Towards Better Schools in Iceland
A Device for Evaluating School Activity
in Iceland

Supervisor                      31. October 2005
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Abstract

In this research project, that was carried out in Iceland, an attempt is made to construct and develop a questionnaire administrators can use as a “device” to shed light on and evaluate certain aspects of the administration in their school. The research is based upon a quantitative method that was chosen in order to secure a maximally objective approach of those who carry out the evaluation.

The enactment of the Compulsory School Act from 1995 significantly increased the independence of principals. Likewise, the wage agreements 2001-2004 and 2004-2007 extended the scope of administration within the schools. The Act granted principals the warranty and opportunity to enhance the uptrend in school activity. This thesis is part of that uptrend.

Theories and concepts put forth and developed by Bert Stålhammar and Tomas J. Sergiovanni concerning the role of the principal were a point of reference in the choice of questions in the questionnaire.

Four schools were chosen to participate in the research. All the principals answered the questionnaire, one female and three males. The total number of respondents among the teachers of the four schools was 103.

The methodology used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire is a statistically reliable measure and an effective instrument to gather extensive information and with the aid of statistics and a good software program it is easy to present it in an explicit manner.

The information contained in this thesis may be used in various ways, e.g. the direct statistical findings of the questions and the comparison of the findings for teachers and the principal (frequency tables, cf. the report of the schools). But it may also be viewed as a manual for those who intend to pose this questionnaire in their school or another comparable one and how the findings of such a questionnaire should be read and interpreted.

Principals of other schools do not need to carry out the factor analysis but can utilize the findings of this survey, i.e. the 25 questions that came under the five factors (F1-Interaction with the principal, F2-The policy regarding teaching and pedagogy, F3-Collaboration and flow of information, F4-Praise to teachers and pupils and F5-Teachers’ professionalism).

Key words: Evaluation, Compulsory School, Principal, Questionnaire.
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Preface

During the past decade evaluation of school activity has been prominent in the discussion of schooling in Iceland and much has been written on the subject. In 1995 it was enacted that all compulsory schools should have a plan for systematic self-evaluation supervised by the ministry of education. However, research on the influence of evaluation of school activity is limited in the country.

This thesis is intended to further the research on school evaluation with the hope that it will make a contribution. In as multiple-faceted job as school administration the principal must be able to evaluate the way in which he handles the administration. A questionnaire for school administrators and personnel to evaluate certain aspects of the administration in schools like the one introduced here is therefore an important “tool” in school activity. It must be statistically significant if the findings are to be reliable.

The work on this thesis has been informative. I want to thank the teachers and principals of the four schools participating in the survey for answering the questionnaires. My supervisor was Dr. Haukur Viggósson, lecturer at the Teachers’ Training College in Malmö. I thank him for a gentlemanly supervision, great patience and joyous encounter in Sweden last winter. My wife, Halldóra Þorvarðardóttir, I thank for invaluable support concerning proofreading and computer setup. I also thank Kristín Hreinsdóttir for the proofreading of the first two chapters. Finally, my thanks to Þorlákur Karlsson for proofreading the statistics part of the work and Stefán Erlendsson for his time and patience while translating the thesis into English.

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1.  Chapter: The Role of the Principal

This chapter begins with a discussion of the value of education and the increased independence of the school. Then, the changed position of the principal concerning the administration of the school’s inner operation will be examined by comparing the Compulsory School Acts from 1974 and 1995 and in the context of the wage agreements from 2000-2004 and 2004-2007. Finally, there is a discussion of the aforementioned topics.

1.1. The Value of Education

It is a common saying that “education empowers.” Since the Enlightenment we have realized the importance of education for improving the standard of living and broadening people’s minds. It is apparent that increased education, both public education and professional knowledge, have brought us the modern welfare state – a welfare state that relies on the majority of people being schooled and people who understand the value of education and utilize it in their daily lives.

Both professionals and lay people believe that the education of the nation is vital to the future of Icelandic society. In his new-year speech 2005 the president of Iceland, Mr Ólafur Ragnar Grimsson, announced that he had decided to establish the Icelandic Education Award that should become the prime award assigned by the presidency in addition to the Icelandic Literature Prize and the Iceland Award for Export Achievement. The president claimed that education, no less than exports and culture, is among the pillars of the future welfare of Iceland and in his view it is time that education is recognized as such. He also said: “Enhancing compulsory schooling is therefore not just an educational issue in the sense traditionally understood in the corridors of power; it is also an employment issue, an industrial issue, an energy issue; in fact the basis for success and advances in all fields” (Grimsson, 2005).

In view of this it may be concluded that the president takes education to be a cornerstone of the future development of Icelandic society and his aim with establishing the Icelandic Education Award is to make a contribution to enhance and confirm its status as such.

On the other hand we must face the fact that it is not a matter of course that our children will be Icelandic citizens throughout their lives and continue where we leave off. Young people today do not take it as given that they will spend their whole life in Iceland and pass their motherland on to their descendants.
In previous times Icelanders, like many other nations, could not afford to educate but a tiny part of the population at university level, mainly in humanities, which was not considered to have direct utility in the field of labor and production. But the times have changed and today no country can afford not to provide its citizens with as much education as possible (Edelstein, 1988). It is of vital importance to invest in education. There is unanimity among those who consider or deal with these matters that the future state of Iceland will depend on the nation’s degree of education (Skýrsla um menntastefnu á Íslandi, 1987). Schools are an economic factor, a profitable field of investment in the economy, which has been measured as an increase in the welfare of the society as a whole. The schools provide the framework for education and must evaluate the social future of the young generation and evaluate the past and the future simultaneously and alike, map the development and produce teaching material and methods accordingly. It is clear to most of us that the school must enhance the competence and capabilities of all classes in society (Edelstein, 1988).

The policy of the ministry of education and the minister of education appears in the Compulsory school Act from 1995, the Main Curriculum for Compulsory schools from 1999, and a booklet entitled By Force of Information (Í krafti upplýsinga) published on behalf of the ministry of education.

In the aforementioned laws and writings some issues are specifically directed to principals. There it may be discerned that principals are assigned a key role in all changes of the compulsory school system and are supposed to lead the schools into the information society. Principals are also demanded to increase the quality of education and to provide a rewarding and stimulating environment for pupils and teachers alike.

In all these writings it is presumed that schools will gain more independence and that the principal is responsible for the development of the education policy of his/her school, fostering the retraining of employees and evaluating the school activity as a whole. The principal is given more freedom to develop a flexible practice in cooperation with teachers and other personnel and implement this in view of circumstances and the unique characteristics of the community within which the school operates. The principal is supposed to be the one who leads, dictates and evaluates. Special knowledge, professional skills and overview have been transported into the school and the problems and assignments that arise there are to be solved within its walls.

It is crucial that the principal is qualified, that he has an education in administration or management and is in possession of the necessary knowledge and skills to run such an operation
and thus capable of bringing out the best in each and everybody by way of collaboration at every point in time.

1.2. The Role of the Principal and Changes in his Position from 1974 to 1995

It could be said that the principal has two superiors; on the one hand the minister of education who is responsible for the implementation of the Compulsory School Act and is the head of all matters of education in the country. On the other hand the local government which is responsible for the running of the compulsory school/s in its district. The role of the principal has changed considerably since local communities took over the running of the compulsory school in 1996.

To clarify the role of principals in relation to these changes the Compulsory school Acts from 1974 and 1995 will be compared and the changed position of the principal considered in view of the new act. The changed position of principals will also be considered in the context of the wage agreement from 2000-2004 and 2004-2007 pertaining to the administration of the school’s inner operation. Finally an attempt will be made to evaluate the position of principals in view of the policy of the ministry of education and the local governments according to which the principal has certain obligations and responsibilities both to the state and the local government.

1.3. Comparison of Chosen Aspects of the Principal’s Position

Both in the Compulsory School Act from 1974 and the one from 1995 the obligations and responsibilities of principals are detailed. In what follows the responsibilities assigned to principals in both acts will be compared by going through the paragraphs in question in each act.

The 2nd paragraph of the Compulsory School Act from 1974 and 1995 both say that “the role of the compulsory school, in cooperation with the homes, is to prepare pupils for life and practice in a democratic society that is constantly evolving” (Lög um grunnskóla nr. 66/1995). This paragraph is unchanged in the new act and its content is general as this involves the fundamental role of the compulsory school.

The 20th paragraph of the act from 1974 says: “The principal administers the operation of the compulsory school in cooperation with teachers and under the jurisdiction of the ministry of
education, the education council, the commissioner of education and the school board.” (Lög um grunnskóla nr. 63/1974).

In the 1995 act, paragraph 14, the principal is described as the leader of the school; he administers it and is responsible for its operation, and provides professional leadership. He is also responsible for the making of the school curriculum.

The outer frame of the act from 1974 is explicit. The principal administers his institute consulting with teachers where the operation is predetermined. If something goes wrong he seeks a solution with the institutions he is subject to; the school committee, the education council and the ministry of education. It is clear in the 1974 act that teachers share the responsibility for the administration of the school with the principal. According to the 1995 act the principal bears the sole responsibility but consults with the teachers’ meeting and the teachers’ committee.

The same paragraph of the 1974 act also prescribes how conflicts or disagreements between the principal and teachers should be handled where each party has a role to play in the administration. In the Compulsory school Act from 1995 nothing is said about how disagreements between these parties are to be treated since the principal bears the sole responsibility.

According to the 21st paragraph of the 1974 act the principal is obliged to summon an inaugural meeting of a parents' society. The same stipulation is to be found in the 1995 act, but a new paragraph has been added on parents’ councils (16th paragraph), and the principal is also assigned the responsibility for its establishment.

With these changes a formal, mandatory forum has been established where parents can monitor the inner operation of the school and express their opinions to those in charge. This also provides an ideal forum for the principal to work with parents. A representative of the parents’ council attends teachers’ meetings and enjoys freedom of speech and the right to make proposals, but not the chairman of the parents’ society as in the 1974 act.

According to paragraph 33.1 of the 1974 act the school board is to consult with the principal when teachers are hired at the school and send the review to the commissioner of education who sends it further to the ministry of education along with his own review. According to the 1995 act the principal is responsible for the hiring of teachers consulting with the school board, except when the local government or governments decide otherwise. Employment issues are transferred from the school board to the principal and the final approval of employment contracts is transferred from the ministry of education to the local government.
The 38th paragraph of the 1974 act prescribes that the principal decides supporting teachers for each class. In the 1995 act, paragraph 24, this is stipulated as well but the principal is also permitted to assign to teachers the management of classes, professional management, and supervision of newcomers and teacher trainees with the approval of the local government. The increased relevance of the principal is obvious in this context as he is responsible for considerably more aspects of the inner operation of the school which is supposed to lead to improvements and increased professionalism.

Paragraph 68 of the 1974 act stipulates the inspection and counseling role the principal has towards teachers. This aspect is not detailed in the 1995 act except for a minor clause in paragraph 14: “The principal is the leader of the compulsory school, administers it and is responsible for its operation and leads it professionally.” As a leader it is quite natural that the principal monitors his personnel; it is his responsibility to provide solutions to problems that arise and promote the development of the school.

In the same paragraph it says that the commissioner of education is to consult with the principal regarding the organization of counseling and psychology services. According to the 1995 act the local governments are obliged to provide the school with expertise service and the principal is responsible for this in his/her school.

In the new act the commissioner of education is no longer responsible for the supervision of the expertise service. The responsibility is now within the school, in the hands of the principal.

The 1995 act, paragraph 49, stipulates that the compulsory school is to introduce methods for evaluating school activity. Paragraph 50 of the same act mentions that the principal is responsible for the retraining of the personnel in accordance with the curriculum. Such a clause is not to be found in the 1974 act.

Evaluation of school activity and getting an overview of it at every point in time, e.g. goals, management, teaching, evaluation of teaching, and issues regarding pupils and personnel, to name but a few aspects of this, is a great professional challenge to the leader. He/she must have knowledge to support the evaluation committee of the school, that could for instance use measuring devices that are reliable and effective. According to the Main Curriculum for Compulsory schools the internal evaluation of the school must be general, i.e., include all aspects of the school’s operation, formal, i.e., description of the evaluation devices must be available in writing within the school, and reliable, i.e., based upon solid data and reliable assessment. All these issues are important with regard to a systematic development of quality and improvement.
of school activity. If methods and implementation of such an evaluation is effective, this is an ideal way to strengthen and improve the operation of the school and the principal as a leader.


The impact of the wage agreement between the wage committees representing the Association of Local Authorities and the Teachers Union in Iceland from 2001-2004 was decisive with regard to the management of the internal operation of the school. This agreement involved a systematic change that was meant to “create room for changes of wage terms with the aim of making the compulsory school competitive and the teachers’ job desirable,” as it is put in the agreement (Kjarasamn. KÍ. og L. 2001-2004). The agreement also emphasized that a changed organization of the school’s operation requires effective leadership involving all aspects of the school activity and that the principal plays a key role in this new organization. Specific emphasis is put on human resource management and a new vision of school activity in this context.

According to this new vision the principal organizes the collaboration of teachers (working teams) and allocates hours for that. In the new agreement the principal gains more authority to the effect that a larger portion of teachers’ work quota is now under his/her supervision than before. The principal is thus authorized to arrange the work of teachers to perform the professional tasks and assignments required for the school’s operation. A certain amount of man-hours is defined for this collaboration, 9.14 man-hours, which is working hours outside teaching and teaching preparation. In the agreement it is stipulated that the professional development of teachers must accord with the continuous education plan of the school and the emphases laid by the school regarding improvements of its operation at every point of time. The principal is responsible for the development of that plan.

With the agreement the principal acquired certain latitude in the form of capital to reward teachers for special responsibility, strain, proficiency, or as it is put in the wage agreement:

The principal allocates teachers’ work hours to perform the professional tasks and assignments required to operate the school. Under the teachers’ work quota fall all their professional duties, such as teaching, teaching preparation, evaluation of pupils’ learning performance, procurement of teaching material, supervision of classrooms and equipment, development of curriculum, the making of learning plans, the making of individual syllabus, internal evaluation of school activity, parent
collaboration, collaboration among teachers and between teachers and other specialists, participation in professional teams and other internal activity of the school (Kjarasamn. KÍ. og L. 2001-2004).

The agreement 2004-2007 strikes the same note. It says that “the principal allocates teachers’ work to perform the professional tasks and assignments required for the school’s operation. The work quota includes all professional work” (Kjarasamn. KÍ. og L. 2004-2007). The agreement also stipulates that the principal and teachers seek an agreement as to how the 9.14 hours a week per teacher are to be utilized and make sure that there is enough time for collaboration among professionals within and outside the school, parent collaboration, filing of information, supervision and inspection of teaching rooms, and pupil interviews.

The agreement also mentions “follow up” since it is important that principals monitor how teachers perform the assignments they have been allocated and check whether deadlines are kept. With this paragraph, inspection becomes an explicit part of the wage agreement and it may be inferred that this is being done to avoid too much workload within the 9.14 hours time frame. A survey among principals and confidants of the wage committees representing the local governments and the Teachers Union carried out by the Institute of Research at Iceland University of Education in the spring 2002 reveals how the time supervised (the 9.14 hours) by principals has been utilized in practice. 4% of the respondents thought that emphases regarding the choice of assignments had not been right and 13% pointed out that too little time had been marked out for preparation. By contrast, 64% of the respondents mentioned that the arrangement had been successful, 24% believed that the arrangement had strengthened the leadership role of the principal, and 15% said that it improved the quality of school activity.

As both these agreements emphasize a strengthened professional leadership of the principal within his institute, it is important for him to know what his teachers think of the school activity in general so that he can reassess it and thus be better prepared to lead and work with his personnel towards a successful operation of the school. Therefore it is important that the principal is equipped with measuring devices that enable him to evaluate certain aspects of his leadership in an effective way.
1.5. Discussion

In view of constantly evolving social practices it is necessary to advance good, general education and that it is of the sort that enables the school system to provide the country with well educated people who can quickly adapt to new circumstances and are capable of organizing and leading (Skýrsla um menntastefnu á Íslandi, 1987). This activity must be administered and there the leaders of the schools play a key role at every point of time within each school.

As the head of the school the principal must be firm and reasonable and enjoy trust and reliance of all those who relate to the school; pupils, staff, parents, the school board or local governments. His position is such that he has an overview of the school activity as a whole which no one else has.

In the 1974 act the outer framework of school administration was clearly at the forefront and the role of the principal was limited to administering an institution. According to the act the principal often had to refer matters that arose within the institution to others, e.g. to the ministry of education or the commissioner of education. It was in other words not expected that expertise, professional skills and overview was altogether in the hands of the principal, but was to be found in institutions he was subordinated to. He was the head of an institution that knew exactly what and how to work and administer from day to day, since this was crystal clear according to the law.

The emphases changed in the 1995 act. There it is explicitly stated that the principal is the leader of his school and is responsible for its administration. He is given considerably more responsibility than before and the importance of the leadership role is emphasized. The hiring of teachers has been transferred from the school board with the agreement of the principal onto his hands with the agreement of the school board. The increased independence of the school is presumed since the principal is to develop the educational policy of his school, supervise the professional development of the personnel and evaluate the school activity as a whole. He is given more latitude to develop flexible school activity in collaboration with his teachers and other personnel through the Main Curriculum and arrange it according to circumstances and the unique characteristics of the community within which the school operates. He is to be the leader, the one who leads, administers and evaluates. Expertise, skill and overview have been transferred into the school and the problems and assignments that arise there should be solved within its walls.
In evaluating the school activity the principal now enjoys the assistance of the parents committee, constituted by three representatives elected by parents at the annual meeting of the parents’ society. The parents committee has formal access to the school and evaluates the school curriculum and other projects concerning the school activity. The advent of the parents committee strengthens the collaboration and relationship between the school and the homes and reinforces the participation of parents in the school strategy.

The principal must be capable of communicating his vision of the school activity and the aims he believes should be striven for. He must have a good overview and make an effort to enhance his abilities and those of his teachers to tackle the school activity, try new ideas and evaluate and have evaluated in a systematic way whether things have been successful or not, because the school activity must be constantly revalued. The principal is to introduce methods for evaluating the school activity. This could be fundamental to enhancing the quality of the education provided by the school.

