

https://dspace.org/

Successful school leadership practices in challenging contexts : case studies of three township secondary schools.

Mbokazi, Zakhele

2015-05-22
http://hdl.handle.net/10539/17829

Downloaded from a DSpace repository. https://dspace.org/

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to explore successful leadership practices in challenging circumstances. The case studies were three Soweto township secondary schools and the study looked at the ways in which principals and other leaders achieved results, despite the socio-economic difficulties facing their schools.

The study used a case study method and it was situated in the conceptual framework of Leithwood et al's (2009) which proposes four core practices of successful principals. The framework formed the basis for understanding whether successful school principals applied these core practices in responding to their learners' challenging contexts. Data sources included interviews, informal discussions and focus groups. The participants included principals, other members of the school management teams, teachers and parents. Using thematic content analysis, the following recurrent themes emerged: (a) A central focus on managing teaching and learning (b) the creation of a positive school culture of high-performance and (c) development and sustenance of *relationships within (and outside) the school community.*

The successful school leadership practices explored in this study revealed that there were three discernible ways to characterise leadership practices in the case schools: Principal-driven success; participative leadership, driven by senior management, and teacher-led success.