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TITLE A Causal Study Examining How Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, and the Mediating Effects of Teach-Self Efficacy Influence the Math Achievement Scores of Third Through Fifth Grade Students as Measured by the Maryland School Assessment

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OBJECTIVE The purpose of this inquiry was to examine the influences of instructional leadership, transformational leadership, and the mediating effects of teacher self-efficacy on third through fifth grade students' math achievement on the Maryland School Assessment.

METHODOLOGY

The participants in this study included 57 administrators (34 principals and 23 vice principals; response rate = 60%) and 177 third, fourth, and fifth grade math teachers (30% response rate) located in six counties on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. Administrators completed the Leadership Practices Inventory and the Principal Instructional Management Rating Scale (Hallinger, 2008), and teachers completed the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfork Hoy, 2001). The alpha reliability for the 30-item Leadership Practice Inventory, measuring transformational leadership, was 0.96.

KEY FINDINGS

Transformational leadership behaviors had a significant, direct and negative effect on students' achievement. A possible explanation for these unexpected results regarding transformational leadership and achievement, suggests the author:

could be the style versus the organization. Transformational leadership has been viewed as an effective form of leadership in education, especially in the 1990's. The results from this study show that transformational leadership yielded a negative impact on student achievement rather than a positive one which was hypothesized. The negative impact could be contributed to the direct line of communication that has become education in recent years. In recent years, leaders in education have transitioned to becoming more direct with their explanations ranging from content selection to specific teaching pedagogies. As a result of this transition, teachers may have become dependent on this type of directed expectations from administrators. In contrast, transformational leadership does not lend itself to this new culture of thinking in education. This culture shift in education has possibly limited the overall creativity and increased the dependence of teachers on leaders. Transformational leadership lends itself to motivating the hearts and minds of the followers. It does lend itself specifically to the educational component that is needed to increase student achievement. This may be the underlying rationale as to why transformational leadership had a significant, but negative impact on students' math achievement scores (p. 123).

Teacher self-efficacy did not mediate either instructional or transformational leadership when applied to student math achievement.