

**THE PERFORMANCE OF FEMALE PRINCIPALS IN THE
MANAGEMENT OF SELECTED SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN THE
GAUTENG PROVINCE**

by

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SYNOPSIS

This study focuses on the performance of women principals in managing secondary schools. It emphasizes the styles of management and how it impacts on school effectiveness. Furthermore, the study highlights the barriers that hinder women performances especially, gender discrimination against women with regard to filling of senior post in secondary schools. One of the central themes that permeate studies on gender discrimination is the move towards eroding all forms of discrimination against women. Hitherto, women remain a minority gender in terms of management positions in education generally, and in secondary schools in particular. Attempts are made, through the implementation of policy documents to enforce the principle of gender equity. However, certain subtle discriminatory practices remain a barrier between the present state of affairs and a desired situation. This could be due to, inter alia, prejudice, stereotyping, cultural beliefs or even religious injunctions perpetuating women submissiveness.

The amplified awareness of gender politics combined with challenges about gender equity in organizations such as schools remain a thorny concern in educational cycles. Today, women are becoming increasingly aware of the important role they can play in transforming of schools into institutions of excellence. This study has argued that although women may be discriminated against, they do possess essential tools to transform their schools into highly performing institutions. In an attempt to cross-examine the issue of gender discrimination, a qualitative research approach was employed to elicit the perceptions of women principals with regard to their management styles and how it impact on their performance.

The research was conducted at different secondary schools in Johannesburg South district (D 11) of Gauteng. Purposive sampling was used for selection of the participants and the sites. Data was collected by means of individual interviews, supported by relevant research literature. The findings reveal that women principals in secondary schools are competent and do possess the necessary skills to manage secondary school effectively. With the necessary support to develop and enhance their management and leadership styles, women can become successful partners in transforming schools in institutions of learning.

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CHAPTER ONE

1.1 INTRODUCTION

“Women are overwhelmingly represented in lower echelons of the educational field, but are poorly represented among the ranks of school managers” (Republic of South Africa, 1996 a).

The patriarchal culture which is dominant in many schools has placed constraints on the introduction of women advancement in senior management levels. Although much has changed for South African women, many still suffer discrimination and have an unequal share of power, especially in education. (Sboros,1994a:13). These deep-seated inequalities accompanied by stereotypical myths and prejudicial attitudes about women’s competencies as school principals, are barriers that impact on their performances as principals (Gender Equity Task Team [GETT], 1997:195).

Despite considerable progress made regarding the legal status of women and gender equality being entrenched in the *Bill of Rights* and the *Constitution* of South Africa (Republic of South Africa, 1996 b), women and men do not enjoy equal rights in practice (Cotter, 2004; Van Deventer and Kruger, 2003). Patriarchy is still entrenched amongst all ethnic groups. Under-representation of women in decision-making structures shows that structural gender inequalities remain firmly imbedded in South African society (GETT, 1997:198). Specific measures must be developed to identify and remove the underlying causes of discrimination in policies, laws, procedures, beliefs, practices and attitudes that maintain gender inequality (Cotter, 2004:11).

One of the burning issues in education today is the rapid transformation that is taking place in education policy, conditions of employment and school governance. In the context of the Constitution (Republic of South Africa, 1996), various legal requirements to accelerate equity and equality in the workplace are endorsed (Niehause & Myburg, 1999: 9). This has been the result of inter alia, the rapid transformation that is occurring in the workplace.

We now see more women, younger employees, people with different sexual orientation and diversified cultural groups in the workplace (Greyvenstein, 2000:31). To meet the challenges and demands of an ever-changing society, schools must have access to a large pool of human resource managers who must be prepared to commit their time, skills and expertise to transform schools into viable institutions of learning. Our schools face unique challenges, caused by changes that are rapidly taking place in the external environment (Leithwood and Jantzi, 2000:5).

Among the main forces of change are the changing expectations of society; new technology, the implementation and managing of a new curriculum, demands for new skills for employment, competition and the desire to satisfy the customers and stakeholders, such as the learners, parents, the community and society as a whole (Moloi, 1997:11). To survive in a complex and turbulent environment, school managers need to be internally aligned and environmentally attuned. School managers should take cognizance of the fact that society demands sustainable high standards of performance and service delivery from men and women.

In view of the above, this research argues that the management of secondary schools should not be solely confined to men. Research indicates that women are as capable as men in managing and changing schools (Al-Khalifa in Bennett, Crawford & Riches, 1992: 99). Furthermore, research indicates that although 64% of educators are female and 36% male, the latter occupy 58% of the principalship posts in both primary and secondary schools (Gender Equity Task Team [GETT], 1997). It is further revealed that only 17% of secondary principal posts in Gauteng Department of Education are occupied by women. Greyvenstein (2000:31) argue that this situation can no longer be left unchallenged because women are as capable as their male counterparts.

1.2 BACKGROUND TO THE PROBLEM

Equal opportunity and affirmative action legislation (Republic of South Africa, 1998) was implemented to redress past imbalances, hence the attention paid to issues of women's rights and empowerment, pay equity and sexual discrimination (Mathur-Helm, 2002). Until the early 1990s, South Africa was dominated by apartheid, which discriminated, segmented and segregated society in many ways, more so in terms of culture and gender. However, from 1990 onwards, and especially since 1994, when its new democratic government was elected, a major transformation occurred in education. Global competition, a new curriculum and fast-changing technology have caused the education system to cast aside old practices and invest in new ideas and methods.

Research on discrimination against women within the education system uncovers the seriousness of continuous deterrents to women being promoted to management positions, especially in secondary schools (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2000). Research in gender equity seems to endorse the view that there is a disproportional representation of women at senior management level in secondary schools (Department of Education, 2005). The legacy of gender discrimination against women demands a new mindset considering legal imperatives such as the Labour Relations Act (Republic of South Africa, 1995) and Employment Equity Act (Republic of South Africa, 1998).

The post-apartheid government has passed a significant number of laws, which touch upon gender issues (Budlender, Goldman, Pigou, & Valji, 1999). However, according to the Employment Equity Bill (Republic of South Africa, 1997), it is 5000 times more likely for a white male South African (the previously most advantaged group) than for a black female (the previously most disadvantaged group) to be in a top management position (Wolpe, Quinlan & Martinez, 1997).

The Employment Equity Act (Republic of South Africa, 1998) was passed, with the intention of encouraging the employment of more women, which ought to result in greater equity in the workplace (Mathur-Helm, 2002). However, of the 6.2 million employed females, only 1.6 % are managers and the rest occupy lower level jobs (South Africa Population Census, 1996). Research in gender equity seems to agree that there is a

disproportional representation of women in secondary schools (Van Deventer & Van der Westhuizen, 2000:235). Erasmus's (1998 a) study on South African career women found that, in spite of being talented, educated and committed to their careers, barriers that keep these women from being promoted, relate to the misconceptions.

In this research, the misconception is presented that women do not show leadership potential and behave differently from traditional male leaders, in ways that would be detrimental to them and to the organization. Besides, evidence suggests that implementation of affirmative action, is still subject to dominant, white male value system (Fischer, 1996). It very important to get a commitment from top management, as discrimination on the basis of gender and race is institutionalized in South African organizations. Male managers as an elite group will continue to maintain their privileged positions by closing off opportunities to women. Fischer (1996: 34) concluded that for affirmative action to be fully implemented with gender in mind, it would take decades for the effects of century's old inequality and discrimination, against women in terms of both gender and race, to be eliminated.

Issues of advancement of women have not been afforded the importance that they deserve, with gender issues being marginalized or overlooked (Masango, 1994; Fischer, 1996:36). Thus, the barriers hindering progress and advancement of women in management are typically "white male domination" in management and decision-making, stereotyped gender roles and racism. This is not only evident in South Africa's corporate world, private and public sectors, but also prevails in its educational system.

Due to systematic educational discrimination against women, the lack of opportunities for economic advancement many have been denied formal educational qualifications and necessary experience for entry into and advancement within certain types of occupations, especially technical occupations and managerial level posts (Cotter, 2004: 27). This resulted in the majority of women doing menial jobs and has excluded women from senior management positions (Cotter, 2004: 114). This in turn resulted in there being a significant gap in top management positions, and the creation of an unrepresentative body at the strategic decision- making levels.

Even where women are well qualified and experienced, the predominance of males at management level has resulted in a culture in which male behavioural patterns are perceived to be the norm, and in which women often find it difficult to be accepted as equals by their male colleagues (Burke & Davidson, 1994: 28-29; Cotter, 2004:129).

They further argue that a working environment, which makes few concessions to matters like maternity leave, time-off, leave and domestic responsibilities exists, thus the challenge for affirmative action is to create those conditions that women need to: overcome the barriers that block access to the wide spectrum of occupations; overcome the barriers that block progression up the employment hierarchy for all women irrespective of rank; and create an environment that affirms them.

The focus of this investigation is to examine barriers that hinder women's performance in management positions in secondary schools. As the number of women employed in institutions, businesses and schools increase, so does the expectation of improved status in the workplace. The consciousness of women's progression in society, the workforce, and particular management has been raised largely as a result of the feminist movement (Sekaran, 1990: 187).

Mckeen and Burke, (1992) argue that there are a number of barriers that impede on women's performances in management, which is: that women are different from men and that this difference is perceived as a deficiency in women. Their attitude, behaviours, traits and socialization handicap them in the masculine environment (Winstanley & Woodal, 2000:88). That the managerial and professional women are held back by the bias and stereotypes men have of women; and the assumption that structural and systematic discrimination in organisational policies and practices which affect the treatment of women and which limit their advancement.

The researcher accepts that women managers are equally good and can be more diverse in their management styles, but that they face certain problems, which do not exist for the typical male. Mckeen and Burke (1992) argue that women attempting to exercise

leadership in a male environment can expose themselves to critique from men. Since a successful manager is seen as assertive and self-reliant, a failure to fulfill this role would cause her subordinates and peers to perceive her as weak and passive, more capable of being led than leading. But if she demonstrates assertiveness, initiative or ambition, many men and women will see her as hostile, maladjusted and over controlling. This criticism is often leveled against female managers by women in lower positions in an organization.

The misrepresentation of women's diverse and unique traits needs to be investigated and corrected or repositioned because distorted stereotyping may hinder their performance at senior managerial levels. Their misrepresentation in senior management can be explained by human capital (the perception of their worth in the labour market), discrimination and stereotypical attitudes. There is a perception when looking at human capital factors that women are 'channeled' into lowly paid occupations because of lack of skills

This research will identify and explore the perceptions held by women principals and the barriers impeding on performances. The following research questions will be used to explore the problem and to develop guidelines and recommendations:

- What are the perceptions of women principals relating to their role and responsibilities as school managers?
- What are the possible factors that impede their performance as women principals?
- What guidelines may be presented to assist women principals in addressing possible gender stereotyping relating to their management of secondary schools?

1.3 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The general aim of this research is to identify and explore women principals' perceptions and responsibilities as school managers. It will also examine how bias relating to stereotype possibly impacts on their assessment of themselves as capable leaders.

The specific aims are:

- to explore the perceptions of women principals in the management of secondary schools;
- to identify factors that impede the performance of women principals;
- to present guidelines that could assist women principals addressing issues of gender stereotyping relating to management.

A description of the research design, which directed this study, will now be provided.

1.4 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.4.1 Research design

In order to investigate how female managers can overcome the stigmatization as non-performers and gender discrimination in transforming secondary schools, a qualitative study will be utilized. According to Lincoln and Guba (1995), a qualitative study enables the researchers to gather enough knowledge so that understanding or explanation about women managers is acquired. It is a method used to understand situations in their context. Being concerned with meaning, interpretive studies are framed by descriptions of explanations for, or meanings given to specify phenomena by the researcher and the study participants, rather than the definitions and interpretations of the researcher himself (Merriam, 1998:6). The interpretive design portrays the individual as forming part of the social world. The responses and action of principals cannot be interpreted in isolation, it forms part of a particular community. It emphasizes action and interaction with the social context and understanding of intended actions of individuals. It wants to understand the subjective world and deepen the investigation of why social life is perceived and experienced the way it is.

This research is aimed at producing knowledge guided by feminist concepts to produce findings arrived at through interviews which will be interrogated on the basis of literature. The empirical aspect of the study will use individual (person-to-person) interviews as a qualitative research tool to identify the essential characteristics of women principals in management positions.

This study will therefore use the effectiveness of individual interviews to obtain information about the performance of women principals in management. The interview findings and the literature review will be used to provide a framework on how women managers could address the burden of stereotyping and discrimination whilst transforming and managing their schools effectively. In addition, the aim of the interview would be obtain specific information from women principals at secondary schools on how they cope with discrimination within transformation in general and in the management of secondary schools.

1.4.2 Literature review

A literature review will be undertaken to provide a theoretical framework on how women managers can overcome gender discrimination whilst transforming secondary schools. Strauss and Corbin (1995:52) argue that a literature study assists the researcher to better understand the research phenomenon. The questions intended to be asked and the theoretical sampling is easily obtained from the relevant theory.

1.4.3 The interview

In this research, interviews on women management styles will be conducted in order to attain the relevant information. The sample will consist of women managers in various secondary schools in the Johannesburg South district (D11).

Cormack, (2000: 294) defined an interview as a purposeful interaction between two or more people who communicate, conversate and negotiate for a specific aim associated with some agreed subject matter. Accordingly, the interview has been chosen as a tool to bring together selected women managers for the purpose of data collection. The main aim of the interview is to obtain specific information about how women managers perceive their role and responsibilities as managers, what possible factors impede on their performance and how they cope with discrimination in transformation (Merriam,

1998:71). This will be done by allowing the respondents to answer questions through semi-structured questions. A semi-structured interview refers to the interviewer's ability "to respond to the situation at hand" (Merriam, 1998:74).

1.4.4 Data analysis

Analysis is essentially about making sense of the data that has been collected and using the results of this process to answer the research questions (Thakathi, 2000:82).

The aim of collecting and analyzing data is to obtain information and to give severity to the study about secondary school women managers (Merriam, 1998:71). The transcribed interviews obtained from the selected women principals in secondary schools will be coded and categorized. When analysing data, the respondent and context effects will be identified (Mouton,1998:148). Data will be transcribed and analyzed using the constant comparative method as explained by Maykut and Morehouse (1994:126-144).

1.4.5. Trustworthiness, reliability and validity

Trustworthiness is employed throughout research to ensure that the research project is valid and reliable and therefore yields envisaged results (Merriam, 1998:20). Validity uses strategies such as triangulation, member checks, long term objectives, observation, peer examination, participatory or collaborative modes of research and researcher's biases whilst reliability uses techniques such as investigator's position to, triangulation as well as audit to account for results (Merriam,1998:201-209).

In keeping with the above, the conceptual framework for this research is now provided.

1.5 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

According to Mouton (1998:119) a theoretical framework denotes a thought process by which research is incorporated into existing body of knowledge relevant to the topic

investigated. It attempts to combine thought and its application. A thought refers to the organization of perceptions.

A complete system of these perceptions results into a concept. Therefore, the concept should be applied in order to deduct meaning from the research question (De Vos, 1998: 110-112). The foregoing thus suggests that a theoretical framework serves to provide a relationship between key factors being researched, such as gender discrimination stereotypes and prejudice and transformation in secondary schools. This can be done by consulting relevant literature. Reviewing research literature provides a map for the researcher of a field being researched (Mouton, 1998:119). Mapping in this research consists of the following sections:

- theories on gender discrimination;
- transformation;
- women managers and
- stereotypes and prejudice

Having made the necessary assumptions, key concepts that form the focus of this research will be clarified.

