PRINCIPALS' PERCEIVED VALUE OF DATA AND PRINCIPALS' PERCEIVED COMPETENCY OF DATA USE IN A RURAL SCHOOL DIVISION

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Abstract

Over the last years, principals in schools have had to contend with numerous governmental regulations that change with each passing year. The change from instruction based on concepts to instruction based on standards to instruction based on student performance has created a need for principals to utilize data in ever-increasing forms. Both federal and state standards require schools and school divisions to look at subgroup data to determine if they are meeting the needs of all students based on student performance data. Principals are asked to compile, analyze, share, and extrapolate data to meet the more rigorous standards each year. This study examined principals' self-perceptions on their value and competency of data use. The study utilized the Torrence (2002) survey on principals' self-perceptions on data use to gather information on the self-perceptions of principals' value of data and self-perceptions on competency of using data. The study employed a mixed research approach by collecting both quantitative and qualitative data through the Torrence (2002) survey via Surveymonkey.com. Data was analyzed using descriptive and correlation analyses. The finding of the study indicated that principals in the designated school division believed that their level of competency correlated to the value they placed on data. The overwhelming majority of principals value data to help guide their individual schools; however, their level of competency in using data is limited to their experiences and level of professional development in using statistics and statistical programs. Time was the biggest inhibitor to principals' effective use and analysis of data within the school division.