

Does Mentorship Add Value to In-service Leadership Development for School Principals? Evidence from South Africa

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ABSTRACT Leadership development has become topical as a means towards growing future leaders. However, what pedagogies and learning methods produce effective leaders remains contested. In South Africa, the National Department of Education has rolled out an Advanced Certificate in Education in School Leadership targeted initially at practising school principals. It combines a content and process rich programme involving work-based learning and employs mentoring as a development tool. In this paper the researchers report on a study of mentors' experiences of their role as leadership developers and through this evidence explore the potential that mentoring has as a leadership development strategy. The researchers adopted a qualitative methodological approach involving semi-structured interviews with six purposively selected mentors. The data was analysed using Krueger's 'framework analysis'. Findings suggest that mentoring practising school principals is a valuable but very sensitive matter requiring careful selection of the mentor and mentoring approaches.