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**Perceptions of teachers and learners about factors that facilitate learners' performance in mathematics in South Africa.**

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Summary: Under-performance in mathematics is a challenge in South African schools. The purpose of this study is to advance views expressed by teachers and learners on factors that facilitate learners' performance in mathematics. The participants in this research were educators and learners from historically disadvantaged schools from similar socio-economic backgrounds in the Limpopo Province. Ten rural schools participated in the study, all government schools, with schools selected on the basis of their accessibility and performance. They represent both high-performing and low-performing schools in mathematics. Data were collected from learner focus group interviews and individual teacher interviews. Perceptions expressed by educators and learners from high-achieving schools and from low-achieving schools are juxtaposed and point to factors such as learners' and teachers' commitment and motivation, attitudes and self-concept, learners' career prospects, learners' perceptions of peers and teachers and teachers' perceptions of learners. These factors appear to influence disadvantaged learners' decisions to persist and achieve in mathematics despite their difficult circumstances.

*Classification:* C20 C30

*Keywords:* mathematics performance; learner perceptions; teacher perceptions; school effectiveness

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