The independence of the principal stipulated in the 1995 act is a considerable change from the 1974 act. The wage agreements 2001-2004 and 2004-2007 have reinforced the internal administration of the school. If the principal has the capacity to create opportunities and advance development of the school activity the legal statutes are in place.

It is clear that increased professional demands on principals necessitate changed emphases; not only regarding their education and preparation but also that there are ways to evaluate how things are being handled. Intensive administration or management study is absolutely necessary. A systematic instruction about the development and evaluation of school activity must be included in that study so that the principal will be capable of an independent evaluation of his work and role within the school. What we need here are effective methods of evaluation and a greater variety in the supply of education for practicing principals.
2. Chapter – Theoretical Discussions

This chapter discusses material published in Iceland as well as material from other countries that among other things is related to the development of schooling in Iceland. Evaluation of school activity will also be discussed, e.g. the purpose, development and results of such an evaluation of school activity. In addition, evaluation of teachers and principals and the relation of such evaluation to the development of schools will be recapitulated. Then, the concepts that Bert Stålhammar (1991) and Tomas J. Sergiovanni (2001) have put forth regarding the principal’s role are to be considered, and their theories were the point of reference in the choice of questions in the questionnaire. Finally, there will be a discussion of the aforementioned topics.

2.1. Research in Iceland

During the past years fairly much has been written on the evaluation of school activity and school development in Iceland and it is generally concluded that evaluation of school activity is part of quality management/administration or performance management.

In the first chapter the clauses of the Compulsory school Act that relate to evaluation of school activity and the emphases in the Main Curriculum of the Compulsory school from 1999 were considered. There self-evaluation of the school is stipulated as a way to work systematically towards improving school activity and to share knowledge and information about school activity. The increased emphasis on the internal concerns of the school that the principal is responsible for was discussed as well. These laws and regulations lay new obligations and responsibilities on the shoulders of schools, teachers and principals and call forth changes of the internal activity of the schools.

Deliberation about the necessity of evaluation and inspection of schools has intensified and the publication of writings and manuals on school evaluation has significantly increased. First to mention is a piece of writing entitled Towards a New Age (Til nýrrar aldar) published on behalf of the ministry of education in 1991 and the report A Committee on the Development of Education Policy (Nefnd um móttun menntastefnu) appeared three years later. Both these writings discuss the necessity of evaluating school activity. In continuation of these writings the ministry
of education published the booklet, *Self-Evaluation of Schools: Preschools, Compulsory schools, and College* (Sjálfsmat skóla: Leikskólar, grunnskólar, framhaldsskólar). There it says that the main objective of self-evaluation is to enable the school personnel to work towards the aims of the school, assess whether they have been obtained, revalue them and make for improvements. The school curriculum is the basis for this work.

Among recent Icelandic publications is a book by Börkur Hansen and Smári S. Sigurðsson, *School Activity and Quality Management* (Skólastarf og gæðastjórnun), published in 1998. The book is intended to evoke interest in reform of school activity and discusses in an accessible way certain concepts and work methods pertaining to school administration based upon ideas about quality management/administration.

In addition, it is worth mentioning a work published in 1999 edited by Rúnar Sigþórsson et al., *Increased Quality of Learning: School Development for Pupils* (Aukin gæði náms: Skólabróun í þágu nemenda). It features a discussion of the school development project AGN (increased quality of learning) set off in the autumn 1995. The paradigm for this model is IQEA (Improving the Quality of Education for All) developed by the Drits Hopkins, Ainscow and West (1994). This developmental model aims at creating internal conditions that relate to the administrative structure of the school on the one hand and the work in the classroom on the other, i.e. to integrate self-evaluation and developmental work. With self-evaluation the result of the school activity is constantly evaluated and on the basis of what it reveals the school decides priority projects to work on. Those priority projects aim at shaping a work culture that creates and strengthens the internal conditions for a successful school activity, both within the administrative structure and the classroom. In this way the self-evaluation and the developmental work are integrated with other activity of the school – but an attachment to it.

*Evaluation of School Activity, What and How? (Mat á skólastarfí, hvað og hvernig?)* by Gerður G. Óskarsdóttir, published in 1999, should also be mentioned. This work summarizes the discussion of why school activity should be evaluated and the primary methods and devices for the evaluation. Nor should her essay, “School Activity in a New Age,” that originally appeared in Danish in *Morgendagens skole i Norden*, published by the Nordic Council of Ministers in 2002, and has recently been translated into Icelandic, go unnoticed. The latter provides the occasion to reflect on what is to come in the near future and what the development in schooling in general will be like in an increasingly integrated Europe. This essay discusses among other things the role of the principal in schools of the future and how it must be his compulsory role always to be
prepared to make changes and rethink matters, i.e. administer the school in such a way that it is constantly evolving, never stagnant. If this is to succeed it is of vital importance always to have access to the most recent data and information for these are a prerequisite for a successful operation of the school in general. Such information is to be used in addition to intuition and feeling, not the least that of the principal who leads and administers the activity as a whole.

Finally, I want to mention a Ph.D. thesis by Haukur Viggósson, *I fjärran blir fjällen blå*, published in 1998, which is a comparative study of the responsibility of Icelandic and Swedish principals. This is among the most extensive research carried out in that field. One of the main findings of the study was the strong correlation between the closeness (närhet) of the principal and teachers and their reliance on his leadership, i.e. that the teachers and the principal have a common vision and views regarding the assignments the principal wants to come first. If this is not the case all communication will be superficial. Here the small or smaller schools have a better opportunity to create such closeness than the larger ones, although this is not absolute. What matters most is that the principal is capable of creating this relationship between him and the teachers. The teachers who have a positive attitude towards the principal’s leadership are the ones who experience much closeness to him. It is also important for teachers that the principal is familiar with their pedagogical emphases and knows which teaching methods they use. This gives teachers the feeling that the principal makes an effort to acquaint himself with their teaching methods and he thereby becomes a source of inspiration and support. Teachers agree with the legislator that the principal is to watch the school activity and is responsible for it, yet they feel strongly that the principal should respect their independence in teaching, that decisions are made jointly and that the flow of information within the school must be sufficient.

2.2. Evaluation of School Activity

In Iceland the evaluation of school activity, including teachers and administrators, is often referred to as quality control and this concept has been adopted by the authorities for analysis and use in policy making and administration of educational matters. Such an evaluation frequently yields important conclusions about the advantages and disadvantages of various options regarding the planning of school activity. These conclusions are then used for writing reports upon which the authorities base their decisions. An evaluation is usually carried out with certain objectives in mind, something local or topical that is on the minds of those who administer it.
Börkur Hansen and Smári S. Sigurðsson (1998) put it thus that an evaluation of school activity is the process whereby information is gathered and aspects of school activity are evaluated. This can be implemented in different ways depending on whether individuals or certain aspects of the school’s operation are being evaluated. Usually those who work within the school are asked to critically examine themselves or look into the school activity with the aim of improving it. The majority of those who deal with educational matters and school administration share the view that organized self-evaluation is a natural component of the school activity. They also point out that research on the efficiency of schools reveals differences between schools with regard to the attainment of the same objectives. It does matter how the school is being administered if it is to be successful. They mention in particular that collaboration, trust, mutual responsibility, strong leadership and clear objectives are most important together with critically evaluating one’s own activity (Hansen & Sigurðsson, 1998).

Evaluation of school activity has been in progress for a long time. A well known example is from the latter half of the 20th century when Joseph Rich developed an evaluation plan for several school systems in USA in order to validate the claim that school time was poorly utilized (Worthen, Sanders, Fitzpatrick, 1997). Various forms have been used throughout the years, e.g. evaluation lists, check lists and/or classification scales, mainly to evaluate teachers both in a subjective and an objective way. One of the largest steps taken in research on teachers’ attainment in practice was “The Ohio Teaching Record” in 1941. It encouraged the development of a common approach as to the guidance of the teacher and the consultant with regard to the satisfaction of the needs of pupils in the classroom. And this provided an emphasis worth noticing since the evaluation is aimed at those who enjoy the service, the pupil himself/herself.

Classification systems used in the aforementioned research were originally developed in response to external conditions, to show that pupils enjoyed proper and good teaching, and also to prove that teachers were generally up to their responsibility. The idea was not to provide teachers with information they could use to improve their teaching. Evaluation of teachers continued to evolve and was usually implemented by the administrators of the schools, yet without consulting with the teachers or anyone else (Worthen, Sanders, Fitzpatrick, 1997). This procedure was not suited to enhance the development of schooling.

Important original research was done on the evaluation of teachers and principals in Britain administered by the National Steering Group (NSG) that consisted in an evaluation of 1690 teachers and 190 principals (Evans and Tomlinson, 1989). The report said that among other
things the benefits of evaluation are a better work morale, better organized curriculum, better preparation of teachers, wider participation, better organized teacher training and safer résumés.

Much has happened since the first speculations about evaluation came forth and these ideas have evolved and changed throughout the years. In her M.A. thesis submitted at the University of Iceland in 2003 Kristín Dýrfjörð recapitulates how experts on evaluation today have gradually begun to consider organization theories since evaluation becomes a natural element in the development and administration of organizations and part of what Senge calls the community of learning as well. She describes the ideas of Senge, McCabe, Lucar, Smith, Dutton and Kleiner about the preconditions for the growth of organizations. These factors are: System thinking, i.e. that our lives are directed by incidents that loosely connect or interweave, but underneath there is a hidden pattern to be recognized. Personal mastery, i.e. the methods of work that encourage people to let their dreams come true and simultaneously open their eyes to the reality they live in. Team learning built upon getting colleagues to think and work together, even if everyone does not think alike. Mental models, i.e. people’s attitudes and feelings that determine how they react to both their own ideas and those of others. Finally, there is a shared vision, i.e. that people within the same organization have a common vision of the work. This means that all of them share a common vision but do not simply accept the vision of the leader (2003).

2.3. Evaluation of Teachers

Evaluation of teachers is demanding, not the least today when teaching methods evolve and change as rapidly as they do. On the other hand, it is clear that whichever method is used in evaluating teachers the first step in it is always to acquire information on certain matters to nurture development and change.

Gary Natriello (1990) believes that evaluation of teachers can be classified into three categories. The purpose of these categories is in many respects different, in particular when attempts are made to change permanent arrangements.

In the first place, evaluation of teachers can be used to make an impact on a particular arrangement without producing any change in the individual who is responsible for it. The aim of such an evaluation is thus to improve the arrangement that is already in place and is considered to be excellent. Various methods are used for that purpose, such as the teacher evaluation of Beach
& Reinhartz that is based upon very productive research, Golberry’s evaluation that applies scientific counsel, as well as the reward evaluation of Natriello & Chon.

Secondly, teachers’ evaluation can be used as a steering device for administration in particular circumstances. As such it throws light on the individual’s attempt to establish particular circumstances, maintain a certain position or enforce a way out of a situation. Such an evaluation can be utilized to change and/or maintain certain arrangement, not by changing the arrangement of the individuals who hold the arrangement, but those individuals who are in a position to do so. Contrary to the first purpose teacher evaluation of this sort leads to transference.

Third and last, Natriello believes that evaluation could be used to legitimize the administrative system itself. Such an evaluation may involve a certain kind of justice and fairness both regarding to the organization and its administrative role. Systematic evaluation of this sort consists in influencing those who maintain the arrangement by persuading them that such an evaluation process is legal and calls for flexibility (Natriello, 1990).

The foregoing indicates that principals can utilize various evaluation processes of teachers in a conscious way to influence the teaching of individual teachers who are stuck in their teaching arrangement and to steer certain changes of teaching methods and finally to justify administrative procedures within the organization.

Scholars have realized that evaluation of teachers has great influence, both intended and unintended, and an attempt has been made to classify these influences. Teachers’ evaluation can have three kinds of influence, i.e. on the individual, the organization and the environment. The influences on an individual teacher appear when his/her evaluation has an influence on himself/herself. The influences on the organization appear when an evaluation process in use influences teachers in general. Environmental influences appear for instance when a teacher is forced to quit because of disqualification, but such a decision unquestionably has an impact on his/her colleagues and others within and outside the organization and the impact may be considerable.

When evaluation of teachers is initiated the essentials upon which the evaluation rests must be clear: What is to be attained by the evaluation and what is to be evaluated? It is also important for the teacher to know who is evaluating him; it is in fact as important as to know when and how often evaluation is being carried out. Likewise, it is of fundamental importance that teachers have every confidence in the evaluation process and can be sure that there is absolute trust between all parties. If this is not the case the evaluation becomes superficial and
sparse and only satisfies those who are interested in appearances, but the result would not be improved teaching or learning. One should keep in mind that this has happened with the majority of evaluations throughout the world because the evaluation process as a whole was not properly carried through (Evans & Tomlinson, 1989).

A successful evaluation process requires that teachers respond to the conclusions of the evaluation and work with it towards a productive and efficient school activity, but the basis for a successful evaluation of teachers is that there is absolute trust between the principal and teachers (Millman, Darling-Hammond, 1990). Confidence pertaining to evaluation data must also be assured and this aspect must be emphasized at the beginning of the process. No one should have access to the evaluation data except for the appraiser, the one who is being evaluated and the principal (Evans & Tomlinson, 1989).

When teachers do their best during an evaluation process it is fundamental that they get something in return after its completion, such as processing, guidance or some kind of aftercare. And such aftercare must be financially sound. It differs from place to place which demands are made upon teachers when an evaluation is completed depending on the sensitivity and input of the process, the personnel and many other factors. Yet, it is quite certain that the conclusions of an evaluation enhance the likelihood of professional development within the organization in question (Evans & Tomlinson, 1989).

2.4. Development of Schooling

Evaluation of teachers and school administrators is among the most important aspects of the development of schooling and it is not possible to discuss the former without adverting to the nature of the latter. The aim of the development of schooling is always to improve pupils’ experience with learning and capacity to learn in the widest sense. Many interactive factors influence the development of schooling. According to the theories of Dalins (1993) the fundamental change in the development of schooling must take place in the school culture. In order for the school to change its culture must change. A change in the school culture begins with the people who work there, how they think and work as individuals and in collaboration. Dalins claims that the school culture has a great impact on every one’s chances in the school. The work morale in the school in general and in particular classrooms greatly influences the teaching and learning. The culture presupposes that working on changes is part of the daily routine in the
school activity. The administration of change is the basis of the administrative culture and has an important role to play in creating a vivacious community of learning (Dalin, 1993).

The evaluation of teachers and principals is thus closely related to the aforementioned factors. In his book, *Effective Teacher Evaluation*, Valentine agrees with Dalin and says that atmosphere, culture and development of evaluation are interactive factors and that administration is closely related to the development of evaluation and teachers and principals must always maintain a positive attitude towards change (Valentine, 1992).

Various scholars in the field of school development believe that certain premises are crucial for the success of school development. In the first place, it is important to postulate the needs of pupils when school development is being planned and assure that knowledge and skills are defined (Fullan, 1993, Hopkins et al., 1994). Secondly, it is important to create a reformist school culture and conditions within the organization that enable teachers to cultivate their work skills and enjoy work development (Sergiovanni, 2001). Yet, it is necessary to differentiate between a change in organization and a change of culture (Fullan, 1993). It is also important to show regard for the values, feelings and opinions of those who work on the school development, i.e. the teachers. It is imperative to realize that school development is a complicated process that takes a long time and its success depends on the perseverance, optimism and unity of all who participate in it (Sergiovanni, 2001).

### 2.5. Evaluation of School Administrators

It is not long since scholars and those who have been responsible for evaluation admitted that evaluation, whether of school activity, teachers or principals, must be based upon professional and methodological methods of work. That is, the strategy of evaluation must provide useful information for those who stand for it (Worten, Sander, Fitzpatrick, 1997). Evaluation is also a process that enables schools to maintain their developmental plans, prioritise and better reach the goals that have been set for the school activity.

School administration is undeniably similar to administration of other institutions in many respects. Yet, there are important differences and perhaps most important principals always work with people who work with pupils. Teaching as part of the principal’s responsibility is constantly
shrinking while the administrative factor becomes ever more important. Miklos says that the principal’s field of work mainly consists in coordination, communication, influencing and evaluation. All these spheres are interrelated to the various tasks principals deal with in their daily work (Miklos, 1980; ref. in Sergiovanni 1987).

When a school institute is described theoretically it may be viewed as an instance of a collection of permanently related units. The associates Hansen and Sigurðsson (1998) argue that the business of schools is pupils with different needs and abilities and that there are many and diverse ways of teaching. Teachers must work independently and shoulder the responsibility of their teaching and its arrangement and they often have more than one class or teach specific subjects. Consequently, pupils and teachers are often disconnected from fellow pupils or teachers with regard to learning and it could be said that each class is a separate community within the school. It is the task of the principal to maintain all factors within the institution and shape the work procedures of the school (Hansen & Sigurðsson, 1998).

Principals are more often than not in the position that they must shoulder responsibility and define their role in view of the circumstances in which they find themselves. In many respects they work alone and their position and job is therefore different from the position of teachers. Often the principal does not meet his colleagues for long periods of time unlike teachers who, at least, regularly meet in the teachers’ room. The conceptual framework of principals is also different from that of teachers since the principal makes most of the decisions and is responsible for all professional work within the school and often its financial running as well. As an example of this difference Hargreaves (1998) points out how differently teachers and the principal interpret the time framing and the arrangement of teaching and school development and all changes pertaining to these. The teacher’s responsibility is time consuming and teachers therefore frequently experience lack of time and stress, both as regards the arrangement and preparation of teaching and also in relation to changes they strive to resist. Principals on the other hand often find such changes to be slow since they have a different vision of the school activity as a whole (Hargreaves, 1998).

