

TITLE A Correlational Study of Principal Perceived Leadership Effectiveness and Teacher-Principal Trust

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to investigate the correlation between effective principal leadership practices and teacher-principal trust.

METHODOLOGY

The sample involved 17 elementary school principals (13 females) in California and seven in Texas (six females). Each principal completed the Leadership Practices Inventory. Seventy-nine percent of the principals, as well as the teachers, were women. The typical principal was Caucasian (63%), between the ages of 45-54 years of age (46%). Trust was measured using the Omnibus T-Scale (Hoy & Tschannen-Moran, 1999), completed by 383 teachers. Six principals participated in interviews about these relationships, and each had two teachers complete the Observer form of the LPI.

KEY FINDINGS

The correlation between overall average principal leadership practices score and teacher-principal trust was not significant; nor was there a significant correlation between trust and any of the five leadership practices. Furthermore, none of the demographic factors (e.g., principal's age, gender, ethnicity, years of service at the present campus, years as an administrator, or geographical location) significantly influenced the relationship between leadership and trust.

The interview data revealed that the three principals with high trust scores had the highest leadership scores, while the three principals with low-to-average leadership practice indicators demonstrated lower trust scores. The interviews also showed that elements of Model, Inspire, Enable and Encourage aligned with teacher-principal trust, because these were more evident in schools with high teacher-principal trust. Challenge did not show a relationship with teacher-principal trust through the qualitative analysis. The interviews further showed that there was no relationship between demographics and teacher-principal trust.

The researcher concludes that the "qualitative analysis suggested effective leadership promotes teacher-principal trust" (p. 79). He also notes that: "Principals with high trust and high leadership skills verbalized their total leadership abilities, while principals with low trust tended to be less effective in verbalizing their abilities to describe their leadership/trust action indicators" (p. 88).