

# THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

# research

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- TITLE** A Comparison of the Leadership Practices of Principals of High Schools That Work Schools as Measured by the Leadership Practices Inventory
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Available at [WWW.ACADEMICLEADERSHIP.ORG/ARTICLE/A-COMPARISON-OF-THE-LEADERSHIP-PRACTICES-OF-PRINCIPALS-OF-HIGH-SCHOOLS-THAT-WORK-SCHOOLS-AS-MEASURED-BY-THE-LEADERSHIP-PRACTICES-INVENTORY](http://WWW.ACADEMICLEADERSHIP.ORG/ARTICLE/A-COMPARISON-OF-THE-LEADERSHIP-PRACTICES-OF-PRINCIPALS-OF-HIGH-SCHOOLS-THAT-WORK-SCHOOLS-AS-MEASURED-BY-THE-LEADERSHIP-PRACTICES-INVENTORY)
- OBJECTIVE** This research study sought to determine if the leadership practices of the principals of the higher performing High Schools That Work (HSTW) schools are more transformational than the practices of the moderate and lower performing HSTW schools as measured by the LPI, and to determine if the self-reported leadership practices scores of HSTW principals are different from the expected scores for the leadership practices as measured by the LPI.
- METHODOLOGY** The overall number of schools that were invited to participate in this research was 1,022 of which there were 286 high implementer schools and 736 moderate and low implementer schools. Overall, principals of 12% of the schools and teachers of 4% of the schools responded to the survey. The principal of each school was emailed an introductory letter outlining the study.

The principal was asked to complete a Self version of the LPI and a demographic survey online using SurveyMonkey.com web site to host the surveys. The principal was also asked to randomly select a teacher and forward the email he/she received. The teacher was asked to complete an Observer version of the LPI and demographic survey also on SurveyMonkey.com.

The demographics of the principals of high implementer schools were very similar to the demographics of moderate and low implementer schools. Of the 123 principals who responded with their gender, 37 (30%) were females and 86 (70%) were males. High implementer schools and moderate and low implementer schools gender distribution was very similar. The mean age of the principals was 49.3. The age of high implementer schools was also nearly the same as the age of principals of moderate and low implementer schools. Of the 122 principals who responded with their degree, 98 (80%) had a masters degree and 24 (20%) had a doctorate degree. Moderate and low implementer school principals had nearly twice the percentage and three times the number of principals with a doctorate degree, and fewer principals who had a master's degree as compared to high implementer schools. The principal mean years in predominantly administrative position was 12.9 and the median was 12. High implementer school principals had a slightly higher mean and median number of years of administrative experience as compared to moderate and low implementer schools. The mean years predominantly teaching was 13.0 and median was 12 years. This was very similar for both high and moderate/low implementer schools. Finally, the mean years in current position was 5.3 years and median was 4 years. Principals of high implementer tended to be in their current position on average 2 more years than moderate and low implementer school principals.

## KEY FINDINGS

While high implementer schools scored higher than low and moderate for all leadership practices except Modeling, there were no significant differences between the leadership practices of the three groups. The leadership practices of all HSTW principals were significantly different (higher) than the Kouzes and Posner norms for all five practices. Principal LPI scores were significantly higher than those reported by their constituents (teachers) on all five practices.

Analyses by demographic variables revealed that female principals reported higher leadership scores for Model, Inspire, Challenge and Encourage as compared to male principals, with Inspire and Challenge being statistically significant. The principals with doctorates reported higher leadership scores for all practices, with Inspire and Challenge reaching statistical significance. There were no significant differences in the leadership practices given the number of years in administration, although principals with more than 12 years of administrative experience scored higher for all leadership practices except Model. There were no significant differences in the leadership practices given the number of years a principal was a teacher or given their number of years in administration. There were no significant differences in the leadership practices of principals between urban, suburban, and rural schools.

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