

**TITLE:** Teacher Attitudes of Principal Leadership Practices: Teachers Hired by the Principal vs. Teachers Inherited

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**OBJECTIVE:** The purpose of this study was to examine teachers' perceptions of middle school principals' leadership practices, specifically whether teachers hired under the current principal perceived the leadership practices differently than teachers who were already at the school when the principal was hired.

**METHODOLOGY:** Thirty-eight principals who were members of the Indiana Middle Level Education Association participated in the study (41% of principal members). Each principal requested the entire certified teaching staff to participate, resulting in a population of 969 constituents. A total of 516 completed the LPI-Observer (53% response rate). Teachers were a priori identified as inherited (48%) or not (52%) by the principal. Internal reliabilities in this study generated coefficient alphas of .91 for Challenge and Enable, .92 for Modeling, .93 for Inspiring and .94 for Encouraging.

**KEY FINDINGS:** The principals reported engaging in Enabling most frequently, closely followed by Modeling. Grouped together next were Encouraging and Challenging, and then Inspiring. There was little correlation between the principals' leadership practices scores and those from the teachers (except for challenging and hired teachers, and challenging and inherited teachers). There were strong significant correlations ( $p < .001$ ) between hired and inherited teachers LPI scores. Teachers who were hired by the principal rated the principal higher on each of these leadership practices, with three reaching statistical significance: Challenging, Enabling and Encouraging.

“The findings in this study, teachers hired by the principal perceive the principals' leadership practices more favorably than teachers who were already at the institution. This supports the importance that leaders must become skillful in recognizing and meeting the needs of teachers” (p. 120).