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Leadership Readiness among Prospective School Leaders in Jordan

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the leadership readiness beliefs of 185 prospective school leaders in which they participated during school management program. A moderate level was found in leadership readiness (Total), and in Focus and magnitude subscales. While a high level was found in Purposeful Community subscale. No differences found among prospective school leaders regarding to their gender. Regarding to teaching experience, results of study in "Focus subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years of teaching experience) had significantly upper leadership readiness than both the (less 5 years) and (10 and more years) of teaching experience. In "Magnitude subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years of teaching experience) had significantly upper leadership readiness than both the (less 5 years) and (10 and more years) of teaching experience. "Purposeful Community subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years) had significantly upper leadership readiness than both the (less 5 years) and (10 and more years) of teaching experience.

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Introduction

The role of the school principal has changed drastically. In this regard, leadership is often identified as a key component to the success of schools. Levine (2005) stated that principals can no longer see themselves as supervisors and managers; they are now required to be instructional leaders. He argued that the job of the school principal has been drastically impacted by demographic, economic, technological, and global influences. Indeed, a newly appointed school principal is often considerably different from the retiring principal that he or she replaces.

The requirements for leadership are multi-faceted due to the complex and ever evolving demands that are placed upon individuals who hold leadership positions. It has been noted by others that it can be difficult to arrive at a consensus definition of leadership (Bass and Bass, 2008; Bolden, 2004; Lussier and Achua, 2007). Nahavandi (2009) defines leadership as a goal directed, group phenomenon that is organized hierarchically. This definition, while not exhaustive or specifically focused on the role of the leader, suggests that a leader would need to demonstrate the competencies necessary to successfully influence the pursuit of goal directed activities.

To be an effective instructional leader, principals must rethink their roles, modify their responsibilities, and build new relationships (Dimmock & Hattie, 1996). To lead a school through the change process, leaders must be comfortable with unfamiliar situations and confront problems in which they work. Imants and DeBrabander (1996) argue that the principal plays an essential role in creating a positive climate, a critical

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component of effective organizational change. Bandura (1993) showed that "strong principals excel in their ability to get their staff to work together with a strong sense of purpose and to believe in their capabilities to surmount obstacles to educational attainment" (p. 141). It falls on the school leader to create a community where teachers can remain focused on the goals of the school and adapt to the changing needs of students in the face of these competing entities.

Levine (2005) spent four years conducting surveys of school of education deans, faculty, and alumni as well as current school principals. He concluded that there are eight areas of concern in educational administration programs today: (a) a lack of systematic self-assessment by departments, (b) curriculum that is not connected to the work of current school leaders, (c) low standards for admission, (d) instructors who do not understand the needs of today's schools and their leaders, (e) poor quality mentors, (f) irrelevance of the degree to the work of today's schools, (g) research that is detached from practice, and (h) a lack of sufficient resources.

Murphy's (2006) characterized educational administration programs as "slow stepping elephants when it comes to leadership education— sluggishly adjusting to today's call for new blood, stronger content, more relevance, and higher quality" (p. 490). Schools of education may not have created the great need for a new breed of leaders, but it appears that they have also failed to respond to this concern.

Educational leadership programs need to prevent themselves from being marginalized. To do so, they must critically analyze curriculum, field work, and pedagogy to ensure that educational leaders develop the skills that will lead to success in today s schools. Teachers often participate in education leadership programs mid-career, and they come to the university with significant knowledge about effective teaching strategies and a practical knowledge of what students need to succeed. An effective program should build upon this background knowledge and apply it to the development of leadership abilities.

Murphy (2006) argued that the situation should be looked upon as an opportunity for meaningful reform. If universities can demonstrate that they are capable of providing successful leaders for today's complex schools, they will play a crucial role in training the next generation of school leaders.

An educational leadership program that can consistently produce highly efficacious, and consequently successful, leaders could benefit our schools. In addition, such a program could serve as a model for university programs across the country. The complexity of our schools implies that it is not possible to establish a singular trait that could improve preparation for all leaders. An approach that identifies individual strategies for leaders would not be adequate; challenges vary widely between schools and within each school over time.

