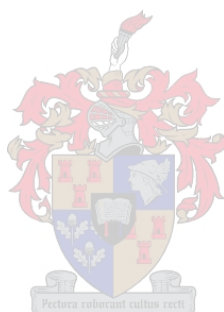# THE DEVELOPMENT OF A

PARTIAL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL COMPETENCY MODEL

BY

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Thesis presented in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Commerce in the Faculty of Economic and Management Sciences, Stellenbosch University

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March 2015

DECLARATION

By submitting this thesis, I Jaco Janse van Vuuren, declare:

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ABSTRACT

The unequal distribution of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) across all South Africans is perhaps the most fundamental problem faced by South African organisations in terms of building sustainable human resource capacity. This inequality has a profoundly negative effect on the upward mobilisation of potentially competent employees within the labour market. Therefore, if the Human Resource Management and Industrial Psychology fraternity earnestly plans to earn the title of "strategic", then both its academic and professional spheres need to get involved there where the fundamental cause of the problem originates: the lack of quality primary and secondary education in South Africa. Previous research found that the unequal distribution of the quality of primary and secondary schools in South Africa is to a large extent attributable to a lack of effective school leadership and management, with the school principal being the focal point (Van der Berg, 2007; van der Berg et al, 2011; Taylor, 2011). This finding leads to the research initiating question: why do some school principals outperform others in effectively leading their schools?

The objective of this study is to offer an exploratory step towards explaining variance in school principal performance by studying the behaviours (competencies) associated with successful school principals. A comprehensive literature review was conducted to understand the context and identify broad categories of variables. This was followed by semi-structured interviews with a diverse sample of highly effective South African school principals (N=10). The qualitative analysis based on grounded theory principals, resulted in the refinement and expansion of the variables that were identified through the literature study. The final product culminates in a framework of eleven competency clusters, 32 School Principal Competencies (SPCs) and 173 behavioural examples. Similarly, the results yield two additional School Performance Outcomes (SPOs). Finally, a conceptual model is proposed that depicts the possible interrelationships between the School Principal Competencies and School Performance Outcomes.

The study therefore contributes as a stepping stone in the path towards developing empirically-based human resource management instruments that in turn can lead to the improvement of the selection, development, and performance management of

South African school principals. Due to the exploratory and qualitative nature of the study, follow-up studies are needed to develop and validate a School Principal Competency Questionnaire. This will enable future research to empirically test and validate a comprehensive school principal competency model.

OPSOMMING

Die ongelyke verspreiding van kennis, vaardighede, vermoëns en ander eienskappe (KVVAe) is waarskynlik een van Suid-Afrika se grootste uitdagings in die proses tot die bou van 'n volhoubare en gebalanseerde arbeidsmag. Hierdie ongelykheid veroorsaak 'n negatiewe effek op die opwaartse beweging van potensieël bevoegde werknemers binne die arbeidsmark. Indien die Menslike Hulpbronbestuur en die Bedryfsielkunde gemeenskap dus werklik die titel "strategies" wil verdien, moet beide die akademiese en professionele terreine van hierdie funksie betrokke raak by die oorsprong van die probleem: die tekort aan kwaliteit primêre en sekondêre onderrig in Suid-Afrika. Vorige navorsing dui daarop dat ongelykheid in die kwaliteit van skole en onderwys grotendeels is as gevolg van swak leierskap en bestuur met die skoolhoof as die sleutelrolspeler. (Van der Berg, 2007; van der Berg et al, 2011; Taylor, 2011). Hierdie bevindinge lei tot die navorsingsinisiërende vraag: waarom presteer sommige skoolhoofde beter as ander in terme van die effektiewe leiding en bestuur van die betrokke skole?

Die doel van hierdie studie is om 'n verkennende stap tot die verklaring van variansie in die prestasie van skoolhoofde te bied deur middel van die bestudering van gedrag (bevoegdhede) wat met suksesvolle skoolhoofde geassosieer word. 'n Omvattende literatuurstudie was uitgevoer met die doel om die konteks te verstaan en breë kategorieë van veranderlikes te identifiseer. Dit was opgevolg deur semi-gestruktureerde onderhoude met 'n diverse steekproef (N=10) van hoogs-effektiewe Suid-Afrikaanse skoolhoofde gevoer. Die kwalitatiewe analise, gebaseer op gegronde teorie, loop uit op die verfyning asook die uitbreiding van die veranderlikes soos geïdentifiseer deur die literatuurstudie. Die eindproduk ontwikkel in 'n raamwerk bestaande uit elf bevoegdheidsgroeperings, 32 Skoolhoof Bevoegdhede en 173 gedragsvoorbeelde. Twee addisionele Skool Prestasie Uitkomste spruit ook voort uit die analise. Ten slotte bied die studie 'n konseptuele model wat die moontlike verwantskappe tussen die Skoolhoof Bevoeghede en Skool Prestasie Uitkomste uiteensit.

Die studie bied dus 'n waardevolle wegspringplek in die pad tot empiries-ontwikkelde menslike hulpbronbestuur (MHB) instrumente wat op hul beurt weer kan lei tot die verbetering van die aanstelling, ontwikkeling, en prestasiebestuur van

Suid-Afrikaanse skoolhoofde. As gevolg van die verkennende aard van die studie, is opvolgstudies nodig om 'n Skoolhoof-bevoegdheidsvraelys te ontwikkel en te valideer en ten einde 'n omvattende Skoolhoof-bevoegdheidsmodel empiries te toets en te valideer.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The aim of this study was to create a spark – a spark that can hopefully lead to the partial improvement of the quality of education in South Africa. I therefore dedicate this work to the future learners of this country.

I thank all lecturers, staff, and fellow students at the Department of Industrial Psychology for their continuous support.

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- My parents Coenie and Winnie: There is no way that I can now describe the deep appreciation I have for your support as well as the sacrifices you made in order for me to be in this position.

Finally, I consider Jesus Christ, my God, as the primary source of inner strength and guidance in completing this work. I consequently give overarching thanks to the Lord.

TABLE OF CONTENT

LIST OF FIGURES

PAGE

LIST OF TABLES

PAGE

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION, OBJECTIVES AND OVERVIEW

1.1   Introduction

To exist in a free market economy, organisations have to create, combine, and transform scarce factors of production into products or services with economic utility, and do so in an ever-changing and competitive environment. Successful exchange of goods and services for profit in such circumstances requires organisations to continuously adjust and focus on core competencies in order to create and sustain a competitive advantage. Successful response to these economic challenges requires an effective system of interrelated organisational functions that add value. The human resource management (HRM) function, in particular, contributes via the acquisition, maintenance, and utilisation of a competent and motivated labour workforce. Not only is labour an essential factor of production, but it is increasingly considered a source of competitiveness and sustainability. Organisational success is therefore significantly dependent on the performance and management of its workforce (Combs, Crooks, Todd, Woehr, 2011; Gibson, Ivancevich, & Donnelly, 1997; Morris, Kuratko, & Covin, 2008).

For labour to be effectively utilised, the behaviour of working man and how it relates to employee and organisational performance must be understood. Although human behaviour in general, as well as within the workplace, is exceptionally complex, it contains regularities which can be studied through the scientific method of inquiry. The field of Industrial Organisational Psychology, in particular, aims to provide valid explanations of human behaviour through its commitment to the scientific method of inquiry in both its academic and practical form (Theron, 2009).

Valid explanations of human behaviour, in turn, inform HRM interventions. Broadly speaking, HRM interventions exist to affect either the flow or stock of employees (Milkovich & Boudreau, 1994). HRM interventions designed to affect employee flow aim to change the composition and quality of the workforce by removing, adding, or transferring employees, whereas interventions directed at the stock of employees, seek to improve the quality or nature of employees in their current positions. The underlying expectation is that these actions will ultimately result in the improvement of individual, group and organisational performance. In terms of human resource

interventions aimed at affecting employee flow, personnel selection established itself as a key HRM practice.

The primary objective of personnel selection is to filter and only let those employees enter the organisation whose performance will be satisfactory and in line with the goals of the organisation. The key question becomes whether the monetary value of the increase in performance due to the selection procedure exceeds the expenses of the investment made. The emphasis is therefore on maximum utility. To achieve this objective, top-down selection are the most effective approach to selection, provided that a systematic relationship exist between the procedure used to predict performance and the actual performance criterion (Guion,1998; Davidshofer & Murphy, 2005; Theron, 2007).

In addition to maximum utility, the success of selection procedures is judged by various stakeholders in terms of social justice and fairness (Guion,1998; Murphy & Davidshofer, 2005). For many, the existence of adverse impact in personnel selection is considered unfair. In personnel selection, adverse impact refers to the phenomenon where the use of a certain selection strategy leads to members of one group having a smaller chance of being selected than those of another group - identified by a significant difference in the selection ratios between groups (Guion, 1998). Precisely this seems to be the concern in the South African context where the minority White group will probably, in the absence of government regulation, have a greater chance of being appointed when strict top-down selection is used (Foxcroft & Roodt, 2005). Indeed, for reasons to be discussed later, it would be ideal if selection procedures contribute to a more proportional representation of the various gender and race-ethnic divisions of the South African labour market. However, up to date, even with legalisation such as the Employment Equity Act, this goal is far from being achieved, and when progress is indeed made, it is often at the expense of utility (Theron, 2007; 2009).

It needs to be stressed from the outset that the issue at hand does not necessarily represent a deficiency in selection procedures. According to the Cleary (1968) definition of fairness, selection procedures are considered fair when persons with equal probabilities of success with the job have equal probabilities of being hired for the job (Guion, 1998). To put it in another way, it would not be considered unfair

when persons with smaller probabilities of success on the job have a lesser chance of being hired for the job. Unfortunately, the painful reality is that the previously disadvantaged group in South Africa, having been denied opportunities for development, lacks important skills in many areas of business. Theron (2009; 2007) provides alerting evidence that shows that the previously disadvantaged groups often does perform more poorly on the predictor and on the criterion (performance measure). This essentially means that fair selection, according to the Cleary model, may often lead to adverse impact in South Africa when used in strict top-down, performance maximising selection. This is in stark contrast with the prevalent belief that adverse impact is caused by unfair selection practices. Of course, unfair labour practices have not completely ceased to exist after the democratisation of South Africa and deserve on-going scrutiny; however, if the root cause of adverse impact is not acknowledged, real progress in both an economic and social sense will not materialise.

In the South African context, it does not seem unreasonable to attribute at least some part of the systematic group-related differences in criterion distributions to a socio-political system that systematically denied the members of a specific group the opportunity to develop and acquire those crystallised abilities required to succeed on the criterion (Theron, 2009). Human resource management should not accept the creation of adverse impact as either unavoidable or unchangeable. More importantly, urgent attention to the problem is required by HRM in both the public and private sectors. The need for this sense of urgency is motivated by a number of interrelated considerations which will briefly be explained. This will be followed by elaborating on what is believed to be one of the primary causes of adverse impact in South Africa.

1.1.1   Why urgent attention to adverse impact is needed

From the annual report of the Commission for Employment Equity for 2013-2014, it remains apparent that limited progress has been made towards transforming the upper levels of both overall employment and the private sector in specific (Commission of Employment Equity, 2013). According to the report, black men remain underrepresented, occupying only 13.5 % of the total workforce profile at top management level, while white men enjoy a 52.3 % representation at this level. In the private sector, the picture is even bleaker. Here, white men occupy 58.6 % of

jobs at the top management level and black men only 8.8 %. These findings are corroborated by Yu (2012), who also found that little progress has been made with regard to the transformation of the labour market. It is therefore no surprise that the government, unions and the society at large are demanding more radical transformation. One example of the government's intolerance of the status quo is the proposed amendments in the Employment Equity Act with regards to stronger penalties for not meeting employment equity targets.

The real impact of adverse impact, however, penetrates far beyond statistics and should be considered a societal phenomenon that profoundly impacts on the daily lives of people. According to the Office of the Presidency, income inequality in South Africa remains high. Based on various internationally accepted indicators and using different data sets, a consistent Gini coefficient measure of above 0.64 between 1993 and 2009 indicates that too little progress has been made in closing the gap between the rich and the poor (Republic of South Africa, 2011).

In relation with other developing countries, South Africa stands out as one of the most unequal countries when it comes to income distribution (Yu, 2012). Inequality of this level gradually pushes South Africa towards an unhealthy position of social volatility. In 2012, the country witnessed some tragic events following social instability and ultimately violent incidents which can be linked to inequality. The deaths of 47 people, the majority of whom were striking mineworkers, killed on 16 August 2012 at Marikana in a wildcat strike, stands out in this regard (Dixon, 2013). Social instability of such nature is increasingly garnering international attention and is everything but helpful to economic growth. In order to significantly decrease the levels of inequality, intellectually thought-through ways must be found to empower those currently excluded from or underrepresented in the formal economy to participate productively.

Addressing the root causes of adverse impact is also critical for economic reasons. The unequal distribution of the necessary knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) amongst all South Africans is perhaps the most fundamental problem faced by South African organisations in terms of building sustainable human resource capacity. The lack of skills and opportunities amongst previously

disadvantaged groups have a profoundly negative effect on the upward mobilisation of potentially competent employees within the labour market.

Affirmative Action strategies attempt to rectify the inequalities of the past; however, in many respects it merely treats the symptoms and not the underlying causes. Affirmative action in its traditional interpretation of quotas and preferential hiring based on gender-racio-ethnic terms, is an inadequately considered solution to adverse impact and the underrepresentation of previously disadvantaged groups in the private sector of the economy. The system, in the long run, may eventually hurt the people it is meant to help by placing them in positions which they are not necessarily competent or motivated for. Consequently, the result will be a continuing systemic implosion of public and private sector organisations and a loss of institutional memory (Esterhuyse, 2008). This calls for a need to understand and treat the primary causes of adverse impact.

A further related consideration as to why urgent HRM attention and action to the problem of adverse impact is needed is rooted in its contribution to the loss of human capital. Adverse impact is expected to significantly reduce the potential economic contribution of the South African people. The tragic reality exists that the talent and potential of an innumerable amount of people will never be discovered or utilised. In addition to the economic cost of such a major loss of human potential, the problem of adverse impact becomes more humane and moving when it is considered how profound and far-reaching its effect is on the lives of those affected. Finally, even if there were no economic advantages or disadvantages to responding to adverse impact, an intellectually honest response to the problem simply becomes the right thing to do in a country where a great need for moral leadership exists.

1.1.2 Working towards the primary cause of adverse impact

Two pivotal questions now become unavoidable: 1) why do selection procedures create adverse impact, and 2) what is the essential cause of adverse impact? Although adverse impact is created during the personnel selection process, it does not serve as evidence that the procedure in itself is responsible for it. Selection decisions are typically based on criterion (job performance) inferences derived from predictors. If there are real differences in the means of criterion distributions of protected and unprotected groups, then performance-maximising predictors and

strict top-down selection procedures will automatically create adverse impact even if they are used fairly and proven to be valid (Theron, 2007; 2009).

Now that a stance has been taken on how adverse impact through selection is fundamentally created through systematic differences in group-specific criterion distributions, the HRM function should respond to the problem by focusing on the primary causes of these differences. Although a vast range of other factors should not be denied, it becomes particularly reasonable to attribute the current differences in group-specific criterion distributions to South Africa's socio-political-historical conditions. The Apartheid era systematically deterred the acquisition and development of the required skills, knowledge, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) of certain groups in South Africa.

In the short term, an intellectually honest solution to the problem would involve providing opportunities for previously disadvantaged individuals to develop their lacking KSAOs and ultimately earn a fair chance to be selected and perform successfully in the respective jobs. A serious need therefore exists to accurately identify those individuals with the greatest potential to gain maximum benefit from developmental opportunities and ultimately acquire the deficient attainments and dispositions (SHL, 2000; Theron, 2009; 2007).

Theron (2009; 2007) suggested a two-stage selection procedure in line with the foregoing line of reasoning. The first stage precedes the typical selection procedure and aims to indirectly maximise performance on the job by selecting previously disadvantaged applicants provisionally on the basis of their learning potential. Hence, individuals who were previously disadvantaged in acquiring and developing their KSAOs, but who would gain maximum benefit from affirmative development, would be selected during this stage. These employees will undergo development with the aim of "levelling the playing field", which hopefully will lead to them having the same probability of success on the job than applicants from unprotected groups. During the second stage, the previously disadvantaged employees, now more fully developed in terms of the required KSAs, would be able to compete on merits with other employees applying for the same position, with the impact of adverse impact being substantially reduced, but not eliminated.

The development of previously disadvantaged employees on this basis is referred to as affirmative development, which is distinct from the traditional concept of affirmative action. Affirmative development, compared to the latter practice where previously disadvantaged individuals are often simply placed into vacant positions, seems more sensible in many ways. This realisation has sparked a series of studies in the Stellenbosch University Industrial Psychology Department, focussing on the explication of the learning potential construct (Burger, 2012; De Goede, 2007; Van Heerden, 2013).

Considering the fundamental cause of adverse impact, it becomes apparent that affirmative development, as defined in the preceding paragraph, is a necessary but temporary measure that each and every organisation in South Africa must invest in for the sake of its own survival and for the sake of long-term socio-economic political prosperity in South Africa. However, although affirmative development serves as an intellectually honest way of moving beyond the treatment of the symptoms of the problem, it remains one step behind the primary source of continuous adverse impact in South Africa. In the long term, adverse impact can only be fought there where it originates.

The fundamental long-term solution is to ensure sustainable economic growth and political stability in South Africa through well-functioning primary and secondary schools that provide all learners of the South African population the opportunity to develop to their full potential. It is only through well-functioning schools that the KSAOs of learners from previously disadvantaged communities can be developed to the extent that they have the same probability of succeeding in their jobs than their counterparts who were not previously disadvantaged.

1.1.3   The importance of school leadership and management in South Africa

Although the post-apartheid government has been reasonably successful in narrowing the quantitative educational gap (e.g. pass rates etc.) caused by South Africa's divided past, significant disparity remains in the quality of schools across the country. Major resource shifts to previously disadvantaged schools seems to have contributed to a slight improvement in national examinations results. However, various educators argue that, within the South African educational system, these higher levels of educational attainment do not necessarily reflect improved literacy

levels. Thus despite all efforts, the school system contribute far below its capacity in assisting the upward mobility of scholars from disadvantaged schools in the labour market (De Vos, 2011; Shepherd, 2011; Van der Berg, 2007).

The malfunctioning of the school system, however, appears to be largely a problem of "x-inefficiency" rather than the prevalent belief of "allocative-deficiency". Van der Berg (2007; 2008) argued and provided some alerting evidence that the crucial factor, instead, is the school's ability to convert resources into outcomes. This finding highlights school leadership and management practices as a pivotal success factor in school quality performance. It therefore comes as no surprise that major differences also exist in the performance among and between poor schools. Thus, improving the school system and ensuring quality education for all South Africans calls for a combined approach of equitable resource allocation together with improved leadership and management (Crouch & Mabogoane, 1998; Van der Berg & Burger, 2002; Gustafsson, 2007). Furthermore, an increasing amount of research is indicating that variables which are indicators of school leadership and management effectiveness are strong predictors of student success. In South Africa, such indicators, among others, include an Organised Learning Environment (signified by curriculum planning for the school full year), a Functional Timetable, Quality and sufficient Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM), Low Teacher Absenteeism, as well as up-to-date Assessment Records (Shepherd, 2011; Taylor, 2011; Van der Berg, 2007).

If leaders of organisations should be held accountable for the performance of the organisational units they are responsible for, then school principals should be held accountable for the performance dimensions of the schools they are responsible for (Theron, 2012). School principals are thus, like any others organisation leader, expected to demonstrate certain competencies that are instrumental in achieving specific unit outcomes. In the educational context, these competencies take the form of behaviours such as Developing School Staff and Maintaining an Orderly and Supportive Learning Environment, which in turn influences certain school outcomes such as Quality of Instruction and Curricular Achievement.

If the performance of schools is viewed from this perspective, then a key question becomes, whether South African organisations and the human resource function in

particular, should not get involved in the management of under-performing schools in the interest of their own long-term survival and growth (Theron, 2012). As mentioned at the beginning of this chapter, the field of Industrial-Organisational (I-O) Psychology can contribute to the effectiveness of workers through studying, explaining and predicting regularities in behaviour. More specifically, I-O Psychologists' involvement in the management of under-performing schools will require a comprehensive understanding of the bundles of leadership behaviour (competencies) that are required to achieve certain school performance outcomes.

1.1.4   The need for a school principal competency structural model

Although the nature of the products and services of schools differ from most corporate organisations, schools can be viewed as organisations in its basic definition. Like organisations, the effectiveness of schools is greatly influenced by the performance of its workforce. The job performance of workers, teacher staff, and principals can be conceptualised on two interrelated levels. The first level includes the outcome level (e.g. Professional capacity of school staff, Mean pass rate, University exemption, Pupil discipline, etc.) while the second makes out the behavioural (competency) level (e.g. Managing self, Developing school staff, Resourcing strategically). The two performance levels are interrelated in the sense that successful performance on the job outcome level requires specific levels of performance (competence) on the behavioural (competency) level. The former is therefore complexly determined by the latter. Adding to this complexity is the possibility that the level of performance achieved on the outcome level could also recursively feed back onto the level of performance displayed on the behavioural (competencies) level.

A complex network of causal effects thus exists between the job outcomes and the competencies. A comprehensive competency model accommodates the fact that behavioural performance is in turn also the function of a nomological network of person-centred characteristics, referred to a competency potential variables (e.g. predispositions, personality traits, and knowledge) (Binning & Barrett, 1989; Cascio, 1998; Bartram, 2005, 2006). Human behaviour in the workplace thus not only acts as a determinant of a job outcome, but also as a mediator through which person-centred attributes affect these outcomes. This perspective implies a three-tier

performance@work structural model in which a network of inter-linked latent competency potential variables causally influence a network of inter-linked latent behavioural competency variables that in turn causally map onto a network of inter-linked latent job outcome variables (Bartram, 2006).[1]

To the extent that an accurate understanding of a School Leadership@work structural model can be depicted and tested, the possibility exists of proactively improving performance through a variety of human resource management interventions. The objective of this study is to answer this call by aiming to develop a school principal competency structural model that reflects the impact of school principal behaviours (competencies) on school outcome dimensions.

1.2 Objectives

More specifically, the objectives of the study are:

- To identify and explicate broad School Principal Competency (SPC) clusters and School Performance Outcome (SPO) variables from the literature which constitute school principal effectiveness,
- To develop more specific competencies and behavioural examples from analysed interview data,
- To develop a proposed structural model that explicates the nature of possible interrelationships between the most critical SPCs and SPOs.

1.3 Overview of the Study

Chapter one offers an explanation as to what the role of the Human Resource Management function must be in addressing the fundamental cause of adverse impact and the long term sustainability of organisations. This introductory chapter argues for the ultimate need of a school principal competency model. Chapter 2 begins with an explanation of the concept and practice of competency modelling. This is followed by a literature review of critical SPOs and SPCs. Chapter 3 explains

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[1] A model depicting the interrelations between the outcome and behavioural (competency) level, but with the exclusion of the competency potential level (as in this study) should, according to the broad conceptual framework propagated in this study, technically be referred to as a partial competency model. However, since the convention is to refer to a single list of critical job-related behaviours (thus even in the absence of both the outcome and competency potential variables) as a competency model, the same will be done in this study.

how the research study was conducted and includes the research paradigm, the interviewing process, the sample, and the qualitative analysis that was performed. A representation and discussion of the results of the study is covered in chapter 4 and finally, chapter 5 draws conclusions, discuss the implications and limitations of the study, and make recommendations for future research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE STUDY

2.1   Introduction

In the light of the primary objective of the study, this chapter provides a general overview of the practice of competency modelling. Thereafter, in order to give context to the school principal performance outcomes and competencies, the concept of school management leadership in general is discussed, as well as how it influences student learning and development. Subsequently, school principal performance outcomes, as well as the proposed competencies identified during the literature review are defined and discussed. This serves as a provisional model, which, in Chapter 4, is refined by the results from the qualitative interviews

2.2   Defining Competencies

Two related but distinct views can be identified in the Industrial-Organisational Psychology literature regarding competencies: the view that competencies represent any person-centred attribute (including personality, cognition, values, knowledge etc.) causally related to job success, and the view that considers competencies to be bundles of observable behaviour causally related to job success (Cooper, Lawrence, Kierstead, Lynch & Luce, 1998).

In South Africa, the National Qualifications Framework (NQF) defines standards on national training schemes in terms of outcomes. The achievement of certain standards is measured against behaviours upon which the outcomes are dependent (Vorster & Roodt, 2003). South Africa therefore seems to subscribe to the latter interpretation of competencies. The public service also defines competencies as a "set of behaviour patterns an individual needs to display in order to perform effectively and efficiently in his or her position" (Department of Public Service Administration, 2003, p. 157). Being NQF related, this study will consequently follow the behavioural perspective of competencies.

According to the behavioural view, competencies can more specifically be defined as "behaviours that support the attainment of organisational objectives" (SHL, 2011, p. 3). In line with this line of reasoning, Bartram (2005, p. 1187) defines competencies as "sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of sought after results or

outcomes". Similarly, Cooper, Lawrence, Kierstead, Lynch and Luce (1998) define competencies as "individual performance behaviours that are observable, measureable and critical to successful individual or corporate performance". Competencies, in the context of this study, are then viewed as relatively stable sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of superior school performance, defined in terms of the outcomes the school principal is held accountable for.

2.3   Defining Competency Modelling: A Three-Domain Competency Framework

Defining competency models and competency modelling partially depends on the conceptualisation of competencies. If the view that competencies are personal characteristics (e.g. personality, attitudes, knowledge, etc.) is endorsed, then competency models refer to collections of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAOs) that are required for effective performance. If, as in this study, the behavioural view is endorsed, the focal point of the model is behaviour, which acts as a mediator between personal characteristics and actual performance on the job (Campion et al., 2011).

The assessment group, Saville and Holdsworth (SHL), developed the SHL Performance@Work competency framework for conceptualising the relationships between competencies, job outcomes and competency potential (i.e. the psychological attributes underlying competencies).

Figure 2.1 offers a basic depiction of how the different elements of the model make up the framework. According to SHL (2000, p. 6), this framework refers to:

> *[A] Model of performance at work that defines the relationship between competency potential, competency requirements and competencies themselves. 'Competencies' are defined as behaviours that support the attainment of organizational objectives. 'Competency potential' is seen to derive from individual dispositions and attainments, and 'competency requirements' refer both to facilitators of and barriers to effective performance in the workplace. The framework points to ways in which people and the work setting interact, and has implications for how performance is managed in the workplace.*
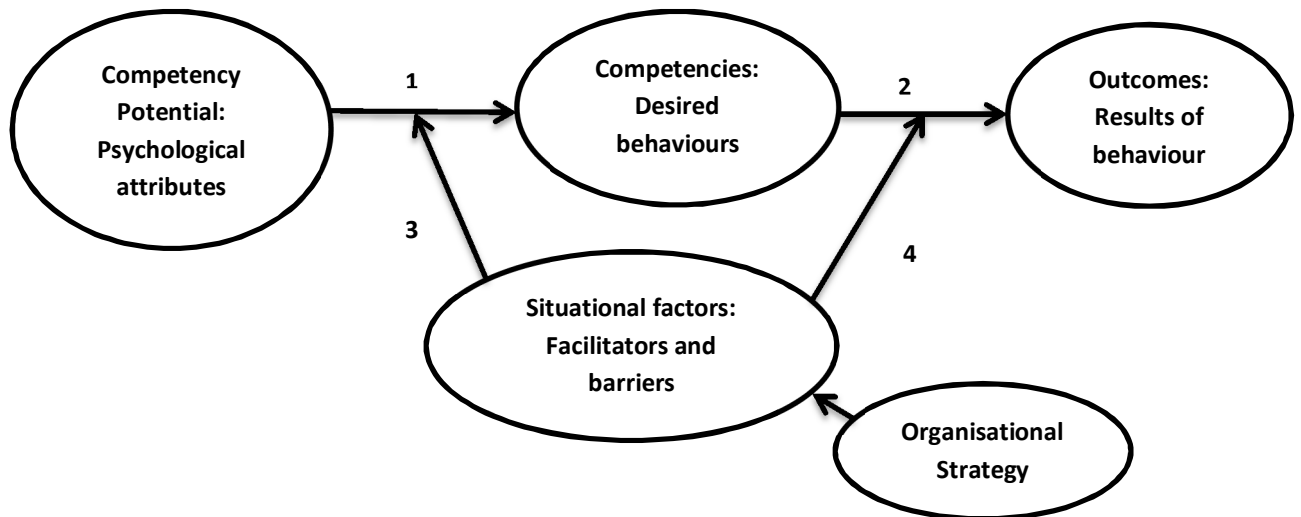
Figure 2.1 A three-domain competency framework

(Adapted from SHL,1994, p.11)

Although it is not explicitly stipulated as such, the comprehensive SHL competency model essentially becomes a three-domain structural model that maps a network of causally inter-related person characteristics (competency potential) onto a network of abstract representations of bundles of related observable behaviour (competencies), and in turn maps the latter onto a network of causally inter-related performance outcome variables. Both the effect of the person characteristics on behavioural performance (competencies) and the effect of the latter on the outcome variables are in turn moderated by situational/ environmental variables which can act as either facilitators or barriers to performance (Bartram, 2005; SHL, 2011). Each of these domains is discussed in more detail in succeeding sections.

