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THE VOICES OF GRADE 11 LEARNERS ATTENDING OUTREACH PROGRAMMES OF TWO JOHANNESBURG INDEPENDENT SCHOOLS

by

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ABSTRACT

In an attempt to make a small contribution to the broader educational landscape in South Africa, as well as to fulfil their Corporate Social Investment (CSI) requirements, many independent schools have embarked on a form of academic outreach initiative. This study considered two such initiatives at Johannesburg independent schools which select learners from specific high schools to attend each respective academy in the afternoons. The views of those participating in such endeavours are not often heard. This study, which is qualitative in nature and phenomenological in design, used individual interviews and focus group interviews to explore the voices of Grade 11 learners involved in the two academies. The data obtained through this voice research indicated that the experiences of the learners fell into two broad themes, namely, opportunities and challenges. The nuances of the opportunities and challenges experienced by the learners attending the academies determined the level of marginalisation or inclusion the learners encountered. As a result of the voices of the participants in this study and findings from related literature it was ascertained that such outreach academies had a significant impact on their learners, particularly in terms of their personal development yet, nevertheless, had a number of limitations.

Key words:

inclusive education, inclusion/exclusion, marginalisation, outreach, voice research