

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER PERCEIVED  
PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP PRACTICES AND TEACHER MORALE LEVELS

by

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Liberty University

A Dissertation Presented in Partial Fulfillment

Of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education

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## ABSTRACT

This quantitative study examined the relationship between five teacher perceived leadership practices of high school principals and the morale levels of the teachers in their schools. Two high schools (grades 10-12) in the upstate of South Carolina participated in the study. One hundred twelve high school teachers were surveyed using the Leadership Practices Inventory to collect information about five teacher perceived principal leadership practices, and the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire to collect information about teacher morale levels. Multiple linear regression analysis was used to measure the relationship between the five teacher perceived leadership practices and teacher morale levels. One of the five predictor variables, model the way was excluded due to high zero-order correlations with the rest of the predictors. The statistical analysis provided a basis to support the assertion that the four teacher perceived leadership practices (i.e., challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart, and inspire a shared vision) were related to teacher morale to a significant degree. However, the four teacher perceived leadership practices collectively accounted for only a modest portion of the variance in teacher morale levels. None of the four individual leadership practices was a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale when all other variables were controlled. The results imply that principals' leadership practices make a difference in teacher morale. Suggested integration of leadership practices into administrative training and recommendations for future research are also addressed.

## **Dedication**

I thank my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, Who has blessed me with this opportunity, and empowered me throughout the arduous process to its completion. It is by His grace I can say it is done. Praise the Lord!

I would like to also thank my devoted husband for the support and encouragement he has shown and given me throughout the years I have been pursuing my education and career. He has been the spiritual leader of our family, uplifting me in prayer, and has been a wonderful and loving father to our two daughters. I feel blessed to have a loving husband to send me out each day with a prayer and an encouraging word, and then receive me back each day with open arms. I would be remiss not to mention my two Spirit-filled daughters who gave up time with their mother to allow her to follow her dreams. Only my family knows the stress, pressure, and endless energy it took to finish this project. I am so proud of my family, and I could not have done this without their support.

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## Table of Contents

ABSTRACT.....	ii
Dedication.....	iii
Acknowledgements.....	iv
Table of Contents.....	v
List of Tables.....	ix
List of Figures.....	x
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY.....	1
Background.....	1
Problem Statement.....	6
Purpose Statement.....	6
Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Hypotheses in Null Form.....	7
Research Design.....	9
Identification of Variables.....	11
Assumptions.....	13
CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	14
Introduction.....	14
Theoretical Framework.....	14
Transformational Leadership Theory.....	14
Transactional Leadership Theory.....	17
Path/Goal Theory.....	18
Review of the Literature.....	20
The Role of Principal Leadership.....	20

Instructional Leadership.....	26
Impact of Reform Programs.....	28
Implications for Teacher Morale.....	30
Teacher Participation.....	32
Retention of an Exceptional Teaching Force .....	34
Summary of Literature Review.....	40
<b>CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY .....</b>	<b>44</b>
Introduction.....	44
Design of the Study.....	44
Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Hypotheses in Null Form.....	45
Participants and Setting.....	47
Instrumentation .....	48
The PTO Survey.....	49
The LPI Survey .....	50
Procedures.....	51
Data Analysis .....	54
Summary of Methodology .....	55
<b>CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS .....</b>	<b>57</b>
Descriptive Statistics.....	60
Assumption Testing .....	61
Univariate Outliers .....	61
Normality and Multivariate Outliers.....	62
Linearity .....	64
Homoscedasticity of the Variance of the Residuals.....	65

Multicollinearity.....	67
Results from Multiple Linear Regression.....	69
Hypothesis One.....	69
Hypothesis Two.....	70
Hypothesis Three.....	70
Hypothesis Four.....	71
Hypothesis Five.....	72
Hypothesis Six.....	72
Summary of Results and Findings.....	73
CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION.....	75
Statement of the Purpose.....	75
Summary of the Findings.....	78
Discussion of the Findings in Light of the Relevant Literature.....	79
Hypothesis One.....	80
Hypothesis Two.....	81
Hypothesis Three.....	83
Hypothesis Four.....	84
Hypothesis Five.....	86
Hypothesis Six.....	87
Study Implications, Limitations, Delimitations, and Recommendations.....	89
Theoretical Implications.....	89
Limitations.....	90
Delimitations.....	91
Recommendations for Future Research.....	91



Practical Recommendations .....	92
Conclusion .....	93
REFERENCES .....	95
Appendix A.....	103
Appendix B.....	111
Appendix C.....	113
Appendix D.....	118

## **List of Tables**

Table 1: LPI Category Questions.....	51
Table 2: Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices.....	61
Table 3: Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices after deletion of outliers.....	67
Table 4: Zero-order correlations between study variables.....	68
Table 5: Collinearity Statistics for Morale with Leadership Practices.....	69
Table 6: Contributions of Predictor Variables (N=112).....	73

## List of Figures

Figure 1: Normal probability plot of regression standardized residuals with PTO as a dependent variable.....	63
Figure 2: Scatterplots of the relationships between all pairs of variables.....	65
Figure 3: Scatterplots of the relationships between all pairs of variables.....	66

## **CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY**

### **Background**

One of the foremost concerns in America today is how to improve education (Leech & Fulton, 2008). The last two decades have centered on restructuring and reforming the foundation of education and improving educational productivity. The primary focus of research during this time was to show positive influences on student achievement obtained through strong leadership, a positive school climate, and high teacher morale (Kelley, Thornton, & Daugherty, 2005; Leech & Fulton, 2008). The role of the principal, which formerly was simply management of the school and its employees, has drastically evolved into the present role of effectively leading the school (Rowland, 2008). Research shows that teacher morale impacts student achievement and principal leadership influences teacher morale, therefore, there is a vital need for an examination of the leadership traits of effective principals (Dinham, 2007; Houchard, 2005; Margolis & Nagel, 2006).

Increased accountability has redirected school principals to focus on the performance of their school's teachers, examining issues teachers confront on a day-to-day basis, and assisting teachers in maintaining the focus on their students and instruction (Barlett, 2008; Kinsey, 2006). Building principals now must be able to assess and evaluate teacher perceptions of their style of leadership, and understand the possible contribution levels of their faculty, in order to implement reforms to improve student achievement (Kelley et al., 2005).

Researchers in the field of education have been approaching this accountability challenge by focusing on the impact of providing secondary schools with a healthy organizational structure (Korkmaz, 2007). Leadership has been identified as a pivotal element in educational reform, so educational administrators have been asked to examine the way they lead their schools (Dinham, 2007; Jones, 1997; Williams, 2000). The working environment, which the administrator has a large role in creating, makes an enormous difference (whether positive or negative) to teacher morale and helps determine whether the school will retain or lose quality teachers (Kinsey, 2006). Teacher morale is affected by multiple stressors: demands on time, lesson preparations, grading of student work, increased paperwork, meetings, contacting parents, ongoing training, mitigating student behavior and emotional needs, low pay, curricular issues, teaching load, poor school facilities, lack of community support, and lack of support from the school's administration (Kinsey, 2006; Rafferty, 2002). The shift to higher accountability adds to teacher pressures, and those increases in demands negatively impact teacher morale, leaving teachers feeling unappreciated, overworked, and not treated as professionals (Rowland, 2008).

Administrators have the task of staffing their schools with highly qualified teachers, requiring an understanding of what attracts and motivates such teachers to remain in their teaching positions year after year (Ahuja, 2007; Denton, 2009). Educational leadership has become the most important single determinant in creating an effective learning environment (Korkmaz, 2007). As the most influential educational leader in the school, the behavior of the building principal is inextricably linked to the

learning environment (Kelley et al., 2005; Korkmaz, 2007). The principal of a school sets the tone for the entire school, including the morale of the teachers and the overall level of professionalism within the school (Korkmaz, 2007; Williams, 2000).

The 28<sup>th</sup> annual Metlife Survey of the American Teacher, released in March 2012, revealed that teacher job satisfaction is at the lowest it has been in more than two decades. The last time teacher job satisfaction dropped this low was in 1989 (Markow & Pieters, 2012). Low morale has a detrimental effect on a teacher's professional skills, is associated with increases in teacher burnout, and increases the rate exodus of qualified teachers from the classroom (Margolis & Nagel, 2006). A recent estimate of teachers found that 33% chose to leave the classroom within the first three years of teaching, which is unacceptably high. The key factors for their departures were dissatisfaction with administration and lack of opportunity for professional growth (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2004). The increased teacher attrition numbers are forcing schools to use funds earmarked for school improvements on teacher recruitment and training. This trend will produce little long-term educational payoff if it continues (Darling-Hammond, 2003).

The exodus of the nation's public classroom teachers has been costly. The National Commission on Teaching and America's Future (NCTAF) estimated in 2007 that the national cost of teacher turnover was \$7.3 billion per year, increasing from the 2005 cost of \$4.9 billion per year. NCTAF's findings indicated a 50% increase in teacher attrition in the last 15 years. They also found that school leaders had the capability to reduce this attrition by transforming schools into genuine learning organizations. In

order to close the student achievement gap, leaders needed to first close the teaching quality gap caused by eliminating the constant need to rebuild teaching staff (NCTAF, 2007).

NCTAF's findings clearly supported the perception that teacher retention problems were out of control and school leadership could impact the downward spiral. NCTAF's results were staggering. In 1987, 175,000 teachers left American classrooms. By the turn of the century, the number had surged to 340,000 teachers who shut the doors of public education with no intent on returning, nearly doubling the number of teachers who left the profession in only two decades.

In 2008, the Center for Education Recruitment, Retention, and Advancement (CERRA) estimated a loss of approximately 28,500 teachers during the previous five years in South Carolina. The financial cost in teacher attrition was more than \$74.5 million, not including retirees. CERRA's report stated that the teachers' deciding factor for leaving a particular job was the environment in which they worked (CERRA, 2008). South Carolina had approximately 20,000 certified teachers who chose to no longer teach and left their classrooms, but still lived in the state. The South Carolina Department of Education enabled CERRA to survey this supply of potential teachers to find out what would entice them back into the classroom. Using the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (SECTQ) survey on working conditions, CERRA found that the number one thing that would entice them back into the classroom was supportive principal leadership (CERRA, 2008).

If teachers feel their input is not considered, if they feel unsupported, and if they

do not feel successful, their low morale and self-worth will inevitably lead to a decision to leave the profession (Kinsey, 2006). These negative feelings regarding the organizational environment remain until the principal begins to nurture a healthy school climate through positive interpersonal relationships among all members of the school (Rafferty, 2002; Williams, 2000). Although this last decade has witnessed an increase in people entering the teaching profession, the increase in student enrollment and teacher attrition makes it impossible to provide every classroom with a highly qualified teacher (Denton, 2009). Regardless of this fact, educational leaders are still being held accountable for the success of those in their charge because of the heightened concern with results (Bartlett, 2008).

The first step toward a solution to keeping qualified teachers in the classroom will be to identify the factors impacting teacher morale, both negative and positive (Rafferty, 2002). This study investigates the level of teacher morale and the relationship of teacher morale to the teacher perception of the leadership practices of the school. It also identifies the leadership practices with the greatest positive impact on teacher morale at the high school level. Teachers, the largest professional body in the school, and the group with the most contact with students, are demanding that educational leaders examine the factors affecting teacher morale (Rowland, 2008). Because teachers are a valuable human resource for schools, school leaders should make keeping effective teachers in the classroom a top priority (Darling-Hammond, 2003). This study fills that gap by examining the relationship between the specific principal leadership practices of transformational leadership and teacher morale at the high school level.



## **Problem Statement**

Kouzes and Posner (2002) stated, “Leadership is not all about personality; it’s about practice” (p. 13). Educational research in the past 20 years has overlooked the internal relationships within the school (Houchard, 2005). There is a lack of research focusing on high school principal leadership practices and teacher morale levels in America during the last five years. The studies that have been conducted have not been conclusive in confirming or denying a relationship between high school principal leadership practices and teacher morale (Ahuja, 2007; Leech & Fulton, 2008). Therefore, inquiry into how high school principal leadership practices influence high school teacher morale levels warranted study.

Markow and Pieters’s (2012) recent study revealed a new low in teacher morale levels in the United States; however, the study did not examine teacher perceptions of leadership practices that lead to decreased morale. Thus, there is also a need for research that examines teacher perceptions of high school principal leadership practices and their affect on teacher morale in order to begin to develop a model that positively impacts overall school effectiveness and school improvement (Krüger, Witziers, & Slegers, 2007). This study takes the first step towards that goal by examining the relationship between teacher perceptions of leadership practices and teacher morale.

## **Purpose Statement**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between five leadership practices and teacher morale in high school teachers in South Carolina. The predictor variables of interest were five teacher perceived principal leadership practices called

model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. The criterion variable was teacher morale level. The research method of this study was a quantitative analysis of data, which was the appropriate choice to investigate the questions posed by the researcher. Certified teachers from two high schools in the upstate of South Carolina were targeted to participate in this study.

It is crucial for educational leaders to understand and address the factors affecting teacher morale (Rowland, 2008). School systems that are committed to keeping and supporting effective teachers create a magnetic environment that attracts the most talented new teachers while it nurtures accomplished teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2003). The focus of this study was to evaluate the relationship between five specific leadership practices and teacher morale at the high school level in South Carolina.

### **Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Hypotheses in Null Form**

This study tested the following research hypotheses and evaluated the stated null hypotheses to determine if there was a relationship between teacher morale and five teacher perceived principal leadership practices at the high school level.

RQ1: Do the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score), collectively or individually, reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score)?

H1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score) will reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H<sub>0</sub>1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI score) will not reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H<sub>2</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>3</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>4</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>4: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>5</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>5: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>6</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>6: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

### **Research Design**

This research was a correlational study. A correlational study is straightforward, determining if there is a relationship, and the strength of the relationship, between variables in a single group of subjects (Ary et al., 2006). This correlational study was conducted to determine if a statistical relationship exists between high school teachers' perceptions of their principals' five leadership practices and high school teachers' morale. The two survey instruments used in this study were the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO), developed by Bentley and Rempel (1972), and the third edition of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), developed by Kouzes and Posner (2003). The five variables of interest were measurements of teachers' self-reported perceptions of the leadership practices of their principals from the LPI survey. These leadership practices are as follows: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. The PTO survey was used to measure total teacher morale. The two surveys were distributed to all certified teachers working at two high schools in South Carolina. The 2010 composition of the two high schools, according to the State of South Carolina Annual School Report Card reported High School 1 had 121 certified teachers and High School 2 had 129 certified teachers. For the purpose of this study, the target was to get as many of the 250 teachers to complete both surveys as possible.

The surveys were distributed following the Tailored Design Method (TDM), which was developed by Don Dillman (2000). Dillman's TDM boasts of "response rates of 68-92%, with an average of 74%" (p. 27). The methodology was designed to create trust, perceptions of reward, and to reduce the cost of participation by the respondent (Dillman, 2000). The surveys were delivered in sealed envelopes and collected over a

four week time period. The research hypotheses were evaluated for a relationship between one or more of the five LPI subscales and the PTO Total using standard multiple linear regression analysis.

### **Identification of Variables**

*Challenge the Process:* Challenge the process is the principal leadership practice of taking the initiative, being innovative, and taking risks toward improvement (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26). Challenge the process was one of the five predictor variables of the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI). Challenge the process was operationally defined in this study as the total score on Questions 3, 8, 13, 18, 23, and 28 on the LPI. The possible score range for this variable was 1-10, with four or less being considered a negative perception, and five or more being considered a positive perception.