For the purpose of this study, the competencies and the performance outcomes are to be considered the most important domains in the comprehensive three-domain structural model, as they constitute job performance and are observable and measurable. Furthermore, competency potential variables are derived from the performance domain. Conceptualisation of both the outcomes and competencies are therefore essential for the accurate identification of competency potential variables. In order to determine the necessary competencies for success on the job it must first, however, be clear what exactly performance entails. For this reason, the performance construct is defined hereafter.

2.3.1   Defining the performance construct

Various existing definitions in the performance literature do not emphasise performance as a construct that includes both a behavioural and an outcome domain. Also, there is no predominant consensus that these two domains are structurally inter-related. Instead, performance definitions in general tend to focus on one domain while excluding the other (Bartram, 2005; Binning & Barret, 1989; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Despite this, there is much that strengthens the stance that performance is compounded from both behaviour and the attainment of outcomes.

The SHL Performance@Work model interprets performance as the nomological network of structural relations between an interrelated set of latent behavioural performance dimensions (competencies) and an interrelated set of latent outcome variables. These outcomes are valued by the organisation, contribute to organisational goals, and are determined by organisational strategy. The meaning of performance is therefore spread over the entirety of the performance structural model. Some depth and comprehensiveness of this meaning will be lost if the structural model is to be dissected. Thus, for the purposes of this study, performance constitutes both behaviours and outcomes.

2.3.2   Competencies: Desired behaviours

According to SHL (2011, p. 3), competencies can be defined as "behaviours that support the attainment of organisational objectives." Similarly, Bartram (2005, p. 1187) defines competencies as "sets of behaviours that are instrumental in the delivery of desired results or outcomes". Cooper, Lawrence, Kierstead, Lynch and Luce (1998, as cited in Myburgh, 2011, p. 4) articulate two important characteristics of competencies. According to these authors, competencies can be characterised as 1) "individual performance behaviours that are observable and measureable and 2) critical to successful individual or corporate performance".

Simply put, competencies refer to the bundles of behaviour that a person must be able to display in order to be successful at a given job (Bartram, 2004; Theron, 2012).

2.3.3   Competency potential

Competency potential, in terms of the SHL model, refers to person constructs that can be relatively stable dispositions (e.g. values, personality, motives, etc.), or to more malleable attainments (e.g. knowledge or skills). Competency potential constitutes key psychological personal attributes, in the sense that it determines the behaviour (competencies) which is instrumental to attaining the outcomes for which the specific employee, manager, or leader is held accountable (Bartram, 2005, Theron, 2012).

2.3.4   Outcomes: results of behaviour

Put simply, outcomes are the results of behaviour needed for performance in a specific job. In this light, SHL (Baily, Bartram Kurz, 2001, p.5) defines results as "the actual or intended outcomes of behaviour which have been defined either explicitly or implicitly by the individual, his or her line manager or the organisation".

A key characteristic of job outcomes (as defined in this study) is that they are interdependent of each other. Consequently, a unique causal relationship may exist between outcomes of the same job. The relationship between outcome variables can further be conceptualised by being either "leading" or lagging" in nature. This refers to the fact that an outcome can either occur at the beginning of the chain of outcomes (leading), or it can occur later in the chain (lagging). Leading outcomes therefore by definition affect lagging outcomes, which are more closely related to hard criteria performance measures (Binning & Barret, 1998; Cascio, 1998).

In terms of the current study, for example, it would be difficult to demonstrate a direct link between a competency like *Developing school staff* and an ultimate (lagging) school outcome such as *Academic Results.* It would however, be logically sensible for showing a relationship between the same competency and a leading outcome like *Professional capacity of school staff,* and then arguing that this outcome is more closely related to a lagging outcome like *Academic Results.*

2.3.5   The difference between competence and competencies

At this point it is essential to distinguish between "competence" (knowledge and skills) and "competencies". Unfortunately these two similarly sounding words have

often led to confusion or misuse of the terms. Simply put, competence is about mastery in relation to specified job-related goals or outcomes. It therefore requires the ability to demonstrate mastery of specific job-relevant knowledge and skills. Competencies on the other hand, are "behavioural repertoires" that relate to the behaviours underpinning successful performance in a specific job (Bartram, 2006; Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011).

Like SHL's three-domain universal competency framework, this study does not aim to develop a model of knowledge and skills. Such a model is referred to as a model of 'competence'. Rather, the aim of this study is to develop a model of competencies as defined above.

2.3.6 Situational factors: Situational variables influencing the relationship between competency potential competencies (Arrow 3)

According to Bartram (2006), the possibility exists that the development of competency potential into competencies will be influenced by the situational facilitators and barriers. Put differently, even if a leader displays competency potential that is thought to lead to the realisation of a specific competency , certain situational constraints may prevent that competency potential from realising into a the relevant competency.   Such constrains may include the following: the effectiveness of communication channels, reporting relationships, and the organisational climate or culture (Bailey, Bartram, & Kurz, 2001).   A practical example would be a situation where a school principal has all the competency potential in order to be an effective communicator (e.g. extroverted, conscientious, emotionally stable/intelligent etc.), but fail to display the behavioural aspect thereof due to constraining communication systems.

2.3.7   Situational factors: Situational variables influencing leadership behaviour and effectiveness (Arrow 4)

The competency-outcome relationship is also affected by situational factors. Displaying the desired or even ideal behaviour does not necessarily guarantee job success as outlined by the job outcomes. Theron (2012, p. 9) acknowledges the effect of situational factors in this relationship by stating that "competencies… when exhibited on a job, would constitute high job performance and would [probably,

depending on situational constraints/opportunities] lead to job success defined in terms of the objectives for which the job exists".

In spite of the widely excepted notion that desired leader behaviours may differ between situations, there is surprisingly little agreement about these contingencies (Fiedler, 1967; House, 1971; Yukl, 1981; Vroom & Jago 2007). After conducting an extensive literature review on situational leadership factors, however, Bartram and Inceoglu (2011) highlight two specific situational features that appear in many discussions of leadership effectiveness. These two factors are used as general situational factors from which the more specific situational factors of school principals are derived and discussed in Section 4.5 . The two broad categories of situational leadership variables are now briefly explained.

2.3.7.1 *Contextual uncertainty*

Milliken (1987) defines perceived uncertainty as an individual's perceived inability to understand the direction in which an environment might be changing, the potential impact of those changes on that individual's organisation, and whether or not particular responses to the environment might be successful. Due to the fact that uncertainty, as defined above, may develop from numerous contextual features, Bartram and Inceoglu (2011) state that contextual uncertainty should be used as a more general construct to characterise current ambiguity and lack of clarity about the best way forward.

In an organisational context, uncertainty is often a function of the degree of complexity and interdependency in an organisation's structure. In small or simply-structured organisations, for example, the potential impact of change processes or behaviours are easier to predict than for more complex or larger organisations. Also important for leadership is the fact that predictability in this sense is logically and directly related to risk. The less predictable the outcome of an intervention, the higher the risk associated with it. Also, leadership is never a linear process. Having set a vision and strategy, the leader cannot initiate a process with the mere hope that it will run through and be successful without further behavioural intervention, redesigning, and necessary innovation. Mistakes made early in the process will therefore affect outcomes later down the chain (Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011; Theron & Spangenberg, 2011).

2.3.7.2   Pressure to act

A second general contextual leadership feature that varies between situations is the degree of external pressure to act and its opposite, namely the internal resistance to the needed change. For presentational purposes, Bartram and Inceoglu (2011) created a two-by-two taxonomy that shifts the leadership framework from descriptive to prescriptive in the sense that it outlines the different prescribed behaviours in order to be effective in the various combinations of situations. The emphasis is now on different "types" of leadership in four different situational contexts.

Table 2.1

Different types of leadership in different situational contexts

	High contextual uncertainty	Low contextual uncertainty
High external pressure for change ——————▶ **Transformations**	High risk, rapid change Change by revolution	Medium risk, rapid change Change by innovation and paradigm shift
Low external pressure for change ——————▶ **Improvements**	Medium risk, slow change Change by evolution and continuous improvement	Low risk, maintain status quo Process change and maintenance

(Bartram, D., & Inceoglu, 2011, p.12).

Different types of leadership also mean different types of behaviours. Bartram and Inceoglu's (2011) classification explains that contextual uncertainty increases the value of transformational behaviours. Such behaviours are of more limited value, and may even be disruptive in situations where there is stability and clarity within or outside the organisation. As leaders of their schools, school principals are confronted by the full spectrum of situations in this regard. The effectiveness of a school will therefore be a partial function of the extent to which the school principal displays behaviours congruent with the type of leadership needed in the specific situation.

2.3.8   Competency relationships

As defined in the previous sections, a comprehensive structural competency model includes competency potential, competencies, and outcomes. Competency modelling in a complete sense therefore implies mapping all three these domains

onto each other via two main sets of relationships that act as linkages in the creation of the structural model. Each of the two relationships will now briefly be discussed.

2.3.8.1   *The competency potential-competencies relationship (Arrow 1)*

Displaying certain desired bundles of behaviour (competencies) is not a random occurrence, but is determined by a multitude of variables. Among these determining variables, are desired psychological person attributes (competency potential). The influence of the competency potential-competencies relationship as explained above is in turn based on the assumption that the competencies, predicted from the competency potential measures, are in fact related to the delivery of successful job outcomes (Bartram, 2005; Theron, 2009).

Consequently, the starting point should be the competencies-outcomes relationship, which is discussed hereafter

2.3.8.2   *The competencies-outcomes relationship (Arrow 2)*

In the SHL approach to competency modelling, the importance of competencies for specific jobs is inferred (via job analysis) from job outcomes, and therefore becomes central to the model. For this reason it becomes essential to understand the competency-outcome relationship. An additional and perhaps neglected reason for the importance of this relationship is that it provides perspective on the relative importance of individual competencies in relation to the most critical outcomes. This enables test developers to attach weights to specific performance areas and subsequently, informing the development of selection rules (Bartram, 2005; Cascio, 1998).

Now that an explanation has been given regarding the approach taken in in defining bundles of behaviours as well as in how these behaviours lead to performance, clarity is needed on how the study defines its primary unit of analysis: the school leader. The following sections offer perspective in this regard.

2.4   Defining School Leadership

Although leadership has become a concept of ever-increasing prominence in the education literature, there remains very little consensus on exactly what leadership is and what it comprises within this context. Much of this confusion stems from the

overlap and difference between the concepts of administration, management, and leadership (Krüger & Scheerens, 2012).

While an in-depth coverage of the differences between these concepts falls far outside the scope of this study, Bartram and Inceoglu's (2011) distinction between management and leadership in general will be regarded as sufficient. In this distinction, management entails keeping an existing system running, whereas leadership is creating it, developing it, or changing its course (Bartram and Inceoglu, 2011). It is this latter understanding of leadership as a dynamic change process which seems to underlie Krüger's (2010) broad conceptualisation of school leadership: (*1) a process of influence, 2) a process of leading and following, 3) a matter of personality, 4) a way of persuasion, 5) a manner of interacting, 6) a process of goal attainment, 7) a way of creating structure, 8) negotiating in power relations, and 9) stimulating change.*

Focusing on behavioural competencies*,* the current study does not include all these elements of leadership in achieving its objective. The focus is placed on *leadership behaviours and actions*, thereby omitting *leadership personality* and aspects relating to *leadership styles.*

Two main focus areas of literature on School Leadership and Management (SLM) exist internationally. The first area is more macro-orientated and can be categorised as system wide reforms in school management. Such reforms include the effects of the decentralisation of management to school level, contract tenure for teachers, as well as school/teacher incentives. The second focus area is more micro-orientated and includes studies of leadership practices and behaviours at the school level and how these impact on learner outcomes (Robinson et al 2008; Leithwood et al, 2004; Heck & Hallinger, 1998; Bruns, Filmer & Patrinos, 2011). This study draws largely from the results of school leadership behaviour studies (i.e. the second focus area) as part of the process of theorising and identifying the most critical school principal competencies.

Research on school leadership behaviour has to a large extent served as a foundation for the identification of school principal competencies. Not only has this field of research led to further conceptualisation of the concept of school leadership, but also to the central question of which behaviours are demonstrated and

competently displayed by principals of schools where achievements exceed expectations. This question in turn guides the identification of what exactly it is that effective school principals do and need to do (Hallinger, 1983; Krüger & Scheerens, 2012). A literature review of school principal competencies and outcomes now follows in pursuit of such identification on a theoretical level.

2.5 Literature Review of School Principal Competencies and Outcomes

South Africa has a unique history and specific educational needs. There is however, much in the international literature that is universal regarding school leadership and management. A review of both the South African and international literature on school leadership practices and behaviours therefore follows.

2.5.1 South African literature

Within the South African scientific literature there seems to be rather limited information as to what and how School Leadership and Management (SLM) behaviours and practices are contributing to or detracting from school functionality. This appears to be particularly true in terms of what is known about the intricate nature of the interrelations between school principal behaviours and learning outcomes (Bush & Heysteck, 2006). In South Africa, some research indicates that even school principals themselves have a limited understanding of what really constitutes school principal success. In a survey of 500 Gauteng school principals, Bush and Heysteck (2006) reported the school principals as not fully conceptualising their role as *Leaders of Learnin*g. Instead, these school principals give higher priority to financial management per se. The following sections give an overview of the most noteworthy qualitative and qualitative South African studies on leadership practices and behaviours at school level and of how such behaviours impact on learner outcomes.

In terms of qualitative research, Taylor et al. (2011a) identified various effective school principal practices and behaviours using twelve South African primary schools by means of case studies. Results indicated that higher learner achievement was associated with the following:

- A coherent focus on teaching and learning

- Parental involvement

- The optimal use of time for teaching and learning

- A supportive School Governing Body

On the quantitative side of South African research, two studies stand out within the literature on School Leadership and Management (SLM) behaviours and practices. Firstly, Taylor (2011b) identified various indicators of leadership and management in South Africa by making use of the National School Effectiveness Study (NSES). Among the indicators that were strongly linked to higher pupil achievement, the following stood out: An organised learning environment signified by curriculum planning for the full year, a functional timetable, and high quality inventories for Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSM), low teacher absenteeism and up-to-date assessment records. Furthermore, this study found weak evidence that school resources such as pupil-teacher ratios and school facilities are associated with pupil achievement. As other studies have argued (e.g. Van der Berg, 2007), the more important factor is how well these resources are managed and transformed into critical school performance outcomes.

Another quantitative study of note was conducted by Hoadley, Christie & Ward (2009) in which 200 Schools in the Eastern and Western Cape were initially studied. According to the authors, the following indicators were significant when included in regression model that examined the relationship between various school variables and student achievement gains over time (SAGOT):

- Curriculum coverage (t=2.34; p=0.021).

- Student Governing Bodies' (SGB) willingness to help (t=2.134; p=0.035).

- Parental valuing of and support for education (t=3.027; p=0.003)

In conclusion, although there is some indication of a number of rudimentary indicators of SLM practices that significantly influences pupil's performance outcomes, the SLM construct in its totality within the South African context remains mostly undetected. A much larger bulk of international literature is available within this focus area. The next section covers the most relevant international literature in the field of educational leadership.

2.5.2   International literature

Internationally, results from school leadership behaviour studies suggest a number of leadership behaviours that are essential for school effectiveness. These include: 1) establishing high expectations for students and their learning achievements, 2) emphasising basic skills, 3) involvement with instructional methods, 4) coordinating instructional programmes, 5) evaluation of student progress, 6) providing support and guidance for teachers, and 7) creating an orderly and supportive learning-orientated climate (van Vilsteren, 1999; Krüger & Scheerens, 2012).

Although some meta-analysis has put these findings sharply into question by finding direct leadership effects on student learning and outcomes to be weak and small (e.g. Hallinger and Heck, 1998; Witziers, Bosker, & Krüger, 2003), the belief that school principals have the capacity to play a substantial role in improving their schools, remains scientifically alive for at least two primary reasons.

Firstly, almost all of the studies which found school leadership effects to be weak or small concluded that the primary reason for the small effects is to be expected due to the absence of mediating variables through which school principals affect student outcomes. It is therefore not a surprise that the qualitative findings in the rigorous and extensive literature reviews of researchers like Leithwood et al. (2004) found school principals to be everything but non-influential in effecting critical student outcomes. In fact, these scholars found school leadership second only to classroom instruction among school-related factors in influencing student learning. They expanded on this by stating:

> *"Indeed, there are virtually no documented instances of troubled schools being turned around without intervention by a powerful leader. Many other factors may contribute to such turnarounds, but leadership is the catalyst (p.7)" ….school leadership "is second only to teaching among school-related factors in its impact on student learning" (p. 5)."*

Also in contrast with the meta-analysis reported by Witzers et al. (2003), are the findings of the second analysis of a two pronged meta-analysis by Robinson et al. (2008). While the first analysis examined the relative impact of different types of leadership on learners' outcomes, the second analysis analysed the average impact

of various behavioural leadership dimensions on student outcomes. Five of these dimensions showed either strong or moderate effects. The dimensions, including some of the sub- dimensions are defined and briefly discussed below.

1. Establishing goals and expectations

This behavioural domain is defined as the determined pursuit of clear goals, which are understood by and perceived as attractive to those who pursue them. Of the 12 studies used in Robinson et al.'s (2008) meta-analysis, seven studies provided evidence of the importance of being able to set and establish goals and expectations. Twenty-one indicators of this behavioural dimension produced an average effect size of 0.42 standard deviations. These results can be interpreted as moderately large.

2. Resourcing strategically – According to Robinson et al. (2008), resourcing strategically refers to securing resources that are aligned with instructional purposes, rather than leadership skill per se. Thus, this measure should not be interpreted as an indicator of skill in fundraising, grant writing, or partnering with business, as those skills may or may not be applied in ways that serve key instructional purposes. It should also be noted that the resources that are included in the "resourcing" element of the construct, include financial, technological, and human resources. The strategic resourcing of school staff therefore becomes essential as teaching is proven to be the primary factor impacting on student learning outcomes (Leithwood et al., 2004). In the meta-analysis, eleven indicators of this dimension yields an average effect size of 0.31 standard deviations. This suggests that this leadership behaviour has a small indirect impact on pupil outcomes.

3. Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum – This behavioural domain refers to the school principal's personal involvement in planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum. Across the nine studies examined by Robinson et al. (2008), eighty indicators indicate this group of leadership behaviours to have a moderate impact on student outcomes (ES = 0.42). On a more specific level, Robinson et al. (2008) find evidence for *Planning, coordinating, and evaluating teaching and the curriculum* to be a behavioural domain consisting out of four interrelated sub-dimensions.

Firstly, an *Active involvement in instructional matters* is needed. This sub-dimension was created from consistent reports from teachers in higher performing schools that their school principals are actively involved in collegial discussions of instructional matters (e.g. the dynamics of how instruction impacts student achievement).

The second sub-dimension is termed as an *Active oversight and coordination of the instructional programme.* According to Robinson et al. (2008), effective school principals and staff constantly work together in reviewing and improving teaching. Results indicated that in high-performing schools, school principals were more directly involved in coordinating the curriculum across year levels than those in lower performing schools. A prominent example of such involvement includes behaviours included developing progressions of teaching objectives across year levels.

Thirdly, *Involvement in classroom observation and feedback* refers to the degree to which the school principal displays behaviours that promote involvement in classroom observation and subsequent feedback. According to Robinson et al. (2008), teachers in high performing schools reported that their leaders set and adhered to clear performance standards for teaching and made regular classroom observations that helped them improve their teaching.

Finally, the sub-dimension of *Ensuring that staff systematically monitored student progress* represents the repertoire of behaviours that ensure that test results are monitored and that the curriculum is systematically improved. Such behaviours are viewed in strong contrast to mere record-keeping.

4. Promoting and participating in teacher learning and development - The leader's participation in life-long learning and the development of teachers in the contexts of both formal (staff meetings and professional teacher training) and informal (reflections and discussions about specific teaching problems) behaviours. From the six studies on this behavioural domain, seventeen effect sizes were calculated, indicting a yield in average effect size of 0.84 standard deviations. This can be interpreted as a large effect.

5. *Ensuring an orderly and supportive environment* – Behaviours that lead to the creation of an environment for both teaching staff and students which makes it possible for important academic and social goals to be achieved. In an orderly

environment, teachers can focus on teaching and students can focus on learning. Instrumental here is establishing a safe and supportive learning environment through clear and consistently enforced social expectations and discipline codes. Results from this behavioural domain were derived from 42 effect sizes from 8 studies. The mean effect size of the 20 indicators was a small (0.27) standard deviation. These findings therefore suggest that the leadership of effective schools can be distinguished by emphasis on and behaviours that enforce the establishment of a safe and supportive environment through clear and consistently applied social expectations and discipline codes.

An additional reason as to why the belief that school principals have the capacity to substantially improve their schools remains to be endorsed stems from the value of the school principal as not only being an instructional leader, but also an transformational leader (Krüger & Scheerens, 2012). The value of transformational school leadership flows from the importance of behaviours that create necessary educational innovation and improvement (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). The transformational school leader brings about a necessary cultural shift within the school. This can be done by steering the behaviours of the staff and pupils through initiating a vision for the future, by inspiring, motivating, giving individual support, and by setting intellectual challenges (Krüger & Scheerens, 2012). A key question now becomes; if the complex repertoire of school principal behaviours need to be grouped, what are the most overarching sets of behaviours that these educational leader display?

As a product of an extensive review on the subject, Leithwood et al. (2004) proposed that successful school principals make use of four similar basic repertoires of activities and behaviours. These repertoires also capture the essence of what was identified in the South African literature and is displayed in Table 2.2 as categorised by Leithwood et al. (2004).

Table 2.2

The four basic repertoires of school principal behaviour

Behavioural Repertoire	Definition
Developing a vision and giving direction	Identifying and formulating a vision, creating a shared interest, demonstrating high expectations for performance, promoting the acceptance of group objectives, monitoring organisational performance, and communicating
Understanding and developing people	Providing intellectual stimulation, giving individual guidance, and setting a good example. The school leader builds on the knowledge and skills of teachers and other personnel to achieve the school objectives.
Redesigning the school	Building on cultures and cooperative processes, managing the environment and working conditions, building and maintaining productive relations with parents and the community, and connecting the school with the wider environment
Managing the teaching and learning programme	Creating a productive working environment for both teachers and students, promoting organisational/school stability, guaranteeing effective leadership with the focus on learning, appointing teachers and supporting staff to implement the curriculum, and monitoring school activities and performance.

(Adapted from Leithwood et al., 2004)

It can be argued that school principals should have capacity in each of the four areas as outlined in Table 2.2 in order to improve pupil achievement and development. This stance is supported by Bryk et al. (2010), who found large differences in examination score gains among elementary schools where school principals score high in all four areas.

2.5.3 The importance of a mediated-effects in a school principal competency model

As already explained, direct effects between school principals' actions and ultimate outcomes such as pupil success are rarely identified in the literature. The behaviours and actions of school principals are mediated through the effect of their leadership on people (especially teachers) and features of the school as an organisation (Leithwood et. al, 2004; Hallinger and Heck 1996). Consequently, a need exists to develop models that capture the complexity of the influence that schools principals really have on student outcomes. Moreover, advanced statistical techniques are required to empirically test models of this nature.

Structural Equation Modelling (SEM) is particularly suited to examining the strength of direct and indirect relationships in structural models. However, only recently have studies on educational leadership accounted for this complexity by using methods such as SEM to estimate the effects of multiple indirect pathways from leadership to instruction and learning (e.g., Hallinger & Heck, 2010; Louis, Dretzke, & Wahlstrom, 2010; Supovitz et al., 2010).

At least two studies stand out with regards to use of sophisticated methods and large samples in identifying significant paths through which school principal leadership effect student learning and other critical school performance outcomes. These two studies were   performed by Sebastian and Allensworth (2012), and Ten Bruggencate et al. (2012).

After comparing one school with another, Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) found principal leadership to be largely related to the overall quality of instruction and student achievement through one primary mechanism - the *learning climate*. The learning climate of a school refers to the beliefs, values, and everyday interactions among school personnel, parents, and students (Bryk et al., 2010). According to Sebastian and Allensworth (2012), this includes basic needs such as the order and safety at the school, which can have a strong effect on the motivation and learning of both teachers and learners. Figure 2.3 presents a replica of the Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) model.
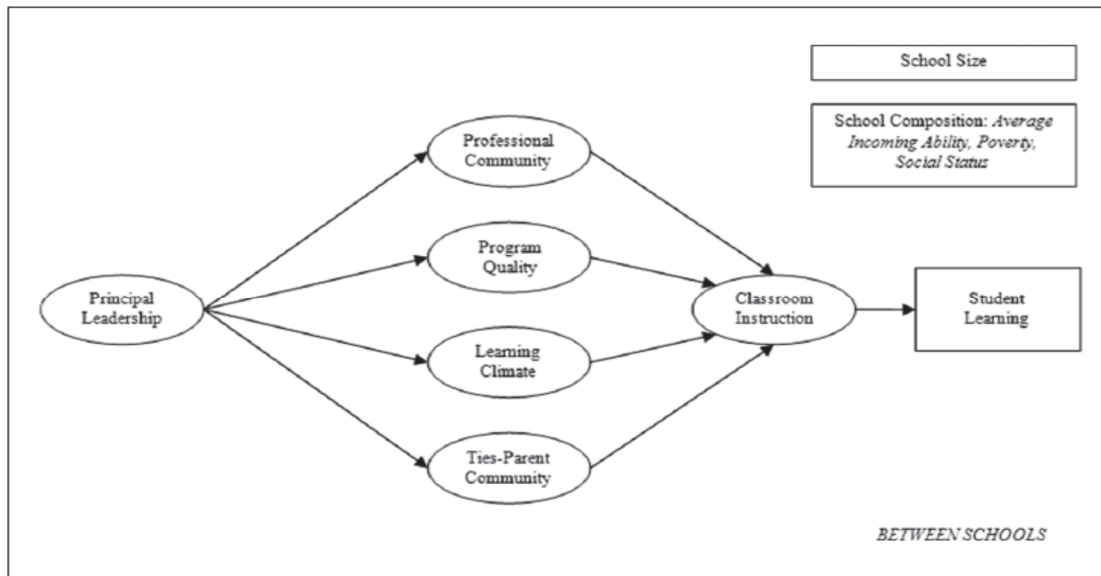
Figure 2.2 **The Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) Principal Leadership Model**

(Sebastian, & Allensworth, 2012, p.633)

School climate affects all classrooms and consequently may have the most widely reaching effect across the various classes in a school. Even highly qualified teachers are unlikely to produce high learning gains in schools that are disorderly or unsafe (DeAngelis & Presley, 2011). When the current South African educational context is taken into account, this finding may be even more important. Sebastian and Allensworth (2012) also emphasise that efforts to improve learning climate do not rely on subject-specific skills or understanding. Therefore, even if school principals may not have the skills to direct instructional practice in all subjects, they can still create a climate in which teachers can be effective. In a country like South Africa where there is considerable variation in quality across school situational factors like socio-economic status and environmental surroundings (van den Berg 2005), principal leadership is theorised to have a strong impact through this mediating outcome (*See Appendix A for a recent case in which the creation of a student-focused learning climate proved pivotal in the turnaround of a severely underperforming high school in the Western Cape).*

The results of the first half of Sebastian and Allensworth's (2012) study do not imply that other aspects of school principals' behaviour are unimportant. When the relationship of school principal leadership and instruction within schools (i.e. comparing one teacher with another) was considered, the *quality of professional*

development programmes, *professional teaching community*, and *partnerships with parents* and the community, were also found to have significant associations with instructional quality.

