

Full text open access online (Since 2009)

©  Kamla-Raj IJES 2023

PRINT: ISSN 0975-1122 ONLINE: ISSN 2456-6322

Int J Edu Sci, 40(1-3): 56-67 (2023)

DOI: 10.31901/24566322.2023/40.1-3.1261

## **Leadership Styles of Principals with High Levels of Learners' Academic Performance Compared To Low Levels in Rural Secondary Schools in South Africa<sup>1</sup>**

**Mabandla Nonyashe<sup>1,\*</sup>, Christabel Dudu Mantlana<sup>2</sup> and Owen Madalambana<sup>3</sup>**

<sup>1</sup>*Walter Sisulu University, Faculty of Educational Sciences, Nelson Mandela Drive, Mithatha, South Africa*

*Contact: +27 82 931 0597, E-mail: nonyashem@gmail.com*

<sup>2</sup>*Walter Sisulu University, Faculty of Education, Department of Technology and Mathematics Education, Butterworth, Eastern Cape, South Africa, 4960*

*Contact: +27 71 365 2609, E-mail: cmantlana@wsu.ac.za*

<sup>3</sup>*Walter Sisulu University, Faculty of Education and School Development, Queenstown, South Africa*

*Contact: +27 73 179 6558, E-mail: omadalambana@wsu.ac.za*

**KEYWORDS** Accountability. Effective Teaching and Learning. Functional Schools. Leadership Styles. Quality Learner Output. School Leadership

**ABSTRACT** There has been general underperformance in secondary schools in rural areas of Eastern Cape, South Africa. The paper aimed to identify commonly used leadership styles of principals with high levels of learners' academic performance compared to those with low levels in four rural secondary schools. Qualitative research approach and case study research design were used. Four conveniently selected schools were used, from each school, four principals, four departmental heads and four post level one teachers were purposively selected to make twelve participants. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews. Findings revealed that all school principals use a mixture of leadership styles like laissez faire, democratic, autocratic, instructional, transactional and transformational, in their quest to make their schools perform better. It is recommended that the Department of Basic Education capacitates rural secondary school principals in all areas of performance. Only competent people of strong character should be appointed to the principalship position.