

**TITLE** The Relationship Between High School Teacher Perceived Principal Leadership Practices and Teacher Morale Levels

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**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between high school teachers' morale and their perceptions of the leadership practices of their principal.

### **METHODOLOGY**

Two high schools, from two separate school districts in one county in the northwestern area of South Carolina, with similar demographics (ethnicity, gender and years of experience), participated in the study. The typical teacher was Caucasian, female, with less than 10 years of experience, between the ages of 27-46 years old. Responses from 112 teachers (48% response rate) who completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (Observer) and using the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (Bentley & Rempel, 1972) to measure morale were included in the study. Internal reliability coefficients for the LPI in this study were: .92 Model, .93 Inspire, .94 Challenge, .93 Enable, and .95 Encourage.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

The most frequently used leadership practice was Enable, followed by Encourage, Model, Inspire and Challenge. Results indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between the teachers' perceived leadership practices of their high school principal and their morale. Multiple regression analysis showed that the leadership practices accounted for 29.2 percent of the variance in levels of teacher morale (because of problems with multicollinearity the leadership practice of Model was not included in this analysis). However, when considered individually, none of these four leadership practices accounted for statistically significant amounts of explained variance in teacher morale.

The author concludes that "educational leaders should consider training principals in Kouzes and Posners's (2002) leadership practices, which would enable principals to lead their schools to higher levels of teacher morale by teaching them how to reduce the stressors that accompany the occupation of teaching. Since the combination of four of the five principal leadership practices were found to be related to teacher morale, those practices should be addressed collectively during professional development to improve fundamental relationships between principals and teachers. These training programs would implement the leadership practices of Transformational Leadership Theory and instruct principals in leadership practices that influence teacher morale" (pp. 93-94).