The Bruggencate et al. school leadership model (2012) is another example of where mediation effects were studied in order to understand the nature of the pathways through which school principals contribute to student learning. The Ten Bruggencate et al. (2012) model assumes school principals to indirectly influence academic performance through their behavioural influence on the school culture and school organisation via two mediating variables: teachers' work and student engagement.

The Ten Bruggencate et al. (2012) research model also incorporated contextual variables which were expected to have an effect on academic performance as well as on the relationships between the mediating variables. These contextual variables included school size, student population composition, and degree of urbanisation.[2] For illustrative purposes, the Ten Bruggencate et al. (2012) model is displayed in Figure 2.3.
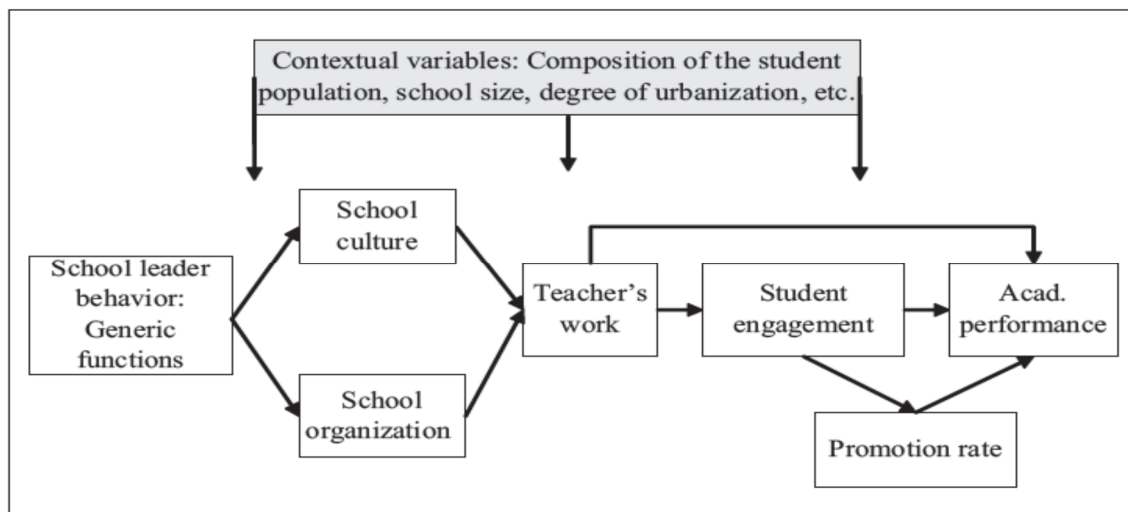
Figure 2.3   **The Ten Bruggencate et al. Scool Leadership Model.**

(Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012, p.707)

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[2] Accounting for these contextual factor are recognised as important for understanding school performance; however due to the qualitative nature of the study, statistical control was not possible in the current study.

2.6   The Development of a School Principal Competency Model

Systematic theorising plays an important role in the objective of scientific research and its epistemic ideal (Theron, 2012). Therefore, an appropriate organisational framework and theoretical leadership model is needed in order to develop a school principal competency model in the South African context. The goal is that the final product should be domestically relevant as well as internationally competitive. The following sections offer a systematic argument regarding the leadership frameworks and models that were used for this study.

2.6.1   Selecting the right framework: General vs. Specific Leadership Models

Utilising a generic framework for measuring the various independent and mediating variables offers valuable possibilities in the quest to establish a relationship between school principal leadership competencies and different organisational characteristics or school performance outcomes (Quinn, 1998). Therefore, in addition to the need to develop more complex causal models of school leadership effects (as argued in 2.5.3), future research focusing on school leadership behaviour should use more integrated and generic leadership models.

Leithwood and Levin (2005) support the search for a broader set of leadership behaviours than those used by Ten Bruggencate et al. (2012) and Sebastian and Allensworth (2012), but simultaneously recommend moving away from the usage of specific leadership styles as the primary factor in developing leadership competency models. Although "instructional", "transformational", and "strategic" leadership styles are all directly linked to specific educational leadership behaviours, they tend to obscure the generic functions of leadership due to the multitude of labels used for the different forms and styles (Hallinger, 2003; Leithwood, Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004; Robinson et al., 2008). An integrated leadership model would therefore be more valuable in this study

The literature study has revealed a number of such leadership models and performance assessments that provide a basis for categorising school principal competencies. For example, the four basic repertoires of school principal behaviour (listed in Table 2.2), could easily be integrated into any of these generic leadership models. These leadership models include Bartram and Inceoglu's (2011) SHL

Corporate Leadership Model, Theron and Spangengberg's (2011) Leadership Behaviour Inventory (LBI-2), as well as the current performance measurement instrument of the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) – called the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS). These models also seems to A brief explanation of each will now be given.

2.6.2 The WCED's integrated quality management system

According to S. Nowers (personal communication, September 21, 2013), the Western Cape Education Department (WCED) is currently using the same performance observation instrument for both school principals and staff, namely the QA3. The QA3 forms part of the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) in the Western Cape. School principals are presently being evaluated against four of the behavioural performance dimensions (9-12) of the instrument, whereas teaching staff are only evaluated against the first eight. For confidentiality reasons, the content of the respective dimensions can unfortunately not be exposed.

According to S. Nowers (Personal communication, September 21, 2013), an improved performance management instrument; the Quality Management System (QMS), will in all probability replace the IQMS in the near future. At the time of publication of the current study, the QMS had draft evaluation forms, but was still under review and discussion by various education unions and therefore not yet in effect (Nowers, 2013).

From the preceding literature it is clear that school principals may attempt to improve learner achievement through multiple processes. Each of these processes has many different behavioural dimensions. The complexity of their roles may lead them to focus their efforts more on some aspects of school organisation and management than on others. Therefore, their choices about how to divide their efforts may in turn lead them to be more or less effective in improving instruction and student performance. The IQMS framework fails to answer two important questions in this regard. These questions are:

- Which areas of the school principals' work and behaviour are most strongly related to critical outcomes like classroom instruction and student

learning/achievement? In other words, what are the relative weights of each performance dimension?

- What is the nature of the interrelated network of behavioural processes through which school principal leadership explains differences in student achievement and classroom instruction across schools? In other words, what does the relationship between school principal competencies and performance outcomes look like?

2.6.3   The SHL Corporate Leadership Model

Much of the confusion in the approaches to leadership arises from the literature's failure to differentiate between leadership and management on the one hand and individual and contingent factors on the other. The SHL approach to leadership creates an explicit separation between the notions of management and leadership and incorporates this distinction as an integral part of the model (Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011) In the SHL approach, management is essentially about keeping an existing system running, whereas leadership is creating it, developing it, or changing its course. Further confusion is sometimes generated by the fact that it is naturally difficult to regard a person as a competent leader without that person also having management skills. The reality is that while the two concepts may be conceptually distinct, they manifest alongside each other in practice.

In terms of broad behavioural activities it is generally accepted that management includes planning, organising, monitoring, maintaining routines, and handling deviations from desired progress, etc. These activities are typically viewed as being relatively routine, whereas leadership is seen as more initiative. SHL's view of management is however, not at all negative in nature. It rather views good management and effective leadership, although different, to be both instrumental to organisational successes (Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011). Figure 2.4 offers a depiction of how leadership potential and leadership behaviours (competencies) are influenced by contextual factors in their relation with outcomes.

The SHL Corporate Leadership Model covers the following four sets of variables:

1. *Key outcomes and impacts.* What are the consequences of leadership? What impact do leaders have? What is the focus, depth, and breadth of these impacts?

2. *Key competencies*. What are the desirable 'leadership behaviours'?

3. *Individual antecedents of competencies.* What are the stable individual characteristics that lead to such behaviours?

4. *Context:* What is the situational and cultural context?

Figure 2.4   **The relationship between Leadership potential, competencies, performance outcomes**

(SHL Corporate Leadership Model: White Paper, 2011, p.5)

The SHL Corporate Leadership Model is derived from SHL's Universal Competency Framework (Bartram, Robertson & Callinan, 2002; Kurz & Bartram 2002). The SHL Corporate Leadership Model therefore incorporates all three domains of a comprehensive competency model as described in section 2.3. The model further provides a significant advance by taking account of both leadership behaviours (as rated by oneself and others) and leadership impacts, both individual and aggregated (i.e. team, group and organisational) measurement, and both people-measures and contextual/situational variables (Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011).

Although the nature of the organisational context of schools differs from that of corporate organisations, it is safe to say that SHL Corporate Leadership Model offers a well-researched and promising theoretical base for the situational factors influencing school leadership effectiveness, due to the universality of the leadership

construct in general, as well as the significant congruence between SHL's model and the current study's approach to competency modelling.

2.6.4   The Leadership Behaviour Inventory – version 2

The second version of the LBI, the LBI-2, is the more streamlined adapted version of the questionnaire and also aims to measure how effectively leaders meet current challenges. Like the SHL Corporate Leadership Model, the LBI-2 was developed to capture leadership-unit performance. The LBI-2 goes one step further by explicitly depicting a structural model that explains the manner in which the various latent leadership dimensions, mediated by influence processes, affect the endogenous unit performance latent variables. Put more simply, the primary purpose of the LBI-2 is the assessment of competencies needed by leaders and managers to implement major change while sustaining unit performance (Theron & Spangengberg, 2005; 2011).

According to Theron and Spangengberg (2011), the leadership process include: 1) Assessment of the internal and external environment of the unit and the development of an environmentally appropriate yet challenging vision and strategy for the unit, 2) Preparation of the unit for the implementation of the vision, and 3) Implementation of the vision by continually monitoring, revitalising, fine-tuning and orchestrating a multitude of prerequisites for unit success in terms of the vision.

Flowing from the three processes are nine behavioural dimensions that in turn yields twenty sub-dimensions. According to Theron and Spangengberg (2011), a leader needs to be skilled in each of the three processes and subsequent behavioural dimensions in order to lead his/her unit effectively. The structure of the LBI-2, together with its three components (processes, dimensions, and sub-dimensions), is presented in table 2.3

There exist at least five primary reasons why the LBI-2 is particularly valuable in the current study. These include:

1. *Significant overlap between leadership dimensions*: The four competency categories of the basic school leadership repertoire identified in the literature study correspond with the three sequentially linked phases of the LBI-2, as follows: "Developing a school vision and giving direction" fits the LBI-2's

"*Creating vision and strategy"* phase. "Understanding and developing people", as well as "managing the teaching and learning programme", matches "the preparation of the unit for implementation of the vision and strategy" phase of the LBI-2, while "Redesigning the school" corresponds with the LBI-2's *"implementation of the vision and strategy*" phase.

2. *The endorsement of the same view of competencies*: Like the current study, the LBI-2 also views competencies as bundles of necessary behaviour to attain success in the job.

3. *Both aim to assess behaviour and performance rather than to identify potential:* By focusing on leadership competencies rather than on leadership competency potential, both the current study and the LBI-2 aim to address the effectiveness of leaders "in flight" instead of identifying potential leaders on the ground.

4. *Both use the mediated effect model of leadership*: By including the pathways through which leaders influence unit effectiveness, the LBI-2 uses the mediated effect model. Consequently, the LBI-2 holds sound psychometric properties.

5. *The South African context:* Finally, as the current study aims to do, the LBI-2 was developed specifically within the South African context.

Table 2.3

The basic structure of the LBI-2

LEADERSHIP PROCESS	BEHAVIOURAL DIMENSION	SUB-DIMENSION
1. CREATING VISION AND STRATEGY	1. Analysing and interpreting the environment	1. Monitoring the external environment 2. Monitoring the internal environment
	2. Formulating the vision and strategy	3. Developing a challenging vision 4. Conceptualising strategy 5. Developing performance plans

2. PREPARING THE UNIT FOR IMPLEMENTING THE VISION AND STRATEGY	3. Preparing the leader and followers	6. Leader self-discovery, reflection and self-awareness
		7. Leader personal growth and development
		8. Empowering followers
	4. Preparing the unit	9. Optimising processes and structures
3. IMPLEMENTING THE VISION AND STRATEGY	5. Sharing the vision and inspiring followers	10. Articulating the vision
		11. Inspiring and motivating followers
	6. Leading with integrity and courage	12. Building trust and demonstrating integrity
		13. Demonstrating decisiveness and hardiness
		14. Acting entrepreneurial
	7. Leading with compassion	15. Showing concern for others
		16. Displaying sound interpersonal skills
	8. Leading across boundaries	17. Facilitating inter-departmental co-ordination
		18. Influencing across external boundaries
	9. Reviewing and rewarding performance	19. Reviewing performance
		20. Acknowledging and celebrating performance

(Adapted from Theron and Spangengberg, 2011, p.3)

2.7   Proposed theoretical Partial School Principal Competency Model

The objective of this section is to unpack what was identified and theorised in the literature study. In terms of the SPCs, the aim of the literature study was to identify broad clusters of behavioural competencies. The ultimate aim is to develop more specific competencies from behavioural examples identified in the interview data analysis.

2.7.1   School Performance Outcomes

Both primary and secondary schools exist for a definite reason and with a specific purpose. While primary schools exist to provide a basic education and prepare pupils for the demands of secondary education, secondary schools exist to adequatly

prepare scholars for tertiary educational and vocational settings. The aim is to produce scholars who are able to satisfy the demands of the next stage of their lives – whether that may be further education or the world of work.

In order to be successful in satisfying these demands and needs, primary and secondary schools have to transfer knowledge and skills with maximum educational and vocational utility to school pupils. Schools are then evaluated in terms of the efficiency and effectiveness with which they produce the kind of pupils described earlier.

In the literature review, various studies on educational leadership have identified a wide array of performance areas through which school principals can influence teaching and learning and that encompass the school performance dimensions for which the school principal could be responsible for (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). These areas are generalised into seven outcome areas, labelled "school principal performance outcomes". Since the outcomes serves as the basis from which the competencies are derived, the former will first be discussed. Each school performance outcome will now be constitutively defined where after a discussion of its importance will follow. Finally, an argument will be given with regards to the possible conceptual relationships between the outcomes.

2.7.1.1 *Pupil educational maturity*

The pursuit of identifying the most critical school performance outcomes gives rise to the initiating question, namely what it is that a school ultimately should accomplish. Ultimately, secondary schools should produce pupils who are cognitively, physically, and emotionally developed to the extent that they possess the basic KSAOs to be able to successfully enter their next educational stage. This remains pivotal whether the next stage be a short apprentice or a full-time university degree.

The fact that a pupil has been promoted from one academic grade to the next or that a pupil has achieved a certain level of performance does, however, not provide assurance that the pupil will be cognitively or emotionally ready for the next stage of life - whether that be within an educational or vocational setting. A measure is therefore needed to provide a valid prediction that the pupil will possess the necessary KSAOs in order to cope with the demands of the specific stage.

Following Super in his definition of career maturity, the term "pupil educational maturity" will be coined to refer to this comprehensive readiness. No other single term that adequately describes pupil educational readiness in the sense that it is described above was to be found in the literature.

Super (1990, p. 186) defines *career maturity* as:

"The ability of a person to acquire the skills to be able to master the career development tasks appropriate to his or her specific stage of life."

"Stage of life", in the context of this study, will hence refer to the specific stage of the pupil's educational career. The outcome *pupil educational readiness* will therefore refer to the ability of the pupil to have acquired the necessary developmental skills in order to cope with the basic cognitive, emotional, physical, and social educational requirements that he or she will face in the next educational stage.

2.7.1.2   Curricular Achievement

Curricular Achievement includes the average final examination for all subjects. The score is a weighted average that takes into account the number of pupils per subject and includes sub-dimensions for amount of distinctions, university exemptions, and the mean pass rate, which is an estimate of the probability that pupils will pass/be promoted to the next grade. This probability can be computed by averaging the actual pass rates for each school year.

2.7.1.3   Pupil engagement

Pupil engagement within this study is based on Leithwood and Janzi (2000a), perspective of the construct. According to these authors, *Pupil engagement* has both behavioural and affective components. The behavioural component comprises the extent to which pupils participate in school activities, both inside and outside the classroom. The affective component, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which pupils identify with the school and feel they belong at the school.

Leithwood & Janzi, (2000a) remind that the following three reasons exist as to why *pupil engagement* is important:

1. *It serves as a predictor of the school's retention rate* - Dropping out of school is often the final step in a process of systematic disengagement. Estimates of

pupil participation and identification (i.e. engagement) can therefore serve as valuable predictors of a school's retention rate.

2. *It identifies the factors of disengagement* – Seeing that some factors give rise to pupils becoming at risk of disengagement, early patterns of student participation and identification can be identified as reliable symptoms of these problem factors.

3. *It serves as a reliable predictor of variation in academic performance* – Through the various affective and behavioural effects of identifying with and participating within the school, at least a modest amount of evidence suggests that student engagement is a reliable predictor of variation in academic performance.

2.7.1.4   *Quality of classroom instruction*

The quality of instruction that pupils receive in class determines their learning to a large extent. This outcome includes the quality of interaction between pupils and teachers, the learning support of teachers, the work atmosphere in the classroom, and the level of systematic organisation of subjects and lessons (Leithwood et al., 2004; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012).

Although classroom instruction is widely regarded to be a complex process, the following particular aspects of the construct have been shown to affect student learning:

a. Level of order and lack of interruptions - A key aspect of classroom instruction simply includes the level of order and lack of interruptions to teaching and learning. Frequent disruptions arising from student misbehaviour or other events can easily hamper potential learning, regardless of how carefully teachers plan their instruction. This outcome therefore requires effective class management strategies and techniques. A meta-analysis by Marzano (2003) found classes with effective management techniques to have achievement levels that are 0.521 standard deviations higher than classes without effective management techniques.

b. Quality of student participation - Researchers agree that student participation is critical, regardless of subject or content area (Turner & Patrick, 2004). At the most basic level, students need to show up for class appropriately prepared with

necessary supplies, textbooks and completed homework in order to effectively participate. At a higher level, students actively need to participate in the class by engaging in discussion among peers and with teachers. This in turn can manifest on a continuum between civil and respectful interactions at minimum and engagement with content matter and discussions characterised by the application of critical thinking skills at the higher end. Gamoran et al. (1995) found student participation and student discussion to be positively associated with student achievement. Literacy performance of both high and low-achieving students has been shown to improve from instruction that involves discussion-based approaches (Applebee, Langer, Nystrand, & Gamoran, 2003). Building on the existing literature, Sebastian & Allensworth, (2012) created a measure, "quality of student discussion", to indicate the degree to which students built on each other's ideas and provided constructive feedback during discussions.

The quality of instruction can be influenced by various other outcome variables down the chain. School principals may affect this outcome via their efforts to improve the professional capacity of teachers, parent and community involvement, and the school climate (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012).

2.7.1.5   *Professional capacity of school staff*

The combination of skills, norms, and work arrangements of teachers at the school all make out the capacity with which they can perform professionally. An additional aspect here is "professional community"; referring to the degree to which teacher interaction is frequent and actions of teachers are governed by shared norms that focus on teaching and learning. This ranges from basic professionalism like minimum teacher to more sophisticated structures that foster coherent teacher interaction (Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Leithwood et al., 2004).

By concentrating on instruction and pupil learning outcomes, professional teacher training and development promotes collaboration among peers, provides opportunities for reflection, feedback, and critical thinking, and is sustained and continuous.

2.7.1.6   *Family and community involvement*

According to Bryk et al. (2010), the following three characteristics constitute this outcome: 1) involved and outreaching parents, 2) teachers' efforts to learn about their pupils' local community, and 3) the strength of community partnership networks.

The involvement of parents and the community is significant in driving many kinds of diverse improvement initiatives ranging from the enhancement of safety in and around schools to solving problems of absenteeism and tardiness, as well as to ensuring more disciplined and effective homework sessions (Bryk et al., 2010). Family and community involvement is well established as being essential for both a pupil's academic and social development (El Nokali, Bachman, & Votruba-Drzal, 2010; Lee, & Bowen, 2006).

2.7.1.7   *A student-centred learning climate*

The learning climate of the school refers to the values, beliefs, and nature of everyday interactions between teachers, parents, and pupils. In a student-centred learning climate, basic needs such as order and safety must be satisfied. Pupils need to be motivated in order for teachers to focus on teaching and pupils to focus on learning. In schools with positive, student-orientated learning climates, teachers and students hold high expectations of each other as well as of themselves. Such schools, where both parties are engaged in their work and classes, are characterised by better pupil behaviour and greater academic demand (Cornell & Mayer, 2010; Ripski & Gregory, 2009; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012).

2.7.2   **School Principal Competencies**

As explained earlier, the objective of the literature study was to identify broad groups (i.e. clusters) of school leadership competencies. Each of these clusters, as identified and categorised from the literature, is hereafter constitutively defined and motivated.

2.7.2.1   *Formulating a school vision and setting strategic direction*

Formulating a school vision and giving strategic direction refers to the screening and analysing of the external and internal school environment and, based on this analysis, to formulate and articulate a challenging school vision and subsequent

strategies (Bartram and Inceoglu, 2011; Theron and Spangenberg, 2011; Leithwood et al. 2004; Robinson et al. 2008).

This category of school leadership practices and competencies closely reflects the transformational component of leadership which Bass (1997) also found to be useful in many different cultural and organisational contexts, including educational institutions. By screening the external internal environment, the leader essentially takes the first step in leading. Other critical elements of the leadership process (e.g. establishing goals and expectations) are therefore dependant on this initial leadership role.

The importance of a school principal's competence in direction-setting can additionally be motivated through its enabling value in goal-based theories of human motivation. This critical aspect of school leadership enables various stakeholder groups to develop shared understandings of the school as an organisation, its purpose, and its internal and external environments. This understanding in turn creates a sense of meaning and shared vision amongst followers (Hallinger and Heck, 2002). Evidence from Leithwood et al's. (2004) research also suggests that leadership practices included in *setting direction,* account for the largest proportion of a leader's impact.

2.7.2.2 *Establishing and communicating goals and expectations*

This competency includes the formal setting and communication of strategically aligned and challenging goals, expectations and standards. Relationship skills are embedded within effective goal-setting, as this requires setting of a goal of such a nature that school staff is able to understand and become committed to it. Therefore, careful integration of staff considerations with task requirements is needed to effectively establish strategic goals (Hallinger and Heck, 2002; Leithwood et al., 2004; Robinson et al., 2008).

The importance of establishing and communicating school goals is to a large extent due to its coordinating value. Indeed, the effective establishment and communication of goals and expectations focuses and coordinates the work of teachers and pupils. Also, the extent to which goals and expectations are imbedded within school and

classroom routines will in turn determine their influential coordinating effect (Leithwood et al., 2004; Robinson et al., 2008).

2.7.2.3 *Developing School staff*

While a clear and compelling school vision and subsequent strategic directions and goals contribute significantly to the school staff's work-related motivations, it is the capacities of members that enable them to effectively move in those directions. As a leader, the school principal can develop these capacities by developing the teachers and other staff (Leithwood et al., 2004).

This competency includes two elements. Firstly, it refers to behaviours that promote and structure coherent professional teacher training and development programmes that are continuous and sustainable. Secondly, it refers to the development of school staff through the direct experiences that staff members have with school principals (Leithwood et al., 2004; Robinson et al., 2008). The ability to engage in practices that help develop school staff as teachers and people does therefore not only depend on knowledge and experience in technical aspects of schooling. It also depends on the principal's emotional intelligence (Goleman, Boyatzis and McKee, 2002). Other scholars like McColl-Kennedy and Anderson (2002) provided some evidence that emotional intelligence displayed, for example, through a leader's personal attention to an employee and through the utilisation of the employee's capacities, has at least the following effects:

- increases the employee's enthusiasm and optimism
- reduces frustration
- transmits a sense of mission

2.7.2.4 *Maintaining an orderly and supportive learning environment*

The competency of *ensuring an orderly and supportive learning environment* involves creating an environment for both school staff and pupils that makes it possible for key academic and social goals to be achieved. In such an orderly environment, the two fundamentals of schooling can take place: teachers can focus on teaching and pupils can focus on learning. The extent to which school principals can successfully establish a safe, orderly, and supportive learning environment partially depends on the extent to which clear and consistently enforced social

expectations and disciplinary strategies are established (Heck, 2000; Robinson et al., 2008).

A second component of this school leadership dimension, relating to the "supportive learning environment" component, includes behaviours through which school principals protect teachers from undue pressure (i.e. from education officials and from parents).

Finally, the third element of ensuring an orderly and supportive learning environment includes the competence and speed with which the school principal effectively addresses staff conflict. Here, Eberts and Stone (1986) found the principal's ability to identify and resolve conflict, rather than allow it to stall or escalate, to be strongly associated with student achievement in mathematics.

2.7.2.5   *Leading across boundaries*

The competency of *Leading across school boundaries* was created from Theron & Spangenberg's (2005) leadership dimension of "leading across boundaries". This competency can be conceptualised on two levels. On an intra-school level, it refers to leadership behaviour that facilitates academic interdepartmental coordination and helps teachers see the wider picture (*facilitating interdepartmental co-ordination)*. On a   macro-level, it refers to behaviour that influences across external school boundaries (e.g. parents and the community) with the aim of improving teaching and learning (*builds the image of the unit and practices socially responsible citizenship).*

2.7.2.6   *Planning, managing, and rewarding teaching and the curriculum*

This competency includes behaviour aimed at managing, evaluating, and rewarding the elements of teaching and learning. These include a school timetable, annual learning programme, annual curriculum coverage plan, teachers' pedagogic practices, and pupils' assessment records. In terms of feedback and rewarding, it includes behaviour that provides school staff with feedback about the school's performance, as well as specific feedback about their own performance. It also includes acknowledging positive staff and pupil performance and behaviour; and celebrating teacher and pupil success.

In their meta-analyses on effective school leadership behaviours, Robinson et al. (2008) found eighty indicators across nine studies to indicate that this type of leadership behaviour has a moderate impact (ES = 0.42) on student outcomes.

2.7.2.7 *Resourcing strategically*

Resourcing strategically involves aligning the school's resource selection and allocation to established and prioritised teaching goals. The inclusion of the word "strategic" in the description of this competency serves to indicate that it refers to securing resources that are aligned with instructional purposes, rather than skill in securing resources per se. It therefore includes strategic budgeting and investment in financial, technological, and human resources (Robinson et al., 2008; Bush & Heystek, 2006).

In their meta-analyses on effective school leadership behaviours, Robinson et al. (2008) reported that seven studies provided evidence for how principals can influence student outcomes through their decisions regarding staffing and teaching resources.

At this point of the literature study, a multitude of constructs have been discussed. Table 2.2 and 2.3 provide a summary of the broad clusters of SPOs and SPCs respectively. Table 2.2 is constructed in such a fashion that it includes the different levels (ranging from an organisational to an individual level) at which the various SPOs manifest within the school setting. In essence, the range of SPOs also represents the extent to which the relevant variable acts as a leading or lagging outcome. Similarly, Table 2.3 captures, at its broadest level, the three primary roles that school leaders are responsible for and subsequently explicates the behavioural clusters identified as essential within the literature study.

