

TITLE A Study of Leadership Behavior as Perceived by Principals, Teachers, and School Personnel in a Georgia School District

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to explore the self-ratings of perceptions of principals' leadership behaviors compared with observers' perceptions of principals' leadership behaviors within the actual school setting.

METHODOLOGY

A convenience sample of school personnel in a large Georgia school district were invited to participate and 20 principals (57% response rate) completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, and had 103 of their staff (including teachers, counselors, coaches, paraprofessionals, custodians, and bus drivers) complete the LPI-Observer. Of the principal participants, eight were at the elementary level, and six each were at the middle and high school levels. Eight school personnel participated in a focus group discussion. The typical respondent was female (77%), African-American (55%), between the ages of 40-59 (59%), with a post-baccalaureate degree or certification (63%), and with at least six years of work experience in education (82%).

KEY FINDINGS

The frequency scores of principals were higher on all five leadership practices than those reported by their constituents, and this reached statistical significance for Model, Challenge, Enable, and Encourage. For principals the most frequently used leadership practices were Enable and Model, followed by Encourage, Challenge and Inspire. From the perspective of constituents, the most frequently used leadership practice was also Enable, followed by Encourage and Model, then Inspire and Challenge.

The qualitative portion of the study "allowed the researcher to obtain confirmation that five tenets of leadership themes emerged from the discussion with a school personnel focus group. The survey findings and the focus group discussion reflected consistent results centered on the thought that Kouzes and Posner's (2003) five tenets of leadership behaviors are crucial in leadership behaviors based on self-ratings by principals and ratings of school personnel regarding identified leadership behaviors" (p. 137).