*Enable Others to Act:* Enable others to act is the principal leadership practice of “fostering collaboration, trust, building relationships, and developing self-determination and competence in others” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26). Enable others to act was one of the five predictor variables of the LPI. Enable others to act was operationally defined in this study as the total score on Questions 4, 9, 14, 19, 24, and 29 on the LPI. The possible score range for this variable was 1-10, with four or less being considered a negative perception, and five or more being considered a positive perception.

*Encourage the Heart:* Encourage the heart is the principal leadership practice of “creating a community of recognition and celebration for individual excellence and accomplishments” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26). Encourage the heart was one of the five predictor variables of the LPI. Encourage the heart was operationally defined in this

study as the total score on Questions 5, 10, 15, 20, 25, and 30 on the LPI. The possible score range for this variable was 1-10, with four or less being considered a negative perception, and five or more being considered a positive perception.

*Inspire a Shared Vision:* Inspire a shared vision is the principal leadership practice of “involving others in an exciting and shared vision” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26).

Inspire a shared vision was one of the five predictor variables of the LPI. Inspire a shared vision was operationally defined in this study as the total score on Questions 2, 7, 12, 17, 22, and 278 on the LPI. The possible score range for this variable was 1-10, with four or less being considered a negative perception, and five or more being considered a positive perception.

*Model the Way:* Model the way is the principal leadership practice of “setting the example through action and speech of shared values” (Kouzes & Posner, 2007, p. 26).

model the way was one of the five predictor variables of the LPI. Model the way was operationally defined in this study as the total score on Questions 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, and 26 on the LPI. The possible score range for this variable was 1-10, with four or less being considered a negative perception, and five or more being considered a positive perception.

*Teacher Morale:* Teacher morale “is the numerical representation of the teachers’ job satisfaction as reported on the Purdue Teacher Opinionaire” (Rowland, 2008, p. 6). The Purdue Teacher Opinionaire (PTO) was the criterion variable in this study. The possible score range for this variable was 100-1000, with 499 or less being considered a negative morale level, and 500 or more being considered a positive morale level.

### **Assumptions**

1. It was assumed that all participants who responded to the PTO and LPI surveys were certified high school teachers within the selected high schools during the 2011-2012 school year.
2. It was assumed that all high school teachers who responded were responding of their own free will and had a desire to assist in evaluating the relationship between high school principal leadership practices and high school teacher morale.
3. It was assumed that all the high school teachers would respond honestly and thoughtfully to the survey questions.



## **CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

### **Introduction**

The purpose of this study was to investigate if a statistically significant correlation exists between teacher perceived high school principal leadership practices and teacher morale levels. Certified teachers from two high schools in the upstate of South Carolina were targeted to participate in this study by taking two surveys: the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) to measure teacher morale levels and the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) to measure five teacher perceived principal leadership practices. The research method of this study was a quantitative analysis of data, which was the appropriate choice to investigate the questions posed in the study.

Chapter two consists of a review of related literature in the areas of principal leadership practices and teacher morale. The chapter is organized into three sections: Theoretical Framework, Review of the Literature, and a Summary of the Literature Review.

### **Theoretical Framework**

#### **Transformational Leadership Theory**

Leech and Fulton (2008) argued that in order to meet the need for increased involvement of employees and other stakeholders in decision making, today's school leaders must rely on applying results from current research focused on transformational and participatory leadership practices. Research shows the transformational leadership style to have the greatest positive effect on staff at every level. It results in increased job

satisfaction among teachers and could be the leadership style needed to raise job satisfaction to a higher level (Korkmaz, 2007; Rowland, 2008).

Burns (1978) originally applied Transformational Leadership Theory to the business world, but the principles were easily transferred to the field of education. Burn's theory evolved from Abraham Maslow's 1943 hierarchy of human needs. Transformational Leadership Theory contains elements of trait and behavioral theories, both espousing leadership with a higher purpose and creating positive changes in motivation, morale, and purpose. Participatory practices encourage higher levels of morality, motivation, and an ongoing relational process between leaders and followers (Burns, 1978). The goal is to have a collective purpose or vision, moving away from notions of short-term goals, and focusing on increasing higher order intrinsic needs. There are four basic components of transformational leadership: charismatic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personal attention. The charismatic component inspires others to follow and trust in their leaders. The inspirational component motivates participants to commit to a shared vision. The intellectual component stimulates participants, increasing creativity and innovation. The personal attention component focuses on fostering individualized attention (Burns, 1978).

Bass and Avolio (1990) proposed only three characteristics of the transformational leader: charismatic leadership, intellectual stimulation, and individual consideration. The inspirational component proposed by Burns (1978) was changed into the charismatic influence component, and is defined as the ability of leaders to role model practices, purposely create a vision, elevate the goals of the organization, and inspire

enthusiasm through the theoretical dimensions of idealized influence and inspirational motivation. The intellectual stimulation component refers to the extent that leaders' behavior increases the followers' understanding of problems they face, and then shows them how to contrast those problems with the leaders' vision of the future. The individual consideration component is the treatment leaders extend to followers, as individuals, by providing effective coaching, individual advisement, and opportunities for professional growth and development (Bass & Avolio, 1990).

Choi (2006) defined charismatic leadership as the ability to use vision, empathy, and empowerment to affect the morale of their followers and how they view themselves, their coworkers, and their leaders. The effect is on the follower's desire for achievement and affiliation with the vision, thus creating job satisfaction and satisfaction with their leader. Choi suggested that leadership behaviors that stimulate the needs of followers, both individually and organizationally, generate positive outcomes. Having a vision creates a goal or outcome which motivates followers, making the charismatic leader more worthy of their allegiance. Communicating the vision is accomplished through persuasive communication and exemplary behavior by the leader, inspiring followers to disregard self-interest for the cause of the collective goal. Empathy is the ability to understand another person's perspective, which in turn generates trust, respect, and support for each other, fostering consideration of others when making decisions to meet objectives. The use of empowerment increases self-efficacy by identifying and removing negative elements that create feelings of powerlessness. Empowered followers feel capable and confident (Choi, 2006).

Randolph-Robinson (2007) explored the hypotheses that transformational leadership practices empower teachers and positively impact the morale of teachers. Randolph-Robinson surveyed teachers of five elementary schools looking for a significant relationship between teachers' perceived principal leadership behavior and teachers' morale. Her results reflected overall teacher dissatisfaction with the behavior of the principal, a lack of support by the principal, and a feeling of disconnectedness with the principal. Randolph-Robinson's results did not determine that any particular principal leadership behavior was the sole cause of low teacher morale. She found many behaviors that are necessities for leaders, but two transformational leadership practices were at the forefront of her findings: empowering others and sharing leadership. The study found a positive relationship between leadership behavior and teacher morale.

Rowland (2008) surveyed teachers from seven middle schools in Georgia to determine if there was a significant correlation between teacher morale and the leadership practices of their principals. His findings supported Transformational Leadership Theory. Rowland surveyed the total morale of the teachers and the teachers' perceptions of the leadership style of their principals and found a significant correlation. The three strongest relationships between teacher morale and teacher perceptions of leadership style were the leadership abilities inspire a shared vision, Encourage the heart of the teacher, and enable others to act. The category of Enabling Others to Act had the strongest correlation with teacher morale.

### **Transactional Leadership Theory**

Nguni, Slegers, and Denessen (2006) conducted a study in Tanzania attempting to confirm the universality of the transformational and transactional paradigm across different nations and societies. They examined the two leadership practices and their effects on teacher job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and organizational citizenship behaviors. They found that the two leadership practices had a modest influence on the three dimensions that were proposed by Bass and Avolio (1990), with charismatic leadership having the greatest influence. Intellectual stimulation had a weak influence and individual consideration produced no significant influence. The results suggested both noneducational and educational settings would benefit from transformational leadership behavior due to the stronger positive influence of the three variables. Transactional leadership behaviors had no significant and weak aggregate effects.

Korkmaz (2007) studied leadership styles and organizational health in Ankara, Turkey. This quantitative study found that transformational leadership had a profound impact on the teachers' job satisfaction, promoting organizational health and relationships. Teachers felt personal development, happiness in their work, establishment of positive relationships with colleagues and superiors, and taking part in decision making resulted in higher satisfaction in their careers and higher morale levels. Consequently, the study found a negative relationship between transactional leadership and the organizational health of the school.

### **Path/Goal Theory**

Path/Goal Theory was one of several theories espoused by situational theorists. Defining Path/Goal theory, Burns (2000) determined job satisfaction was measured by the amount of leader direction and the structure of the task. Leaders encourage and support followers in achieving their goals. Leaders make the path clear and easy by removing roadblocks. W. Edwards Deming's "Fourteen Points For Management" (as cited in Jossey-Bass, 2000) included several of the elements of the Path/Goal Theory: instituting training on the job, instituting leadership, driving out fear, breaking down barriers between departments, doing away with adversarial relationships, removing barriers robbing people of their right to pride of workmanship, and instituting programs of education and for self-improvement (p. 27). Path-Goal Theory surmises that a positive relationship between the leader and the led is essential in creating and stimulating a positive environment within any organization, including the school.

Schriesheim, Castro, Zhou, and DeChurch (2006) investigated Path/Goal and Transformational Leadership Theory at the individual level of analysis. The findings supported theoretical positions of charismatic or transformational leadership, but found little to support the effectiveness of Path/Goal Theory. Only one strand of the Path/Goal Theory, called Proposition 24, was substantiated, and it involved transformational leadership. Transformational leadership was dependent upon a leader's display of contingent extrinsic reward behavior at the individual level through a shared vision, role modeling, setting and accepting group goals, and setting high levels of expectations. The "individual level" was defined as the relationship between the leader and the follower,

and the follower's perception of the leader's behavior, not the group's or work unit's perception.

## **Review of the Literature**

### **The Role of Principal Leadership**

The single most important determinant of the learning environment is the leadership of the principal (Kelley et al., 2005). An examination into the research reveals that the United States has been focusing on improving the nation's educational system. The dissatisfaction with the current educational system is shared by educators, parents, and business leaders, each for different reasons. Parents feel the schools have failed to address the needs of today's students, and business leaders are frustrated at having to pay the expense to retrain high school graduates in basic literacy skills in order for them to learn job-specific skills. Educational reform has become the means by which the demands for educational productivity have been met during the past two decades (Leech & Fulton, 2008).

To accomplish this educational reform, the definition of "good" school leadership must first be examined. Stephen Dinham (2007) reported that the principal should be open to opportunity, looking outward rather than inward, using discretionary powers, and bending the rules when the occasion arises. These successful, risk-taking educational leaders derive benefit from being at the forefront of school change. Exceptional leaders recognize students and staff, reinforce vision, facilitate continuous improvement, and provide for the building facilities. Relationships are fundamental, so support of professional development and teacher inclusion in decision making becomes crucial.

Dinham advised concentrating solely on the committed staff because a principal cannot make everyone happy, and if a teacher with a negative attitude leaves, it should be considered as a positive event for the school. Bolin (1989) agreed, and expanded the list to include teachers with low ability and teachers suffering from burnout. According to Bolin, teachers who are not working toward a shared vision should either get onboard or find another school. He also indicated that it only takes a little negativity from a teacher with low morale to infect the progress made by the school.

However, power is not one of the essential elements of successful leadership, according to Kouzes and Posner (2007), who defined authentic leadership as being “founded on trust, and the more people trusted their leaders, and each other, the more they took risks, made changes, and kept organizations and movements alive” (p. 21). Kouzes and Posner proposed that teachers learn to take risks and develop their own leadership skills through the development of relational trust created and fostered by authentic leaders. One of the key components of authentic leadership is teacher inclusion. A team mentality and vested ownership are important links to a positive school culture. Autocratic leadership creates feelings by teachers of being unappreciated and dependent upon administration for all decision making. In their study of Transformational Leadership Theory, Kouzes and Posner, listed and described the five principles of an exemplary leader:

1. *Modeling the Way*: clarifying values, affirming shared ideals, and setting an example



2. *Inspiring a Shared Vision*: envisioning the future and enlisting others to share their aspirations
3. *Challenging the Process*: looking outward, seizing the initiative, experimenting, and taking risks
4. *Enabling Others to Act*: fostering collaboration, building trust, facilitating relationships, strengthening others, and developing competence
5. *Encouraging the Heart*: recognizing contributions, showing appreciation, celebrating victories, and creating a spirit of community.

Sharma (2011) conducted a quantitative study in Malaysia, India, and Thailand. She surveyed over 100 high school teachers in each of the countries, primarily seeking a relationship between leadership practices and student achievement. In regards to the application of this research to this study, one aspect of her study looked at the teachers' perspective of the leadership practices of the school principal. The results were contradictory. There was a statistically negative correlation in Thailand and statistically positive correlations in both India and Malaysia. Teacher morale was high in all three countries, suggesting that the morale of teachers in Thailand was not influenced by the leadership practices of their principals, but the morale of the teacher in both Malaysia and India was influenced by the leadership practices of their principals.

Pan and Qin (2007) examined the relationship between organizational climate and teacher satisfaction in secondary schools in China, an authoritarian style atmosphere (citation needed). Their survey results revealed that 58.1% of the teachers were dissatisfied with school leadership. The Hunan study also revealed that 81.2% of the

teachers were dissatisfied with working conditions and 63.8% of the teachers were dissatisfied with their perceived opportunities for advancement. However, Pan and Qin stated that satisfaction with working conditions and opportunities for advancement would improve if the school leadership were less authoritarian. Their findings suggested the administrative factor was the key to teacher job satisfaction.

Quantitative research was conducted by Easley (2006) that came to contrary conclusions. He surveyed teachers in an attempt to examine teacher retention and the causes of teacher attrition. Results revealed teachers entered the teaching career with moral ideals: a love of working with students, a need to contribute to society, or a belief that a good education is essential for the success of America. These moral ideals greatly influenced the potential for teacher retention. Easley's results seemed to indicate the principal's leadership style had little influence on teacher retention since a principal cannot impact a teacher's moral ideals prior to entering the profession of teaching. Easley found a relationship did exist between a teacher's moral value of education and an environment of support and fulfillment for the teacher. Moral actualization was equated to teacher efficacy and the teacher's self-perception of their ability to teach and motivate their students. Easley's research built support for school principals to focus on the environment of the school and support of the teachers, which should result in increased retention of qualified teachers.

The business world has been researching the impact of leadership behavior on role stress characteristics and organizational commitment source. Dale and Fox (2008) sampled 200 fulltime employees of a manufacturing company in the Midwest. They

administered a survey containing measures of demographics, organizational commitment, role stress, leader consideration, and leaders initiating structure. Their findings and conclusions supported the notion that employees had higher organizational commitment when they perceived that their leaders were exhibiting a higher level of initiating structure, formalizing the work environment, and providing formal rules and procedures to follow. These factors caused the employee to internalize the values and goals of the organization. The organization was personified through the actions of the superior, and the employees perceived the organization and superior as having values similar with their own. The positive outcomes of organizational commitment were less absenteeism, less turnover, and greater productivity. Dale and Fox summarized their findings by stating that managers should provide structure, strive for employee involvement, and inspire workers by sharing in a common vision.

In an effort to define and evaluate leadership, the roles and duties must be examined, along with the traits and behaviors constituting effective leadership. Burns (2000) stated, “Knowledge of theory is crucial for those who desire to conduct leadership in a world that is in a constant state of change” (p.2). Theories of leadership that revolve around the relationship between principal leadership style and teacher morale should be examined. Some of these theories are Transformational Leadership Theory, Transactional Leadership Theory, and Path/Goal Theory. Following is a brief description of the theories, followed by an examination of leadership styles, the role of instructional leadership, and the impact of reform programs on teacher morale.

