

Abstract

Principal Leadership Practices and Student Outcomes in a Primary School –

A Case Study of Three Principals

The study seeks to understand the individual practices of three principals and the student outcomes which they promoted. Applying a qualitative, multi-case approach, it analyses the perceptions of the principals and samples of teachers and parents to learn how the principals confronted challenges of underperformance in a small, rural school. The emergent study uncovered several dimensions of leadership which were explored- visioning, instructional leadership, professional development, leadership roles, interpersonal relations, parental involvement- and conceptions of student outcomes. The findings revealed variations in the practices of the principals. Principal I was bureaucratically- inclined; Principal II was oriented towards human relations and Principal III was professionally-oriented. The incorporation of the findings with a review of the literature pointed to the adequacies and inadequacies in their leadership practices to meet their contextual demands. The study sees the need for further research into similar school types to empower principals with the knowledge, skills and competencies to address the needs of their schools.

Keywords: leadership, student outcomes, vision, empower, professional learning communities, role construct, self efficacy, trust, interpersonal relations.