Effective administrator preparation is essential to the future of public education. Hess and Kelly (2007) asserted that scholars, superintendents, and principals agree that the increasing demands of school leadership require better preparation. As Levine (2005) stated, "The job of school leader has been transformed by extraordinary economic, demographic, technological, and global change" (p. 11). University programs that prepare school leaders have been under attack in the past several years, with some individuals even calling for the elimination of such programs altogether (Elmore, 2006; Levine, 2005). Critics argue that university programs do not teach what school leaders need to successfully lead schools.

In Jordan, school management programs are one of the most criteria principals need to be principals. The Faculty of Educational Sciences at Hashemite University offers graduate program of study leading to the degree of Diploma of School Management. The students who are admitted to the program should hold a bachelor’s degree in any academic discipline from an accredited university. Requirements for the award of this certificate are (24) credit hours distributed as follows: 18 credit hours compulsory courses like educational administration, administrative training, and school management; and 6 credit hours elective courses as curriculum planning and development, and educational supervision..

Principals are selected in schools in Jordan depends on Education Act, Article 18 of Act said "Stipulated that the principal of the school must have a minimum educational qualification for the study for one academic year beyond the first degree (BSc) and experienced in education in the ministry of education for at least five years."

This study attempted to address these concerns by identifying one crucial aspect of the success of schools and their leaders. It was proposed that educational leadership programs that can effectively build readiness should produce successful school leaders. An administrative preparation program that produces effective school leaders would benefit community schools and could serve as a model for other programs.

Research Problem

It is the responsibility of the leadership of university preparation programs to collaborate with schools to determine whether their graduates have acquired the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to become successful school leaders. Although there have been recent efforts to link the content of university programs with successful outcomes for schools (Murphy, 2005), these evaluations have generally emphasized the examination of narrow measures such as high-stakes test scores. In fact, English (2006) argued that such attempts at standardization have actually weakened preparation programs. An evaluation of the leadership readiness of prospective administrators, could contribute to improving the readiness of school leaders who participate in university preparation programs.

Research Purpose

The demands that leaders will face in their new positions become more complex each day. This study sought to determine whether and how university school management program build leadership readiness. To this end, students of these programs were asked to evaluate their leadership by evaluating their readiness to be an effective school leader. The goal of this research was to identify promising practices for building leadership readiness and to disseminate this information to school management preparation programs to enhance the quality of professionals who enter the field of educational leadership in the coming years.

Research Questions

The main research question for this study was the following:

1. What is the degree of leadership readiness of prospective school principals who participated in school management program?

2. Are there significant differences in leadership readiness among participants attributed to their gender, and teaching experience?

Research Significance

This study has the potential to positively impact the training of educational administrators. Schools and their leaders are under enormous pressure to improve, and, consequently, the programs that prepare leaders are being called upon to improve as well (Murphy, 2006). Effective preparation is more important than ever, and programs that build leadership should produce school leaders who will experience greater success in their careers.

It is hoped that the results of this study will benefit Jordanian schools. An overwhelming number of administrators will be needed in the next years, and their preparation must reflect the ever-increasing demands of today's students. Collaboration between university programs and Jordanian schools is critical to the success of future leaders. In particular, program improvement schools are engrossed in restructuring and reorganization.

It is also a goal of this study to provide insight into some of the necessary components of university educational administration preparation programs. By doing so, it is possible that the role of universities in training successful school leaders for the future could be strengthened. In an era of increased accountability for all educational settings, data that demonstrate the importance of high-quality leadership programs could make a meaningful contribution to the field of higher education.

Method

A survey instrument was developed to determine the perceived leadership readiness of students who participated in school management program in Jordan. The survey also was used to determine whether leadership readiness varied based upon participants' gender, and their teaching experience.

Population and Sample of Study

This study involved students who worked as teachers in ministry of education and were enrolled in school management program in the Hashemite University during the past two academic years 2010/ 2011 and 2009/ 2010. The sample consisted of all (185) teachers (Male = 69, and Female =116).

Instrument Development

A review of the literature was conducted to determine whether an instrument existed that could measure leadership readiness in individuals who were enrolled in programs to become school leaders. The McREL Balanced Leadership Framework (Waters & Cameron, 2007) was used to measure leadership readiness, which identifies 30 leadership responsibilities. These responsibilities are grouped into three domains: focus, magnitude, and purposeful community. The responsibilities were formulated into statements that asked prospective school leaders to consider their beliefs about whether they would be able to successfully execute them. The statements were designed to provide information about perceptions of leadership readiness in sum as well as readiness within subscales based upon the domains of focus, magnitude, and purposeful community.