### **Leadership Styles**

Faced with differing circumstances in cultures and school environments, educational leaders must choose a leadership style that enables them to lead their schools to new levels of excellence in this era of high stress and rigid measures of accountability (Egley & Jones, 2005). There are many types of leadership styles: collaborative, participative, bureaucratic, charismatic, laissez-faire, benevolent despot, and autocratic.

Dunn and Brasco (2006) defined the different leadership styles as follows:

1. Collaborative leadership involves the staff in decision making.
2. Participative leadership works with the staff side-by-side.
3. Bureaucratic leadership follows rules and regulations.
4. Charismatic leadership uses any style, but the style is gone when he or she leaves the organization
5. Laissez-faire leadership allows staff members to determine direction.
6. Benevolent despot leadership gets results using charm, good will, and savoir faire.
7. Autocratic leaders possess all of the power. Surprisingly, some staff follow leaders that utilize this leadership style.

Dunn and Brasco (2006) supported collaborative leadership as fundamental to a positive school culture. Collaborative leaders involve and work side-by-side with their teachers and staff members. This form of leadership looks good on paper, but the principal concepts, according to Dunn and Brasco, are not being incorporated into current leadership practices. Dunn and Brasco found that 80% of supervisors choose the instructional program adopted by their school, a decidedly autocratic style. The most

negative effect of the autocratic leadership style is that teachers are not being invited into a collaborative relationship or involved in the decision making process of their schools.

### **Instructional Leadership**

Williams (2000) stated that successful school administrators are trusted to stay up-to-date with the latest experimental research and to assess the curriculum and the current levels of teacher morale. Williams' findings suggest low teacher morale manifests itself in weak instruction, affecting student performance, and has to be addressed by administration. Williams found administrators do not spend enough time in the classrooms, averaging only 9% of their time. Effective instructional leaders choose an instructional program and evaluate the program as an on-going process.

School principals have overwhelming responsibilities to meet in their schools; consequently, administrators are not able to invest enough time into curriculum improvement and teacher assessment, resulting in low student scores and the creation of school reform programs. The pressures from district offices over competition and high performance are being passed down to the teachers and students (Williams, 2000).

Ahuja (2007) supported the impact of effective instructional leadership by using a descriptive case study designed to investigate teachers' and instructional leaders' perceptions of the factors influencing commitment to school success. Her results indicated successful student achievement was due to strong instructional leadership and collective responsibility with the teachers. Six themes evolved: mission (goals and shared vision), empowerment, teamwork and capability development, flexibility and student-centered differentiated teaching, organizational learning (teachers teaching each

other), and fostering competency and relatedness. Ahuja's final analysis suggested the instructional leader could affect career aspirations, confidence, creativity, motivation, enthusiasm, security, expectations, sense of belonging, and willingness to excel. Collective efficacy could be attained through strong leadership and empowerment of teachers.

MacNeil, Prater, and Busch (2009) found that principals who supported the vision and climate of the school enhanced the learning of the students. However, the study suggested that different leaders behaving in their own leadership style could still achieve effective leadership results.

The Netherlands researchers, Küger et al (2007) produced contradictory findings. They conducted a path analysis to test and validate a causal model of educational leadership on student achievement. The results showed neither direct nor indirect effects. The findings contradicted other studies concerning the effectiveness and impact of school leadership on student outcomes; however, the results appeared to support the direct effect that school leaders have on the quality of the organization of the school and indirect effect that they have on the quality of the school culture. The quality of the school culture may indirectly affect student achievement because negative school leadership behavior negatively impacts teacher morale. Negative teacher morale would in turn negatively influence student results; therefore, the researchers suggested further research on these issues is needed. The results of this study, however, showed very weak effects of school leadership behavior on school culture. The exclusion of the transformational leadership perspective on leadership within this study may explain the weak effect of

educational leadership on school culture.

Additional research by Bartlett (2008) contradicts the role of the principal as an instructional leader who has an impact on student achievement. Bartlett attempted to determine if a correlation existed between specific leadership practices and student achievement. The results did not show a statistically significant relationship between either the amount of time principals spent in the classroom monitoring instruction or the frequency with which principals provided instructional feedback and teacher and student achievement, as measured by the Tennessee Gateway Tests. Bartlett's study revealed a lack of evidence to support a relationship between principal leadership practices and student achievement.

### **Impact of Reform Programs**

Houchard (2005) stated that schools, teachers, and principals are blamed for inadequacies within America's educational system today. Efforts to improve student test scores through No Child Left Behind (NCLB; 2001) have brought school reform to the educational forefront, yet many reform models are causing teacher morale to become a serious problem (Bartlett, 2008). One of the tasks of American leadership, according to Hoyle and Slater (2005), is to put love at the center of the educational vision. The pressures in the central office over competition and high performance are being passed down to the teachers. As administrators influence school policy, they need to take into consideration what should be at the heart of the reform movement in their school and the cost of reform in teacher attrition. The focus should be on developing good teachers into great teachers and giving them the support needed to remain in the classroom. Short,

Rinehart, and Eckley (1999) considered teacher empowerment and principal leadership style as the basic elements of school reform. Teacher empowerment includes opportunities in decision making, participation in curriculum development, and working in an environment that gives teachers autonomy and control in their classrooms. They found a significant relationship between teacher empowerment and principal leadership.

Egley and Jones (2005) examined leadership behavior and impact on teacher morale during a time of test-based accountability. Using a quantitative study, they surveyed elementary school teachers to examine teachers' perceptions of principal leadership behaviors. They found that teachers perceived their principals as having fairly high levels of positive leadership behaviors. They also found positive relationships between teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership behavior and teacher job satisfaction, school climate, and the accountability rating assigned to their school. This suggested a correlation between principal leadership style and teacher and student achievement. Interestingly, principals at the higher rated schools exhibited higher levels of professional and personal leadership behaviors.

Margolis and Nagel (2006) conducted a year-long qualitative study focusing on the relationship between educational reform and administrative leadership and the stress levels of teachers. The most powerful determinants of teacher stress, as determined by this study, are administrative relationships, cumulative stress, and the pace of change. Reform without positive human relationships undermines the intended reform. Margolis and Nagel's study reaffirmed the impact of the principal in creating an environment conducive to enhancing or harming teacher morale and productivity.



## **Implications for Teacher Morale**

Teachers ultimately make the difference in, and are the basis of, schooling (Houchard, 2005). Teacher morale, which affects every aspect of the educational system, has not been a significant consideration in research due to the lack of understanding of its importance and the lack of a clear definition. Traditionally, teachers have had a measure of autonomy within their classrooms while administrators and school boards made the larger decisions, such as hiring, scheduling, technology selections, budgeting, textbook selections, curriculum, and professional development. Over time, teachers felt disconnected by not being part of the decision making, and morale began to spiral downward. Teacher morale has eroded over time, so subtly that teachers and administrators may have not been aware of the decline. An examination of teacher morale revealed elements creating stress, anxiety, and thoughts of leaving the current school or occupation altogether (Houchard, 2005).

Houchard (2005) conducted research in seven schools within one school district to determine if a significant relationship existed between teacher morale and principal leadership practices. Houchard surveyed teachers concerning their morale and their perspective of their principal's leadership style, and also surveyed each school principal concerning their self-perceived forms of leadership practices. Houchard found a significant relationship between teachers' rapport with the principal and the principal's ability to enable others to act and encourage the teachers. There was also a significant relationship between teachers' satisfaction with teaching, teacher workload, and school facilities and services and the principal's ability to inspire a shared vision and enable

others to act.

Butt and Lance (2005) examined the effectiveness of an 18 month program in England called Transforming the School Workforce (TSW), part of the Pathfinder Project. The examination took place in the form of interviews, focus groups, questionnaires, observations, and two case studies. Butt and Lance examined eight of the 32 schools that participated in the project. All eight were secondary level schools. England's teachers regularly work outside the classroom: 96% worked in the evening (9.7 hours per week) and 90% worked on the weekends (3.25 hours). Butt and Lance found the TSW program to be unsuccessful because the amount of time committed to direct teaching, planning, preparation, and grading did not decrease significantly. Teachers reported working 51.3 - 52.8 hours per week. Teachers cited their reasons for the excessive workload as nonteaching tasks, too many government and school initiatives, and a lack of time for planning. All the teachers wanted more time, additional teachers, smaller class sizes, a reduction in bureaucracy, and an increase in administrative support. The results of the study revealed modest positive changes in job satisfaction and a small reduction in teacher workload.

Margolis and Nagel (2006) claimed that teacher attrition was directly related to a teacher's perception of lack of support from administration. The lack of support escalates teacher stress, increases the risk of physical and mental exhaustion, and results in higher rates of absenteeism. Higher rates of absenteeism puts poorly trained substitute teachers in the classroom and in charge of educating the student; therefore negatively affecting student achievement.

The most powerful mitigating factor of teacher stress is relationships developed and maintained within the work place. Acknowledgment of teacher perspectives and experiences helps bolster teacher resiliency. Korkmaz (2007) found that the level of job satisfaction either improved or decreased self-confidence, and loss of job satisfaction could cause an individual to exhibit aggressive tendencies toward other people. Korkmaz's study, conducted in Turkey, found the major factor resulting in loss of job satisfaction was the principal's administrative style toward their teaching staff. Successful administrators developed positive school climates by building upon teacher experience and expertise, encouraging teacher-led interaction in meetings and decision making, and praising and acknowledging the daily work of teachers. Teacher involvement is fundamental to increasing teacher morale (Korkmaz, 2007).

Yost (2008) found results contrary to Korkmaz's. Yost looked for data to explain self-efficacy. Her interviewing process shed light on the reasons three of the teachers left their schools during their first year of teaching. All three left due to perceived lack of administrative support. Her findings also suggested that a positive school environment was not enough to keep teachers from leaving, even with support from the principal and colleagues.

### **Teacher Participation**

Research found teacher participation had an effect on teacher morale. Jones (1997) found a positive correlation between teacher participation and morale. Organizational theorists, such as Herzberg, Ouchi, and others, suggested participatory decision making equates to higher staff morale and more effective school programming.

Rafferty (2002) cited the importance of the feeling of self-worth in a chosen career. Employees exhibit higher morale when they feel their contributions are welcomed and appreciated. Employee involvement in issues that impact them result in higher levels of dedication.

Leech and Fulton (2008) examined levels of high school teacher participation through shared decision making with their principals. The results indicated a weak correlation between principal leadership practices and the level of shared decision making in the secondary schools. The weakest relationship was between the leadership practice of challenging the process and the level of shared decision making in the development of policy. The teachers perceived their level of contributions in the area of policy development as higher when the principal exhibited greater risk-taking behavior. Again, this was a very weak result, and the researchers cautioned readers to consider the strength of the interpretation when making conclusions.

In 2004, the Southeast Center for Teaching Quality (SECTQ) surveyed teachers in South Carolina to examine teacher perception of, and participation in, their working environment. The results of the survey showed a strong correlation between leadership and teacher empowerment. Teachers with positive perceptions of their principal's leadership style felt empowered to make decisions within their classrooms and school work. The results of the South Carolina survey revealed 75% of teachers felt that they were trusted to make instructional decisions, 58% felt educational risk-taking was encouraged, and 66% sensed an atmosphere of trust and respect and indicated they felt comfortable discussing issues and concerns with administration. The survey revealed

critical areas negatively impacting school climate. Only 29% participated in the hiring of new teachers, 33% participated in school budget decisions, and approximately 50% indicated that they assisted with professional development days (SECTQ, 2005). The second most important factor (after teacher participation) in raising teacher morale is the retention of qualified and exemplary teachers.

### **Retention of an Exceptional Teaching Force**

Historically, the central cause of teacher turnover has been attributed to low levels of job satisfaction. According to W. Tillman and C. Tillman (2008), creating disgruntled employees, higher degrees of absenteeism, or leaving the organization entirely results in millions of dollars spent each year recruiting, relocating, and training new employees. They examined three factors that might influence job satisfaction: length of service, salary, and supervision. Their study found a positive correlation between supervision and teacher job satisfaction. W. Tillman and C. Tillman were not able to find theoretical or empirical evidence explaining the impact of supervision on job satisfaction.

Brown and Wynn (2009) conducted a qualitative study of twelve principals attempting to identify common leadership practices used to retain teachers. Brown and Wynn selected 12 schools (eight elementary schools, two middle schools, and two high schools) with low attrition and low transfer rates among beginning teachers. Using constant comparative analysis and coding, several common themes emerged: shared values, shared vision, an umbrella of support for the teachers, and building learning communities. The one common approach of the 12 principals was the use of the situational leadership practice. The analysis revealed lower attrition and transfer rates

due to administrative support for teachers, less student discipline problems, and higher levels of faculty decision making, influence, and autonomy. Brown and Wynn admitted their findings were not necessarily new and could not share a concrete formula for current school leaders or preparation of future school leaders. The interviewed principals did not feel they had all the answers, but all were open to an environment that encourages teachers to share ideas and methodologies.

Denton's (2009) qualitative study of leadership styles and practices influencing teacher satisfaction and retention found similar results when he interviewed 12 teachers, elementary through high school, in South Carolina. His study focused on teacher perceptions of principal leadership styles, and what principals could do to improve teacher job satisfaction and retention. Seven themes emerged from his study. He found that principals should:

1. encourage positive and respectful relationships between teachers and students.
2. treat teachers as professionals.
3. offer opportunities for professional growth.
4. provide positive feedback.
5. be accessible and listen to teachers.
6. establish high expectations for student achievement and teacher performance.
7. support teacher efforts.

Denton found the primary link to be between teachers' job satisfaction and teachers' relationship to their students. To create an atmosphere that fosters job satisfaction, principals must create a safe and secure school and encourage positive and respectful

teacher-student relationships. All 12 teachers cited the transformational leadership styles of Inspiring a Shared Vision and Enabling Others to Act as important to teacher job satisfaction.

Denton's interviews revealed that teacher turnover has a strong relationship to school performance. The schools with high turnover were forced to hire teachers who did not have the necessary certification and experience to be considered highly qualified by their state. The 12 teachers felt administrators should speak up on behalf of teachers to the state board of education, school districts, and school boards in regards to salary and community support as a means to increase the retention of highly qualified teachers.

Contradictory results were found by Rafferty (2002) in a quantitative study designed to specifically address teacher satisfaction and teacher morale. Her two-fold purpose was to determine the relationship, if any, between teacher morale and their decision to leave the current campus, and to determine if any relationship existed between teacher turnover and leadership practices. Rafferty's results showed no statistically significant relationship between teacher morale and teacher decision to leave the campus, or between teacher turnover and leadership practices. However, the study did show that principals had an impact on teacher morale.

Kelley et al. (2005) did a similar study in elementary schools that examined the relationship between the principals' leadership style, the teachers' perceptions of their principals' leadership style, and the teachers' perception of the school climate. The results suggested school climate was positively linked to teachers' perceptions of their principals' effectiveness for six climate scores: communication, decision making,

innovation, advocacy, evaluation, and staff development. However, their results revealed that the teachers had negative perceptions if they perceived that their principals were varying their leadership style. Those negative perceptions resulted in low ratings for school climate. Principal flexibility also had a negative correlation to school climate. Not surprising, principals' self-ratings were not related to either the teachers' ratings of school climate or teachers' perceptions of principals' leadership style in regards to effectiveness and flexibility. The data from this study indicated that the perceptions of leadership styles were not consistent between principals and teachers.

