

TITLE A Qualitative Study on Educational Leadership Styles and Teacher Morale

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of the study was to determine the leadership styles, traits, and other factors that school personnel perceived as contributions to heightened morale.

METHODOLOGY

The participants for this study consisted of 77 teachers and 18 paraprofessionals from a small K-8 school district (with eight schools) in the southeastern United States, who completed the Leadership Practices Inventory (Observer) and the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire (Bentley and Rempel, 1980).

KEY FINDINGS

The author summarized the “results gathered from the Leadership Practices Inventory, and the researcher theorized (pp. 116-117):

- 1) Effective administrators “modeled the way” by being professional, punctual, and prepared. These leaders worked diligently to build positive relationships with those they led, and in turn, were successful at heightening morale.
- 2) Operative school leaders “inspired a shared vision” by encouraging others through weekly memos, newsletters, and regular communication. These leaders attentively worked to ensure those they led were inspired; consequently, morale was heightened.
- 3) Effectual administrators “challenged the process” by maintaining high expectations for themselves as well as for those they led. These leaders did not shy away from an opportunity to gain expertise, and their contagious desire for continuous learning increased morale.
- 4) By being supportive and encouraging, successful school leaders “enabled others to act.” These leaders shared relevant resources, encouraged continuous learning, and their reassurance heightened morale.
- 5) Exemplary school leaders “encouraged the heart” by publicly praising people and regularly recognizing accomplishments. These leaders went above and beyond by sending personalized notes and through these positive interactions, they increased morale.