In view of the foregoing it should be clear that the evaluation of school administration must be well prepared. The principal’s responsibility is so wide and multifaceted that it is often difficult to figure out which fields of work should be included in the evaluation and which not. In Britain people have experienced difficulties with this and tried different ways, each with their

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1 In small schools in Iceland principals are obliged to teach.
own peculiarities but none of them flawless (Hewton & West, 1992). The way considered to be preferable there and was developed in the wake of original research by the National Steering Group (NSG) is that an evaluation of principals is always to be carried out by two parties. One of them is to have experience with school administration similar to the one that was being evaluated; the other should come from LEA or the local education authorities (District Office of Education) and be a consultant sufficiently familiar with the school. This arrangement was considered to be so urgent that it was put into a regulation. According to Hewton and West (1992), evaluation of principals is among the most efficient means of human resource development.

There is unanimity among scholars that evaluation of principals aims for increasing their competence to deal with the tasks they are responsible for from day to day. To ensure this, the principal needs assistance to observe his own vision of the school and review important goals, arrangements and policies. The principal must also have the necessary competence and knowledge to define alternative ways of improving the school administration, attend to his own professional development on the job and to define and discuss in an open and honest way his concerns about the activity there. When the principal has participated in an evaluation process of this sort it is almost certain that the conclusions of the evaluation will increase the likelihood of professional development within the institute (Evans & Tomlinson, 1989).

2.6. The Conceptual Framework of Scholars

In this section the concepts that influenced the choice of questions in the research will be discussed. It was decided to use Bert Stålhammer’s (1991) definition of qualification in relation to the principal’s role and Tomas J. Sergiovanni’s claim that principals base their work skill on various potency or “force.” These two scholars share more or less the same views about which characteristics and qualifications principals must have if their leadership is to be successful. The research of Stålhammer and Sergiovanni will not be considered in any detail here; their concepts were simply the stimulus behind the questions put forth in this thesis.

Qualification is the capability to deal with and pull off a task. All principals have certain qualifications that can indeed be widely differing. In Stålhammar’s view (1991), qualification consists of intertwining factors constituting the individual himself, his circumstances, knowledge and education, ideologies and activity. The concept of qualification involves the ability to learn
from experience, put things in a context, have an overview of the job, and be in possession of good valuation. He devi
des the concept into four categories: personal competence, social competence, strategic competence and ideological competence.

A principal who is in possession of personal competence is conscious of himself and the objectives he is working towards. He is capable of prioritizing, foreseeing problems and responding to them in a preventive manner. He encourages and stimulates his teachers to enhance their work qualifications. A principal who possesses social competence is capable of shaping the school culture he prefers within the institute he leads and strives towards sublime aims. He has an overview of the school culture and the competence required to change it in the direction he wants. He creates a good work morale and has the competence to communicate and solve disputes. When the principal is in possession of strategic competence he can easily organize and coordinate the work within the school and obtain the goals that have been set. Ideological competence consists in possessing valid knowledge, both ideological and legal, of matters regarding the school and being capable of discussing them. Ideological competence enables him to rationalize his decisions well (Stålhammar, 1991).

According to Sergiovanni (2001) the abilities of a good principal can be divided into five different potencies or “force.” These potencies are: the technical force, the human force, the educational force, the symbolic force, and the cultural force. All these attributions are important and help the principal improve the quality of the school activity, but shape different emphasis at the same time.

When a principal possesses technical force he is a good leader from a technical point of view. This quality is crucial since the principal’s competence in this field is visible in all his daily work. A principal who does not possess this ability has a poor influence on those who work under his command. The human force is of vital importance and reflects the principal’s ability to communicate. A good understanding of the needs of pupils and teachers must be inherent in all school administrators. Such qualities are essential and can best be seen in that the development of human resource is a predominant and underlying note in discussions of management/administration. Educational force characterizes the principal as a pedagog and how well he tends to learning and teaching and seeks to develop and improve these aspects of the school activity. He is a professional leader who initiates the development of plans regarding the content and arrangement of everything that falls under teaching and learning, is an advisor to teachers, initiates supervision and evaluation, builds up his personnel and develops the
Those principals who are in possession of symbolic force are able to see what matters in the school activity and which factors are most important. Such a principal perceives which objectives and behavior are the most important ones and presents it to others. He traverses the school and seeks relationship with teachers and pupils. He shows educational concern, administers auto-dafés, ceremonies and other occasions. To fully understand this quality it is necessary to look beneath the surface of the principal’s work to spot the relevance of his performance. Cultural force characterizes the cultural figure, i.e. the competence of the principal to build up a distinct school culture and refer to the cultural sides of administration. The principal is in the role of a leader and seeks to explain, reinforce and preserve the values, ideology and cultural valuation that present the unique position of the school. The benefit of cultural administration consists in uniting pupils, personnel and others related to the school to perpetuate the common values they believe in and shape their work (Sergiovanni, 2001).

It is important for every principal to possess these potencies or to adopt them. According to Sergiovanni, the first three of these are essential qualities that all principals must have if the school is to function properly and to be capable of developing their own style of leadership within the institute (Sergiovanni, 2001).

2.7. Discussion

The evaluation of teachers and principals has changed dramatically since it started in the latter half of the 19th century. Evaluation lists or checklists and classification scales were methods used to evaluate teachers both in a subjective and an objective manner. Their main utility was to show and assure the general public or the pupils’ parents that the schools were manned with competent teachers who provided pupils with good teaching, faithful to the belief that teachers will always be evaluated by their pupils and their parents in view of how pupils are doing in school or whether they are liked or disliked by the pupils or their parents. Later, new emphases were developed and the conclusions of the evaluation were utilized to the benefit of pupils. This development then continued working with the relationship between pupils and teachers and views pertaining to their communication within the class system. In the wake of an original research carried out by NSG in Britain, it became apparent that the benefit of teacher evaluation was decisive; the conclusions unequivocally revealed a better and better organized school activity.
Evaluation of teachers and principals and school development are indiscrete. Dalin has covered school culture and school morale in great detail in his writings and others have pointed to the interaction between these concepts. This is indeed an important view and it should be emphasized that if school culture is to the school what the personality is to people and the school morale is to each school what an outlook of life is to individuals, then these concepts are inseparable from school evaluation and school development that can be obtained by a process of evaluation, whether of teachers or principals.

Natriello (1990) indicates three different ways regarding teacher evaluation as an administrative device to influence teaching, administration of the teaching arrangement or to justify methods of administration as well as the influence that teaching evaluation has on the individual, the institute and the environment. This shows how intertwined the teacher evaluation is with the school activity and school development in general. And this is no less the case with the evaluation of principals since the driving force of each school frequently depends on administrative competence and professionalism. As regards the evaluation of both teachers and principals it is important that the implementation and preparation are done with great care. All parties must know what to expect, i.e. the arrangement of the evaluation, what is being evaluated and that full confidence is between parties and that evaluation data is confidential.

When the task is well done the evaluation process has a great impact on the principal in his work. It sharpens his vision of the school activity and enables him to distinguish between short term and long term goals. He gets the opportunity to fine tune his endowments and recapitulate important ideas with his colleagues who also have an insight into his job. The principal and teachers work in a community of learning and reap by participating in a common process of development.

Today Icelandic school personnel are continually seeking more experience and knowledge of the impact evaluation has on school activity. The number of published writings on evaluation of school activity has increased dramatically during the past few years. In her study, Kristín Dýrfjörð (2003) traces how experts on evaluation cover the development of institutes where the evaluation is viewed as one factor in the development, based upon cooperation aimed at enhancing a common vision of the operation. Haukur Viggósson (1998) reached the conclusion in his Ph.D. thesis that the closeness between the principal and teachers deepened their trust towards the school administration and built up a common vision of the school activity.
Treatises like these can play an important part in promoting school development that contributes to cooperation among school personnel aimed at cultivating the ability to learn and live through the rapid changes that are taking place today and will no doubt continue in the 21st century. Conceptual frameworks of scholars like Sergiovanni (2001) and Stålhammar (1991) may be necessary to develop and strengthen ideas about factors in evaluation of principals and teachers and enhance the likelihood that policy making within the school will be more systematic and better stand up to the requirements of education in the future to come.
Chapter 3: Research Method

In this chapter the approach that was chosen to examine the data and the research method used in the thesis will be discussed. The research process is covered; the subject matter is introduced, organized and developed and the implementation described. And among other things, the statistical program SPSS, which is being used for calculation of the findings, is utilized even if it is relatively easy to run the Excel program in the case of the simplest calculations. In addition, the choice of questions in relation to the concepts developed by Sergiovanni and Stålhammar is accounted for. Finally, there is a discussion.

3.1. Methodology

Social scientific research presupposes certain epistemological premises that guide how knowledge is to be acquired and illuminate its nature. Such research is often divided into qualitative and quantitative research methods or a mixture of the two. The research must be based upon a systematic collection of data; i.e. a certain procedure is followed to ensure the reliability of the data, such as putting the questionnaire to the teachers in the same way and at the same time, etc. The data is then interpreted and the findings documented and presented in a holistic manner exhibiting a connection to the data. Since the objective here is to construct and develop a questionnaire administrators can use as a “device” to shed light on and evaluate certain aspects of the administration in their school this research is based on a quantitative method. The method in question was chosen in order to secure a maximal objective approach of those who carry out the evaluation. In research of this kind the researcher must always keep in mind that he/she has to approach the subject matter from the outside without mixing with it in any way or express his/her own opinions of it. Yet, we must never forget that no matter how scientific and objective we may want to be, no researcher is infallible (Holme, Solvang, 1997).

3.2. Definition of the Research

The inspiration for this undertaking is 20 years of work experience with schools, thereof 15 years as a principal and 5 years of teaching. The question of how it would be possible to evaluate
certain aspects of the principal’s responsibility, e.g. work methods, cooperation, channels, meetings, retraining and continuous education, or the policy regarding matters of upbringing and teaching, has become ever more pressing. This sparked the idea of developing a questionnaire (cf. chapter 3, section 5) that could serve as a reliable measure for principals in evaluating certain aspects of the administration and work methods within the school. Problems that may emerge when such questionnaires are made and used were kept in mind; e.g. that the researcher represents all those attitudes reflected in the questions and in most cases the response alternatives as well. If the researcher wants to bring forth as many views as possible, in some cases it may be preferable to use different methods, e.g. interviews, field work or diary method (Viggósson, 1998). But in this research the strength of questionnaires is exploited to collect maximal variety of data in order to assess the questionnaire as a device and in that case what matters is to verify it statistically, i.e. check the device as for its reliability.

In making the questionnaire, an effort was made to avoid dangers that pose a threat to their internal validity. What is most important in this regard is the wording of the questions, i.e. that every one understands the question in the same way as the researcher and that the questions are substantially correct and only contain one topic each. When the respondents understand a particular question differently the measure has become inaccurate and an error creeps into the findings. As many studies have shown, the strength of questionnaires lies in their validity in the sense that there is often a strong correlation between what people say they are doing and what they actually do (Karlsson, 2003). Yet, it should be kept in mind that people also have a tendency to overstate or tone down – or to agree with the last speaker.

3.3. The Organization of the Research

Four schools were chosen to participate in the research. Among the presumptions for the choice of schools was that they were located widely around the country and that the principals either had or were obtaining a masters degree in management/administration. According to Sergiovanni (2001), it is more likely that such leaders are self-confident, both as individuals and in their work. They regard mistakes or other unsuccessful projects as ideas that have failed, but not as a personal defeat. Three of those schools have more than forty working teachers and in the fourth the teachers are eighteen. The principals are four. One of the schools is located in Reykjavík, but the remaining three in other parts of the country.
The researcher was conscious of how contingent he was upon the good will of those who participated in the survey and considering that teachers in Iceland were on an eight week long strike shortly before the questionnaire was sent out, it could easily have turned out that they were not particularly interested in answering a questionnaire not directly related to the school activity (since they were quite busy at the time).

When the permission of the principals for participating in the survey was granted as well as their approval of putting the questionnaire to the teachers in their work hours and that the teachers’ union representative would be asked to supervise it, the repositories were contacted by phone on account of the setup of the questionnaire. In this regard, an attempt was made to build up trust between parties emphasizing that full anonymity would be secured and all data would be treated confidentially. It was also mentioned that teachers could refuse or fail to answer. Finally, it was pointed out that the schools in question could benefit directly from the information acquired by the survey.

The union representatives of the schools put the questionnaire to the teachers simultaneously, collected the answers and mailed them back. The method of letting the union representatives pose the questionnaire secured most likely a better answering rate than if the principal or his representative would have supervised the task (Viggósson, 1998). All source material was sent to the schools January 8, 2005 and was returned a month later, or by the beginning of February. The intention was to send the questionnaire to the schools earlier but that was not possible because of the strike.

3.4. Questionnaires

There were two questionnaires. One was for teachers and the other for principals. The format of the questionnaires was carefully designed in order to secure face validity. The emphasis on the aesthetic side matters to the participants and when this is done with care it is to be expected that they show more interest in the questionnaire. The numbering of the questions was parallel in both questionnaires, i.e. the same number in both questionnaires refer to the same content – question 7 in both questionnaires, for instance, is: Do you feel good or bad at work? Both teachers and principals were asked about their opinion on the same subject as well, e.g. in question 28 in the teachers’ questionnaire: Does the principal make much/little demands upon you at work? The
same question in the principals’ questionnaire is: Do you make much/little demands upon teachers at work?

The response alternatives were also frequently parallel; e.g. question 46 in the teachers’ questionnaire is: Does the principal watch the pupils’ progress at his school? The same question in the principals’ questionnaire is: Do you watch pupils’ progress at your school? The response alternatives in both questionnaires are: very much, fairly/rather much, neither nor, rather little, very little. In order to facilitate comparison of statistical findings, the response alternatives for five questions in the principals’ questionnaire (questions 16, 30, 31, 43 and 44) are “most” (91-100%), “many” (61-90%), “both and” (41-60%), “several” (11-39%) and “few” (1-10%).

3.5. Types of Questions

In choosing questions it was decided mainly to use closed questions where the answers are on a scale. For instance: very well, rather well, both/and or/neither nor, rather badly, very badly. Generally five options are given and this is done to keep the questions in “balance,” i.e. with even length of both ends of the scale. It is important that the questions are in “balance” to foreclose that they become leading. For most questions two equal alternatives are given to counter the so called “acquiescent response style” (Karlsson, 2003).

An ordinal scale that estimates one dimension from e.g. “very pleased” to “very discontented” or “very clear” to “very unclear” was used. This is often referred to as the Likert scale which is an ordinal scale where each denomination is related to a word which is then given a number for processing. Most questions have a middle, i.e. “both and” or “neither nor” which yields a five step scale. Karlsson (2003) recommends a five step scale. He argues that compared to a four step scale, the five step scale grants additional information about those who have not taken a firm position. The five step scale ensures a more accurate measurement. It should be pointed out that one can always convert a finely divided scale into a broader scale by re-classifying the answers when they have been processed in a computer. If the scale of the questionnaire is broad the number of response alternatives cannot be increased afterwards and the researcher is stuck with a bad distribution in the findings of the questionnaire.

In addition, there are some more closed questions, e.g. on a nominal scale (e.g. gender, question 1) and a classified ratio scale (age, question 2). There are seven open-ended questions (questions 9b, 24b, 34b, 35b, 37b, 38b and 45b). Open-ended questions are meant to provide
more thorough answers as well as unexpected answers. It was decided to have most questions closed because of the number of respondents and because they are easier to classify. Such questions are more convenient both for the questioner and the respondent. An open-ended question makes more demands upon the respondents than a closed one, in particular when the answer has to be written. The processing of open-ended questions can be a difficult task since the answers must be classified (Karlsson, 2003).

3.6. The Choice of Questions

The choice of questions for the teachers and principals was based on the concepts explicated in the previous chapter, i.e. the concept of qualification that Stålhammar (1991) divides into four categories and the qualities of principals described by Sergiovanni (2001) as five different potencies or force. Undeniably, many of these factors overlap and can be reduced to more than one potency or category of qualification. Other scholars who have dealt with school administration were also taken into consideration, e.g. Haukur Viggósson (1998).

The first four questions of the questionnaire yield background information of sex, age, work experience and the age group that person teaches. Questions of this sort render information about the participants, such as whether the great majority of teachers are female with more than 15 years work experience, or whether there is a remarkably high percentage of young teachers.

1. Are you a male or a female?
2. What year were you born?
3. How long have you been teaching?
4. Which age group do you teach?

The next three questions (5-8) ask whether the work place makes demands upon the concerned, about illness due to strain and the condition at work. Research indicates that a good condition of the personnel at the workplace is a prerequisite of a successful work; teachers are no exception from this. It should also be noted that if the teachers’ job does not make demands upon the concerned it is as if the motivation to succeed fades. In this regard, though, the middle course is probably best since too much strain breaks people down (Hargreaves, 1998). Hargreaves also
points out that teachers’ and principals’ perception of time differs. Thus, the information obtained with these questions can be useful for principals in organizing teachers’ work hours.

5. Do you think the school is a workplace that puts much/little demands upon you?
6. Are you often/seldom ill due to strain at work?
7. Do you feel good/bad at work?

Questions 8-11 and question 28 deal with the interaction between the principal and teachers, both as regards personal matters and the morale at the workplace, and whether the principal makes demands upon teachers at work.

8. Do you partake much/little in strengthening the morale at work?
9. Do you think your interaction with the principal is good/bad?
10. Does the principal show understanding/not show understanding when you need to take care of personal matters?
11. Does the principal give you the opportunity to have much/little influence on decisions?
28. Does the principal make much/little demands upon you at work?

These questions are meant to give clues about the social competence of the principal, but a socially competent principal is capable of creating a good atmosphere within the institute and is in possession of a good communicability. Sergiovanni’s definition (2001) of the importance that the principal is competent at communication applies here, but the principal’s understanding of the personnel’s needs is fundamental to a smooth school activity.

Questions 12-16 centre on work methods and their success.

12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?
13. Do you have much/little control of what subjects you teach?
14. Do you have much/little control of the work hours?
15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?
16. Is your work experience and professional knowledge highly/poorly valued?

This cluster of questions is intended to provide insight into work methods and organizing skills internal to the school activity and reveal to what extent teachers take part in shaping it in
cooperation with the principal. Haukur Viggósson (1998) points out that teachers are much more likely to experience nearness or closeness to the principal when they feel that their opinions regarding organization are taken into consideration.

