		Total	381.592	200			

Results from One-Way ANOVA suggested that based on their current employment, principals' perceptions differed for whether their degree prepared them for a position of principal ($p\text{-value}=0.010<0.05$), management of all school-based employees ($p\text{-value}=0.043<0.05$), selection and recruitment ($p\text{-value}=0.006<0.05$) and evaluation of employees ($p\text{-value}=0.010<0.05$). However, based on their current employment as a principal, respondents had the same perception about their academic preparation for training and development of employees ($p\text{-value}=0.276<0.05$).

and their retention ($p\text{-value}=0.585<0.05$). Additionally, based on current employment, no statistically significant difference was found in a rating of employer-provided training to prepare principals for employee selection and recruitment ($p\text{-value}=0.865$), for employee training & development ($p\text{-value}=0.385$), for employee evaluation ($p\text{-value}=0.793$) and employee retention ($p\text{-value}=0.449$) since their respective p -values were greater than our significance level.

Analysis revealed that respondents have the same perception of completing a college or university course in employee selection and recruitment, training and development, and retention based on their current employment. However, their difference in perceptions was statistically significant concerning completing a college or university course in employee evaluation ($p\text{-value}=0.021$).

Principals' Perceptions in Relation to Type of School of Employment

Results from ANOVA based on responses to Q11, Q12, and Q14 suggested that principals from all four types of schools of employment, i.e., Elementary School, Middle/ Junior High School, High School, and Other P-12 Schools, had the same perceptions of their master's degree in educational leadership preparing them for the position of principal ($p\text{-value}=0.773>0.05$) as evident from respective p -value which is greater than our significance level. Also, these principals have the same perceptions of their master's degree in educational leadership preparing them for the other factors of human capital management: for management of all school-based employees ($p\text{-value}=0.141$), for selection and recruitment of all school-based employees ($p\text{-value}=0.613$), for evaluating all school-based employees ($p\text{-value}=0.990$), for training and development of all school-based staff ($p\text{-value}=0.626$) and for retaining school-based staff ($p\text{-value}=0.228$).

Principals' Perceptions in Relation to Their Experience Level

Results from ANOVA suggested that we may conclude that principals with different levels of experience had the same perception of their master's degree in educational leadership preparing them for the position of principal, as evident by the corresponding p -value of 0.062 which is greater than our significance level of 0.05. Analysis also suggested similar results for other human resource capital management aspects except for effectiveness of master's degree in preparing for selection and recruitment of employees ($p\text{-value}=0.018<0.05$) where respondent's perception statistically significantly differed based on their experience level.

Table 3:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Whether Their Master's Degree in Educational Leadership Prepared Them for the Position of Principal in Relation to Experience Level.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q11	Degree Prepared for Position of Principal	Between Groups	19.880	4	4.970	2.284	.062
		Within Groups	428.714	197	2.176		
		Total	448.594	201			
Q12	Management of all school-based employees	Between Groups	20.679	4	5.170	2.291	.061
		Within Groups	439.941	195	2.256		
		Total	460.620	199			
Q14.1	Selection and recruitment	Between Groups	21.384	4	5.346	3.057	.018
		Within Groups	340.971	195	1.749		
		Total	362.355	199			
Q14.2	Evaluating	Between Groups	15.180	4	3.795	2.224	.068
		Within Groups	327.571	192	1.706		
		Total	342.751	196			
Q14.3	Training and development	Between Groups	12.700	4	3.175	1.879	.116
		Within Groups	327.892	194	1.690		
		Total	340.593	198			
Q14.4	Retaining	Between Groups	8.835	4	2.209	1.142	.338
		Within Groups	381.071	197	1.934		
		Total	389.906	201			

ANOVA revealed that based on experience, principals had the same perception regarding course or training provided by the employer for selection and recruitment of employees, their training and development, and retention; however, their perception regarding employer-provided training or course on employee evaluation ($p\text{-value}=0.047<0.05$) statistically significantly differed based on their experience level.

Table 4:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Desire to Complete a Course Related to Human Capital Management in Relation to Experience Level.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q17.1	Desire to complete a course in employee selection and recruitment	Between Groups	5.759	4	1.440	.908	.460
		Within Groups	309.236	195	1.586		
		Total	314.995	199			
Q17.2	Desire to complete a course in employee training & development.	Between Groups	12.776	4	3.194	1.887	.114
		Within Groups	331.821	196	1.693		
		Total	344.597	200			
Q17.3	Desire to complete a course in employee evaluation	Between Groups	13.833	4	3.458	2.186	.072
		Within Groups	310.088	196	1.582		
		Total	323.920	200			
Q17.4	Desire to complete a course in employee retention	Between Groups	4.883	4	1.221	.764	.550
		Within Groups	311.497	195	1.597		
		Total	316.380	199			

ANOVA suggested that based on the experience level of principals, their perception of improving effectiveness by undertaking courses in employee selection and recruitment ($p\text{-value}=0.082$), their evaluation ($p\text{-value}=0.424$), and retention ($p\text{-value}=0.600$) were the same. However, with respect to their perception of improving employee training and development by undertaking a course or training statistically significantly differed ($p\text{-value}=0.003$).

