

Caring school leadership: A South African study

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**Cornelius P. van der Vyver,
Philip C. van der Westhuizen and L. W. Meyer**

Abstract

The research pivoted on the question whether South African school principals fulfilled their caring role towards teachers. The aims of the study were threefold. First, to determine how principals rated their care-giving, secondly to determine whether significant discrepancies existed between principals' rating of their care-giving and teachers' experiences thereof and thirdly to identify the determinants of care that contributed the most and the least towards principals' care-giving and teachers' ratings thereof. A survey was conducted among a sample of South African teachers and the findings revealed that principals rated their care-giving more positively than teachers did, specifically with regard to certain psychological aspects of care. It is recommended that a strategy should be developed in which the caring role of principals should be addressed. In such a strategy a personal development plan for principals should be included, which addresses specifically the psychological determinants of care.

Keywords

care, caring leadership, care-giving, caring role, determinants of care

Introduction

There is evidence that a shift has occurred in the role of the school principal – away from the traditional planning, organising, leading and control function to a more caring and supportive role (De Bruyn, 2007). In view of this, the *Report of the Task Team on Education Development* refers to the need for a different approach in education management in South Africa, one that is described as follows (South Africa, 1996: 64): 'A whole new way of doing business: education management must be more supportive than directive'. School management in which the principal fulfils a caring role implies the development of a supportive and empowering environment for teachers in which to flourish (Pellicer, 2003; De Bruyn, 2007). To create such an environment, the principal has to act in a caring way towards the teachers under his or her supervision. Put differently, the principal's leadership/management function also includes a caring role.

Corresponding author:

Cornelius P. van der Vyver, School for Continuing Teacher Education, Faculty of Educational Sciences, North-West University, PO Box X 6001, Potchefstroom campus, Potchefstroom 2522, South Africa.

Email: cp.vandervyver@nwu.ac.za

In schools where care is not evident the performance/achievement of teachers is weaker, there are negative organizational relationships that contribute to a negative climate (Basson and Smith, 1991; Beck, 1992; Kahn, 1993). An absence of care further leads to lower levels of organisational (school) effectiveness, low levels of commitment by teachers and poor academic performance by learners (Beck, 1994; Beck and Murphy, 1993; Lyman, 2000: 11). The biggest problem is that people who do not receive care also restrain from giving care to others. It is an accepted view that when principals fulfil their caring role with regard to the teachers in their care, the teachers' experience of the quality of working life will become more positive because of its motivational nature (Davis and Wilson, 2000; Kroth and Keeler, 2009). One positive result of the new approach is more effective classroom teaching and learning (Ellerbrock and Kiefer, 2010; Kroth and Keeler, 2009). The caring role of both the principal and the teacher with respect to learners has already been researched, but the caring role of the principal with regard to the teacher has thus far been largely overlooked in South Africa as well as internationally. The question that arose in view of the above is: how do principals rate their care-giving and how do teachers experience it?

In a democratic South Africa many schools still bear the scars of apartheid, even 17 years after the first democratic election. In rural areas, mainly populated by black African people, poverty prevails and schools still suffer despite efforts of the government to provide funding. The leadership in SA schools consist of men and women who moved through the ranks of being a teacher, a head of department, deputy principal and then principal. There are no formal training programmes for school principals in leadership and management. Often good classroom teachers become school principals, without having the necessary skills and knowledge to lead and manage people.

The purpose of this article is first to explicate how principals rate their care-giving with regard to teachers. Second, it discusses the discrepancies that emerged during an empirical investigation between the principals' own perceptions of caring for teachers and those of the teachers regarding their principals' care-giving. Third, the determinants of care that contributed most and least towards principals care-giving and teacher's ratings thereof are discussed.