Focus. Generally, focus is the set of behaviors by which effective leaders ensure that the efforts of the school are precisely aimed at developing practices that promote positive outcomes for students. Specifically, these leaders do several things. First, leaders with focus support the school in the development of clear goals and ensure that the goals remain the center of the school's attention. A focused leader also recognizes quality performance and rewards or praises individuals and groups whose performance and efforts are aligned with practices which support positive outcomes for students. Leaders with focus also protect teachers from issues that might detract from their teaching time or focus. Further, a leader with focus is directly involved in the design and implementation of curriculum, instruction, and assessment practices. The focused school leader is an advocate for the school who works in partnership with stakeholders. The school leader makes the district personnel, parents, and community members aware of the school's vision and mission. Whenever possible, outside resources are used to further the school's activities and progress toward accomplishing the stated goals. Finally, a leader with focus establishes standard operating procedures and routines. The development of effective routines and procedures ensure that the school operates in a safe and orderly way; the classroom can maintain its focus on instruction (Marzano et al., 2005).

Magnitude. Magnitude is represented by a break with the past rather than simply an extension of old practices, change that is outside of existing paradigms and that which requires new knowledge and a new set of skills to implement. One of the first responsibilities associated with magnitude is to be a change agent: one who is willing to challenge the existing paradigms of a school. A leader who does this is constantly looking for innovative ways to get things done and is comfortable taking on initiatives that have not been part of the school system.

A leader with magnitude is also flexible. This type of leader is comfortable with making big changes in how things are done and is willing to try different approaches to solving varied problems. In addition, flexible leaders encourage others in the school to develop their own leadership, even when their ideas may not agree wholly with those of the leader (Marzano et al., 2005).

A leader with magnitude has strong ideals and beliefs about the type of place that school should be. This leader clearly communicates these beliefs, but also models them in daily actions. Individuals who come into contact with this person come away with a clear sense of what school should be like in the eyes of this

leader. Such a leader uses this passion to optimize the performance of others such as teachers. This behavior inspires others as well to be passionate about the purposes of schooling. Such a transformation allows the leader and their school to move beyond ineffective practices for the betterment of students, no matter how entrenched these customs might be.

Additional practices related to magnitude ensure that change efforts are grounded in actions that make a meaningful difference. A leader with magnitude fosters intellectual stimulation by exposing faculty and staff to the most current theories and practices and making the discussion of these a regular aspect of the school's culture. To do this, the leader must have a strong knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Further, this leader must consistently monitor the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning (Marzanoetal., 2005).

Purposeful community. A purposeful school community is one that is bonded together based upon a common goal, in which it is understood that all members are needed to achieve the goal (Marzano et al., 2005). The first step in creating a purposeful community is to establish strong lines of communication with faculty, staff, and students. Marzano et al. (2005) believe that a purposeful community requires that a leader is accessible to all by being visible, providing clear communication, and reinforcing the importance of all members of the community and the work that they do together.

A purposeful community leader recognizes and celebrates accomplishments but also acknowledges failures. Although recognition and affirmation are common in today's schools, many leaders struggle to acknowledge their own failures or those of the school as a whole. Failure to confront shortcomings is a serious concern for today's schools; doing so not only leads schools to continue down the wrong path when mistakes are made but also brings their credibility into question, both within and outside of school organizations. Finally, a purposeful community is developed by fostering meaningful relationships with members of the school community and encouraging their involvement in the design and implementation of important decisions and policies (Marzano et al., 2005).

The Validity and Reliability of Leadership Readiness Instrument

For the purpose of examining the validity (face validity evidence) the instrument was presented to experts in the fields of educational administration and evaluation and educational measurement. These experts were asked to check whether the statements in the instrument are clear and linked appropriately with the problem of study.

Regarding the reliability of the instrument, split-half was used to estimate the stability coefficient. A total 26 teachers from participating teachers were selected randomly to be in the pilot study. These teachers did not participate in the final study. Stability coefficients for the instrument were 0.84, for Focus was 0.85, for Magnitude was 0.86, and for Purposeful Community was 0,82, which demonstrated that the leadership readiness scale was indeed reliable across survey questions.

