

Abstract

The problem of higher than desired teacher turnover has plagued many school systems for many decades. The teachers who participated in this survey were all from one school district in Central Texas. The purpose of this quantitative non-experimental survey research was to test the theories of transformational, transactional, and passive-avoidant leadership by comparing for differences in the transactional, transformational, or passive-avoidant leadership traits perceived by the teacher from their principal to the stated retention intentions for teachers at a single school district. The level of the presence of each of these leadership traits in the perception of the follower was measured using the Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (Form 5X Short) instrument (MLQ5X) by Avolio and Bass (2004) with an added question to assess retention intent. The primary procedure used in this study is the one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). This research study used a confidence level of 95% and a confidence interval of 10%.

Whereas contingent reward works on positive reinforcement in the form of leader exchanges of rewards and/or recognition for effort, management by exception is based on negative reinforcement (Avolio et al., 1999) and involves the leaders' critiquing undesired follower behavior actively, in which the leader actively looks for behaviors that need to be addressed (Avolio et al., 1999). The split among the two traits associated with transactional leadership style may explain why the transactional leadership style failed to demonstrate a significant relationship with teacher retention intentions in this study. It is noted that the results of this analysis demonstrated that the more positive form of transactional characteristic of contingent reward was positively related to retention, while the negative characteristic was related to teacher turnover, suggesting that the more positive environment promotes retention.