There are concerns about teacher retention worldwide. A Chinese study, conducted by Chen (2007) examined high school teacher job satisfaction and its relationship with attrition and work enthusiasm. There were 10 factors used to score teacher job satisfaction. All aspects were found to be important to the teachers. The factors were listed in order of significance, with the first having the strongest correlation to job satisfaction: income and welfare, social status, student quality, work stress, educational system and social environment, social acknowledgement, leadership and administration, work environment and conditions, work achievements, and collegial relationships. The high school teachers of China scored significantly high in all of the ten aspects of job satisfaction. Interestingly, promotion was not a factor in the high schools, and the higher the teachers' job satisfaction, the stronger their involvement within the organization. The overall conclusion from Chen's research was that teachers' intentions to remain with their current school were significantly correlated with job satisfaction.

Yost (2006) found teacher attrition could only be controlled by understanding the



problems associated with job satisfaction. Lack of time for genuine reflection closes the door to building personal coping skills. Teachers can only cope with dilemmas when self-efficacy is high. Yost attested that a mere increase in feelings of worth, or competence, is not enough. The focus needs to be on increasing competency and confidence through qualified induction programs and staff development, teaching management skills, and modeling critical reflection techniques.

Schlichte, Yssel, and Merbler (2005) collaborated in a case study to examine how the stress factors of five novice teachers contributed to teacher attrition. Using qualitative interviewing strategies, their findings revealed the importance of strong mentoring programs. The new teachers revealed the need to feel valued as a person, to have a reasonable teaching load, and to develop strategies to deal with feelings of being overwhelmed. The importance of mentoring should not be relegated to a single source of support, such as one mentor. Schlichte et al. said that administration needs to foster a collegial environment of support for new teachers in order to facilitate retention of a qualified teaching force.

Keeping the brightest individuals in the teaching profession is imperative, but the track record shows that they often become “fed up” and leave. Tye and O’Brien (2002) examined teacher morale and the consequences of the “pressure cooker” they work in. Teachers have limited time to meet stringent state standards, teach, and reinforce the content of their course. Teachers feel that they are trapped in their job with no possibility of moving up the career ladder, making their career joyless and without a future. In terms of job pressures, close behind high-stakes testing and increased paperwork are poor

student attitudes and lack of parental support. Teachers typically feel that administrators and district office personnel do not support them in confrontations with angry and hostile parents. This is an international phenomenon. Australia, England, and New Zealand have reported a significant loss of teacher job satisfaction and career motivation due to low teacher morale associated with the perception of the school leadership. Rafferty (2002) found a very significant relationship between teacher morale and satisfaction with school administration. The stress of low pay, poor student behavior, and other factors contributes to the problem of low teacher morale. The problem of low teacher morale must be addressed in order to reduce teacher attrition and keep highly qualified teachers in the classroom.

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), a federal entity that reports on the status of education in the United States and other nations, did a 2007 follow-up survey to a 2004-2005 survey of elementary and high school teachers that examined teacher attrition and mobility. Conducted by Marvel, Lyter, Peltola, Strizek, and Morton (2007), the research examined teacher attitudes about the teaching profession and job satisfaction. Results showed that the number of teachers leaving public education before the school year began increased from 5.6% in 1988 to 8.4% in 2005. The 2004-2005 survey showed that 14.6% of the teachers who left were dissatisfied with teaching as a career, and 16% were dissatisfied with the school or the teaching assignment. Those who left cited the following reasons: low salary, poor benefits, inadequate job security, lack of intellectual challenges, lack of opportunities for professional development, lack of professional prestige, excessive workload, lack of concern for teacher safety, lack of

autonomy in the classroom, an inability to balance personal life and work, and lack of opportunities for professional advancement. The one area that teachers who left the teaching career felt was stronger in teaching than in other jobs was the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of others.

Butt et al. (2005) examined the results of the NCES findings a second time. In addition to the original report, this team examined the high school case studies and determined that job satisfaction for high schools was dependent on a more complex set of factors than the number of hours they worked and their workload. Their examination revealed dissatisfaction with administrative communication strategies. They also found that high school teachers were originally attracted to teaching as a career through the subject matter acquired during their university degree.

Liu and Meyer (2005) also examined the NCES data and found similar results as well as some new findings. They only examined five aspects of the survey: school climate, administrative support, compensation, student discipline, and working conditions. Student discipline and income were at the top of the list statistically of the factors that influence teacher job satisfaction. Student discipline was the major reason for teacher dissatisfaction, followed by low compensation. Interestingly, there was little association between a large salary and student discipline in terms of improving teacher satisfaction. One other finding was that when principals encouraged teachers' involvement in school decisions and operations, work conditions improved.

### **Summary of Literature Review**

This review of literature has revealed a lack of research focusing on principal

leadership practice and teacher morale within the high schools of the United States during the last five years. The six high school research results examined were produced during the years of 2007 and 2008, one of which was conducted in Turkey and one in China. These results were not conclusive in confirming or denying a relationship between principal leadership practices and teacher morale. Many of the cross-grade level examinations have focused on this concern in order to discover the reasons why teachers are leaving the classroom. This focus is important because retention of the educational workforce has surfaced as a legitimate concern in education today.

Several of the research studies reviewed revealed that principals have a problem in relinquishing power, and one of the many ways of protecting their power is by controlling how much information is disseminated to their teachers. Teachers need to be informed through supportive communication about impending decisions; furthermore, principals are the filter for the information needed to empower the stakeholders to facilitate effective decision making. Shared decision making requires principals to examine their behavior, nurture teacher participation, and make decisions interdependently. Effective use of power by administrators impacts teacher satisfaction and the overall school environment. Even if principals and teachers support the idea of shared decision making, they have limited training to implement or impact a reform effort, one of several reasons more research is warranted in high schools. Leech and Fulton (2008) maintained the importance of extensive training for principals and teachers in facilitating shared decision making. Effective principal behaviors nurture participation in decision making, and assist in making all decisions interdependently with the teachers.

Only through an examination of teacher morale and the leadership practices of the building principals of the schools with high teacher morale will it be understood how to effectively train leaders and possibly cease the attrition of qualified teachers.

Short and Johnson (1994) found that empowered workers were monetary contributors to the company. Similarly, the empowerment movement in education encourages teacher effectiveness. The effectiveness of teachers and the use of power by administrators affects the overall school climate, including student achievement and teacher morale. Administrators who demonstrate respect, value, and support for teachers empower the teachers to become more responsible. In turn, those empowered teachers inspire, unconditionally accept, and care for their students (Bolin, 1989). Teachers who were provided with the professional nurturing needed to remain inspired and energized in the classroom have higher morale and remain in their chosen profession, with the greatest benefactors being their students. It was obvious, according to Korkmaz (2007), that school principals must understand how their role and behavior strongly impact teacher morale and job satisfaction. Teachers who feel supported, work in a healthy environment, and possess higher levels of morale work more enthusiastically and have a more positive effect on their students. This suggests strong relationships between teacher morale, leadership practice, and student achievement. When administrators receive the proper training in leadership styles, the result is a positive impact across the school in both teacher retention and success for the students.

This review of literature revealed a need for further in-depth research into the relationship between leadership practice and teacher morale (not only in the United

States, but worldwide) in order to explore the reasons for low teacher morale and the rise in teacher attrition. Research from the United States, China, Tanzania, Turkey, the Netherlands, and England has been examined. Because this review of literature has shown conflicting evidence from the United States and other countries worldwide, continuing to conduct research on this topic is both necessary and relevant.

## **CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY**

### **Introduction**

After reviewing the literature on leadership practice and teacher morale, this researcher noticed an obvious research gap in the area of the relationship between the leadership practices of school principals and teacher morale in high schools. This study intends to fill that gap. This chapter gives the research question and hypotheses, describes the participants and setting, discusses the instruments that were utilized for measurement, indicates the procedural plan for the study, provides an overview of the research design, and details the specific statistical methods and data analysis techniques that were used in the study.

The research problem is as follows: Do teachers' perceptions of the five leadership practices of principals influence the morale of teachers at the high school level?

### **Design of the Study**

This was a quantitative study using a correlational research design. Two surveys were administered to all certified teachers in two high schools. The distribution of the surveys, using Dillman's Tailored Design Method (TDM) (2000), allowed greater anonymity for the surveyed teachers who were being asked specific questions about their principal's leadership practices and teacher's current morale level (Houchard, 2005; Rowland, 2008). The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) and Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) surveys were chosen following their successful implementation during

Rowland's (2008) and Houchard's (2005) research. The correlation coefficients were calculated to measure the relationship between the five LPI categories and the PTO Total. The survey descriptions are addressed in detail in the instrumentation section.

### **Research Questions, Hypotheses, and Hypotheses in Null Form**

RQ1: Do the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score), collectively or individually, reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score)?

H1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score) will reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H<sub>0</sub>1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI score) will not reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.



H3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H4: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>4: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H5: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>5: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale

levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H6: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

H<sub>06</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

### **Participants and Setting**

Two high schools, from two separate school districts in one county in the northwestern area of South Carolina, were targeted and approached to conduct the research. Both high schools house grades 10-12, are similar in demographics, and are located in suburban areas.

The 2009 teacher demographics from the State of South Carolina's Annual School Report Card were examined separately for each school. High School 1 has 121 teachers: 75.7% have advanced degrees, 79.6% are continuing contract teachers, 3.0% are emergency or provisional contract teachers, and 88.2% are returning teachers. High School 2 has 129 teachers: 64.4% have advanced degrees, 78.1% are continuing contract teachers, 3.4% are emergency or provisional contract teachers, and 87.9% are returning teachers.

Each school's district office was contacted to provide demographics, not supplied by the State of South Carolina's Annual School Report Card. Those demographic categories were ethnicity, years of experience, age, and gender. The two high schools are similar in ethnicity, gender, and years of experience. The teachers in High School 1 are 79% Caucasian and the teachers in High School 2 are 89% Caucasian. The teachers in High School 1 are 57% female, and the teachers in High School 2 are 65% female. The majority of both high schools have teachers with 0-10 years of experience (High School 1 has 39% and High School 2 has 48%). However, the age demographics were different between schools. The majority (30%) of High School 1 teachers are between the ages of 37-46 and the majority (30%) of High School 2 teachers are between the ages of 27-36.

There was an attempt to get as many of the 250 subjects as possible to participate. Two hundred fifty survey packets were prepared. Sixteen of the 250 were not distributed because the participants were not certified teachers. Three participants sent their survey packets back because they refused to participate. One hundred seventy completed survey packets were returned. Eight were returned post-collection date and were not used. Forty-five participants returned survey packets with incomplete data or incorrectly scored surveys. A decision was made to exclude these from the study. Fifty percent of the 234 survey packets, or a total of 117 distributed survey packets, were properly scored and viable for the study.

### **Instrumentation**

The two survey instruments utilized in this study were the PTO (Bentley & Rempel, 1972) and the third edition of the LPI (developed by Kouzes and Posner in

2003). Following is a descriptive of each instrument.

### **The PTO Survey**

The PTO (see Appendix A) contained 100 items, ranked on a 4-point Likert scale, which measured responses to questions about teacher morale in 10 categories. The 10 categories were as follows: rapport with principal, satisfaction with teaching, rapport among teachers, teacher salary, teacher load, curricular issues, teacher status in the community, community support for education, school facilities and services, and community expectations.

A composite score of the PTO Survey was used in this study. For each statement, the possible responses were: (A) agree, (PA) probably agree, (PD) probably disagree, and (D) disagree. The surveys were scored as follows: (A) agree = 4, (PA) probably agree = 3, (PD) probably disagree = 2, and (D) disagree = 1. The higher the composite score of the responses, the higher the teacher morale level. The range of total scores was 100-400.

Reliability coefficient for the PTO ranged from .62 (lowest) to .87 (highest) for the five subscales. The reliability was lowest (below .80) for the subscales with the fewest questions (Goldman, 2010). The test-retest reliability coefficient was .87 (Rosner, 2010). The authors of the test claim validity because teachers' scores between the low/middle/high morale groups were significant at the .05 confidence level (Goldman, 2010). Bentley and Rempel (2008) used a test-retest procedure to measure reliability. They reported a reliability coefficient of .87. The results from the reliability analysis for the present study was also .87. The copyright for the instrument has expired due to its

age, meaning the instrument is available for use without having to request permission.

Instrumentation was carefully analyzed for consistency with current educational language to ensure the age did not affect responses to the survey (Rowland, 2008).

### **The LPI Survey**

The LPI survey contained 30 items, ranked on a 10-point Likert scale, which measured responses to questions about the principal's daily practices as perceived by the teachers. The LPI items are divided into five leadership categories. Each of the 30 questions is applicable to one of those five categories (see Table 1 for question assignment) which are centered on developing and empowering relationships between principals and teachers.

The survey was scored with the corresponding number equal to the score given: (1) almost never = 1, (2) rarely = 2, (3) seldom = 3, (4) once in a while = 4, (5) occasionally = 5, (6) sometimes = 6, (7) fairly often = 7, (8) usually = 8, (9) very frequently = 9, (10) always = 10. The range of total scores was 30-300. The LPI Survey scores, both composite and subscale, were used in this study. Internal consistency coefficients ranged from .70-.85. The test-retest reliability ranged from .93-.95 for the five leadership practices (Leong, 1997). No validity scores were reported. Leong (1997) claims that validity is difficult to measure with leadership surveys because of the criterion problem; it is difficult or impossible to define what constitutes effective leadership. Kouzes and Posner (2002) measured reliability using a test-retest procedure, producing reliability coefficients of .88 and .92. Reliability analyses for the present study were conducted for each subscale of the LPI: model the way (.92), inspire a shared vision

(.93), challenge the process (.94), enable others to act (.93), and encourage the heart (.95).

Permission to use the LPI was obtained from the instrument's authors prior to the onset of the research (See Appendix B).

Table 1

*LPI Category Questions*

Category	Questions
Model the Way	1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26.
Inspire a Shared Vision	2, 7, 12, 17, 22, 27.
Challenge the Process	3, 8, 13, 18, 23, 28.
Enable Others to Act	4, 9, 14, 19, 24, 29.
Encourage the Heart	5, 10, 15, 20, 25, 30.

**Procedures**

Permission to conduct the study was obtained from each of the two district superintendents of the two high schools in this study. After permission was obtained from the district superintendents, meetings took place with both of the principals of the target schools to determine the process for distributing the surveys. Both the surveys (see Appendix C) and means of teacher correspondence (see Appendix D) were discussed with the principals prior to distribution of the surveys. Once district permission was received, signatures were obtained, and the principals were asked for a list of all certified teachers within their schools. The researcher made every effort to protect the anonymity of the teachers and of the high schools. Teachers were assigned a random number using a random number generator. Teacher names and random numbers were compiled in an

Excel spreadsheet, and when the teachers' separately mailed postcards arrived stating that their surveys were completed and mailed, their names were removed from the Excel list so that the only identifier that remained was their randomly-assigned number.

TDM, created by Dillman (2000), was used in this study to maximize the number of responses. TDM creates trust, gives a perception of reward, and reduces the cost of teacher participation (Dillman, 2000). The Dillman's TDM boasts an average response rate of 74% (p. 27). There are five needed elements for achieving Dillman's TDM high response rate: respondent-friendly questionnaires, four respondent contacts, return envelopes with first-class stamps, personalization of correspondences, and a token prepaid financial incentive (pp. 151-152). The five respondent contacts consisted of a prenotice letter, a questionnaire cover letter, a thank you card, replacement questionnaires, and a final contact.

