

The Perceptions of South African Classroom Teachers with Regard to the Role of Distributed Leadership in School Improvement

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ABSTRACT The concept of shared or distributed leadership becomes vital in a system of school-based management. In this process classroom teachers can play an important role in improving teaching and learning through participation in distributed leadership. But what are the perceptions of classroom teachers with regards to the role of leadership distribution in school improvement? This paper reports on a qualitative study on distributed leadership undertaken in the KwaZulu-Natal province of South Africa. Ten ethnographic interviews were conducted with teachers from five effective, functional schools to establish the perceptions of classroom teachers with regard to the effectiveness of distributed leadership and its effect on school improvement in their schools. The outcomes of this study show that distributed leadership contributes to improvements in teaching and learning in effective schools. This is of importance to all school leaders as the outcomes provide guidelines on how distributed leadership can be used to improve schools globally.