1.6 CLARIFICATION OF CONCEPTS

The specific terms relevant to the research are defined as follows:

1.6.1 Gender discrimination

In this study, gender discrimination refers to a purposive process of dominating and/or excluding people in a less favorable manner with regard to gender, marital status, physical incompetence or sexual orientation over others and denying them their rights and freedom to be engaged in whatever public activity they want to take part in (Van Deventer and Van der Westhuisen, 2000:235). Snyder & Tadesse (1995:14) construe gender as a “social construct” declaring both men and women’s responsibilities and

expectations as not being the same and equal. It is the differences socially prescribed by society between males and females (GETT, 1997:40). Gender discrimination refers to the non-impartial, unfair and unjust treatment towards women (Greyvenstein, 2000: 30). In the education system there is no equity in term of representation within the post levels (GETT, 1997:196). This constitutes gender imbalance. In this research, gender discrimination will be used to refer to the subtle side-lining of women from top management positions in secondary schools.

1.6.2 Transformation

Hornby (1994:546) defines transformation as an instance that changes the shape in the nature of quality. Activities are in a way changed and redirected to bring change. Change engages both the intellect and emotions of individuals; it may also interfere with people's value systems, norms and environments, including their organizational structures (Everard & Morrison, 1996:233). Consequently, change is unlikely to happen successfully unless promoted, steered or facilitated.

Furthermore, it refers to the manner in which the schools are effectively improved and developed using external reform process to obtain their objectives as well as their ability to sustain change. Fullan and Steigelbauer (1991:15), states that a visionary leader is the key in this regard because such a leader is able to revitalize organizations through giving people meaning, purpose and a sense of higher values in their work. When a common purpose and future possibilities are articulated, the leader manages to line up the organization's members behind a shared vision, which in turn enables them all to move forward. In this study transformation refers to the manner in which schools are effectively improved and developed using external reform processes to obtain their objectives as well as their ability to sustain change.

1.6.3 Women as Managers

Managers are individuals who are engrossed in a process of management which entails personnel, task and system functions (Sallis & Sallis, 1990: 112). Their responsibility is to plan, co-ordinate, motivate, allocate and control activities, people and the organization (Hales, 2001: 2). Bush (1995:1) contends that the process of management involves the accountability of getting things done through and working effectively with other people.

In this research Johnson & Johnson (1994: 1:4) distinguish between a leader and a manager by pointing out that leadership entails taking the lead in doing something, whilst management involves dealing with issues. Leadership involves “mission, direction and inspiration” (Fullan and Steigelbauer, 1991:157). Women managers should therefore become leading managers who display integrity. This can be achieved by always keeping in mind that people are led and not managed (Johnson & Johnson, 1994: 1-10).

The concepts leadership and management are thus essential in changing and transforming the school. Therefore, women managers refer to women who are involved in the process of management and leadership in secondary schools. The concept “woman manager” shall hereafter mean female principal.

1.6.4 Stereotypes and Prejudices

Daft (1991:437) defines a stereotype as a “widely held generalization about a group of people that assigns attributes to them solely on the basis of a limited number of categories”. It is people’s tendencies to attribute events or actions of an individual on the basis of an assessment of a group to which the individual belongs, e.g. where an emotional incident of a woman is generalized into a sweeping statement that all women are emotional. Stereotypes may be ascribed to infant and early years teaching whereby boys and girls are brought up differently such as that society shapes them according to their up-bringing. This is then extended to their professions whereby women applications into management posts are rejected on the basis of strength and posts are stereotypically offered according to feminine (educators) or masculine characteristics (Al-Khallifa, 1992:96).

Mathipa and Tsoka (2000:130) define prejudice as an act of forming an opinion about a particular condition before viewing and assessing the actual condition. This opinion may also be formed without gathering facts. People judged on presumptions as well as preconceived ideas. This is because people are inclined to readily remember instances that perpetuate stereotype than incidences that challenge it. These judgments may be discriminatory in nature. An example of prejudice act is where the majority of people (men and women) still believe that women cannot make good leaders. This belief is in itself discriminatory. Hence prejudices may lead to discrimination. Thus Mathipa & Tsoka (2000:130) argue that these two concepts cannot be separated. Prejudice may be caused by stereotypes or generalizations emanating from culture, customs and beliefs. (Greyvenstein, 2000:32).

1.7 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

In this research, the ideal situation in the interviewing process would be to interview every women principal of secondary schools; however the researcher chose to focus on the public schools rather than the independent schools. Due to the length of the minor-dissertation, Gauteng province will be chosen for practical reasons. Of the 12 districts in Gauteng, the researcher was interested in studying the D11 district for practical reasons. There are 554 public ordinary schools in Gauteng, 125 Secondary Schools in D 11 and 6 women principals in Cluster 9 (Department of Education, 2004/5) annual report.

1.8 ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

The ethical guidelines of the research and practice will be adhered to throughout the process of the research. Initially, all prospective principals will be contacted to gain written permission for their involvement in the study. Gauteng Department of Education and the University of Johannesburg were approached and permission was granted for the researcher to enter the sites of investigation. Participants were assured that no actual

names would be used in the study. Confidentiality was respected under all circumstances and plagiarism should be avoided at all cost. The researchers would also make provision for participants to withdraw from the research study.

1.9 SEQUENCE OF CHAPTERS

Chapter one provides the introduction, background and rationale of the research. The study emphasizes the barriers that hinder women's performances especially, gender discrimination against women with regard to the filling of managerial posts. It also highlights the research problem, the aim of the research, the conceptual framework, clarification of concepts and the division of chapters.

Chapter two explores relevant literature on feminist theories, including the barriers impeding on women performances. It also details a strategy that can be utilized to transform their schools into viable institutions whilst overcoming gender discrimination.

Chapter three focuses on the research method whereby the interaction with respondents will be interpreted with the aim of describing what they (respondents) attach to questions asked. A qualitative approach is used to draw out information that will yield qualitative data.

Chapter four deals with the analysis and interpretation of data collected. The findings acquired from interview are presented. This is expounded in line with the theoretical framework outlined in this chapter.

Chapter five outlines findings from relevant research literature and interviews. It also provides recommendations and conclusion as well as topics for further research.

1.10 SUMMARY

In this chapter, a framework for the research has been explored. It has been argued that women are capable managers given the opportunity to manage secondary school. The research is motivated by the need to expose the fact that women continue to be discriminated against particularly in secondary schools. Firstly, the background of the research is stated. The chapter further provides the statement of the problem, whereby aspects of discrimination and stereotypical attitude towards women, in particular, has been highlighted. The aim of the research is to explore women's perceptions on school management, to interrogate certain concepts and consolidate meaning with research methods.

In the next chapter, the relevant research literature on barriers impacting on women's performance and how they overcome gender discrimination in transforming their schools will be discussed.



CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELEVANT LITERATURE

“It is vitally important that all structures of government ... should fully understand... freedom cannot be achieved unless women have been emancipated from all forms of oppression... unless we see in visible and practical terms that the condition of women in our country has radically changed for the better and that they have been empowered in all spheres of life as equals...”

(President Nelson Mandela, Inaugural speech, April 1994, from South Africa's National Policy framework for Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality,)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The first chapter of this research provided the background and motivation for a study on women in management. Women numerically dominate the teaching profession in our country (Department of Education, 2006), but they hold a minority of management positions in education, apart from junior primary schools, which are more often managed by women. In secondary schools, the proportion of women and male teachers are roughly equal but the positions that are better paid and involve greater levels of management responsibility are more likely to be held by men (Coleman, 2002:2). A theoretical framework of the literature that deals with this phenomenon will also be developed.

This chapter will examine gender discrimination in the workplace and how it impacts on the performances of women in management. It will initially look at feminism, and will then examine women in employment. Undoubtedly there are still a large proportion of committed women educators who are not interested in climbing the promotion ladder. For these women the question of whether they enjoy equal opportunities in terms of promotion rarely arises. Gradually this group is to be replaced by a new generation of women educators who believe that all women who wish to seek advancement should be offered the opportunity to do so. Feminism, in its various forms, and how these impact on women generally and women managers in particular, will be outlined.

Theories on feminism will be used to highlight how women have been marginalized in South Africa will be covered.

2.2 FEMINIST THEORIES

Weiner (1994) defines feminism as a movement for political, social and economic equality of women and men. This suggests that there is greater reservation about the label feminist than about the actual goals, values, and achievements of feminism. Because feminism means different things to different people, (Hurtado, 2001:33) defines feminism as an active commitment to equality and respect for all forms of life. He state that feminism is against oppression, be it oppression of women, men, specific sexualities on our planet. Feminism seeks for women the same opportunities and privileges that society gives to men, and asserts the distinctive value of womanhood against patriarchal denigration, in the protest against women's oppression, as it looks to the individuality of each human soul. Feminism encompasses the move to erode all forms of women discrimination, to strike a balance on a gender scale (Ledwith & Colgan, 1996:7).

A feminist is an individual whose focal point is on women and their rights as well as their upliftment in society. This person may be an activist whose main purpose is to challenge all forms of discrimination against women. Feminist theories seek to redress the unfair and unjust prescriptions made by society over different roles that men and women portray. This imbalance can also be seen overlapping into the education system, whereby leadership positions in the township schools are still predominantly male driven (GETT,1997:). The following are the feminist theories seen from different perspectives by feminists:

- liberal feminism
- cultural feminism
- radical feminism
- socialist feminism
- post modern feminism

It should be borne in mind that feminist theories are divided into three main categories, namely; liberal feminism, radical and social feminism (Ledwith & Colgan, 1996). The focal point of all the theories centers on the improvement of women's lives.

2.2.1 Liberal feminism

Liberal feminism is concerned with equality between men and women, above all else. These equalities proponents put forth that sameness does not mean men and women are identical but rather alike, and they argue that difference is either non-existent, the product of a mystique, or existing but must be overcome through various efforts including legal activism. Women can be seen as capable of combining a career with family, in true fulfillment and equality, cautioning against the damage of over-mothering.

Liberal feminism manifests itself into three themes, namely; equality, sex stereotyping and sex discrimination (Wolf, 1993:195). The disproportion of women in leadership roles can be simply seen as a matter of equity. Liberal feminism would take a view that the 'problem' could and should be eliminated by ensuring policies of equal opportunities. The concern is more with equality in the sense of access and opportunity based on merit or credentials as opposed to equality of outcomes. Equality forms the basis of feminism. It seeks to promote equal opportunities for women. In the case of this investigation, equal opportunities in management positions.

Sex stereotyping and socialization is the second theme. Sex stereotyping, according to Weiss (2001) emanates from the very announcement of the birth of a child. This implies that colour is used to separate girls from boys' clothes, which is pink and blue respectively. Differentiation is further extended to schools whereby girls are treated differently from boys. Such practice limit girls career to gender stereotype occupation and family role (Acker, 1993:45). Sex stereotyping also encourage sex attitudes that put women in an unfavourable position where men perceive themselves as having an upper hand over "women's work, sexuality as well as their bodies" (Van der Lippe & Fodor, 1998). This is evidenced where women are confined to a position of dependency on men

because they are said to be emotionally weak, whilst men are encouraged to suppress their feelings (Acker, 1993: 45). Society qualifies these actions and is quick to refer them to societal norms such as 'men don't cry' or 'let her cry, she's hurting' (Wolf, 1993: 200). As a result, such actions lead to sex discrimination.

Sex discrimination is the third theme within liberalism. It embraces aspects of discrimination such as rights, justice and fairness (Acker, 1993: 45). These involve acts such as sexual harassment, which is abusive in nature. Some men may want to sexually abuse women in return of a job or favour (Wolf, 1993: 204). Measor & Sikes (1992: 25) contend that liberal feminists limit individuals to personal rights, instead of societal rights. Thus liberalism may itself reverse the male view in terms of how people and society works. As a result, oppressive acts and behaviour may remain unnoticed. (Acker, 1993; Wood, 2001).

2.2.2 Cultural Feminism

This type of feminism examines the differences between men and women in elevating feminine qualities of personal strength as an alternative to the relationship of marriage and home is examined. Underlying cultural feminism is a matriarchal vision of strong women guided by female concerns and values of pacifism, cooperation, non-violent settlement, and harmonious regulation of public life. Strong cultural feminism believes that only women can say what a 'woman' is, by reviewing and reclaiming themselves, abhorring the man-made public realm and turning to the deployment of female values for the public good (Cotter, 2004:17). They further believe that women possess qualities superior to men, feminine qualities which are of better use outside the home for entry into the public world.

Leaders of this new movement prefer the term 'multi-cultural' because they believe that race is a particularly potent power system that shapes people's identities and opportunities (Zinn & Dill, 1996.). At the same time, multi-cultural feminists insist that race cannot be viewed in isolation. Although, especially important from the feminists'

perspective, race intersects other systems of domination in ways that affect what race means. Central to multi-cultural feminism is emphasis on women's agency.

Despite constraints imposed by systems of domination, women have often resisted their oppressions. Even when they operated within abhorrent systems of domination such as slavery, women found ways to care for themselves and their families and to contribute to their communities (Hurtado, 2001).

2.2.3 Radical Feminism

Radical feminists relied on revolutionary analysis and politics along with high-profile events to call attention to the oppression of women and to demand changes in women's place in society and changes in relationships between women and men (Freeman, 2002: 45). Patriarchy in short entails male domination over women and forms the core of radical feminism. It is a hierarchical social system that encourages domination. This results in women being subjected to subordinate position as compared to men's superordinate position. Thus, women may experience difficulties in trying to be accepted as leaders by their subordinate (Lucas & Lovaglia, 1998). The former is perpetuated by men's dominance in the social, economic and political arena of society (Measor & Sikes, 1992:27).

Men and women are seen as fundamentally different, with the female mode the basis of a future society, in the rejection of marriage and family which act as oppressive psychological factors. Radical feminism argues for womanhood. It views women as 'we', believing in commonality and mutual support. Espousing the need to be freed from state control and from the constraining association with the family, *strong difference feminists* argue that the man-made world must be changed as it hinders women (Boyd, 2002). With the outcome being the elimination of male privilege and sexual distinction in order to break the tyranny of biological and psychological power, *radical feminism* requires the overthrow of male dominance and promulgates equality of the sexes.

Walby (in Ledwith & Colgan, 1996: 7) states that patriarchy manifests itself in a few structures, namely: the patriarchal values and structures of society mean that the activities of women are always seen as less significant than those of men. That man is the stronger, intelligent sex and should be rewarded for their labour accordingly.

Women will serve, be exploited, undermined and subjected to male dominance, wage labour and sexual violence, that the patriarchal system will be maintained and institutionalized by a particular culture. These structures form the basis of the manifestation of patriarchy.

Radical feminism focuses on two themes. The first theme involves the overall dominance of culture and knowledge. This is informed by the notion that men's activities, knowledge and decisions have in the past been taken as human knowledge. On the contrary, women inputs were ignored (Acker, 1993: 50). The second theme, sexuality incidences of school life, refers to educators' unequal focus between girls and boys. As a result boys being more advantaged over girls (Zinn & Dill, 1996).

With regard to education, radical feminists look into power relations within the school. Because of these relations, they are of the opinion that schools serve as institutions that reinforce patriarchy (Ledwith & Colgan, 1994: 7). According to Weiner (1994: 66) women and girls are subjected to an oppressive role in the staff-room and classroom respectively as well as around the school generally. Radical feminists further claim that school subject's focus more on males than females, which further emphasize patriarchy. Concerning change, radical feminists adopt their radical stance that political and legal structures should be eradicated. This, they assert, will assist women to attain liberal, fundamental as well as revolutionary plight. Change, they argue will come as a result of this ruthless move (Measor & Sikes, 1992: 27; Coleman, 2002:130).

2.2.4 Socialist feminism

Socialist feminism aligns itself with Marxist feminism which is capitalistic in nature (Thakathi, 2001: 31). They both assert that economic, social and political structures bring about imbalances within a society. Middleton (1993: 42) is of the opinion that the basis of socialist feminism, emanates from Marxist and Radical feminism. Marxist feminism argues that education for women emphasizes the negativism of sexual labour division, including class difference.

