

Public Abstract

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Title:THE INFLUENCE OF PRINCIPAL GENDER, TEACHERS YEARS OF EXPERIENCE, AND RETENTION ON TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP STYLE, QUALITIES, AND JOB SATISFACTION

In present times, education faces many challenges on various fronts. One main challenge for many districts is teacher retention and all the costs associated. Turnover rates cost schools in America over \$7 billion a year. The national averages nearly \$13,000 per teacher. In Missouri the total was over \$43 million for the 4,036 teachers who left the profession and over \$68 million for the teachers who transferred to other schools. This totals over \$111 million. School districts and schools with high teacher turnover rates review principal leadership styles, practices, and teacher job satisfaction when analyzing teacher turnover and its costs. In addition to the monetary cost is the loss of experienced teachers affecting student achievement. Mentoring or role modeling relationships are usually terminated, leading to negative student perceptions of consistency and stability.

This quantitative analysis explored perceptions teachers have about their principals leadership styles, transformational qualities, and job satisfaction as may be influenced by gender, years of experience, and retention. Surveys were given from an online survey website to participating schools. Data was then collected and analyzed. Seven research questions attempted to answer questions from the actual surveys using three researcher-added independent variables and subscale breakdown scores. The intent of this meta-analysis was to help clarify and add to the existing depth of knowledge. A variety of statistical analyses were used to determine if differences existed between the independent variables relating to summary statistics, significances, and subs-scale breakdown. The three independent variables, added by this researcher, in many cases show differences in perceptions and subscale breakdown information.

From the results new learning was obtained adding understanding and knowledge to academia. New knowledge to support practitioners of the Leadership Style Survey is:

1. Teachers perceived the Structural leadership style as the dominant style used by principals.
2. Teachers rated male principals higher on most every leadership style in the areas of: Structural, Human Resource, Symbolic, and Political.
3. Teachers perceive male principals rated higher on most leadership style sub-scales: Analytical, Organized, Supportive, Participative, and Charismatic
4. Mature teachers tend to rate principals lower, and are more critical of principals.
5. Teachers returning rated their principals the highest on leadership styles.
6. Beginning teachers rated principals the highest on transformational sub-scales.

New knowledge to support practitioners of the Principals Leadership Qualities (transformational) Survey is:

1. Teachers perceive that principals use transformational qualities.
2. Teachers reported females were more transformational than males.
3. Teachers observed female principals were more transformational than males of the sub-scale qualities: Vision, Role Model, Group Goals, Support, Stimulation, and Experience.
4. Teachers returning rated their principals the highest on leadership styles.
5. Beginning teachers rate principal transformational sub-scales higher than the other groups

New knowledge to support practitioners of the Job Satisfaction Survey is:

1. Teachers are overall likely to be satisfied in their position.

2. Teachers perceived similar job satisfaction with principals of either gender.
3. Mature teachers tend to rate job satisfaction lower and are more critical of principals.
4. Teachers returning rated their principals the highest on most sub-scales: Communication, Nature of Work, Coworkers, Operating Conditions, Contingent Rewards, Supervision, and Promotion.
5. Teachers perceived principals split by gender equally on the job satisfaction sub-scales. Males (Operating Conditions, Coworkers, Nature of Work, and Communication) Females (Promotion, Supervision, Fringe Benefits, and Contingent Rewards).

The intent of this meta-analysis was to help clarify and add to the existing depth of knowledge. My research is valuable in that information learned about leadership behaviors may help in diagnosing the needs of school environments relating to retention and job satisfaction. Superintendents might adjust principal leadership styles and behaviors through management training and roleplaying to meet needs of specific schools for many reasons. Superintendents should match strengths and weaknesses of potential principal candidates to differing schools and their climates to obtain more success. This would provide the organization a strong, productive, and efficient workforce with more satisfied teachers. My research shows a principal who looks the best strictly on paper may not always be the right candidate.

My recommendations for school boards and superintendents are to evaluate principals on transformational qualities during interviews and/or with questionnaires. They may also start principal training programs to evaluate current principals and transform them through role playing, reflection, and introspection. Principals who match these qualities and use these traits should be a better fit and create higher retention of teachers, thus saving money and training time. Leaders should realize transformational characteristics reflect many attributes and qualities which teacher perceive important in staying at their present location and which impact job satisfaction. Superintendents may re-evaluate putting principals of a certain genders in specific schools due to better fit and cooperation among teachers. They may also re-evaluate putting principals of certain ages into specific schools where the years of experience of teachers might create more cooperation and a better fit. Matching strengths and weaknesses of potential principal candidates to differing schools and their climates should create more overall success. This would provide the organization with a stronger, more productive, and efficient workforce with more satisfied teachers resulting in greater teacher retention.