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The value of a shared vision at the school of opportunity

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The Value of a Shared Vision at the School of Opportunity

A thesis submitted to the School of Education, Faculty of Humanities, University of the Witwatersrand in fulfillment of the requirements of the degree of Master of Education (Leadership and Management)

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DECLARATION

I, hereby, acknowledge that this research report is my own, unaided work. It is submitted for the degree of Masters of Education in Educational Leadership at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted before for any other degree or examination at any other university.

_____ _____

Julie Jane Penrose Date

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I would like to extend a heartfelt “Thank You” to the following individuals and organisations who have contributed to this study and made this research dissertation possible:

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“Thank you”

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandmother, Jean Mackay Penrose, who inspired me to be the teacher that I am today. Her reputation as a teacher outlived her, and she is remembered for her personal contribution to many people's lives;

And to my extraordinary family: my dad, mum and sister, who have always had faith in me and supported me in my studies.

"A great leader's courage to fulfill his vision comes from passion, not position"

- *John Maxwell Quotes - n21paul*

ABSTRACT

This qualitative research report explores the effect that a strong school vision, which is followed and utilised in accordance with a considered holistic leadership practice, can have in supporting a previously disadvantaged school in Gauteng towards success. Despite the challenging circumstances in which that school functions, this study explores how leadership can help to propel the school forward.

It has been completed using the interpretive methodology of Portraiture, which is the combination of systematic, empirical description and aesthetic expression, to "paint" a portrait of the chosen township school in Johannesburg and its principal. The school is a no-fees school situated amidst the informal settlement situated next to an industrial district and which caters to the children of that area.

The researcher used the analytic frames from Senge's Learning Organisation (1990) and the description of "Schools that Work" from the same titled ministerial report by Christie, Butler and Potterton (2007) to illustrate why this school functions at such a high level. The characteristics of this school and its principal, observed by the researcher, echo the characteristics of "Schools that Work" and the principles of a Learning Organisation.

The principal's leadership style is based on mentorship and the relationships fostered at the school. It is discussed in relation to the literature of Attuned Leadership (Khoza, 2011), Passionate Leadership (Brighouse, 2008) and Holistic Leadership (Loock et al., 2003).

Key Words:
Vision Statement
Mission Statement
Learning Organisation
Schools That Work
Principalship
Schools in Challenging Circumstances
Relationship Based Leadership
Passionate Leadership
Holistic Leadership
Change

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