

THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE **research**

THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE	The Effects of Principals' Leadership Practices on School Climate and Student Achievement in Title I Elementary Schools
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OBJECTIVE	The purpose of the study was to examine the effects of principals' leadership practices on school climate and student achievement in large urban high-poverty school district.

METHODOLOGY

The target population consisted of 213 teachers in 13 Title I elementary schools in a large urban school district in west Tennessee (65% response rate). Teachers completed the LPI-Observer and School Climate Inventory (Center for Research in Educational Policy, 2002). Student achievement data (reading and math scores) came from the district's web site, as did information on the number of students receiving free lunch and school enrollment.

KEY FINDINGS

The most frequent leadership practice was Encouraging the Heart, followed closely by Challenging and Inspiring, and then Modeling and Enabling. Using regression analysis, the principals' leadership practices accounted for over 76.6 percent of the variability in overall school climate. In terms of the dimensions of school climate, the five leadership practices accounted for 88.7 percent of the variation in Leadership, 86.4 percent in Collaboration, 81.5 percent in Environment, and 80.5 percent in Instruction. The principals' leadership practices did not have a significant impact on Order, Involvement, and Expectations. In addition, the principals' leadership practices did not have a significant effect on reading and math student achievement.

The author's concludes: "Although there was not a statistically significant relationship found between principals' leadership practices and student achievement, principals should continue to exhibit exemplary leadership practices in order to positively impact school climate; thus, leading to increased student achievement" (p. vii).