

Public Abstract

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The study examined the differences between invitational leadership practices of leaders in effective versus less effective schools. Research constructs undergirding the study included: increasing accountability issues, need for effective leadership, organizational health, leader as a change agent, development of school culture, leadership theories, and the need for a new leadership model. The theoretical foundation for this study was leadership theory as viewed through the lens of varying types of leadership models. The study population consisted of 178 teachers and principals in a Midwestern state. All participants were state certified teachers or administrators.

The mixed design study utilized the Principal Perceptions of Leadership Practices and the Teacher Perceptions of Leadership Practices surveys to collect pertinent data, as well as through semi-structured, open-ended interviews.

Study findings revealed that there is a statistical difference between the usages of invitational leadership qualities in effective schools versus less effective schools, while no significant difference exists between the invitational leadership qualities of male and female administrators. Qualitative findings established that teachers believed that the invitational qualities of respect and trust were most influential to creating an effective organization, while principals agreed that trust is the predominant influencing factor. The invitational leadership factor of people proved to be the undisputed choice for teachers and principals when striving to establish an overall effective school organization.

Implications of this research study were identified in the areas of leadership preparatory programs and recruitment, as well as educational reform at the district level.