After permission to survey the teachers was obtained from the district superintendents, the principal of each high school forwarded a researcher prepared email to the teachers. Two days after the introductory email was sent, the researcher personally placed the following in each participant's school mailbox: a sealed envelope containing a cover letter, the two surveys, a stamped and addressed envelope for the return of the surveys, a stamped and addressed postcard to be returned separately stating their surveys were in the mail, and a one dollar bill. The exterior of the envelopes had the teacher's name only and were sealed. The surveys and return envelopes were void of marks, numbers, or names identifying the respondent. Each envelope included a cover letter addressing the following issues: the purpose of the survey, the guarantee of

confidentiality of both individuals and schools, a description of how the researcher would secure all records and dispose of records, an explanation of voluntary participation, the directions for returning the surveys, and reassurance that their participation would have no effect on any existing relationship. The stamped and addressed postcard had the random teacher number and instructions to mail the post card separately so the researcher could remove the teacher's name from the teacher list. Data collection took place over a four week period. The return survey envelopes and postcards were addressed to a rented post office box and were collected by the researcher periodically over the four week survey time period.

One week after the surveys had been delivered, the researcher delivered a second correspondence to each teacher's mailbox. The correspondence was a postcard thanking teachers who had already completed and returned the surveys and encouraging teachers who have not yet responded to do so as soon as possible. The postcard offered replacements of misplaced or lost surveys, along with the researcher's contact information.

Two weeks after the surveys had been delivered, the researcher delivered a second round of surveys to teacher's who had not responded by returning their postcards. The same method was used as the first round of distribution. A cover letter within the sealed envelopes reiterated the importance of the study, reminding teachers that participation is voluntary, and that their valuable feedback would benefit the study results. Once again, cost to the participant was removed by providing stamped and addressed envelopes for return of the surveys. The teachers were asked to simply return



the blank surveys if they wished not to participate. This second round of survey distribution did not contain the initial incentive of a one dollar bill.

The final correspondence with the participant teachers was a researcher-generated email forwarded by the building principal. The email encouraged teachers to respond and reminded them that there was still time, thanked participants one last time, and stated that the email would be the last correspondence that they would receive as the study was drawing to a close.

### **Data Analysis**

Data were collected and recorded in an Excel program for each of the following variables: Teacher ID, PTO Total, and each of the five subscales of the LPI leadership practices. In order to evaluate the relationship between the five leadership practices and teacher morale totals, there had to be a score for each of the five leadership practices and teacher morale total. Missing data could have been a serious problem. Double checking of scored surveys provided a greater degree of accuracy. Prior to regression analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were examined. These assumptions included: absence of extreme outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity of the variance of the residuals, and multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Mertler & Vannatta, 2010; Warner, 2008). Following the data screening, the research hypotheses were evaluated using standard multiple linear regression analysis.

Multiple linear regression analysis tests for a linear relationship between one or more predictor variables and one criterion variable (Ary et al., 2006). Standard multiple linear regression was chosen over hierarchical or statistical regression because the

purpose of the study was to examine the percent of variance in PTO attributable to teacher perceived principal leadership practices (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Multiple linear regression was successfully used in previous studies examining transformational leadership practices and teacher morale (Leech & Fulton, 2008; Nguni et al., 2006).

Correlation/regression coefficients  $r$ ,  $R^2$ , and  $R^2_{adj}$  are measurements of effect size. The  $r$  correlation represents the strength and direction of correlation between a predictor and a criterion variable. If there is more than one predictor variable, the correlations are typically reported in a correlation matrix. The effect size interpretation guidelines used for  $r$  in this study were: .2 = small effect, .3 = medium effect, and .5 = large effect (Cohen, 1988). Once the  $r$  value was determined, the coefficients of determination  $R^2$  and  $R^2_{adj}$  were calculated. Both  $R^2$  and  $R^2_{adj}$  values represent the percentage of variance in the criterion variable explained by all predictors in the model. A coefficient value of .20 means that 20% of the variance in the dependent variable is explained by all predictors in the model. Although the interpretation of both coefficients is identical,  $R^2$  is known to overestimate the proportion of variance explained in relatively small samples (Tabachnick & Fidel, 2007); therefore,  $R^2_{adj}$  was taken as a measure of effect size in the context of multiple regression prediction with five variables. The alpha level used was .05.

### **Summary of Methodology**

This study intended to expand established research on the relationship between principal leadership and teacher morale by examining two high schools in South Carolina. The methods that were used to perform a quantitative correlational study were

delineated, a full description of the participants was provided, methods of gathering data were explained, study instrumentation was discussed, detailed research procedures were listed, and the means of data analysis were described.

## **CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND FINDINGS**

As previously established, past research on principal leadership practices and their relationship with teacher morale has focused predominately on the elementary and middle schools to the exclusion of secondary schools. The purpose of this study was to address that gap in research by examining the relationship between teacher morale and five teacher perceived principal leadership practices at the secondary level. This research was an attempt to examine if five teacher perceived leadership practices had a statistically significant correlation with teacher morale.

This chapter presents the findings of a quantitative study that was conducted within two public secondary schools in Upstate South Carolina by displaying multiple linear regression analysis results from two teacher surveys. First, the descriptive statistics are given for the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO), which was used to measure teacher morale levels, and the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI), which was used to measure the five teacher perceived leadership practices. Second, the assumptions of the multiple linear regression analyses are reported. Finally, the multiple regression analysis findings that address the study research questions and hypotheses are presented. The chapter concludes with a summary of the major findings.

The study sought to examine how well teacher perceptions of each of the five leadership practices predicted teacher morale, jointly and independently. More specifically, the following research questions and hypotheses were addressed:

RQ1: Do the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score), collectively or individually, reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score)?

H1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score) will reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H<sub>0</sub>1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI score) will not reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>4</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>4: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>5</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>5: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>6</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels

(as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

H<sub>06</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The focal variables in the study were: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart, and the PTO composite score. The survey scores means and standard deviations for the PTO Total and the five teacher perceived leadership practices are presented in Table 2. The average scores on the five predictor variables were relatively high, approaching the maximum possible score of 60.

Table 2

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices*

Leadership Practice	Mean	Standard Deviation	<i>N</i>
PTO Total	294.13	22.02	117
Model the Way	53.56	7.92	117
Inspire a Shared Vision	52.71	8.11	117
Challenge the Process	50.76	9.14	117
Enable Others to Act	54.25	7.52	117
Encourage the Heart	53.67	8.8	117

**Assumption Testing**

Prior to regression analysis, the assumptions of multiple linear regression analysis were examined. These assumptions included: absence of extreme outliers, normality, linearity, homoscedasticity of the variance of the residuals, and multicollinearity (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Warner, 2008).

**Univariate Outliers**

To determine the presence of univariate outliers, the criterion variable (PTO) and the five predictor variables to be used in multiple regression analysis were standardized,



and the resulting standardized values were examined (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). It was determined that one total PTO response, three model the way responses, three inspire a shared vision responses, one challenge the process response, four enable others to act responses, and one encourage the heart response represented univariate outliers. Per Mertler and Vannatta's (2010) recommendation, cases exceeding the absolute threshold value of +/- 3.29 were recoded into the next nonoutlying values.

### **Normality and Multivariate Outliers**

Normality and absence of multivariate outliers were assessed simultaneously by examination of normal P-P plot of regression standardized residuals and calculating Mahalanobis distances in a preliminary regression analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). In a normal probability plot, the expected cumulated probabilities are plotted against observed cumulated probability of standardized residuals (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) and if the pattern of the data points follows a straight line, the assumption of normality is considered met. As seen, the residuals fit the expected pattern; therefore, the assumption of normality was found tenable.

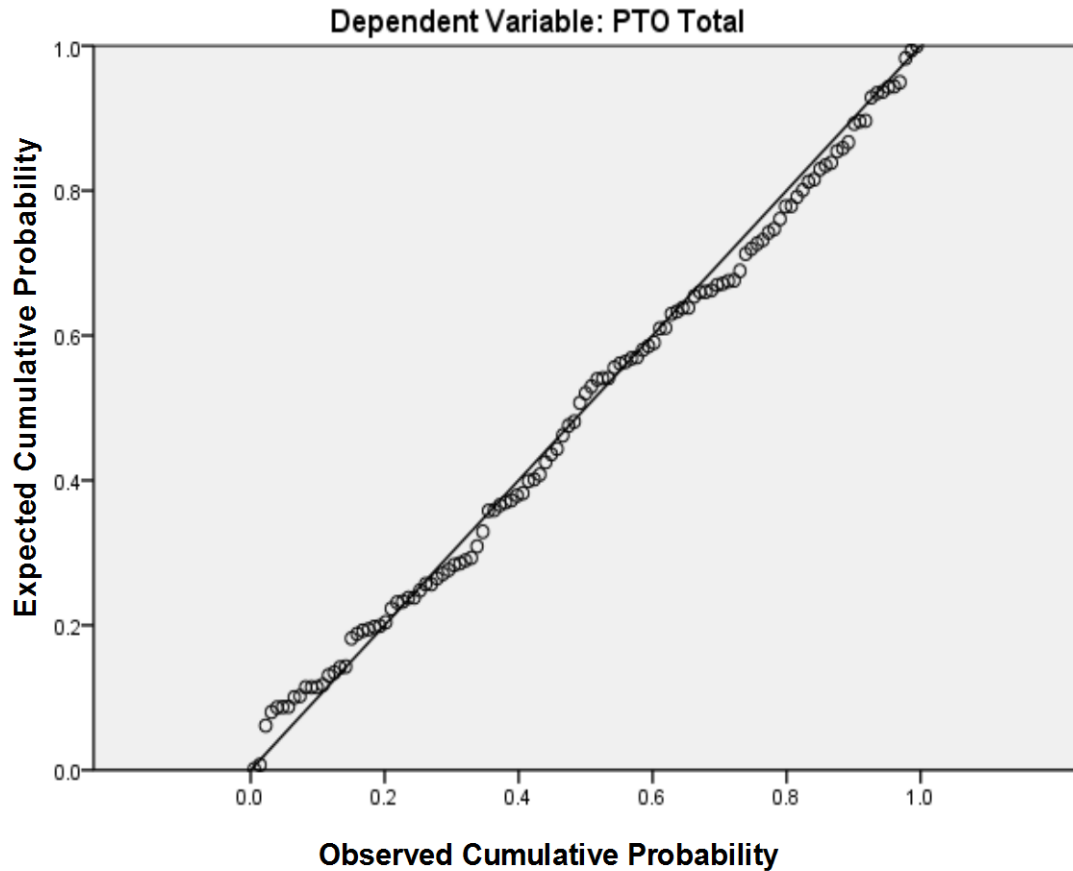


Figure 1. *Normal probability plot of regression standardized residuals with PTO as a dependent variable.*

The presence of multivariate outliers with evaluated by calculating a Mahalanobis distances (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007) in a preliminary regression procedure, with PTO as a criterion variable and all leadership practices as predictors. The Mahalanobis distance of a particular case was evaluated by the use of a chi-square statistic. Per Tabachnick and Fidell's (2007), the chi-square table with degrees of freedom of five and Alpha level of .001 was used to determine critical values. The results indicated that five

cases had Mahalanobis distances exceeding the critical values of the test statistics and were deleted. After deletion of univariate and multivariate outliers, 112 cases remained for data analysis, which represents a reduction of 4%.

### **Linearity**

The assumption of linearity between individual predictors and the criterion was examined by the means of scatterplots, generated for each pair of variables (Warner, 2008). The scatterplot matrix is given in Figure 2. As seen, the bivariate relationships between pairs of variables were linear.

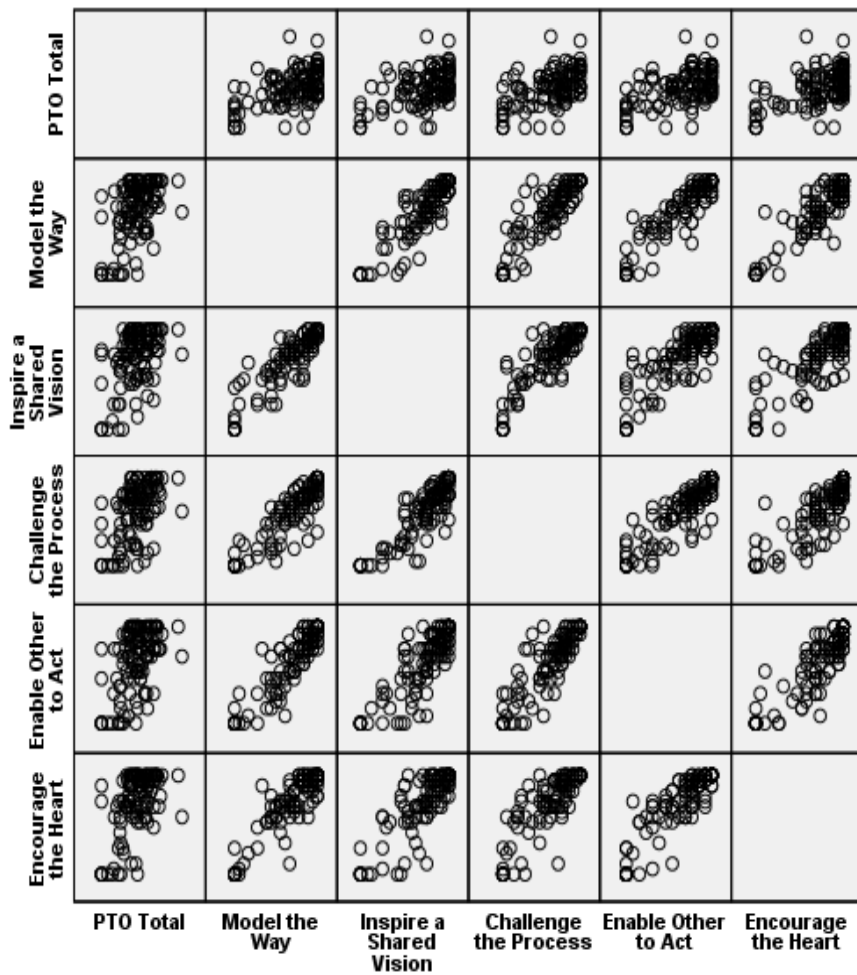
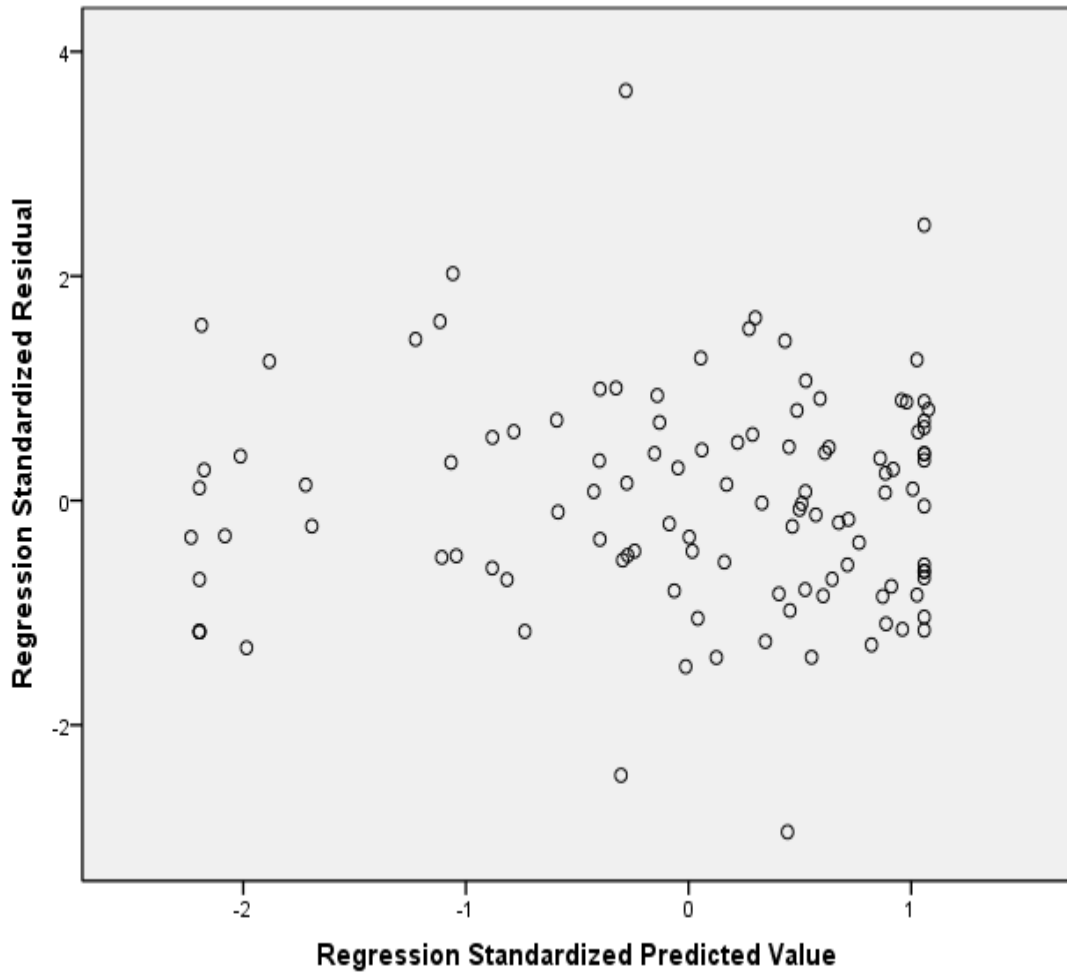


Figure 2. Scatterplots of the relationships between all pairs of variables.