Questions 17-20 and question 47 address praise, both when a teacher praises the principal and his colleagues and when the principal praises the teachers or pupils.

17. Do you often/seldom receive praise from the principal for good performance?
18. Do you often/seldom praise the principal for good performance?
19. Do you often/seldom praise your colleagues for good performance?
20. Do your colleagues often/seldom receive praise from their closest superior for good performance?
21. Do you often/seldom receive praise from the principal for good performance?
22. Do you often/seldom praise the principal for good performance?
23. Do you often/seldom praise your colleagues for good performance?
24. Do your colleagues often/seldom receive praise from their closest superior for good performance?
25. Does the principal praise pupils much/little for good performance at school?

Praise concerns the interaction between people at school and can be charged up to the social competence of the principal considering that when people are praised it improves the interaction between them and the school culture is thereby enhanced. Praise is also essential to Sergiovanni’s (2001) definition of the human force and the principal’s ability to communicate and his understanding of teachers’ needs.

Questions 21-24 check teachers’ accessibility to the principal and the encouragement he affords them to seek retraining and continuous education. Teachers are also asked about their opinion of the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education.

21. Do you have ready/limited access to the principal?
22. Do you often/seldom call upon the principal when you need support?
23. Do you receive encouragement from the principal to seek retraining and continuous education?
24. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education of teachers?

These questions may be charged up to Stålhammar’s category of organization competence, i.e. the principal’s capacity to organize matters of retraining and continuous education within the school as well as coordinate and organize this force with teachers to attain the objectives of the school. The aforementioned questions may also be charged up to communication according to
Sergiovanni’s (2001) categorization of human potencies or force as well as the principal’s qualification in the field of pedagogy and his ability to develop strategy and supervision.

Questions 25-27 and questions 39 and 45 deal with the collaboration of administrators, the division of labour within the school, information about the principal’s decision making, channels within the school and the flow of information to the school community.

25. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration of administrators?
26. Do you receive much/little information about the decision making of the principal?
27. Is the division of labour within the school clear/hazy?
29. Do you find channels within the school satisfactory/unsatisfactory?
45. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the flow of information to the school community?

These questions may be charged up to the principal’s organization competence according to Stålhammar (1991) concerning division of labour and channels. These questions may also be charged up to Sergiovanni’s (2001) technical potency or force in administration technique.

Question 29 asks whether the principal visits the classrooms to check on the teaching.

29. Does the principal often/seldom visit classes to watch the teaching?

This question can be charged up to Stålhammar’s (1991) category of ideological competence as the principal constantly seeks to consolidate his knowledge and gain overview that enables him to show flexibility in his administration. The question can also be charged up to Sergiovanni’s definition of the pedagogy in relation to educational force when the principal exhibits educational concern.

Questions 30-38 deal with attitudes towards disciplinary matters and their treatment, containment with the time spent on collaboration and the efficiency of meetings (teachers’ meetings, teachers’ committee meetings, divisions meetings, year’s meetings and subject’s meetings).

30. Is your attitude towards disciplinary matters regarding pupils often/seldom the same as the principal’s/your nearest superior’s?
31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters regarding pupils the same as the principal’s?
32. Are teachers’ meetings a forum where you frequently/seldom get the opportunity to express your views on matters regarding the school?
33. Are teachers’ meetings efficient/inefficient?
34. Are teachers’ committee meetings efficient/inefficient?
35. Are divisions, years, and subject’s meetings efficient/inefficient?
36. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers’ collaboration?
37. Is there much/little collaboration between those who teach different age levels?
38. Is the time of collaboration between teachers efficient/inefficient?
39. Do you find the channels within the school adequate/inadequate?

Order and effective treatment at meetings and treatment of disciplinary matters are important for all principals with regard to coordination of work and improvements of the school activity to reach set goals. In addition, the ideological vision of the principal has to be systematic, since he must be capable of interpreting the vision of the school as Stålhammar (1991) points out. These questions can also be related to Sergiovanni’s (2001) definition of technical force, for technical implementation of meetings can be decisive as to which meetings are effective and come in use for the school activity. The cultural force according to Sergiovanni’s (2001) definition hovers over, so to speak, for work methods and meetings are a substantial part of the school culture.

Questions 40-44 cover the policy of teaching and pedagogy, whether it is intelligible and implemented in a systematic way, and the principal’s and teachers’ involvement in it.

40. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy clear/unclear?
41. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy being implemented systematically?
42. What is the part of the principal in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?
43. Did you participate much/little in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?
44. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy accessible/inaccessible to you?

These questions bear upon the principal’s ideological competence that enables him to rationalize his decisions on the basis of it. As Haukur Viggósson (1998) points out, it is important that the policy regarding teaching and pedagogy is clear in order for teachers to follow it in their work. As teachers realize that the principal is in possession of wide ranging knowledge of the entire school activity they gain more confidence in him as a leader. At the same time, a common vision of the school activity emerges that every one can rally around (cf. also Sergiovanni, 2001).
3.7. Description of Methodology

For the analysis of the data, the software program SPSS 11.0 was being used, which is a specially designed statistics program and widely used in operations research. The data from the schools was marked to ensure that it would be correctly filled in the computer and then punched into the program. The sample will be accounted for, i.e. the respondents and their gender and age distribution is examined. Drop outs will also be accounted for, both external drop outs, i.e. the respondents of questionnaire, and internal drop outs, i.e. those questions skipped by the respondents.

The methods used for analyzing the data are, in the first place, descriptive statistics and, secondly, factor analysis. In descriptive statistics the frequency of each question is identified and filled in a frequency table. The table is used to calculate percentage and draw graphs. Pie charts are used to demonstrate the dispersion of the data because percentage is being emphasized.

The method used here to describe the findings of the questionnaire in the four schools, with examples taken from school D, is so called cumulative percent which is one of the methods for interpreting data in descriptive statistics. It is considered useful e.g. in order to know how many answers is below or above a certain limit. Hence, the response alternatives “very good,” “very well,” “very much,” “rather good,” “rather well,” and “rather much” are interpreted positively or as potency and in a similar manner negatively or as weakness in the case of response alternatives like “rather little,” “rather seldom,” “very little,” “very seldom,” “rather unclear,” or “very unclear,” etc. When the response alternatives are “neither nor” or “both and” they are interpreted as neutral.

Factor analysis is based upon the Pearson correlation coefficient and it is intended to find out whether there is a relation between the questions. When a large proportion of the questions have for some reason something in common it is said that a factor is being created. The questionnaire is comprised of 47 questions and 42 of them are directed at certain attitudes towards various matters or factors. When these 42 questions are fitted in a factor analysis the “varimax” factor rotation is being used, which is an orthogonal rotation and is most common in factor analysis.

Once the factor analysis is completed the factors are fitted in the Cronbach’s alpha reliability statistics that yields an outcome indicating the internal stability of the questions; this
provides one confirmation of the reliability of the questionnaire. If the alpha coefficient is higher than .7 there is much internal stability. Factors that reach the reliability coefficient .7 are selected.

Eta squared coefficient is searched out. This is a correlation coefficient between a nominal variable, which is an independent variable with few values (e.g. school), on the one hand, and an interval or ratio variable, which is a dependent variable with many values (e.g. factor), on the other. Eta squared correlation coefficient grants a statistical explanation, i.e. of how much schools explain statistically in the factors. If the Eta squared is low < (lower than) .05 (5%) it means that there is little difference between schools regarding the factor in question. When it is low, the Eta squared also indicates that the questionnaire/measure is robust, that is, equally good for different schools in the school sample and should thus be good for other schools as well (Howell, 2002).

The new factors from the factor analysis are compared between schools statistically (mean, median, standard deviation and the distribution) and analyzed with a Box Plot. In a Box Plot, the box includes more than 50% of the data. The box contains a line that signifies the median of the data. This Box Plot shows well the distribution where the numbers are divided into quarters and it also draws out outliers if they are present.

3.8. Summary

This chapter discussed the methodology as it is always based on a systematic and precise collection of data. The data were collected in the wake of an eight week long teachers’ strike that most likely had an effect on the participation in the questionnaire because of dissatisfaction with the wage contract.

The construction of the two questionnaires was a double-barreled work. On the one hand, it was of a technical nature where the five steps Likert ordinal scale was opted for. On this scale the questions are in “balance” and words can be related to numbers in processing. It is also secured that the attitudes of respondents who are not determined come forth. On the other hand, the questions were materially related to the scholars Stålhammar (1991), Sergiovanni (2001) and Haukur Viggósson (1998). The attitudes that appear in the questions are those of the researcher who relied on the aforementioned scholars. This procedure has its pros and cons. The main advantage is that the variety of questions is great and covers most parts of the principal’s daily work. The main disadvantage is that such a questionnaire as a whole has not been developed
before (as far as the researcher knows) so there were no direct prototypes available even if many questionnaires were checked, among other things the study of Haukur Viggósson (1998). The merit of this thesis is that principals of other schools do not have to carry through a factor analysis of the questionnaire, i.e. check which questions are directed at what, if they want to look into specific aspects of the school activity, such as interaction, praise, etc.

Statistics was processed in the software program SPSS where correlation between questions was found, a factor analysis carried through and Eta Squared calculated. The program also enables one to verify the reliability of the questionnaire in so far as it is correctly structured and the data properly treated and processed.
Chapter 4. Results

This chapter is divided into two parts and discusses the findings of the research. The first part covers the sample (the respondents of the questionnaire), the number of respondents, as well as gender and age distribution. Subsequently, the statistic utility of the questionnaire is addressed, i.e. in what way administrators can make use of the information yielded by the questionnaire. Examples are taken from the findings of school D to clarify the discussion, i.e. statistic recapitulation and comparison of the teachers’ and the principal’s questionnaires. School D was randomly selected from the four schools that participated in the survey, but the findings and discussion of the remaining three schools are to be found in appendices.

In the second part, the findings of the factor analysis (cf. chapter 3) will be accounted for, i.e. what questions were materially related and came under the same factors (had something in common) and the factors examined with regard to the views of the scholars discussed in previous chapters. The reliability of the factors and the statistic difference between them (mean, median, standard deviation and Eta Squared) will be considered. Finally, the distribution of the factors is compared in a Box Plot. The chapter concludes with a recapitulation.

4.1. Findings. Part 1

4.1.1 The Number of Participants

As pointed out before, four schools participated in the survey and there were two questionnaires, one for the four principals and another one for the teachers. All four principals answered the questionnaire, one female and three males. The total number of respondents among the teachers was 103 and the response rate was 71%. The response rate in the schools was from 65% in school C located in Reykjavík up to a little less than 79% in school B located in the country side. It is most likely that the response rate would have been higher if a teachers’ strike would not have come to being at the time the questionnaire was posed as was previously mentioned. All respondents answered the questionnaire at the same time in each school.

2 The teachers’ strike lasted a little more than eight weeks, but then the government passed a law prohibiting the strike and teachers returned to work in the shadow of this injunction.
4.1.2 Gender Distribution

The gender division of the sample was as shown in table 1, 23 males or 22.3% of the respondents, and 80 females or 77.7% of the respondents.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Valid</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>22.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>77.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>103</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

4.1.3. Age distribution

The age division of the group was as shown in tables 2 and diagram 1. The majority or 39 teachers were born between 1960 and 1969 or 38% of the respondents, 30 teachers were born in 1950-1959 or a little less than 30%. Then 25 teachers, or about 24% of them, were born in 1970-1979 and 8 teachers were born in 1940-1949, or a little less than 8%. One teacher was born in 1980 or later.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question 2. What year were you born?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Frequency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1940-1949</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.4. Drop outs

*External drop out.* It was only registered how many teachers in each school did not answer the questionnaire, without distinguishing whether they were present, ill or on leave. An enquiry with the principals did not reveal whether the teachers who declined to answer formed a specific group, i.e. older teachers or those who most actively expressed themselves during the strike. The drop out was 28%, which is not considered to be much (Karlsson, 2003).

*Internal drop out.* Internal drop out varied among the schools. In one school, only one teacher declined to answer one single question, but this individual counted for 7.77% of the teachers at the school. In schools B and C, six teachers declined to answer specific questions. Internal drop out decreases the reliability of the questions that are not being answered, but does not affect the questionnaire beside that.

In questions 9b, 24b, 34b, 35b, 37b, 38b, and 45b respondents were allowed to add something in writing, but only 5 of them utilized that possibility. One wonders why so few respondents added written comments to their answers. They may have concluded that there was no reason doing it, as the questions were clear, enough or perhaps there was no desire or interest in doing it, for the interest usually decreases as the effort increases.

The additional information such questions yield may be important for school administrators, for they grant a more exact picture of the view of the respective teacher who answers the question. It also improves the face validity of the questionnaire when respondents have the chance to give more detailed information if they wish to do so. However, this additional information does not affect the findings of the research as such.

4.1.5. The Utility of the Questionnaire

To demonstrate the utility of the questionnaires, examples from school D are being used for clarification in the discussion. If administrators want to utilize the findings of the teachers’ questionnaire it is convenient for them to examine frequency tables with the questions depicting the views of their teachers, which in turn may be compared with their own conclusions (cf. tables 3a-d). The findings of each question in the tables present both the number of respondents (frequency) and valid percentage for each item, i.e. those who answered the respective question. The last column is for cumulative percent (i.e. valid percentage added up one after another).
Those who did not answer a certain question are also shown (cf. internal drop out) and those respondents do not count as “valid percentage” nor are they counted in the column cumulative percent (see table 3d).

Frequency tables: Examples

Table 3 a
8. Do you partake much/little in strengthening the morale at work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very much</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
<td>13.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fairly much</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>60.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither nor</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>30.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather little</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very little</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 b
12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very fruitful</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fairly fruitful</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>50.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>both and</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>43.3</td>
<td>93.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather little</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3 c
15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very content</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fairly content</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>70.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither nor</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>20.0</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather discontent</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>96.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very discontent</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.6. Basic Information

Basic information about the respondents appears in the first four questions: 1. Are you a male or a female? 2. What year were you born? 3. How long have you been teaching? 4. Which age level do you teach? The information rendered by these questions may be compared with all the other questions of the questionnaires and they yield important additional information that is useful with regard to a more extensive processing for each school. It is interesting for the principal to know, for instance, whether there is a difference between genders in the case of teachers’ condition (table 4). Table 4 (below) shows that there is not a significant difference between genders in that school, although the males seem to feel better in general than the females.

Table 4.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Are you a male or a female?</th>
<th>7. Do you feel good/bad at work?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male</td>
<td>very good</td>
<td>fairly good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Count</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>16.7%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>30.0%</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>frequencies</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 3d

41. Is the school's policy regarding teaching and pedagogy being implemented systematically?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Valid Percent</th>
<th>Cumulative Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very systematically</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fairly systematically</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>73.3</td>
<td>78.6</td>
<td>85.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither nor</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.0</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>96.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rather unsystematically</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>93.3</td>
<td>100</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Missing System 2 6.7

Total 30 100
It is also possible to compare the age of teachers and their condition at work, cf. table 5 below. It appears that 50% of teachers in school D who are born in 1960-1969 feel good at school and the teachers in general feel good except for one who does not take a stand.

Table 5.

2. What year were you born? * 7. Do you feel good/bad at work? Cross tabulation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>7. Do you feel good/bad at work?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>very good</td>
<td>fairly good</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. born 1940-1949</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1950-1959</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-1969</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1970-1979</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>10.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1980-1989</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Frequencies</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is a lot of possibilities for comparison depending on what is to be reviewed and what administrators are seeking out. To take another example, e.g. whether there is a connection between the age of teachers and their opinion regarding the utility of personnel interviews, it appears that the age distribution is largest among teachers teaching at the intermediary age level and two of them hold that personnel interviews is of little use to them. (cf Table 6).

Table 6.


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>youngest level 1-3 grade</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>very fruitful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Which age group do you teach?</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>intermediary 4-7 grade</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>oldest level 8-10 grade</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>more then one level</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The attitude questions may also be compared in numerous ways. The attitude of those who answered question 7. Do you feel good/bad at work? for instance, may be compared with question 15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours? (cf. Table 7).

Table 7.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>7. Do you feel good/bad at work?</th>
<th>15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>very content</td>
<td>fairly content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>very good</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fair good</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>neither nor</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>13.3%</td>
<td>23.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>Count</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>20.0%</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>% of Total</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In table 7 above we can see that one teacher who feels good at work is rather discontent with his work hours. We can also see that 70% of the teachers who are content with their work hours also feel good at work (here the categories very content and fairly content have been added up). One individual is very discontent with his work hours but does not take a position regarding his condition. This outcome may perhaps not tell the general reader much, but the respective principal can read more out of it and it may proof useful to him as he knows the infrastructure and backdrop of his school.

The numerous possibilities of comparing the basic information with other questions or comparing the attitude questions yield information/clues one can learn from since they inform us about the attitudes of the respondents at the time the questionnaire is posed. It is important for school administrators to know the attitudes of their teachers and compare them with their own. It should be noted, however, that the findings do not represent a development and without the teachers’ questionnaire the principals would not have the same overview of teachers’ opinions on various matters pertaining to the school. If another measurement was carried out in the wake of a work procedure, for instance, it would be possible to compare both findings, i.e. of the questionnaire and the new measurement. This work procedure or other factors, such as changed conditions of teachers or new attitudes among the personnel, teachers and administrators alike, could lead to improvements.
4.1.7. School D

For convenience and clarification of the utility of the questionnaire it was decided to reveal the findings of one of the four schools that participated in the questionnaire and school D was randomly selected. In this way the utility of the questionnaire for a single school should become more transparent.

The 47 questions were divided into seven categories to facilitate the comparison of the principals’ and teachers’ questionnaires so that it could be figured out where their agreements lie. In this way it is easier for the respective principal to process the findings with his personnel. The following classification was made for the four schools that participated in the survey.

