

ABSTRACT

Gonzalez, J.A., *Measures of Leadership Styles, School Climate and Student Behavior in District Alternative Education Programs*. Doctor of Education (Ed.D.), May 2008, 152 pp., 94 tables, 108 references.

The purpose of this study is to provide a description of various leadership styles of principals, the school climate and student behavior in select DAEPs across the Rio Grande Valley.

Three methods of data collection, through the usage of two instruments, were used in this study. The first instrument, MLQ-Form 5X-Short was utilized to identify a principals' perceived leadership style. The second instrument, the *Organizational Climate Description Questionnaire*, was selected to measure the teachers' perception of school climate within their respective district alternative education program. Additionally, the following existing school data were collected over a six-week period from the campus PEIMS records: average daily attendance (ADA), the number of mandatory/discretionary discipline referrals processed and the number of discretionary removals to the Justice Juvenile Education Program (JJAEP).

The scoring of the two instruments was performed in accordance with the directions included in the manuals for each of the instruments. Validity and reliability were checked using the study sample. The analysis consisted of descriptive statistical

analyses that targeted principal leadership style, school climate and the student behavior of each respective DAEP in the study. The MLQ (5x Short) was used to measure perceived leadership style. The OCDQ-RE was used to analyze the perceived school climate of each DAEP. Finally, student behavior was measured using a PEIMS Questionnaire developed by the researcher.

The findings of this study describe how leadership, school climate and student behavior vary from one DAEP to another. The data revealed that the predominant leadership style for principals in the study was a transformational leadership style with one attribute of transactional leadership (contingent reward). In the area of school climate the data revealed that three DAEPs had a positive school climate, two had average school climates and one had a negative school climate. The data pointed out that a transformational leadership style with one attribute of transactional leadership (contingent reward) produced a positive school climate and positive student behavior. Finally, the results indicated that a negative school climate produced a low attendance rate and led to the highest rate of discretionary and mandatory discipline referrals, with one exception: One school had a positive school climate while producing a low attendance rate and a high number of discipline infractions.