### **Homoscedasticity of the Variance of the Residuals**

A residual scatterplot was created (errors in predictions) against the predicted values of the criterion variable to test the assumption of homoscedasticity of variance of the residuals. The points on the scatterplot should cluster around a horizontal line in a random pattern, provided that the assumption of the homoscedasticity is tenable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). The generated residual plot, displayed in Figures 3, indicated that the assumption was not violated.



*Figure 3.* Residual plot of standardized regression residuals against predicted values for PTO

Because several univariate outliers were recoded, and five multivariate outliers deleted, descriptive statistics for the study variables were recalculated. These are provided in Table 3.

Table 3

*Descriptive Statistics for Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices After Deletion of Outliers*

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Leadership Practice	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
PTO Total	112	250	355	295.55	20.403
Model the Way	112	42	60	54.53	5.554
Inspire a Shared Vision	112	36	60	53.42	6.722
Challenge the Process	112	39	60	52.15	6.594
Enable Others to Act	112	47	60	55.45	4.24
Encourage the Heart	112	41	60	54.92	5.902

---

**Multicollinearity**

The assumption of lack of multicollinearity was evaluated by examination of the magnitude of the bivariate correlations between the predictors, and tolerance and Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) statistics. Results from Pearson product moment correlational analysis indicated that the four predictors were strongly correlated with each

other. Warner (2008) suggested that a correlation above .90 between two predictors should be a point of concern. As seen, the correlations between model the way and inspire a shared vision and enable others to act and encourage the heart were in the range between .90 and .91.

Table 4

*Zero-order Correlations Between Study Variables.*

Variable	PTO Total	Model the Way	Inspire a Shared Vision	Challenge the Process	Enable Other to Act	Encourage the Heart
PTO Total	--					
Model the Way	.528**	--				
Inspire a Shared Vision	.491**	.899**	--			
Challenge the Process	.538**	.883**	.875**	--		
Enable Other to Act	.530**	.910**	.841**	.882**	--	
Encourage the Heart	.550**	.902**	.833**	.839**	.875**	--

\*\* p < .001

Further multicollinearity diagnostics, presented in Table 5, support the observation that the high correlations of model the way with the remaining variables is likely to distort the interpretation of individual regression coefficients in a subsequent multiple regression analysis. The tolerance statistic for model the way was lower than the suggested cut-off value of .1 (Warner, 2008). In addition, its VIF was higher than the suggested cut-off of 10.00 (Mertler & Vannatta, 2010). By most accounts, problematic

variables such as this should be omitted from further analysis (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007; Warner, 2008).

Table 5

*Collinearity Statistics for Morale with Leadership Practices*

Variable	Collinearity Statistics	
	Tolerance	VIF
Inspire a Shared Vision	.161	6.202
Challenge the Process	.157	6.381
Enable Other to Act	.136	7.374
Encourage the Heart	.167	6.000
Model the Way	.091	10.933

**Results from Multiple Linear Regression**

As previously reported, data screening indicated that the original data set contained univariate and multivariate outliers. Even though the assumptions of normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity of variance were met, further diagnostics showed that collinearity between model the way and the rest of the predictor variables represented an issue preventing the inclusion of this variable in the multiple regression model. Therefore, a standard multiple regression was conducted without model the way as a predictor of teacher morale.

**Hypothesis One**



The research question asked if the combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score) reliably predicted teacher morale levels. It was hypothesized that the combination of teacher perceptions of principals' model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart would reliably predict teacher morale levels.

Standard multiple linear regression was conducted to determine whether the remaining four teacher perceived leadership practices, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart, predicted variance in teacher morale levels. The results indicated that taken together, the four teacher perceived leadership practices explain a modest amount of variance in teacher morale levels. The overall model significantly predicted teacher morale levels,  $R^2 = .323$ ,  $R^2_{adj} = .292$ ,  $F(4, 107) = 10.134$ ,  $p < .001$ . The combination of the four teacher perceived leadership practices accounted for 29.2% of the variance in teacher morale levels. Therefore, it was determined that the four teacher perceived principal leadership variables, when taken together, reliably predicted teacher morale levels. The null hypothesis was rejected.

### **Hypothesis Two**

The second research hypothesis stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measure by the LPI) was a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO). This hypothesis was not formally tested in the study, because the variable model the way was excluded from the model for reasons stated previously.

### **Hypothesis Three**

Research Hypothesis three stated teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measure by the LPI) would be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were controlled. Evidence in support of the hypothesis was not found. The relationship between teacher morale and inspire a shared vision leadership practice was not statistically significant when all other teacher perceived leadership practices were controlled,  $\beta = -.217$ ,  $t(107) = -.400$ ,  $p > .05$ .

The hypothesis was not supported by the data. When the remaining teacher perceived leadership practices were controlled, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encouraging the heart, teacher morale had a statistically nonsignificant relationship with the leadership practice of inspire a shared vision. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

#### **Hypothesis Four**

Hypotheses four posited that teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were controlled. The hypothesis was not supported by the data. When inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were held constant, the teacher perceived leadership practice of challenge the process was not a statistically significant predictor of levels of teacher morale,  $\beta = .801$ ,  $t(107) = 1.308$ ,  $p > .05$ .

The hypothesis was not supported by the data. When the remaining three teacher perceived leadership practices, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were held constant, challenge the process did not contribute to the prediction of teacher morale. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

### **Hypothesis Five**

Hypothesis five stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart were controlled. The hypothesis was not supported by the data. Enable others to act leadership practice was not a significant predictor of teacher morale when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart were taken into account,  $\beta = .382$ ,  $t(107) = .397$ ,  $p > .05$ .

The hypothesis was not supported by the data. Enable others to act leadership practice was not a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart were controlled. Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected.

### **Hypothesis Six**

Hypothesis six stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act were controlled. The hypothesis was not supported by the data. Encourage the heart leadership practice was not a significant predictor of teacher morale when inspire a

shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act were taken into account,  $\beta = 1.107$ ,  $t(107) = 1.795$ ,  $p > .05$ . Therefore, the null hypothesis was not rejected. A summary of regression coefficients is presented in Table 6.

Table 6

*Contributions of Predictor Variables*

Predictor Variable	$\beta$	B	$t$	$p$	Bivariate $r$	Partial
Inspire a Shared Vision	-.217	-.072	-.400	.690	.491**	-.039
Challenge the Process	.808	.261	1.308	.194	.538**	.125
Enable Other to Act	.382	.079	.397	.692	.530**	.038
Encourage the Heart	1.107	.320	1.795	.075	.550**	.171

Note.  $N = 112$

\*\*  $p < .001$

### Summary of Results and Findings

This quantitative study explored the six research hypotheses through the use of multiple linear regression analysis. Multiple linear regression procedures were used to evaluate the influence of the five dimensions of teacher perceived leadership practices on teacher morale levels. Data screening procedures indicated that the statistical assumptions underlying multiple regression analysis were met, except the assumption of lack of multicollinearity. Several univariate outliers were recoded and five multivariate outliers were deleted from the data set. The variable model the way was excluded from the multiple regression model by virtue of its high zero-order correlations with the rest of the predictors.

The statistical analysis of the survey results presented in this chapter provided a statistical basis to support the assertion that the four teacher perceived leadership practices are related to teacher morale to a significant degree. However, the four of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (i.e., challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart, and inspire a shared vision) collectively accounted for only a modest portion of the variance in teacher morale levels. None of the identified four leadership practices was a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale when all of the variables were considered together in a multiple regression model. Chapter Five discusses these findings in light of the relevant literature.

## **CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION**

This chapter is organized into a restatement of the purpose of the study, a brief summary of the primary findings, a discussion of the findings in regards to the relationship of the present study to prior relevant literature, study limitations, and recommendations for future research. A conclusion to the overall study completes this manuscript.

### **Statement of the Purpose**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between high school teachers' morale and their perceptions of five principal leadership practices: model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart. Kelly et al. (2005) stated that the single most important determinant of the learning environment is the leadership of the principal, so the effect of principal leadership practices on teacher morale became the focus of this study.

One hundred seventeen high school teachers from the upstate of South Carolina who shared similar demographics completed two assessment instruments. The Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) survey measured teachers' perceptions of principal leadership practices and the Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire (PTO) measured total teacher morale. In order to investigate whether the high school teachers' perceptions of principal leadership practices had a significant correlation with teacher morale, one research question and six hypotheses were posed. The hypotheses and corresponding null hypotheses are as follows:

RQ1: Do the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score), collectively or individually, reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score)?

H1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI total score) will reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H<sub>0</sub>1: A combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices (as measured by the LPI score) will not reliably predict teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO total score).

H2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>2: Teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>3: Teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>4</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>4: Teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>5</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>0</sub>5: Teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart are controlled.

H<sub>6</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels



(as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

H<sub>06</sub>: Teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice (as measured by the LPI) will not be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels (as measured by the PTO) when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act are controlled.

### **Summary of the Findings**

This study was guided by one research question, six hypotheses, and six null hypotheses. All six hypotheses were analyzed using standard multiple linear regression. Multiple linear regression was utilized to determine the combined influence of several independent variables on a single dependent variable. Teacher perceived principal leadership practices, measured by the LPI, were the five predictor variables. Teacher morale level, measured by the PTO, was the single criterion variable.

The findings indicated that a relationship of significant degree existed between four of the five collective teacher perceived principal leadership practices and teacher morale levels. While conducting analysis of the assumption of multicollinearity, it was determined that one of the predictor variables, model the way, were highly correlated. This violation of multicollinearity prevented the inclusion of this variable in the multiple regression model. Therefore, a standard multiple regression was conducted without the use of model the way as a predictor of teacher morale.

The four teacher perceived principal leadership practices accounted for only a modest percentage of the variance in teacher morale levels. None of the identified four

leadership practices (i.e., challenge the process, enable others to act, encourage the heart, and inspire a shared vision) was a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale, when all of the variables were considered together in a multiple regression model.

### **Discussion of the Findings in Light of the Relevant Literature**

The results of this inquiry supported previous studies, examined in the review of literature, concerning the relationship between teacher morale and teacher perceived principal leadership practices. The five strands of transformational leadership (Kouzes & Pozner, 2002) were used in this study. Research in transformational leadership practices have shown the greatest positive relationship on teachers, resulting in increased teacher morale (Korkmaz, 2007; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Rowland, 2008). However, existing research had been primarily conducted in elementary schools and middle schools, with relatively little research in the high schools of America within the last five years.

As stated in Chapter One, the purpose of this study was to determine if there was a relationship between teacher morale and teacher perceived principal leadership practices at the high school level. Results indicated a statistically significant positive correlation between the teacher perceived leadership practices of the high school principal and teacher morale, which validated the leadership practices that comprise the Transformational Leadership Theory (Ahuja, 2007; Bartlett, 2008; Denton, 2009; Houchard, 2005; Leech & Fulton, 2008; Margolis & Nagel, 2006; Rowland, 2008). Most of the research literature, with the exception of Leech and Fulton (2008) and Rowland (2008), addressed leadership practices as a whole, not as the five individual variables of transformational leadership. Following is a discussion of the results of the six hypotheses

tests, in light of relevant literature, and how they relates to research that supports or contradicts this study's findings.

### **Hypothesis One**

The study sought to determine if a combination of the five teacher perceived leadership practices, measured by the LPI, reliably predicted teacher morale levels. The researcher verified through statistical analyses that only four of the five leadership variables inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart could be analyzed using standard multiple linear regression. Each of the teacher perceived leadership subscales had a moderate positive correlation with the PTO Total, which measured teacher morale levels. The results indicated that all correlations among the four teacher perceived leadership practice variables were positive, statistically significant, and not due to chance. When taken together, the four teacher perceived leadership practices significantly predicted teacher morale by explaining a modest amount of variance in teacher morale levels. Research conducted in a school containing only sixth and seventh grade students (Margolis & Nagel, 2006) also found a positive relationship between transformational leadership practices and teacher morale, stating that relationships are the most powerful mediator of teacher stress, and that the principal has the power to enhance or debilitate teacher performance.

Though this study did find a correlation between the four combined predictor variables, it did not find a correlation between the individual leadership practices and teacher morale. Randolph-Robinson (2007), researching at the elementary school level, also found that the individual principal leadership subscales, of a similar leadership

survey, were too closely related to one another for regression analysis. Randolph-Robinson found that a five dimensional approach was not valid, due to multicollinearity, for determining if individual principal leadership practices correlated with teacher morale. She determined a combination of the leadership practices were necessary to influence teacher morale. Her study resulted in a positive correlation between combined leadership practices and teacher morale.

Leech and Fulton (2008), one of the few studies conducted at the high school level in the last five years, supported this study's findings. They found a modest correlation, using multiple regression, between high school principal leadership practices and shared decision making, one of the components of teacher morale. Using the same leadership practice survey (LPI), that this researcher utilized, their multiple regression analyses also found very little variance between the LPI and their criterion variable. Leech and Fulton concluded that the leadership behaviors of the LPI did not have appropriate definitions to influence teacher perceptions of leadership practices in order to answer their research questions.

## **Hypothesis Two**

Hypothesis two stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' model the way leadership practice would be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels when inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were controlled. Six of the LPI questions measured teacher perceptions of the model the way leadership practice. The questions asked teachers if their principal sets a personal example of their expectations for teachers, takes time to ensure teachers are held

accountable to those expectations, follows through on promises and commitments they make, asks for feedback on how their actions affect teacher performance, builds a consensus around a common set of values for the operation of the school, and makes sure their philosophy of leadership is clear (Kouzes & Posner, 2002).