Conceptual-theoretical framework

Many authors (e.g. Fine, 2007; Kroth and Keeler, 2009) emphasize the difference between *caring about* and *caring for*. In Latin, *care* is referred to as *caritas* or *cura*. The former refers to *selfless love* or love directed at others that is not self-centred, *an unlimited loving kindness towards all others* (Yourdictionary.com, 2010) whereas *cura*, according to Fine (2007), among its many meanings, can refer to the upliftment and realization of a person's potential. This meaning is reflected in human capital theory, namely the assumption that people have inherent value. This theory embraces two quite dissimilar approaches (Baptiste, 2001). According to the first, the acquired knowledge and skills of a person, and not the person as such, are valued as human capital. People are seen as income-generating agents. The development of human capital is resultantly aimed at the improvement and development of workers' specific skills and knowledge. In the second approach, the person him- or herself is regarded as valuable and seen as a form of 'capital', as an asset (Baptiste, 2001). The value of the person is located in the usefulness or service that is embedded in the person (Sweetland, 1996). The caring role of the principal which played a pivotal role in this research relates to this second approach: people as human beings are regarded as intrinsically valuable, as assets to the institution and to others around them. Care is thus directed at the person and the wellbeing of the human being itself. Care should be unconditional and not based on the quality of skills and knowledge that a person displays.

The Western Cape Department of Education in South Africa (2006) supported this approach in their *Human Capital Development Strategy* by saying that the Department was committed to putting people first; people are the department's most valuable resource. Human capital is also developed in the South African National Department of Basic Education through creating a caring working environment where diversity and participation are valued. The caring role of the principal relates closely to people; a principal cannot execute her/his caring role if s/he does not value the self and others as people.

In view of this, for the caring role of the principal to be actualized, a management/leadership approach should be followed where the people within the organization are regarded as important and not only the skills and knowledge they can offer. Some management/leadership approaches do not provide for the actualization of the caring role of the principal because they subject the employees to the aims and ideals of the organization. The emphasis does not fall on the people in the organization, but rather on tasks to be performed (Bush, 2007; Van der Westhuizen, 2005: 65). According to the *people-in-organization* approach, however, people are recognized and given a rightful position in management as well as in the structure of the organization. The *people-in-organization* approach creates conditions for the caring role of the principal to come to fruition (Barnabas et al., 2010; Bush, 2007; Harms and Credé, 2010; Harris, 2007; Van der Westhuizen, 2005).

The caring role of the principal is furthermore important because caring principals contribute to the taking of ownership and high levels of commitment on the part of teachers. Teachers working under caring principals experience higher morale and higher levels of job satisfaction, which in turn influence their quality of working life (Beck, 1994; Roffey, 2007). A caring principal contributes to enhanced parental involvement in schools, and decisions taken are more likely to be directed by an ethic of care. A positive teaching-learning environment is established and the organizational citizenship behaviour of teachers is enhanced, all of which may lead to teachers putting in greater effort and to spend more time on their work (Ellerbrock and Kiefer, 2010; Kroth and Keeler, 2009; Marshall et al., 1996; Oplatka, 2006).

Before determining the extent to which principals are fulfilling their caring role towards teachers, it was necessary to reflect on the prerequisites and determinants required for caring to take place. There are two such prerequisites in organizational settings. First, relationships should exist – caring can only occur in a relationship between people (Kroth and Keeler, 2009). Second, a caring community should exist (Frick and Frick, 2010; Lance, 2010); such a community supports the educative efforts of teachers. It also improves their personal wellbeing, which in turn is a prerequisite for a high morale. Teacher absenteeism may decline as a result of this, and teachers may show higher levels of job satisfaction (Kroth and Keeler, 2009).

A literature study identified the following as the most important determinants of principals' care: psychological, organizational/workplace and management (Van der Vyver, 2011).