1) Basic information (questions 1-4).
2) The school as a work place (questions 5-8).
3) Interaction with the principal (questions 28, 9, 10, 17-20, 47, 13, 16, 14-15, 11, and 12).
4) Council, support, retraining and continuous education (questions 22, 21, 23, and 24).
5) Collaboration of administrators, channels and flow of information within and outside the school (questions 25, 27, 26, 46, 45, 39, and 29).
6) The attitudes of teachers regarding work methods, different meetings and collaboration in the school (questions 30-34, 38, 35, 37, and 36).
7) The policy regarding teaching and pedagogy (questions 40-44).

This classification was inspired by the concepts of Sergiovanni and Stålhammar as mentioned before.

In the discussion of the findings pie charts are being used which present them graphically in percentages.

Presentation of school D

School D is located in a fishing village in the countryside. There were 30 out of 40 teachers working at the school who answered the questionnaire, and 10 were absent. The principal answered the questionnaire put to him as well. One teacher equals 3.3%. In the recapitulation and the discussion it is always referred to active respondents, i.e. those who answered the questionnaire and drop outs (external and internal) are therefore not taken into consideration.
4.1.8. Comparison of the Findings for Teachers and Principals

1) Basic Information
Two administrators are employed at school D, the principal and the vice-principal, and 40 teachers. The gender distribution is 23.3% males and 76.7% females. About 70% of the teachers are born in 1940-1969 and 50% between 1960 and 1969. A little less than 47% have been teaching for 1-5 years but slightly more than 53% have been teaching longer than that, thereof 36.7% for 16 years or longer. Almost 73.3% of the teachers teach at a specific age level, 33% at the youngest level, 26.7% at the intermediary level and 13.3% at the oldest level. A little less than 30% teach at more than one level. The principal has no teaching obligations.

2) The School as a Work Place
A little less than 95% of the teachers think the school is a challenging work place and the principal agrees, but 6.7% answered “both and.” As regards teachers’ illness, the teachers all agree that absenteeism on account of illness is from 2-3 days per school year up to 2-3 days per term. The principal disagrees; in his view it is “rather high.” It should be noted that the principal has the whole picture in mind, i.e. the total number of absenteeism, but every teacher perceives the matter from his own standpoint. Almost 97% of the teachers say that they feel good at work while 3.3% are neutral. About 60% of the teachers participate much in strengthening the work morale against 10% who contribute little, but 30% are neutral. The principal goes “rather much” in for strengthening the work morale.

3) Interaction with the Principal
In 73.3% of cases teachers believe that the principal makes much demand upon them at work, while 26.7% of them are neutral. The principal claims to make “rather much” demands upon teachers at work. Almost 93% of the teachers are content with their dealings with the principal and consider him to be understanding when they need to take care of personal matters. In 10% of cases the teachers say that the principal often praises them, while 56.7% say “both and.” On the other hand, 33.3% of teachers hold that the principal seldom praises them. The principal holds he praises teachers “rather often.”

In 3.3% of cases, teachers hold that they praise the principal “rather often,” but their colleagues “often” in 36.7% of cases. When there comes to pupils, 53.6% of the teachers think
the principal praises pupils much, 10.7% believe he praises them little and 35.7% are neutral. The principal thinks he praises pupils “rather much.”

Almost 57% of the teachers hold that they have much to say about what disciplines they teach. They also hold that their work experience and professional knowledge is appreciated, or in 63.3% of cases, while 10% say that it is not. The principal does not take a position on whether experience and professional knowledge is appreciated.

In 60% of cases, teachers believe they have much control of their work hours against 16.7% of teachers who claim that the have little control of it, but 23.3% are neutral. About 70% of the teachers are content with their work hours but 10% are discontent. The principal holds that most of the teachers are content with the work hours. In 50% of cases the teachers think the principal gives them a fair opportunity to influence decision making, but 6.7% think they rarely get the opportunity to do so, 43.3% are neutral and the principal is neutral as well. In 50% of cases, teachers hold that the principal gives them the opportunity to have much influence on decisions, but 6.7% believe they have little influence, 43.3% are neutral, and the principal is neutral as well. The principal and 16.7% of teachers hold that their colleagues "rather often" receive praise from their closest superior for good performance, 60% of teachers are neutral and 23.4% think that teachers seldom receive praise from their closest superior.

The principal holds that personnel interviews are “rather fruitful” and 50% of the teachers think so too. Then 6.7% of the teachers think that personnel interviews are rather fruitless but 43.3% are neutral.

4) Counsel, Support, Retraining and Continuous Education
About 50% of the teachers resort to the principal when they need support against 36.7% who rarely do so. Almost 97% of the teachers agree that they have ready access to the principal and the principal is of the same opinion. About 70% of the teachers say that the principal encourages them to seek retraining and continuous education, and 76.7% of them are content with the school’s policy regarding these matters, but 23.3% are neutral. The principal is “rather content” with the policy and encourages the teachers “rather often” to seek retraining and continuous education.

5) Collaboration of Administrators, Channels and Delivery of Information within and Outside the School
A little more than 85% of the teachers are rather content with the collaboration of the school administrators and the principal agrees, but slightly more than 13% are neutral (“neither nor”). The division of labor within the school is clear according to 86.7% of the teachers and the principal approves, but 10% of the teachers are neutral, and 3.3% of them think the division of labor is hazy. In 50% of cases the teachers think they receive much information about the principal’s decision making, against 10% who claim that they get little information and 40% are neutral. Also, 50% of the teachers believe that the principal watches the pupils’ progress carefully, but 10% think he does not, and 39.3% are neutral. The principal thinks he watches pupils’ progress fairly much.

About 75% of the teachers are satisfied with the flow of information to the school community, but 3.6% are dissatisfied. The principal is satisfies with the flow of information.

As regards the channels within the school, 86.2% of the teachers find them satisfactory but 13.8% are neutral. The principal takes them to be all right. In addition, 70% of the teachers claim that the principal visits classes ones a month or 2-3 times per term to watch the teaching, but 30% claim that he has never been there. The principal maintains that he visits classes 2-3 times per term to watch the teaching.

6) The Attitudes of Teachers towards Work Methods, Various Meetings and Collaboration within the School
In 72.4% of cases the teachers share the attitude of the principal or the nearest superior concerning disciplinary matters, 6.8% rarely agree, but 20.7% are neutral. When asked about the treatment of such matters 86.2% of the teachers agree with the principal, but 10.3% are neutral or do not take a position. Teachers’ meetings are a forum where 65.5% of teachers believe they can often express themselves about matters pertaining to the school, but 3.4% of them claim that they seldom get the opportunity to express themselves at these meetings, and 31% are neutral. Over 72% of teachers consider teachers’ meetings to be effective, but 32% hold that teachers’ committee meetings are effective, and 12% consider teachers’ committee meetings to be ineffective. More than 24% of the teachers are neutral with regard to teachers’ meetings, but 56% in the case of teachers’ committee meetings. The principal takes teachers’ committee meetings to be rather effective, but he is neutral about teachers’ meetings.
About 64% of the teachers hold that the time of collaboration between teachers is effective, against 32.1% who are neutral. There is unanimity among the teachers (100%) that divisions, years and subjects meetings are effective.

Almost 36% of the teachers think that collaboration between those who teach at different age levels is much, against 25% who find it rather little, 39.3% are neutral. The principal considers the collaboration between teachers teaching at different age levels to be rather much. The teachers are satisfied with the collaboration among themselves in 96.6% of cases and the principal shares this opinion, 3.4% of the teachers are neutral.

7) The Policy regarding Teaching and Pedagogy
The policy regarding teaching and pedagogy is deemed “clear” by 89.3% of the teachers and the principal holds the same view, but 10.7% are neutral. In 85.7% of cases the teachers also think that the policy is being systematically implemented. Over 96% of the teachers believed that the principal played an important role in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy, but 3.7% were neutral. About 30% of the teachers also believed that they played an important role in shaping this policy, but 22.2% thought that their contribution was insignificant, and 48.1% were neutral. In 81.5% of cases the teachers believe that the policy regarding teaching and pedagogy is accessible and the principal agrees. Over 18% of the teachers are neutral.

Discussion
The gender division of teachers in school D is 23.3% males and 76.7% females. The age division among the teachers is somewhat uneven; most of them are between 36 and 45 years old. The teachers’ work experience is also variable, but a little less than half of them have been teaching for 1-5 years, and about half of them have more than 16 years work experience (cf. pie chart for question 3 below). The principal has 16-20 years work experience. A little less than three fourth of the teachers teach at a certain age level while slightly more than one fourth of them teach at more than one level (cf. pie chart for question 4 below). The principal has no teaching obligations.
The findings indicate that the great majority (40% + 53.3%) of teachers think the school is a good workplace where they feel good and face a challenging job (cf. pie charts for questions 5 and 7 below).

The teachers deem that they are rarely absent due to illness, or once a month up to 2-3 times per school year. The principal holds that the teachers are “rather much” absent because of illness. The perception of teachers and principals differ in this respect. Slightly more than half of the teachers and the principal believe they make a contribution to strengthen the work morale.
5. Do you think the school is a workplace that puts much/little demands upon you?

- both and fairly much: 6.7%
- fairly much: 40.0%
- very much: 53.3%

7. Do you feel good/bad at work?

- neither nor: 3.3%
- fairly good: 50.0%
- very good: 46.7%

The majority of the teachers say that the interaction between the principal and teachers is good (cf. pie chart for question 9 below). The principal shows understanding when teachers need to take care of personal matters and he makes demands upon them at work (cf. pie chart for question 28 below).

9. Do you think your interaction with the principal is good/bad?

- neither nor: 6.7%
- fairly good: 43.3%
- very good: 50.0%

28. Does the principal make much/little demands upon you at work?

- neither nor: 26.7%
- fairly much: 66.7%
- very much: 6.7%

The principal values teachers’ work experience and professional knowledge highly and the majority of teachers believe they have much control of what subjects they teach. The principal and a little more than half of the teachers agree as to how much control teachers have of their work hours, and more than half of them are content with the arrangement of the work hours (cf. pie chart...
for question 15 below). The principal and about half of the teachers hold that personnel interviews are fruitful, but a little less than half of the teachers are neutral (cf. pie chart for question 12 below).

*12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rather little</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly fruitful</td>
<td>46.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very fruitful</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Both and</td>
<td>43.3%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Very discontent</td>
<td>3.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rather discontent</td>
<td>6.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Neither nor</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fairly content</td>
<td>50.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very content</td>
<td>20.0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

It varies how much praise is being used at work and the experience of the principal and the teachers is not always the same. The principal praises pupils “fairly much” and a little more than half of the teachers agree (cf. pie chart for question 47 below). The principal and teachers’ nearest superiors praise teachers more often than the teachers praise the principal. Teachers praise their colleagues often in a little more than one third of cases (cf. pie chart for question 19 below).
Access to the principal is exemplary as nearly all the teachers hold that they have ready access to him (cf. pie chart for question 21 below) and a little less than one fourth of them call upon the principal when they need support. The principal and a little less than three quarters of the teachers hold that the principal often encourages them to seek retraining and continuous education and the same percentage of teachers and the principal are content with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education (cf. pie chart for question 24 below).
The majority of the teachers and the principal unanimously hold that the collaboration among the administrators is good and that the division of labor within the school is clear (cf. pie chart for questions 25 and 27 below). The principal and slightly more than three forth of the teachers find the channels within the school adequate. Half of the teachers along with the principal hold that they receive much information about the decision making of the principal, and three fourth of them are content with the flow of information to the school community.

25. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration with administrators?

- neither nor
  - 13.3%
- fairly satisfied
  - 46.7%
- very satisfied
  - 40.0%

27. Is the division of labor within the school clear/hazy?

- very clear
  - 80.0%
- fairly clear
  - 6.7%
- rather hazy
  - 3.3%
- neither nor
  - 10.0%

About three fourth of the teachers and the principal agree on how disciplinary matters regarding pupils are to be treated (cf. pie chart for questions 31 below). The principal and the majority of teachers also agree that teachers can express themselves at teachers’ meetings. The principal and a great majority of teachers deem all meetings effective except teachers’ committee meetings (cf. pie chart for questions 33 and 35 below). One fourth of the teachers hold that there is little collaboration between teachers teaching at different age levels. The principal and a little more that one third of the teachers claim that there is much collaboration between age levels.
31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters the same as principal's?

- in every case (91-100%): 20.0%
- in most cases (61-90%): 63.3%
- in few cases (11-40%): 3.3%
- both and (41-60%): 3.3%
- neither nor: 10.0%

33. Are teachers' meetings efficient/inefficient?

- very efficient: 6.7%
- fairly efficient: 63.3%
- rather inefficient: 3.3%
- neither nor: 3.3%
- rather inefficient: 23.3%

A little less than one third of the teachers do not take a position with regard to the effectiveness of teachers’ meetings, a little less than on third of them are neutral concerning the time of teachers’ collaboration, and about half of them are neutral in the case of teachers’ committee meetings. The majority of teachers and the principal are content with the collaboration among teachers (cf. pie chart for question 36 below).

35. Are division, year, and subject’s meetings efficient/inefficient?

- Missing: 3.3%
- very efficient: 30.0%
- fairly efficient: 66.7%

36. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers’ collaboration?

- neither nor: 3.3%
- fairly satisfied: 50.0%
- very satisfied: 43.3%
The teachers are more or less unanimous regarding the policy on teaching and pedagogy (cf. pie chart for question 40 below). A great majority of the teachers hold that the principal’s role in shaping the policy is large and a little less than one third of them also hold that they participated in this task. The majority of the teachers think the policy is accessible and hold that they follow it in a systematic way (cf. pie chart for question 41 below).

Summary
It has been demonstrated above how the questionnaires may be used to compare the views of teachers and principals with regard to basic information and information about attitudes.

Two of the principals express in letters (cf. appendices) that they utilized the findings for further work and processing of internal evaluation carried out in their schools last winter.

It was decided to present the findings in the above-mentioned way, but this format is in no way exhaustive.
It is easy to do all major descriptive results of the study with simple software, such as the frequency tables and cross tabulation. It was chosen, however, to use SPSS with all analyses as that software program can be employed as well in simple and complex calculations.

It has been suggested that the questionnaires could be posed again when a certain time has passed for comparison, and to account for its pros and cons. Another possibility would be to continue the research by carrying out interviews (qualitative research).

Questionnaires for evaluating school activity, whether open or closed, or other assessment devices like interviews, have their advantages and disadvantages. As many scholars have pointed out (Hansen & Sigurðsson, 1998), gathering information to facilitate change and development in school activity is a prerequisite for changes in schools. The treatment of such information must be fully confidential and those who hold them must have a good judgment in order not to misconstrue the data.

### 4.2. Findings. Part 2.

#### 4.2.1. Factor Analysis

The findings of the factor analysis will be discussed in this part. As was mentioned in the chapter on methodology above, factor analysis is a way to find certain basic categories or factors that are common to the responses of the participants in the survey. The common features that occur in the responses direct certain questions into a common category or factor. All the attitude questions were processed in the computer program (factor analysis) and the strongest factors were singled out.

In the factor analysis five factors occurred that were strongest and they are labeled F1, F2, F3, F4, and F5. These factors consist of 25 out of 42 attitude questions in the questionnaire and statistically they explain 45.5% of all the variables. There are numerous other factors that cannot be seen in advance and are simply inexplicable, like some external stimulus that caused one teacher to answer in a different way than he would otherwise have done, etc. (see table 9).
In table 9 the factors (components) are shown in the first column, then there is the total that indicates how many variables (questions) this factor influences, i.e. 9.938/42 that yields the percentage of variance explained, and the last column includes cumulative percentage, i.e. the numbers in the columns when they have been added up (cumulative %). The first factor explains almost one quarter (23.11%), or nearly ten variables, the next factor explains a little less than three, etc.

**Table 9**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>% of Variance</th>
<th>Cumulative %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>9.94</td>
<td>23.11</td>
<td>23.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.86</td>
<td>6.64</td>
<td>29.76</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.52</td>
<td>5.86</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>2.29</td>
<td>5.32</td>
<td>40.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>1.91</td>
<td>4.45</td>
<td><strong>45.38</strong>*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 10 below includes the results of the factor analysis with the questions that constitute the factors where each factor is written in bold and italics. It is also shown how each question influences other factors. The alfa reliability coefficient is registered below each factor. As may be seen the reliability of all the factors is more than 0.7 which is considered a good reliability index.
An overview of the questions that constitute the five factors.

Table 10. Rotated Component Matrix

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component</th>
<th>F.1</th>
<th>F.2</th>
<th>F.3</th>
<th>F.4</th>
<th>F.5</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>.22</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.9</td>
<td>.75</td>
<td></td>
<td>.15</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.30</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.10</td>
<td>.74</td>
<td>.34</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.11</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.22</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>-12</td>
<td>.32</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.42</td>
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<td>.80</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.12</td>
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<tr>
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<td>.77</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.23</td>
<td>.31</td>
<td>.54</td>
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<td>.47</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.26</td>
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<td>.42</td>
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<td>.37</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>.25</td>
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<td>.15</td>
<td>-.20</td>
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<td>.27</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.68</td>
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<td>Q.29</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Q.17</td>
<td>.46</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td></td>
<td>.58</td>
<td>.36</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.41</td>
<td>.48*</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.52</td>
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</tr>
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<td>Q.12</td>
<td>.32</td>
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<tr>
<td>Q.13</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>.61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Alpha = .82  .78  .74  .75  .73

*It is permissible to move one factor to another if the difference between the numbers is less than .1. This has been done with the result that the reliability of the factors increased. (For instance, question 23 Do you receive encouragement from the principal to seek retraining and continuous education? enters factor F5 instead of factor F2 because it is materially related to this factor).

4.2.2. Discussion of the Factors

The five factors constituted by the 25 questions and the 17 questions that fall outside the factors are now to be discussed. Each factor is put in a frame and given as clear a label as possible in accordance with the material content common to the questions. Below the questions is the number of respondents (n of cases) and the number of questions (n of items).
The first factor, that is labeled **Interaction with the principal**, is constituted by 6 questions:

| Q. 9   | Do you think your interaction with the principal is good/bad? |
| Q. 21  | Do you have ready/limited access to the principal? |
| Q. 10  | Does the principal show understanding/not show understanding when you need to take care of personal matters? |
| Q. 11  | Does the principal give you the opportunity to have much/little influence on decisions? |
| Q. 22  | Do you often/seldom call upon the principal when you need support? |
| Q. 26  | Do you receive much/little information about the decision making of the principal? |

**N of Cases = 101 (number of participants)**

**N of Items = 6 (number of questions)**

**Alpha = .82**

This factor alone explains 23.11% of all the variables, or a little less than a quarter, and is therefore the most important one. All these questions are centered on the interaction with the principal in one way or another as well as access to him. The reliability is high, or Alpha .82.

