



An Exploration of Leadership Behaviors that Impact Teacher Motivation

By

Marvin H. Jeter, III

Statement of the Problem

The problem lies in the need for a model or framework of clearly defined behaviors that are likely to motivate teachers to offer quality instruction with research-based strategies or interventions.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to generate a grounded theory and subsequently to develop a theoretical framework of leadership behaviors that affect the motivation of teachers.

Significance of the Study

The significance of a study devoted to identifying behaviors that motivate teachers is the resulting knowledge base that connects the best practices of organizational management with the innovations of classroom instructional delivery.

Review of the Literature

. . . limited hard research has been published to support the effectiveness of applying . . . theories in producing motivated teachers . . .

– Leithwood & Duke, 1999

Review of the Literature

- Early Theories Relative to Educational Leadership
- Related Theories & Studies in Business Leadership
- Recent Findings in Educational Leadership

“the opinions of roles and responsibilities of educational leaders are shifting” –

Therefore, research-based operational definitions of what leader motivation ‘looks like’ could help leaders be more successful in ‘more difficult to lead and improve schools.’ ”

No Child Left Behind

Selection of Participants

- 3 of the 12 schools winning awards from MDE for “Closing the Achievement Gap” (November, 2003) consented to participate per Superintendent and Principal permission
- Principals were asked to identify 2 to 3 motivated and 2 to 3 unmotivated teachers to invite to participate in the study.
- 15 Teachers participated according to the directives of informed consent and informed right of refusal according to the standard ethics of research involving human subjects.

Collection of the Data

- Interviews – location of comfort
 - Typical Behaviors – words, actions, expressions (verbal & nonverbal)
 - Motivating Behaviors
 - Subsequent Feelings & Effects on Instruction
 - Un-motivating Behaviors
 - Subsequent Feelings & Effects on Instruction
- Recorded, Transcribed, & Validated

Analysis of the Data

- Figure 1
 - Open Coding – Categorizing Themes
 - Axial Coding – Interconnecting Themes
- Figure 2
 - Thematic Analysis – Exploring Theory Alignment
- Figure 3
 - Grounded Theory Generated – Basing Upon:
 - Data Collected
 - Themes Identified
 - Motivational Theory Alignment

Summation

- The participating teachers felt that their leaders demonstrated a set of behavior patterns that embraced all of the motivating themes through explicit and implicit behaviors.
- No single theme was isolated as the pivotal theme and the combination of the themes crafted a motivating culture for learning.
- For teachers who have already achieved success and attained self-actualization, the unmotivating behaviors could not lead them to do a lesser quality of instruction as they were intrinsically motivated at that point.
- They did suggest that such behaviors could cause a veteran to retire earlier or to transfer to another school.

Recommendations for Further Study

- Return to interview principals
 - to ascertain if the motivating behaviors are conscious or unconscious patterns
- Replicate at schools labeled as unsuccessful
 - to explore teacher perceptions of unmotivating behaviors
 - to ascertain intentions of leaders
- Peer-to-peer coaching with leaders
 - to consider pairing successful with unsuccessful leaders
- Replicate at middle and high school levels

An Exploration of Leadership Behaviors that Impact Teacher Motivation

By
Marvin H. Jeter, III

Donna Lander, PhD, Chair
Rannie Lewis, PhD, Cognate Member
Darlene Thurston, PhD, Statistician
Ron Walker, PhD, Department Member