Table 5:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Improvement in Effectiveness for Human Capital Management in Relation to Experience Level.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q18.1	Improve Effectiveness by a course in employee selection and recruitment	Between Groups	12.905	4	3.226	2.106	.082
		Within Groups	295.685	193	1.532		
		Total	308.591	197			
Q18.2	Improve Effectiveness by course in employee training/development.	Between Groups	25.722	4	6.431	4.240	.003
		Within Groups	294.258	194	1.517		
		Total	319.980	198			
Q18.3	Improve Effectiveness through a course in employee evaluation	Between Groups	5.412	4	1.353	.973	.424
		Within Groups	265.650	191	1.391		
		Total	271.061	195			
Q18.4	Improve Effectiveness through a course in employee retention	Between Groups	4.174	4	1.043	.690	.600
		Within Groups	296.463	196	1.513		
		Total	300.637	200			

Principals' Perceptions in Relation to Type of School Community

ANOVA results suggested that based on the type of school community, principals' perceptions of their degree prepared them for the principal position differed ($p\text{-value}=0.000$). Similarly, their perception of whether the degree

prepared them to manage all school-based employees (p-value=0.044) also differed. However, their perception of the degree preparing them for selection and recruitment (p-value=0.281), evaluation of employees (p-value=0.085), training and development (p-value=0.275), and retention (p-value=0.536) remained the same as observed from respective p-values.

Table 6:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Whether Their Master's Degree in Educational Leadership Prepared Them for the Position of Principal in Relation to the Type of School Community.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q11	Degree Prepared for Position of Principal	Between Groups	33.289	2	16.644	7.975	.000
		Within Groups	415.305	199	2.087		
		Total	448.594	201			
Q12	Management of all school-based employees	Between Groups	14.361	2	7.181	3.170	.044
		Within Groups	446.259	197	2.265		
		Total	460.620	199			
Q14.1	Selection and recruitment	Between Groups	4.644	2	2.322	1.279	.281
		Within Groups	357.711	197	1.816		
		Total	362.355	199			
Q14.2	Evaluating	Between Groups	8.599	2	4.300	2.496	.085
		Within Groups	334.152	194	1.722		
		Total	342.751	196			
Q14.3	Training and development	Between Groups	4.454	2	2.227	1.298	.275
		Within Groups	336.139	196	1.715		
		Total	340.593	198			
Q14.4	Retaining	Between Groups	2.435	2	1.218	.625	.536
		Within Groups	387.470	199	1.947		
		Total	389.906	201			

Results from ANOVA suggested that principals' perceptions regarding employer-provided courses or training in employee selection and recruitment (p-value=0.051), employee training and development (p-value=0.371), and employee evaluation (p-value=0.073) remained the same. However, they differed in their perception regarding employer-provided courses or training in employee retention (p-value=0.010).

Table 7:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Whether Employer-Provided Training Prepared Them for Human Capital Management in Relation to the Type of School Community.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q15.1	Course or training in employee selection and recruitment	Between Groups	.984	2	.492	3.020	.051
		Within Groups	32.240	198	.163		
		Total	33.224	200			
Q15.2	Course or training in employee training & development	Between Groups	.300	2	.150	.997	.371
		Within Groups	29.923	199	.150		
		Total	30.223	201			
Q15.3	Course or training in employee evaluation	Between Groups	.867	2	.434	2.654	.073
		Within Groups	32.356	198	.163		
		Total	33.224	200			
Q15.4	Course or training in employee retention	Between Groups	1.757	2	.878	4.742	.010
		Within Groups	36.857	199	.185		
		Total	38.614	201			

Analysis revealed that respondents have the same perception of completing a college or university course in employee selection and recruitment, training and development, and evaluation based on their current employment. However, the analysis suggested that principals' perceptions differed with regard to completing a college or university course in employee retention (p-value=0.23).

Table 8:- One-Way ANOVA of Principals' Perceptions of Completing College or University Course in Human Resource Capital Management in Relation to School Community of Employment.

			Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Q16.1	College or university course in employee selection and recruitment	Between Groups	.726	2	.363	2.251	.108
		Within Groups	31.911	198	.161		
		Total	32.637	200			
Q16.2	College or university course in employee training & development.	Between Groups	.028	2	.014	.089	.915
		Within Groups	30.752	197	.156		
		Total	30.780	199			
Q16.3	College or university course in employee evaluation	Between Groups	.106	2	.053	.300	.741
		Within Groups	34.769	197	.176		
		Total	34.875	199			
Q16.4	College or university course in employee retention	Between Groups	1.347	2	.674	3.854	.023
		Within Groups	33.912	194	.175		
		Total	35.259	196			

Principals' Perceptions in Relation to Geographical Location

When analyzed with respect to their region, respondents' perceptions regarding their degree preparing them for the position of principal, management of all school-based employees, selection and recruitment, training and development, evaluation, and retention did not differ.

Similarly, respondents' perceptions of employer-provided courses or training on employee selection and recruitment, training and development, evaluation, and retention did not differ with their location.

Analysis revealed that based on their current employment, respondents have the same perception of completing a college or university course in employee selection and recruitment, training, and development, their evaluation and retention as evident from respective p-values, which are greater than our significance level of 0.05.

With regards to the desire to complete a course in employee selection and recruitment, their training and development, evaluation and retention, respondents' perceptions did not statistically significantly differ.

Human Capital Management Skills Considered Essential for a Principal to Possess Before They Manage School-Based Employees

We also examined responses to questions 23, 24, and 25, which were included in the survey as open-ended (qualitative) questions. Table 9 summarizes the frequency of skills survey respondents found essential for a principal to possess before they manage school-based employees.

Table 9:- Frequencies of Skills are Deemed Essential for a Principal to Have Before They Manage School-Based Employees.

Skills	N	%	Description
Skills in Visionary	26	12%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to establish a

Leadership			clear and compelling vision for their organization or school, create a positive and innovative culture, and inspire and motivate all stakeholders to work towards achieving the vision.
Skills in Policy and Governance	9	4%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to establish effective policies and procedures and to ensure that they are implemented and followed consistently.
Skills in Communication and Community Relations	56	26%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to establish and maintain positive relationships with all stakeholders, including students, parents, staff, and the community.
Skills in Organizational Management	24	11%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to manage the various aspects of the organization effectively and efficiently.
Skills in Curriculum Planning and Development	7	3%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to design and implement a comprehensive and effective curriculum that meets the needs of all students.
Skills in Instructional Management	10	5%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to support and enhance the quality of instruction and learning in their organization.
Skills in Staff Evaluation and Personnel Management	14	7%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to effectively manage and support the performance of all personnel within their organization.
Skills in Staff Development	22	10%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to support and enhance the professional growth and development of all personnel within their organization.
Skills in Educational Research, Evaluation, and Planning	11	5%	Set of abilities that enable educational leaders to effectively plan, evaluate, and improve their organization's performance.
Skills in Values and Ethics of Leadership	34	16%	Set of core beliefs and principles that guide the behavior and decision-making of educational leaders.

Principals primarily identified skills in communication and community relations (N = 56, 26%), followed by skills in values and ethics of leadership (N = 34, 16%) as skills for a principal to possess before they manage school-based employees. Skills in policy and governance (N = 9, 4%) and curriculum planning and development (N = 7, 3%) were identified as the least essential for a principal to possess before managing school-based employees.

Table 15 summarizes the frequency of skills principals identify as critical to include in instructing new principals in human capital management.

Table 10:- Frequencies of Essential Human Capital Management Skills for a Principal to Possess Before They Manage School-Based Employees.

Theme	N	%	Description
Selection and Recruitment	29	33%	Critical processes ensure that an organization can attract, identify and hire the most qualified and suitable candidates.
Training and Development	21	24%	The process of enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities in an organization to improve their job performance and prepare them for future roles and responsibilities.
Employee Evaluation	13	15%	A process by which an employer assesses and evaluates an employee's job performance.
Retention	24	28%	The ability of an organization to retain its employees and prevent them from leaving their jobs or the company altogether

Principals identified selection and recruitment (N = 29, 33%) and retention (N = 24, 28%) highest as the most critical human capital management skills for new principals, while employee evaluation (N = 13, 15%) ranked lowest. Some links were observed between the qualitative data on essential skills for principals and the quantitative data on the effectiveness of achievements in human capital management. For example, in the qualitative data, the finding that communication and community relations skills were identified as essential human capital management skills aligns with the statistically noteworthy result that the school community had an impact on the effectiveness of academic qualifications in selection and recruitment.