Interaction with the principal is the single human factor that influences most other aspects of the school activity. The complexity of the principal’s position is among the most influential impetus of the school activity and his closeness to teachers reinforces their faith in him and enhances the interaction between them. Yet, if the principal is not competent at communication much closeness might spoil his administration of the school instead of being the driving force that helps him lead the activity in the direction he aims for.
The second factor, labeled **Teaching and pedagogy**, consists of questions that concern the policy regarding teaching and pedagogy. It includes the following four questions:

Q. 40 Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy clear/unclear?
Q. 42 What is the part of the principal in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?
Q. 44 Is the school's policy regarding teaching and pedagogy accessible/inaccessible to you?
Q. 41 Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy being implemented systematically?

**N of Cases = 97 (number of participants)**

**N of Items = 4 (number of questions)**

Alpha = .78

All the questions related to the policy regarding teaching and pedagogy fell into this factor except question 43. Did you participate much/little in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy? One wonders why teachers’ participation did not enter the factor. One possible explanation is that they did not participate much in shaping the policy; a little less than one third of them participated much in shaping it. Another reason could be that the policy had already been formed when many of the teachers were hired at the school. Without a doubt, it is most successful when the principal shapes the policy in cooperation with his teachers since it is supposed to represent a common vision of the school activity that every one can look to. This common vision serves as a guidepost for the personnel in their daily work at every school. The faith in a school’s leadership increases if the personnel can be united around this vision.

The third factor, labeled **Collaboration and flow of information**, consists of questions that concern this field. It includes the following 6 questions:
Q. 38 Is the time of collaboration between teachers efficient/inefficient?
Q. 45 Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the flow of information to the school community?
Q. 36 Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers’ collaboration?
Q. 15 Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?
Q. 39 Do you find the channels within the school adequate/inadequate?
Q. 25 Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration of administrators?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>N of Cases</th>
<th>100 (number of participants)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>N of Items</td>
<td>6 (number of questions)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Alpha</td>
<td>.74</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This factor includes questions 36, 38, 15 and 25 that are all directed at collaboration and organization of work, question 45 covers channels and question 39 centers on flow of information.

Questions 32, 33, 34 and 35 directed at the efficiency of other meetings did not enter this factor.

32. Are teachers’ meetings a forum where you frequently/seldom get the opportunity to express your views on matters regarding the school?
33. Are teachers’ meetings efficient/inefficient?
34. Are teachers’ committee meetings efficient/inefficient?
35. Are divisions, year’s, and subject’s meetings efficient/inefficient?

It is difficult to figure out why these questions did not enter the factor of collaboration, but presumably these matters are not that important to teachers. Concerning questions 32 and 33 it might be of importance that when teachers are taken as a whole the answer is more distant to the individual.

With regard to questions 34 and 35 it is possible that the teachers are not familiar with what teachers’s committee meetings are about and the teacher team is divided into various subject’s, year’s and division groups and teachers therefore have limited insight into what happens at these meetings unless they attend the meetings themselves. Presumably question 14. Do you have much/little control of the work hours? is closely related to question 15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work
hours? Success may be more important to teachers than control of the work hours or teachers simply accept a certain division of labor.

Collaboration at work, clear channels and efficient flow of information is a precondition of school activity based on dissemination of knowledge and intensive flow of information. The ministry of education has among other things published a treatise to stress the importance of this factor. Collaboration within the school, teamwork and different kinds of professional work that has been “framed” in teachers’ wage contract also stresses the importance of such work methods.

The fourth factor, labeled Praise to teachers and pupils, consists of the following four questions:

| Q. 20 | Do your colleagues often/seldom receive praise from their closest superior for good performance? |
| Q. 47 | Does the principal praise pupils much/little for good performance at school? |
| Q. 29 | Does the principal often/seldom visit classes to watch the teaching? |
| Q. 17 | Do you often/seldom receive praise from the principal for good performance? |

N of Cases = 95 (number of participants)
N of Items = 4 (number of questions)

Alpha = .75

What is being asked here is whether teachers receive praise from the principal and whether he visits classes to watch the teaching. Related questions concerning praise, i.e. when teachers are asked whether they praise others, i.e. their colleagues or the principal, did not enter the factor. It seems to be more important to the teacher that he receives praise from the administrators and hears that colleagues and pupils are being praised than praising the same, i.e. the principal or the nearest superior and colleagues (Q. 18. Do you often/seldom praise the principal for good performance? Q. 19. Do you often/seldom praise your colleagues for good performance?)

Praise is the factor that stresses the necessity of the social competence all principals must possess in order to stimulate and encourage the personnel to do good deeds.
It is not an overstatement, as Sergiovanni (2001) points out, that this is fundamental to efficient school activity. Hansen & Sigurðsson (1998) emphasize, in accordance with Stålhammar (1991), that the human competence is decisive as to whether the administrators are capable of shaping and administering the school activity the way they want or must be constantly responding to stimulus that arises in the daily work.

The fifth factor, labeled Teachers’ professionalism, consists of the following five questions:

Q. 12 Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?
Q. 13 Do you have much/little control of what subjects you teach?
Q. 16 Is your work experience and professional knowledge highly/poorly valued?
Q. 37 Is there much/little collaboration between those who teach different age levels?
Q. 23 Do you receive encouragement from the principal to seek retraining and continuous education?

N of Cases = 94 (number of participants)
N of Items = 5 (number of questions)

\[ \text{Alpha} = 0.73 \]

This factor consists of professionalism and independence of teachers, whether their experience is valued and how much control they have of what subjects they teach and their collaboration with teachers teaching at different age levels. Question 24, Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education of teachers? which presumably concerns similar matters as question 23 did not enter the factor. This question may be directed at topics that teachers do not know well or perhaps they did not have the policy on retraining and continuous education ready at hand when they answered the questionnaire. Question 23 concerning the principal encouraging teachers to seek retraining and continuous education is more obvious to the teachers, i.e. they know whether the principal has encouraged them to seek retraining and continuous education or not.

Teaching is to a large extent based upon the independence and professionalism of teachers and they work alone most of the time. Research has shown that teachers
experience the presence of the principal in a positive way, e.g. Viggósson (1998). His presence and praise reinforces their faith in the school administration, but at the same time they want him to respect their professional independence. It is important to keep in mind how different the conceptual framework of teachers and the principal are. Teachers’ experience of the time comes first to mind, since this aspect of the definition of the work hours has been controversial and strongly debated.

4.2.3. The 17 Questions that Fell Outside the Factor Analysis

The 17 questions that did not enter the five factors are quite interesting. Many of them have been discussed, i.e. the ones that appear to be related to the five factors. To be sure, the foregoing discussion is far from being the only one that is legitimate and there are no doubt divergent views as to why they fall outside the factors. It does not, however, undermine the value of the questions as such and the information they provide should be of interest to the administrators.

The following questions are fine examples of attitude questions: 5. Do you think the school is a workplace that puts much/little demands upon you? 6. Are you often/seldom ill due to strain at work? 7. Do you feel good/bad at work? 8. Do you partake much/little in strengthening the morale at work? One may wonder whether it is appropriate to ask questions like question 5. Most people think that their job is depreciated if it does not make demands upon them, and also a little less than 90% of the teachers answered that their job made demands upon them. Similarly, one may wonder whether question 6 concerning illness due to strain at work is a realistic question. It may be quite hard for many to admit illness due to strain. Almost everyone answered the question in the negative. On the other hand, there is a positive correlation between questions 7 and 8, i.e. when teachers feel good at work it has a positive effect on the work morale. It is not an overstatement to claim that a good condition at work is fundamental to successful activity.

Question 27, Is the division of labor within the school clear/hazy? is a fine question considering the professional responsibilities of teachers predisposed by the principal. The division of labor must be clear if the activity is to run smoothly and to avoid doing the same thing twice over, and not the least to prevent unclear and ambiguous messages. One should think that question 28, Does the principal make much/little
demands upon you at work? was important, and of course it appeared that the presence of the principal has a positive effect on the teacher (cf. Viggósson, 1998). The wage contract expressly stipulates that the principal is to monitor the work of teachers. Questions 30, 31 and 46 are typical attitude questions: 30. Is your attitude towards disciplinary matters regarding pupils often/seldom the same as the principal’s/your nearest supervisor’s? 31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters regarding pupils the same as the principal’s? 46. Does the principal watch pupils’ progress at his school?

4.2.4. Statistical Comparison of the Factors (Mean, Median and Standard Deviation)

Table 11 includes the statistical findings of the five factors – mean, N (number of respondents), standard deviation and median – for each school and the total findings for all respondents are at the bottom of the table.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Were do you teach?</th>
<th>F1 Interaction with the principal</th>
<th>F2 Teaching and pedagogy</th>
<th>F3 Collaboration and flow of information</th>
<th>F4 Praise to teachers and pupils</th>
<th>F5 Teachers’ professionalism</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School A</td>
<td>Mean 1.82</td>
<td>1.79</td>
<td>2.74</td>
<td>3.17</td>
<td>2.46</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation .66</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.52</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.69</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median 1.83</td>
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<td>2.83</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School B</td>
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<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation .60</td>
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<td>.63</td>
<td>.72</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median 1.83</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School C</td>
<td>Mean 2.21</td>
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<td>2.31</td>
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</tr>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation .61</td>
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<td>.50</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median 2.17</td>
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<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School D</td>
<td>Mean 2.03</td>
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<td>2.01</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>2.47</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N 30</td>
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<td>.55</td>
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<tr>
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<td>2.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>Total</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Std. Deviation .60</td>
<td>.53</td>
<td>.58</td>
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<td>.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Median 2.00</td>
<td>2.00</td>
<td>2.17</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>2.60</td>
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<tr>
<td>Eta Squared</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.025</td>
<td>.185</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(4%)</td>
<td>(2.5%)</td>
<td>(18.5%)</td>
<td>(6.4%)</td>
<td>(3.6%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The difference between the Mean and the Median of all the factors is insubstantial, largest .09 in *F4-Praise to teachers and pupils* and least .02 in *F3-Collaboration and flow of information*. Since there is little difference between the Median and the Mean the distribution is not biased. Generally it is considered good when the distribution is not biased, i.e. as statistical qualities are better the better the measure. The difference between the Standard Deviation is also little which means that the distribution is similar in all the factors.

Eta squared provides a statistical explanation, i.e. how much the schools statistically explain in the factors. There is little difference between the schools concerning all the factors (except F3, 18.5%). This indicates that the questionnaire is robust, i.e. that it is an equally good measure for all the schools in the sample. However, this does not count for factor *F3-Collaboration and flow of information*. In this case it matters which school it is, which shows that the questionnaire is sensitive, i.e. measures changes. All the higher Eta is the larger the difference between the factors in each school.

If we compare the mean between the factors F1-F5 in each school, then it is presupposed that the lowest mean grants the most felicitous conclusion, since very often \= 1 and very seldom \= 5. Accordingly, *F1-Interaction with the principal* is lowest in school A and highest in school C. This means that the interaction with the principal is best in school A and least in school C. Equally, *F2-Teaching and pedagogy* is lowest in school A and highest in school C. *F3-Collaboration and flow of information* is lowest in school D and highest in school A. *F4-Praise to teachers and pupils* is lowest in school B and highest in school D. *F5-Teachers professionalism* is lowest in school A and highest in school B.

### 4.2.5. Comparison of the Factors in the Four Schools in a Box Plot

In order to compare the distribution of the factors F1-F5 it is preferable to use a Box Plot (*Tilvísun í heimild*). A Box Plot graph shows the distribution of the factors in each school, one graph for each factor. Each box contains 50% of the respondents, and the other 50% are in the lines above and below. The horizontal line in the box shows the Median and a circle or a star above or below the lines show individuals that stand out and
are called loners. In statistical presentation “very often” = 1 and “very seldom” = 5. This means that all the lower the distribution is on the y-axis the better the conclusion for the school in questions.

The median is highest in the box in school A because of the three outliers, yet it comes out best due to low distribution on the y-axis. School B has the highest distribution. The Median is highest in school C compared to the other schools.

Here the median is the same in all the schools. The distribution is lowest in school D but highest in school C.
School A has the lowest distribution and the highest Median. School D has the lowest median but school B has the highest distribution.

Schools B and C have the same distribution short of a outlier in school C.

School B has the highest distribution but school D the lowest.
4.3. Summary

It has been shown how the questionnaires may be utilized to compare the attitudes of teachers and principals with regard to basic information and information about attitudes. As was mentioned above, two of the four principals who answered the questionnaire expressed in letters (enclosures 5 and 6) that they utilized the findings of the survey for further work and processing of internal evaluation carried out in their schools last winter.

It is easy to present the findings of the questionnaires in frequency tables and cross tables and the processing does not require complicated computer programs but only a simple Excel-program.

It has been suggested that it might be valuable to pose the questionnaires again after a certain period of time for comparison and account for its advantages and disadvantages. The research could also be continued by carrying out interviews (qualitative research).

Questionnaires for evaluating school activity, whether open or closed, or other assessment devices like interviews, have their pros and cons. Gathering information to facilitate change and development in school activity is a precondition for changes in schools, as many scholars have pointed out (Hansen & Sigurðsson, 1998). Such information must be fully confidential and carefully treated by those who hold them in order not to misconstrue the data.

To detect common factors in the questionnaire through factor analysis, which is recognized by scholars, it was decided to use .7 on the alfa reliability index as a criterion. This guarantees a good reliability of the questionnaire. Five factors emerged. Child (1990) points out that it is tricky to rely on a factor analysis with lower reliability than .7. It could be asked whether it would not have been preferable to have more than five factors but the limits had to be drawn somewhere and the decision was made on the basis of a strong reliability index.

The findings of the factor analysis confirm the emphases laid in the writings of the scholars Stållhammar (1991), Sergiovanni (2001) and Viggósson (1998). *F1-Interaction with the principal* is the most important factor, and his position is also of such a nature that most aspects of the school activity are in some way or another related to him. Factor *F4- Praise to teachers and pupils* reveals that the presence of the principal with praise and stimulating conversations relies on his human communicability competence. It should be noted, however, that the principal must have a good “radiance” if his presence is to yield this positive effect.
F2- Teaching and pedagogy is the common policy of the school and vision of the present and future that is worth cherishing because the future awaits us all (or at least most of us!). Factors F3- Collaboration and flow of information and F5-Teachers’ professionalism reflect the work and ambition of teachers to do good deeds at school, the organization competence of the principal to shape the work environment and stimulate and shape the work and atmosphere among teachers and enhance their professional awareness and satisfaction in daily work.

The conclusions of the factor analysis and the statistical comparison (Mean, Median, Standard Deviation and Eta Square) of the factors F1-F5 revealed that the distribution of the data was not biased since there is little difference between the Mean and the Median which further supports the usefulness of the measure.

Eta Square was rather high in F3 (18.5%) which indicates that the assessment device is “perceptive,” i.e. it also measures the difference between schools.³

The comparison of the factors in a Box Plot shows how the distribution is in each factor in the four schools. The distribution in school A that has the fewest teachers is smallest in two factors out of five but nowhere largest. It is not easy to discern a pattern in the distribution related to number which implies the strength of the questionnaire as an assessment device.

The factors may also be compared in each school, e.g. in terms of what age level is being taught.

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³ By comparing the means of the factors it could be checked whether there is a significant difference (One-Way ANOVA).
Chapter 5. Conclusion

At the beginning of this dissertation it was quoted that education empowers. To unleash the power of education the compulsory school has continually sought to develop and adapt its work environment and establish itself as a forceful institution in the service of pupils and the society. The legislator, the executive power and the president have laid new emphases with the Compulsory school Act, the wage contracts and the Icelandic Education Award to reinforce school activity in Iceland.

As was discussed in chapter 1 above every school is by nature a well-organized institution that is based upon certain laws and regulations it must follow. A fixed frame of reference of this sort is bound to impede the principal in his work. He must abide by various laws and regulations, e.g. when he is working on planning, the budget, quality standards, etc. Frequently these different tasks in his daily routine run against the various regulations of the school and it may therefore be quite difficult to fulfill the aims of both. The principal is in a way caught between two fires; on the one hand he is subject to laws and regulations but at the same time he administers and makes decisions concerning matters of the school as he thinks fit.

The development of school evaluation, research done by scholars on evaluation related to school development and domestic and foreign research on schools and school activity, all aim at reinforcing the operation of the compulsory school. Those who deal with matters concerning the school unanimously believe that evaluation is a natural part of school development and administration of school activity. The questionnaire presented here draws on Stålhammer’s definition of qualification in relation to the principal’s role and Sergiovanni’s claim that principals base their work skill on various potency or “force.” A questionnaire of this sort, which has been verified statistically as a reliable tool for assessing work methods and administration, should be a valuable contribution to the reinforcement of school activity.

The methodology used to verify the reliability of the questionnaire is a statistically reliable instrument to obtain extensive information and with the aid of the statistics and a good computer program it may be presented in a perspicuous way.

In formulating the questions it was ensured that “nothing” threatened their research validity by keeping them simple and clear and delimiting each question to only one topic. The scale of the questionnaire is a five step Likert scale (recommended by scholars rather than a four
step scale). It was also ensured that the questions were in balance and an attempt made to counter “acquiescent response style.”

The principals’ and the teachers’ questionnaires are symmetrical, i.e. contain parallel questions. The findings of the principals’ questionnaire are useful to the principal in that he can compare his own attitudes to the attitudes of the teachers. The findings provide him with tenacious knowledge of which aspects he has insight into irrespective of whether he agrees or not (e.g. whether he knows that the teachers are content with the arrangement of the work hours). The use and utilization of the questionnaire depends on the principal who poses it. Questions may be skipped, e.g. those who fell outside the factors. The final number of questions varies depending on the business of the principal or researcher concerned.

