

## **ABSTRACT**

School systems are organizations that feature various stakeholders that include principals, teachers, students, parents and community members who function interdependently to achieve a common goal. This study aims to develop and validate a mediated-effects model for conceptualizing the leadership styles of principals and its effect on the work behavior of teachers and student achievement in Indian secondary schools. School leadership is hypothesized as a multi-dimensional construct that is anchored by the two most dominant leadership styles of principals, namely, transformational and instructional. A conceptual model is developed after a thorough literature review to identify the underlying processes through which principals impact student outcomes. The model includes aspects of the context, of antecedent conditions, and the school mission and culture. Structural equation modeling was applied to test the model, using cross-sectional survey data (306 schools, 1539 teachers) collected from secondary schools in urban India. The results showed a small positive effect of principal leadership on student achievement, mediated by the school climate and culture as well as favorable classroom conditions. No indications of significant direct positive effects of the leadership styles of the principal on student achievement were found. Results also showed weak but significant indirect effects of principal leadership on the organizational citizenship behavior, job satisfaction, absenteeism, turnover intentions, and counterproductive work behavior of teachers. Principal's instructional leadership appears to be the predominant style, when compared to its transformational counterpart. By identifying the relative effects of different leadership practices, school leaders and educational practitioners can focus more on altering the distribution and frequency of those practices that work best for ameliorating student achievement levels. Taking into account the manifold complexities facing Indian secondary schools today, the study may aid policy makers to have a fair understanding of the various crucial contextual factors necessary for a healthy and conducive learning environment.

**Keywords: Instructional Leadership, Transformational Leadership, Organizational Behavior, Student Achievement, Mediated-Effects Model**