Table 2.4

Preliminary school principal performance outcomes supported by literature

Outcome	Definition	References
LEVEL : SCHOOL PRINCIPAL LEVEL		
Parent and community involvement	Involved and outreaching parents, teacher's efforts to learn about their pupils'/learners' local community, and the strength of community partnership networks	Bryk et al. 2010; Sebastian and Allensworth 2012; Leithwood et al. 2004,2006; Robinson et al. 2008; N.Taylor et al. 2012; S.Taylor 2011
A Student-centred learning climate	The values, beliefs, and nature of everyday interactions between teachers, parents, and pupils/learners.	Bryk et al. 2010; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Robinson et al. 2008; Johnson, Livingston, Scgwartza, & Slate, 2000; De Jager, 2013; Leithwood et al. 2004,2006;Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012;
LEVEL: TEACHER LEVEL		
Quality of instruction	The quality of interaction between pupils and teachers, the learning support of teachers, the working atmosphere in the classroom, and the level of systematic organisation of subjects and lessons.	Bryk et al., 2010; Leithwood et al. 2004,2006; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Robinson et al. 2008
Professional capacity of school staff	The combination of knowledge, skills, and abilities (KSA's) of teachers as well as norms and work	Bryk et al. 2010; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Robinson et al. 2008

	arrangements between school staff; especially between teachers.	
LEVEL: PUPIL LEVEL		
Pupil engagement	The pupils' attendance of and participation in school activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, as well as the extent to which pupils identify with the school and feel they belong at the school.	Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012; Leithwood et al. 2004,2006;
Circular Completion	The extent to which the curriculum for the full academic year has been completed. Includes the mean pass rate and other sub-criteria.	Leithwood et al. 2004,2006; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012;
Pupil educational readiness	The pupil's ability to have acquired the necessary basic developmental knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (malleable and non-malleable) in order to cope with the tasks needed to enter the labour market successfully.	Miller, 2006; Super, 1990; Van der Berg et al., 2011.

Table 2.5

Preliminary school principal competency clusters supported by literature

COMPETENCY CLUSTER	DEFINITION	REFERENCES
ROLE 1: CREATING A SCHOOL VISION AND SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION		
Formulating a school vision and developing strategies	Screening and analysing the internal and external school environment and deductively formulating a challenging school vision and subsequent strategies.	Bartram and Inceoglu, 2011; Theron and Spangenberg, 2011; Leithwood et al. 2004, 2006; Robinson et al. 2008;
Establishing and goals and expectations	Setting and communicating strategically aligned and challenging academic goals, expectations of teaching staff and others in such a way that that there is clarity and consensus about these goals.	Robinson et al. 2008; Leithwood et al. 2004, 2006;
ROLE 2: PREPARING THE SCHOOL FOR IMPLEMENTING THE VISION AND STRATEGIES		
Developing school staff	Promoting and structuring coherent teacher training and development programmes that are professional, continuous and sustainable	Leithwood et al. 2004, 2006; Robinson et al. 2008; Hallinger & Hack, 1996; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012
Ensuring an orderly & supportive learning environment	Protecting quality time for teaching and learning by reducing external pressures and interruptions and establishing an orderly and supportive environment both inside and outside	Leithwood et al., 2004, 2006; Robinson et al., 2008; Hallinger & Hack, 1996; Taylor, 2011; Gustafsson, 2005

	classrooms.	
ROLE 3: IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL VISION AND STRATEGY		
Resourcing strategically	Aligning the school's resource selection and allocation with the primary purpose of teaching and learning.	Robinson et al. 2008; Crouch & Mabogoane 2001; Gustafsson , 2005; Taylor, 2011; Van der Berg, Burger & Yu, 2005
Managing and rewarding teaching & learning	Managing, evaluating, and rewarding the elements of teaching and learning. Includes assessing and evaluating organisational effectiveness, the curriculum as well as staff and pupil performance.	Leithwood et al., 2004; S. Taylor, 2010; 2011; Van der Berg, Burger & Yu, 2005; Gustafsson; 2005 ; Robinson, 2008
Leading across boundaries	Leadership behaviours that facilitate academic interdepartmental co-ordination and helps teachers see the wider picture and behaviours that extend across school boundaries.	Theron & Spangenberg, 2011; Leithwood et al. 2004; Bartram & Inceoglu; Taylor, 2011.

2.8   Summary and concluding remarks

This chapter included a review of the concepts of competencies, school performance, as well as the practice of competency modeling. Internationally, existing literature on effective school leadership behaviours seem to be predomintnantly theoretical in nature with little consensus between the findings of qualtitative and qualitative studies.

In terms of South African research, a much greater scarsity of research on spesifc school principal behavours exist. The review revealed that a great need exist for the development of models that capture the mediating pathways through which school principals influence critical pupil outcomes. Also, during the literature review it became apparent that a strong need exists for the development of a school leadership competency framework that is spesifically applicable to the South African context. Finally, broad groups (i.e. clusters) of School Principal Competencies (SPCs) and School Perfomrance Outcomes (SPOs) were identified from the literature.

The next chapter will provide a roadmap of how this study was conducted, covering the research approach, research design, and methods that were used to gather and analyse the data.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1   Introduction

When a social research topic in an early phase warrants significant further study, further exploration becomes meaningful. In such cases, conclusions are suggestive rather than definitive. From an interpretive paradigm, exploration in itself might be the goal for the purposes of understanding human life and the meaning people attach to specific events. This can be contrasted with the positivistic paradigm which considers exploration to be only a starting point, with the end goal being to generalise findings and explain a phenomenon in terms of causal relationships (Babbie, 2011; De Vos, Delport, Fouché, & Strydom, 2011). It is more in line with this latter approach that the current study attempts to eventually answer the research initiating question: *why do school principals differ in the extent to which they achieve critical school performance outcomes*?

The current study by itself, however, is exploratory in the sense that it a great deal of understanding is still needed surrounding the pathways through which school principals influence school and pupil outcomes. As mentioned earlier, the ultimate aim is to set the stage for follow-up studies to generate hypotheses that can be empirically tested.

This chapter presents the research design and methodology used in this study. Firstly, the research approach is clarified and objectives are restated. Secondly, a description of the selected research design and sampling process is given. Finally, the selected methods of gathering and analysing the data are explained.

3.2   Research Approach

Traditionally two separate approaches to social research exist, namely quantitative and qualitative research. Quantitative research predominantly aims to explain nomothetically by means of deductively testing hypotheses. Put differently, quantitative research involves deriving hypotheses from theory and testing these hypotheses through objectively examining the relationship between variables. Consequently, quantitative data is numerical in nature. The purpose of qualitative research, on the other hand, is to inductively explore and understand by means of

ideographical explanations. In other words, qualitative research is used to explore and understand the meaning which individuals or groups attach to a human or social phenomenon. Therefore, qualitative research is non-numerical in nature (Babbie, 2011; Creswell, 2012; Lee, Mitchell, & Harman, 2011).

The two research approaches (quantitative and qualitative), however, are not mutually exclusive. When researchers want to test the elements of an emergent theory that resulted from a qualitative phase, then a third approach, often called the mixed methods research approach, has substantial value (Creswell, 2009). Mixed methods research is defined by Johnson and Onwegebuzi (2011, p. 17) as: *"the class of research where the researcher mixes or combines quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study".*

It should be noted that although the study relies on the interpretive subjective realities of the specific participants, it is in essence interested in making generalised nomothetic explanations about effective school principal behaviours and how such behaviours are related to school success. Therefore, if forced to take a stance regarding whether the study follows an interpretive or positivistic paradigm, it is the latter that falls closer to its broader objective. This is because the practice of competency modelling in this study's context ultimately entails more than an understanding of school principals' views on what kind of behaviour is important within a particular contextual setting. Rather, the idea behind an eventual structural school principal competency model is to approximate an objective reality of school principal performance with the purpose of explaining, controlling, and ultimately predicting performance.

By utilising in-depth interviews and grounded theory analysis, the study does, however, make use of methods that fall within the interpretive-phenomenological approach in the requisition of knowledge and insight about the school principal behaviours and competencies. In sum, this study therefore follows a positivistic research paradigm, but applies interpretive methods used in qualitative research (Babbie, 2011; Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004; Lee, Mitchel, and Sablynski, 1999).

In the broader scheme of its research objective, the study forms part of a sequential mixed methods research strategy. Its place within this strategy can be viewed in

Figure 3.1 where it makes out the first of three sequential phases with the last phase, ending in a fully quantitative approach. It should be noted that both phase 2a and 2b are included for future reference.
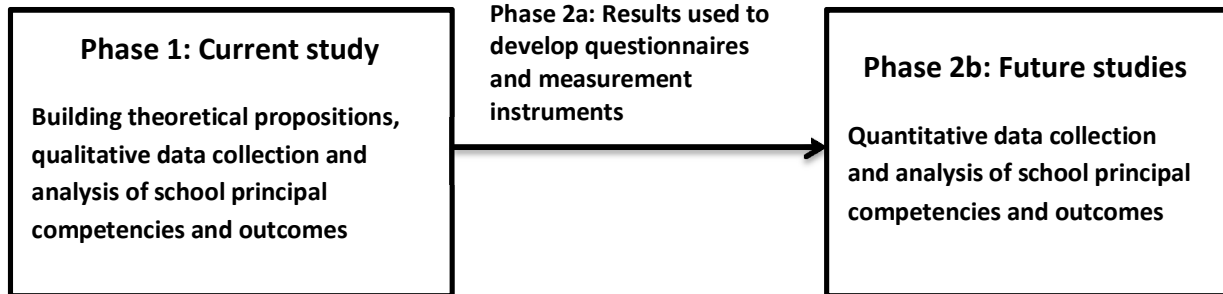
Figure 3.1   **The research approach in perspective**

While much of the tension between qualitative and quantitative research stems from insufficient information about the other, Lee, Mitchell, and Harman (2011, p 74) offer the following three general attributes of qualitative research:

1. Qualitative research generally occurs in natural settings and is not conducted in a laboratory;
2. Qualitative data is driven from the participant's perspective and the researcher should not impose immediate interpretations (after substantial analysis, theoretical inductions, propositions, or interpretations can become legitimate);
3. Qualitative research designs should be flexible and can be readily changed to fit the fluid or dynamic demands of the specific research setting.

These three characteristics guided the research design as well as the subsequent data collection and data analysing techniques used in the study.

3.3   Research Questions

The overarching research initiating question that this study partially aims to answer is: *"Why do some school principals perform better than others in leading their schools to success?"* More specifically, the following research questions are asked in the study:

1. *What are the most critical School Performance Outcomes (SPOs)?*

2. *What are the most critical School Principal Competencies (SPCs)?*

3. *From the literature study and interview results, what conceptual propositions can be developed regarding the relationships between the SPCs and the SPOs?*

3.4   Research Design

This study follows the more specific definition of a research design. In the more specific definition, the research design is defined as a phase of the process in which available perspectives and methodologies are chosen to study the phenomenon suitable for the research goal. Metaphorically speaking, the research design becomes the phase of the study which acts as an entrapment through which the study has to squeeze in order to produce the most systematic results as well as the most unambiguous interpretation thereof. Through this entrapment, "small confessions" are then released by the complex and elusive nature of social science (De Vos et al., 2011; Ehrenreich, 1991; Kerlinger & Lee, 2000; Theron, 2012).

School leadership behaviour is a research area which still needs considerable exploration within the field of Industrial-Organizational (I-O) Psychology. Consequently, the current study aims to serve as a stepping stone in discovering the behavioural competencies that need to be included in order to validly and reliably measure the phenomenon of school principal performance. According to Boeije (2010), a research study that finds itself in this specific transitory position can (if a term has to be linked to it) be referred to as a sequential exploratory design.

3.4.1   Ontology and epistemology

A key question that must be answered in order to decide on the research design for this study is: how should the social reality of school leadership be viewed? The current research study endorses the view that there is a "real world" within school leadership and management, but that it is fundamentally different from that of natural sciences. This raises a second question which becomes relevant for the research design: If there is a reality, what are the perspectives and principles by which it should be known? The current research study endorses the view that reality can be interpreted through the meaning that school principals ascribe to their world. Thus, it endorses the view that the school principal's world can be discovered by means of a

systematic and interactive methodical approach where knowledge arises from the understanding of the meaning that school principals give their world (Suddaby, 2006; Schwandt, 2007; De Vos et al. 2011).

Of all the traditions of qualitative inquiry associated with interpretive methodologies (see Scwandt 2007; Creswell, 2007 for a detailed list), grounded theory becomes most appropriate for the purpose of this study and was therefore opted for. A brief explanation of why this is the case now follows.

3.4.2 Grounded Theory

Simply put, grounded theory earns its name from the iterative process by which the researcher becomes gradually and increasingly "grounded" in the qualitative data. It is essentially a set of techniques that firstly identifies categories and concepts that emerge from text and secondly links the concepts into substantive and formal theories (Bernard, 2000; De Vos, 2011; Schram, 2006; Schwandt, 2007).

3.4.2.1 *The process of grounded theory*

First developed by Glaser and Strauss (1967), the practical process of grounded theory is guided by two concepts: *constant comparison* and *theoretical sampling* (Suddaby, 2006).

Constant comparison refers to the iterative process of continuously comparing data incidents with each other during all the respective stages of data analysis. The purpose of the repetitive comparison is to search and find conceptual similarities and differences in the selected text. The aim is to sharpen the definition of the concepts identified in the literature and to develop conceptual categories. The categories are then grouped together to form themes and the relationships between the themes ultimately represent elements of developed theory. These tentative theories are then "tested" by means of *theoretical sampling* (which will be discussed next). When no new categories emerge, then theoretical saturation is reached. Consequently, no additional data samples are needed (De Vos et al., 2011; Schwandt, 2007).

Theoretical sampling acts as the method of monitoring the emerging grounded theory. The method entails pertinently seeking (i.e. sampling) data from the text to elaborate on the categories identified during *constant comparison* in order to

constitute the theory. A key implication of the two guiding concepts as explained above is that it causes data collection, data analysis, and theory to stand in reciprocal relationship with each other.

The aim here, as explained earlier, is to saturate categories in order to detail the theory. Data analysis is conducted by means of open, axial, and selective coding in order to detail the theory. The product of grounded theory therefore culminates in an organic process of theory emergence (de Vos et al., 2011). According to Suddaby (2007), the emergence of the theory is based on the following three factors:

1. how well data fits conceptual categories identified by an observer;
2. how well the categories explain or predict on-going interpretations;
3. how relevantly the categories fit to the core of the phenomenon of interest being observed.

3.4.2.2 *Grounded theory as a choice in the current study*

This study firstly aims to develop abstract representations of bundles of school principal behaviours (competencies) and secondly to develop propositions about the required relationships among these competencies, in order to achieve certain performance outcomes. The purpose, therefore, is to explain the phenomenon of effective school principal behaviour and to ultimately ground itself within the newly developed theoretical generalisations - hence the term "grounded theory".

In this study, themes of school principal competencies are labelled *competency clusters* (*e.g. Creating a school vision and strategy*), which represent a grouping of similar competencies. School Principal Competencies (e.g. *Analysing and interpreting the school environment*) represent more specific school leadership behaviours. Each competency is further broken down into specific elements (e.g. *Ensuring that the school budget is aligned with strategic purposes of teaching and learning*), which represents examples of behavioural indicators of the respective competency. Table 3.1 gives a summary of grounded theory terminology which is used to represent different categories in the coding procedure.

Table. 3.1

Grounded theory terminology to be used

GROUNDED THEORY TERMINOLOGY	EQUIVALENT TERMINOLOGY CURRENT STUDY
Incidents	Behavioural examples
Categories	Competencies
Themes	Competency clusters

3.4.2.3 *A relevant misconception about grounded theory*

Of all the misconceptions about grounded theory outlined by Suddaby (2006), the misconception that it is an excuse to ignore the literature holds specific relevance for the current study.

Suddaby (2006) asserts that although there is a distinction between *substantive theory* (theory grounded in extant research in a particular subject area like school leadership), and *grounded theory*, there is also a clear and necessary link between the two forms of theory. Glaser and Strauss (1967, p. 79) summarise this overlap by stating:

> *"Substantive theory is a strategic link in the formulation and generation of grounded formal theory. We believe that although formal theory can be generated directly from data, it is more desirable, and usually necessary, to start the formal theory from a substantive one. The latter not only provides a stimulus to a "good idea" but it also gives an initial direction in developing relevant categories and properties and in choosing possible modes of integration. Indeed it is difficult to find a grounded formal theory that was not in some way stimulated by substantive theory."*

This point is especially relevant to the current study because of the prominent role literature has played in identifying the most critical SPCs and SPOs. The propositions that were developed from the interview data in this study were built upon the substitutive theory available in literature. Moreover, the literature study crafted a deeper understanding of the construct as well as insight into the phenomenon of school leadership within the researcher. This insight was particularly

valuable during the interviewing process where prompting certain concepts were essential.

3.5   Sampling

This study's research question was formulated with reference to a particular population: South African primary and secondary school principals. To interview the whole population was practically unfeasible (as would be testing hypotheses on the whole population in a quantitative study). A representative sample was instead used for interviewing participants.

In a quantitative study, statistical power refers to the conditional probability of rejecting the null hypothesis given that it is false. Keeping in mind that this study does not have any statistical hypotheses, the concept of statistical power and an explanation thereof is not relevant. Nevertheless, the study remains concerned with generalisability and transferability. Therefore, a purely opportunistic *ad hoc* sampling strategy would not be appropriate. Rather, the sample needs to be selected in such a way that it relates in some systematic fashion to the social worlds and phenomena surrounding school principalship and school performance (Babbie, 2011; King & Horrocks, 2010; Theron, 2012).

3.5.1   Sampling design

Probability sampling was not feasible in this study. Non-probability sampling, in which the selection of participants depends on their availability and willingness, was therefore used. This sampling design offers a valuable sampling design for both qualitative and quantitative studies (Collins & Onwuegbuzie, 2007; Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). Pilot precursor

It should be noted that non-probability sampling does not allow the researcher any control over the representativeness of the sample. Together with the influence of situational variables, this stresses the fact that caution should be used in this study before generalising the findings to the larger population of successful school principals. (Babbie, 2011; Gravetter & Forzano, 2009). Nonetheless, this study is a valuable precursor for future studies with more representative samples.

Moreover, in conjunction with an attempt to ensure reasonable representativeness, other criteria also had to be followed in this study. For instance, the questioning technique applied in the study requires that the most successful incumbents are interviewed, which by implication restrict representativeness. Other deciding factors were the diversity of the sample group (King & Horrocks). In summary, the following criteria were used to select the sample group:

1. The selected individuals should have successful records as school principals and be perceived as effective by their colleagues
2. The selected individuals should be or have been leaders of their school for a substantial period of time
3. The sample should include a balance between primary and secondary school principals;
4. The sample should include a balance in terms of diversity (e.g. race, gender, etc.)
5. The selected individuals were regarded by directors of the Western Cape Education Department as highly influential in the turnaround or maintenance of their respective schools
6. The sample should include a wide range of schools in terms of socio economic levels, ranging from very poor schools to wealthy schools

Although the exclusive inclusion of successful school principals in the sample may be considered as a factor that undermines the representativeness of the sample, it becomes difficult to imagine a competency model being developed on the blueprint of unsuccessful principals. Also, the selection of the sample was more heavily based on individual effectiveness than school success as there may be a range of situational factors that influence school performance. The researcher had various in-depth discussions with directors at the Western Cape Education Department (WCED), investigating which school principals were particularly effective in midst of challenging domestic circumstances. Table 3.2 presents a summary of the demographical characteristics of the sample as well as the socio-economic status of the respective schools that each Subject matter Expert (SME) represent.

Table 3.2

Sample demographics

School sector	Male			Female			Total
	Black	**White**	**Coloured**	**Black**	**White**	**Coloured**	
Low income	1	0	1	1	1	1	**5**
Middle income	0	1	0	0	1	0	**2**
High income	0	3	0	0	0	0	**3**
Total	**1**	**4**	**1**	**1**	**2**	**1**	**10**

3.5.2   Sample size

In general, the rule of thumb for all research is to use as big a sample as possible. The primary reason for this is to minimise error, i.e. how much the sample deviates from the population. As it is not always possible to secure large samples, it is necessary to calculate or establish the approximate sample size needed for the particular type of study (Babbie, 2011; Collins & Onwuegbuzie, 2007).

A key measure through which a sufficient sample size in a grounded theory study is attained is through the concept of saturation (De Vos et al., 2011). Glaser and Strauss (1967, p.65) first defined the milestone of theoretical saturation as the point at which no additional data is found whereby the researcher can develop further properties of the category. For a grounded theory study, however, the term theoretical saturation refers specifically to the development of theory. Theoretical saturation therefore occurs when all of the main distinctions at the specified level of the phenomenon have been identified and incorporated into the emerging theory. Using this approach, the researcher deliberately searches for extreme variations of each concept in the theory to the point of exhaustion (Guest, Bunce, & Johnson, 2006).

After conducting a rigorous experimental study on interview data saturation and variability in pursuit of concluding how many interviews are enough, Guest et al.

(2006) found that data saturation for expert interviews occurs by the time ten to twelve interviews are analysed. Like Guest et al. (2006), the current study draws on consensus theory as to why ten interviews (N=10) with subject matter experts were considered sufficient. First developed by Romney, Batchelder, and Weller (1986), consensus theory is based on the principle that experts tend to agree more with each other with respect to their particular domain of expertise than do novices. After providing some evidence, Romney et al. (1986) found small samples to be quite sufficient in providing complete and accurate information within a particular context as long as the participants possess a certain degree of expertise about the domain of inquiry.

The school principals that were selected in the sample of this study were selected in such a way that they possess a substantial degree of expertise about school leadership behaviour and competencies.

3.6   Data-gathering Instruments

In-depth interviews were used to serve as the primary qualitative research instrument in gathering the data of this study. A brief explanation of how the interviews were approached and conducted now follows.

3.6.1   In-depth interviews

On the spot observations and surveys within social research often lacks depth and richness in explaining a phenomenon in its early phases of study. If the underlying theory of a research study is too complicated to quantify with available methods, insufficiently developed, or too narrowly interpreted (i.e. does not capture comprehensiveness or richness of the theoretical underpinnings) then in-depth interviews are considered more promising. By using qualitative in-depth interviews, many researchers have discovered a more complex system of social processes and structures than could have been imagined (Babbie, 2011; Lee, Mitchell, & Harman, 2011).

While an in-depth description of the differences between surveys and qualitative interviewing falls outside the scope of this study, a few primary differences must be addressed. In contrast to a survey, a qualitative in-depth interview is built on interaction between the interviewer and respondents in which the interviewer has a

general plan of inquiry and topic to be covered, but not a list of questions that must be asked and no particular wording or order. The interview is therefore not cast in stone and needs to be flexible in order to be effective and rich in meaning. Even so, the interviewer needs to be very familiar with the topic and questions to be asked. This allows him/her to smoothly direct the interview without causing an abrupt transition in the respondent's reactions and answers (Babbie, 2011).

3.6.2   The interview structure

The objective of the interviews of this study was to obtain accurate information regarding the perspectives of the school principals, and to simultaneously confirm the content of the information which has been previously gathered on the topic. Consequently, the interviews are semi-structured. Semi-structured interviews enable exploration of the specific topic whilst guarding against rigidity and predefined ideas about the topic.

3.6.3   The interview guide

With flexibility being a key requirement for qualitative interviewing, a tool is needed that outlines the main topics to be covered in such a way that it enables flexible phrasing and ordering of questions while guarding against the development of a loose conversation. In qualitative interviews, this tool comes in the form of an interview guide or schedule. The interview guide/schedule (See Appendix B for the interview guide/schedule used in this study) also assures that the same topics are covered and that the same initial questions are asked in all the interviews (Babbie, 2011; Blumberg et al., 2008; King & Horrocks, 2010).

The specific format followed by the interview guide was based on the needs of the specific methodological tradition of the study. The sources used to identify the topics to be included in the interview guide include the following:

1. *The literature study:* The literature study acted as a preliminary identification of the most critical school principal competencies and school performance outcomes.
2. *Informal preliminary interviews:* the researcher has carried out various informal preliminary conversations and interviews with school principals and

other subject matter experts in order to focus the thinking about the competencies, outcomes, and situational variables.

3. *The researcher's personal experience and anecdotes told by others:* The researcher has reflected on his own 12-years' experience of primary and secondary schooling as well as on anecdotes told by his parents, who collectively hold more than 50 years of high school teaching experience in South Africa.

3.6.4   The types of questions asked

The types of questions to be asked in a qualitative interview depend on the particular kind of information that the researcher seeks to elicit (King & Horrocks, 2010). Patton (1990) outlined a number of questions that can be asked in this regard. This study aimed to elicit information on the bundles of behaviours (competencies) of school principals and how these competencies affect critical school performance outcomes. Taking this into account, the following three types of questions identified by Patton (1990) became most essential during the interviews:

1. *Behaviour/Experience questions:* These questions focus on the overt and specific actions that the school principal took as well as on the outcomes thereof. (E.g. Overt: What did you do to ensure an orderly and supportive learning environment? Specific: How did you go about developing and enforcing the disciplinary policy and practices you diced on? What happened after it was enacted?)

2. *Opinion/value questions:* These questions ask what the school principals thinks about a topic at hand, and how their thoughts relate to their values goals, and intentions. (E.g. What did you hope to achieve by doing that?)

3. *Knowledge questions:* This category relates to questions about perceived factual information that the school principal holds. (E.g. What do you know about the most effective systems for formulating and enforcing disciplinary policies and practices?)

The specific technique used to elicit the behaviours can be described as a variation of the Critical Incident Technique (CIT). This will be explained in more detail in the next section. In summary, the interviews commenced with a brief explanation of the

purpose of the study and the interviews, followed by an explanation of the confidentiality of the interviews and the fact that participation is voluntary. Thereafter, various other topics on the matter were covered, as outlined by the interview guide. Throughout the interview, clarifying and probing questions were asked to confirm whether the interviewer interpreted the information correctly, as well as to cover more specific elements of a behavioural domain (Blumberg et al., 2008).

3.6.5   Eliciting the school principal competencies

The technique used to identify and formulate the school principal competencies had to be aligned with the definition of competencies as defined earlier. Since this study endorses the behavioural view of competencies, the Critical Incident Technique (CIT) offers a suitable technique.

The CIT is essentially a procedure in which a list of behavioural exemplars (incidents) of particularly good or poor performance and subsequent outcomes are revealed by the respondents. Of importance here is to try and capture behaviour that has in actual fact been observed by the respondent and not to gather subjective or trait-based descriptions of performance. The captured information, now acting as the first domain of data in the development of grounded theory, is then grouped into categories.

In a classic piece of literature, Flanagan (1954) reminds that the CIT ought not to be rigid in its procedures, but ought rather to include a flexible set of principles that can be followed. He further identified the following five steps that can be followed in conducting the CIT: (1) formulate the general aim, (2) establish specifications, (3) generate the critical incidents, (4) analyse the data, and (5) interpret and report the results (Barrick, Field, & Gatewood, 2008; Fanigan, 1954).

The five steps as outlined by Flanagan (1954) were followed to guide the process through which the school principal competencies were produced. The interview guide (Appendix B) represents the first three steps, while the coding of the data includes the fourth step. The refined school principal competency model represents the fifth and final step.

3.6.6   Recording and transcribing the interviews

With the consent of the participants, the interviews were recorded on a Samsung Galaxy S4 smart mobile phone's audio recorder. The recorded data was saved and directly sent to a synchronised "Dropbox" database which was protected by means of a password. Transcription of the interviews was made by the researcher himself. The purpose of transcribing interviews from an oral to a written mode is to structure the interview conversations in a form more amenable to closer analysis. It therefore forms an initial analytic process in itself.

Although the amount and form of transcribing depends on the purpose of the investigation, the process essentially becomes a series of choices. The choices include which of the multitude of dimensions of oral interview conversations are to be selected for written transcriptions, as well as how specialised and detailed the transcriptions ought to be (Babbie, 2011; King & Horrocks, 2010).

