

K-12 Public School Superintendent Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Practices

Secondary Education

Principals/Superintendents

TITLE K-12 Public School Superintendent Emotional Intelligence and Leadership Practices

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OBJECTIVE

Leadership is complex and demanding. The role of a public-school superintendent includes overseeing multiple district operations, working with a variety of stakeholders, and is viewed as the instructional leader of the school district. Given the importance of relationship development for superintendents with stakeholders, the current educator retention rate, and turnover rate for superintendents, there was a need to study the relationship between 28 superintendents' emotional intelligence in the workplace and its relationship to Kouzes and Posner's (2017) leadership practices. This study sought to do just this and examined the relationship between emotional intelligence in the workplace and leadership practices in Indiana public school superintendents.

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study utilized a survey design to collect data from 61 Indiana K-12 public school superintendents to identify their use of Palmer and Stough's emotional intelligence (EI) factors (Palmer et al., 2009) and frequency of use of Kouzes and Posner's (2017) leadership practices in the workplace (LPI Self). Participants provided their age and years of experience as a superintendent and rated their use of emotional intelligence and leadership practices in the workplace. The four EI factors with the highest whole group mean were emotional self-control, emotional reasoning, emotional self-awareness, and emotional awareness of others.

KEY FINDINGS

The top two leadership practices used by Indiana K-12 public school superintendents were enable others to act with a mean of 53.90 ($SD = 3.96$) and model the way with a mean of 52.84 ($SD = 3.96$). Research questions were answered using a simultaneous multiple regression analysis. There was no statistically significant relationship between age and years of experience

as a superintendent with either EI or use of leadership practices in the workplace. The linear combination of Palmer and Stough's seven factors of EI was a statistically significant predictor ($p < 0.001$) of the composite score of Kouzes and Posner's leadership practices, with emotional reasoning being a significant predictor ($t = 3.40, p = 0.001$). The results of this study reinforce the relationship between the use of EI and leadership practices in the workplace and add to the body of research regarding EI and leadership practices in education.