Data Collection

Data for the study were collected using a survey questionnaire. The survey instrument was organized into two sections: leadership readiness, and demographics. Items in the first section, leadership readiness, were measured by a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 = strongly disagree to 5 = strongly agree. The second section of the survey asked participants for demographic information, gender and teaching experiences.

Data Analysis

The data accumulated from the research instrument were scored, analysed, and statistically evaluated as they related to the research questions of this study. Means and standard deviation, and a two-tailed t test were used to determine any differences among the mean scores of participants. An analysis of the variance by comparing concerns mean scores of participants was used to test the significant difference between levels of teaching experiences of participants.

Findings

Question 1: What is the degree of leadership readiness of prospective school principals who participated in school management program?

In order to understand the results of the current study, it was important to set specific cut points to interpret the prospected principals total scores related to their leadership readiness. Regarding the cut points, it should be noted that the researcher used the response scale of each item that ranged from 1 to 5 to determine these cut points according to the following manner: 1.00 -2.33 = low, from 2.34 to 3.67 = moderate, and 3.68-5.00 = high levels.

Results of this question as indicated in Table 1 reveals that the mean of leadership readiness among prospective principals who participated in school management program was (M= 3.58, SD = 0.26) with moderate level. Prospective principals who participated felt most prepared to develop a purposeful community (M = 3.69, SD = 0.13) with high level, but also felt well prepared to carry out responsibilities associated with focus (M = 3.67, SD = 0.35), and magnitude (M = 3.38, SD = 0.34) with moderate levels.

Table 1. Means and SD for leadership readiness among prospective school principals who participated a in school management program

Items	Mean	SD
Focus	3.67	0.35
Magnitude	3.38	0.34
Purposeful Community	3.69	0.13
Leadership Readiness (Total)	3.58	0.26

Items in the scale were divided into one of three subscales: focus, magnitude, and purposeful community. Statistics for leadership readiness are presented by subscale as followed. In each subscale section, means and standard deviations are reported.

Focus. There were six questions in the focus subscale, respondents who participated in school management program felt strongly that they would be able to create an environment that fosters time for teaching and learning while minimizing external distractions (M=4.47, SD = 0.55) as well as be able to involve parents and community members in ways that contribute to the achievement of school goals (M=3.98, SD = 1.01).

To a lesser degree, they also believed that they would be able to foster professional conduct by recognizing teachers for effort and performance that is linked to student achievement (M=3.52, SD = 1.49) and will be able to guide the professional development of teachers, even when resources are limited (M=3.52, SD = 0.54). They also somewhat believed that they would be able to focus on instructional leadership; even when so much of an administrator's day is spent dealing with other issues like paperwork and discipline (M=3.50, SD = 0.55), and establish a set of standard operating procedures and routines for the school that will lead (M=3.05, SD = 0.31).

Magnitude. There were 13 questions in the magnitude subscale, respondents felt very strongly that they would be able to work with people who are resistant to change (M=4.49, SD = 0.53), ability to act as a change agent (M=4.47, SD = 0.56), monitor the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning (M=3.99, SD = 1.03), and possess the moral courage that is needed to have difficult conversations with those who are not acting in a manner that is best for children (M=3.78, SD =1.03).

They also believed, in a moderate level, that they would be able to accept dissent and adhere to the mission and vision of the school (M=3.53, SD = 0.55), be able to lead with high expectations and establish a culture where school staff believes that all students can achieve (M=3.52, SD = 0.54), be able to provide conceptual guidance for teachers regarding effective classroom practices (M=3.52, SD = 0.54), be able to keep up with research on best practices in teaching and learning (M=3.52, SD = 1.50), communicate and operate

from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling (M=3.05, SD = 0.31), use knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to lead decisions about teaching and learning (M=2.56, SD = 0.62), make discussions of current theories and practice a regular part of my school's culture (M=2.54, SD = 0.57), adapt my leadership behavior to the needs of different situations (M=2.53, SD = 0.58), inspire and lead new and challenging innovations (M=2.52, SD = 0.58).

