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TITLE A Study of the Relationships Between Headmasters' Leadership Behaviors and the Organizational Climate of Independent Schools as Perceived by Teachers

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Unpublished Doctoral Dissertation: May 2006

OBJECTIVE The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which private school leadership practices relate to teacher perceptions of the organizational climate of independent schools.

METHODOLOGY The unit of analysis for this study consisted of all teachers employed in three independent schools within Connecticut (N = 183), of which 99 participated (51% response rate). Participants completed the Observer form of the Leadership Practices Inventory, the Organizational Climate Index (Hoy, 2003) and provided demographic information. The typical teacher (respondent) was female (70%), Caucasian (98%), had a master's degree (69%), and was between 30-50 years of age (50%). Cronbach alpha for Modeling was .78, Inspiring was .86, Challenging was .86, Enabling was .91, and Encouraging was .92. Colinearity diagnostics revealed no significant problems with multicollinearity in this study.

KEY FINDINGS A significant correlation was found between the leadership practices of the headmaster, as perceived by teachers, and the teachers' perception of their organizational climate. Linear regression analysis revealed that nearly 26 percent of the variance around organizational climate could be accounted for by

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the five leadership practices. Stepwise regression indicated that most of this result was around the leadership practice of Challenging the Process. No significant differences were found in perceptions of school climate based upon the background characteristics of the teachers.

The author concludes that “there is indeed an association between what the leader did and how teachers perceived the climate across all levels of the organization with regard to leadership, professional treatment, academic standards, and external influences within the independent school setting” (p. 100). It was recommended that “headmasters obtain a solid foundation in leadership theory and associated research practices used by successful leaders” (p. 114).