Radical feminism on the other hand, emphasizes oppression of women by men as well as the enhancement of sexual subordination by the school. Thus, a combination of these two feminisms is what socialist feminism entails. Patriarchy and capitalism according to socialist feminism have to be eroded (Cotter, 2004:17). Patriarchy emanates from materialistic and historical foundations. In turn capitalism emanates from patriarchal division of labour (Weiner, 1994:67). Thus, the relationship between production (through labor) and reproduction (the family) is what socialist feminism should entail. Socialist feminism further asserts that class has an impact on gender formation. According to Weiner (1994: 68) gender class groupings are formulated within the school. An example of this is a snowball effect whereby a working class of girls and boys become a working class of men and women. Schools, as argued by socialist feminist play a vital role in exacerbating gender and class inequalities. According to them (socialist feminist), strong messages concerning female inferiority are encoded in such practices.

2.2.5 Post-structuralism feminism

Post-structuralism is a notion that came about from the challenges on structural conceptions of the system that drives society. Feminist post-structuralist challenges the opposition of masculinism and femininity. They point out that by using it; preference is laid on masculinity over femininity (Winter & Wiggleswoth, 1993:88). Post-structuralism is of the notion that emphasis is put on 'agency' including "structures in the production of social practices" (Thakathi, 2001: 42). Feminist post structuralism argue that the meaning of the concept 'women' and feminism changes as a result of cultural transformation and changes in historical events (Weiner,1994: 65).

Post-structuralists thus provide new possibilities for understanding women's socialization in a way that goes beyond viewing girls and women as being disadvantaged. Furthermore, it also suggests mechanisms to view women's state of affairs in a new perspective (Jones, 1993: 157). These mechanisms will help women cope with changes, which are favorable and sometimes unfavorable. A central principle of post-feminism is that women have made it or have the opportunity to make it, having the possibilities to decide on priorities and pursuing them.

It is at the heart of the 'superwomen' image and the 'new man' image, with access to promotion and job security assumed. It seeks to attack hierarchies, fighting against closure and the limiting of options, and giving women a greater chance of gaining ground.

2.2.6 Black feminism

Black feminism emanate from anti-racist and anti-sexist struggle (Thakathi, 2001:40). Black women according to this theory have been triply oppressed on the basis of sex, colour and class. They were further oppressed by white women, who further created economic and social differences among women [of all races] (Weiner, 1994: 57). As a result black women, who were alienated, grouped together to overcome these problems.

Black women found themselves being oppressed and exploited by men of all races (Weiner, 1994: 58). According to Ozga (1993:19) most women principals depend to a great extent on the support and loyalty of staff. They felt that they often experienced more difficulty in being accepted in this way. Part of the problem might be understood if one recognizes that loyalty often comes out of shared values and/or cultural links. Consequently the hidden values of the institution do not apply in the same way for black women in management. Black women are largely perceived by the wider society in a number of stereotyped ways, and this was put forward as a reason for some of the responses they received from the staff and wider community.

Pigford and Tonnsen (1993:16) conclude that black women aspiring to administrative positions face dual barriers of race and gender. As such, many find themselves in situations where they are confronted with both racism and sexism. Although black and white women face some of the same barriers in their advancement to positions of leadership, their experience differ. Thus black feminism focuses on the different needs and encounters of black women in their communities. These feminists insist that the simultaneous discrimination based on race, gender, and class be dealt with (Weiner, 1994:59).

The next section deals with a theoretical framework on leadership and management styles of women.

2.3 THEORIES ON LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT STYLES OF WOMEN

In developing a theoretical framework of women management and leadership styles, theories are used to understand the behavioral styles of women leaders-managers (Bush, 1995:23). Hannagan (1995:51), state that two theories, theories X and Y are utilized to identify a leaders' behavior in organizations. Theory X is based on the assumption that subordinates are lazy and dislike work; they therefore need to be directed and autocratic leadership is utilized as assurance that the work will be done. In theory Y, people see work as a natural phenomenon; therefore they can participate and work under the right conditions.

A study by Douglas (1996) and Robbins & Caulter (1999) emphasize that the handling of decision-making depends on three leadership styles. In a democratic style, the behavior of the leader reveals the stakeholders' involvement in democratization, which involves co-operation, collaboration and co-ordination. The authoritarian leadership style practices authority and allows no participation and *laissez faire* (freedom) that empowers individuals within the organization with total ownership of the organization (Garrison & Bly, 1997:344). These theories have developed because of human leadership traits,

behavior and styles. Therefore, an insight into theories identifying women styles of leading-managing is vital because managers and leaders have contrasting attitudes toward their subordinates due to manager's various attitudes. However, Robbins and Cautler (1999: 534) claim that characteristics found in successful women managers and leaders differ. They state that leadership requires a different form of behavior on the part of the person. According to them, the traits approach fails to consider the nature of the leadership situation. Therefore, not all successful women managers-leaders are alike in the organization. Garrison and Bly (1997:355) argue that women's management and leadership styles shift the organization from a centralized and autocratic management process to a more participatory approach.

These theories of women's management and leadership styles have led to the consideration of the relationship between management and leadership roles.

What is evident from this discussion of leadership styles is that there is no one correct style. Each of the styles discussed have certain advantages. Different people in different situations could use different styles. If you have decided on a specific leadership style, you should, nevertheless, take into consideration the people and the circumstances. Clearly, every situation requires a unique course of action by the educational leader. Each situation will therefore have to be carefully analyzed and adapted to the education leader's own abilities and personality, the forces at work within the staff, learners or parents, and the forces within the environment or situation.

2.4 THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN WOMEN MANAGEMENT AND LEADERSHIP

2.4.1 Management and leadership

The terms leadership and management are distinguishable, but more often than not, they are used interchangeably. Leadership is frequently seen as an aspect of management, with "born leaders" being characterized as charismatic individuals with visionary flair and the ability to motivate and inspire others even if they lack the managerial skill to plan,

organize effectively or control resources (Law & Glover, 1998:13). Van Deventer and Van der Westhuizen (1997:68) state that the difference between leadership and management is that leadership relates to mission, direction and inspiration, whilst management involves designing and carrying out plans, getting things done and working effectively with people. A school principal has to be both leader and manager.

Some people think of leadership as a more emotional process than management. After all, leaders have been characterized by terms such as charismatic and inspiring, but one rarely hears of a charismatic or inspiring manager. Management has the connotation rather of being rational, of being a process that involves the head instead of the heart. It is associated in people's mind with words like efficiency, planning, paperwork, procedures, regulations, control and consistency. Leadership, however, is associated with words like risk taking, dynamic, creativity, change and vision (Hughes in Gerber, Nel & Van Dyk, 1998: 287). However, Gerber et al. (1998: 268-288) is of the opinion that this distinction between leaders and managers may be more a function of implicit theories of leaders and managers than of what actually happens in real work settings. Individuals can be seen as charismatic and charming, or calculating and controlling, whether or not they happen to be called leaders or managers. The difference between being perceived as a leader or as a manager is a function of a specific responsibility of a given role within a situation or context, and how a person in that role chooses to fulfill those responsibilities.

Robbins and Caulter (1999:525) state that management differs from leadership in the sense that a person could have the ability to perform a managerial task but fail to persuade followers to achieve organizational goals. Or, conversely, he/she could be capable of influencing people, but incapable of performing the management activities. According to Lethepa (1998:29), managers utilize power to succeed, whilst leaders depend on the ability to acquire and use power for position and personal sources. Mabey and Baim (1999: 149) state that management and leadership are not mutually exclusive. Arguably, without managers, the vision of leaders becomes a dream. Leaders require managers to change visions into reality. They both perform the duty of assisting employees to gain knowledge and experience. Douglas (1996:3) notes that a leader and a

manager depend on the principal's ability to adapt personal resources to the job situation as effectively as possible. Robbins and Cautler (1999:525) recommend that all managers should ideally be leaders; hence there is a mutual interrelationship.

2.4.2 Women management and leadership styles

Determining the extent of women's involvement in principalship position in secondary schools is not the focal point of this research project. What is essential is to identify their management and leadership styles and at the same time investigate what management and leadership styles (qualities) they possess and how it compliments their performances.

We need to establish if these styles are effective in developing secondary schools and, if not, how ways of leading and managing should be enhanced in order to develop secondary schools effectively.

To attain the above goals, this section investigates women's management and leadership styles by examining the following: interpersonal relationships, emotional intelligence, communication styles, collaboration with stakeholders, transformational style and conflict resolution.

2.4.3 Interpersonal skills

Dean (1992:169) explains interpersonal skills as the way people react to each other or with one another. Winstanley and Woodal (2000:151) perceive interpersonal skills as the process of relating well to others and revealing the intrinsic characteristics of relationships and communication with others. Wolpe, Quinlan and Martinez (1997:204) argue that women's ways of leading and managing are influenced by their attributes and the various situations in which they find themselves. These attributes has to do with interpersonal skills (Judith, 1992:22). Bush (1995:66) states that women generally have an ethical and caring approach to the leading-managing process. They demonstrate qualities such as warmth and empathy and they pay special attention to honesty, gentleness, compassion, gender and trust. Goodman (1996:1) further claims that women

do display emotions such as anger at work. Their anger can be associated with attributes such as being sharp-tongued, persistently annoying, being cruelly nasty and prone to crying. Their tears can be used to manipulatively or, on the other hand, reveal their openness: women show guilt by crying and this crying conveys the message that they care about their employees and inspire excellence.

According to Judith (1992:2), women tend to hold on to anger rather than return to business as usual. This indicates that in their management and leadership roles they may not always have emotional hiding places. Magudi, (2000:15) supports these claims by arguing that women have the capacity to build effective management and leadership through attributes such as confidence, courage and respect for the opinions of others. They are affectionate and considerate of other people's existence and dignity.

Women are better listeners, less analytical and less aggressive. However, these scholars also argue that some female managers' behavior devalues other women because of their failure to support them. Morgan (1994: 69) affirms these ideas when he states that some women display successful managerial and leadership qualities, whilst other women fail to become effective managers. These arguments indicate some differences in women's ways of managing. Goodman (1996:2) argues that women's ways of leading and managing originate from their domestic responsibilities and limited mobility, changes at work, sexism and styles of childhood socialization. Women regard each other as colleagues, value each other, and show mutual respect and share common values.

2.4.4 Emotional intelligence in women managers' styles

According to Goleman (1996:316) emotional intelligence refers to the ability to recognize your own feelings and those of others in order for you to produce emotions and then reason with these emotions, be able to motivate oneself and others and to manage our emotions well in ourselves and in our relationships. Weisinger (1998:16-17) says that emotional intelligence is the intelligent use of your emotions: you intentionally make your emotions work for you by successfully using them to help you guide your behavior

and thinking and ways that can enhance your results in order for you to reach a higher level of emotional and intellectual growth.

According to LeRoux and DeKlerk (2001:10) interpersonal intelligence and intrapersonal intelligence are the main components of emotional intelligence. Gardner (in Weare, 2000:68) defines interpersonal intelligence as the ability to understand others, how they work, what motivates them and how to work cooperatively with people. Interpersonal intelligence is the ability to understand oneself, to form an accurate model of oneself and use this model to operate effectively in life. A combination of intelligence of interpersonal and intrapersonal skills can be seen as emotional intelligence.

Emotional intelligence is a group of capabilities, competencies and skills which influence one's ability to succeed in coping with the environmental demands and pressures that directly affect overall psychological well being. Emotional intelligence is considered to be a learnable intelligence that can be developed and improved at any time and at any age (Pauquet, 1998:94). In the light of the above definitions, emotional leadership can thus be defined as being aware how one and others feel and what to do about it; knowing what feels good, what feels bad, and how to get from bad to good; to maintain a high degree of self-motivation and to motivate others and continuously being in control of one's emotions and being able to effectively manage emotions.

Women managers' emotional intelligence is described as the intelligent use of emotions in different situations. (Winstanley & Woodal, 2000:144). In this, people intentionally make their emotions work for themselves. They utilize their behavior and thinking in ways that enhance their results. Marshall (1995: 175) affirms that women have the ability to work with others due to their sense of caring. Goodman (1996: 2) affirms this when stating that women principals are more likely to influence teachers to use more desirable teaching methods and techniques. This shows that women have skills to persuade people, encourage, motivate them and build interpersonal relationships.

2.4.5 Communication styles

There are a few management skills as important to the education manager as the ability to communicate effectively - both in writing and orally. It is very important to have a simultaneous flow of information and ideas from the top down and from the bottom up in order to plan a vision, a mission, aims and outcomes and to ensure action to achieve the set outcomes. Oral and written communication is necessary for making decisions and solving problems, and also for organizing and coordinating activities. Research has shown that the education leader (principal) spends 80% of his/her day communicating (Van der Westhuizen, 1997:214).

Marshall (1995: 176) is of the opinion that women are highly effective in communicating with others. He states that they utilize unambiguous communicating styles.

This emanates from their strong sense of identity. In their leading of staff, they possess good effective communication that empowers individuals and groups (Wolpe & Martinez, 1997:20; Magudi, 2000:15). They further state that women managers utilize informal communication in a way that treats people as individuals whose ideas and opinions matter to the organization. Bilimaria (1999:8) affirms this with the claim that in operations lead by women managers' and leaders' there is face-to-face communication. Murray (1996: 49) notes that open communication will assist in obtaining information from individuals and groups to identify what makes up the secondary school's value and what contributes to its failure.

Moreover, women apply collective communication in a way that encourages shared governance of the school. Bailey (1997:9) emphasizes the view that women involve group structures in their collective communication to encourage individuals to think creatively and productively. These communication skills create a complex interaction between women managers, followers and certain circumstances in which they find themselves (Kroon, 1996:367). He further argues that women's personal communication skills assist them in identifying stakeholders' needs, demands and goals and in adjusting their leading-managing styles accordingly. This means that they (women managers) are able to consider parents, learners, educators and the community. They (women managers)

care about their satisfaction and meet their needs. This provides them (women managers) with the ability to determine how the organization does things. According to Marshall (1995:314), women in their communication have a good sense of humour and the ability to confess to making mistakes. They are sensitive to others' ideas, listen to their opinions and are capable of sharing all facets of work as well as valuing personal needs. From the above, it is evident that women managers care deeply about the well-being of staff members, learners and parents.

Bailey (1997:12) asserts that women empower stakeholders through ownership to encourage their commitment in sharing the organization's vision and mission with the purpose of accomplishing organizational goals. This is due to the fact that human beings do not always have complete knowledge of all possible courses of action.

Silver (1994:4) argues that women managers and leaders are implementers of job satisfaction, in the sense that they apply collective resolution of conflicts; utilize teamwork in planning and action strategizing. Their recognition of stakeholders' autonomy and ownership in the holistic organization could result in curriculum, educator, learner and parent-centered, goal setting management that could lead to the advancement and development of secondary schools.

2.4.6 Collaboration with stakeholders

Another aspect of women management and leadership styles is that women practice collegiality and collaboration. According to Gordon (1996:3), their collaborative framework involves sharing of management, vision and mission of the organization and other capabilities to benefit the school's purpose. Bush (1995: 66) supports this statement by affirming that women implement a collegial culture that focuses on collaboration, while also emphasizing the individual. In women management and leadership styles the school can be identified as an organization with a culture of co-operation, co-ordination and commitment. The healthy atmosphere created by women's styles emanates from the power to encourage the collective sharing of ideas in the formulation of a vision, mission and strategies leading to goal attainment.

