

TITLE The Effect of a District-Sponsored Principal Leadership Training Program on Perceived Principal Leadership Behaviors.

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to examine the perceived leadership behaviors of principals who did complete a district-sponsored principal leadership training program, and principals who did not.

METHODOLOGY

A convenience sample of local school principals and teachers were asked to participate in this research. The sample selected from all 130 elementary, middle, and high schools (grades K-12), and included 105 principals (81% response rate). Fifty-four were graduates of the District-Sponsored Principal Leadership Training Program and 51 were principals who had not participated. Each completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and asked teachers at their school to complete the LPI-Observer. There were 1,924 Teachers associated with graduates of the training program who completed the LPI-Observer, and 1,722 teachers of non-graduates who completed the LPI-O.

KEY FINDINGS

While the frequency scores of program graduates were higher on Model, Enable, and Encourage, there were no statistically significant differences on any of the five leadership practices based on whether principals had or had not graduated from the district-sponsored principal leadership program. However, a somewhat different, and mixed, picture emerges from the perspective of their constituents (teachers). Frequency scores as reported on the LPI-O showed that teachers reported that the principals who had participated in the leadership training program were viewed as engaging significantly more in Enabling and Encouraging, while their counterparts who had not graduated or participated in the same program were seen as engaging more frequently in Inspire and Challenge.

The author concludes:

In contrast, participation in the district-sponsored principal leadership training program had an effect on teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership behaviors. Results of teachers' perceptions of their principal's leadership behaviors were statistically significant across teacher respondents who were led by leadership training graduates and non-graduates. LPI Observer-Survey responses within this present study suggested that teachers perceive when they are being led effectively and when they are not. Principals who did participate in the leadership training program exhibit effective leadership behaviors, however, this study would suggest that effective leadership behaviors are

prevalent in all principals based on individual experiences personally and professionally. Notably, this finding suggests that teachers, who are led by program-trained principals, responded in such a way because of the positive effect of the district-sponsored principal leadership training program. Since any differentiation in leadership construct means in this current study occurred in the teachers' perceptions of their principals, it is conceivable that followers have a more discerning and accurate perception of leadership behaviors. These findings indicate that the district-sponsored principal leadership training program most likely contributed to the perceived leadership behaviors of principals in the district of study. As a result, the researcher strongly supports the continuance of the district-sponsored principal leadership training program to improve the leadership development of aspiring principals in the district of study (pp. 138-139).