Psychological determinants

The emotional intelligence of the principal is recognized as an important psychological determinant of care (Harms and Credé, 2010). Other important psychological determinants of care include showing interest in the person (educator) by showing sympathy (Terry, 1999), empathy (McEwan, 2003), concern (Hawk and Lyons, 2008), attention (Iszatt-White, 2009) and compassion (Richards, 2002). Psychological needs (Harris, 2007; Harley, 2008), intrinsic motivation (South Africa, 2008b), respect (South Africa, 2008a), honesty (Watson and Lea, 1997), morality (Sendjaya et al., 2008), love for

others (Dennis and Bocarnea, 2005), and acceptance of others as they are (Rexroth and Davidhizar, 2003) can also be regarded as important psychological determinants. As with emotional intelligence, the majority of these psychological determinants relate to the emotional literacy of the school principal.

Organizational or workplace determinants

These determinants are associated with the physical work environment of the teacher, as well as the organizational climate in the school. A safe working environment (South Africa, 2008c), adequate physical infrastructure (buildings and terrain) (Buckley et al., 2004) and job security (Kroth and Keeler, 2009) are included as organizational determinants. The conduct and behaviour of the principal (Blase and Blase, 2002) and a safe school climate (Marshall, 2009; Richards, 2002) also contribute to such a caring environment. The provision of resources (Buckley et al., 2004; Cassidy and Bates, 2005) and creating a caring environment/community (Frick and Frick, 2010) may also contribute significantly towards an experience of care by teachers.

Management determinants

These determinants are associated with the management and leadership style of the school principal and include: trust (Held, 2006), empowerment (Slater, 2008), recognition (Iszatt-White, 2009), the protection of rights (Gould, 2004), righteousness (Kroth and Keeler, 2009), listening (Kroth and Keeler, 2009), subservience (Hawk and Lyons, 2008), accessibility (Cassidy and Bates, 2005), leadership effectiveness (Magyar et al., 2007), consistency (Marshall et al., 1996), commitment (Sergiovanni, 2000), participative decision-making (Emira, 2010), support (Sigford, 2006), staff development (Day et al., 2001) and altruism (Toremén et al., 2006).

All of the above-mentioned determinants and related items were incorporated in a measuring instrument specially developed for purposes of the empirical investigation.

Empirical investigation

Research aims

The purpose of the empirical investigation was to determine to what extent principals fulfilled their caring role with regard to teachers and whether significant discrepancies existed between the principals' own evaluations of their care-giving and teachers' experiences and/or perceptions of the care being given by their principals. Another aim was to identify the determinants of care that contributed most and least towards principals' care-giving and teachers' ratings thereof.

Research design and methodology

A quantitative approach, embedded in the post-positivist paradigm, was followed (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009; Wiersma and Jurs, 2009) and in order to achieve the aims of the research, a survey was conducted. In this research the aim was to determine to what extent principals fulfilled their caring role with regard to teachers. This was done by measuring the levels of care experienced by educators and given by principals, therefore survey research was chosen. In the post-positivist approach however, it is accepted that the relationship between variables could be influenced by factors over which the researcher has no control (Onwuegbuzie et al., 2009). Survey research,

described by Leedy and Ormrod (2005: 183) involves the collection of information (in this instance, opinions on giving and receiving care) from one or more groups of respondents (educators and principals), by asking them questions and tabulating their answers. This type of design, as indicated by Maree and Pietersen (2007: 155), could best assess the status of the phenomenon of care, as well as comparing principals' giving and educators' receiving of care.

Study population and sampling

The study population consisted of principals and teachers of primary schools in the North West Province of South Africa. The province consists of four educational regions, with a total of 1377 primary schools. Based on statistical computation, a systematic stratified cluster sample of 83 schools with more than 15 teachers each was drawn. All the principals and teachers on post levels 1 to 3 were invited to participate in the survey. In South Africa post level 1 refers to teachers, post level 2 are heads of departments, post level 3 refers to deputy principals and post levels 4 and 5 are principals of large schools. However in smaller schools principals might be appointed on post level 3 and in very small schools (farm schools) even on post level 2. In this study population where schools with more than 15 teachers were involved, all three post levels were represented. Because the sample was systematically drawn, and classified per region and APO (Area Project Office), the sample can be regarded as representative of the entire North West Province. Seventy-two of the 83 schools responded to the questionnaires (86.7 percent); 65 principals and 1041 teachers participated in the survey.