Although participation increases stakeholders' willingness and commitment to become involved in efforts focused on development, it does not always build ownership and commitment (Mathur-Helm, 2002:125). Participation takes time; hence everyone's opinions are honoured and analyzed before consensus is achieved. Even though women's styles are appreciated in the sense that they seek increased involvement to attain successful decision-making, this does not mean that bureaucracy, orderly administrative procedures and controls must be ignored. A bureaucratic system assists in having structures and procedures that guide daily activities.

2.4.7 Transformational leadership

According to Lethepa (1998:51), transformational leadership is perceived as charismatic, delegating, responsible, open, and communicative; and it identifies the organizational strengths, weaknesses, threats and opportunities. Women apply transformational styles that allow people to transform their self-interest into goals, and to perform well when they feel good about themselves.

They prefer work that involves sharing of power and information that encourage involvement. According to Bailey (1997:7), this style of leadership builds transaction between women as leaders and followers. He mentions that slogan "you do this for me, I do that for you, you do this to accomplish organization goals, therefore it is in my interest to do all I can to assist you to be successful" (Richards, 1999: 122) affirms this when he claims that women's transformational styles include a shared vision, empowerment of others, challenge to the status quo, an adoption of a pro-active stance, communication, vision and positive self-regard. However, some researchers like (Mathipa & Tsonka, 2000: 28, Snyder & Tadesse 1995:44) are against the ideas that link transformational management and leadership directly to women.

Thakhathi (2000:42) claims that, in future, women might be better than men at managing secondary schools. This idea challenges the notion that school-based management requires traditional masculine attributes. In management and leadership situations some circumstances need a degree of control over what is to be done and a shift of responsibility when things go wrong. Although women school leaders are claimed to be friendly and collaborative, this also has a negative side, because women take organizational life too seriously and too personally.

2.4.8 Conflict resolution

Conflict does not simply explode; rather it develops through various stages, and in each of these stages certain factors contribute to the possibility of conflict. Gerber, Nel and Van Dyk (1997: 384) define conflict as the difference of opinion that influences the interaction between independent parties. Conflict is an open disagreement between two parties who have different goals and values. Conflict involves people's feelings, as well as their objectives, and both feelings, as well as their outcomes must be resolved, agreement must be found or compromise worked out (Snyman, 1993:49). Teachers at all schools have at their disposal their own personality, agendas and experience of life and faith, which have a certain amount of influence on their socialization, domestic circumstances and career.

Despite their diversity, they must work together as a group of individuals in a coordinated manner to realize the general aims of the school. Conflict can thus have a negative effect on the actualization of the educational aims in a school (Untiedt, 1993:79). According to Everard and Morris (1996:88) the ability to handle conflict is a key factor in managerial success. When conflict arises among staff members, principals should intervene and provide mediation to reduce interpersonal conflicts. Not all conflict has negative effects but valuable insight can be achieved if conflict is handled constructively. If constructively handled, conflict may lead to valuable insights, new ideas and creative

situations. A principal should, however, be aware of what causes conflict, as well as the effect this has on the behavior of teachers.

Since conflict seems to be inevitable in the workplace, it is the task of the principal to prevent conflict from obstructing the realization of the school's objectives through the management of it. Principals find themselves in a peculiar position of trust with respect to their colleagues, and the way they communicate with the parties will either be a motivating or demotivating force in solving the conflict. To defuse a potential explosive situation a principal should be empowered with special interpersonal skills, he/she must inspire confidence, listening skills, and structured problem-solving and must have knowledge of the staff's social standing and abilities. When a principal attempts to solve destructive conflict, he/she may make use of a variety of possible conflict management styles, and it differs from person to person, before it is resolved.

The logo of the University of Johannesburg, featuring two stylized human figures in orange and white, with the text 'UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG' in a light grey font to the right.

2.5 GENDER AND ORGANISATIONS

According to Acker (1994: 46) *gendering of organisations* is a fairly new concept. This is due to the fact that organisational structure is neutral, despite the fact that feminist theories reckon that hierarchical organizations promote male dominance. This in turn, shifts focus on women and undermine their credibility in terms of their knowledge capacity (De Villiers, 2001: 167). Thus feminists who attempt to theorize gender and organisations find themselves having to accept theoretical domains that cast organisations as gender neutral.

Society has its way of dealing with and controlling sexuality within organisations, through power relations in these organizations (Leonard, 1998). Again, separation of work and sexuality is in itself bureaucratic. This is aimed at controlling disruptions and interferences to the organizational function caused by sexuality. Silence in sexuality may

further force people with a different sexual orientation, for instance, to conceal the sexuality status in these organizations (Acker, 1994: 47).

There is a growing need of systematic theory for gender and organization. This is because work situations are places in which organizational and its 'cultural image' as well as individual image are created. Hall (in Bush, Bell, Bolam, Glatter and Ribbins, 1999: 28) purport that gendering of organizations should focus on gender analysis by means of analyzing social processes of gender. There are four such processes, although different, they practically imply similar issues.

They are:

- the construction of gender division among men and women where men are in top positions;
- the construction of opposing characteristics such as images and symbols which in turn influence gender division;
- the interaction between men and women; and
- the gendered sense of the individuals and how they interpret their being in an organization.

These processes sensitize people to the disparities concerning women. These disparities should be addressed in congruence to the Employment Act (Republic of South Africa, 1998) and Department of Education (2006: 27).

Having briefly discussed gender and organization, it is now essential to explore the concept of women as change agents.

2.6 WOMEN MANAGERS AS CHANGE AGENTS

2.6.1 Women and change

At the 'management level' there is a disproportional ratio of men to women in our schools (Cotter, 2004:114). Gender imbalances in teaching and management in educational institutions creates perceptions that are difficult to comprehend and contest. Greyvenstein and Westhuizen (1992) argues that the common assessment that women teach and men manage still holds true, despite a multitude of strategies to rectify the gender imbalance in educational management. Gerber et al., (1998) concurs with the above argument stating that the education system is generally structured like a traditional home: men run the schools and women nurture the learners. Gerber et al., (1998) expand on the statement by adding that if women expected to be treated equally they should accept demands and conditions related to work and service that are in existence. The researcher's argument would be that the very same male-dominated structures and values will be in place, and that women would have to compete and cope with this background, having to work particularly hard for merit awards and promotions.

The challenge for women who are now beginning to achieve positions of leadership is whether to transform themselves to fit into a preconceived role or to redefine leadership in terms of their own experiences and ways of thinking. The researcher's opinion is that women who become leaders are increasingly taking the bold step of breaking new ground. They are challenging the stereotypes of what women leaders are supposed to be, that is, like men, they are giving value to their own skills; they are giving expression to their own conceptions of leadership.

Ledwith and Colgan (1996:2) argue that women's influx into the labour market poses a challenge to the previously gendered role division in most societies and organizations. This challenge allows change to occur within organizations and because women contribute to the shaping of policies, change is fostered through their questioning of the present traditional working conditions as well as organizational priorities.

According to O'Connell (1994:13) women play multi-role functions in society, family and the work place. These roles enable them to develop multi-faceted skills for handling

more than one project at a time. Schools and organizations need these skills to yield good results and these results will in turn, bring about the aspired change. These skills resemble what is needed by management to enhance transformation in secondary schools. Therefore, this research argues that, some women may be the ideal management force needed to transform secondary schools into institutions of excellence.

2.6.2. Effective leadership

Effective leadership refers to the ability of a leader to collaboratively lead, manage and control plans as well as activities (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003:139). It implies that principals should strive to take the lead in instructional leadership (whereby every educator is regarded as an instructional leader). This will in turn enable all stakeholders to assume responsibility and feel obligated about the school events (Brandt, 1993: 258). Viewed in this light, this research argues that, women managers are appropriately suited to effectively manage secondary schools.

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:148) defines an effective leader as someone that can bridge the gap between where the school, department or activity currently is, and where he/she eventually wants it to be, by using careful planning. It requires someone that can set realistic and attainable aims, in consultation with subordinates and link the achievement of these aims with the satisfaction of their needs. Furthermore, it requires an effective decision maker in accordance with the stipulations of all relevant laws and regulations, and chooses the right course of action. This person should be able to delegate duties, tasks, responsibilities and authority to subordinates with a view to their development and promote high professional ideals. He or she must keep abreast of the latest trends and developments in education balance task orientation and people orientation and motivate staff and learners.

To be effective, women need to shake off the perception that society have of female behavior of being submissive and take calculated risks to reach their goals (Brandt, 1993: 222). This they can do by:

- ensuring that the risk they want to take is worth taking;
- overcoming fears that hold them back;
- knowing and understanding their limitations;
- having a contingency plan;
- gauging their limits;
- going for maximum impact; and
- knowing when to quit (Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993: 54-55).

In engaging in activities, women can bring about change and rebel the perceptions that society has about them being submissive and afraid to take risk.

2.6.3 Closing the management gap

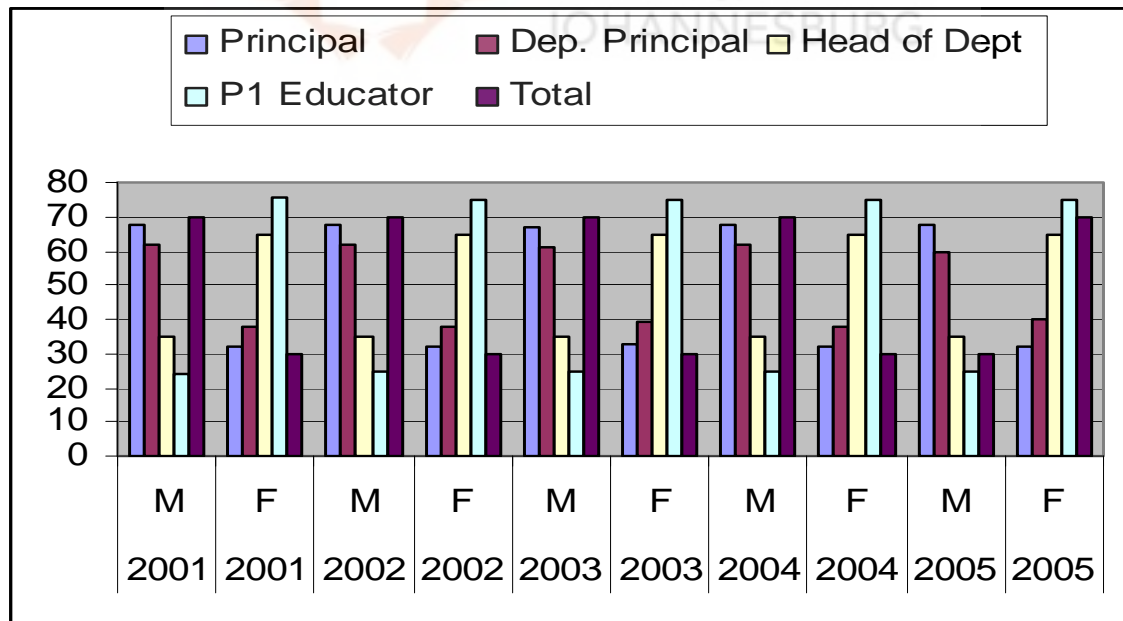
Research by Van Deventer and Van der Westhuizen (2000:236) and current statistics (Department of Education, 2005/6) clearly indicate the differences between women and men managers in secondary schools. Furthermore, the report indicates that 75% of managerial posts are occupied by men as opposed to 25% by women. Recent data states that only 17% of women occupy secondary school management posts in the Gauteng Education Department (GDE). These statistics confirm that there is a need to close the gap by redressing the imbalances in terms of women leaders in secondary schools.

The percentages indicate that the senior positions in schools are still dominated by males. The sector has a female to male ratio of 70:30 for all educators including principals, but at the school management level (excluding heads of department), the female to male ratio in 2005 was 35: 65. When differentiated by post level (refer to table below), it is noted that in 2001, 32% of principal's posts and 38% of deputy principals' posts were held by females. Four years later, in 2005, minimal change can be observed: 32% of principals and 40% of deputy principals were female. These percentages confirm the male domination in senior posts.

Table 1. Percentage of educators by gender employed at different post levels (Department of Education, 2006):

Key: M = Male F = Female

Post level	2001	2001	2002	2002	2003	2003	2004	2004	2005	2005
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
Principal	68	32	68	32	67	33	68	32	68	32
Deputy. Principal	62	38	62	38	61	39	62	38	60	40
Head of Department	35	65	35	65	35	65	35	65	35	65
P1 Educator	24	76	25	75	25	75	25	75	25	75
Total	70	30	70	30	70	30	70	30	30	70



According to annual statistics released by the GDE a small percentage of women principals occupy top management positions in secondary schools, even those who aspire to be in those positions may be discouraged by these low percentages. Thus, an

impression has been created that a secondary management position is off limits (the glass ceiling phenomenon) for aspiring females. Further, those who are in those positions probably possess a particular skill or attitude or are there because peculiar circumstances. The table and graph indicate that there is a need for positive action to bridge the gap between professional and personal roles. In turn, this will narrow the gender divide. Reducing the gender gap in education management requires political intervention and enforcement of certain gender acts and policies. These policies will help to eradicate factors such as intellectual discouragement, where women's academic participation was restricted.

These policies will also help to level the playing fields by promoting equality amongst boys and girls. Furthermore, the policies will ensure that the unfair advantages that men used to enjoy, such as inflated salaries and other male orientated perks are eliminated. However, according to Ledwith and Colgan (1996: 105-119), women still believe that the lack of career path for women is as a result of discrimination which may be perpetuated by society's expectations in terms of women's role in the family.

The following discussion will focus on the strategies that women can embark on to overcome inequalities and discrimination.

2.7 STRATEGIES FOR WOMEN MANAGERS TO OVERCOME GENDER DISCRIMINATION

Women in management positions outclass male principals in terms of enhancing learners' learning and educator performance (Pigford & Tonnsen, 1993:5, GDE: 2005:39). Yet past practices still deter them from being assertive in claiming their capabilities. Seen from this perspective, there is a need to eradicate gender discrimination. This can be done by ensuring that equal opportunities for both men and women are promoted and that their needs are achieved without and being discriminated against (GETT, 1997:40).

The foregoing suggest that true transformation can only exist when there is proportional representation of gender in management positions in schools generally and of secondary

schools in particular. Greyvenstein (2000:30) is of the idea that linking gender equity to management involves, amongst other things, fairness towards women in the management hierarchies of education. Women managers are therefore encouraged to develop strategies that will enable them to overcome gender discrimination. Strategies to overcome gender discrimination are addressed under the following headings: dealing with prejudice and stereotypes, overcoming patriarchal obstacles, addressing inequalities in defying gender discrimination and empowerment and career development for women.

2.7.1 Dealing with prejudices and stereotypes

Mathipa and Tsoka (2000: 130) define prejudice as an act of forming an opinion about a particular condition before viewing and assessing the actual condition. This opinion may also be formed without gathering facts. People are judged on presumptions as well as preconceived ideas. This is because, as argued by Goleman (1996:157), people are inclined to readily remember instances that perpetuate stereotypes than incidences that challenge it. These judgments may be discriminatory in nature. An example of a prejudice act is where the majority of people (men and women) still believe that women cannot make good leaders. This is a myth and it is in itself discriminatory. Hence prejudice may lead to discrimination.

Thus Mathipa and Tsoka (2000: 130) argue that these two concepts cannot be separated. Prejudice may be caused by stereotypes or generalizations emanating from culture, custom and beliefs (Greyvenstein, 2000: 32). Daft (1991:437) defines a stereotype as “ a widely held generalization about a group of people that assigns attributes to them solely on the basis of a limited number of categories”. It is people’s tendencies to attribute events or actions of an individual on the basis of an assessment of the group to which the individual belongs.