Discussion:-

The present study examined the perceptions of principals regarding their human capital management training based on their current employment as principals, experience level, geographic location, and type of school community. The results of the One-Way ANOVA analysis revealed significant differences in principals' perceptions based on their current employment, suggesting the need for targeted professional development and training opportunities to address potential gaps in knowledge and skills. Moreover, a statistically significant difference was found in principals' perceptions of completing a course in employee evaluation, indicating the importance of providing targeted training and professional development opportunities in this area.

However, the analysis indicated no significant differences in principals' perceptions regarding the value and effectiveness of their respective employers' training and development programs. This suggests that while principals have a consistent perception of the value of training and development programs, further research is needed to determine their effectiveness in improving human capital management skills. Additionally, the study found that principals with more experience may value training in employee training and development more highly, indicating the need to explore the factors contributing to this difference and evaluate the effectiveness of training and development programs in improving employee performance.

The results of this study also suggest that regional location and current employment impact principals' perceptions regarding their preparedness and need for further training in various aspects of human capital management, such as employee selection and recruitment, training and development, evaluation, and retention. This finding implies that educational institutions do not develop training programs that cater to the needs of educators across different regions and employment levels.

Furthermore, the results of the study suggest that principals' perceptions of their degree preparation may vary depending on the type of school community they work in. Thus, it may be valuable to investigate the factors contributing to these differences and evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs in developing the necessary skills for effective human capital management in different types of school communities. Finally, the study found that principals may perceive the importance of retention strategies differently, indicating the need to explore the factors contributing to this difference and evaluate the effectiveness of retention programs provided by employers.

The present study provides insights into principals' perceptions of their human capital management skills and highlights the need for targeted professional development and training programs to address potential gaps in knowledge and skills. Future research could investigate the effectiveness of training and development programs in improving human capital management skills, explore the factors contributing to differences in perceptions, and evaluate the effectiveness of educational programs in developing necessary skills for effective human capital management in different school communities. Overall, the findings suggest that a better understanding of principals' perceptions of their human capital management skills could enhance their ability to effectively manage and develop their school's workforce.

Smith and Snyder (2018) found that effective principal preparation programs should focus on human resources management and developing interpersonal skills. In contrast, a study by Hitt and Tucker (2016) found that traditional principal preparation programs do not adequately prepare principals for human capital management challenges. This study suggests that traditional programs may not be as effective in preparing principals to manage human capital as programs with a more targeted focus. When comparing these previous studies to the current study's findings, most principals perceived their master's degree program as effective. The effectiveness may vary depending on the specific geographical location or community type, as this study indicates that principals in rural communities perceive their training as insufficient. Specifically, programs that effectively prepare principals to manage human

capital may positively impact their perceptions of their preparation for the role. Additionally, traditional programs may not always be the most effective preparation for this particular aspect of the role.

The findings of this study have several implications for policymakers and educators involved in designing and implementing principal preparation programs. Firstly, the study highlights the necessity of training in human capital management, which can be achieved through coursework, the incorporation of longer internships, field experiences, and job-embedded professional development opportunities. Secondly, the study emphasizes the importance of designing principal preparation programs tailored to principals' specific needs and backgrounds, considering their prior teaching experience, career goals, and educational background. Finally, the study suggests the need for ongoing professional development opportunities for principals, particularly in employee selection/recruitment and retention.

This study was significant, as it provided a more in-depth understanding of the current situation regarding principal preparation within master's degree programs in educational leadership. There are many unanswered questions, such as why principals in urban and suburban areas report better perceptions regarding how prepared they were for their position as principals. Therefore, future research is recommended, with additional studies being undertaken to explore this topic more fully. This study provides valuable insights into principals' perceptions regarding their academic training in human capital management. The findings suggest that while some principals perceived their master's degree programs as helpful, others expressed the need for more training and tailored programs. Policymakers and educators can use these findings to design more effective principal preparation programs that meet the specific needs of principals and provide them with the necessary knowledge and skills to manage human capital effectively.

Conclusion:-

Effective human capital management is crucial for every educational institution's success. According to the study, principals with more experience believe their master's degree programs are of greater assistance in preparing them for this critical job. According to the research, the essential skills required for efficient human capital management are selection/recruiting and retention. However, the study demonstrates that principals in rural regions perceive themselves as less prepared to manage human capital effectively. This suggests that policymakers and preparation programs should undertake specific strategies to improve principals' skills and preparation in rural areas. Furthermore, the ANOVA analytic approach utilized in this study was an effective tool for investigating variations in principals' assessments of their preparation for human capital management. Future studies might build on this methodology to investigate the aspects that lead to effective human capital management.

Overall, the study's findings highlight the need to invest in effective human capital management practices, especially in rural locations where principals may require more assistance. Educational institutions may improve their ability to recruit, train, and retain skillful educators by implementing policies and procedures, resulting in improved outcomes for students and communities.

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