

ABSTRACT

THE IMPACT OF THE TITLE I PRINCIPAL'S LEADERSHIP STYLE ON THE CLIMATE OF THE SCHOOL

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Principals have become one of the most significant factors that affect student achievement, next to classroom teachers, and the overall success of the school. Principals of Title I schools have the added challenge of serving children from low-income families. Research was conducted to determine the impact that the leadership style of the Title I elementary school's principal has on the climate of the school. The leadership styles that were examined in this study were transformational leadership, transactional leadership, and distributive leadership. Participants of this qualitative phenomenological study include fifteen classroom teachers from two different school sites from the same suburban school district. Participants were asked twelve open-ended questions about their experience with principals' leadership and the impact those principals had on the climate of their school. It was concluded that transformational leadership and distributive leadership had a positive impact on the climate of the Title I elementary schools. During the interview process with regard to transformational and distributive leadership the following themes emerged: positive, collaboration, openness, teamwork, empowering, committees, unified, and valued. Transactional leadership was found to have a negative impact on the climate of the Title I elementary school except for when verbal praise was used. The following themes emerged during the interview process with regard to transactional leadership: principals' failure to consider outside factors, the negative effects of competition and unclear rules, and potential positive effects of verbal praise.