Data collection

On the basis of a theoretical study, a structured questionnaire was developed and used in the survey (Maree and Pietersen, 2007; Thomas, 2004). One of the objectives of the theoretical study was to identify different determinants of care. These determinants were identified consulting literature on caring leadership, models of care as well as instruments used to measure care. Individual determinants formed the basis of the items in the questionnaire. The questionnaire contained two sections. Section A gathered biographical information about the participants. Section B consisted of 66 items with statements that addressed the previously discussed psychological, workplace/organizational and management determinants of care. In order to respond to the statements, participants considered the following response options: 1 = *not at all*; 2 = *to a small extent*; 3 = *to some extent*; 4 = *to a large extent*.

Separate colour-coded questionnaires were developed for teachers and principals. The items in the principals' questionnaire addressed exactly the same determinants of care as the items in the teachers' questionnaire, but they were formulated in such a way that principals and teachers could respond from their own unique perspectives. For example:

Principal questionnaire: As far as the psychological welfare of the teachers in my school is concerned, I demonstrate empathy with their circumstances.

Teacher questionnaire: As far as my psychological welfare is concerned, my school principal demonstrates empathy with my circumstances.

Before the questionnaire was submitted to the participants in the sample, a pilot study was conducted with 96 principals and teachers who were not part of the study population from which the

sample was drawn. The participants in the pilot study commented on the user friendliness of the questionnaire such as its length, clarity of items and time to complete. All their comments were taken into account during the finalization of the questionnaire.

An analysis of item responses from the pilot study was undertaken in order to determine whether preference was given to particular response options. The analysis revealed that for none of the items (more than 90 percent of the cases) one particular response option was selected and that the participants' responses to the items displayed a good variation. In cases where more than three participants did not exercise any response option to particular items, a reformulation of the items occurred to improve their clarity.

Validity and reliability of the questionnaire

All the items in the questionnaire were formulated to address the determinants of care that emerged from the theoretical analysis, thereby ensuring content validity. Content validity was also ensured by subjecting the questionnaire to the critical scrutiny of various specialists in the field of education management. The construct validity of the questionnaire was confirmed by confirmatory factor analyses.

Cronbach-alpha coefficients were calculated to determine the internal consistency of the items in the questionnaire (Ary et al., 2010; Pietersen and Maree, 2007). According to Pietersen and Maree (2007), the following reliability index is used by most researchers to determine the reliability levels associated with the alpha coefficients: 0.9 – high level of reliability; 0.8 – average level of reliability and 0.7 – low level of reliability. The calculated alpha coefficients varied between 0.83 and 0.98. Since the values were larger than 0.7, the questionnaire could be regarded as reliable.

Ethical considerations

The research project was approved by the ethical committee of the institution under whose auspices it was done. Permission to conduct the research was also granted by the North West Department of Education, in the person of the Superintendent-General. An information sheet was supplied with the questionnaire in which the aims of the research and other aspects of the questionnaire were explained. Assurance was given to participants that their identities and those of their schools as well as all information would remain confidential and anonymous. Respondents were assured that filling in the questionnaire would hold no harm for them and that they were under no obligation to participate. All concerned agreed to participate. Data, based on the findings of the statistical analysis, were processed and reported in an open and honest manner.

Data analysis

First, descriptive statistics (means, standard deviations and frequencies) were used to analyse the data. Second, paired t-tests were done to determine the statistical and practical significance of the differences between the means of the principals' and teachers' responses. In order to determine the practical significance of the differences in the means, effect sizes (*d*-values) were calculated. Effect sizes were calculated according to Cohen (1988), where $d = 0.8$ indicates a large effect.