Table 2. Means and Standard deviations for leadership readiness (Focus Subscale) among prospective school principals who participated in school management program

Items	Mean	SD
I am prepared to foster professional conduct by recognizing teachers for effort and performance that is linked to student achievement.	3.52	1.49
At the completion of my training, I will be able to involve parents and community members in ways that contribute to the achievement of school goals.	3.98	1.01
I will be able to guide the professional development of teachers, even when resources are limited.	3.52	0.54
At the completion of my program, I will be able to create an environment that fosters time for teaching and learning while minimizing external distractions.	4.47	0.55
I believe that I will be able to focus on instructional leadership; even when so much of an administrator's day is spent dealing with other issues like paperwork and discipline.	3.50	0.55
I am ready to establish a set of standard operating procedures and routines for the school that I will lead.	3.05	0.31

Table 3. Means and Standard Deviation for leadership readiness (Magnitude Subscale) among prospective school principals who participated a in school management program

Items	Mean	SD
I will be able to lead with high expectations and establish a culture where school staff believes that all students can achieve.	3.52	0.54
I am confident in my ability to communicate and operate from strong ideals and beliefs about schooling.	3.05	0.31
I am confident that I possess the moral courage that is needed to have difficult conversations with those who are not acting in a manner that is best for children.	3.78	1.02
I am prepared to inspire and lead new and challenging innovations.	2.52	0.58
I am prepared to monitor the effectiveness of school practices and their impact on student learning.	3.99	1.03
I will be able to accept dissent and adhere to the mission and vision of the school.	3.53	0.55
I will be able to adapt my leadership behavior to the needs of different situations.	2.53	0.58
I am confident in my ability to act as a change agent.	4.47	0.56
I will be able to provide conceptual guidance for teachers regarding effective classroom practices.	3.52	0.54
I will be able to keep up with research on best practices in teaching and learning.	3.52	1.50
I am prepared to make discussions of current theories and practice a regular part of my school's culture.	2.54	0.57
I am prepared to use knowledge of curriculum, instruction, and assessment to lead decisions about teaching and learning.	2.56	0.62
I am prepared to work with people who are resistant to change.	4.49	0.53

Purposeful Community. There were 11 questions in the purposeful community subscale, respondents felt very strongly that they would be able to maintain open and effective lines of communication between myself and the school staff and community (M=4.94, SD = 0.37), develop meaningful relationships with

members of my school team that allow me to appreciate how their personal needs affect their professional lives (M=4.49, SD = 0.54), acknowledge my school's failures and reframe them as opportunities for growth (M=4.49, SD = 0.52), act with situational awareness; to be aware of concerns that might not be overtly stated use the information to address current and potential problems (M=3.97, SD = 0.36).

To a moderate level, they also believed that they would be able to provide opportunities for students, teachers, other staff, and community members to give input on important decisions that affect the teaching and learning (M=3.52, SD = 0.53), foster shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation among faculty and staff (M=3.52, SD = 0.53), visible and have quality contact and interactions with teachers and students (M=3.51, SD = 0.54), to perform my job in a way that supports my ideals and beliefs about the purpose of school (M=3.51, SD = 0.54), create opportunities for all school personnel to develop leadership skills (M=3.03, SD = 1.02), lead a school to refine instructional practice to support student achievement (M=2.99, SD = 0.29), and to establish strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students (M=2.53, SD = 0.53).

Table 4. Means and Standard Deviation for leadership readiness (Purposeful Community Subscale) among prospective school principals who participated a in school management program

Items	Mean	SD
I am prepared to be visible and have quality contact and interactions with teachers and students.	3.51	0.54
I am prepared to maintain open and effective lines of communication between myself and the school staff and community.	4.94	0.37
As a school leader, I am ready to establish strong lines of communication with and among teachers and students.	2.53	0.57
I am prepared to provide opportunities for students, teachers, other staff, and community members to give input on important decisions that affect the teaching and learning.	3.52	0.53
I will be able to develop meaningful relationships with members of my school team that allow me to appreciate how their personal needs affect their professional lives.	4.49	0.54
I will be able to acknowledge my school's failures and reframe them as opportunities for growth.	4.49	0.52
I will be able to foster shared beliefs and a sense of community and cooperation among faculty and staff.	3.52	0.53
My administrative training has prepared me to perform my job in a way that supports my ideals and beliefs about the purpose of school.	3.51	0.54
I am ready to create opportunities for all school personnel to develop leadership skills.	3.03	1.02
I am prepared to act with situational awareness; to be aware of concerns that might not be overtly stated use the information to address current and potential problems.	3.97	0.36
I am convinced that I will be able to lead a school to refine instructional practice to support student achievement.	2.99	0.29

Question 2: Are there significant differences in leadership readiness among participants attributed to their gender, and teaching experience?

