Teachers’ experiences of caring school leadership in the South African context

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Structure

• Introduction
• Problem and purpose
• Research aims
• Research design and methodology
• Research findings
• Recommendations
Introduction

• The management/leadership style of the principal is one of the factors that determines the climate in the school and influences the educator’s experience of the quality of his/her working life.

• The emphasis in school educational management is moving from a planning, organising, guiding/leading and control function to also include a more supportive role.

• Teachers and students alike work better when they are cared about. Educators also experience greater levels of job satisfaction when they are cared for and supported by the principal.

Problem and Purpose

The caring role of the principal specifically with regard to the educator have not been researched, and there is very little literature or documentation on this topic.

This research pivoted around the problem:

Do all educators experience caring leadership in primary schools in the North-West province of South-Africa?
Research Aims

From the problem, the research aims crystallised, namely:

1. To describe the nature and the determinants of the caring role of the principal with regard to the educator.

2. Secondly, to determine empirically to which extent school principals fulfill their caring role with regard to educators in primary schools of the North-West Province

   2.1 To determine whether there were practical significant differences between the teacher’s experience of care and the principal’s care giving.

   2.2 To determine whether there were specific determinants which were not addressed adequately by the principal or experienced optimally by the educators.

Research Design and Methodology

- Quantitative approach: Embedded in the Post-Positivistic paradigm
- Non-Experimental: Survey
- Instrument:
  - A questionnaire was developed using the determinants as identified with the literature study.
  - 66 items, which allowed for four response options.
  - Separate questionnaires for principals and educators

Validity:
- Content validity
- Face validity
- Construct validity
  » Pilot Study
  » Factor analysis (3 factors identified correlated with the 3 main determinants identified from the literature)
- Reliability: Cronbach-alpha coefficient ranged between 0.83 and 0.91 (> 0.7)
Research Design and Methodology (Continue)

• Population:
  Educators & principals of primary schools in North-West Province, RSA

• Sampling:
  – A systematic stratified cluster sample of primary schools in the North-West Province
  – Subjects:
    • Principals: n = 65
    • Educators: n = 1041

• Data analysis:
  – Descriptive statistics:
  – Inferential statistics:

Results/Findings

Research aim 1
To describe the nature the caring role of the principal with regard to the educator.

• the following became evident from the literature:
  – The caring role is embedded in love for others. “An unlimited loving kindness towards all others”
  – The caring role finds its roots in the human capital theory.
  – The caring role only manifests in management/leadership styles where people in the organisation is regarded as important.

To identify and describe the determinants of the caring role of the principal with regard to the educator.

• identified from literature and classified as:
  – Psychological determinants
  – Organisational (workplace) determinants and
  – Management determinants
Results/Findings (Continue)

2.1 To determine whether there were practical significant differences between the teacher’s experience of care and the principal’s care giving.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Determinants</th>
<th>AVG</th>
<th>S.D</th>
<th>p - Value</th>
<th>d - Value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Psychological</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3.512</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td>1.20***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>3.030</td>
<td>0.393</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workplace</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3.546</td>
<td>0.296</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td>1.12***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>3.185</td>
<td>0.412</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Management</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3.674</td>
<td>0.264</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td>1.41***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>3.104</td>
<td>0.405</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caring role</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Principals</td>
<td>3.611</td>
<td>0.238</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
<td>1.30***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educators</td>
<td>3.111</td>
<td>0.385</td>
<td>&lt;0.0001</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Results/Findings (Continue)

2.2 To determine whether there were specific determinants which were not addressed adequately by the principal or experienced optimally by the educators.

- The following table shows the 10 items contributing the least to a positive experience of care by educators.

- The majority of items that contributed the least to a positive rating of care by teachers addressed psychological determinants of care (B2; B13; B4; B6; B10; B19; B8).

- The other three addressed management determinants (B63; B44; B58).

- From this it can be deduced that teachers' rated the psychological care that they experience, more negative than the workplace/organizational and management aspects of care.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Rank</th>
<th>Item/Item no.</th>
<th>My principal........</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Not at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>f</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B2</td>
<td>Understands my feelings</td>
<td>2.94</td>
<td>0.69</td>
<td>76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>B13</td>
<td>Is interested in my experiences</td>
<td>2.96</td>
<td>0.97</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>B63</td>
<td>Supports me personally</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>B4</td>
<td>Imagines her/his situation</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.927</td>
<td>99</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>B6</td>
<td>Is conscious of others' feelings</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.841</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>B10</td>
<td>Shows my share as important</td>
<td>2.93</td>
<td>0.839</td>
<td>67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>B44</td>
<td>Empowers me through participative decision-making</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>0.888</td>
<td>79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>B58</td>
<td>Makes an effort to defend me</td>
<td>2.91</td>
<td>0.903</td>
<td>92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>B19</td>
<td>Protects my self-interest</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.851</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>B6</td>
<td>Takes an interest in my personal life</td>
<td>2.89</td>
<td>0.938</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Recommendations

National level

• Education/Training institutions
  Determinants should be addressed in specific training programmes eg. ACE in School leadership.
  Short courses should be developed for principal training, addressing determinants of the caring role.

Provincial level

School level

• With the appointment of principals, the SGB should also use the results of personality evaluations.
• If personality evaluations shows specific development areas, the principal should receive guidance or psychotherapy.
• Principals should annually do a self evaluation, to determine if they adress their caring role with regard to educators optimally.
• Principals should annually undergo a 180°-evaluation to determine if they adress their caring role optimally.