The factor analysis of the questions that have something in common leading them to enter the same factor and its confirmation with Alfa reliability test shows that the five factors in question explain a little less than half of the variables in the questionnaire.

The aim of this piece of work is first and foremost to design a statistically reliable questionnaire that may be utilized by principals for evaluation of school activity. But it may also be viewed as a manual for those who intend to pose this questionnaire in their school or another comparable one and how the findings of such a questionnaire should be read and interpreted. The findings of the factor analysis, i.e. the 25 questions that entered the factors, may also be utilized for further research.

Finally, it should be noted that the questionnaire was posed during a teachers’ strike in Iceland. The response rate may have been lower on account of this, and one wonders whether and to what extent the strike has affected the results of the survey – in particular the factor analysis. Accordingly, the lesson to be drawn from this might be that the research ought to be repeated under “normal” circumstances in order to see if that would yield different results.

Final Reflections

Research indicates (cf. Hansen & Sigurðsson, 1998; Fullan, 1991) that the leadership of school administrators matters with regard to the efficiency of schools. It also matters that the principal is aware of the importance of promoting a united modus operandi among his teachers, and singleness, coordination and mutual responsibility of all concerned when the comprehensive
policy of the school is formed. At the same time constant reform and systematic and objective use of information must be a standard work method besides understanding that such work takes time.

It is crucial that administrators follow up their ideas about where the school is to be heading and lead that work. It is not enough that the principal knows the policy of the school; he must also be capable of communicating it to the teachers and inspire them to collaborate. Likewise, he must always keep in mind that it is mainly his responsibility to administer the school in concordance with the local circumstances in which he finds himself.

A principal who is ambitious and interested in his job is prepared to face up to himself and recognize his strengths and weaknesses as a leader. In addition to this he must know his institution well and be able to figure out its institutional character. He must always beware of stagnating, but increase his knowledge and experience step by step so that he can react to whatever comes up or may happen within the school.

It is a difficult task to grow by knowledge and experience and thereby gain strength as a leader and not always clear how this is to be accomplished. Many agree, though, that the signposts on that way are interwoven with the school policy, i.e. the vision of the future, the characteristics of the school as an institution and the cooperation of the personnel and the principal and his competence as a leader. In all that work the expectations of pupils and the community as a whole towards the school must be taken into consideration, since all efforts to improve the school activity, for instance by reconsidering the competence of the principal, is centered on the pupils and their welfare in every respect. School development is a never ending story and its playground is the school itself.

The end.
References:


Lög um grunnskóla nr. 63/1974.

Lög um grunnskóla nr. 66/1995.


Litterature:


Software Program:

Dear teacher.

My name is Sigurjón Bjarnason and I am the principal of Laugalandsskóli í Holtum School in Rangaárvallasýsla County. This winter I am on a leave working on a master’s thesis at the Teachers’ training college in Malmö Sweden (Malmö Högskola Lärerutbildingen).

My project is on evaluation of various aspects of principals’ administration and my aim is to develop questionnaires that administrators can utilize as a device to illuminate the state of affairs in their school. These questionnaires are posed to both principals and teachers in a number of unequal schools in Iceland. I ask about factors concerning communication, condition, work methods, supervision, counsel and cooperation between principals and teachers.

The reason for contacting you is to grant your permission to pose these questionnaires in your school – to you and your teachers.

The principals’ and the teachers’ questionnaires are commensurable so that the answers to the questions may be compared to see what the findings are for each school. It is important for the principal to have a “device” (a questionnaire) he can use to examine various components of the administration and utilize the findings to make improvements where necessary and also to get an affirmation of what is being well done.

Enclosed with this letter is a questionnaire for you, dear teacher, and I sincerely hope you answer the questions honestly to ensure that the findings will be optimally significant. Your principal will receive identical questions and the findings will be compared.

I have already granted the permission of your principal to pose the questionnaire in this school and emphasize that this is an anonymous survey where full confidentiality is ensured. I want to ask you to put the questionnaire in the enclosed envelope and the repository of the school will then post it to me before next Wednesday January 23.

It is not revealed in the thesis in which schools the questionnaires were posed.

Yours truly,

Sigurjón Bjarnason.
Appendices II.

Teachers’ Questionnaire

1. Are you a male or a female?
   - Male
   - Female

2. What year were you born?
   - 1930 - 1939
   - 1940 - 1949
   - 1950 - 1959
   - 1960 - 1969
   - 1970 - 1979
   - 1980 - 1989

3. How long have you been teaching?
   - 1-5 years
   - 6-10 years
   - 11-15 years
   - 16-20 years
   - 21 years or longer

4. Which age group do you teach?
   - Youngest level (1.-3. grade)
   - Intermediary level (4.-7. grade)
   - Oldest level (8.-10. grade)

5. Do you think the school is a workplace that puts much/little demands upon you?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

6. Are you often/seldom ill due to strain at work?
   - Very often (4-5 times per month)
   - Fairly often (2-3 times per month)
   - Neither nor (once per month)
   - Rather seldom (2-3 times per term)
   - Very seldom (2-3 times per school year)

7. Do you feel good/bad at work?
   - Very good
   - Fairly good
   - Neither nor
   - Rather bad
   - Very bad

8. Do you partake much/little in strengthening the morale at work?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
9. Do you think your interaction with the principal is good/bad?
   - Very good
   - Fairly good
   - Neither nor
   - Rather bad
   - Very bad

9. b) If the answer is rather bad or very bad what should be improved in your opinion?
______________________________________________________________________________

10. Does the principal show understanding/not show understanding when you need to take care of personal matters?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

11. Does the principal give you the opportunity to have much/little influence on decisions?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?
   - Very fruitful
   - Fairly fruitful
   - Neither nor
   - Rather fruitless
   - Very fruitless

13. Do you have much/little control of what subjects you teach?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - both and
   - Rather little
   - Very little

14. Do you have much/little control of the work hours?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?
16. Is your work experience and professional knowledge highly/poorly valued?
   - Very highly
   - Fairly highly
   - Neither nor
   - Rather poorly
   - Very poorly

17. Do you often/seldom receive praise from the principal for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

18. Do you often/seldom praise the principal for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

19. Do you often/seldom praise your colleagues for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

20. Do your colleagues often/seldom receive praise from their closest superior for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

21. Do you have ready/limited access to the principal?
   - Very ready
   - Fairly ready
   - Neither nor
   - Rather limited
22. Do you often/seldom call upon the principal when you need support?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Neither nor
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

23. Do you receive encouragement from the principal to seek retraining and continuous education?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Neither nor
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

24. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education of teachers?
   - Very satisfied
   - Fairly satisfied
   - Neither nor
   - Rather dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied

24. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding counsel and support in the school community?

__________________________________________________________________________________________
___________________________________________________________________________________________

25. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration of administrators?
   - Very satisfied
   - Fairly satisfied
   - Neither nor
   - Rather dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied

26. Do you receive much/little information about the decision making of the principal?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little
27. Is the division of labor within the school clear/hazy?
   - Very clear
   - Fairly clear
   - Neither nor
   - Rather hazy
   - Very hazy

28. Does the principal make much/little demands upon you at work?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

29. Does the principal often/seldom visit classes to watch the teaching?
   - Very often (Once per week)
   - Fairly often (Twice per month)
   - Rather seldom (Once per month)
   - Very seldom (2-3 times per term)
   - Never

30. Is your attitude towards disciplinary matters regarding pupils often/seldom the same as the principal’s/your nearest superior?
   - Very often (91-100%)
   - Fairly often (61-90%)
   - Both and (41-60%)
   - Rather seldom (11-40%)
   - Very seldom (1-10%)

31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters regarding pupils the same as the principal’s?
   - In every case (91-100%)
   - In most cases (61-90%)
   - Both and (41-60%)
   - In few cases (11-40%)
   - In very few cases (1-10%)

32. Are teachers’ meetings a forum where you frequently/seldom get the opportunity to express your views on matters regarding the school?
   - Very frequently
   - Fairly frequently
   - Neither nor
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

33. Are teachers’ meetings efficient/inefficient?
   - Very efficient
   - Fairly efficient
34. Are teachers’ committee meetings efficient/inefficient?
   - Very efficient
   - Fairly efficient
   - Neither nor
   - Rather inefficient
   - Very inefficient

34. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding teachers’ and teachers’ committee meetings.

______________________________________________________________________________

35. Are division, year, and subject’s meetings efficient/inefficient?
   - Very efficient
   - Fairly efficient
   - Neither nor
   - Rather inefficient
   - Very inefficient

35. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding division, year and subject’s meetings?

______________________________________________________________________________

36. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers’ collaboration?
   - Very satisfied
   - Fairly satisfied
   - Neither nor
   - Rather dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied

37. Is there much/little collaboration between those who teach different age levels?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Both and
   - Rather little
   - Very little

37. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding teachers’ collaboration?

______________________________________________________________________________

38. Is the time of collaboration between teachers efficient/inefficient?
   - Very efficient
   - Fairly efficient
   - Both and
   - Rather inefficient
   - Very inefficient
38. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding the time of collaboration between teachers?

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________________

39. Do you find the channels within the school adequate/inadequate?

☐ Very adequate
☐ Fairly adequate
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather inadequate
☐ Inadequate

40. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy clear/hazy?

☐ Very clear
☐ Fairly clear
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather hazy
☐ Very hazy

41. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy being implemented systematically?

☐ Very systematically
☐ Fairly systematically
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather unsystematically
☐ Very unsystematically

42. What part does the principal play in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?

☐ Very big
☐ Fairly big
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

43. Did you participate much/little in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?

☐ Very much
☐ Fairly much
☐ Both and
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

44. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy accessible/inaccessible to you?

☐ Very accessible
☐ Fairly accessible
☐ Both and
☐ Rather inaccessible
☐ Very inaccessible

45. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the flow of information to the school community?
☐ Very satisfied
☐ Fairly satisfied
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather dissatisfied
☐ Very dissatisfied

45. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding the flow of information to the school community?
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

46. Does the principal watch the pupils’ progress at his school?
☐ Very much
☐ Fairly much
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

47. Does the principal praise pupils much/little for good performance at school?
☐ Very much
☐ Fairly much
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

Appendices III.


To principals

Dear principal.

My name is Sigurjón Bjarnason and I am the principal of Laugalandsskóli í Holtum School in Rangaárvallasýsla County. This winter I am on a leave working on a master’s thesis at the Teachers’ training college in Malmö Sweden (Malmö Högskola Lärerutbildingen).
My project is on evaluation of various aspects of principals’ administration and my aim is to develop questionnaires that administrators can utilize as a device to illuminate the state of affairs in their school. These questionnaires are posed to both principals and teachers in a number of unequal schools in Iceland. I ask about factors concerning communication, condition, work methods, supervision, counsel and cooperation between principals and teachers.

The reason for contacting you is to grant your permission to pose these questionnaires in your school – to you and your teachers.

The principals’ and the teachers’ questionnaires are commensurable so that the answers to the questions may be compared to see what the findings are for each school. It is important for the principal to have a “device” (a questionnaire) he can use to examine various components of the administration and utilize the findings to make improvements where necessary and also to get an affirmation of what is being well done.

I want to ask for you permission to pose the questionnaire to as many teachers as possible at the same time (ca. 10-20 minutes). This is an anonymous questionnaire and full confidentiality is ensured. It would be best if you could answer your questionnaire at the same time (day) as the teachers. As far as I can see a preferable time seems to be either next January 10.-14. or January 17.-21. It would be fortunate if the repository posed the questionnaire and then posted the lists to me.

The findings will be sent to you fully processed.
It is not revealed in the thesis in which schools the questionnaires were posed.

Yours truly,

Sigurjón Bjarnason.

Appendices IV.

**Principals’ Questionnaire**        Confidential

1. Are you a male or a female?
   □ Male
   □ Female

2. What year were you born?
   □ 1930 -1939
   □ 1940 - 1949
   □ 1950 - 1959
   □ 1960 - 1969
   □ 1970 - 1979
3. How long have you been teaching?
   - 1-5 years
   - 6-10 years
   - 11-15 years
   - 16-20 years
   - 21 years or longer

4. If you are also teaching, which age group do you teach?
   - Youngest level (1.-3. grade)
   - Intermediary level (4.-7. grade)
   - Oldest level (8.-10. grade)

5. Do you think the school is a workplace that puts much/little demands upon your teachers?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Both and
   - Rather little
   - Very little

6. Are you often/seldom ill due to strain at work?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Both and
   - Rather little
   - Very little

7. Do you feel good/bad at work?
   - Very good
   - Fairly good
   - Neither nor
   - Rather bad
   - Very bad

8. Do you partake much/little in strengthening the morale at work?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little
9. What do you think of your interaction with teachers?
   - Good with all teachers
   - Good with most teachers
   - Good with a number of teachers
   - Good with a few teachers

9. b) If the answer is good with most, good with a number, or good with a few, what should be improved in your opinion?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

10. How important/unimportant is it to take personal matters of teachers into consideration?
   - Very important
   - Rather important
   - Both and
   - Rather unimportant
   - Very unimportant

11. Do you give teachers the opportunity to have much/little influence on decisions?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?
   - Very fruitful
   - Fairly fruitful
   - Both and
   - Rather fruitless
   - Very fruitless

13. Do teachers have much/little control of what subjects they teach?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Both and
   - Rather little
   - Very little
14. Do teachers have much/little control of the work hours?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

15. Are teachers content with the arrangement of the work hours?
   - All of them
   - Most of them
   - A number of them
   - Few of them

16. Do you value the experience and professional knowledge of teachers?
   - In most cases (85-100%)
   - In many cases (60-84%)
   - Both and (40-59%)
   - In a number of cases (11-39%)
   - In a few cases (1-10%)

17. Do you often/seldom praise your teachers for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

18. Do you often/seldom receive praise from your teachers for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

19. Do you often/seldom praise your fellow administrators for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Both and
   - Rather seldom
20. Do your teachers often/seldom receive praise from their closest superior for good performance?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - both and
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

21. Do you think teachers have ready/limited access to you?
   - Very ready
   - Fairly ready
   - Neither nor
   - Rather limited
   - Very limited

22. Do teachers often/seldom call upon you when they need support?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Neither nor
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

23. Do you encourage teachers to seek retraining and continuous education?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Neither nor
   - Rather seldom
   - Very seldom

24. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education of teachers?
   - Very satisfied
   - Fairly satisfied
   - Neither nor
   - Rather dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied

24. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding the policy on retraining and continuous education of teachers?

________________________________________________________________________

25. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration with your fellow
administrators?
☐ Very satisfied
☐ Fairly satisfied
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather dissatisfied
☐ Very dissatisfied

26. Do teachers receive much/little information about your decision making?
☐ Very much
☐ Fairly much
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

27. Is the division of labor within the school clear/hazy?
☐ Very clear
☐ Fairly clear
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather hazy
☐ Very hazy

28. Do you make much/little demands upon teachers at work?
☐ Very much
☐ Fairly much
☐ Neither nor
☐ Rather little
☐ Very little

29. Do you often/seldom visit classes to watch the teaching?
☐ Very often (once per week)
☐ Fairly often (twice per month)
☐ Rather seldom (once per month)
☐ Very seldom (2-3 times per term)
☐ Never

30. Is your attitude towards disciplinary matters regarding pupils often/seldom the same as the attitude of your teachers?
☐ Very often (91 - 100%)
☐ Fairly often (61 - 90%)
☐ Both and (41 - 60%)
☐ Rather seldom (11 - 40%)
☐ Very seldom (1 - 10%)
31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters regarding pupils the same as the attitude of your teachers?
- In every case (91-100%)
- In most cases (61 - 90%)
- Both and (41 - 60%)
- In a number of cases (11 - 40%)
- In very few cases (1 - 10%)

32. Are teachers’ meetings a forum where teachers frequently/seldom get the opportunity to express their views on matters regarding the school?
- Very frequently
- Fairly frequently
- Neither nor
- Rather seldom
- Very seldom

33. Are teachers’ meetings efficient/inefficient?
- Very efficient
- Fairly efficient
- Neither nor
- Rather inefficient
- Very inefficient

34. Are teachers’ committee meetings efficient/inefficient?
- Very efficient
- Fairly efficient
- Neither nor
- Rather inefficient
- Very inefficient

34. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding teachers’ and teachers’ committee meetings.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________

35. Are divisions, years, and subject’s meetings efficient/inefficient?
35. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding division, year and subject’s meetings?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

36. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers’ collaboration?
  □ Very satisfied
  □ Fairly satisfied
  □ Neither nor
  □ Rather dissatisfied
  □ Very dissatisfied

37. Is there much/little collaboration between those who teach different age levels?
  □ Very much
  □ Fairly much
  □ Both and
  □ Rather little
  □ Very little

37. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding teachers’ collaboration?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

38. Is the time of collaboration between teachers efficient/inefficient?
  □ Very efficient
  □ Fairly efficient
  □ Both and
  □ Rather inefficient
  □ Very inefficient

38. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding the time of collaboration between teachers?

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________
39. Do you find the channels within the school adequate/inadequate?
   - Very adequate
   - Fairly adequate
   - Neither nor
   - Rather inadequate
   - Inadequate

40. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy clear/hazy?
   - Very clear
   - Fairly clear
   - Neither nor
   - Rather hazy
   - Very hazy

41. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy systematically implemented?
   - Very systematically
   - Fairly systematically
   - Neither nor
   - Rather unsystematically
   - Very unsystematically

42. What part do you play in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?
   - Very big
   - Fairly big
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

43. Did teachers take part in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy?
   - Most (91-100%)
   - Many (61 - 89%)
   - Both and (41 -60%)
   - A number of them (11 - 40%)
   - A few of them (1-10%)

44. Is the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy documented and accessible/inaccessible to the teachers?
   - Most (91-100%)
   - Many (61 - 89%)
   - Both and (41 -60%)
   - A number of them (11 - 40%)
45. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the flow of information to the school community?
   - Very satisfied
   - Fairly satisfied
   - Neither nor
   - Rather dissatisfied
   - Very dissatisfied

45. b) Anything else you would like to add regarding the flow of information to the school community?