Burns (1978) stated that the model the way component of transformational leadership is the charismatic component, inspiring others to follow and trust in their leaders. He indicated that administrators who model respect, value, and support for their school's teachers increase teacher morale.

This study found the variable model the way had a high zero-order correlation with the rest of the predictors and was excluded from the multiple regression model. Several studies contradicted the exclusion of model the way and further suggested higher teacher morale correlated with teacher retention and student achievement. Brown and Wynn (2009) and Denton (2009) conducted studies that found modeling high expectations, having an open door policy, being a visible presence, and encouraging and supporting collegiality not only positively influenced teacher retention, but improved the attitude and actions of the teacher. They also found that beyond the benefits of higher teacher morale, there is evidence that the self-worth of a student increases with higher teacher morale. Bolin (1998) found that teachers working with principals who demonstrated the model the way leadership practice were empowered to inspire, unconditionally accept, and care for their students, resulting in an increased sense of self-worth on the part of the students.

One study (Houchard, 2005), whose research included one high school in his multiple grade level study, aligned with the results of this research. Although, Houchard (2005) did find a positive correlation between model the way and rapport among teachers, one of the variables of the PTO survey, he did not find a statistically significant positive correlation between model the way and total teacher morale.

### **Hypothesis Three**

Hypothesis three stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' inspire a shared vision leadership practice would be a statistically significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were controlled. Six of the LPI questions measured teacher perceptions of the inspire a shared vision leadership practice. The questions asked teachers if their principal talks about future trends that will influence how teachers work, if their principal is able to describe an inspiring image of the future, encourage teachers to share their individual dreams for the future, show how long-term interests can be realized by having a common vision, paint a "big picture" of what aspirations are required to accomplish the shared vision, and speak with genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of their work (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Burns (1978) stated that principals needed to purposely create a vision as the school's transformational leader.

This study that found inspire a shared vision did not account for statistically significant variance in teacher morale levels. Several studies have found contradictory results as this study. Bolin (1998) called inspire a shared vision the inspirational component of Transformational Leadership Theory, and found teachers working with

principals who demonstrated this leadership practice to be motivated to commit to a shared vision. Choi (2006) found that teacher job satisfaction and teacher satisfaction with their leaders were both correlated with the teacher's desire for achievement and affiliation with the vision suggested by the principal. Küger et al. (2007) examined variables linking principal leadership practices to teacher morale to student achievement. These two international studies found a statistically significant correlation between teacher morale and a personal and well-integrated vision emanating from the principal of the school. Effective communication of the vision by the leader inspired followers to pursue the cause of the collective goal (Choi, 2006). Rowland (2008), who conducted his study at the middle school level, found that inspire a shared vision had the third strongest relationship with teacher morale among the five leadership practices.

MacNeil et al. (2009), though not specifically targeting teacher morale, found that principals in Texas who supported the climate of their school through a strong shared vision, enhanced the learning of the students. The notable outcome of their study was the suggestion that different leadership practices, or a combination of leadership practices, could achieve positive results on the environment of the school, which did align with this study.

#### **Hypothesis Four**

Hypothesis four stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' challenge the process leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, enable others to act, and encourage the heart were controlled. Six of the LPI questions measured teacher perceptions of the challenge the

process leadership practice. The questions asked teachers if their principal seeks out challenging opportunities to test their own skills and abilities, challenges teachers to try out new and innovative ways to teach, searches outside the boundaries of the school for innovative ways to improve, learns to question “what can we learn?” when things do not go as planned, sets achievable goals, makes concrete plans, establishes measurable milestones, and take risks even when there is a possibility of failure (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Interestingly, Burns (1978) did not list challenge the process as a basic component of transformational leadership, and there were few studies found that supported the leadership practice of challenge the process.

This study found that challenge the process did not account for statistically significant variance in teacher morale levels. Bass and Avolio’s (1990) results conflicted with the results of this study. Bass and Avolio found that there was an intellectual stimulation component, referring to the leader’s behavior, which increased the follower’s understanding of organizational problems and vision. Dinham (2007) reported that principals had higher levels of teacher-reported job satisfaction when they were perceived as open to new opportunities, being progressive, using discretionary powers, and bending the rules when the occasion was necessary. The data from their studies did not support the findings of this study that higher teacher morale levels do not have a statistically significant correlation with teacher perceptions of their principal using the challenge the process leadership practice.

Leech and Fulton (2008), one of the few high school level studies in the past five years that attempted to connect leadership to teacher morale, found results that conflict



with the findings of this study. They found that as the employee perceived an increase in risk taking behavior on the part of the school leadership, there was an accompanying perception that their input was being utilized in the decision making within the organization. However, their results were weak, and Leech and Fulton warned that the results must be cautiously interpreted due to concerns that the leadership behaviors did not have appropriate definitions.

### **Hypothesis Five**

Hypothesis five stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' enable others to act leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and encourage the heart were controlled. Six of the LPI questions measured teacher perceptions of the enable others to act leadership practice. The questions asked teachers if their principal tries to develop cooperative relationships among teachers, listens to diverse points of view, treats others with dignity and respect, supports decisions that teachers make on their own, gives teachers ample freedom and choice in making work decisions, and ensures that teachers grow professionally and personally by learning new skills (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Burns (1978) described the enable others to act practice as the charismatic component of transformational leadership, inspiring others to follow and trust in their leaders.

This study found that enable others to act did not account for statistically significant variance in teacher morale levels. There are multiple studies that conflict with the results of this study regarding the enable others to act leadership practice. Bass and Avolio (1990) found that the individualized treatment from leaders increased teacher

reported higher morale because the principal provided effective coaching, individual advisement, and opportunities for professional growth and development. Bolin (1998), calling enable others to act the intellectual component, found teachers working with principals who demonstrated this leadership practice felt stimulated, thus increasing creativity and innovation. Houchard (2005) found a significant correlation between a teacher's relationship with the principal and the principal's leadership practice of enable others to act. Choi (2006) claimed similar findings of teacher empowerment and how teachers viewed themselves, coworkers, and leaders. Rowland (2008) conducted transformational leadership research at the middle school level and found that enable others to act had the strongest correlation with teacher morale, which does not confirm the findings of this research.

Randolph-Robinson's (2007) analysis revealed that no particular principal leadership behavior was the sole cause of low teacher morale, but that the inability to empower teachers was one of the primary reasons for low teacher morale. Nguni et al. (2006) did their research in the primary schools of Tanzania. They used multiple regression to investigate the relationship between transformational leadership practices and teacher job satisfaction. Their results found a moderate amount of variance between leadership behaviors and teacher morale, but strongly cautioned other factors may have influenced the teachers' level of job satisfaction. In her case study, Ahuja (2007) found that through strong leadership and empowerment of teachers collective efficacy could be attained.

## **Hypothesis Six**

Hypothesis six stated that teachers' perceptions of principals' encourage the heart leadership practice would be a significant predictor of teacher morale levels when model the way, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, and enable others to act were controlled. Six of the LPI questions measured teacher perceptions of the encourage the heart leadership practice. The questions asked teachers if their principal praises teachers for a job well done, makes sure teachers know the principal is confident in their abilities, makes sure teachers are creatively rewarded for contributions to projects, publicly recognizes teachers who exemplify commitment to shared values, finds ways to celebrate accomplishments, and gives the members of the team plenty of appreciation and support for their contributions (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Burns (1978) found that the personal attention component of transformational leadership was strongest when the leader cultivated individualized attention.

This study found that encourage the heart did not account for statistically significant variance in teacher morale levels. Several studies did not align with the results found by this researcher. Bolin (1998), calling encourage the heart the personal attention component, found that teachers working with principals who demonstrated this leadership practice felt they were being given individualized attention. Houchard (2005), using both the LPI and PTO, found a significant correlation between two variables: a teacher's relationship with the principal and the principal's encourage the heart leadership practice. Choi (2006) found a positive correlation between the leader showing empathy (which generated trust, respect, and support between the principal and teacher) and increased overall teacher morale. Choi stated that fostering elements of empathy

created feelings of powerlessness, which were replaced by feelings of capability and confidence. Rowland (2008) conducted transformational leadership research at the middle school level and found encourage the heart to be one of the three strongest predictors of the relationship between leadership practices and teacher morale.

### **Study Implications, Limitations, Delimitations, and Recommendations**

Very little research has been conducted at the high school level that examined the correlation between teacher morale and teacher perceived principal leadership practices. The results of this study were based on the scores of two surveys, the PTO and LPI, measuring teacher morale and five teacher perceived principal leadership practices respectively, in two high schools in the upstate of South Carolina. The demographics of these two schools were similar, and strict measures were adhered to in order to protect the anonymity of the participants and their respective schools. In this section, the theoreticl implications, limitations, and delimitations of the study are discussed, followed by recommendations for future research.

### **Theoretical Implications**

The results of this research support Transformational Leadership Theory. Transformational Leadership Theory espouses leadership that creates positive changes in motivation, morale, and purpose. There are four basic components: charismatic influence, inspirational motivation, intellectual stimulation, and personal attention (Burns, 1978).

Burns (1978) stated that model the way was the charismatic component of transformational leadership, inspiring others to follow and trust in their leaders. In this

study, model the way was excluded due to high zero-order correlations with the rest of the predictors. The four remaining teacher perceived leadership practices, inspire a shared vision, challenge the process, enable others to act, and encourage the heart, when examined collectively, were related to teacher morale to a significant degree and accounted for a modest portion of the variance in teacher morale levels.

It is the position of this researcher, in agreement with Randolph-Robinson (2007), that a five dimensional approach is not valid for determining a relationship between principal leadership practices and teacher morale. The individual principal leadership practices subscales are not significantly correlated to teacher morale levels.

### **Limitations**

There were limitations to this study. It cannot be assumed that the results are applicable to elementary or middle school teachers' perception of their principals' leadership practices. The majority of schools are split into separate facilities that house each separately, and have their own unique school environment.

The findings of this study cannot be generalized to other areas of South Carolina, other regions of the United States of America, or other countries of the world. Data from just one geographical area cannot be generalized to another geographical area due to such variables as economy, educational level of parents, community dynamics, and other cultural influences and factors.

The length of the two surveys is a limitation to the study. The LPI contains 30 questions, and the PTO has 100 questions. Each participant had to take both surveys and answer a total of 130 questions. To control for the possibility that the teachers would not

participate, the Dillman's TDM was used, giving a monetary incentive to teachers to participate by filling out the two surveys.

The teachers might have had a less positive attitude knowing that the data were being collected for use in a research study. The teachers may have felt that their principal or school were being judged, and might have answered in a way that intentionally gave a positive or negative impression. The anonymity of the schools and teachers was controlled by using Dillman's TDM. As mentioned in Chapter 3, surveys were returned by mail without markings or names, making the packet untraceable to the survey participants.

### **Delimitations**

This research was delimited to an investigation of the five separate variables of transformational leadership of the LPI; the total score was not used. The PTO's ten variables were examined only as a total score due to the researcher's intent to keep this study concise and focused only on the results of the leadership practices.

Individual schools' total teacher morale was not examined to reduce the possibility of insinuating that one particular school's principal had certain strengths or weaknesses. Anonymity was secured through Dillman's TDM. The population was delimited to certain public schools to ensure a better chance of surveying in demographically similar schools.

### **Recommendations for Future Research**

Based on the findings of this research, there are recommendations for future research that may provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationships of

the variables that were examined. Adding qualitative data, such as interviewing the teachers, would give clarity and voice to the opinions of the participants and their overall morale. This would reveal other components not listed in the PTO survey that impact teacher morale, or suggest leadership practices that affect teacher morale that are not included in the LPI survey. Including student achievement as one of the variables to be studied would be one method to improve the present research. Including student achievement as a third component in future research would expand the current body of knowledge linking student achievement to the impact of principal leadership practices on teacher morale.

The study did not differentiate between any of the following factors: length of service, age, ethnicity, or gender of the teachers. These components could give important data and are recommended for inclusion in future research. In addition, the same factors for the principal of the school would also add to the future study of transformational leadership practices. This researcher, agreeing with Leech and Fulton (2008) and Randolph-Robinson (2007), believes an alternate instrument to define transformational leadership practices would give better clarity and greatly improve results of future research.

### **Practical Recommendations**

In light of this study and the previous relevant research presented in Chapter Two, educational leaders should consider training principals in Kouzes and Posner'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.

### **Conclusion**

All school principals have different strengths and weaknesses. This study attempted to find a correlation between five principal leadership practices and teacher morale using two surveys: the PTO and LPI. The PTO was designed to measure teacher morale, and the LPI was intended to measure the five teacher perceived principal leadership practices of transformational leadership (Kouzes & Posner, 2002). Similar to the findings of Rowland (2008) at the middle school level and Randolph-Robinson (2007) at the elementary school level, the current study's findings supported the Transformational Leadership Theory. Ahuja (2007) and Leech and Fulton (2008), two studies that were conducted at the high school level, produced similar findings in their studies. Leech and Fulton (2008) argued that today's school leaders must rely on applying results from current research that are focused on transformational leadership practices.

Even though the four teacher perceived principal leadership practices did not individually account for any of the variance in teacher morale levels, this research did find a correlation between effective use of the combination of the four principal



leadership practices and overall teacher morale. It will only be through additional research, especially at the less researched high school level, and implementation of effective training programs for building principals, that a sufficient number of qualified teachers will remain in the classroom. As prior research (Bartlett, 2008) suggested, teachers possessing higher levels of morale may have a more positive effect on student achievement, thus possibly linking principal leadership practices to both teacher morale and student achievement.

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## **Appendix A**

The Purdue Teacher Opinionnaire

# **THE PURDUE TEACHER OPINIONAIRE**

Prepared by Ralph R. Bentley and Averno M. Rempel

This instrument is designed to provide you the opportunity to express your opinions about your work as a teacher and various school problems in your particular school situation. There are no right or wrong responses, so do not hesitate to mark the statements frankly. Please **do not** record your name on this document.

Read each statement carefully. Then indicate whether you (A) agree, (PA) probably agree, (PD) probably disagree, (D) disagree with each statement. Circle your answers.

