

New Kids on the Block: Novice Teachers and Teacher Leadership

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ABSTRACT There is widespread belief that the quality of leadership at a school makes a significant difference to school effectiveness. When this leadership is stretched across the school to include teachers in the practice of leadership, more favourable learner outcomes result. Given this, the present research attempts to examine and investigate the experiences of novice teachers with regard to teacher leadership. Two key questions inform this research namely, how teacher leadership is enacted by novice teachers and what support do novice teachers receive from the formally appointed leaders in enacting their roles as teacher leaders. Theoretically, distributed leadership and Grant's framework on teacher leadership underpin this research. Located within the interpretive research paradigm, the present research, reports on a qualitative case study of one high school. Semi-structured interviews, focus group discussions and document analysis were methods used to produce data. The school principal, five novice teachers and two senior teachers were purposively selected as participants for the study. The data generated was analysed using Grant's framework. The results suggest that the enactment of leadership by novice teachers is more predominant in the zone of the classroom. As we move away from the classroom teacher leadership is less prevalent. It is therefore recommended that empowerment programs be put in place to capacitate school management teams on issues around novice teachers and teacher leadership.