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The impact of democracy on leadership and management styles in primary schools in the city of Johannesburg : a case study in the Gauteng Porvince of South Africa.

Vergie, Claude

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Abstract

This study explored the impact of democracy on the leadership and management styles in two previously coloured primary schools in Johannesburg, Gauteng Province of South Africa. The report uses a case study as well as an interactive qualitative analysis research methodology. It explores how principals and educators use post-apartheid legislation policies and practices to address complex challenges in order to effect change. I argue that despite tensions between coloured and black educators, change is evident. The people learn to work together, respect each other and forge ahead. These challenges brought about by desegregation contribute to shaping a future non-racial, non-sexist South Africa. We see how mentalities of superiority and inferiority play itself out and how one group exercises its hegemony over another sometimes reflecting the social constructs of society during apartheid.

The findings reveal that the Constitution of South Africa (1996) and the South African Schools Act (SASA) (1996) are not used sufficiently and substantively to influence change. Discretion and common sense are often used to resolve problems and to find each other. Desegregation and integration create a space where tolerance, acceptance and forgiveness have been able to be practiced in different ways. The leaders have worked with their staff, students and communities to make headway on the path from the received apartheid past to a brighter more integrated future." While schools discuss embracing the ten fundamental values of the Constitution of South Africa, living up to them continues to remain a challenge in practice.