THE RELATIONSHIPS AMONG PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP, SCHOOL CULTURE

AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT IN MISSOURI MIDDLE SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to analyze the relative impact of transformational leadership and school culture on student achievement. The population of this study consisted of 79 middle schools, defined in this study as schools with a grade configuration of 6 through 8, within the state of Missouri. Quantitative data were collected from two instruments, the Principal Leadership Questionnaire (Jantzi & Leithwood, 1996) and the School Culture Survey (Gruenert, 1998), and analyzed to determine if (a) any zero-order or partial correlations existed among the factors of transformational leadership, school culture, and student achievement; (b) if any predictive linear relationships existed between transformational leadership and school culture; (c) if any predictive linear relationships existed between school culture and student achievement; and, (d) if any predictive linear relationships existed between transformational leadership and school culture in combination and student achievement.

The study found, when controlling for socioeconomic status using the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch as the proxy measure, transformational leadership and school culture correlated to student achievement. Using regression analysis, the transformational leadership factors of "Modeling," "Goal Acceptance," and "Individualized Support" were identified as predictors of the school culture factor of

"Collaborative Leadership." The transformational leadership factor "Goal Acceptance" and school enrollment were predictors of the school culture factor of "Teacher Collaboration." The transformational leadership factors "Modeling," "Goal Acceptance," and "Intellectual Stimulation" were predictors of the school culture factor of "Professional Development." The transformational leadership factor "Intellectual Stimulation" and school enrollment were predictors of the school culture factor of "Unity of Purpose." The transformational leadership factor "Goal Acceptance" was a predictor of the school culture factor of "Collegial Support." The transformational leadership factor "Intellectual Stimulation" and the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch were predictors of the school culture factor of "Learning Partnership." The school culture factor of "Learning Partnership" and the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch were predictors of communication arts achievement.