3.7   Data Analysis

This section offers an explanation of how the mass of data gathered from the transcriptions of the in-depth interviews was processed in such a way that it is aligned with the purpose and nature of the study (Babbie, 2011; Barrick et al., 2008). The transcribed interview data was analysed using Microsoft Excel and coded by means of an inductive coding analysis technique. The coding was conducted by the researcher himself.

Based on Bernard's (2000) suggestion of the mechanics of grounded theory, the following serves as a summary of the mechanical steps that were followed in the coding process of this study:

1. Transcripts of interviews with SME's were produced and small samples of text (behavioural examples) were read through;
2. Potential analytic categories (competencies) were identified as they arose from text samples. (Note: the most general themes; the school principal competency clusters, were derived from the literature study.
3. As the competencies emerged, the data was pulled together in Microsoft Excel;

4. It was analysed how the competencies are related and how they can be linked together and grouped under the broad clusters as identified in the literature.

5. The relations among the competencies and clusters were used to develop a theoretical model which was constantly checked against the interview data.

The following section offers an explanation of what coding entails as well as a general discussion of the practice of theme finding.

3.7.1 Coding

In its core grounded theory is all about the identification of themes within texts as well as the search for the presence or absence of a particular theme (e.g. in a set of texts about school leadership, school principals did or did not talk about how a school vision is formulated etc.). At second glance, coding therefore transforms free-flowing texts into a nominal set of variables that now become what qualitative researchers call "qualitative data" (Bernard, 2000; De Vos et al., 2011).

This study made use of *inductive coding,* also called "open coding". During inductive coding the researcher inductively develops the codes by working from the specific towards the more general, thereby becoming grounded in the qualitative data and developing an understanding of the texts through close examination (Bernard, 2000). The generated clusters and part-going competencies are presented in chapter four and essentially become the inductively developed set of school principal competencies (SPCs).

From the explanation above, it is clear that the coding and relating of concepts, as well as the filtering of pieces of transcribed information, are essential in the process of inductive coding. This beckons questions like how the themes should be identified and whether the general message of the text should be extracted instead of identifying specific words or phrases (Babbie, 2011; Lee, Mitchell, & Harman, 2011; Blumberg et al., 2008). The next section offers a clarification of how the interview texts were scanned and filtered in initially finding the conceptual categories and themes.

3.7.2 Theme finding

Although inductive coding formed the predominant process in the analysis of the qualitative data obtained in this study is, it must be mentioned that the most general themes (i.e. school principal competency clusters) were derived from the literature study. This approach is based on Miles and Huberman's (1994) suggestion and can technically be viewed as a coding procedure that falls somewhere between inductive and deductive coding. The researcher therefore had a general idea of what the broad themes of effective school principal behaviours were, but were still very much in discovery mode – letting new themes emerge from the transcribed texts as he went along with the process.

But how exactly were these new themes identified as outlined in step one and two of the precious section? Initially, the interview texts were laid out and read through over and over again. Pieces of texts, words, and phrases were then highlighted and read through again. This ocular scanning method is known as "eyeballing" and enabled a deep engagement with the texts (Bernard, 2000). Through contact with the texts of this nature, information was identified on broad leadership themes like power distribution, people relations, problem solving, and perception of success.

It should be articulated that the researcher can honestly acknowledge that the process as explained above was responsible for what can be described as "aha moments" during which patterns hit him between the eyes. These moments were powerful experiences and are considered by the researcher as his closest glimpse yet of how social science unfolds right before one's eyes. Indeed, by the time the themes were identified and refined, a substantial amount of interpretive analysis has already been conducted. Hence, Miles and Huberman (1994, p.56) point out: "Coding is analysis".

At this point of the analysis, a Microsoft excel spread sheet was used to capture all the codes and pieces of texts that now represent conceptual categories and themes. More specifically, a codebook was written up. The next section offers a brief description of the process that was followed in developing the sheets that made out the codebook.

3.7.3 The Codebook

As described earlier, the aim of grounded theory is to produce models or theories that are grounded in text. Written texts therefore became both vital and inextricable from the themes and codes that were identified (Bernard, 2000).

As a first step, all the themes and pieces of quoted texts identified during the theme finding were posted in a single main sheet on Microsoft Excel and grouped according to the participant that produced the quote. Each substantive theme was then succinctly defined by the quotes from participants. Secondly, an individual code sheet was developed and inserted in Microsoft Excel for each School Principal Competency cluster (main theme). This step involved the use of numbers as representations of more specific School Principal Competencies (SPCs) as they emerged from the texts.

As an example of the second step in the development of the codebook of this study, Appendix F offers a presentation of the direct quotes from respondents (interviewees) that were used to develop the SPCs involved in the *Managing self-*cluster. The number #1 was for example used as the code for all quoted behaviours that resembled building trust and leading with integrity. Appendix F enables the reader to swiftly understand a segment of what had taken the researcher months to decipher. At first glance, the example may look easy, but it was not. Finding a balance between over and under analysis proved to be the most challenging part of the study.

An important distinction to note at this stage of the research concerns the depth in which the qualitative data analysis for the School Principal Competencies was conducted compared to that of the School Performance Outcomes. The inductive coding analysis focused primarily on the competencies while the outcomes were not analysed in as much depth. Finally, in addition to the practical and ethical challenges involved in the coding procedure, this study also produced a range of ethical considerations. These considerations will now be briefly explained coupled with

3.8   Ethical Considerations

A research study is confronted with several ethical issues during its data collection stage (Babbie, 2011). In order to address the ethical implications, the following ethical questions were addressed and complied with during the research interviews:

- Have the participants been informed that the researchers will be recording and transcribing their words and have they given their full written consent?
- Have the participants been assured confidentiality?
- Has the interviewer conducted the interview in such a fashion that neither the researcher's personal agenda nor the contents of the literature study impose themselves on the reactions of the interviewee?

Addressing the first three questions as outlined above was achieved by means of the ethical use of a comprehensively written consent form, which is attached as Appendix C. Answering the call of the last question was in turn partially achieved by the proper use of a semi-structured interview guide. The purpose of the interview guide was to enable the equal distribution of the same questions and time limits. The interview guide can be viewed in Appendix B of this document. Finally, by means of objective paraphrasing and prompting, the researcher used his personal discursion and integrity to best of his ability in trying not to lead participants in a specific thematic direction.

3.9   Concluding Remarks

When the steps of the process of grounded are followed, theoretical generalisations and models are produced. It should be noted however, that these models are not the ultimate product of the grounded theory approach. In the original formulation of the approach, Glaser and Strauss (1967) emphasised the fact that the development of grounded theory models only makes out the first step in the research process. As reminded throughout this paper, the next step is to confirm the validity and reliability of the model by empirically testing it on an independent sample of quantitative data.

This chapter provided a roadmap of how the study was conducted. This included a description of the research approach, design and methodology that was used. The sampling process as well as the selected method and subsequent techniques of

gathering and analysing the data were also briefly explained. In conclusion, this study took a qualitative research approach and used grounded theory methodologies in the analysis of ten in-depth interviews with Subject Matter Experts.

The following chapter presents the results of the research as well as the interpretation thereof.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS AND FINDINGS

4.1   Introduction

The aim of this chapter is to present and discuss the results of this study. The first section contains a basic representation of the descriptive statistics of the results of the school principal competencies (SPCs) developed in the grounded theory analysis. This is followed by a discussion of what unfolded during the interview analysis. The importance of different clusters and subsequent competencies are then discussed as reported by the participants. Along the way, behavioural examples of each school principal competency are given. Each discussion culminates in a definition and is finally represented at the end of each discussion.

The second section of this chapter covers the School Performance Outcomes (SPOs). Results on the SPOs takes the form of an adapted report of the outcomes as defined in the literature study, and not a pure representation of what was found in the interviews (as with the case of the SPCs). The definitions of the school performance outcomes are therefore predominantly based on the literature's stance of what the respective outcomes entail and then supplemented by additional performance indicators captured from the interview data.

In the third and final section of this chapter, a comparison is made between the theoretical school principal competency model as depicted in the literature study and the school principal competencies developed by the grounded theory analysis. Results are reported up to competency level, while a summary of the more specific behavioural examples are included Appendix D.

It should be remembered that the findings cannot be interpreted as being causal in any sense. Although a structural model is depicted (figure 4.3), the model must be viewed as exclusively conceptual in nature as it has not been empirically measured or validated. In the next chapter, a discussion of these findings and its implications is given in more detail, together with a take on what lies beyond.

4.2   Frequency statistics

In terms of the School Principal Competency clusters, *Managing Self* stands out as the most reported cluster with 27.93% of the quoted pieces of texts relating to this

behavioral domain. Also high on the list were *Making decisions* and *Influencing and communicating* with 12.79% and 11.09% respectively. *Planning and establishing school goals and expectations* and *Resourcing strategically* reports as the two lowest reported clusters and only occupied 3.62% and 2.35% of quoted texts.

In terms of the School performance Outcomes (SPO), it is *School climate* that stands out above the rest with 29.50% of the quoted texts grouped within this performance domain. No other SPO ranks close to this percentage. To other SPOs that enjoyed noteworthy amount of emphasis are *Pupil educational readiness* (16.52%) and *Family and community involvement* (14.45%). The remaining outcomes, as can be noted in table 4.2, are distributed in the same lower range (4.13% - 10.32%) of proportional percentages.

The frequencies of the units of qualitative data (i.e. quoted texts) for both the SPC clusters and SPO's are reported in Tables 4.1 and 4.2 respectively. The tables also indicate the proportional percentages of each SPC cluster and SPO. These frequency percentages are visually depicted in the form of pie charts (Figure 4.1 and 4.2).

Table 4.1

SPC cluster frequencies and proportional percentages

Competency cluster	Number of quoted texts	Proportional %
Formulating a school vision and setting strategic direction	37	7.89
Planning and establishing school goals and expectations	17	3.62
Resourcing strategically	11	2.35
Influencing and communicating	52	11.09
Developing school staff and pupils	40	8.53
Leading with compassion	32	6.82
Maintaining a safe and orderly student-centred learning environment	21	4.48
Leading across school boundaries	46	9.81
Managing and rewarding Teaching and Learning	22	4.69
Managing self	131	27.93
Making decisions	60	12.79
Total	**469**	**100**

1 = Formulating a vision and setting strategic direction
2 = Planning and establishing goals and expectations
3 = Resourcing strategically
4 = Influencing and communicating
5 = Developing school staff and pupils
6 = Leading with compassion
7 = Maintaining a safe and orderly student-centred
 learning environment
8 = Leading across school boundaries
9 = Managing and rewarding Teaching and Learning
10 = Managing self
11 = Making decisions

Figure 4.1   **SPC cluster pie chart**

Table 4.2

SPOs frequencies and proportional percentages

Outcome	Number of reported instances	Proportional %
Family and community involvement	49	14.45
School climate	100	29.50
Wealth of school resources	14	4.13
Teacher professional capacity	21	6.20
Core People Processes	14	4.13
Quality of instruction	21	6.20
Pupil engagement	29	8.55
Circular Achievement	35	10.32
Pupil educational readiness	56	16.52
Total	**339**	**100**

■ 1	1= Family and community involvement
■ 2	2 = School climate
■ 3	3= Teacher professional capacity
■ 4	4= Quality of instruction
■ 5	5= Pupil engagement
■ 6	6= Circular Achievement
■ 7	7= Wealth of school resources
■ 8	8= Pupil educational readiness
■ 9	9= Core People Processes
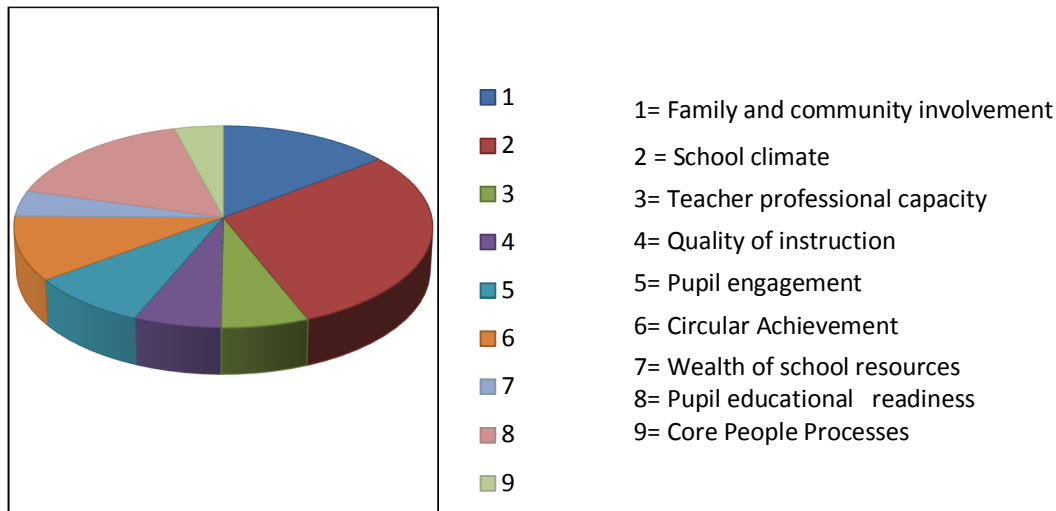
Figure 4.2   **SPOs pie chart**

Although the in-depth interviews are qualitative in nature, there seem to be clear differentiation in terms of the amount of times that certain competencies and outcomes are stressed by participants. It cannot be concluded that this differentiation serves as an indication of the importance of the respective clusters and SPOs as there may be a range of other factors that caused its emphasis. The following section offers a more in-depth discussion of what was captured during the grounded theory analysis in order to give the reader a richer understanding of the value of the interviews.

4.3   Development of school principal competencies

In sum, the grounded theory analysis resulted in the development of eleven competency clusters, 33 school principal competencies (SPC's) and 178 behavioural examples. The goal here is to clarify the value of the in-depth interviews via the incorporation of interview examples and a discussion of how the competencies are displayed in the context of the school. In doing so, the aim is to give richness and contextual meaning to the newly developed SPC's. During the discussion, a few examples are given. Please refer to Appendix D for the complete list of behavioural examples captured on each competency.

4.3.1 Formulating a school vision and setting strategic direction

This cluster was formed by the development of two competencies that relate to the behaviours involved in the effective formulating of a school vision as well as to the behaviours involved in effectively setting the strategic direction of the school. The two competencies are: 1) *Analysing and interpreting the school environment* and 2) *Developing a school vision and strategies.*

4.3.1.1   *Analysing and interpreting the school environment*

Being an effective observer in serving the best interest of the school was reported by various participants as a being the first stepping stone towards being an effective school principal. A large proportion of participants stressed the importance of analysing what is going on in the world and the country and, based on that observational screening, to identify what and foresee how external developments may affect the school's trajectory and performance. Typical examples included that the school principal must be a "reader", that he/she must be up to date with educational developments (e.g. new technological teaching and learning tools), and that he/she must be able to assess which macro-developments could hold opportunities or threats for the school.

This competency also proved to include behaviours involved in effectively interpreting the internal dynamics of the school and in identifying the strengths and weaknesses that may affect the trajectory or performance of the school. Various subject matter experts reported the importance of effectively assessing the internal state and culture of the school in order to identify its strengths, weaknesses, or current trajectory. Examples in this domain included sending out surveys and being a good observer of what is happening on the managerial front as well as on the "ground" (teaching and learning) level of the school.

4.3.1.2   *Developing a school vision and strategies*

The competency *Developing a school vision and strategies* was developed from recurrent reports from participants stating that the school principal should be actively involved in the development of a clear, challenging, and sustainable school vision. It was also reported that the school principal should be actively involved in the development and communication of strategies that are in line with the school vision,

that give school staff and pupils a sense of purpose, are learner focused, and advance diversity and respect for people. Behaviours involved in building school strategies based on thorough problem analysis and broad-based fact-finding were especially reported as important. Participants' examples included the school principal's ability to see the bigger picture, to talk about the school vision and where it should be going in order to achieve the vision.

4.3.2 Establishing and organising goals and expectations

Goal and expectation-orientated behaviours proved to be essential in directing the work of others. It was reported that the organisation of work leads to a valuable differential the priorities that people attach to the specific work within the school. Generic planning skills were also grouped within this competency cluster and consequently the following two competencies were yielded: 1) *Establishing goals & expectations* and 2) *Planning and organising.*

4.3.2.1   Establishing goals and expectations

According to the participants, teachers struggle to direct their work towards a goal when they do not have a proper understanding of the strategic value of that goal or when they do not fully understand what is expected of them. Also, behaviours relating to the development of high expectations were reported as instrumental to creating a student-centred learning climate. Consequently, behaviours necessary in the proper establishment of strategically aligned and challenging school goals and expectations were reported as important. Various participants stressed how difficult it is to establish consensus regarding school goals. It was explained that only after consensus has been reached on set goals, do teachers coherently work and commit themselves towards specific goals and hard work. The interview was filled with actions that facilitate the extent to which consensus is reached regarding the goals and expectations, as well as the extent to which each role player understands his or her role in realising the goals and expectations of the school. Various subject matter experts also stressed the importance of first establishing a mutual understanding of a goal and its specifications before implementing it.

4.3.2.2   Planning and organising

The coining of this competency developed from participants' emphasis on generic planning and organising skills. This included stories about the principal's inability to appoint a competent staff member to organises and prioritise his or her work. However, the participants regarded taking the lead (e.g. to organise his/her personal work desk) as the best way of achieving an organised school environment, and not only relying on administrative support. The importance of generic planning skills were stressed and a multitude of subjects matter experts acknowledged that goals cannot be tackled in a pure ad hoc fashion but should rather be approached systematically by means of some kind of planning system.

Consequently, *Planning and Organising* refers to behaviours instrumental in prioritising and planning school activities effectively and efficiently to ensure that established goals and expectations are met. Good time management and the application of educational knowledge in planning and constructing school plans also characterise this competency.

4.3.3 Developing key school stakeholders

Results regarding the comprehensive development of school staff and pupils yielded three interrelated competencies: 1) *Training and coaching, 2) Delegating and empowering*, and 3*) Identifying and deploying potential*

4.3.3.1   Training and Coaching

Training and Coaching was developed from results that clearly indicated the importance of the school principal's role in both formal training as well as on a more informal and personal level. It was reported that in order to develop the school staff on a comprehensive level, the leader of the school should not only budget for and facilitate training programs, but also acts as a leader of learning and to be willing to act as a mentor on a personal level. Behavioural examples included getting to know school staff and pupils, initiating and supporting continuous training opportunities, and sharing personal and professional knowledge and experience.

In conclusion, the competency *Training and Coaching School Stakeholders* refers to behaviours included in promoting and structuring continuous formal and informal

training and development. It also includes behaviours involved in developing school staff on individual and personal level. Furthermore, it also includes behaviours involving the identification and development of areas in need of improvement.

4.3.3.2   Delegating and empowering

A central theme than came about throughout the interviews was that of granting teachers and staffs the power to solve problems independently. With this power went part-going responsibility and accountability, but also the support of the school principal as well as access to the necessary resources. Participants explained that only through such exposure do teachers, non-teaching staff, and pupils really develop their ability to independently solve problems and more importantly, to be innovative and creative.

The respondents reminded that this kind of development through empowerment does not mean that the principal expects the subordinate to function completely independently and that he or she cannot be guided along the way. The "development through empowerment" phenomenon was rather as a skill that involved continuous guidance that facilitated independent functioning. Typical behavioural examples included, among others, the following: to set high expectations of staff and pupils, to refrain from agreeing to do the person's task or job for him/her, to refrain from communicating doubts to the now entrusted person, and to offer structural and practical support once the person is given the responsibility.

Delegating and empowering as competency is consequently characterised by behaviours involved in entrusting the school staff and learner representative council with increasing responsibility while simultaneously empowering them to do so. It includes the development of staff and pupils' critical thinking and independent problem-solving ability through combining entrustment, empowerment, and accountability in the delegation of tasks and sharing of leadership.

4.3.3.3   Identifying and deploying potential

Another central theme that was identified with regards to optimally developing the school staff was the school principal's ability to identify "the right people for the right job, at the right time" within the school. It was reported that this skill essentially included behaviours involved in the accurate identification and deployment of human

potential within the school. It includes deploying staff and pupils to areas where they will benefit from and develop most as well as promoting the right candidates to the right positions and surrounding the leader with people who can.

4.3.4 Resourcing strategically

The cluster *Resourcing strategically* was developed from interview instances that captured the competence with which strategic resources are recruited and secured, as well as the competence with which these resources are strategically and optimally allocated. Consequently, this cluster includes two interrelated competencies: *1) Recruiting and securing strategic resources* and 2) *Allocating resources strategically and optimally.*

4.3.4.1   Recruiting and securing strategic resources

From the beginning of the interviews, participants acknowledged the human weakness of wanting resources that are not really needed for strategic purposes or pedagogic goals. In the same breath however, these subject matter experts explained that with experience, they have learned that the principals who can overcome this natural tendency, most often outperform others in securing the right resources. Only those principals who demonstrate this skill succeeds in creating congruence between the school strategies and the resources needed to carry out the strategies. Typical behavioural examples in this domain included: going out of the way to find and attract the best teachers possible, promoting and utilising objective staff selection procedures, and explicitly making the link between the school's specific needs and the resources secured.

Consequently, this competency includes behaviours involved in the recruitment and securement of all human, financial, and technological resources that are aligned with instructional and strategic purposes of teaching, learning and development. The competency *Recruiting and Securing Strategic Resources* therefore goes beyond the mere skill of raising funds and accumulating resources, as these securements may or may not be strategically employed to improve teaching and learning.

4.3.4.2   Allocating resources strategically and optimally

During the interviews it was soon discovered that merely recruiting and securing school resources, is not sufficient. A large proportion of participants explained that the ultimate value of a resource lies within what the leader of the school does with it. It was reported that principal's first priority should be to allocate all resources to the school's teaching and learning priorities.

Interrelated with the skills of strategic allocation comes the skill of utilising the existing resources optimally and economically. Participants emphasised the importance of the following in this regard: create calculations for utilising and distributing existing Teaching and Learning (T&L) resources as economically as possible, find innovative ways to rent existing resources or sell worthless resources, and sets up plans for the strategic allocation of all school resources.

After the final analysis, this competency refers to behaviours related to competently allocating resources to specific pedagogical and strategic goals and, once allocated, utilising and sharing the resources among users in an economically optimal manner.

4.3.5 Leading with compassion

Leading with compassion was developed from behaviours that were found to be essential in 1) *Showing concern and being supportive* and 2) *Displaying sound interpersonal skills.* This cluster acts as the overarching behavioural domain of all compassion-related behaviours.

4.3.5.1   Showing concern and being supportive

In line with charismatic and servant leadership, Showing Concern for school staff and pupils revealed itself as a key theme during the interviews. A large proportion of participants accentuated the influential power of behaviours that demonstrated concern for subordinates and pupils.

According to various interviewees, this competency starts with going out of the way to get to know individuals not only as employees, but also as human beings and fellows. Sincere listening was also reported to be a key element of showing concern. Behavioural examples included, among others, recognising and valuing all

individuals and their respective places within the school and showing understanding and concern for their aspirations, needs, values, and feelings.

4.3.5.2   *Displaying sound interpersonal skills*

This universal competency was included due to the reported prevalence of contextually and socially appropriate interpersonal skills. As leaders of their schools, participants stressed the importance of skills when interacting on both an interpersonal and collective level within the school as well as when serving in interest of the school. Actions that enable the effective handling of interpersonal and group related conflicts were also grouped within this competency. Various participants went as far as stating that the absence of basic interpersonal skills would make it impossible for school principals to be effective school leaders in today's educational context.

4.3.6 Maintaining an orderly and supportive student-centred learning environment

Although a mouthful, *Maintaining an orderly and supportive student-centred learning environment* essentially refers to the repertoire of competencies needed to ensure and maintain an environment where pupils can learn and teachers can teach effectively. It was reported that for this to be realised, the school principal needs to be competent in 1) Ensuring *safety*, 2) Creating *order and discipline*, and 3) Creating *inclusiveness and unity.*

4.3.6.1   *Ensuring Safety*

During the in-depth interviews, various dimensions of the concept of safety were discussed. A substantial proportion of participants raised the importance of both perceived and real psychological and physical safety. On a psychological level, it was reported that the school principals should demonstrate behaviours that enable staff and pupils to feel safe to make mistakes. The physical dimension of safety was developed form reports that stressed the importance of behaviours that foster school security and the protection of staff and pupils against safety risks.

After incorporating the results, this competency refers to behaviours that facilitate the establishment and maintenance of a physical and psychological safe learning-orientated environment for all school stakeholders, especially learners. In addition to

actions promoting and ensuring physical school safety, it includes the effectiveness with which the school principal creates space for pupils and staff to feel safe to make mistakes as part of the process of learning.

4.3.6.2 Creating Order and discipline

Almost all the participants reminded the interviewer of the fact school pupils are not adults. By this they reiterated the fact that the effective management of discipline and pupil behaviour will always be a key competency that effective principals need to acquire. Maintaining order and discipline was found to refer to behaviours that enable the establishment and maintenance of a neat and orderly school environment in facilitating effective teaching and learning. This competency includes actions ranging from the consistent instalment and enforcement of disciplinary codes to protecting classroom order from external disruptions.

4.3.6.3 Creating Inclusiveness and unity

A large proportion of participants spoke passionately about how crucial it is that all pupils, teachers, and non-teaching staff feel as if their place within the school is valued and that they do not feel alienated. According to these interviewees, the school principal's behaviour is essential in moving towards this ideal. It was explained that inclusiveness and unity will prevail to the extent that the school principal remains objective and neutral and the extent to which the principal actively supports minority groups and celebrates diversity.

Ensuring *Inclusiveness and unity* was found to refer to behaviours that enable all staff members and pupils to feel and behave as if they belong to the school while enjoying the rights of that position and being held accountable for its responsibilities. This competency also includes behaviours that facilitate unity and team spirit among staff and pupils. Examples included the facilitation of teambuilding workshops, the expression of recognition for the value of minority groups, as well as actively building morale after setbacks or inter-group conflicts.

4.3.7 Communicating and Influencing

Communicating and influencing was developed to represent the range of competencies that were considered essential in being able to communicate and influence effectively within the various school settings. It was found that four

interrelated competencies constitute this generic competency cluster. These include: 1) *Communicating*, 2) *Motivating and inspiring*, 3) *Persuasion*, and 4) *Negotiating and debating*. Communicating was reported as central to the other three competencies in the sense that effective communication is needed in order to motivate, persuade, and negotiate.

4.3.7.1   Communicating

According to the participants, effective communication skills were stressed as one of the most important competencies that a school principal should possess. The principal's role as communicator was emphasised as crucial by the vast majority of interviewees. Interestingly, little to no communication skills were discussed that exclusively applied to the educational setting. Rather, almost all interview instances on this competency were generic communications skills. Communicating to the right receivers of the information, in the right way, at the right time was reported as being an essential ability. Also, substantial emphasis was put on the school principal's ability to communicate tactfully when needed as well as the means of communication. In summary, communication in the context of this study refers to the extent to which relevant information is conveyed clearly, timeously, and in an appropriate style. This includes thorough listening as well as the extent to which meaning is clarified in order to establish mutual understanding.

4.3.7.2   Motivating and inspiring

As with communication, the school principal's ability to demonstrate behaviours that motivates and inspires staff members and pupils, were considered pivotal by the interviewees. According to the participants, the largest source of inspiration comes from the kind of example that the principal sets. Inspiration therefore originates from the principal's ability to manage him/herself. A theme that emerged closely related to inspiration was that of motivation. Various interviewees spoke passionately about motivation as more than just setting an example. These participants considered the school principals ability to make teachers see the value of their work as the primary facilitator of motivation. This represents the value of intrinsic motivation within the professional world of education. Other examples of motivational behaviour that came forth strongly, was the school principal's ability to systematically encourage school

staff through positive energy as well as offering the best possible extrinsic rewards (e.g. bonuses) from the school's side.