Stereotypes may be ascribed to infants in early years teaching whereby boys and girls are conditioned differently such that society shapes them according to their conditioning (Atkinson, 2001:219). This is then extended to their professions whereby women

applications into management posts are scrutinized according to their strengths and posts are stereotypically offered according to feminine or masculine traits (Al-Khalifa, 1992:96). According to Snyder and Tadesse (1995:44), “attitudes of both men and women towards women often block the progress of women as a whole and the progress of the nation’. Again, this leads to misconceptions. Misconceptions are assumed false assumptions about an individual. A misconception that women cannot make excellent managers is another form of stereotyping which also discriminate against women.

As a result, there is a need to eradicate stereotypes that prevent women from being promoted to top managerial posts. The most viable way for women to successfully validate the fact that they are equally as competent as men, is to challenge the stereotypes. This can be done by creating an awareness of such stereotypes and that women managers should conscientise their critics and inform them that they are not tokens representing other women nor should they adopt masculine traits to be successful managers (Greyvenstein, 2000:32). Bush (1995:22) declare that in the process of promotion, gender still contribute to career identity, socialization and expectations in women management and leadership positions.

In research findings, descriptors of men are positive; they are valued and emulated, while female descriptors are negative and to be ignored. It has also been argued that the accepted management and leadership theories are modeled on male behavior, perceptions and values (Coleman, 2002: 98). Women are perceived as incapable of leading and managing. These perceptions have degraded women’s effectiveness and helped socialize them into the prevailing world. This is due to the fact that the researched management and leadership theories consider men as efficient in leading and managing secondary schools (Goodman, 1996:1). Finally, women should overcome gender differences by overcoming patriarchal dominance and obstacles.

2.7.2 Overcoming patriarchal obstacles

Patriarchy has to do with male domination over females and some men. Atkinson, Wyatt and Senkgawe, (1993:217) argue that patriarchy in schools is still rife, particularly in schools where females are school leaders. Females are faced with a formidable challenge of resistance, insubordination and sabotage (Greyevenstein, 2000: 31). These efforts, particularly from men are about power (Convention on the Elimination of all forms of discrimination against women, 2000:14) because secondary school principals are in a position of power, they sometimes viewed as being deviant from the norm.

Such perverse views require female managers to balance their interests and aspirations (internal factors) with external factors arising from the long reign of domination by men over women (Ledwith & Colgan, 1996:7-23). Practices of such discriminatory views have, due to previous practices, kept women from being promoted to certain higher positions in management cycles. This research argues that female principals should plant the seeds of equity and equality in their schools and nurture them into the norms and values of absolute balance between males and females where neither loses their identity. The employer needs to develop a support structure for female managers taking into consideration that many of them are mothers, wives, and have families to care for and still trying to improve on their career paths.

2.7.3 Addressing inequalities

Redressing discrimination is a fact that is entrenched in the (Republic of South Africa, 1996 a). According to GETT (1997:1) and Pigford and Tonnsen (1993:1), women are in most cases, seen to be ordinary caregivers for learners whilst men manage schools. These notions are indicative of the inequalities that exist. Further, they are a reason to encourage women to defy discrimination directed at them, because it hampers growth and their success (World Bank, 1995:21).

Mathipa and Tsonka (2000:28) have observed that inequalities are brought about by cultural patterns from traditional societies as well as religious beliefs. This is evidenced

by the fact that they are used as ‘instruments through which the social system reproduces itself and through which systemic inequalities are maintained’ (O’Connell, 1994:75). These patterns have positioned women to be mere children and thus could not in the past be placed in leadership positions. Again, these cultural patterns have to a large extent engaged women’s attention from their capabilities (Mathipa & Tsonka, 2000: 28). Thus women should challenge these societal patterns and change the status quo by applying for leadership positions.

Pigford and Tonnsen (1993, 5) contend that women principals are highly renowned for their ability to effectively manage finances, handle disciplinary problems and by far effectively manage the culture of teaching and learning in their schools. Yet Van Deventer and Van der Westhuizen (2000: 235) argue that they still encounter problems with regard to managerial posts because of the barriers which are both intrinsic and extrinsic to them. These barriers may be as a result of women underestimating their future performances, whilst men overestimate theirs. Van Deventer and Van der Westhuizen (2000:237) further explain that there is a belief that women successes are to a large extent attributed to either luck or hard work whilst men successes are attributed to ability.

These perceptions contribute to the retardation of addressing inequalities, particular in education. Furthermore they enhance gender inequalities which in turn hinder advancement to achieve aspired change (World Bank, 1995: 21).

Thus, schools should pursue the notion of equal opportunities so that both men and women alike enjoy the same treatment (Middlewood & Lumby, 1998: 35). This implies that there is a need to curb inequalities.

Despite contradictory evidence, stereotypes concerning female inadequacy as managers persist and act to distort perceptions of male and female performance and potential. One obvious consequence of these ideas is that a man is more likely to be selected for a managerial position than is an equally qualified female. Bush and West-Burnham

(1994:180) suggest that once a woman is selected for a managerial position, her superiors will be less committed to her career development than that of her male counterpart.

Not only can sex stereotypes act to prevent the selection and development of female managerial talent, but they can distort performance evaluation. This can be achieved by casting a particular sex for a particular position. The ultimate consequence of sex stereotypes is that they may become self-fulfilling. Unfortunately, many women believe themselves less capable of managing than men, and have become resigned to jobs for which they are over-qualified. Too many capable women have given up or avoided career aspirations either to behave consistently with a self-concept or to adjust to a society shaped and dominated by men. Because gender role stereotypes and myths such as the above, have evolved from traditional roles that women have played for years. Negative biases, sexist generalizations and stereotypical myths could inhibit her effective application of her task or duty. Although education appears to be undergoing a feminization of leadership, both demographically and conceptually, most women principals still encounter barriers that impact negatively on their performances.

2.7.4 Empowering and career development for women

Prinson and Jimmet (1992:55) consider a career path to be important for women's management and leadership development. Women must be pro-active in considering their next appointment and must be able to transform and make changes in their management and leadership performance.

Marshall (1995:318) states that women should listen to their inner voices in order to choose what they love to do and try to pursue it with vigor and zest.

Murray (1996:11) postulates that women should act as carriers, catalysts and gatekeepers for new ideas within the framework of advancing their careers. They should learn continuously by affiliating with higher learning institutions and empower themselves with their career paths courses (management and leadership). They should learn by doing and being on the job and constantly being self-aware. In this process, they should

consider sources of learning such as modeling, peer assessment, projects and events. They should have a strong sense of self and get used to presenting their ideas confidently and assertively. They must have clear knowledge and insight of the external and internal barriers that prevent them from attaining their goals. They must capitalize on their strengths and invest in in-service-training, workshops and mentoring on how to improve on their performances.

They can be successful if they utilize group interaction to identify their strengths, shortcomings, opportunities and threats in their way of managing and leading. Further, Whatmore (1999:210) recommends the application of behaviour modeling in which women secondary school leaders will learn by observing and participating – for example, demonstrations through audio-visual aid, demonstrating practically, how to improve on skills and performance. Newly appointed women managers should be empowered by their mentors and role models how to manage a senior position with confidence. Marshall (1995: 321) affirms this by claiming that they need to be trained as participants to avoid their displacement of disappearance from senior jobs. In the training process, theories such as knowledge, ethics, legality and communication in the management and leadership should be mandatory.

Skills such as human, technical and conceptual skills should be considered to sustain the ability of seeing the school as integrated parts that entail a holistic development (Donnelly, *et al.*, 1995: 48). In their interaction, women must ensure that they seek and have inside knowledge of internal and external hurdles keeping them from attaining their goals. They must be aware of their thoughts and attitudes.

They can be successful if they utilize group interaction to identify their strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats in their way of leading and managing.

2.8 IMPLICATIONS FOR FEMALE SCHOOL MANAGERS

Education and gender are not simple terms; each carries a wealth of definitions and interpretations. Women are easily caricatured as either ‘victims’ of circumstances or

‘villains’ who contribute to the oppression of others. The truth is more complicated. All people are positioned by circumstances, and we all have to earn a living, look after families, feed and clothe ourselves and others. The challenge for women who are now beginning to achieve positions of leadership is whether to transform themselves to fit into a preconceived role or to redefine leadership in terms of their own experiences and ways of thinking.

Women who become leaders will have to shatter the stereotypes of the ‘glass ceiling’ with vigor and zest and encourage other women to follow gallantly. They need to challenge the stereotypical roles of how women leaders were depicted and discriminated in the past and encourage gender equality in all spheres of employment.

2.9 SUMMARY

This chapter shows that women are under-represented in managerial positions in relation to the number of women in the educational institutions. Theories of gender, including different kinds of feminism, discrimination and stereotypes were discussed. Alluding to these perspectives significantly forms a point of departure, on the basis that they give background information on the need for this research.

A theoretical framework on leadership and management styles, together with gender in organizations is provided because it points out the diverse management styles and inequality in organizations. It is relevant to the research because it gives a structure to the subsequent topics. These topics are based on the theoretical framework as stated in chapter one.

In the next chapter, the researcher focuses on the research design and method to be employed in eliciting personal opinions on the barriers impacting on the performances of female managers in secondary schools.



CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

3.1 INTRODUCTION

The previous chapter provides a framework underpinning the research. There are numerous barriers that impact on the performance of female principals' as managers of secondary schools. The researcher is also interested in investigating how female principals view the role of women in education management and what their responses towards the under representation of women in management positions are. Some of the concerns that guided this investigation include:

- (i) What causes the under representation of women in managerial posts?
- (ii) Is there a difference in management styles of males and females?
- (iii) What barriers prevent women from entering into management posts?

The literature study further identifies how other sources perceive the topic being discussed.

A detailed method and research design is presented in this chapter. The researcher utilized a qualitative research approach to explore the nature and context of gender stereotyping with regard to female managers in secondary schools and how perceptions impact on their performances.

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN

According to De Vos (1998: 80) a qualitative research provides the researcher with a choice to structure the research design. This can be done by using strategies suitable for the researchers' use. A qualitative research approach was used in this study, employing an exploratory, descriptive and contextual focus. It gives the researcher insight into the frame of mind of principals' and other stakeholders on how females are being perceived as managers. It also gives an indication of the perceptions and stereotypes that can impact on their managerial performances. This approach is an open design (is based on open ended questions) to accommodate the participants' opinions at every stage of this investigation (Janesick, 1998: 60; Cormack, 2000:19).

The purpose of a research design is to plan and structure a given research study in a manner that maximizes the validity of the research findings (Mouton & Marais, 1991:33). It further focuses on the inquiry and plan for the research sample as well as respondents for the research, thus making it possible to discuss subjects of population upon which the research is focused (Maykut & Morehouse, 1997: 44).

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Method

Creswell (2005:39) defines qualitative research as a type of educational research in which the researchers relies on the views of participants, asks broad, general questions, collects data consisting largely of words (or text) from participants, describes and analyses these words for themes, and conducts the inquiry in a subjective, biased manner.

Qualitative research is a multi-perspective approach to social interaction, which aims at describing, making sense of, interpreting, or reconstructing this interaction in terms of the meanings that are subject to it (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994: 44). Merriam (1998: 5) defines qualitative research as an umbrella concept that covers several forms of inquiry in order to help us understand and explain the meaning of social phenomena with as little disruption of the natural setting as possible. Qualitative research is further perceived as a research method aimed at analysing concrete cases in their temporal local particularity, starting from people's expressions and activities in their local contexts (Fick, 1995:13).

In the qualitative research design, different aspects such as ethnography, phenomenology, biography, rhetoric and methodology are regarded as qualitative research design strategies (De Vos, 1998: 253). In the research on women's management and leadership styles, the phenomenological approach was chosen and used.

By phenomenological strategy, it is meant the researcher's understanding of respondents' interpretation to meaning (De Vos,1998: 80). This strategy mainly used interviewing as well as participant observation. In this research, the phenomenon under study is how

principals perceive their roles and responsibilities; the impact of stereotyping women managers experience and how they saw themselves overcoming these barriers?.

To apply phenomenological strategy, Merriam (1998: 16-17), suggest the following process:

- Firstly, the “subjective experience” is explained. In this research, the theme is gender discrimination in management posts, its implications and how it impacts on the performance of females in leadership positions.
- Secondly, the mechanisms utilized to address the experience. The strategies females in particular use to overcome stereotyping and discrimination.
- Thirdly, conceptualizing these experiences. This implies the nature and context of gender discrimination including the perceptions of females in managerial positions.
- Finally, intuitively reflecting on the experiences. The researcher’s intention to reflect on how secondary school female managers can overcome gender discrimination and stereotyping in the execution of their tasks.

The aim of employing this strategy was to obtain rich quality data from secondary-school principals sampled. In order to obtain reliable and valid findings, the researcher has focused on the research topic and approached the respondents in a cordial manner.

Merriam (1998:145) mention certain assumptions of qualitative research design that a researcher needs to take into account. The primary concern is with process rather than outcomes or products. In this research study the researcher was concerned with the process whereby the perceptions of school managers and other stakeholders was constructed by their interaction within the school environment. The interest in meaning, namely how people make sense of their lives, experiences, and their structure of the world. The researcher gave meaning to the experiences of school managers with regard to the impact stereotyping and gender discrimination have on their performances.

The researcher was the primary instrument for data collection by being physically involved with the participants in the process of collecting data. Through fieldwork the

researcher physically interacted with the principals, or institution in order to observe or record behaviour in its natural setting. Description in that the researcher is interested in process, meaning and understanding gained through words and gestures. The researcher described in detail and gave meaning to what was said. The process of qualitative research is inductive in that the researcher builds abstractions, concepts, hypotheses and theories from details. In this study, the situation is observed and generalization is made from the observed situation.

3.2.2 Types of qualitative design

In the research on the performance of female principals in the management of secondary schools, the phenomenological approach was utilized as a tool to collect data. The aim of employing this strategy was to obtain rich, quality data from the secondary school principals through interviewing as well as thorough observation. For the purpose of this research, emphasis was placed on the amount of schools in the province and which particular schools would be selected.

The research design will be followed by a discussion on sampling and selection.

3.3 SAMPLING AND SELECTION

In the qualitative research method, the focal question was the description of the site and the sample (Seale, 1998:820) – for instance, how, where and with whom a particular phenomenon exists. According to Seale (1998:329), Frey and Oishi (1995:14), the selection strategy should be used in order to obtain a sub-set of the population in which data will be collected by means of interviews, observing and documents. It is therefore essential to conceptualize sampling as an aspect. Frey, Bothan & Friedman (1991:44), defines sampling as scientific research in which a few people are studied to find out something about a large group of people. Sampling is perceived as the portion or subject of the population the researcher is interested in interviewing (Frey & Oishi, 1995:14).

Mouton (1998:132) explains a sample as a process of selecting a small group of people from a defined population.

A purposive sampling method was used in this research. According to Creswell (1994:14) the idea of qualitative research is to purposefully select participants that will best answer the research question. Mouton (1998:134) also asserts that a purposive sample is one that is selected non-randomly for some particular reason. This method is based entirely on judgement of the researcher regarding the characteristics of a represented sample (Merriam, 1998:64).

In this study the participants were chosen from a specific target group in the Gauteng province. Johannesburg is one of the cities in the province and the researcher concentrated on the Johannesburg South district, (D 11), whose opinions and ideas were of specific interest to this investigation. The method was purposive because the population in this study consisted of secondary school principals in the District 11.

The criteria for the selection of participants for inclusion in the study were as follows:

- School principals from diverse cultural backgrounds
- They must be principals of secondary schools in cluster 11
- School principals with managerial experience of five years or longer.

There are 554 ordinary public secondary schools in Gauteng, 125 secondary schools in the district 11 area. There are 11 clusters (9-11 schools form a cluster) and 6 female principals in cluster 9. The criteria also ensured that the sampling method was convenient, representative and directed to specific group.