1. Details, "red tape," and required reports absorb too much of my time. ....A PA PD D
2. The work of individual faculty members is appreciated and commended by our principal. ....A PA PD D
3. Teachers feel free to criticize administrative policy at faculty meetings called by our principal.....A PA PD D
4. The faculty feels that their suggestions pertaining to salaries are adequately transmitted by the administration to the board of education. ....A PA PD D
5. Our principal shows favoritism in his relations with the teachers in our school. ....A PA PD D
6. Teachers in this school are expected to do an unreasonable amount of record keeping and clerical work. ....A PA PD D
7. My principal makes a real effort to maintain close contact with the faculty. ....A PA PD D
8. Community demands upon the teacher's time are unreasonable. ....A PA PD D
9. I am satisfied with the policies under which pay raises are granted. ....A PA PD D
10. My teaching load is greater than that of most of the other teachers in our school. ....A PA PD D
11. The extra-curricular load of the teachers in our school is unreasonable. ....A PA PD D

12. Our principal's leadership in faculty meetings challenges and stimulates our professional growth.....A PA PD D
13. My teaching position gives me the social status in the community that I desire. ....A PA PD D
14. The number of hours a teacher must work is unreasonable. ....A PA PD D
15. Teaching enables me to enjoy many of the material and cultural things I like. ....A PA PD D
16. My school provides me with adequate classroom supplies and equipment. ....A PA PD D
17. Our school has a well-balanced curriculum. ....A PA PD D
18. There is a great deal of griping, arguing, taking sides, and feuding among our teachers.....A PA PD D
19. Teaching gives me a great deal of personal satisfaction. ....A PA PD D
20. The curriculum of our school makes reasonable provision for student individual differences. ....A PA PD D
21. The procedures for obtaining materials and services are well defined and efficient. ....A PA PD D
22. Generally, teachers in our school do not take advantage of one another. ....A PA PD D
23. The teachers in our school cooperate with each other to achieve common, personal, and professional objectives. ....A PA PD D
24. Teaching enables me to make my greatest contribution to society. ....A PA PD D
25. The curriculum of our school is in need of major revisions. ....A PA PD D
26. I love to teach. ....A PA PD D
27. If I could plan my career again, I would choose teaching. ....A PA PD D
28. Experienced faculty members accept new and younger members as colleagues.....A PA PD D

29. I would recommend teaching as an occupation to students of high scholastic ability. ....A PA PD D
30. If I could earn as much money in another occupation, I would stop teaching.....A PA PD D
31. The school schedule places my classes at a disadvantage.....A PA PD D
32. Within the limits of financial resources, the school tries to follow a generous policy regarding fringe benefits, professional travel, professional study, etc. ....A PA PD D
33. My principal makes my work easier and more pleasant. ....A PA PD D
34. Keeping up professionally is too much of a burden. ....A PA PD D
35. Our community makes its teachers feel as though they are a real part of the community. ....A PA PD D
36. Salary policies are administered with fairness and justice. ....A PA PD D
37. Teaching affords me the security I want in an occupation. ....A PA PD D
38. My school principal understands and recognizes good teaching procedures. ....A PA PD D
39. Teachers clearly understand the policies governing salary increases.....A PA PD D
40. My classes are used as “dumping grounds” for problem students. ....A PA PD D
41. The lines and methods of communication between teachers and the principal in our school are well developed and maintained.....A PA PD D
42. My teaching load at this school is unreasonable. ....A PA PD D
43. My principal shows a real interest in my department.....A PA PD D
44. Our principal promotes a sense of belonging among the teachers in our school. ....A PA PD D
45. My teaching load unduly restricts my nonprofessional activities. ....A PA PD D
46. I find my contacts with students, for the most part, highly

- satisfying and rewarding.....A PA PD D
47. I feel that I am an important part of this school system. ....A PA PD D
48. The competency of the teachers in our school compares favorably with that of teachers in other schools with which I am familiar.....A PA PD D
49. My school provides the teachers with adequate audio-visual aids and projection equipment. ....A PA PD D
50. I feel successful and competent in my present position. ....A PA PD D
51. I enjoy working with student organizations, clubs, and societies. ....A PA PD D
52. Our teaching staff is congenial to work with.....A PA PD D
53. My teaching associates are well prepared for their jobs.....A PA PD D
54. Our school faculty has a tendency to form into cliques. ....A PA PD D
55. The teachers in our school work well together.....A PA PD D
56. I am at a disadvantage professionally because other teachers are better prepared to teach than I am. ....A PA PD D
57. Our school provides adequate clerical services for the teachers. . ....A PA PD D
58. As far as I know, the other teachers think I am a good teacher.....A PA PD D
59. Library facilities and resources are adequate for the grade or subject area which I teach.....A PA PD D
60. The “stress and strain” resulting from teaching makes teaching undesirable for me.....A PA PD D
61. My principal is concerned with the problems of the faculty and handles these problems sympathetically.....A PA PD D
62. I do not hesitate to discuss any school problem with my principal. ....A PA PD D
63. Teaching gives me the prestige I desire. ....A PA PD D
64. My teaching job enables me to provide a satisfactory standard of living for my family. ....A PA PD D

65. The salary schedule in our school adequately recognizes teacher competency. ....A PA PD D
66. Most of the people in this community understand and appreciate good education. ....A PA PD D
67. In my judgment, this community is a good place to raise a family. ....A PA PD D
68. This community respects its teachers and treats them like professional persons. ....A PA PD D
69. My principal acts interested in me and my problems. ....A PA PD D
70. My school principal supervises rather than “snoopervises” the teachers in our school. ....A PA PD D
71. It is difficult for teachers to gain acceptance by the people in this community. ....A PA PD D
72. Teachers’ meetings as now conducted by our principal waste the time and energy of the staff. ....A PA PD D
73. My principal has a reasonable understanding of the problems connected with my teaching assignment. ....A PA PD D
74. I feel that my work is judged fairly by my principal. ....A PA PD D
75. Salaries paid in this school system compare favorably with salaries in other systems with which I am familiar. ....A PA PD D
76. Most of the actions of students irritate me. ....A PA PD D
77. The cooperativeness of teachers in our school helps make our work more enjoyable. ....A PA PD D
78. My students regard me with respect and seem to have confidence in my professional ability.....A PA PD D
79. The purposes and objectives of the school cannot be achieved by the present curriculum. ....A PA PD D
80. The teachers in our school have a desirable influence on the values and attitudes of their students.....A PA PD D

81. This community expects its teachers to meet unreasonable personal standards. ....A PA PD D
82. My students appreciate the help I give them with their schoolwork. ....A PA PD D
83. To me there is no more challenging work than teaching.....A PA PD D
84. Other teachers in our school are appreciative of my work. ....A PA PD D
85. As a teacher in this community, my nonprofessional activities outside of school are unduly restricted.....A PA PD D
86. As a teacher, I think I am as competent as most other teachers. ....A PA PD D
87. The teachers with whom I work have high professional ethics.....A PA PD D
88. Our school curriculum does a good job of preparing students to become enlightened and competent citizens. ....A PA PD D
89. I really enjoy working with my students. ....A PA PD D
90. The teachers in our school show a great deal of initiative and creativity in their teaching assignments. ....A PA PD D
91. Teachers in our community feel free to discuss controversial issues in their classes. ....A PA PD D
92. My principal tries to make me feel comfortable when visiting my classes. ....A PA PD D
93. My principal makes effective use of the individual teacher's capacity and talent. ....A PA PD D
94. The people in this community, generally, have a sincere and wholehearted interest in the school system. ....A PA PD D
95. Teachers feel free to go to the principal about problems of personal and group welfare. ....A PA PD D
96. This community supports ethical procedures regarding the appointment and reappointment of members of the teaching staff. ....A PA PD D
97. This community is willing to support a good program of education.....A PA PD D



98. Our community expects the teachers to participate in too many social activities. ....A PA PD D
99. Community pressures prevent me from doing my best as a teacher. ....A PA PD D
100. I am well satisfied with my present teaching position.....A PA PD D

## **Appendix B**

Permission to Use the Leadership Practices Inventory

KOUZES POSNER INTERNATIONAL  
1548 Camino Monde  
San Jose, California 95125  
FAX: (408) 554-4553

May 16, 2011

Nora Moore  
299 Williams Rd  
Roebuck, SC 29376

Dear Ms. Moore:

Thank you for your request to use the Leadership Practices Inventory (LPI) in your dissertation. We are willing to allow you to *reproduce* the instrument in written form, as outlined in your request, at no charge. If you prefer to use our electronic distribution of the LPI (vs. making copies of the print materials) you will need to separately contact Lisa Shannon ([lshannon@wiley.com](mailto:lshannon@wiley.com)) directly for instructions and payment. Permission to use either the written or electronic versions requires the following agreement:

- (1) That the LPI is used only for research purposes and is not sold or used in conjunction with any compensated management development activities;
- (2) That copyright of the LPI, or any derivation of the instrument, is retained by Kouzes Posner International, and that the following copyright statement is included on all copies of the instrument; "Copyright 8 2003 James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner. All rights reserved. Used with permission",
- (3) That one (1) **electronic** copy of your dissertation and one (1) copy of all papers, reports, articles, and the like which make use of the LPI data be sent **promptly** to our attention; and,
- (4) That you agree to allow us to include an abstract of your study and any other published papers utilizing the LPI on our various websites.

If the terms outlined above are acceptable, would you indicate so by signing one (1) copy of this letter and returning it to us. Best wishes for every success with your research project.

Cordially,

Ellen Peterson  
Permissions Editor  
[Epeter4@gmail.com](mailto:Epeter4@gmail.com)

## **Appendix C**

### The Leadership Practices Inventory

# LEADERSHIP PRACTICES INVENTORY

James M. Kouzes and Barry Z. Posner

To what extent does your principal typically engage in the following behaviors? Choose the response number that best applies to each statement and circle it under that statement.

1 = Almost Never	6 = Sometimes
2 = Rarely	7 = Fairly Often
3 = Seldom	8 = Usually
4 = Once in a While	9 = Very Frequently
5 = Occasionally	10 = Always

## He or She:

1. Sets a personal example of what he/she expects of others.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

2. Talks about future trends that will influence how our work gets done.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

3. Seeks out challenging opportunities that tests his/her own skills and abilities.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

4. Develops cooperative relationships among the people he/she works with.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

5. Praises people for a job well done.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

6. Spends time and energy making certain that the people he/she works with adhere to the principals and standards we have agreed on.

1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10

7. Describes a compelling image of what our future could be like.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

8. Challenges people to try out new and innovative ways to do their work.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

9. Actively listens to diverse points of view.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

10. Makes it a point to let people know about his/her confidence in their abilities.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

11. Follows through on the promises and commitments that he/she makes.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

12. Appeals to others to share an exciting dream of the future.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

13. Searches outside the formal boundaries of his/her organization for innovative ways to improve what we do.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

14. Treats others with dignity and respect.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

15. Makes sure that people are creatively rewarded for their contributions to the success of our projects.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

16. Asks for feedback on how his/her actions affect other people's performance.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

17. Shows others how their long-term interests can be realized by enlisting in a common vision.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

18. Asks “What can we learn?” when things don’t go as expected.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

19. Supports the decisions that people make on their own.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

20. Publicly recognizes people who exemplify commitment to shared values.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

21. Builds consensus around a common set of values for running our organization.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

22. Paints the “big picture” of what we aspire to accomplish.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

23. Makes certain that we set achievable goals, make concrete plans, and establish measurable milestones for the projects and programs that we work on.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

24. Gives people a great deal of freedom and choice in deciding how to do their work.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

25. Finds ways to celebrate accomplishments.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

26. Is clear about his/her philosophy of leadership.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

27. Speaks with a genuine conviction about the higher meaning and purpose of our work.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

28. Experiments and take risks, even when there is a chance of failure.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

29. Ensures that people grow in their jobs by learning new skills and developing themselves.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

30. Gives the members of the team lots of appreciation and support for their contributions.

**1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10**

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## **Appendix D**

### Researcher Generated Correspondence to Teachers

Contact #1: Forwarded email, by principal, the day before distribution of surveys.

Dear Teachers,

Your district superintendent has given permission to conduct an important research project through the doctoral program at Liberty University. A few days from now you will receive a packet in the mail for an important research project.

I am emailing in advance because people like to know ahead of time they will be contacted. This is an important study. The purpose of this research is to examine the relationship between leadership practices and teacher morale.

Two surveys, in a sealed envelope, will be placed in your box tomorrow. Permission has been granted for you to use your instructional planning time to complete the surveys or you can take them home to complete and mail. Thank you for your time and consideration. It's only with the generous help of people like you that research can be successful.

Sincerely,

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School

P.S. I will be enclosing a small token of appreciation with the surveys as a way of saying thanks.

Contact #2: Cover Letter and Return Postcard Included in Survey Packet, placed in teacher mailboxes on day 3.

(Cover Letter)

September 7, 2011

I am writing to ask for your help in this study, an effort to improve educational leadership practices, by asking you to fill out two enclosed surveys. Your experience and opinion, as a certified teacher, are why you were chosen to be a part of this research.

Results from the surveys will be used to help improve leadership programs and add to a growing body of knowledge concerning the educational leadership practices.

Your answers are completely confidential, released only as summaries, and no participant's answers can be identified in any way. There are no identification numbers of any kind on the surveys or envelopes. However, once you have finished the survey and mailed them back in the enclosed stamped envelope, please sign and return the enclosed stamped postcard *separately* in the mail so I can check your name off of the mailing list.

The survey is voluntary. If for some reason you prefer not to participate, please let me know by returning the blank surveys in the enclosed stamped envelope. However, you can help me very much by taking a few minutes, sharing your perceptions, and mailing the surveys back in the enclosed stamped envelope.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, I would be happy to talk with you. My email address is [Moorenf@spart6.org](mailto:Moorenf@spart6.org) or you can call me at 576-4212 (ext. 4321).

Thank you very much for your help.

Sincerely,

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School

P.S. I have enclosed a small token of appreciation as a way of saying thank you for your help.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Casey Reason, chair of the research committee, at [creason@liberty.edu](mailto:creason@liberty.edu), or the Human Subject Office at 1971 University Blvd, Suite 2400, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or by email at [fgarzon@liberty.edu](mailto:fgarzon@liberty.edu).

(Postcard)

Survey #xxxx

This postcard is being returned to let you know that my surveys have been returned in a separate envelope.

---

Your name (please print)

Thank you very much for helping with this very important study. I really appreciate it.

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School

Contact #3: Postcard placed in teacher mailboxes on day 7.

September 12, 2011

Last week two surveys were placed in your box asking for your perceptions and experiences, as a certified teacher, in the field of education.

Please accept my personal and sincere thanks if you have already completed and returned the surveys. If you did not receive the surveys, or if you have misplaced the surveys and need replacements, please contact me at [Moorenf@spart6.org](mailto:Moorenf@spart6.org) or call 576-4212 (ext. 4321) and I will get another one to you quickly.

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School

Contact #4: Letter with replacement surveys to non-respondents on day 14.

September 26, 2011

(Teacher by name)

Two surveys were placed in your box two weeks ago asking about your opinions and perceptions in educational leadership. To the best of my knowledge, your surveys haven't been returned.

The surveys I've received so far have included very important data describing their experiences and I think the results are going to be vitally important to educational leaders and leadership programs.

I'm writing again asking for your help with this study. In order to get good results your help is very important. The more feedback I receive the more concrete the results.

Participation is completely voluntary. If you prefer not to participate, please let me know by writing your name on the surveys and returning them in the enclosed stamped envelope and I will take your name off the mailing list.

Protecting the confidentiality of the participants is very important to me, as well as Liberty University. The mailing list containing teacher names will be destroyed so that individual names can never be connected to the survey results in any way.

I hope you will fill out and return the surveys soon, but if you prefer not to participate, please let me know by returning the surveys in the enclosed stamped envelope.

Sincerely,

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School

P.S. If you have any questions, please feel free to contact me: [Moorenf@spart6.org](mailto:Moorenf@spart6.org) or 576-4212 (ext. 4321). If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher, you are encouraged to contact Dr. Casey Reason, chair of the research committee, at [creason@liberty.edu](mailto:creason@liberty.edu), or the Human Subject Office at 1971 University Blvd, Suite 2400, Lynchburg, VA 24502 or by email at [fgarzon@liberty.edu](mailto:fgarzon@liberty.edu).

Contact #5: Final contact: forwarded email by principal on day 28.

October 3, 2011

There have been several contacts over the last four weeks concerning the importance of the research I have been conducting through Liberty University's doctoral program.

The study is drawing to a close and this is the last contact. There is still time to return your surveys if you haven't had the opportunity.

In conclusion, I appreciate those who were willing to participate in this research. It was voluntary and I thank you very much for your valuable insight and time.

Sincerely,

Nora Moore, Director  
County Public School