Table 1. Principals' versus teachers' ratings of care.

Determinant of care	Respondents	M	SD	p-value	d-value
Psychological	Principals (N=65)	3.512	0.272	<0.0001	1.20***
	Teachers (N=1041)	3.039	0.393		
Workplace/Organizational	Principals	3.646	0.296	<0.0001	1.12***
	Teachers	3.185	0.412		
Management	Principals	3.674	0.264	<0.0001	1.41***
	Teachers	3.104	0.405		

*** Large effect.

Results

Information regarding the principals' ratings of their care and teachers' experiences thereof is presented in Table 1.

The results in Table 1 indicate that there were significant differences between principals' and teachers' ratings of care and that the principals rated their care-giving higher than the teachers did.

When the principals' ratings of care are considered, they rated themselves higher on the management and workplace/organizational determinants of care, than on the psychological determinants.

Teachers also gave the lowest rating to the psychological care-giving of principals and rated the workplace/organizational care of principals the highest.

In Table 2 information is given about the ten items that contributed most towards a positive rating of care by the teachers.

When the items in Table 2 are considered, five of the ten items (B29, B32, B30, B28, B27) address workplace/organizational determinants of care, four (B52, B61, B54, B42) address management determinants and only one of them (B15) addresses psychological determinants of care. From this it can be deduced that teachers' positive ratings of care related mostly to workplace/organizational and management aspects of care and the least to psychological care.

In Table 3 information is given about the ten items that contributed least towards a positive rating of care by the teachers.

That table shows that the majority of items that contributed least to a positive rating of care by teachers address psychological determinants of care (B2, B13, B4, B6, B10, B19, B8) and that the other three address management determinants (B63; B44; B58). From this it can be deduced that teachers rated the psychological care that they experienced as more negative than the workplace/organizational and management aspects of care.

Discussion of results

Factors contributing to a positive experience of caring leadership by teachers

Table 1 indicates that workplace/organizational determinants contributed most towards teachers' ratings of caring leadership/management. This tendency also emerged from Table 2, where the ratio of the ten highest ranking items of care was 50 percent workplace/organizational factors, 40 percent management factors and only 10 percent (1 item) psychological factors. Therefore, it seems as if teachers experienced higher levels of caring in terms of their physical working environment than the other determinants of care. This trend was somewhat surprising in view of the fact that most schools in the sample were situated in previously disadvantaged communities.

Table 2. Items that contributed most towards a positive rating of care by the teachers.

Rank	Item no.	Item <i>My principal</i>	M	SD	Response							
					Not at all		To a small extent		To some extent		To a large extent	
					f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	B52	Shares successes with teachers	3.34	0.811	41	4	98	9.6	358	35.1	524	51.3
2	B29	Sees to a school safety policy	3.32	0.795	33	3.2	113	11	372	36.3	506	49.4
2	B32	Limits school vandalism	3.32	0.767	30	2.9	98	9.6	403	39.5	489	47.9
4	B30	Sees to it that buildings are kept in a good condition	3.31	0.817	40	3.9	114	11	367	35.7	508	49.4
5	B61	Commits to the vision and mission of the school	3.3	0.821	35	3.4	132	13	348	34.1	507	49.6
6	B54	Demonstrates self-confidence to lead	3.29	0.842	46	4.5	119	12	351	34.5	502	49.3
7	B28	Maintains healthy school discipline	3.26	0.812	35	3.4	136	13	388	37.6	473	45.8
8	B15	Respects us	3.24	0.816	41	4	125	12	408	39.5	458	44.4
9	B27	Provides a safe working environment	3.23	0.833	41	4	142	14	384	37.3	462	44.9
10	B42	Works towards the benefit of the whole school community	3.22	0.831	43	4.2	135	13	394	38.6	450	44

Table 3. Items that contributed least towards a positive rating of care by the teachers.

