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LS 703

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**Dissertation Review**

**Introduction:**

The dissertation I reviewed is *Demystifying Teacher Leadership In Comprehensive High Schools* by Robert J. Fraser. It is a study of how instructional leadership positions, both formal and informal, are viewed both by those who hold them and by their peers. It explores the background of leaders and non-leaders and how each of these groups view teacher leadership opportunities, authority, and skills.

**Chapter One: Introduction and Purpose of the Dissertation:**

The background information for the study is presented in the form of a summary of past research in the area of teacher leadership and the deficiencies in the available data. The given rationale for the study is expressed through the lack of data in this particular area of research. The author is clear that the purpose of the study is to gauge how instructional leadership is executed by teachers in comprehensive high schools and to determine why informal leaders are recognized as such by their peers in this situation. What the study hopes to accomplish and by whom the results will be found useful isn't clearly stated in the beginning of the dissertation.

**Chapter Two: Literature Review:**

The literature review seems exhaustive, but it still leaves the reader a little baffled as to what exactly the writer's purpose is. It is well organized, as far as the flow of information is concerned, but does not form a cohesive theme. The literature review includes no summary.

**Chapter Three: Methods:**

This study is a mixed methods study by means of a quantitative survey which leads to qualitative interviews with a chosen sample. There is evidence of surveying and interviewing being done by the researcher. The researcher includes copies of his survey tool and interview results in the study.

The two schools researched in the study are described in terms of achievement and demographic data. Every teacher in each school was surveyed to identify teacher leaders in their respective schools. The teacher leaders identified then became the sample to be researched further by being interviewed. The survey questions used to form the sample are clearly defined. The survey consisted of three open ended questions and thirteen closed ended questions designed to ascertain the background of each participant. The researcher does not articulate how participants will complete and return the surveys. No follow-up procedures are listed. The sample selection technique does seem to have produced an appropriate sample, but the bias of the sample is not proven.

The research participants are asked to sign a form titled "*Informed Consent for Participants*" which detailed how their rights would be maintained throughout the research and how no information they provided would be used for any unstated purpose. The study does not mention IRB approval.

**Chapter Four: Findings:**

The results of the study are clear and understandable. Both of the research questions were fully developed and answered according to the study. All data presented in tables were discussed in the accompanying text where they were found.

**Chapter Five: Summary, Conclusions, Discussion, and Recommendations:**

The summaries for each of the two research questions do provide a reasonably comprehensive overview of the study. The summaries are either too long or too detailed to be useful. The conclusions are broad generalizations based on the findings of the study. Implications for use of the data are presented for formal and informal teacher leaders separately. Possible limitations of the study results are also presented. Recommendations for future research are made. These recommendations are based on the limitations of the study previously discussed or questions raised by the results of the study.