In summary, *Motivating and Inspiring* refers to behaviours that make school staff and pupils want to contribute to the vision and objectives of the school. This includes the effectiveness with which the school principal both intrinsically and extrinsically encourages goal attainment and school citizenship behaviours.

4.3.7.3   Persuasion

According to the interviewees, the way in which school principals conduct themselves, has much to do with how persuasive they are. More specifically, self-confidence was identified as the most influential factor affecting the school principal's ability to be persuasive. Throughout the interviews it was stressed that an effective principal must demonstrate behaviours that reflect confidence in his/her stance.

It was also mentioned that in order to really be persuasive, principals must make use of evidence-based arguments instead of thumb sucking. The latter should not however, be confused with storytelling. Effective storytelling, according to a large proportion of participants, constitutes something totally different than thumb sucking and has profound persuasive value. By sharing personal experiences and telling real life stories. The use of scientific measures such as surveys and questionnaires were considered especially effective in terms of substantiating evidence-based arguments. (See Appendix D for a more comprehensive range of behavioural examples)

In conclusion, Persuasion refers to the set of behaviours that enable the confident and effective persuasion of school staff and pupils in the best interest of the school. It includes persuading by proposing ideas, convincing through storytelling, and convincing through the extraction of examples. The effectiveness with which the school principal can convince through making illustrative connections with the pupil's future is also captured here.

4.3.7.4   Negotiating and debating

During the interviews it was made clear that as the leader of the school, the principal needs to be an effective negotiator for various reasons. In doing so, the school principal needs to demonstrate good debating skills. The ability to facilitate critical discussions and diverse interests was a key sub-theme that came about within this

behavioural theme. The following examples were included among others: the offering of opportunities for critical discussions and debates, asking critical and open ended questions, and demonstrating open-mindedness during negotiation.

Negotiating and debating competently was consequently found to refer to the extent to which critical discussions and diverse interests are identified and addressed effectively. It includes the display of objective negotiation skills and the taking of a firm stance when needed.

4.3.8 Making decisions

After conducting the coding analysis, it was found that the overall effectiveness of the school principal's decision-making ability, as reported by the participants in this study, consisted of a range of behavioural dimensions that covers both procedural and content-related elements of decision-making. According to the results, making effective decision as the leader of the school is a product of the following four interrelated competencies: *1) Making consultation-based decisions, 2) Decisiveness and courage, 3) Flexibility and adaptability, 4) Creativity and innovation.*

4.3.8.1   Making consultation-based decisions

The value of following a consultation-based approach was another key theme that emerged within the decision-making domain of the interviews. Two participants elaborated extensively on how rewarding it proved to be to consult other more experienced school principals before making big decisions. The same two participants considered the pupils themselves as an underappreciated source of input and stressed that they were often astonished by the merit of the inputs of the pupils. Various interviewees told stories where sending out questionnaires and scheduling face-to- face meetings with teachers proved to provide value strategic feedback.

After the analysis, it was found that being a competent consultation-based decision-maker refers to the extent to which an effective balance is maintained in terms of making decisions individually as leader, and incorporating the inputs of school staff and other school stakeholders. It includes behaviours that facilitate the extent to which opportunities for inputs are given, as well as the extent to which feedback is incorporated in decision-making when proven valuable.

4.3.8.2   Decisiveness and courage

Together with *Flexibility and adaptability*, being decisive and demonstrating courage and hardiness were considered the most important decision-related behaviours. Participants explained that this competency is particularly important in the current educational context that South Africa finds itself. It was explained that great need for courageous principals exists in order to overcome the challenges of corruption and cronyism that exists within public schools. Disagreeing openly and honestly when needed, making unpopular decisions when needed and making personal sacrifices in the best interest of the school were among typical examples provided by participants.

In conclusion, this competency refers to the extent to which the school principal acts decisively in making tough, bold, and courageous decisions when needed. It includes the ability to perform effectively under stress and to react positively to change and uncertainty.

4.3.8.3   Flexibility and adaptability

Three participants considered being flexible and adaptable as pivotal in the process of making sustainable and constructive decisions. Indeed, flexibility and adaptability were reported to be among the two strongest articulated competencies within the decision-making domain. Interestingly, a multitude of participants were of meaning that an effective school principal does not hesitate to admit a mistake. One SME mentioned the importance of openly expressing expectance for the inedibility of change outside and within the school.

This competency includes behaviours that demonstrate acceptance for backtracking when the need to do so arises. It also includes actions that foster the searching for alternative paths when evidence is provided that plans are not working out or that strategic direction needs to change.

4.3.8.4   Creativity and innovation

The theme of creativity and innovation rose prominently among at least three participants. According to these interviewees, creativity applies right from the beginning of the principal's job; that is creating a vision for the school. All three

participants emphasised the opinion that since each school is unique, creating a vision and subsequent strategies is not copying. Interestingly, participants who serve as leaders of under-privileged schools emphasised the value of creativity even more than their counterparts of more wealthy schools. Various participants mentioned that an effective school principal at least demonstrate ways that facilitate innovation within the school and at most, demonstrate visionary behaviours in transforming the school according to the needs of the time and context.

Accordingly, this competency refers to actions that foster creativity and innovation in decision-making. It includes the extent to which opportunities for innovation are identified in pursuit of improving the status quo. It also includes actions that promote the individual and collective generation of creative ideas.

4.3.9 Managing self

Of all the results on the various behavioural domains in this study, the largest proportion revealed the importance of the school principal's ability to manage the "self" in leading the school to success. Further analysis indicated that this cluster comprises the following five competencies: *1) Building trust and leading with integrity, 2) Discretion and Initiative, 3) Personal growth and self-development, 4) Resilience and tenacity,* and *5) Focus and dedication*

4.3.9.1   Building trust and leading with integrity

The competency of *Building trust and leading with integrity* received, with a wide margin, the most emphasis during the interviews. With 51 instances out 131, this competency not only received the highest frequency percentage within the *Managing Self* cluster, but also proved to be the theme that enjoyed the most in-depth discussion. Almost all participants spoke extensively and passionately about the importance of building trust through leading by example. More specifically, the following examples occurred regularly: practicing what he/she preaches, demonstrating fairness to all, being consequent in procedural affairs, demonstrating a sense of humour, and refraining from shouting or screaming at subordinates (See Appendix D for a more comprehensive list of examples).

In the context of this study, *Building trust and leading with integrity* refers to the behavioural demonstration of sound moral and ethical principles in dealing with all

school stakeholders (i.e. pupils, teachers, non-teaching staff, and parents) as well as in serving the interests of the school. It includes leading by example and behaving openly and honestly whilst respecting the boundaries of privacy and confidentiality. It also includes managing own emotions appropriately in dealing with difficult situations and displaying a sense of humility and humour.

4.3.9.2   Discretion and Initiative

During the grounded theory analysis it was initially difficult to come up with an overarching term that captured more abstract examples such as: "makes use of opportunities as they arise or "goes out of way to attend to issues and concerns before the end of the school day". As the amount of critical incidents increased however, it was gradually discovered that the school principal's ability to use his/her discretion and to take initiate when needed, developed into an independently identifiable behavioural domain as such.

Consequently, the behaviours were grouped together and *Discretion and Initiative* now refers to the effective use of the school principal's own discretion and taking of initiative in dealing with work related opportunities, tasks, and problems. It includes actions that are examples of going out of the way to attend to issues as they arise, before the start of the new school day.

4.3.9.3   Personal growth and self-development

This competency was developed from the grouping of reported critical incidents that highlighted the value of personal growth and self-development. Among the sub-themes that were identified were: self-reflection and awareness, self-discovery, continuous enrichment through reading, as well as pursuing personal and professional development and training.

Competently increasing *Personal growth and self-development* therefore refers to the effective display of behaviours necessary for learning and self-development. It includes the behavioural demonstration of a self-reflective, pro-active, and opportunistic approach to continuous life-long learning and development.

4.3.9.4   Resilience and tenacity

The ability to bounce back after setbacks emerged as a prominent theme among at least four interviewees. According to these participants, the ineffective school

principal gets overwhelmed by the problems of poverty in public South African schools. The effective school principal on the other hand, demonstrates optimism and perseverance in the midst of adversity. It was also stressed that this kind of breed takes criticism well and not only goes out of his/her way to separate constructive criticism from the destructive kind, but also incorporates the former and forgets about the latter. Effective school principals, according to three of the four participants, also demonstrate perseverance by communicating confidence in the school when most staff members or pupils have lost hope.

In conclusion, *Resilience and tenacity* refers to the extent and effectiveness with which setbacks and stresses are dealt with. It includes the demonstration of positivity, perseverance and dedication in the midst of adversaries and uncertainty. It also includes the ability to withstand negative criticism.

4.3.9.5   *Focus and dedication*

Focus and dedication was reported to be second only after *Building trust and leading with integrity* in terms of the frequency percentages with this the cluster of *Managing Self*. It was explained that in South Africa it is a prevalent phenomenon that many school principals have "second jobs". Consequently, these school principals are apparently less focused and dedicated to their job; a job that is considered by many as the most important in the current national bio-psycho-socio-economical context.

According to the participants, the effective school principal on the other hand, demonstrates behaviours that serves as evidence that they unconditionally view school principalship as their primary and only job. Such behaviours include working beyond office hours, displaying a passion for the job, and making personal sacrifices in the best interest of the pupils of the school.

Focus and dedication was consequently found to represent the extent to which focus and dedication is demonstrated. This competency includes actions that reflect a passion for the job, namely being a school principal, and a willingness to make sacrifices in the best interest of the school. It also includes the extent to which the school principal understands what the role of the leader of the school entails and subsequently demonstrates this realisation behaviourally.

4.3.10   *Leading across school boundaries*

The term *Leading Across School Boundaries* was adapted from the leadership behaviour *Leading Across Boundaries* in Theron and Spangenberg's (2005) Leadership Behaviour Inventory (LBI). This cluster was developed from leadership behaviours that were reported to facilitate the effective transcendence of both internal and external school boundaries. The two competencies that comprise this cluster are: 1) *Facilitating interdepartmental coordination* and *2) Influencing across external school boundaries.*

4.3.10.1   *Facilitating interdepartmental coordination*

Although less prominent than *Leading across external school boundaries*, the interviews yielded instances and discussions on the importance of leading across internal school boundaries that are worth mentioning. More specifically, the effective coordination of different academic department within the school was reported to be a major source of interdepartmental health and people-related educational processes. This link positions the broader cluster of *Leading across school boundaries* as a possible antecedent of the outcome: Core People Processes. Reported behavioural examples included: facilitating inter-departmental workshops and facilitating inter-departmental discussions.

Facilitating interdepartmental coordination is defined as behaviours involved in the facilitation of inter-departmental school coordination. It includes behaviours that facilitate inter-departmental collaborative practices and help school staff and pupils to see the bigger picture. This competency includes actions that help break down the individual barriers and silos in the school.

4.3.10.2   *Influencing across external school boundaries*

In terms of cross-functional leadership behaviours, it was reported that the school principal's ability to influence across external school boundaries was considered pivotal in the current national and international educational context. Participants considered this competency more important than ever due to the growing nature of globalisation and global communication networks. Behaviours associated with effectively leading collaborative networks with other schools as well as partnering with government services was also considered to fall within the range of actions that

make out this competency. One SME even explained how she manages to protect the pupils of her school by visiting gang leaders and negotiating terms on which the children of her school can be excluded from those targeted by the gangs. Other behavioural themes that were grouped as falling outside the school's boundaries include networking with organisations and regularly interacting with parents and the community.

This competency refers to behaviours that help build the image and external network of the school by breaching boundaries, networking, and practicing socially responsible citizenship. It includes actions that keep the school principal updated with parents and the Student Governing Body (SGB) needs, concerns and suggestions. It also includes remaining visible and acting as a member and leader of the community.

4.3.11 *Managing teaching and learning*

Managing teaching and learning was developed by grouping the competencies necessary for managing the two most important elements of a school: teaching and learning. It includes general management competencies applied in a teaching and learning setting. These competencies include: *1) Monitoring and moderating, 2) Rewarding and celebrating,* and *3) Restructuring and reengineering.* The school principal therefore acts as manager and leader by reviewing the school's performance, acknowledging successes and failures, and restructuring the school.

4.3.11.1 *Monitoring and evaluating*

This competency was developed by grouping behavioural themes that were congruent with the effective evaluation of the performance of the school. As with most organisations, this included the holistic review of school performance and the curriculum.

On the monitoring side, it included behaviours that demonstrate effective reviewing and objective measuring of key performance areas, such as the curriculum, teaching and learning, and instructional tools. On the evaluating side it included actions like administrating effective feedback mechanisms, following up on projects and tasks, and identifying performance areas in need of development. It therefore also included

actions that enable the calculation of the gap between where the school finds itself and where it aimed to be during the goal-setting phase.

4.3.11.2   *Rewarding and celebrating*

Rewarding and celebrating constituted a surprisingly small segment of the current competency cluster (Managing teaching and learning). When participants did discuss behaviours related to this competency however, it was most often in great depth and with great enthusiasm. Various participants were of meaning that by acknowledging good performance in the first place, school principals take the first step in effectively leading performance management within the school.

In conclusion, competently *rewarding and celebrating* within the school context refers to behaviours involved in acknowledging and celebrating positive staff and pupil behaviour and performance. It includes actions that put structures in place to acknowledge good performance, as well as behaviours that foster the identification and recognition of all individuals' contribution to the school.

4.3.11.3   *Restructuring and re-engineering*

It was explained that once the school principal has evaluated and rewarded performance where necessary, his/her most important job now becomes to restructure the school accordingly. According to participants, effectively re-engineering the school includes making the changes as identified in performance evaluation phase. This can take the form of shuffling or replacing teachers, making changes to the curriculum, or implementing new structures or school policies. A multitude of interviewees regarded being creative and having an innovative mind as pivotal in restructuring the school according to the needs of the time. A logical link therefore seems to exist between being creative and innovative and effectively restructuring the school.

In sum, this competency was found to include behaviours that effectively incorporate performance feedback into restructuring of the school. It includes actions that fulfil the gap that was calculated from the gap analysis during the monitoring and moderating phase.

4.4   Development of School Performance Outcomes

In this section, the results of the systematic grounded theory analysis of the interviews are used to complement what was concluded in the literature study with regards to the most critical School Performance Outcomes (SPOs). Certain SPOs were reported as one-dimensional while participants considered other outcomes to consist of more than one dimension. Within each SPO, a range of outcome indicator examples were also captured and can be viewed in Appendix E.

4.4.1   Core People Processes

This outcome was adapted from Henning, Theron and Spangensberg's (2004) performance dimension of *Core People Processes*. In line with Beckard and Harris' (1987) criteria of organisational health and effectiveness, Core *People Processes* includes criteria such as goals and work plans, communication, school interaction, conflict management, and productive clashing of ideas. It also includes the tapping of the value of diversity as well as learning through feedback**.**

Three elements of this outcome, as defined in the literature study, were indicated as being important by the code analysis. The first included the constructive interaction and the productive "jarring" of diverse ideas among school staff. The second element consisted of indicators that represent the extent to which school goals and work plans are congruent between departments and individuals. This also included the extent to which all role players understand their roles and tasks. Thirdly, performance indicators associated with open communication systems and effective conflict management practices were reported within this performance dimension.

4.4.2   Parent and community involvement

A large proportion of the participants highlighted the "willingness vs. capacity" theme. These interviewees reminded that parents, family members, and the community do not necessarily have to have great capacity in order to make a significant positive difference in the education of the pupil. They repetitively stressed the fact it is more about a strong willingness to support the school in what it does in pursuit of developing and engaging the pupil.   This willingness to support, according to participants, then fosters an intrinsic willingness to make their own resources (time, personal   expertise   etc.)   available   to   the   school.   Interestingly,   participants

representing both poor and wealthy schools mentioned that such willingness outweighs the mere willingness to offer money.

Another theme that was brought up by the interviewees, concerns the nature of the involvement of parents. Many participants told stories of parents that were more destructive in trying to help even though the willingness was there. The difference, according to the participants, was that these parents tried to take control instead of playing a supportive role. One participant summed this phenomenon up by stating: *"Imagine me trying to take control at one of my pupil's homes – that would not be very constructive".* The message was clear that the participants felt that there should rather be a partnership where the roles are clear: The school takes the lead, and the parents either support the principals or they don't.

Consequently, Parent and community involvement refers the level of willingness to support, the level of willingness to make personal resources available in the best interest of the pupils, and the presence of constructive community involvement and partnerships with the school.

4.4.3 Wealth of school resources

Even though the literature study made it clear that the wealth of resources per se does not prove to be significant in transforming the resources into critical outcomes, participants remained to emphasise that without a reasonable capacity of educational and financial resources, the challenges become overwhelming. Therefore, a multitude of participants stressed the importance of networking (e.g. non-profiting organisations and individual business owners) with the aim of securing investments in the school additional to what the government offers. Through such investments, poor schools can at least be given the opportunity to prove themselves worthy in managing the resources. About half of the participants did however acknowledge that they have witnessed investments that came to nothing due to poor leadership and management and a lack of dedication and creativeness on the school principal's part.

In line with Henning, Theron and Spangenberg's (2004, p.28) description of the performance dimension "Wealth of resources", this school performance outcome reflects the internal strength and capacity of the school in terms of resources. *Wealth*

of school resources in this sense includes the level of teaching and learning resources (e.g. learning materials supply, physical assets etc.), as well as the level of financial and educational investments in the school. It also refers to the quality and diversity of school staff in reflecting the school's human resource capacity.

4.4.4 School climate

Due to the wide range of intangible psychological factors that were constantly blended in throughout the interviews, it proved exceptionally challenging to group and code interview texts concerning the school climate. After thorough analysis, a list of key themes did however emerge. Among these themes, the aspect of school safety stands out. Participants covered a wide range of topics that concerned both physical and psychological dimensions of safety. As a South African sample, almost all participants voiced their opinion that pupils who feel unsafe will never be able to learn as effectively and efficiently as their counterparts who come from in a safe school environment.

Various participants also elaborated on how pupil's perceived safety to make mistakes facilitates learning. These participants were of meaning that school principals play the key role in creating space for pupils to feel safe to make mistakes. This perception of safety, according to the interviewees, is coupled with a positive learning spirit that acknowledges mistakes as part of learning, but fosters high expectations and values high performance.

A small, but notable proportion of participants elaborated on their opinion that school tidiness and care is primarily an issue of climate and culture and not an as much an administrative aspect. These interviewees shared stories that illustrated how school principals created a climate of value for tidiness and care through personally picking up litter and demonstrating personal care. A theme that emerged as somewhat interrelated with value for tidiness was value for individuals. Three school principals reiterated the importance of creating a value system in which the norm is that all pupils greet each other by the name and that all teachers go out of their way to know each pupil by name. According to these participants, the incorporation of such a value system is believed to develop a sense of communal belonging that in turn transforms into a pride for the school.

With the exception of one participant, all interviewees regarded order and discipline as part of the school climate. Even though these participants acknowledged that pupils will always be sub-adults and will therefore always display all kinds of disciplinary and behavioural problems, they still regarded discipline as a value related phenomenon.

Consequently, the climate of the school is essentially defined as the psychological environment of the school and gives an overall assessment of the integration, commitment to certain values. It includes the values, beliefs, and nature of everyday interactions between school staff, parents, and pupils. Included in this is the working atmosphere and collective orientation. Agreement on core values and relative consensus regarding the vision, goals, and achievement-related attitudes and behaviours also characterise this outcome.

4.4.5 Professional capacity of school staff

As a result of the inductive coding analysis, this outcome includes three dimensions of which the first two are conceptually interrelated. The first dimension captures the formal aspect of the outcome and includes the *Knowledge, Skills, and Abilities, (KSAs) of teachers and other school staff.* More specifically, this refers to qualification and experience levels as well as the level of teaching skills etc. The second dimension falls under the "other characteristics" component of the *Professional capacity of teacher staff* and reflect the staff's satisfaction with the task and work context, empowerment, and career progress as well as the level and nature of their intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. It also refers to other attitudes and orientation to work, including trust in and respect for the school principal and acceptance of him/her as the leader of the school.

The third dimension of the school staff's professional capacity specifically refers to the teachers – the staff with the strongest and most direct influence on student learning. This dimension is termed *Teacher interaction and coherence* and reflects norms and work arrangements between teachers at the school. More specifically, this refers to the degree to which teacher interaction is frequent and to which actions of teachers are governed by shared norms focused on teaching and learning. The presence of coherent professional development programmes that are part of an

overall coherent training and development programme also characterises this dimension of the professional capacity of school staff as a performance area.

4.4.6 Quality of instruction

A large proportion of participants reported the quality of classroom instruction to make out the most direct link to pupil learning. As experienced former teachers themselves, the subject matter experts explained that in order for high quality classroom learning to take place, a collection of conditions need to be present. Ranging from basic order to the presence of more sophisticated learning facilitators such as critical thinking and problem solving, these conditions collectively determine the level of learning that takes place within the classroom. After completion of the grounded theory analysis, *Quality of instruction* was reported to consist of three interrelated sub-dimensions.

Firstly, *classroom order* refers to the working atmosphere in the classroom, including the level of order (not necessarily silence) and lack of interruptions to teaching and learning. *Quality of pupil* interaction is the second dimension and basically reflects the quality of interaction between pupils and teachers. At minimum, this entails civil and respectful interactions, whereas higher quality discussions are characterised by high pupil participation and engagement with content matter supplemented by the application of critical thinking skills. Finally**,** *teacher learning support* reflects the level of quality support that teachers provide in the process of classroom learning. This includes 1) the systematic organisation of subjects and lessons, 2) the level of instructional planning, 3) the consideration of learning principles, 4) the clarification of appropriate instructional goals, 5) decisions about curricular content, 6) selection of instructional strategies, and 7) the effective use of instructional time.

4.4.7 Pupil engagement

At this stage of the interview analysis, the focus was almost exclusively oriented towards the individual level and more specifically, towards the pupil. Discussions centred on what a quality pupil looks like in terms of attitudes and views towards the school and education as well as around characteristics related to learning and development.

At least four participants spoke passionately about the ideal of creating a school where all pupils feel they have a place and where they feel they belong. Reports of this nature clearly overlapped with the literature's description of an internalised conception of belongingness to the school. Together with three others, the same four participants explained that only pupils should experience a moderate level of satisfaction and happiness when at school. Various participants reported however, that a pupil who is satisfied with his or her position in the school is not necessary motivated to learn. With the exception of one, all participants explained that a motivated pupil who takes ownership of his or her learning and who has high expectations of him or herself is the single most important pupil-related outcome that a school can achieve. Some participants went further and explained that only then a pupil sufficiently participates in learning orientated activities.

In sum, the results overlap with the literature's stance on what constitutes an engaged pupil. Consequently, *Pupil engagement* will be defined in this study as an individual-level school performance outcome that has two fundamental features. The first, *Pupil identification,* captures the extent to which the pupil identifies with the school and feels he or she belongs at the school. This identification is characterised by an internalised conception of belonging - that the pupil is discernibly part of the school environment and that education and the school constitutes an important part of his or her own experience. Secondly, the *pupil's participation* in school activities, both inside and outside of the classroom, forms the other primary component of what constitutes an engaged pupil.

4.4.8 Circular Achievement

The outcome of Circular achievement was formulated through reports on the extent to which the school has achieved absolute learning outcomes such as covering a full circular programme and promoting its pupils from one academic grade to the next.

Consequently, this outcome has three sub dimensions. Firstly, it refers to how much of the curriculum for a full academic year has been covered in class. Almost all participants explained that malfunctioning schools fail to achieve this outcome target due to teacher absenteeism and ill-disciplined pupils. Secondly, *Circular achievement* represents the average final examination results for all academic subjects. Flowing from the academic results, the mean pass rate makes out the final

component of overall circular achievement and refers to the average annual rate at which pupils are promoted from one academic grade to the next.

4.4.9 Pupil educational readiness

The inductive coding resulted in a list of attainments, skills and characteristics that were regarded by participants as essential (in addition to sound academic results) in coping with the challenges of the next stages of school pupils' educational careers and personal life, and early vocational challenges.

A large proportion of participants were of opinion that while the school can do much to prepare a pupil for the next stage of his/her life, it ultimately becomes a matter of the "self". These participants explained that a basic level of self-knowledge (i.e. personality, interests, abilities) is firstly needed in order to steer themselves in a direction that is sustainable in terms of individual needs. The same participants as well as four others also spoke passionately about the importance of embedded core values within the pupil. According to these subject matter experts, values like honesty, self-respect, respect for others, optimism, and self-confidence are pivotal in being ready for both higher education and the world of work.

Hand –in hand with embedded values and a basic knowledge of oneself comes an understanding of how the world of work functions. Therefore, various participants considered a basic understanding of civic responsibilities and the world of work as another important dimension of what makes a pupil ready for the next stage of life. It was also reported that in order to gain insight into the "self" as well as others, pupils need display a level of emotional maturity and intelligence. According to at least four participants, emotional maturity is not only essential in order to have effective social and team skills, but also to be able to communicate clearly and contextually appropriately.

At least four participants explained that the value of physical development should never be underestimated in the holistic development of the pupil as a child. Two interviewees explained how they have continuously witnessed pupils who are physically healthy and well developed to outperform their physically underdeveloped peers. Interestingly, the same four participants emphasised a great need for pupils to acquire application skills and called for practical apprentice-orientated vocations in

South Africa. According to these interviews, pupils need to be trained in practically applying specific elements of the theoretical knowledge that they are being tough and evaluated on. Finally, three quarters of the participants stressed the importance of a basic abstract and individual critical thinking ability on the pupil's behalf. According to these interviewees, this not only enables an analytical orientation to solving problems, but also fosters creativity and a basic ability to think long-term and set personal goals.

The term pupil educational readiness has been coined in this study and is based on the concept of career maturity. It represents the extent to which pupils have acquired the necessary basic developmental knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (malleable and non-malleable) in order to cope with the challenges of the next stage of life. The assumption is that such educationally ready pupils will be able to enter the labour market fairly and reach their individual potential.

The outcomes as defined above were discussed under the assumption that the situation the school finds itself in remains constant. In reality, however, various situational factors may influence the kind of leadership behaviour needed from the principal in order to be effective within that specific situational context. A brief description of the situational factors theorised to have influenced the results of this study will now be discussed.

4.5   Situational Variables: Facilitators and Barriers

It Chapter 2 it was argued that there are primarily two broad situational factors influencing the effectiveness of the behaviour of a leader: 1) *contextual uncertainty* and 2) *pressure for change* (Bartram & Inceoglu, 2011). In line with these broad factors, a number of school-level situational variables were identified from the literature to constrain, enable, or pressurise the behaviour and work of the school principal (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2004; Kruger, Witzers, & Sleegers, 2007).

Covering the entire range of situational variables falls beyond the scope of this study. Two situational variables do however, match particularly well with Bartram and Inceoglu,s (2011) broad categories of situational factors. These include: *School Size* and *School survival and competition.*

4.5.1   Contextual Uncertainty: School Size

Uncertainty is often a function of the degree of complexity and interdependency in a school's structures. In smaller schools the structures are most often more simplistic in nature. Consequently, the potential impacts of change processes or behaviours are easier to predict than for more complex or larger schools. The degree to which transformational behaviours are required therefore depends on the size of the school (Hallinger & Heck, 1998; Leithwood et al., 2004; Kruger, Witzers, & Sleegers, 2007).

4.5.2   Pressure for change: School survival and competition

Schools that find themselves in the desperate situation where they must compete with other schools in order to survive cannot afford to be stagnant or selective (this is a prevalent phenomenon in South Africa). Consequently, transformational leadership behaviours have been identified to be more important in schools where this is the case (Sleegers, 1991). The importance of transformational behaviours in turn emphasises the importance of transformational-related competencies needed to demonstrate these effective transformational behaviours. Based on this argument as well as on the fact that South African schools are regarded as being essential in the transformation of the post-Apartheid South Africa, this situational variable is also included in the partial school principal competency model.

