Narratives of a Disadvantaged Educational Landscape in South Africa

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Abstract

Educational leadership in rural settings in South African schools relies on relational leadership and emotional labour. This inquiry draws on 5 years of in-depth conversations that speak to leadership experiences of hope and anticipation, and later to despair and disillusionment. I worked with two school principals, one black male and one black female from two rural and disadvantaged schools in South Africa. Over time the narratives changed, from hope of the challenges the school principals experienced to the point of resignation. The relatedness and care were overcome by the educational challenges, such as severe hunger and poverty, orphaned learners, girl pregnancy, boy initiation, rape, corrupt teachers and Satanism. Both principals began their principalship with hope, care and passion and one resigned from his position for a spiritual calling as pastor. Theoretically, this inquiry draws on the theory of relational leadership, emotional labour and methodologically on narrative inquiry.

References


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