
THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

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TITLE Transformational Leadership Practices of New York State Charter School Principals

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to investigate transformational leadership practices of New York State charter school principals.

METHODOLOGY

The study population included all public charter school principals in New York State during the school year 2004-05 (N = 61). The responding sample included 48 principals (response rate = 79%), and of these 25 were female (57%), and 23 were Caucasian (52%). All were college graduates (with 91% holding at least a master's or specialist's degree), half were the founding principal of the school, most (59%) had previous experience as a school principal, and most (63%) reported working 60 hours per week or more. Participants completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and provided demographic information.

KEY FINDINGS

The most frequently practiced leadership behavior was Enabling, followed by Modeling, Inspiring, Encouraging and Challenging. The leadership practices of New York State charter school principals were in the moderate to high categories when compared to the Kouzes Posner normative database, with the greatest gap for Inspiring a Shared Vision. No statistically significant relationships were found between the five leadership practices and the demographic variables of gender, age, ethnicity and the level of education of the principals. No significant relationships were found between the leadership practices and founding principal status of the school, years of experience in their current position or number of reported work hours per week devoted to the job. Similarly no relationship was found between the leadership practices and prior experience as a school principal except for Inspiring (positive).