

## **Teacher-Learners' Search for Relevance: Lessons from a Principals' Leadership/Management Qualification in South Africa**

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**ABSTRACT** The attempts to expand higher education in South Africa is yielding a number of benefits. The historically disadvantaged are finding paths to higher education institutions gradually opening. With calls for relevant and competitive curricula, formal education is also expected to respond to local challenges as it moulds well-rounded lifelong learners. A number of current practice-based teacher programmes have been introduced and these are geared towards the attainment and enhancement of professional development. In certain instances though, there are challenges that pervade as some students maintain that their needs are not entirely addressed by institutions of higher learning. This paper explores findings of a qualitative study that focused on school principals who were candidates in the practice based Advanced Certificate in Education - School Management and Leadership (ACE-SML) qualification. Many, from three universities under investigation, were frequently daunted by the institutions of higher learning that did not always address their immediate needs.