

# **Middle Tennessee Special Education Teachers' Job Satisfaction Opinions and Leadership Perceptions**

Education

Teachers

**TITLE** Middle Tennessee Special Education Teachers' Job Satisfaction Opinions and Leadership Perceptions

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## **OBJECTIVE**

The United States has endured a shortage of special education teachers for decades. Exceptional educators' job-related stress is a factor that leads to departures from their posts or career, resulting in vacant positions. This research study considered whether exemplary leadership practices impact teachers' job satisfaction and morale, potentially affecting retention.

## **METHODOLOGY**

The quantitative analysis sought to determine if any correlations exist between the five leadership best practices identified by Kouzes and Posner (2017) (LPI 360) and Middle Tennessee special educators' overall morale, as measured by the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire Bentley and Rempel (1980). Additionally, the study examined whether years of experience or caseload size correlated to job satisfaction/morale. The study's null hypotheses were that no correlations existed between leadership best practices, years of experience, or caseload size compared to morale.

## **KEY FINDINGS**

Using Spearman's correlation analyses, the study revealed a strong positive correlation between exemplary leadership practices and overall morale. The study found a statistically significant, small strength of correlation between years of experience and Middle Tennessee special education teachers' job satisfaction and morale. The study found no correlation between caseload size and special educators' job satisfaction and morale. The study's findings suggest that administrators who work with special education teachers should consider strengthening and employing the five exemplary leadership practices to improve special education teachers' morale and retention.