



**TITLE** Transformational Principal Leadership and Teacher Morale

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Unpublished doctoral dissertation: September 2013

**OBJECTIVE** The purpose of this study was to gather data about principal leadership style and its impact on teacher morale.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The participants in the study worked at a middle school that has been recognized as exemplary, both in South Carolina and beyond. This rural school is in upstate South Carolina and contains approximately 650 students in Grades 6 through 8. Thirty-two individuals comprised the faculty of this study school. The study sample included seven teachers who had taught at the participating middle school for at least one year prior to the study. Personal interviews and a focus group were used to gather data. Eighteen questions from the Encourage the Heart scale of the Leadership Practices Inventory and the Teacher Rapport theme from the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (Bentley & Rempel, 1972) guided the interviews and analytical framework.

### **KEY FINDINGS**

“The findings in this study can benefit individuals enrolled in leadership development programs in colleges and universities by making these students aware of the impact of transformational leadership styles in a school environment. Faculty, staff, students, parents, and all stakeholders in the learning environment will benefit by having a school leader who practices effective transformational leadership behaviors. Identifying those actions, behaviors, practices, and characteristics that best exemplify an effective leader can provide the background knowledge necessary to support, develop, and assist both current and future school leaders” (pp. 79-80).

The author concludes:

Based on my findings, I recommend a number of actions involving multiple stakeholders in education. The purpose of these actions is to increase the

awareness of the importance of principal leadership styles and teacher morale in school climate. Educational leaders should consider training principals in Kouzes and Posner's (2002a) leadership practices. This training will enable school administrators to better lead their faculty to higher levels of morale, thereby improving the school climate. Furthermore, school districts should implement professional development for school administrators to improve the relationship between principals and teachers. Additionally, college training programs should include the implementation of the transformational leadership theory to instruct future principals in leadership practices that will impact teacher morale (p. 80).

It is imperative that school administrators are proficient and knowledgeable in leadership styles that will meet the challenges presented in their schools. Transformational leadership theory supports teacher confidence and empowerment. Improved by transformational leadership, the school community creates an alliance with administration, thus improving the school community. In light of this positive relationship, school districts and university-level administrator preparation programs need to incorporate the habits of transformational leaders in their training programs. The implementation of transformational leadership by school administrators may create a more positive school environment and thus increase teacher morale (p. 86).