Rank	Item no.	Item <i>My principal</i> . . .	Mean	SD	Response							
					Not at all		To a small extent		To some extent		To a large extent	
					f	%	f	%	f	%	f	%
1	B2	Understands my feelings	2.95	0.866	75	7.4	186	18	478	46.9	281	27.5
1	B13	Is interested in my experiences	2.95	0.87	69	6.8	199	20	451	44.7	291	28.8
3	B63	Supports me personally	2.93	0.927	99	9.7	179	18	436	42.8	305	29.9
4	B4	Imagines him/her in my situation	2.93	0.927	99	9.7	177	17	436	42.8	307	30.1
4	B6	Is conscious of others' feelings	2.93	0.841	65	6.4	200	20	490	48.1	263	25.8
4	B10	Sees my ideas as important	2.93	0.839	67	6.6	199	20	499	48.8	257	25.1
7	B44	Empowers me through participative decision-making	2.92	0.888	79	7.8	208	20	447	43.9	285	28
8	B58	Makes an effort to defend me	2.91	0.903	92	9	187	18	457	44.8	283	27.8
8	B19	Protects my self-interest	2.89	0.851	69	6.8	218	22	475	47	249	24.6
10	B8	Takes an interest in my personal life	2.69	0.938	133	13	255	25	425	41.7	207	20.3

Teachers were of the opinion that principals demonstrated high levels of caring by creating a safe working environment by ensuring that a school safety policy was in place, and also through the implementation of this policy. Although the maintenance of school buildings is primarily the

responsibility of the National Department of Basic Education, the experience of teachers was that principals demonstrated care in looking after physical facilities, by curtailing vandalism and by maintaining discipline at schools. As indicated by Buckley et al. (2004), the quality of school buildings not only affects teachers' morale, safety, health and general quality of working life, but also the way in which teachers engage in teaching (effectiveness). These results seem to suggest that, if school buildings and facilities are properly maintained by principals, it is experienced as a positive demonstration of care by teachers.

Factors contributing to a lesser experience of caring leadership by teachers

From the data in Table 3 it is evident that psychological factors contributed the least towards teachers' ratings of caring leadership. This tendency is also detectable in Table 1, where psychological determinants obtained the lowest mean. Of the ten lowest ranking items in Table 3, 70 percent of the items related to psychological determinants of care and 30 percent were items that addressed management determinants. When the individual items related to psychological care (B8, B19, B10, B6, B4, B13, B2) are taken into consideration, it seems that teachers experienced inadequate psychological care from principals, mainly because principals did not demonstrate a sincere interest in the personal wellbeing of teachers. This lack of interest could be symptomatic of a lack of empathy on the part of the principal; principals do not always understand how the teacher feels and cannot put him/herself in the position of the teacher – to see matters from the teacher's perspective (Collins, 2004; Kroth and Keeler, 2009). Certain items (B8, B19, B4, B13) seem to suggest that teachers need a more personal (working) relationship with principals. Apart from an inadequate personal interest in teachers' wellbeing, it also seems that principals displayed inadequate emotional intelligence (see teachers' responses to items B2, B4 and B10). Teachers were of the opinion that principals were unable to identify with and be conscious of their (the teachers') feelings. Emotionally intelligent principals will demonstrate the ability to show empathy, be optimistic and build morale (Harms and Credé, 2010; Magyar et al., 2007). Harris (2007) and Magyar et al. (2007) refer to a clear relation between emotional intelligence, effective leadership and care. Principals have to acquire emotional regulating competencies before they can effectively care for teachers and understand and value their emotional needs (Magyar et al., 2007). According to the biographical data collected, 55 percent of the principals who responded were older than 50 years. This may suggest that these 'older' principals adhere to more outdated, scientific management principles where the focus is on management tasks and performance rather than on personal professional relationships with regard to teachers.

