ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

THE IMPACT OF PRINCIPAL LEADERSHIP CHARACTERISTICS ON TEACHER

MORALE IN THE CYBER SCHOOL

by

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The purpose of this quantitative study was to measure, understand, and identify the principals'

leadership characteristics contributing to the level of cyber teacher morale in K-12 cyber schools

located within Arizona, Ohio, and Oklahoma. The literature review identifies and discusses

various theories of leadership, yet little research has been conducted specifically for teachers

working in a fully cyber environment, where there is not a specific physical building where the

teachers and principal congregate daily to interact with and teachstudents. Information obtained

from cyber teachers and principals in this study related to the level of teacher morale and specific

principal leadership characteristics that are the greatest indicator of high morale. All cyber

teachers participating in this study completed the *Purdue Teacher Opinionaire* assessment which

assessed ten specific factors relating to teacher morale. Next, the same group of cyber teachers

completed the *Excellent Principal Inventory* which assessed principal leadership characteristics within thirteen individual areas. The overall goal of this study was to obtain understanding of the factors and leadership practices contributing to cyber teacher morale. The results of this study indicated a strong correlation relating to the relationship between teachers, principals, and peers. Cyber teachers with the highest levels of morale ranked the area of teacher rapport with principal as the primary driver for high morale, followed closely by the rapport among teachers. Cyber teachers did indicate that details relating to 'red tape' and clerical work contributed to a lower level of morale among the staff. Teacher salary was not an indicator of morale, neither positive nor negative, among cyber teachers.