Gender. A *t-test* analysis was used to compare if there were differences in leadership readiness among prospective school principals regarding to their gender. Results revealed in Table 5 that no differences among prospective school principals regarding to their gender.

Teaching experience. A *Three Way ANOVA* was used to compare if there were differences in leadership readiness among prospective school principals regarding to their teaching experience.

In Table 6, the results for the ANOVA indicated that leadership readiness as total and subscales of leadership readiness differ significantly according to their teaching experience; leadership readiness (Focus)

F (2, 184) = 107.439, p= .000, in subscale (magnitude) F (2, 184) = 97.534, p = .000, and in subscale (Purposeful Community) F (2, 184) = 68.608, p = .000) significantly differ according to their teaching experience.

Table 5. Means, Standard Deviation and t-test for leadership readiness among prospective school principals who participated in school management program regarding to their gender

Subscales	Gender	N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
Focus	Male	69	3.66	0.34	-.092	183	.927
	Female	116	3.66	0.34			
Magnitude	Male	69	3.39	0.33	.278	183	.781
	Female	116	3.37	0.32			
Purposeful Community	Male	69	3.68	0.05	.595	183	.552
	Female	116	3.68	0.04			
Leadership Readiness (Total)	Male	69	3.58	0.23	.154	183	.878
	Female	116	3.57	0.23			

Table 6. Three-Way ANOVA for Leadership readiness among prospective school principals by their teaching experience

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Focus	Between Groups	11.358	2	5.679	107.439	.000*
	Within Groups	9.620	182	0.053		
	Total	20.979	184			
magnitude	Between Groups	9.936	2	4.968	97.534	.000*
	Within Groups	9.271	182	0.051		
	Total	19.207	184			
Purposeful Community	Between Groups	.184	2	0.092	68.608	.000*
	Within Groups	.244	182	0.001		
	Total	.428	184			
Total	Between Groups	5.358	2	2.679	108.031	.000*
	Within Groups	4.513	182	0.025		
	Total	9.871	184			

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Scheffe post hoc test were conducted as follow-up test as shown in Table 7. The results in "*Focus* subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years of teaching experience, M=3.96) had significantly upper leadership readiness than both the (less 5 years, M=3.32) and (10 and more years, M= 3.69) of teaching experience.

The results of this analysis in "*Magnitude* subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years of teaching experience, M=3.65) had significantly upper leadership readiness in (magnitude) subscale than both the (less 5 years, M=3.06) and (10 and more years, M= 3.42) of teaching experience.

The results of this analysis in "*Purposeful Community* subscale" indicate that the (5-less 10 years, M=3.72) had significantly upper leadership readiness than both the (less 5 years) (M=3.62) and (10 and more years) (M= 3.64) of teaching experience.

The results of this analysis indicate that the (5-less 10 years) (M=3.77) had significantly upper leadership readiness in total scale than both the (less 5 years) (M=3.33) and (10 and more years) (M= 3.59) of teaching experience.

Table 7. Scheffe Multiple Comparisons for Leadership readiness among prospective school principals by their teaching experience

Dependent Variable	(I) experience	(J) experience	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.
focus	less 5	5-less 10	-.63495*	.04346	.000
		10 and more	-.36395*	.04105	.000
	5-less 10	less 5	.63495*	.04346	.000
		10 and more	.27100*	.04064	.000
	10 and more	less 5	.36395*	.04105	.000
		5-less 10	-.27100*	.04064	.000
magnitude	less 5	5-less 10	-.59097*	.04266	.000
		10 and more	-.36104*	.04030	.000
	5-less 10	less 5	.59097*	.04266	.000
		10 and more	.22993*	.03989	.000
	10 and more	less 5	.36104*	.04030	.000
		5-less 10	-.22993*	.03989	.000
Purposeful Community	less 5	5-less 10	-.08035*	.00692	.000
		10 and more	-.04932*	.00654	.000
	5-less 10	less 5	.08035*	.00692	.000
		10 and more	.03104*	.00647	.000
	10 and more	less 5	.04932*	.00654	.000
		5-less 10	-.03104*	.00647	.000
Total	less 5	5-less 10	-.43514*	.02976	.000
		10 and more	-.25762*	.02812	.000
	5-less 10	less 5	.43514*	.02976	.000
		10 and more	.17752*	.02783	.000
	10 and more	less 5	.25762*	.02812	.000
		5-less 10	-.17752*	.02783	.000

* The mean difference is significant at the .05 level.