4.6   Discussion of findings and comparison with theoretical model

The results of the interviews were analysed with the aim of supplementing what was found in the literature as well as to identify additional competencies and performance outcome variables. This section firstly provides a brief discussion of how the final results compare with the variables identified in literature study. Secondly, Table 4.3 and 4.4 displays this comparison. Finally, by means of Figure 4.3, it offers a visual model that explicates the mediated conceptual pathways through which school principals can possibly influence critical school and pupil outcomes.

Table 4.3

The theoretical competencies vs. results

THEORETICAL MODEL	RESULTS
Formulating a school vision and setting strategic direction	Formulating a school vision and setting strategic direction
Planning and establishing school goals and expectations	Planning and establishing school goals and expectations
Resourcing strategically	Resourcing strategically
Developing key school stakeholders	Developing key school stakeholders
Maintaining an orderly and supportive student-centred learning environment	Maintaining an orderly and supportive student-centred learning environment
Leading across school boundaries	Leading across school boundaries
Managing and rewarding Teaching & Learning	Managing and rewarding Teaching & Learning
	Leading with compassion
	Influencing and communicating
	Managing self
	Making decisions

Table 4.4

The theoretical outcomes vs. results

THEORETICAL MODEL	RESULTS
Parent and community involvement	Parent and community involvement
School climate	School climate
Professional capacity of school staff	Professional capacity of school staff
Quality of instruction	Quality of instruction
Pupil engagement	Pupil engagement
Circular Achievement	Circular Achievement
Pupil educational readiness	Pupil educational readiness
	Core School Processes
	Wealth of school resources

In the visual model, the blue ovals represent the SPCs whilst the SPOs are depicted in the form of the red ovals. The blue arrows represent the possible relationships between the SPCs and the red arrows in turn refer to the possible relationships between the SPOs. The black arrows represent the possible conceptual ways in which the SPCs can lead to certain SPOs. Finally, the competencies and outcomes

written in blue and red respectively represent those competencies and outcomes that were included after the incorporation of the results.

Although this study does not offer an explicit section for arguing each individual relationship, the depiction thereof is not a random accordance. The relationships flowed from the qualitative analysis. Throughout the interviews, participants (without being aware of it) identified directional patterns between the constructs under discussion. These directional patterns were then transformed into a set of conceptual propositions in the form of depicted linkages.

4.7   Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results of this study. First, the definitions of the school principal competencies (SPCs) that were developed from the grounded theory analysis were presented. The results of the school performance outcomes (SPOs) were also reported. The flow of the discussion was then focused on how Bartram and Inceoglu's (2011) framework of situational factors that influences leadership behaviour can possibly be applied in identifying appropriate situational variables that act as facilitators and barriers to certain school principal behaviours.

In addition to supporting the full spectrum of the theoretically formulated SPC clusters and SPOs, the results contributed to the identification of four additional SPC clusters. These include: *Influencing and communicating, Leading with compassion, Managing self,* and *Making decisions*. Results then led to the development of a range of more specific SPCs within each of the above mentioned clusters which in turn yielded a multitude of behavioural examples that can be viewed as partial elements of the relevant competency. Appendix D provides a more detailed layout in this regard. In terms of the school performance outcomes, the inductive coding analysis contributed to the additional inclusion of *Wealth of school resources* and *Core school processes.* As with the competencies, the grounded theory analysis also resulted in the refinement of the existing SPOs and yielded a range of outcome indicator examples (See Appendix E for more detail).
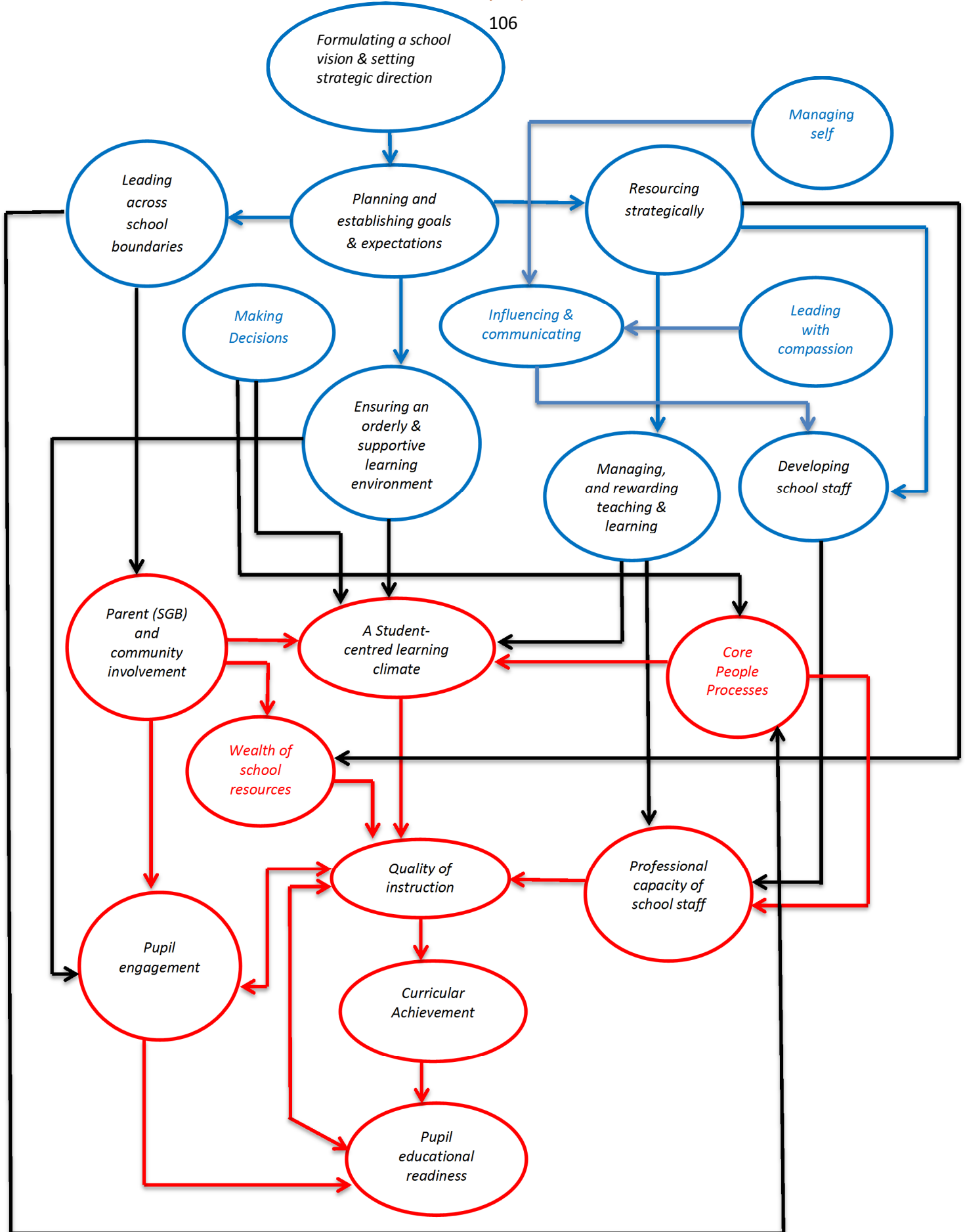
Figure 4.3   **The visual model after incorporation of results**

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1   Introduction

The aim of this final chapter is to provide an overview of why and how this study was conducted as well as the conclusions and implications thereof. Firstly, it includes a methodical overview of how the study was conducted. Finally, limitations of the study are discussed, practical implications are presented, suggestions for future research are suggested, and final concluding remarks are made.

5.2   Purpose of the study

The motivation for the development of a school principal competency model evolved from the introductory argument that explains how quality primary and secondary education serves as the most fundamental weapons against Adverse Impact (AI). More specifically, the stance for such a competency model developed from substantiated claims that low quality primary and secondary South African education is largely due to the inability of schools to transform resources into critical school performance outcomes, thereby emphasising the importance of and need for effective school leadership and management within the country (Van der Berg, 2007; Van der Berg, et al., 2011; Theron, 2012).

Both the South African international literature on school principal behaviour revealed that current school principal competency models largely fail to include school performance outcomes. Existing models also fail to capture the complexity of the mediated pathways through which the competencies influence these outcomes (Robinson at al., 2008; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012; Ten Bruggencate et al., 2012; Van der Berg et al., 2005).

Thus, the primary purpose of this study was to develop a model that depicts the most critical school principal competencies and school performance outcomes. The secondary aim was to capture some complexity as explained above through the depiction of possible conceptual relationships between the competencies and the outcomes. The strategic research aim was to encourage and enable more in-depth empirical studies to develop and validate a multi-rater (e.g. 360 degree) measuring instrument of the performance of school principals within the South African context.

5.3   Review of the methodology

The qualitative approach is a particularly suitable method for exploring a phenomenon (Creswell, 2009). Consequently, this study took a qualitative research approach in pursuit of partially answering a research initiating question that focuses on a largely unexplored research topic. It should be noted that although a qualitative approach was opted in the current study, the overarching research paradigm that it endorses is positivistic of nature. The reason is because the practice of competency modelling in this study's ultimately entails more than an understanding of the school principals' view on what kind of behaviour is important within a particular contextual setting. Rather, the idea behind an eventual structural school principal competency model is to approximate an objective reality of school principal performance with the purposes of explaining, controlling, and ultimately predicting performance.

More specifically, grounded theory was used together with an inductive coding analysis of in-depth interviews with a diverse sample of Subject Matter Experts. The objective was to refine and generate School Principal Competencies (SPCs) through the coding analysis and to develop a framework that encompasses the pathways through which these SPCs influence the most critical School Performance Outcomes (SPOs). This framework was depicted in the form a visual structural model in Chapter four.

5.4   Discussion of the findings

The following subsections offer discussions of the procedures and findings of the study.

5.4.1   Development of competencies and outcomes

The school principal competency model was developed through the competency modelling technique. The idea behind the technique is to map out a model that distinguishes top performers from average and poor performing counterparts. The underlying assumption is that observable behavioural competencies are those most critical elements in the chain of variables that lead to optimum performance (Campion et al., 2011).

Based on the results of the coding analysis, all the school Principal competency clusters and outcomes that were identified in the literature study were supported by the qualitative interview data. The results also led to the development of a range of more specific competencies under each competency cluster. In addition to the corroboration and refinement of what was identified in the literature, four competency clusters and two additional outcomes were developed as discussed in Section 4.3 - 4.5 and outlined in Appendix's D and E.

5.4.2 Descriptive data of the School Principals' reports

In depth interviews were conducted with school principals (N=10) in order to generate qualitative data. Inspection of the pieces of texts revealed that participants considered behaviours related to effective self-management (*Managing self*) as the most influential cluster of School Principal Competencies (SPCs) in the process of leading their schools to success. This may indicate the importance and need of integrity in the current South African educational leadership setting.

In terms of the School Performance Outcomes, *School Climate* stood out as the most emphasised outcome. This may point to the intangible nature and complexity of schools as organisations as well as to the importance of the psychological environment in which the school finds itself.

5.5   Limitations

Methodologically, the first limitation of this study is the non-probability sampling technique that was opted for. Within this technique, sampling error cannot be calculated and it cannot be assumed that the sample of 10 subject matter experts (SME's) is representative of the population (Blumberg et al., 2008). Consequently, the results of this study should be viewed as being tentative until larger samples can be found through probability sampling.

In the broader scheme of longitudinal research, cognisance should be taken of the position and stage of the current study. The current limitations are, to some extent, temporary in the sense that the Department of Industrial Psychology at Stellenbosch University aims to conduct quantitative follow-up studies where latent variables will eventually be operationalised and measured with measuring techniques (e.g. SEM)

that capture the non-linearity of the pathways through which school principals effect critical school performance outcomes.

5.6   Practical Implications

One of the primary practical implications of this study stems from the fact that it shapes an understanding of the pathways through which school principal behaviour lead to school performance. Understanding of such nature has practical value in the sense that it can lead interventions within the school as organisation even in the absence of empirically validated procedures.

Also, in the broader scheme of things this study enables future empirical studies to provide at least three major practical contributions. The first of these includes the development of an empirically validated partial (i.e. excluding competency potential) framework that can guide the management of school principal performance in South African primary and secondary schools. Secondly, the development of a comprehensive (i.e. including competency potential) validated measure can be used as a diagnostic tool to assist in the management of overall school performance and quality management. Finally, future studies can develop selection procedures that can be used with the aim of improving the selection of school principals.

5.7   Suggestions for Future Research

Being the first study within its research circle to explore educational leadership in the manner that it did, the present study is an exploratory research study. Therefore, it forms a foundation for numerous future research studies to be more explanatory and confirming in nature. Suggestions for future studies are to a large extent dependent on this development and at a basic level, include the following:

It is firstly suggested that in a following research study, a measure be developed in which the elements and behavioural indicators of the current study are written into item and scale format to form a multi-rater school principal competency questionnaire. As part of this development, it is suggested that the developed measure is evaluated for internal consistency at either the individual or organisational-school level of analysis. The evaluation of the psychometric properties of the developed measure should also be extended by testing their reliability on an

organisational-school level of analysis. In addition to the reliability testing, it is suggested that the school principal competency measure undergo piloting, and validity testing.

Secondly, it is suggested that the next step should be to evaluate the statistical relationships between the school principal competencies and the school performance outcomes. It is proposed that the developed model should be tested on a larger school principal sample to enable the testing of causal paths through structural equation modelling (SEM) and mediation analysis of the proposed mediatory variables through which school principal behaviours influence pupil outcomes. Additional school performance measures could also be used when testing the model. Also, in testing the possible influences on school performance future researchers should strongly consider controlling for extraneous variables such as school sector, school size, school capacity, the socio-economic status of pupils and parents, and the prior ability of pupils (Bryk et al., 2010; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012).

Thirdly, research is needed to identify and group school leadership competency potential variables with the partial model in order to develop and empirically test a comprehensive school principal competency model. As explained earlier, competency potential refers to the psychological attributes influencing the extent to which desirable behaviours and part-going competencies are displayed for a specific job or task.

Finally, research should work towards developing and testing a selection procedure that can be used as part of a selection battery. By contributing towards the objective and scientific selecting of the best school principals for the job, the I-O Psychology fraternity can contribute towards the improvement of the underperforming segment of the South African School system in a time where school leadership and management is proven to be pivotal (Van der Berg, 2007; Van der Berg et al., 2011).

5.8   Concluding Remarks

In South Africa there is a great need for research that is domestically driven, but internationally comparable. Addressing this need, the primary aim of this study was to provide a solid foundation for future studies to build on the development of a

school principal competency model - a research topic that dovetails with what many currently view as one of the most important issues in the country: the improvement of quality education for all South African pupils. It not only becomes difficult to imagine how immensely limiting the consequences of low quality primary and secondary education may to in the lives of this country's children, but also to imagine how far reaching the opposite picture may prove to be - a picture in which all primary- and secondary school pupils receive a quality education.

Identified the most critical clusters of School Principal Competencies (SPCs) and school performance outcomes (SPOs) from the existing South African and international literature. By means of conducting interviews with a diverse sample of successful school principals within the Western Cape, what was found in the literature was supplement and refined. Through the grounded theory analysis, a structural model was developed that offers possible conceptual interrelationships between the School Principal Competencies (SPCs) and school performance outcomes (SPOs).

Finally, South African educational authorities should take note of the kind of perspective the current study takes in measuring and managing school leadership performance. School leaders and managers should realise that, as executive leaders of companies are held accountable for the performance of their business units, schools principals must be held responsible for the performance of the key performance areas of their schools. Such accountability in turn requests a scientific approach to the measurement and management of school principal's performance within the primary and secondary educational context.

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APPENDIX A: THE IMPORTANCE OF A STUDENT- CENTERED CLIMATE

Peak View Secondary High school

Recently, one school principal in the Western Cape proved just how effective a student-focused learning climate can be. In 2011, Peak View Secondary High School in Bridgetown, Athlone, found itself among 26 other schools marked for closure by the Western Cape Education Department (WCED). It is now barely 2 years later and this school is producing top matric results in its district. From the evidence available, it is clear that the school's principal, Mr. Oswald de Villiers, was the primary catalyst in this transformation. Leading this turn-around was Mr. de Villiers's competence in creating a student-focused and safe learning climate through initiating the signing of a combined pledge by parents, teachers, and learners at the beginning of each year since 2012. The pledge entailed an extension of school hours. Consequently, learners at Peak View have an additional period from 2:45pm to 4pm which exclusively focuses on teaching and learning. The school also offers classes on Saturdays. Supplementary to the extension of focused teaching hours, De Villiers also worked through a passionate and engaged teacher, Mrs. Abrahams, to create a safe and learning orientated environment for as many learners as possible during examination times. Mrs. Abrahams accommodated learners from dysfunctional homes and housed them as part of an intense study camp.

Back in 2011, Peak View's National Senior Certificate (NSC) pass rate was 18.7%, positioning it as one of the poorest performing high schools in the Western Cape. Only seven learners attained the National Senior Certificate during this year. In October 2012, however, almost a year after Mr. De Villiers took over as principal, the WCED agreed to let Peak View stay open. In 2013 the school achieved an 89% pass rate.

APPENDIX B: INTERVIEW GUIDE

Subject matter expert (SME) information

Code number of SME _____   Province_____

Gender _____   Race _____

Job position _____   School name

_____

Period of position (e.g. 1999-2008) _____

Purpose of Interview

The purpose of this interview is to gather and assess perceptions of how school principal behaviours influence school performance outcomes. The findings will be integrated with existing theory to develop a structural model of school principal competencies. The long-term objective of the study is to develop a questionnaire to measure school principal competencies (SPC) that can be used to assist schools in the selection and development of school principals.

Group being interviewed

School principals who have successful records and who have significant experience are interviewed in this study. Interviewees should have had at least 3 years of experience as a school principal or leader of a school with at least 300 pupils.

Confidentiality

You as the interviewee will not be required to provide your identity or particulars in the recording of the interview. A coding procedure will be used to establish and

maintain anonymity. Your interview will be combined with all the other interviews, and subsequently analysed to find common themes relating to effective school principal behaviours. Information that can be identified with you will remain confidential. Only with your written permission or as required by law, will any personal information be disclosed.

The results of this study will be published in a completed Master's thesis. (Note that only the integrated findings will be published and not the actual interviews.) Confidentiality of all respondents will be maintained. You as interviewee have the right to request a copy of a transcribed version of your interview should you wish to receive one.

Recording of the interview

Your interview will be recorded by means of an audio recorder whilst the interviewer will also write up your responses on the response sheet. If you agree that your interview may be recorded, please give your written consent by signing the consent form.

Contextual meaning of school principal competencies, outcomes, and situational factors

In this research study, school principal competencies are defined as bundles of related behaviour (e.g. *Developing school staff* & *Ensuring an orderly and supportive learning environment*) that when performed by a school principal, would probably lead to a range of positive school outcomes (e.g. *Teacher professional capacity* & *learning orientated school climate/culture*). School outcomes refer to the dimensions or criteria that can be used to describe the extent to which a school is successful in its mission. Finally, situational factors refer to contextual factors that facilitate or hinder, firstly, the extent to which the school principal is able to perform the competencies effectively, and secondly, the extent to which the competencies translate into outcomes.

Specifications

When responding to the following questions, please keep the following specifications in mind, since these will give guidance as to what type of information is sought for:

1.   Answers should refer to the behaviour and actions of a school principal.

2.   Answers should refer to the South African educational context.

3.   The behavioural incidents which are recalled are expected to have a direct or indirect effect on school performance.

Questions

1. What do you believe is the ultimate purpose of a primary and secondary school respectively? (i.e. What is the ultimate goal/outcome that a school should achieve?)

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2. What are the different outcomes that a successful school should achieve in order to achieve the ultimate purpose? (i.e. What does a successful school look like?)

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3. When looking at school leadership as a process, what does a successful and unsuccessful school principal actually do? How do these two contrasting groups compare with each other in what they do?

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4. Please tell me about actual incidents that will illustrate the behaviours and part-going competencies involved in the process of successful school leadership. Try to explain the examples in the form of telling a story that includes a situation, action and result.

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5. What do you consider and recall being the most influential situational factors that influenced your behaviour as school principal as well as the school's effectiveness? This can be either in a positive or negative way.

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6. How did these situational factors influence your necessary behaviour as school leader and how did this influence overall school performance?

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Closing

Would you like to make any other comment that you think could be helpful to my research study?

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Thank you for your time and for the willingness to contribute to this study.

If you have any questions about this interview, feel free to contact me or my supervisor, Mr Francois van der Bank at the Dept. of Industrial Psychology, Stellenbosch University. Our contact details can be found in your copy of the consent form.

APPENDIX C: LETTER OF CONSENT

UNIVERSITEIT·STELLENBOSCH·UNIVERSITY
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STELLENBOSCH UNIVERSITY
CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

THE DEVELOPMENT OF A PARTIAL SCHOOL PRINCIPAL COMPETENCY MODEL

Dear Participant

You are asked to participate in a master's research study conducted by Mr Jaco Janse van Vuuren from the department of Industrial Psychology at Stellenbosch University. *The data collected during the interview will contribute to a master's degree thesis (MComm) in Industrial-Organisational Psychology.* You were selected as a possible participant in this study because you were considered a subject matter expert (SME)

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary purpose of the study is to develop a competency model for schools principals. It will be the first study in a series of planned studies with the aim to one day produce a practicable school principal performance measurement instrument that is congruent with school performance outcomes.

1. **PROCEDURES**

Participation in the study entails being interviewed by the researcher in a single in-depth, semi-structured interview. The interview will be audio-recorded and will take approximately 60 minutes to complete. You as participant are given the choice regarding where the interview is to be conducted

2. **POTENTIAL BENEFITS TO SUBJECTS AND/OR TO SOCIETY**

The primary potential benefit of this research is the possibility of developing a school principal performance measurement instrument that can be used to assist schools in the selection, performance management, and development of school principals.

3. **PAYMENT FOR PARTICIPATION**

Due to the fact that the sample for this study was selected from intrinsically motivated participants, there will be no payment for participation.

4. **CONFIDENTIALITY**

You as the interviewee will not be required to provide either your identity or the particulars of your school during the recording of the interview. Should the recorded interview contain such information, it will be edited and removed during the transcription of the interview. Information that can be identified with you or your school will remain confidential.
Confidentiality will be established and maintained by means of a coding procedure (SP01-SP012) and transcribed interviews will be safeguarded electronically by means of a password. Only the researcher will have access to the data obtained from the interviews. Only with your written permission or as

required by law, will any personal information be disclosed .The recorded data will be kept for future scientific usage and will not be erased after transcription. You as interviewee have the right to review the recording and edit the recording as well as to request a copy of a transcribed version of your interview.

5. PARTICIPATION AND WITHDRAWAL

You can choose whether to be in this study or not. If you volunteer to be in this study, you may withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. You may also refuse to answer any questions you don't want to answer and still remain in the study. The investigator may withdraw you from this research if circumstances arise which warrant doing so.

6. IDENTIFICATION OF INVESTIGATORS

If you have any questions or concerns about the research, please feel free to contact the researcher, Mr Jaco Janse van Vuuren (084 5695 905) and his supervisor, Mr Francois van der Bank (021 808 3016)

7.   RIGHTS OF RESEARCH SUBJECTS

You may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty. You are not waiving any legal claims, rights or remedies because of your participation in this research study. If you have questions regarding your rights as a research subject, contact Ms Maléne Fouché [mfouche@sun.ac.za; 021 808 4622] at the Division for Research Development.

SIGNATURE OF RESEARCH SUBJECT OR LEGAL REPRESENTATIVE

The information above was described to me, _____ (name of the participant) in English/Afrikaans. I am in command of this language or it was satisfactorily translated to me. I was given the opportunity to ask questions and these questions were answered to my satisfaction.

I hereby consent voluntarily to participate in this study. I have been given a copy of this form.

_____
Name of Participant

_____
Name of Legal Representative (if applicable)

_____
Date

APPENDIX D: COMPETENCY FRAMEWORK

ROLES	CLUSTERS	COMPETENCIES	Behavioural examples
CREATING A SCHOOL VISION AND SETTING STRATEGIC DIRECTION	**Formulating a school vision and developing strategies**	**Analysing and interpreting the school environment** Screening the external school environment and, based on this screening, identifying external developments that may affect school trajectory and performance. Also includes effectively interpreting the internal dynamics of the school and identifying the strengths and weaknesses that may affect the trajectory and performance of the school.	1. Demonstrates an understanding of the importance of positioning the school 2. Maintains external awareness and screens the external school environment 3. Accurately identifies external developments that may affect education 4. Assesses whether identified external developments holds opportunities or impose threats for the school 5. Assesses the internal state of the school 6. Identifies strengths and weaknesses within the school.
		Developing a school vision and strategies Refers to the competency of developing a clear, challenging, and sustainable school vision and subsequent strategies that give key school stakeholders a sense of purpose, is learner focused, and advances diversity and respect for people. It includes behaviours involved in building school strategies based on thorough problem analysis and broad-based fact-finding.	1. Sees the bigger picture and has a long term view of the future of the school. 2. Formulates a clear and challenging vision for the school 3. Incorporates inclusiveness and diversity into school vision 4. Considers consequences of strategic decisions in relation to the pupils as primary focal point 5. Offers opportunities for comprehensive inputs from others in creation of the vision
	Planning and establishing goals and expectations	**Establishing goals & expectations** Behaviours involved in the establishment of strategically aligned and challenging academic goals and expectations. Includes the extent to which consensus is reached regarding the goals and expectations as well as the extent to which each role-player understands his or her role.	1. Establishes mutual understanding of goals and expectations 2. Establishes consensus regarding goals and expectations 3. Establishes understanding among school staff for their respective roles and jobs 4. Ensures that departmental goals and plans support the school strategy 5. Prioritises goals and part-going actions in line with strategic purposes

		Planning and organising Prioritising and planning school activities to ensure that established goals are met. Good time management and the application of educational knowledge in planning and constructing school plans also characterise this competency.	1. Puts goals in perspective with a timeline 2. Prioritises projects and tasks 3. Re-organising and prioritising plans and part-going goals if necessary 4.Prioritises investments and school in terms of T&L essentiality 5. Puts plans on paper and make it visible 6. Schedules usage of T&L resources economically and optimally
PREPARING THE SCHOOL FOR IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL VISION AND STRATEGY	**Developing school staff**	**Training and coaching** Promoting and structuring continuous formal and informal teacher and leadership training and development. Includes behaviours involved in developing school staff on individual and personal level. Also includes behaviours involving the identification and developing of areas in need of improvement.	1. Gets to know school staff and pupils 2. Initiates and supports formal teacher training and developmental opportunities 3. Initiates and supports formal parenting education programmes 4. Organises presentations and community-based education programmes on bio-psycho-socio challenges 5. Shares personal and professional knowledge and experience with school stakeholders 6. Acts as an mentor to school staff 7. Demonstrates confidence in school stakeholders ability to learn and develop
		Delegating and empowering Entrusting school staff and learner representative council with increasing responsibility while simultaneously empowering them structurally. Developing critical thinking and problem solving through entrustment-empowerment-accountability.	1. Refrains from doing the jobs of school staff for them 2. Sets high expectations for school staff and pupils 3. Demonstrates trust in teacher's and pupil's ability to independently solve problems. 4. Offers structural and practical empowerment with responsibility of directed leadership 5. Refrains from communicating doubts to those entrusted and empowered
		Identifying and deploying potential Behaviours involving the identification of potential within the school and deploying and promoting candidates accordingly.	1. Identifies individual staff members' leadership potential through observing their behaviour 2. Offers opportunities for identified leaders to develop and fulfil leadership positions within the school 3. Identifies school staff's strengths and areas of development 4. Capitalises on people's strengths by enabling them to unlock their talents in the best interest of the school.