Comparison of teachers and principals' ratings of care

The results in Table 1 indicate practically significant differences between the means of the principals' and teachers' ratings with regard to all three factors of care. Teachers experience less psychological care from principals than principals are aware of. This finding can arguably be attributed to principals' inadequate emotional intelligence, their lack of interest in teachers and their inability to address the psychological needs of teachers adequately and to inspire/motivate teachers. It seems that teachers want principals to show a more personal interest in them as people and not only as professional educators.

With regard to the workplace/organizational determinants of care, Table 2 indicated that these determinants contributed more towards an experience of care by teachers. However, it also became

clear that teachers experienced less care with regard to workplace/organizational determinants than principals thought they provided.

Teachers furthermore experienced care with regard to management determinants also to a lesser extent than how principals thought they had shown. The following serves as evidence for this finding: teachers did not adequately experience the creation of an environment of empowerment from the principals (B44), teachers experienced principals not to be adequately altruistic (B58), principals did not adequately involve teachers in participative decision-making (B44) and teachers experienced inadequate support from principals (B63).

From the above it seems clear that, with all three main determinants, principals viewed themselves as much more caring than what teachers felt, thought or experienced.

Recommendations

Since caring leadership/management is a *sine qua non* for caring schools, it is recommended that a management strategy be developed in which all the main factors of care, but specifically psychological factors, are addressed.

With regard to psychological factors, it seems that principals find it difficult to identify and understand their own and the teachers' feelings well. This could be an indication that principals' level of emotional intelligence needs to be developed. It is therefore recommended that a personal development plan be established for principals which will enable them to better understand and deal with their own emotions as well as those of the teachers, enhancing their emotional literacy. The inclusion of emotional literacy in a training programme will implicate the implementation of strategies promoting emotional intelligence (Burman, 2009). With respect to the finding that principals did not meet teachers' emotional needs optimally, it is recommended that a teacher wellness programme be established at schools with the focus on teachers' psychological needs.

With regard to management factors, teachers experienced inadequate support, empowerment, altruism and participative decision-making from the principals. To rectify this, it is recommended that a professional management development programme be set up for principals to help them carry out and include aspects such as empowerment, altruism and participative decision-making in people-orientated management/leadership tasks. This development programme could include a mentorship programme where young/inexperienced principals are guided under the mentorship of older/more experienced, caring principals. Other possibilities include attendance at leadership/management development seminars.

It is finally recommended as part of ongoing school-based evaluation that teachers could undertake periodic review of their principals' effectiveness in their role as caring leaders. An instrument similar to the one used in this research could be used for such review. Principals could also subject themselves to self-evaluation on a regular basis using a similar instrument.

Conclusion

According to human capital theory, the caring role of the principal amounts to a managerial leadership role where s/he cares in a self-sacrificing manner about the welfare of the teachers under her/his care within the school as an organization. The principal has a responsibility to transform the school into a caring community (among others by applying the determinants of care appropriately) where teachers can experience a positive organizational climate that will in turn contribute to

optimal performance on their part. This research revealed that principals fulfilled their caring role to a certain extent, but there were significant discrepancies between the principals' own evaluations of the extent of their care and how the teachers experienced their care, specifically with regard to certain psychological aspects. The determinants of care that contributed most towards teacher's experience of principals care-giving were the workplace/organizational determinants. The psychological determinants contributed least towards a positive rating of care experienced by the teachers.

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Author biographies

C. P. van der Vyver is a Senior lecturer with research focus in Education Management and Leadership in the School of Education studies in the Faculty of Education Sciences at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University, Northwest Province, South Africa.

P. C. van der Westhuizen is a professor in Education Management and Leadership in the School of Education studies in the Faculty of Education Sciences at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University, Northwest Province, South Africa.

L. W. Meyer is a professor in Educational Psychology in the School of Education studies in the Faculty of Education Sciences at the Potchefstroom Campus of the North-West University, Northwest Province, South Africa.