3.2.1 Pilot study

A pilot study was conducted with a principal to determine if relevant information would be gained by the questions posed and whether the method of questioning was suitable for the participant. A pilot study helps investigators to redefine their data collection plans and

questionnaires with respect to both the context of the data and the procedures to be follow (Yin, 1986:80). It also provides the opportunity to identify confusing and ambiguous language, and to obtain information about possible results.

3.4 METHODOLOGY EMPLOYED

Snyman (1993:56) states that methodology is the assumptions about the research: What is to be studied, and how it is to be studied. Sarantakos (1998:30) further maintains that methodology entails theoretical principles and frameworks that provide guidelines about how the research is to be undertaken in the context of a particular paradigm. The methodology employed in this study is able to elucidate what are the barriers that impacts on the performances of female principals. According to Creswell (1994:4-5), a qualitative research paradigm involves the ontological, axiological, epistemological, rhetorical and methodological dimensions.

These dimensions will be briefly discussed.

(a) Ontological dimension

This dimension asserts that reality about the research topic is the construction of the research design by the researcher. In an ontological situation, a number of realities exist, such as, the researcher; the participant and the research report reader (Creswell, 1994:4). Snyman (1993:56) further states that the ontological dimension entails what sorts of entities the universe contains. The context that informs both the researcher and the respondents can be found in the report findings.

(b) Axiological dimension

The qualitative researcher during this process acknowledges value-laden nature of the study. This is done by reporting researchers' values and biases including the nature of value gathered in the field (Creswell, 1994:4).

(c) Epistemological dimension

Parrini (1994:15) argues that the epistemological approach is a process in which the arguments are found against cynicism. Qualitative research is concerned about the way in which the world is known to us or can be known to us. In this scientific inquiry both researcher and participant interact in a collective quest for answers to questions directed to the resistant character of the provided empirical world understudy (Baugh, 1990:33; Creswell, 1998:4) It is therefore crucial for the researcher to ensure that nothing disturbs the qualitative inquiry process.

(d) Rhetorical dimension

The rhetorical dimension deals with the informal utilization of the language by the researcher. In this approach, respondents are regarded as an element of the research paradigm. Therefore for quality data collection, the medium of interaction should be considered a pre-condition.

The researcher and the respondent should make a practical decision with regard to the language to be used in the research paradigm. There must be freedom in the choice of the language when the respondents are to be interviewed for quality data collection. This will assist both the researcher and the respondent in raising and answering the intended questions (Bruce & Ballantyne, 1994:185). Snyman (1993:131) maintains that the choice of a common language will help in limiting the possibilities of subjective bias in the interpretation and the relativity of meaning.

(e) Methodology dimension

The research method uses a qualitative inductive method. The inductive method was applied to conduct interviews with female principals. The researcher has approached data

collection with an “open mind”. This has been done empirically and everything that is considered to be essential is noted. The creative reasoning is employed with the purpose of obtaining new thoughts about females in management positions.

The scientific knowledge is also provided to make tentative conclusions and findings (Snyman, 1993:57; Creswell, 1998:4; De Vos, 1998:91). Henning, Van Rensburg and Smith (2004: 87) further state that whether it is a survey interview consisting of a more or less open-ended oral questionnaire or an interview about someone’s articulation of their lived experience or deeply felt emotions, the data are regarded as credible and believable, so long as the data were forthcoming without pollutants in a procedure from the interviewer. In this study, the situation is observed and generalization is made from the observed situation.

3.5 THE INTERVIEW

In chapter one, the ‘what’ of the interview was stated. In this chapter, the researcher deals with the ‘how’ of the interview. The ‘what’ refers to the expedition of the interview with regard to the entire interview process, whilst the ‘how’ is more inclined to the interpretation and dissemination of thought (Silverman, 1997:114). The concepts used in the aims of this research are to: ‘explore nature and context’, ‘determine perceptions’ and to ‘investigate the influence’. All these concepts require careful observation to detect and correlate responses to non-verbal expressions of respondents.

Thus the purpose of the interview is to “impose” a means for obtaining reality from respondents so that reportable knowledge can be produced (Silverman, 1997:114). Cormack (2000: 294) further states that an interview is a purposeful interaction between two or more people who are in the process of communication, conversation and negotiation for specific purpose associated with some agreed subject matter. During the interviews with the principals certain questions will be posed and they will be given an opportunity to elaborate on their experiences in management. Therefore, interviews are conducted to discover the reality from the reportable knowledge that is eventually

produced, which is of course reliable information that needs to be maximized whilst distortions are minimized.

As a distinctive research technique, the interview can serve the following purpose. It can be used as the principle means of gathering information having direct bearing on the research objectives. As Merriam (1998:87) describes it: By providing access to what is inside a person's head, [it] makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (values and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs).

There are four kinds of interviews that may be used as a research tool: The structured interview, the semi-structured interview, the non-directive interview, and the focused interview. The researcher used a semi-structured method of interviewing the different principals in the secondary schools. Certain questions are posed and when the respondent answers, the researcher would then ask a second question depending on the respondent's response.

In this study, the interview is used with the aim of providing the respondents with the opportunity to speak and construct their reality with the purpose of obtaining deeper insight into issues relating to the research project. The semi-structured interview is utilized to create a frank, open, friendly and interactive mode. This is conducted in a friendly spirit so that the researcher can understand processes by which people attach meaning. Through this interview, female principals are provided room to articulate their own concerns and answer questions freely.

The interviews were conducted at six secondary schools in the Gauteng Province. The reason for choosing the Gauteng province was the proximity of the schools in the area and convenience in arranging interviews with the principals. The female principals were interviewed individually in their offices. The duration of the interviews varied from 30 minutes to 50 minutes. Permission was granted by all participants to record the interviews

3.5.1 Field notes

Fick (1998:170) describes field notes as classic medium for documentation in qualitative research. Since the researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis in the research process, it usually involves fieldwork (Merriam, 1998:7).

According to Lincoln and Guba (1985: 183-185) field notes may be divided up into four categories, namely:

- Observation notes in which the researcher records what he saw and heard during the interview;
- Theoretical notes, which refers to deliberate, controlled efforts to extract meaning from observation notes;
- Methodological notes which include notes on operational practices such as time schedule, the sequence and the physical setup;
- Personal notes such as the researcher's feelings and experiences during interviews.

Field notes are not merely summaries of events but rather detailed written descriptions of what was observed as well as the researcher's interpretations (Fick, 1998:260). The researcher should also physically acquaint himself with the participants, the environment, and institution in order to observe behaviour in its natural setting (Creswell, 1994:145). Furthermore, nothing is trivial and therefore whatever is seen, heard or experienced is recorded and considered. The recording session was recorded from the moment the researcher explained the procedure of the interview until the last elaborative response from the respondents.

3.6 DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis means a search for patterns in data – recurrent behaviors, objects or body of knowledge (Mouton,1998:61). Creswell (1994:153) states that data analysis requires that the researcher be comfortable with developing categories and making comparisons and

contrasts. It also requires that the researcher be open to possibilities and see contrary or alternative explanations for the findings. The researcher also takes a voluminous amount of information and reduces it to certain patterns, categories or themes and then interprets this information by using some schema (Creswell, 1994:154). Qualitative data analysis entails classifying things, persons, events and properties which characterize them according to Schatzman and Strauss (in Creswell, 1994:168).

Throughout the data analysis process in this research study, the data was coded using as many categories as possible (Jacob in Creswell, 1994:167).

An independent researcher was engaged to assist with coding. The transcripts were analysed independently by the researcher. An independent researcher, who received protocol on how to perform the analysis, was used. The researcher and the independent researcher coder analyzed the data independently according to the eight steps suggested by Creswell (1994:155). The following method in Cresswell (1994:155) was followed by the coder and researcher:

- Both parties got a sense of the whole by reading through all of the transcriptions carefully. The important ideas were jotted down as they came to mind.
- Thoughts were written down in the margin.
- Having completed several documents, a list was compiled of all the topics. Similar topics were put together and arranged into major topics.
- The list were taken back to the data, topics were abbreviated as codes and written next to the appropriate segment of the text. In this way the parties realized new categories and codes.
- The most descriptive wording for the topics was turned into categories while related topics were grouped together to reduce the total list of categories. Lines were drawn between categories to show relationships.
- Data material belonging to each category were assembled and put in one place for preliminary analysis.
- Existing data was recorded.

The researcher as well as an independent coder analysed the data and identified the main themes and categories (Krefting, 1991:216-217). In this study the independent coder is an expert in the field of qualitative research. A protocol of method, raw data in the form of recordings as well as transcriptions was given to the coder, who then coded and categorized the data on her own. A discussion was held to reach consensus and to verify whether the categories and themes identified by the independent coder correlated with the categories and the themes identified with the researcher. Themes and categories that the independent coder did not identify were omitted from the results.

In this research study the data that was analysed comprised of verbatim transcriptions of semi-structured, open-ended, individual interviews with principals about their experiences as managers in a challenging school environment. Field notes were also analysed.

3.6.1 Open coding

The collected data was transcribed from a tape recording by means of note-taking, accompanied by creative thinking. All the transcriptions were made carefully – that is, the text, ideas, words and phrases were critically considered. In this process, the researcher looked at statements and meaning in the transcribed data. Re-reading was done thoroughly with the purpose of identifying the concrete respondent responses. The main arguments were highlighted.

3.6.2 Axial coding

A column indicating major topics, unique topics and left-overs, was drawn. Re-reading, creative thinking and selecting similar ideas were performed simultaneously. When taking note of similar phrases, relationships between variables and differences between expressed ideas, the researcher looked for negative cases and surprises. The researcher identified the emerging styles and themes in order to categorize them together - that is most descriptive bonding topics were clustered under one category. The final decision was made after checking and rechecking according to the main categories.

3.6.3 Selective coding

In this process, the researcher did a preliminary analysis by re-identifying the number of categories relating to each other. The categories were integrated, regrouped and refined. The categories of responses were subsequently described in terms of data collected. The results were written down and discussed under the heading of the emergent themes.

3.7 THE RESEARCHER'S ROLE

According to Creswell (1994: 147), interpretation of data is the qualitative researcher's concern. As a result, the researcher's biases, values and judgments' were stated in the research report. This is because the researcher and the respondents bring along "biases, predispositions, attitudes and physical characteristics" that may influence data either positively or negatively (Merriam, 1998: 87).

In this research, the researcher's role during the interviews was to be cautious not to pre-determine meaning (Silverman, 1997: 121), but to report respondent's values including his biases, values and judgments'. Thus, the researcher brackets what he knew (having being a school manager himself) and allowed free and open responses from the participants. In order to achieve this, the researchers' aim was to ask questions, observe responses, and be a participant observer and recorded information. The researcher informed the participants about confidentiality, field notes taken and anonymity.

3.8 ETHICS

Ethics deals with questions of values and morality. It focuses on what is right and correct and what is wrong (Hitchcock & Hughes, 1996:46). Ethical standards such as the respondents' rights, confidentiality, mutual respect and anonymity are imperative in the qualitative research method (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994:20; Hitchcock & Hughes, 1995:45).

Based on these theorists' findings, this researcher reduced the effects of this study by contracting with the women principals in the selected secondary schools. The aim of doing this was to create a safe and confiding atmosphere that encouraged female principals to answer questions and comment freely and easily. To develop a feeling of trust and rapport, the researcher sought consent from head office and the district manager responsible for the district.

A letter to request permission for conducting research was sent to the Department of Education's head office. A confirmation letter granted access to the designated educational sites.

Letters and telephone conversations confirmed the agreed appointments. The respondents were informed about the content of the questions posed, the recording during the interviews, that it would be treated as confidential and that their responses would be anonymous. The possibility of withdrawal was also explained to the participants and that feedback would follow after the completion of the study. The aim was to create a rapport between the interviewer and the respondents taking part in this research study.

3.9 TRUSTWORTHINESS OF CONTENT ANALYSIS

3.9.1 Trustworthiness

For any study to be scientific it must be regarded as credible, reliable, believable and trustworthy by readers. To attain this, data must be carefully measured by means of reliability and validity instruments (Merriam, 1998; 204; Seale, 1998:137). According to Merriam (1998:205), reliability and validity deal with the confidence and belief about the outcomes of the study. This phenomenon is called trustworthiness.

It has been claimed by Lancy (1993:127) and Merriam (1998:204) that reliability and validity are "key concepts" in the trustworthiness of data finding. It is consequently important to elaborate what reliability and validity is.

3.9.2 Reliability

Reliability refers to the extent to which same results are reached if the researcher were to comparatively repeat again (De Vos, 1998:85). However, in qualitative approach, the researcher seeks to attest if other researchers would yield similar findings on different occasions (Bennett, Glatter & Levocie, 1994:218). It has to be noted though, that, qualitative researchers cannot claim that the exact results may be produced due to the fact that situations differ. Hence, it is important in a social discipline to understand and portray meaning constructed by those involved in a particular social setting (Wolcott, 1995:167). This can be done by justifying the entire process of the research so that there is an understanding of the findings (Merriam, 1998:207).

3.9.3 Validity

The extent to which accurate events are captured is what validity entails (Wolcott, 1995:169). This implies that what is intended to be measured is indeed measured. Fick (1995:49) outlines validity as the degree to which a survey instrument assesses what it purports to measure. For example, a study of female principals in managerial position in secondary schools is valid if the researcher formulates and asks questions in alignment with school management and leadership. Based on this theory, validity is used to ensure that the data includes everything it should and that it does not include anything it should not include.

To achieve validity, the researcher used standards such as the fit between the research question, data collection, data analysis, effective data application and analysis techniques to guide him in making valid arguments, findings and reports. The researchers did not deviate from the questions posed to all respondents. A standard of questioning was maintained and only uncertainties were clarified by respondents. These standards claim that the way an interviewer acts, questions and responds in the interviewing process shapes the relationship and the participants' accounts of their experiences. To adopt this strategy, the researcher has paid more attention to the respondents –talking little and

listening a lot to the accounts of the informants, allowing them the freedom to talk to the researcher. Time, purpose, approach, language, style and loyalties were incorporated.

The researcher made sure that the recordings were accurate, allowing readers to see these and report fully. Feedback was checked in order to ensure correctness, completeness and whether reporting was overblown or underdeveloped. Cross-checking of data was completed, where the researcher verified the accuracy of data with the interviewees. Verification was done to assure readers that the survey's findings are worth paying attention to and that an accurate account of events was reported. The validity of the research is checked through external and internal validity.

3.9.3.1 External validity

The researcher relied on what the respondents said about themselves, their experiences in the position of principal. Thus, in order to ascertain that the results were genuine, respondents were interviewed to form a unique interpretation of events (Creswell, 1994:158). Irrespective of whether the responses were negative or positive, the researcher depended on these responses. As a result, instead of the researcher generalizing about a case study, he sought to understand how the respondents in this particular case related to their experiences as a head of an institution. This intention is to “provide a perspective” over generalizing the findings (Merriam, 1998: 208-209).

3.9.3.2 Internal validity

In order to ascertain that the findings in this research are real, Creswell (1994:158) contends that this will be as a result of finding convergence among sources of information. From this convergence, reality can be deduced. Reality, according to Merriam (1998:203), is what the researcher gets from observing as well as interviewing respondents. In turn, the respondents' view enables the researcher to “uncover the

complexity of human behaviour in a contextual framework” thereby ‘painting’ a picture of incidences (Merriam, 1998:203). Triangulation, member checks, observation and researcher’s biases are used as the basis for adding to the internal validity (Merriam, 1998:204). These are a few strategies that one can employ to enhance internal validity. The researcher believes that these strategies enhance validity and therefore the research findings can be applied in subsequent research.

3.10 SUMMARY

This chapter outlined the methodology, the design, the researcher’s role, data analysis, ethics and trustworthiness of the research. The purpose of this chapter was to find out how women managers overcome discrimination in their endeavour to transform secondary schools into institutions of excellence.