		Resourcing strategically	**Recruiting and Securing resources** Behaviours involved in the effective recruitment and securement of all human, financial, technological resources that are aligned with instructional purposes of teaching & learning and development.	1. Goes out of way to attract and recruit the best teachers possible. 2. Promotes and utilises objective staff selection procedures 3. Finds resources that are best for the school's specific needs 4. Networks and raises funds with the purpose of securing T&L resources 5. Secures resources that have growth and investment potential where possible
			Allocating resources strategically and optimally Includes behaviours related to allocating resources to specific pedagogical and strategic goals and, once allocated, optimally utilising and sharing the resources.	1. Allocates resources according to T&L priorities 2. Allocates secured resources in line with school strategies and specific pedagogical goals and priorities 3. Utilises and distributes exiting T&L resources as economically and optimally as possible
		Leading with compassion	**Showing concern and being supportive.** Refers to behaviours involved with recognising and valuing all school stakeholders and their respective places within the school. Includes showing understanding and concern for their aspirations, needs, values, and feelings. Also includes behaviours demonstrating willingness to help and support for others; including being visible, approachable, and willing to provide practical and personal support when needed.	1. Goes out of way to get to know individuals 2. Demonstrates value for all individuals and their respective places in the school by explicitly expressing recognition for their contributions 3. Listens to and expresses acknowledgment for the concerns of all staff members and pupils 4. Protects teachers from undue pressures of parents and education officials 5. Being accessible and approachable 6. Demonstrates reasonable tolerance for mistakes 7. Let's team members know they are trusted and supported from above 8. Assists in solving problems 9. Displays visibility within the school and outside the school
			Displaying sound interpersonal skills Displaying appropriate interpersonal skills when interacting with all stake holders. Effectively handles interpersonal and group relations and conflicts.	1. Demonstrates tact during interpersonal interaction 2. Keeps composed and remains calm under stressful interpersonal circumstances 3. Interacts with pupils and staff as a person and human being 4. Demonstrates acceptance for disagreement 5. Demonstrates forgiveness 6. Demonstrates patience 7. Remains respectful during conflict interactions 8. Uses evidence-based conflict

			confrontations 9. Remains objective during interpersonal judgments
IMPLEMENTING THE SCHOOL VISION AND STRATEGY	**Maintaining an orderly and supportive student-centred learning environment**	**Safety** Behaviours that facilitate the establishment and maintenance of a physical and psychological safe learning-orientated environment. It includes the creation of an environment where staff and pupils feel safe to make mistakes, protecting staff and pupils from safety risks by ensuring security on the school premises.	1. Creates and maintains a safe physical school environment by deploying school security systems and tools 2. Regulates initiation programmes to ensure that it is not destructively intimidating. 3. Protects pupils and staff from external safety risks by going out of the way to improve school security. 4. Creates space for making mistakes by allowing margin for learning error. 5. Goes out of the way to keep learners as children by accepting and defending their natural developmental needs and urges.
		Order and discipline Behaviours that enable the establishment and maintenance of a neat and orderly school-classroom environment and enable effective teaching and learning. Includes a range of actions from the consistent instalment and enforcement of disciplinary codes and practices to protecting classroom order form external disruptions.	1. Consistently installs and enforces behavioural expectations, disciplinary codes and practices. 2. Pro-actively identifies and addresses school conflict and problematic behavioural issues 3.Communicates and explains the destructiveness of poor disciplinary statistics to the school 4. Protects school and classroom order from external disruptions by actively installing barriers to disruptions 5. Sets an example by personally picking up litter where possible 6. Facilitates the repair of broken or dysfunctional infrastructure and learning materials
		Inclusiveness and unity Behaviours that foster the extents to which all school stakeholders feel and behave as if they belong to the school while enjoying the rights of that position and being accountable for its responsibilities. Includes behaviours which facilitate unity and team spirit.	1. Accommodates the interests and needs of minority groups 2. Builds morale effectively by being optimistic and expressing faith in the school 3. Re-unites staff after setbacks and splits by expressing the value of unity
	Influencing and communicating	**Communicating** The extent to which relevant information is conveyed	1. Listens intently and sincerely to school staff and pupils 2. Communicates school issues timeously

		clearly, timeously, and in an appropriate style. Includes proper listening and the extent to which meaning is clarified in order to establish mutual understanding.	when necessary 3. Communicates to internal and external school stakeholders through the appropriate medium 4. Communicates in a clear and unambiguous fashion 5. Utilises a comprehensive range of communication mediums when interacting with school staff, parents, and organisations. 6. Communicates in a contextually appropriate style and tone 7. Considers potential hidden massages before communicating issues to the school 8. Inspects whether appropriate receiver of information has been communicated to 9. Re-sketches and breaks large and complex messages into smaller pieces of understandable information when communicating with teacher staff
		Motivating and inspiring Refers to behaviours which make school stakeholders want to contribute to the vision and objectives of the school. This includes the effectiveness with which the school principal both intrinsically and extrinsically encourages goal attainment and school citizenship behaviours.	1. Gives school stakeholders a sense of purpose by explicating the value and positive influence of their work on the lives of pupils 2. Motivates through depicting the value of the end scenario. 3. Demonstrates valuing the importance of each staff member and pupils' roles and part-going tasks. 4. Shows recognitions and appreciation for all school stakeholders contributions 5. Motivates through examples of success 6. Installs motivational values among school stakeholders by exampling positivity and pupil-centred behaviours 7. Makes school staff and pupils aware of realities affecting the school by presenting non-fictional cases 8. Sets and communicates high expectations for self, school staff, and pupils
		Persuading Confidently and effectively persuading school stakeholders in the best interest of the school while considering ethical implications. It includes persuading by proposing ideas	1. Convince school stakeholders into strategically aligned directions 2. Uses evidence-based arguments in persuasion 3. Demonstrates confidence through strong energy levels 4. Convinces others through storytelling and extracting examples of life.

		and convincing through storytelling and the extraction of examples	5. Demonstrates consideration for staff's and pupils' interests and cultural values when persuading. 6. Illustrates the relevant stance's connection with pupils' best interest
		Negotiating and debating The extent to and competence with which critical discussions and diverse interests are identified and addressed. Includes the display of objective negotiation skills and taking a firm stance when needed.	1. Promotes and offers opportunities for critical discussions and debate 2. Negotiates objectively 3. Takes a firm stance and displays confidence in negotiation 4. Asks critical open ended questions in negotiation 5. Displays open-mindedness in negotiation 6. Listens to school alternative points of view when in a form of debate with the SGB, teachers, or parents.
	Making decisions	**Consultation-based** Following a consulting approach in decision making where possible. Includes behaviours that enable the incorporation of the inputs of school staff in the decision-making process.	1. Listens to as many as possible opinions before making a decision 2. Consults other school principals before making big decisions 3. Offers opportunities for school staff and learners to contribute in decision making process where possible 4. Sends out questionnaires to get opinions regarding decisions 5. Incorporates feedback into decisions when proven valuable
		Decisiveness and hardiness/courage Acts decisively and makes tough, bold, and courageous decisions. Performs effectively under stress and reacts positively to change and uncertainty.	1. Disagreeing openly and honestly when needed 2. Makes unpopular decision when in best interest of pupils 3. Makes bold and courageous decisions when proven to be educationally sound 4. Follows through with tough decisions after making them 5. Puts school ahead of self and makes personal sacrifices when needed 6. Demonstrates confidence in decision making
		Flexibility and adaptability Displaying flexibility and adaptability in the decision making progress. Includes accepting when to backtrack and search for alternative paths when there is evidence that plans are not working out or static direction needs to change.	1. Demonstrates flexibility in decision making by expressing an acceptance for the reality of change 2. Backtracks and reconsiders decisions as school leader when plans do not work out 3. Considers alternative paths when current path proves to be off coarse 4. Adapts school goals when proven to be too high, too low, or inappropriate

			5. Admits mistakes and the presence of problems within the school
		Creativity and innovation Acting innovatively and creatively in decision-making. Includes the extent to which opportunities for innovations or improvement of the status quo are identified and grasped. Includes the individual and collective generation of creative ideas.	1. Accepts the reality of constant change 2. Brings about constructive renewal within school 3. Uses imagination and applies creativity in generating ideas prior to decision making 4. Uses original ideas when possible 5. Offers opportunities for suggesting innovative ideas
	Managing self	**Building trust and leading with integrity** Displaying a behavioural demonstration of sound moral and ethical principles in dealing with school stakeholders and serving the interests of the school. It includes leading by example and behaving openly and honestly whilst respecting the boundaries of privacy and confidentiality. Also includes managing own emotions appropriately in dealing with difficult situations and having a sense of humility and humour.	1. Practices social responsible school citizenship by adhering to agreed-upon values and behaviour. 2. Leads through example by practicing what is preached 3. Demonstrates fairness to all 4. Is consequent in behaviours and dealing with others 5. Admits mistakes and openly apologises 6. Displays sense of humour 7. Demonstrates loyalty to the school 8. Demonstrates confidence and faith in then school 9. Manages and controls own emotions appropriately 10. Openly accepts responsibilities and accountabilities as leader of the school
		Discretion and Initiative Uses own discretion and takes initiative to proactive action in dealing with work-related opportunities, tasks, and problems. Includes behaviours that reflect going out of way to attend to and resolve arisen issues as pro-actively as possible.	1. Proactively looks into school-related problems as they come to attention 2. Makes use of school -related opportunities as they arise 3. Goes out of way to attend to issues and concerns before the start of the new school day 4. Uses own discretion in reacting to school opportunities and problems
		Personal growth and self - development Displaying behaviours necessary for learning and self-development. It includes the behavioural demonstration of an active, opportunistic, and self-reflective approach to	1. Demonstrates inquisitiveness and awareness and a willingness to learn 2. Reads about and keeps updated with macro-developments related to education 3. Remains able to teach 4. Reads about and keeps updated with best educational practices 5. Reflects on and acts upon own

		continuous life-long learning and development.	strengths and weaknesses 6. Reflects on purpose and role as school leader 7. Reflects on and demonstrates willingness to modify own behaviour 8. Responds constructively to criticisms
		Resilience and tenacity The extent to and effectiveness at which setbacks and stress is dealt with. It includes the effective demonstration of positivity, perseverance and dedication in midst of adversary and uncertainty and the ability to not get derailed criticism.	1. Approaches the school's future positively 2. Remains energetic and enthusiastic 3. Demonstrates a positive energy 4. Displays perseverance and determination 5. Remains confident and displays fighting spirit back after setbacks 6. Tolerates criticism 7. Also focuses on positive aspects of the school
		Focus and dedication The extent to which focus and dedication to the job is demonstrated. Includes actions that demonstrate a passion for the job and the willingness to make sacrifices in the best interest of the school.	1. Behaves as if school principalship as primary and only job 2. Demonstrates dedication by working beyond office hours when needed 3. Makes personal sacrifices in best interest of the school and pupils 4. Displays a passion for the job 5. Demonstrates an understanding and realisation of the role of the job
	Leading across school boundaries	**Facilitating interdepartmental coordination** Behaviours involving the facilitation of inter-departmental coordination. Includes behaviours that help school staff and pupils see the bigger picture and helps break down the individual barriers and silos in the school.	1. Regularly engaging with staff and learner representative council 2. Promotes and facilitates inter departmental discussions 3. Promotes and facilitates inter-departmental collaborative practices 4. Attempts to break down the individual silos within the school.
		Influencing across external school boundaries Builds the image and external network of the school by breaching boundaries, networking and practicing socially responsible citizenship	1. Remains updated with parents and SGB needs, concerns and suggestions 2. Remains visible and acts as a member of the community 3. Visits and negotiates with gang leaders regarding pupil related issues 4. Leads collaborative networks with other surrounding schools 5. Initiates and leads partnerships with government services 6. Initiates and leads partnerships with community and organisational services 7. Facilitates cross-sector discussions and summits

	Managing and rewarding Teaching and Learning	**Monitoring and moderating** Holistically reviewing school performance and the curriculum. Includes monitoring and reviewing of key performance areas including the curriculum, teaching and learning, and instructional tools. Also includes effective feedback mechanisms and following up on projects and tasks.	1. Identifies and monitors key school performance indicators 2. Elicits feedback 3. Monitors through feedback 4. Tracks and follows progress of projects and tasks 5. Actively oversees and coordinates the use of the instructional programme 6. Gathers and evaluates school performance information systematically 7. Identifies reasons for underperformance 8. Identifies opportunities for school development and growth 9. Utilises objective and comprehensive employee performance measures.
		Rewarding and celebrating Behaviours involved in acknowledging and celebrating positive staff and pupil behaviour and performance.	1. Gives recognition to individual and group performance 2. Puts structures in place to acknowledge performance 3. Celebrates and rewards success.
		Restructuring and reengineering Refers to behaviours involved in the incorporation of analysis and performance feedback into restructuring the school.	1. Makes necessary changes in curriculum based on feedback and analysis 2. Implements new structures and policies in the school

APPENDIX E: OUTCOME FRAMEWORK

OUTCOME LEVEL	OUTCOME	PRIMARY OUTCOME DIMENSIONS	OUTCOME INDICATOR EXAMPLES
ORGANISATIONAL-SCHOOL LEVEL	Core People Processes	Reflects school-organizational effectiveness criteria such as goals and work plans, communication, school interaction, conflict management, and productive clashing of ideas. Includes systems that enable the tapping of individual human capital, as well as learning through feedback.	1. Conflict management procedures and policies 2. Communication systems that enable coordinated work schedules and 3. The level on consensus regarding strategies, goals and expectations. 4. Effective feedback systems
	Family and community involvement	Involved and outreaching family and community groups, the availability of community resources to support teaching and learning, and the strength of community partnership networks.	1. Parent and community willingness (not capacity) to support 2. Availability of community resources and expertise 3. Constructive community involvement and partnerships
	Wealth of school resources	Reflects the internal strength and capacity of the school. Including T&L resources and materials supply, physical assets, and investments in the school. It also includes the presence of an adequate amount of teachers for the school and the diversity of the school staff	1. Financial and educational investments in the school 2. Physical assets and Teaching and Learning resources and materials 3. Quality and diversity of school staff
	School climate	Refers to the psychological environment of the school and gives an overall assessment of the integration and commitment to certain values. It includes the values, beliefs, and nature of everyday interactions between school staff, parents, and pupils. Included in this is the working atmosphere and collective orientation. Agreement on core values and relative consensus regarding the vision, goals, and achievement-related attitudes and behaviours	1. Physical school safety 2. Pupil's perception of safety to make mistakes 3. A positive learning spirit and high expectations 4. School tidiness and care 5. Value and respect for individuals and the school as a whole 6. School order and discipline 7. A sense of communal school belonging and pride 8. Agreement on core values and goals 9. An enjoyable and humoristic school atmosphere

		also characterise this outcome.	
CLASSROOM-TEACHER LEVEL	**Teacher professional capacity**	**Teacher KSAO's** Reflects the combination of knowledge, skills, abilities, and other characteristics (KSAO's) of teaching staff **Staff Satisfaction and Motivation** The level of satisfaction with the task and work context, empowerment, and career progress, as well as with outcomes of leadership, e.g. trust in and respect for the school principal and acceptance of the principal's influence. Also includes the level and nature of the motivation of school staff **Teacher interaction and coherence** Reflects norms, and work arrangements between teachers at the school, including the degree to which teacher interaction is frequent and actions of teachers are governed by shared norms focused on teaching and learning. The presence of coherent professional development programs that are part of an overall coherent training and development program	1.Teacher staff qualification quality 2. School staff work satisfaction 3.School staff motivation 4. Teacher interaction and teaching coherence
	Quality of Instruction	**Classroom order** Refers to the working atmosphere in the classroom, including the level of order (not necessarily silence) and lack of interruptions to teaching and learning **Quality of pupil interaction** Reflects the quality of interaction between pupils	

		and teachers. Includes the quality of student participation, which at minimum entails civil and respectful interactions, whereas higher quality discussions are characterized by engagement with content matter and the application of critical-thinking skills. **Teacher learning support** Reflects the level of quality support that teachers provide in the process of classroom learning. Includes the systematic organisation of subjects and lessons, the level of instructional planning, the consideration of learning principles, the clarification of appropriate instructional goals, decisions about curricular content, selection of instructional strategies, and the effective use of instructional time.	
INDIVIDUAL-PUPIL LEVEL	**Pupil Engagement**	**Pupil identification** Reflects the extent to which the pupil identifies with the school and feels he or she belongs at the school. It is characterised by an internalized conception of belongingness - that the pupil is discernibly part of the school environment and that education and the school constitutes an important part of their own experience. **Pupil participation** Reflects the pupil's participation in school activities, both inside and outside of the classroom.	1. Internalised conception of belonging to the school 2. Pupil satisfaction 3. Learning motivation 4. Academic self-ownership 5. Participation in learning activities 6. Participation in co-curricular activities
	Circular Achievement	**Curricular completion** Refers to the level of curricular completion for a full academic year	

| | | **Mean promotion rate**
Refers to the average annual rate at which pupils are promoted from one academic grade to the next

Curricular performance
represents the average final examination results for all academic subjects | |
| | **Pupil educational readiness** | **Pupil life skills and learning Potential**
Reflects the acquired necessary basic developmental knowledge, skills, abilities and other characteristics (malleable and non-malleable) in order to fulfill his or her individual potential and cope with the next stage of life. | 1. Basic level of self-awareness
2. Pupil's emotional development and maturity
3. A basic understanding of civic responsibilities and the world
4. Pupil's physical development
5. Embedded core school values
6. Basic abstract and critical thinking ability
7. Application skills
8. Communication skills
9. Basic group-team skills
10. Self-confidence and resilience
11. Basic ability to think long-term and set personal goals |

APPENDIX F: EXAMPLE OF CODEBOOK SHEET

Cluster: *Managing Self*

SME nr	Quoted Text	Code nr	Competency
SP01	only three ways to lead successfully, and that is through example, through example, and through example	1	Building trust and leading with integrity and example
SP01	if you do not display behaviour that you communicated as congruent with your vision and mission, then you can forget about inspiring your followers.	1	
	to "walk the talk" and not to "talk the walk".	1	
SP01	If school principals comes late or is ill-prepared when addressing the school in an assembly or ill-prepared in giving class,	1	
SP01	what message does he/she give the pupils and teachers? They give the message that it's actually not that important to be prepared in teaching while expecting them to do so.	1	
SP02	the set of values and competencies that was included in the profile on which you were appointed	1	
SP02	to be a role model	1	
SP02	to be an example, a role model as far as that is concerned so that they can model themselves on	1	
SP02	if you are holding a particular standard. Then you need to see to it that you are doing it.	1	
SP03	dis iemand waarvoor ander respek en vertoue het.	1	
SP03	'n Goeie skoolhoof kan sy personeel inspireer	1	
SP03	'n ander belangrike ding is dat 'n skoolhoof moet kan erken dat hy verkeerd is.	1	
SP03	'n Swak skoolhoof sal atyd bekommerd wees wat die mense gaan dink of wat die ouers gaan dink	1	
SP03	Hulle is openlik nie konsekwent nie en hulle sal dit nie eers agterkom nie	1	
SP03	En 'n swak skoolhoof is nie konskwent nie	1	
SP03	Die naarheid is dat mens mooit hoofde kry wat nie dink hulle is goed nie. Meeste hoofde dink hulle is goed en weet als.	1	
SP03	'n skoolhoof moet bietjie prettig ook kan wees	1	
SP04	also to make mistakes and say ok it did not work and it was my failure and not yours,	1	
SP04	it is about modelling certain behaviours	1	
SP04	is it morally right?	1	
SP04	the biggest difference between successful and unsuccessful school principals is the difference between "respect" and "popularity" respectively.	1	

SP06	en deur voorbeeld inspireer	1	
SP06	die hoof self vir haar kom dankie sê. Dit het 'n geweldige impak gehad op hoe sy haar werk sien	1	
SP07	"Soft skills" wat krities is sluit in: 'n skoolhoof moet in alles voor stap. In alles voor stap!	1	
SP07	die voorbeeld stel	1	
SP07	Jy moet nooit laat wees nie	1	
SP07	jy moet altyd voorbereid wees,	1	
SP07	jy moet agter mekaar wees in jou skool	1	
SP07	jou woord moet jou woord wees	1	
SP07	Mense moet, as hulle jou sien - en weet dis "old school thinking" – weet hier kom die skoolhoof.	1	
SP07	ten alle tye 'n rolmodel te wees	1	
SP07	"You have got to demand respect.	1	
SP07	niks moet aan jou klou nie. Alles wat jy doen moet dus bo verdenking plaasvind	1	
SP07	ten alle tye mense op dieselfde manier behandel.	1	
SP07	Hierin moet die skoolhoof sterkstaan en onwrikbaar wees	1	
SP07	Ons moenie afwyk nie	1	
SP07	As dit vandag 'n reël is, is dit môre ook 'n reël; as dit vannag nie goed genoeg is nie, is dit nie môre goed genoeg nie. So ons moet konsekwent wees	1	
SP08	you build your human relations	1	
SP08	you build your trust	1	
SP09	taking the lead	1	
SP09	ek trek vir niemand voor nie	1	
SP09	lojaliteit	1	
SP10	must lead by example	1	
SP10	bewus daarvan wees dat of jou onderwysers na jou opkyk en jou sien as iemand wat hulle wil wees	1	
SP10	lei deur 'n voorbeeld te wees	1	
SP10	van die manier hoe jy praat, die manier hoe jy aantrek, die manier hoe jy die skool verteenwoordig.	1	
SP10	jy moet leierskap kan uitstraal	1	
SP10	en dit vertoulik kan hou	1	
SP04	you need to model courage	1	
SP09	when you rock the boat, kan jy 'n span verloor	1	
SP07	ek het net rustig gebly	1	
SP01	If a school principal does not approach the future positively, you won't be successful	2	Staying positive and coping with pressure and setbacks (resilience and tenacity)

SP01	this is what happens to many unsuccessful school principals; he/she loses vision and hope because he/she gets flattened by the problems of poverty and barriers to actions.	2	
SP01	imagine a school principal that is uninspiring, that only focuses on problems instead of a vision and part-going challenges	2	
SP01	The answer is, all three started off equally enthusiastically, but the difference was perseverance	2	
SP04	a good school principals needs to be energetic in their behaviour	2	
SP04	model energy and positivity	2	
SP04	it's about a quite self-confidence and not arrogance	2	
SP04	have the energy to take it somewhere	2	
SP04	You need to have a thick skin because you are constantly going to have many people who are going to criticize you all the time.	2	
SP06	Die skoolhoof moet in die bestemming bly glo	2	
SP07	jy met sterk wees	2	
SP09	ek vir hierdie persoon op 'n baie diplomatiese manier: Ek het genoeg negatiewe energie gekry	2	
SP01	The opposite is the school principal that, when the bell rings, is out of that door.	3	Having focus and dedication/passion and going the extra mile
SP01	In poor schools you often have the phenomenon where the school principal and teachers have second jobs.	3	
SP01	most school principals start off enthusiastic, but seem to lose it.	3	
SP01	the first school principal (who even had the most work to be done on his school's terrain due to the fact that the grounds were at a skew angle) had his sport terrain ready by December of the same year.	3	
SP01	It took another year before the second school principal manages to complete the work on his terrain	3	
SP01	and another year before the third school principal did so	3	
SP01	good school principalship also does not stick to office hours.	3	
SP01	Teaching is then seen as a secondary means of creating an income whilst farming or taxis for example, are the primary job - this is a recipe to failure.	3	
SP01	If you as school principal can create the opposite spirit, one of engagement and dedication, then you are paving a way for success.	3	
SP01	The unsuccessful school principal is the exact opposite and more. He or she does not remain enthusiastic	3	
SP02	although on the surface it looked that everything was happening, but as I dug down	3	

	a bit deeper		
SP04	had to put the school as institution ahead of myself	3	
SP04	I had to put myself on the line	3	
SP04	and behaving accordingly no matter the personal sacrifice	3	
SP09	jy moet 'n passie hê	3	
SP09	'n passie	3	
SP09	A passion	3	
SP01	and keep going until it is fulfilled.	3	
SP01	most shockingly, there was one school principal who let the opportunity pass by completely and threw that whole R360 000 in the water.	4	Taking initiative and displaying discretion and pro-activeness
SP01	the problem only gets bigger if you let a matter pass by.	4	
SP07	Iets kom nou tot tafel en dit moet nou jou aandag kry en jy moet nou 'n besluit maak	4	
SP01	Sometimes this meant that I had to see them at 21:00, but I always tried not to extend a consultation on the matter after the day it occurred	4	
SP02	need to go and look into it emediatly	4	
SP07	Iets kom nou tot tafel en dit moet nou jou aandag kry en jy moet nou 'n besluit maak	4	
SP01	the problem only gets bigger if you let a matter pass by.	4	
SP02	you must be involved	5	Being visible and involved in key school matters
	You must be engaged	5	
SP03	'n goeie skoolhoof sal sigbaar wees.	5	
SP03	Hy sal sy betrokkenheid toon	5	
SP05	Maar dit gaan nie gebeur deur net vanaf die skoolhoof se stoel agter die lessenaar te praat nie	5	
SP07	Jy moet sigbaar wees	5	
SP07	Sigbaar aan die gemeenskap	5	
SP04	They must research and read and visit	5	
SP02	you have to be a generalist in many ways	6	Pursuing personal and professional self-development
SP02	to be updated with labour law, health and safety, all those things. You have to have a basic knowledge of almost everything.	6	
SP02	to have an awareness of the legislative framework within the country, because you are operating within it.	6	
SP03	En jy lees. Mense en boeke is hoe jy jouself ontwikkel	6	
SP04	a school principal must have a deep understanding of education and educational	6	

	principals.		
SP01	in order to formulate a vision, you must be a well read and vigilant leader in a broad range of fields and topics.	6	
SP01	You must be a reader and observer	6	
SP04	They must research and read	6	
SP07	moet ook kan klasgee omdat dit vir jou 'n goeie verstaan hê van wat in die klasse aangaan en wat nodig is om kwaliteit onderrig en leer te laat plaasvind	6	
SP10	rekenaar vaardig wees.	6	
SP10	moet weet wat op die sosiale netwerke aangaan en wat daar buite aangaan	6	
SP10	jy moet informed wees	6	
SP10	jy moet weet wat in jou veld in die onderwys aangaan.	6	
SP10	moet weet van daardie goed wat ek vi jou gesê het van vocatoinal training en vaardighede. Die kanse wat vir ons kinders daar buite bestaan	6	
SP10	moet self uit belangstelling weet wat rondom my aangaan	6	
SP10	. Ek moet weet van die kanse wat daar by ABSA is of wat FNB het, of wat Samsung en Nokia en Vodacom het.	6	
SP10	bevoegdheid in terme van lees	6	
SP10	jy moet informed wees oor wat rondom jou aangaan	6	
SP04	You have to say, are the criticisms part of building a future for the school, for the kids in the school	7	
SP04	You therefore need to know yourself.	7	Self- discovery and self-awareness (personal and professional)
SP04	You need to know your strengths and weakness and own your weaknesses	7	
SP04	You have to have a deep knowledge of yourself.	7	
SP04	So a good vision comes from innate	7	
SP06	eerstens moet 'n skoolhoof die verskil weet en onderskeid kan trek tussen leierskap en bestuur	7	
SP06	'n Skoolhoof is primêr 'n leier en hy of sy moet dit verstaan	7	
SP10	jy moet lief wees vir jou werk en jy moet weet wat jou political purpose is.	7	
SP10	jy moet weet wat jy doel hier is.	7	
SP06	'n Skoolhoof is primêr 'n leier en hy of sy moet dit verstaan	7	
SP06	die beseffing dat die skoolhoof 'n groep volgelinge van "hier" tot "daar" moet neem	7	

150

SP07	belangrike vaardigheid wat 'n skoolhoof moet hê, (en hier is die enigste area waar ek my eie beul kan blaas) is kritiese denke	8	Thinking critically
SP07	moet die heeltyd probleemoplossing kan dink	8	
SP05	baie belangrik vir 'n skoolhoof is om die regte vrae te vrae	8	
SP09	Confedence!	9	Displaying faith and self confidence
SP09	I administer this school based on faith. I think that is critical, because if you don't have a horisontal relationship, whatever you have as a relationship as a vision, you can forget about it	9	
SP10	die verantwoordelikheid daarvoor kan vat.	10	Taking responsibility and excepting accountability as leader of the school