46. Do you watch the pupils’ progress at your school much/little?
   - Very much
   - Fairly much
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

47. Do you praise pupils much/little for good performance at school?
   - Very often
   - Fairly often
   - Neither nor
   - Rather little
   - Very little

Appendices V.
Hi Sigurjón.

Thank you as well. We have already taken some of the issues that come forth in the evaluation project into consideration. In the first place it was briefly introduced at a teachers’ meeting and the findings were left on display in the teachers’ room. In the wake of this we have looked even better at the arrangement of personnel meetings and personnel interviews.

The department head of remedial teaching is working on a self-evaluation report now at the end of this winter where these findings will be included along with more issues from another self-evaluation carried through this winter. The report will presumably contain a reform plan and all this will be introduced to the personnel next autumn.

With best regards,

Þorsteinn Hj.

Appendices VI.

Title: Sigurjón Bjarnason
From: "Gerdaskoli" <gerdask@ismennt.is>
Date: mon, June 6, 2005 8:50 am
To: <sigbjar@ismennt.is>
Priority: Normal

Hi Sigurjón.
Good to hear this about the questionnaire. Yes, the questionnaire fitted our self-evaluation plan particularly well since it was our intention to assess the administration this year and we are not particularly happy with the device we have.

I would very much like to learn how to construct an interactive questionnaire like this one but I have hardly got the time.

I introduced the findings both to the personnel and the school committee and the plan is to put some of them on our homepage. I think I have a good reason to be pleased, it is impossible to please everyone and there is always something that needs to be improved. It is my intention, for instance, to find some time to visit classes next winter, teachers think it is important and they are definitely right about that.

The only criticism of the survey was that people wanted more on the vice principal.

Thank you again for giving us the opportunity to participate in this and we definitely got something out of it. Good luck on the last meters. I remember all too well how long they can be.

Best regards,

Erna.

Appendices VII.


Hi Þorsteinn.

Here you have the findings. As you can see, descriptions as well as a discussion together with explanatory graphs come with them. This is not an evaluation in the sense that I pass judgment or give “advise” or “interpret” from a personal viewpoint. I hope you benefit from this information.
and that you make use of them as you see fit. I will continue to process the findings from all the
schools in one data base and hope that I can establish certain correlations, e.g. what influences the
condition of teachers to name but one.

With best regards,

Sigurjón B.

Appendices VIII.

Compulsory School
The Findings of a Research on Various Components of Administration and Work Methods in Compulsory School D

Sigurjón Bjarnason, Lund, Sweden

Compulsory School D

During the past few years evaluation has been increasingly brought up in the discussion of schooling and most compulsory schools in the country put more emphasis on systematic evaluation of their activity. Part of this is an evaluation of various aspects of administration within the school.

The master’s thesis I am working on presently deals with evaluation of various aspects of the principal’s administration and my aim is to develop questionnaires that administrators can use as
a device to illuminate the status of their school. I put these questionnaires both to the principal and teachers and ask about matters concerning communication, condition, work methods, supervision, counsel and cooperation between the principal and teachers with the aim of providing principals with a better insight into the way they handle their leadership role and how good school activity can become even better.

Having granted permission from the principal of D compulsory school, Gunnlaugur Dan, to put the questionnaires to teachers at the school, the repository was asked to pose the questionnaires. The survey was anonymous and full confidentiality was ensured. 30 out of 40 teachers answered the questionnaire, 10 were indisposed. The principal answered the questions put to him.

Tables with frequency and percentage along with pie charts come with the findings of the survey, and since I mainly use percentage it is convenient for the reader to know that 1 teacher equals 3,3%.

Below is a discussion based upon the findings of the questionnaires and I take the liberty to draw certain conclusions from the answers. I utilize the statistics program SPSS which is a powerful custom program much used in operations research. The method used here to describe the data is so called Cumulative Percent. It is considered felicitous in order to know, for instance, how many answers are below or above certain limits. Accordingly, I interpret the response alternatives “Very good,” “Very well,” “Very much,” “Rather good,” “Rather well” and “Rather much” positively or as potency and the response alternatives “Rather little,” “Rather seldom,” “Very little,” “Very seldom,” “Rather unclear,” or “Very unclear,” etc. negatively or as weakness. The response alternatives “Neither nor” or “Both and” are interpreted as neutral.

The findings of the principals’ questionnaire are compared to the findings of the teachers’ questionnaire to check whether the principal is in step with the attitudes of his teachers concerning administration and work methods of the school.

**The findings of the questionnaires are divided into 7 categories:** 1) Basic information; 2) The school as a work place; 3) Interaction with the principal; 4) Counsel, support, retraining and continuous education; 5) Collaboration of administrators, channels and delivery of information
within and outside the school; 6) The attitudes of teachers towards work methods, various meetings and collaboration within the school; 7) The policy regarding teaching and pedagogy.

1) Basic Information
Two administrators are employed at school D, the principal and the vice-principal, and 40 teachers. The gender division is 23.3% males and 76.7% females. About 70% of the teachers are born in 1940-1969 and 50% between 1960 and 1969. A little less than 47% have been teaching for 1-5 years but slightly more than 53% have been teaching longer than that, thereof 36.7% for 16 years or longer. Almost 73.3% of the teachers teach at a certain age level, 33% at the youngest level, 26.7% at the intermediary level and 13.3% at the oldest level. A little less than 30% teach at more than one level. The principal has no teaching obligations.

2) The School as a Work Place
A little less than 95% of the teachers think the school is a challenging work place and the principal agrees, but 6.7% answered “both and.” As regards teachers’ illness, the teachers all agree that absenteeism on account of illness is from 2-3 days per school year up to 2-3 days per term. The principal disagrees; in his view it is “rather high.” It should be noted that the principal has the whole picture in mind, i.e. the total number of absenteeism, but every teacher perceives the matter from his own standpoint. Almost 97% of the teachers say that the feel good at work while 3.3% are neutral. About 60% of the teachers part take much in strengthening the work morale against 10% who contribute little, but 30% are neutral. The principal goes “rather much” in for strengthening the work morale.

3) Interaction with the Principal
In 73.3% of cases teachers believe that the principal makes much demand upon them at work, while 26.7% of them are neutral. The principal claims to make “rather much” demands upon teachers at work. Almost 93% of the teachers are content with their dealings with the principal and consider him to be understanding when they need to take care of personal matters. In 10% of cases the teachers say that the principal often praises them, while 56.7% say “both and.” On the other hand, 33.3% of teachers hold that the principal seldom praises them. The principal holds he praises teachers “rather often.”

In 3.3% of cases, teachers hold that they praise the principal “rather often,” but their colleagues “often” in 36.7% of cases. When there comes to pupils, 53.6% of the teachers think
the principal praises pupils much, 10.7% believe he praises them little and 35.7% are neutral. The principal thinks he praises pupils “rather much.”

Almost 57% of the teachers hold that they have much to say about what disciplines they teach. They also hold that their work experience and professional knowledge is appreciated, or in 63.3% of cases, while 10% say that it is not. The principal does not take a position on whether experience and professional knowledge is appreciated.

In 60% of cases, teachers believe they have much control of their work hours against 16.7% of teachers who claim that the have little control of it, but 23.3% are neutral. About 70% of the teachers are content with their work hours but 10% are discontent. The principal holds that most of the teachers are content with the work hours. In 50% of cases the teachers think the principal gives them a fair opportunity to influence decision making, but 6.7% think they rarely get the opportunity to do so, 43.3% are neutral and the principal is neutral as well. In 50% of cases, teachers hold that the principal gives them the opportunity to have much influence on decisions, but 6.7% believe they have little influence, 43.3% are neutral, and the principal is neutral as well. The principal and 16.7% of teachers hold that their colleagues "rather often" receive praise from their closest superior for good performance, 60% of teachers are neutral and 23.4% think that teachers seldom receive praise from their closest superior.

The principal holds that personnel interviews are “rather fruitful” and 50% of the teachers think so too. Then 6.7% of the teachers think that personnel interviews are rather fruitless but 43.3% are neutral.

4) Counsel, Support, Retraining and Continuous Education
About 50% of the teachers resort to the principal when they need support against 36.7% who rarely do so. Almost 97% of the teachers agree that they have ready access to the principal and the principal is of the same opinion. About 70% of the teachers say that the principal encourages them to seek retraining and continuous education, and 76.7% of them are content with the school’s policy regarding these matters, but 23.3% are neutral. The principal is “rather content” with the policy and encourages the teachers “rather often” to seek retraining and continuous education.

5) Collaboration of Administrators, Channels and Delivery of Information within and Outside the School
A little more than 85% of the teachers are rather content with the collaboration of the school administrators and the principal agrees, but slightly more than 13% are neutral (“neither nor”). The division of labor within the school is clear according to 86.7% of the teachers and the principal approves, but 10% of the teachers are neutral, and 3.3% of them think the division of labor is hazy. In 50% of cases the teachers think they receive much information about the principal’s decision making, against 10% who claim that they get little information and 40% are neutral. Also, 50% of the teachers believe that the principal watches the pupils’ progress carefully, but 10% think he does not, and 39.3% are neutral. The principal thinks he watches pupils’ progress fairly much.

About 75% of the teachers are satisfied with the flow of information to the school community, but 3.6% are dissatisfied. The principal is satisfies with the flow of information.

As regards the channels within the school, 86.2% of the teachers find them satisfactory but 13.8% are neutral. The principal takes them to be all right. In addition, 70% of the teachers claim that the principal visits classes ones a month or 2-3 times per term to watch the teaching, but 30% claim that he has never been there. The principal maintains that he visits classes 2-3 times per term to watch the teaching.

6) The Attitudes of Teachers towards Work Methods, Various Meetings and Collaboration within the School

In 72.4% of cases the teachers share the attitude of the principal or the nearest superior concerning disciplinary matters, 6.8% rarely agree, but 20.7% are neutral. When asked about the treatment of such matters 86.2% of the teachers agree with the principal, but 10.3% are neutral or do not take a position. Teachers’ meetings are a forum where 65.5% of teachers believe they can often express themselves about matters pertaining to the school, but 3.4% of them claim that they seldom get the opportunity to express themselves at these meetings, and 31% are neutral. Over 72% of teachers consider teachers’ meetings to be effective, but 32% hold that teachers’ committee meetings are effective, and 12% consider teachers’ committee meetings to be ineffective. More than 24% of the teachers are neutral with regard to teachers’ meetings, but 56% in the case of teachers’ committee meetings. The principal takes teachers’ committee meetings to be rather effective, but he is neutral about teachers’ meetings.
About 64% of the teachers hold that the time of collaboration between teachers is effective, against 32.1% who are neutral. There is unanimity among the teachers (100%) that divisions, years and subjects meetings are effective.

Almost 36% of the teachers think that collaboration between those who teach at different age levels is much, against 25% who find it rather little, 39.3% are neutral. The principal considers the collaboration between teachers teaching at different age levels to be rather much. The teachers are satisfied with the collaboration among themselves in 96.6% of cases and the principal shares this opinion, 3.4% of the teachers are neutral.

7) The Policy regarding Teaching and Pedagogy
The policy regarding teaching and pedagogy is deemed “clear” by 89.3% of the teachers and the principal holds the same view, but 10.7% are neutral. In 85.7% of cases the teachers also think that the policy is being systematically implemented. Over 96% of the teachers believed that the principal played an important role in shaping the school’s policy regarding teaching and pedagogy, but 3.7% were neutral. About 30% of the teachers also believed that they played an important role in shaping this policy, but 22.2% thought that their contribution was insignificant, and 48.1% were neutral. In 81.5% of cases the teachers believe that the policy regarding teaching and pedagogy is accessible and the principal agrees. Over 18% of the teachers are neutral.

Discussion
The gender division of teachers in school D is 23.3% males and 76.7% females. The age division among the teachers is somewhat uneven; most of them are between 36 and 45 years old. The teachers’ work experience is also variable, but a little less then half of them have been teaching for 1-5 years, and about half of them have more than 16 years work experience (cf. pie chart for question 3 below). The principal has 16-20 years work experience. A little less than three fourth of the teachers teach at a certain age level while slightly more than one fourth of them teach at more than one level (cf. pie chart for question 4 below). The principal has no teaching obligations.
The findings indicate that the great majority of teachers think the school is a good workplace where they feel good and face a challenging job (cf. pie charts for questions 5 and 7 below).

The teachers deem that they are rarely absent due to illness, or once a month up to 2-3 times per school year. The principal holds that the teachers are “rather much” absent because of illness. Slightly more than half of the teachers and the principal believe they make a contribution to strengthen the work morale.
The majority of the teachers say that the interaction between the principal and teachers is good (cf. pie chart for question 9 below). The principal shows understanding when teachers need to take care of personal matters and he makes demands upon them at work (cf. pie chart for question 28 below).

9. Do you think your interaction with the principal is good/bad?

- fairly good: 43.3%
- very good: 50.0%
- neither nor: 6.7%

28. Does the principal make much/little demands upon you at work?

- fairly much: 66.7%
- very much: 6.7%
- neither nor: 26.7%

The principal values teachers’ work experience and professional knowledge highly and the majority of teachers believe they have much control of what subjects they teach. The principal and a little more than half of the teachers agree as to how much control teachers have of their work hours, and more than half of them are content with the arrangement of the work hours (cf. pie chart for question 15 below). The principal and about half of the teachers hold that personnel interviews are fruitful, but a little less than half of the teachers are neutral (cf. pie chart for question 12 below).
12. Are personnel interviews fruitful/unfruitful?

- Rather little: 6.7%
- Both and: 43.3%
- Fairly fruitful: 46.7%
- Very fruitful: 3.3%

15. Are you content/discontent with the arrangement of the work hours?

- Very discontent: 3.3%
- Rather discontent: 6.7%
- Neither nor: 20.0%
- Fairly content: 50.0%
- Very content: 20.0%

It varies how much praise is being used at work and the experience of the principal and the teachers is not always the same. The principal praises pupils “fairly much” and a little more than half of the teachers agree (cf. pie chart for question 47 below). The principal and teachers’ nearest superiors praise teachers more often than the teachers praise the principal. Teachers praise their colleagues often in a little more than one third of cases (cf. pie chart for question 19 below).
47. Does the principal praise pupils much/little for good performance at school?

- very little: 3.3%
- rather little: 6.7%
- neither nor: 33.3%
- fairly much: 43.3%
- missing: 6.7%

19. Do you often/seldom praise your colleagues for good performance?

- very seldom: 3.3%
- rather seldom: 10.0%
- both and: 50.0%
- fairly often: 36.7%

Access to the principal is exemplary as nearly all the teachers hold that they have ready access to him (cf. pie chart for question 21 below) and a little less than one fourth of them call upon the principal when they need support. The principal and a little less than three quarters of the teachers hold that the principal often encourages them to seek retraining and continuous education and the same percentage of teachers and the principal are content with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education (cf. pie chart for question 24 below).

21. Do you have ready/limited access to the principal?

- neither nor: 33.3%
- fairly ready: 23.3%
- very ready: 43.3%

24. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the school’s policy on retraining and continuous education?

- very satisfied: 20.0%
- fairly satisfied: 56.7%
- neither nor: 23.3%
The majority of the teachers and the principal unanimously hold that the collaboration among the administrators is good and that the division of labor within the school is clear (cf. pie chart for questions 25 and 27 below). The principal and slightly more than three forth of the teachers find the channels within the school adequate. Half of the teachers along with the principal hold that they receive much information about the decision making of the principal, and three fourth of them are content with the flow of information to the school community.

25. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with the collaboration with administrators?

- neither nor: 13.3%
- fairly satisfied: 46.7%
- very satisfied: 40.0%

27. Is the division of labor within the school clear/hazy?

- very clear: 80.0%
- fairly clear: 6.7%
- rather hazy: 3.3%
- neither nor: 10.0%

About three fourth of the teachers and the principal agree on how disciplinary matters regarding pupils are to be treated (cf. pie chart for questions 31 below). The principal and the majority of teachers also agree that teachers can express themselves at teachers’ meetings. The principal and a great majority of teachers deem all meetings effective except teachers’ committee meetings (cf. pie chart for questions 33 and 35 below). One fourth of the teachers hold that there is little collaboration between teachers teaching at different age levels. The principal and a little more that one third of the teachers claim that there is much collaboration between age levels.
31. Is your attitude towards the treatment of disciplinary matters the same as principal's?

- In every case (91-100%): 20.0%
- Missing: 3.3%
- In few cases (11-40%): 63.3%
- Both and (41-60%): 10.0%
- In most cases (61-90%): 20.0%

33. Are teachers' meetings efficient/inefficient?

- Very efficient: 6.7%
- Missing: 3.3%
- Rather inefficient: 3.3%
- Neither nor: 23.3%

A little less than one third of the teachers do not take a position with regard to the effectiveness of teachers' meetings, a little less than one third of them are neutral concerning the time of teachers' collaboration, and about half of them are neutral in the case of teachers' committee meetings. The majority of teachers and the principal are content with the collaboration among teachers (cf. pie chart for question 36 below).

35. Are division, year, and subject's meetings efficient/inefficient?

- Missing: 3.3%
- Very efficient: 30.0%
- Fairly efficient: 66.7%

36. Are you satisfied/dissatisfied with teachers' collaboration?

- Neither nor: 3.3%
- Missing: 3.3%
- Fairly satisfied: 50.0%
- Very satisfied: 43.3%
The teachers are more or less unanimous regarding the policy on teaching and pedagogy (cf. pie chart for question 40 below). A great majority of the teachers hold that the principal’s role in shaping the policy is large and a little less than one third of them also hold that they participated in this task. The majority of the teachers think the policy is accessible and hold that they follow it in a systematic way (cf. pie chart for question 41 below).

### Peroration

The findings of the principal’s and teachers’ questionnaires for Grindavík primary school throw some light on various aspects of the administration of the school. The findings suggest a strong administration and united school activity, and it is my hope that they may be utilized to strengthen even more the factors that were examined.