
THE LEADERSHIP CHALLENGE

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THE MOST TRUSTED SOURCE ON BECOMING A BETTER LEADER

TITLE	The Relationship Between California K-12 Principals' Leadership Characteristics and State-Mandated Test Scores
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OBJECTIVE	The purpose of this study is to determine if a causal relationship exists between principal leadership characteristics and student achievement on state mandated tests, and if so, to what extent, using the theoretical framework of Kouzes and Posner (2007).
METHODOLOGY	The participating principals for this study were all employees of a Northern California school district, who had been at their current site as principal for the past two years (N = 75). While 41 completed the Leadership Practices Inventory, only 30 met the length of service criteria. There were 12 male and 18 female principals and their average years of experience in education were 27. Student achievement was assessed in the form of the 2006-2007 school Academic Performance Index (API).
KEY FINDINGS	Principals whose schools met their annual year performance expectations reported using all of the five leadership practices more frequently than did their counterparts whose schools did not meet their AYP expectations;

however, only Model was statistically significant (given the small sample sizes). There were no statistically significant correlations between the API and the five leadership practices.

The author recommends:

Design leadership programs at the university level to train future educational leaders within proven leadership strategies such as model the way. An understanding of proven effective leadership characteristics will enhance the curriculum and practical application of leadership programs. Further to prepare prospective principals for their responsibilities as school leaders, leadership programs, must focus on curriculum that encourages new leaders to speak in a confident unifying voice while modeling the actions they expect from others (p. 97).

Practicing the five leadership qualities of Kouzes and Posner (2007) research, characteristics such as modeling the way, enabling others to act, inspiring a shared vision, challenging the process, and encouraging will allow educational leaders to better lead valuable stakeholders within their given schools. Principals are important leaders who influence not only students, but also staff members and communities (p. 99).