Discussion

A survey instrument was developed and used to measure the perceptions of participants in school management program regarding their ability to successfully perform the responsibilities of effective school leaders. This study's purpose was not to measure the knowledge, skills, and dispositions of prospective leaders. It was designed to evaluate candidates' perceptions of their ability to succeed, and whether these beliefs were cultivated during their university coursework.

A great deal was learned from the analysis of data. Most notably, response items in the leadership readiness subscale were characterized by that participants tended to rate themselves in the higher portions of the scale. First, self-reported measures are frequently found to contain bias toward more positive responses, even when a survey is anonymous, such as this one was, people tend to rate their own capabilities higher than they might actually be. Researchers speculate that participants do this to create a positive image of themselves, the program that is being evaluated, or in an effort to provide the researchers with what they believe is the desired response.

It is also difficult to fully grasp the challenge of educational leadership until one has actually worked as a school leader. During administrative field work, participants are asked to complete tasks that simulate the responsibilities of a school leader, but their experiences cannot truly replicate the job they seek. There are reasons for this; although credentials candidates are usually responsible for classroom instruction and other adjunct duties, their field work involves them in only a few of the school leader's actual responsibilities. Field work tasks do prepare administrative credential candidates by developing an understanding of the types of responsibilities that they will take on, but they do not replicate the "overloaded circuits" that cause very capable individuals to underperform and consequently question their own abilities.

It is proposed that this finding demonstrates that the areas of responsibility for school leaders are interrelated and should not be considered in isolation. However, these data reinforce the practical reality that the responsibilities of a school leader are not so linear or discrete. As Hess & Kelly (2007) asserted that scholars, superintendents, and principals agree that the increasing demands of school leadership require better preparation, the work of a school leader is not performed as isolated actions, detached from each other. Educational leadership involves multiple tasks, dependent upon one another, happening simultaneously, while each affects the outcome of another. The data in this study support the proposition that leadership readiness is developed in sum, rather than in specific domains. Effective administrator preparation is essential to the future of public education.

The job of school leader has been transformed by extraordinary economic, demographic, technological, and global change. In one way or another, every person and all of our social institutions have been shaken by these sweeping changes, and the schools are no exception. Education has been turned into one of the most powerful engines driving our economy. To be competitive in a global marketplace, Jordan now requires a more educated population. To be employable in an information society, our children need more advanced skills and knowledge than they required in the past. The higher education institutions in Jordan tried to have responded to these realities by raising standards for school promotion and graduation, mandating student testing, and demanding school accountability.

In a rapidly changing environment, principals no longer serve primarily as supervisors. They are being called on to lead in the redesign of their schools and school systems. In an outcome-based and accountability driven era, principals have to lead their schools in the rethinking of goals, priorities, finances, staffing, curriculum, pedagogies, learning resources, assessment methods, technology, and use of time and space. They have to ensure the professional development those teachers and administrators need to be effective. They have to prepare parents and students for the new realities and provide them with the support necessary to succeed. They have to engage in continuous evaluation and school improvement, create a sense of community, and build morale in a time of transformation.

Recommendations

This finding is meaningful for field of school leadership; a more thorough investigation into the leadership readiness should include a wider sample of participants. This program should enhance the development of experiences that are currently underused, namely: program evaluation, data analysis, role play, panels with school leaders, and stress management techniques. The inclusion of these experiences would require a review of field work requirements, course assignments, and class activities.

The results of this study also elucidate a concern for the background of the faculty who teach educational leadership courses. Although this research did not identify the prior experiences of faculty, Levine (2005) found that only 6% of education administration faculty members have worked as school principals or superintendents. The success of a program designed to provide relevant and meaningful efficacy-building experiences would likely hinge on the instructor's abilities to comprehend the challenges associated with the responsibilities of school leadership. The development of activities in the areas of vicarious experiences and verbal persuasion would necessitate a practitioner's knowledge of the field. At its outset, this study identified the need to link the content of school management programs with the success of schools.

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