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Title of Study: SCHOOL LEADERSHIP AND SPIRITUALITY: PERSPECTIVES OF SPIRITUALITY AND SPIRITUALITY’S INFLUENCE ON PRINCIPALS IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN SOUTHEASTERN LOUISIANA

Pages in Study: 137

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The purpose of this study was to investigate K–12 public school principals’ in southeastern Louisiana perception of spirituality. The researcher attempted to identify the role spirituality plays in the lives of principals, if and how spirituality is used to fulfill the duties associated with being a school principal, if and how spirituality is used as a coping mechanism, if and how spirituality is used to form and maintain relationships, and whether there are leadership traits that principals attribute to their spirituality.

The researcher utilized a sequential triangulation mixed-method research design. The quantitative instrument that was utilized was the Assessment of Spirituality and Religious Sentiments. The survey consisted of two parts: (a) a religiosity scale to measure the religious involvement and beliefs and (b) the Spiritual Transcendence Scale. A
phenomenological case study made up the qualitative component of the study. The data were triangulated to pinpoint, organize, and encapsulate the practices by which principals demonstrated their spirituality in their leadership roles.

Eighty-one principals participated in the survey and 58 (72%) of the 81 principals were identified as having high spiritual transcendence. Furthermore, principals in southeastern Louisiana were found to utilize their spirituality in their day-to-day lives as school leaders. Principals described specific practices, coping mechanisms, leadership traits, establishment of relationships, and decision making, and how spirituality plays a role in each.

Principals rely on spirituality to fulfill their role as school leaders. Spirituality helps principals establish and maintain relationships, make decisions, cope with the job-related stress, and foster positive leadership traits.

Several recommendations arose from this study. The first recommendation is to replicate this study in other regions of the state and nation to increase the generalizability of the study. The second recommendation is to study if spiritual principals are more successful than nonspiritual principals. The third recommendation is to replicate the study to see if principals’ spirituality is affected by age. The fourth recommendation is to replicate the study with a greater exploration placed on race, gender, and spirituality.