

THE EFFECT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER EFFICACY AND
SCHOOL CLIMATE: A STRUCTURAL MODELING APPROACH

A Dissertation

by

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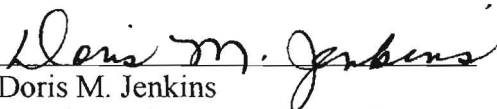
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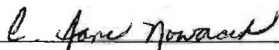
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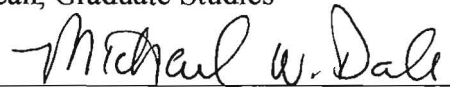
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ABSTRACT

THE EFFECT OF INSTRUCTIONAL LEADERSHIP ON TEACHER EFFICACY AND

SCHOOL CLIMATE: A STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING APPROACH.

(November, 1996)

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The focus of this study was the development of a theoretically informed structural model that specified linkages among actions of the principal as instructional leader as perceived by teachers, level of teacher efficacy and health of school climate. Each linkage in this model implicitly represented a hypothesis tested by estimating the magnitude of the relationships among the constructs of instructional leadership, teacher efficacy and school climate. The hypotheses of this study were as follows: (a) instructional leadership has a direct causal effect on level of teacher efficacy; (b) instructional leadership has a direct causal effect on school climate; and (c) teacher efficacy has a direct causal effect on school climate. The primary theories supporting this study included those found in research and literature on instructional leadership such as: Sergiovanni's (1990) five tier hierarchy of leadership forces; Herzberg's (1964) hygiene factors; McGregor's (1967) theories of X and Y leadership styles; and Hallinger and Murphy's (1985) theoretical framework of instructional leadership behaviors. Theories of self-efficacy, attribution, personal causation, and expectation support the constructs of teacher efficacy and school climate

within this study. The guiding theoretical framework for this study presupposes that:

(a) a teacher's level of teacher efficacy determines the extent of engagement in instructional practices demonstrating levels of commitment, persistence, and expectations for student achievement; (b) school climate is determined in part by the extent to which teachers engage in these instructional practices; (c) school climate is enhanced further by the policies set by the principal; and consequently, (d) teacher efficacy and school climate within the school are functions of teachers' perceptions of the frequency of specific behaviors of the principal in the role of instructional leader. A sample of 717 teachers representing 224 public schools from across the state of North Carolina responded to 110 items of a self-reporting instrument. This instrument was composed of three different scales with items determined a priori to be associated with each construct. An exploratory factor analysis found that scores from items loaded onto sixteen variables. These variables were then used as indicators of the three latent constructs or factors of the model. EQS software was used to build the theoretical model and analyze the data. Indicators of goodness of fit, the Comparative Fit Index (.999), average off-diagonal covariance residual (0.0194), and chi-square statistic, supported acceptable goodness of fit between the restricted or predicted structure of the hypothesized model and sample data provided. The model chi-square ($102, N = 717$) = 111.741, $p = 0.239$ compared favorably with the independent chi-square ($120, N = 717$) = 9205.925 reported for the null hypothesis or independence model. Discussions of alternative models explored and analyzed are included in this study. It was concluded that the hypotheses of this study were supported by the data. It was further concluded that level of teacher efficacy has a stronger direct causal effect on school climate than does instructional leadership. Practical implications of this study are discussed along with recommendations for further study.