

Leadership Identities, Attributes and Roles of Primary School Principals: A South African Case Study

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ABSTRACT This study explores how primary school principals describe their leadership identities, their best attributes and their perceived key roles and responsibilities. Although there is a great deal of literature regarding what is expected of school principals, little is known about how they perceive their roles and responsibilities. The participants in the study included fifteen primary school principals from Limpopo and Mpumalanga Provinces in South Africa. Semi-structured interviews were used to generate data. The findings from this study indicate that the best personal attributes of the principals have an influence on their self-perception as leaders and on how they describe their relationships with other stakeholders. The principals in this study identified curriculum implementation as their key responsibility even though they do not see themselves as instructional leaders.