The rationale for choice of the qualitative research method for this study was described. Data was collected through individual interviews, observation and field notes. The data collection instrument used in this research was relevant research literature, interviews with the principals. In the next chapter, the data generated by using the research methodology that was outlined will be presented and discussed.



ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In chapter three the research design, methodology and the rationale for using the qualitative research method were discussed. The research sample, design and the protocol of data analysis were also clarified.

In this chapter, the researcher will analyse the data obtained from the interviews. Some researchers like (Ely, Anzul, Friedman & Garner, 1991:140; Merriam, 1998: 164) explains, that to analyse data, is to find some essential meaning in the raw data, to reduce and reorganize and combine it, so that the reader share the researcher's findings in the most interesting fashion. The product of analysis is a creation that speaks to the heart of

what was learned. Babbie, Mouton, Voster and Prozesky (2001:101) point out that, finally, we interpret the collected data for the purpose of drawing conclusions that reflect on interest, ideas, and theories that initiated the inquiry.

The aim of the study was to explore the perceptions of women principals in the management of secondary schools, to identify factors that impede on their performances and to present guidelines that could assist in addressing challenges relating to management. During these interviews common themes emerged. This will be spelt out and discussed in detail.

4.1 INTERACTION WITH THE RESPONDENTS

The research process commenced with a formal written request to principals of various secondary schools in the demarcated area. Participants were initially contacted, to introduce the researcher and secure an appointment. Official letters were handed to the participants requesting an interview with them. Four of the six participants agreed to be interviewed after formal teaching, the other two managed to accommodate the researcher during their administrative period. None of the participants objected at first to be mentioned by name, but for ethical reasons pseudonyms was utilized. The first set of audio-taped interview formed part of a pilot study for the research, and was transcribed by the researcher. The transcriptions were coded according to a set protocol in order to identify the underlying themes.

After reviewing the feasibility and correctness of the procedure, the researcher conducted additional interviews to explore certain concepts and behavioral patterns. The same procedure that was followed with the first interview was repeated in each interview. After six interviews certain themes recurred and it was evident that a saturated level was obtained. Some of the themes identified in the pilot study correlated with those in subsequent interviews and this resulted in the inclusion of the pilot study.

Finally, the researcher presented the interview transcriptions and protocol of the coding procedure, to an independent coder who then coded the transcriptions on her own. A meeting was arranged between the researcher and the independent coder. The themes were discussed and a certain level of consensus was reached.

4.2 THEMES

The following themes were identified through data analysis.

THEMES

- 1. Stereotypes**
- 2. Cultural Beliefs**
- 3. Personality and Leadership traits**
- 4. Communication / Collaboration**
- 5. Emotional Intelligence**
- 6. Task Orientation**
- 7. Peer Development**

Each theme will be discussed and examples from the interviews will be given. The quotations are given verbatim. Clarification of concepts will be given in brackets.

The literature control will be used to explain, support and extend the theory generated in this research. This will provide the researcher with a basic understanding of the research problem and the evidence that the study conducted was appropriately based on the current knowledge of the problem (Burns & Grove, 1995:108). The literature control will thus reflect the existing knowledge of the problem and the barriers that impact on female performances in secondary schools.

4.3.1 Stereotyping

It is evident from the responses of interviewees that female principals are subjected to stereotyping. In the collaboration with staff and parents, regarding pertinent issues, there is a tendency to see female principals as weak, submissive, emotional and unfit to become managers. However, principal A and B repudiate these stereotypes finding, stating that:

I just think that people believe that males are stronger, that is a perception which I think it's wrong, uhm... women definitely can play an equally, prominent role leading or being leaders of secondary school.... they are looked upon as weaker and the perception is that if there's a strong man right in front, children will tend to be afraid.

Principal B added that stereotyping in the workplace is alive and well especially practiced by males in management. She explained:

I think because in the past women have been seen as not as strong as what men have been. To run big schools or to manage problems successfully, etc. And I think women haven't been as forceful as what they are now...

This perception is further strengthened by Sarakan and Leong's (1992: 2-10) explanation of stereotypes, which states that it involves categorizing people or events according to their perceived similarities. Greyvenstein (2000:32) state that stereotypes based on gender have historically placed women in a nurturing, submissive role while men are seen as the dominant, more aggressive gender. Principal (C) emphasized that women were placed into a particular compartment.

She explained that: *they are looked upon as weaker and the perception is that if there's a strong man right in front, children will tend to be afraid.* Principal D contested the submissiveness and weak perceptions that were posted, but added that:

Women don't need to portray a certain type of masculinity, but when you walk into the male dominated area, you will have to either speak with authority or say something impressive about the latest circular to make them respect and recognize your presence.

The principals further revealed that assertive behaviour is considered more valuable because of its characteristics of objectivity, impartiality, and orientation toward problem solving. Principal E further elaborated that: *...children at school think of a woman as the*

motherly figure, but you have to be sturdy and assertive so that you can also rule and that you can also lead instead of just giving.

Stereotypes are often inaccurate and clinging to stereotypes will negatively influence communication in the workplace rather than contribute to effective communication. From the responses of the interviewees it is evident that change is necessary, and people have to adapt to it. Women can also and should be part of the school management. They have come a long way and contributed immensely in the educational arena (Erasmus, 1998).

4.3.2 Cultural beliefs

Traditionally, male principals headed many of the secondary schools; occasionally you would encounter a school where the head would be female. What emerges from one of the interviews is that cultural beliefs and practices play a major role in the acceptance of female head in this particular school as one of the respondents said:

...some of the African males don't see women as the head of an institution, it must be a man. Uhm... and that caused a bit of a problem and resulted in conflict, not much, but we could resolve the conflict by speaking ...

Principal C expressed the concern that: *...women are nervous about that position, because the school uhm are very big and multi-cultural and the children being very restless and it comes with a lot of challenges.*

Some of the principals interviewed contest the perception that culture dictates and they need to conform to prescribe norms of culture. Principal F challenged this particular observation where she indicated that:

...the culture also contributed to be saying that preferences must be given to the males as compare to the females. With the culture where I am from, women are just to be seen and not heard. That is the slogan. This participant goes further and explained that: ...women have been right in the kitchen. They were never given an opportunity to come out of the kitchen so that they also play part in the economy or education of this country.

Participant A, who comes from a predominantly Indian community, where preference is given to males, remarked vehemently about the negative perception of the community where she works. She explained that:

People still look at you as a woman and question, can you do the job even if you have been at this job for several years... It is difficult because you have to constantly prove to yourself and to other people that you can do the job.

Principal D expressed her frustration when she made the observation that:

... you are been seen as a woman and have to deal with it, your every action –should be womanly instead of seeing you as a leader and you need to show your leadership...you know it is very difficult and also when it comes to uhm... the different cultures, women are been perceived differently, in different cultures and must just accept it and that is not on.

Hess, Markson, & Stein (1990) however, suggested that culture is often defined as the blueprint for living in a group whose members share a given territory and language, feel responsible for one another and call themselves by the same name. People become functional members of a group as they learn and participate in the culture. How we approach a situation is shaped by our work structure, but our choice of responses is affected by our culture. One of the principals clearly indicated that it would be very difficult for any person from a different cultural background to make inroads in the community where she is working.

She indicated that the community will only be satisfied with “one of their own” or with a person who can express tremendous dedication, tenacity diligence and understanding of the community’s needs. Only then will he or she be fully accepted in their culture. Culture is transmitted through observation, shared beliefs, symbolic gestures, customs, rituals, play, art, myths, and methods of physical and emotional relations. Culture is formed as we observe, listen, talk and interact with others in our organization.

4.3.3 Leadership style

The principals who were interviewed disclosed that their previous style of leadership was authoritarian and created numerous problems and tensions amongst staff and other

stakeholders. Principal B indicated that in order for her to complete an important task she needed to exert a type of style so that educators perform their duties complete their tasks and submit these on time. She understands the impact of deadlines and how it affects the chain of delivery if work is not completed and submitted. She elaborates that:

I think I am more autocratic than democratic. I have been more autocratic, but things need to be done. So you always, uhm, delegate but sometimes we have to sit on people...

However principal A responded when asked about a particular management style. She clearly stated that:

... sometimes you have to be democratic and sometimes you have to be autocratic. So your management style changes. You cannot just be the one and not the other one. The situation will dictate your leadership style at that moment; you cannot just say I got one leadership style. You cannot.

Van Deventer & Kruger (2003: 145) clearly state that there is no one correct leadership style. Each of the mentioned styles has certain advantages. Different people in different situations should use different styles. If a principal decided on a specific leadership style, she should nevertheless, take into consideration the people and the circumstances. Some principals were perceived to be very flexible and adaptable and they could transform themselves according to the need of the situation. These are the type of leaders who have the potential to be effective in a number of situations.

Principals generally accepted the establishment of school management teams (SMT's) and the introduction of school governing bodies (SGB's) and they acknowledge that it represented a change in the process of decision-making.

The participants agreed that it was necessary to adopt a shared leadership style based on inclusiveness and collegiality, as principal F remarked:

I do everything with everybody and agree to disagree, hence the same vision for the school. So that we are able to travel together, so that people shouldn't be left behind to take the school to a higher mark. That is the main aim.

Principal C confirms the above statement as she explains that:

I have a very hands-on approach, which I think at times it can be criticized, but what I do is that I do interact a lot with people. And I actually believe that through interaction is what make a success.

Principal E emphasizes the importance of collaboration with all the stakeholders. She explains that: *I have a good relationship with the children and I communicate with the teachers on every level and that kind of thing and I believe that interaction and communication with the relevant stakeholders is vital.*

It has been stated that influencing the behaviour of people is paramount in leadership. A leader's style helps him/her to create a climate in which his or her followers will function happily, thus willingly co-operate in attaining objectives. Both women and men are placed into sex role, which influence their personality and behavioral patterns, (Chapman and Luthans, 1990: 173-179). In the past, it has been generally accepted in society that women are considered passive, accommodative and intuitive, while men are assumed to be aggressive, active and authoritarian. They further state that women leaders exhibit a style, which is more human-relationship-oriented than their male counterparts. On the other hand, women may also exhibit a leadership style significantly more task-oriented than their male counterparts because their survival in a leadership position may be one of "getting –the –job done" as manifested by a number of participants during the interviews. Participants displayed a remarkable understanding of the importance of dynamic communication between all stakeholders. They acknowledge that they need to possess excellent communication skills, which will allow them to give clear guidance and to be decisive when necessary (Bennett, et al., 1994, Riches & Morgan, 1994).

4.3.4. Collaboration with stakeholders

There was common understanding amongst the principals that they needed to work together with the relevant stakeholders in order to make a success of the management processes of the institution. They stressed the importance of collaboration and effective communication between and with all parties. It is accepted that collaboration allows

individuals to develop a common understanding and language out of which a common culture can emerge. It stimulates dialogue and the sharing of values, knowledge, expertise, thoughts, aspirations, visions, and difficulties in a supportive and positive environment. People cannot work together effectively unless they get to know one another - what they value, how they think, and why they think that way. This creates understanding, and ultimately respect, for one another. Principal B elaborated that:

...we normally sit together or one of the heads of department will come and say I have designed this form, let's have a look at it. So we have that kind of mutual understanding as well. So it is not just a case of delegating and check whether you have done your work. You need people to buy into it.

Principal C confirms the importance of a collaborative approach. She explains that: *It is very important that management works together as a team and communicate with one another and I think that management is vital in a sense that they lead the school.* She went further by stating that *there is a very supportive relationship between the GDE, SGB and parents*". Principal F made the remark stating that in order for her to complete a particular task she

... will look at the whole issue with my SMT, we will come up with vision and mission in terms of strategy of how we are going to improve on our results and that is a collaborative effort. You can't do it all alone. All structures must be involved, failing it we will never get it.

Community involvement in schools has become a buzzword in our time. Everybody seems to agree that it is essential that the community should become involved in the activities of the school (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 261).

One of the most exciting developments in our education dispensation is the establishment of governing bodies at every school in our country.

Government acknowledges the fact that education can only succeed if all the role players accept their responsibilities. Parents and members of the local community are in the best position to determine the needs of their school as well as identify and solve problems. Governing bodies, representing parents, educators, learners and community, are expected

to make important decisions to ensure that the school is administered properly. This can only be achieved by means of open and constant deliberation with all the stakeholders (Prinsloo in Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003: 203).

4.3.5 Communication with stakeholders

Participants agreed that effective communication is vital for the success of any organization. Communication is the process by which meanings are exchanged between people through a common system of symbols (Byars & Rue, 1994:15).

They added that no one style of communication is appropriate in all situations. The situation often defines the appropriate way to communicate as participant B explains:

If there is a particular issue on the table, the SMT will discuss it. I'll first speak to the deputies and SMT about it and see how they feel about it and then we will take it to the staff.

There are many ways to communicate successfully. A competent communicator is sensitive to the situation and determines the appropriate communication strategy. The communication strategy used will also determine the extent of participation of the receiver. Purkey & Schmidt (1996:10) state that if the strategy is of an inviting nature that recognizes the person's worth and is not intended to demean, degrade, dissuade or humiliate the receiver will probably feel invited to participate. The principal must appraise the situation and determine the appropriate strategy to ensure the full participation of the receiver. Principal A explains that "...communication is absolutely important. You cannot stand isolated and say I make the rules and you follow, it doesn't work".

Principal (E) echoed a similar sentiment:

I think it is very important that management communicate with one another and if your management is not solid and strong and focused and they don't have a vision, then your school isn't going to succeed and move forward.

The ultimate aim of communication is to extract a certain behavioural response from the recipient (Van der Westhuizen, 1997: 214). This response leads to task execution, which is an integral part of the communication process. It could also be said that effective communication is a prerequisite for management functions in the school. The characteristics of effective management are leadership competence, uniqueness and openness in communication. The principal should be open, positive, sincere, receptive, supportive and ready to plan and to take action on various professional suggestions that come from staff members during meetings. Educators should feel free to voice their feelings, perceptions, positive suggestions and constructive critique.

4.3.6 Educational Support

The introduction of school management teams and school governing bodies to work and support the principal stems from a collaborative management approach. The Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) refers to the need for stakeholder involvement in school management. The stakeholders are the state, education departments, the provincial head offices, parents, learners, educators and broader community.

In schools where the principals have been newly appointed, curriculum and institutional support in terms of operational performances varied. Schools where the principal has been newly appointed, emotions varied from hostility by the staff and community to extreme support from the staff, SGB and GDE officials. Principal A explained that:

I have received phenomenal support from my IDSO. As far as this school is concerned, the SGB, we have a very, very committed SGB, which makes a remarkable difference to us, because when you need the help, you get the support and ultimately the child gains. Err... staff, excellent support

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:203-204) state that for a school to be successful and effective it requires a thorough human resource planning process that can improve the school with the expertise that is needed to run it successfully and to create a positive

culture of teaching and learning. Contrary to the response above participant, E expressed the following sentiment:

Well I think with the department, they try to see if you can cope, instead of supporting you, they want to test your strength as a female...They are not really supporting you in wanting you to become successful Uhm, ...presently I would say I don't get the necessary support from my immediate supervisor.

The majority of the participants agreed that at first it was difficult to change the perception of the community that a female principal was as competent as a male. The community adjacent the school formulated a particular perception that a female will not be able and is unfit to manage the school effectively. As participant A articulated:

As far as the community is concerned, that was for me an issue. As you know err...I am the only female principal in this area, it was a kind of a shock to parents to say a school of this size, and a school with such good reputation is now given to woman. Now what is going to happen?

What emerged from the deliberation with the principals is that although the community had this negative perception and was reluctant to accept female principals, they later accepted the remarkable change introduced by these principals. Biased perceptions about these females were laid to rest and the communities started to collaborate when they saw the positive strides made by principals.

4.3.7 Emotional Intelligence

School principals, working in a changed and more diverse environment, are under great pressure to perform. Weare (2000: 83) believes that principals need the ability to relate sensitively to people whose assumptions are different to theirs. A principal's calmness and patience when dealing with members of staff are crucial for effective management.

It is evident from the response from the principals that they try their utmost best to accommodate diversity and to be sensitive toward situational factors.

Principal D explains that: *I always wait to understand the situation before I could provide an input. If there were problems, we jointly look into it and ask a person who is wrong to apologize. With this strategy, we are all winners.*

Principal B revealed that when one of the teachers died, she was devastated and emotionally scared. She explains that:

... you have to support people. You need to be there for them, like when something tragic happened at school that concerns all of us. You need to prepare people emotionally for any eventuality. Principal A elaborated further by saying that:

...we have compassion and nobody can tell me that a principal is about err... just making rules. The situation that I am putting myself in, is to show understanding and compassion all the time. Be it the child or be it a staff member or even a cleaner on the school.

Goleman (1996:176) define emotional intelligence as the capacity for recognizing our own feelings and those of others, for motivating and managing emotions well, both ourselves and in our relationships. Winstanley and Woodal,(2000: 144) described emotional intelligence as the intelligent use of emotions in different situations. People intentionally make their emotions work for them. They utilize their behavior and think in ways that enhance their results. During the interviews with the principals', some principals vented their frustration and anger towards the education department, members of school governing bodies and reluctant educators. In the process of doing that, they exposed their own vulnerability and limitations and emphasised the need for emotional tolerance. They can also utilize the very same emotional intelligence as a tool to manipulate and compel others into conformity.

4.3.8 Conflict resolution

Conflict is an inevitable feature of all organizations. However, the ability to manage conflict is a key aspect of principals' success to manage schools effectively. Conflict is perceived or experienced when there are incompatible differences within the individual or between two or more individuals, which may lead to stress or some form of opposition. Conflict perceptions and emotions usually manifest themselves in the

decisions and overt behaviours of one party towards the other. The conflict episodes may range from subtle non-verbal behavior to warlike aggression. According to Goleman (1998:178) people who are skilled in the conflict management competence have the ability to handle people and tense situations with tact and diplomacy. From the responses of the principals, participant A explained that:

My style with conflict is ... you hear the one side alone, you hear the other side alone and most important of all is to bring the two parties together and to ensure that you have one neutral party at hand, and try to resolve it. In any situation you have to communicate. If you don't, the conflict will get worse. Don't ever allow it to become personal and we emphasize that.

Principal C indicated that: *I get the people in I talk to them, I try to keep an ear open and try to see where the conflict originated and try to address it before it actually arises.*

While the above participants emphasize the importance of communication in resolving conflict, principal B boldly state that:

Uhm... first of all I don't like conflict. I really don't like conflict, because it is very difficult for me to handle conflict. I try my utmost, I got outside help to assist me... but it becomes difficult you know.

Principals find themselves in positions of trust with respect to their colleagues, and the way they communicate with the conflicting parties will either be a motivating or a demotivating force in solving the conflict. Special interpersonal skills, the inspiring of confidence, listening skills, structured problem-solving, as well as knowledge of the staff's background and abilities, are required from a principal. From the analysis, it appears that (some) female principals in secondary schools hesitate to confront conflict head-on. They steer away from conflict and make use of different strategies to combat challenging situations. It became evident that in-service training, support and mentorship can assist to restore confidence in some of the managers.

4.3.9 Task Orientation

Participants understood the importance of working with the school management team, school governing body, education department and the broader community.

They also mentioned that when you plan, organize, control and delegate with inclusion and make educators to buy in, you can achieve the impossible. Gerber, et al., 1997:8) aptly describe the importance for principals to manage human resources so that schools can function effectively. They state that it is people who pose the greatest challenge. The quality and willingness of people will determine the schools success or failure. The quality of our schools and our education service depends on the support staff, educators, principals, school governors and administrators. From the principal's responses, it has been noted that women principals are committed and dedicated to their work. Principal A emphasized the point that:

We sit down first of all and decide who will manage which aspect of the school and that is management by everybody around ... That is how I delegate, I don't delegate by bullying. I delegate by saying sir, this is in your scope take charge...

Participant F explained that to understand the feeling and frustration on the ground, she has to be part of the action. The participant explains that:

...my perception is that the head must be always at school. The head must be seen at the school working. You ought to be part and parcel of it. They must see you ...

Principal C responded that *"I have a very hands-on approach...I think it is very important that management work together as a team and communicate effectively"*.

It is evident from the above insert that not all participant experience the same level of support and assistance from staff and others members. While one participant is doing it by the book to achieve a certain outcome, another participant would emphasize the importance of teamwork and leading from the front.

4.3.10 Skills Development

Developing staff members involves the ability to sense other people's developmental needs and bolster their abilities. This competence is a hallmark of superior managers (Cherniss & Golemen, 2001: 36). The development of competencies of educators is essential if schools are to maintain environment conducive to effective teaching and

learning. Principals and educators should be part of the improvement of education and must adopt the principles of lifelong learning and development.

All participants displayed a genuine interest to be developed and in return use that empowering mechanism to motivate their staff further. Principal E elaborated that:

What they (GDE) must do, is to avail resources to the principals, they must support the principal in terms of workshops, they must be available to help, we need nothing else.

Principal B added that:

I think we should have been given a little bit more training. ...there should be at least ongoing training say for the first two, three years and that ongoing support as well. On motivating her staff one participant would express her opinion by saying that: ...it is my belief or my perception that the head must be always at school. The head must be seen at the school working.

In as far as development of skills is concerned, training remains an appropriate solution. Kotter (1996:109) also agrees that skills are developed through training but warns against enormous training budgets that are not necessary for the new responsibilities. He also writes that training needs to be the right kind of experience for it to be effective.

4.4 Summary

This chapter dealt with the data analysis and the interpretation of the individual interviews undertaken with school managers. The aim was to explore and describe their experiences as female managers and the barriers that they have encountered. The following themes extracted from the research were discussed: stereotypes, cultural beliefs, leadership traits, communication, collaboration, emotional intelligence, task orientation and peer development.

The fact is, many barriers remain which hinder women in the teaching profession from achieving true parity in relation to their colleagues with regard to promotion posts. A closer look at the response from principals suggested that the most significant obstacles that have been indicated by women are stereotypes, traditional inequities and

discrimination against women by the community in general. Extracts from the interviews complemented the observation and so did the other themes. A literature control was also undertaken in order to contextualise the findings of the study.

Chapter five will focus on the summary, limitations and conclusion of the research study. Guidelines for female managers would be suggested on how to manage effectively as well as recommendations for further research study.



CHAPTER 5

THE SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The conceptual framework of the research is based on the assumption that women are equally capable as men. The feminist theories attempted to outline the basis of the need for research. The innovative skills, personality and attitude that female principals possess, position them for change agency. Furthermore, the identified strategies enable them to overcome discriminatory barriers to steadily transform their schools to centers of excellence.

This chapter focuses on the findings of the literature review, the interviews and observations with regard to secondary schools in the Gauteng, Johannesburg South District, D11, managed and led by women principals. The objective of the study was to investigate what barriers impede the performances of female principals in secondary schools. The most essential findings of the literature study and the interpretations of the results are also indicated. The chapter concludes with findings, recommendations and suggestions for further research regarding the discriminatory barriers that impact on the performance of female principals.

A summary of the study will follow.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE STUDY

Chapter one gave the background and rationale of the research. It also stated the research problem, aims of the research, research method, conceptual framework and the division of chapters of the research study. The research focuses on the performance of women principals in managing secondary schools. It emphasizes the styles of management and how it impacts on school effectiveness. Furthermore, the study highlights the barriers that hinder women performances especially, gender discrimination against women with regard to filling of senior post in secondary schools. One of the central themes that permeate studies on gender discrimination is the move towards eroding all forms of discrimination against women. Hitherto, women remain a minority gender in terms of management positions in education generally, and in secondary schools in particular. Attempts are made, through the implementation of policy documents to enforce the principle of gender equity. However, certain subtle discriminatory practices remain a barrier between the present state of affairs and a desired situation.

Chapter two focused on literature about women managers as change agents and how they can apply various strategies in changing the schools they manage into effective institutions. Feminist theories were mentioned with an aim of bringing relevance to the research. Literature recommendations on how women managers can become change agents were also provided. The issue of women and change, closing the management gender gap, the need for planned change were also raised. The strategies that women managers can use to overcome discrimination were also provided:

- dealing with prejudice and stereotypes,
- overcoming patriarchal obstacles,
- addressing inequalities empowerment, and
- career development for women.

Following the literature review, Chapter three dealt with the research design, a sample selection and qualitative method. The rationale for choice of the qualitative research method for the study was described. The method of collecting data focused on individual interviews with principals. Applying the reliability, validity and ethical study method has proved the scientific quality of this research study.

Chapter four dealt with the in-depth analysis and interpretation of data obtained through the interviews of women principals in secondary schools. The constant comparative method was employed to analyze the respondent's comments as well as the observed interactions. The themes uncovered were:

- Stereotypes –widely held generalization about a group of people that assigns attributes to them solely on the basis of a limited number of categories.
- Cultural beliefs – suggested that culture is often defined as the blueprint for living in a group whose members share a given territory and language and call themselves by the same name.
- Personalities and Leadership traits argue that certain leadership style has advantages and personality traits can be link to some of them.
- Communication and Collaboration is the key to healthy school community
- Emotional Intelligence believes that principals need the ability to relate sensitively to people whose assumptions are different to theirs.
- Task Orientation emphasizes the importance of working with the school management, school governing body, the department and the broader community.
- Peer Development involves the ability to assess developmental needs and bolster their abilities.

The findings and interpretation of data collected from the literature review and the interviews were outlined and summarized in chapter five. The interpretations were done in accordance with the aims of the research study stated in Chapter one.

The next section presents the findings in accordance with the stated aims in order to indicate how each aim of the research was achieved.

5.3 FINDINGS

In the light of the literature review and the responses to the interviews, the following findings were made. These findings will be interpreted in accordance with the aims:

- The perceptions of women principals in management;
- factors that impede on their performances and
- guidelines that could assist women principals addressing gender stereotyping in management.

5.3.1 Findings that emanates from perceptions of women principals.

The first aim is concerned with exploring the perceptions of women principals in school management. The key factors that were identified from the literature with regard to gender discrimination were that there is a need to eradicate prejudices that emanates from cultural beliefs; these opinions lead to believing, thereby resulting in stereotyping (Wolf: 1993:195). These stereotypes emanate from the belief system with an aim of preserving culture, privilege and power and culture arouses expectations whereby men are seen to be powerful, thus promoting patriarchal practices. The system of patriarchy subjects women to a state of being dominated, thus creating inequalities between men and women.

During the interviews with the principals, aspects of discrimination subtly seeped through although some of it was not blatantly mentioned. The principals are consciously and sub-consciously faced with these challenges and have to deal with them. Discriminatory actions and comments mostly occur behind their backs, making it difficult for them to be aware of them. Despite the discriminatory remarks and prejudices, they managed to keep the schools effective and functional. Their management is shaped by the qualities they possessed in dealing with the different stakeholders and the support received from different sectors.

5.3.2 Findings related to impeding factors that influences performance.

The second aim intended to investigate the factors that impede the performance of women principals. External factors such as societal views are used up against women managing secondary schools. The society has always and still views males as better managers and this dampens the spirit of equal opportunities, which is much talked about in the laws that govern this country.

The factors that were identified were prejudicial perceptions of female principals, willingness to co-operate and to commit to school activities, preconceived assumptions of female competence and cultural differences.

During the interviews with the principals they indicated that some males and females on the staff would deliberately question the purpose of meetings and practicality of activities, after it has been discussed. Cultural differences does impact on the effectiveness of certain programmes because it has to be critically analysed and assessed, thus creating an atmosphere of mistrust.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The main purpose of this research was an investigation into the performance of women managers in secondary schools and looking at the factors that impede on their performances. Firstly, women are encouraged to have coaches and mentors who will assist them not to adopt masculine management style, but enhance their feminine wealth of skills and strategies.

Secondly, the existing culture needs to be scrutinized and altered. This implies that sources of culture that enhance disparities have to be eradicated. Implementing relevant policies will ensure that this is achieved. Finally, the ability to control emotions and appropriately deal with other individuals' is of paramount importance.

In the light of the literature review and interviews, the following are recommended:

5.4.1. Dealing with perceptions about women

Women managers are under continuous scrutiny by their subordinates and communities. Their actions are viewed from a gender perspective. Thus:

- Educators, particularly males, need to be educated on the need to accept and be tolerant of women as their equals, as human beings in their own right and begin to respect that, irrespective of their position. By addressing the gender differences, stereotypical perceptions and discrimination in workshops and seminars, indicating that women has an important role and can contribution to educational management.
- Both genders need to be made aware of their differences and how they need one another to complement these differences in their work environment in particular and in society in general. Being aware of opposite sex's differences enables them to accept and to co-exist. Co-existence can only become a reality when males respect and accept females cultural differences, gender, composition and content unconditionally.

Another way of preparing educators that resist adapting to women leaders is to change their stereotypical behaviour. Educators should be provided with information that builds an internal social system in secondary schools. Videos (DVD's), television programmes and journals displaying women's capabilities in leading-managing secondary schools in the locally and globally should be sent to schools.

5.4.2. Overcoming gender discrimination

All forms of gender discrimination are prohibited by the *Constitution* of South Africa clause 8. Again, the preamble of the Schools Act (Republic of South Africa, 1996) states that “the country requires a new national system for schools... which will combat racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance...” These national law enforcement documents must be adhered to. Therefore, it is imperative that:

- Educators are continuously reminded of the need for addressing gender differences. This can be done through district offices, magazines, newsletters and media exposure emphasizing gender issues;
- Aspects of stereotypical roles for men and women should be combated so that more equitable functions are promoted. This can be achieved through strict enforcement of equity policies and agreement-contracts to conform to these policies;
- The Department of Education comes up with media programs that address equity issues and the danger of gender discrimination.

5.4.3 Equity and equality in human resources

Stereotypical perceptions in women principals' management styles inhibit school structures from being productive and efficient. All stakeholders who perceive women managers differently should learn to work together in determining the essential needs, critical issues and problems in their various individual schools. Through this, secondary school female managers will be able to link their abilities, spirit and gain self-confidence in their style of leading and managing. The reality of this is that excellence in female leadership in secondary school cannot be attained without valuing both male and female contributions in all school activities.

5.4.4 Educational training

The educational programmes and projects should be planned effectively to compensate for principals' lack of skills and to encourage them to obtain those skills necessary to compete in managing secondary schools. Ongoing training is imperative for school principals to gain insight, acquire new skills and have confidence in managing performances. Planners should build programmes on women principals' strengths, courage and ingenuity. Providing them with wider and more effective options with regard to resources and skills could do this. Furthermore, women principals should be

encouraged to attend institutions and seminars focused on school leadership and management.

Issues such as motivation, personal skills and job skills should be stressed in the training of women principals. The main purpose of this training should be focused on doing away with different behaviour displayed towards men and women with regard to secondary schools' leadership.

5.4.5 Educational policy and development

Educational policy should be regarded as a tool to support and improve the secondary school women principals' current effort toward their style of managing.

The Department of Education should actively participate in accelerating changes in gender, political, economic and social structures that are recently diminishing women's hopes to be future district directors. Moreover, affirmative action programmes should be implemented to provide women principals with skills that will alter their inferiority complex and self-concept with regard to the style of management they are practicing.

They should study relevant courses and obtain qualifications with the purpose of developing new skills. To obtain this, newly appointed women principals, should read and seek advice from neighbouring secondary schools. They should be closer to coaches, mentors, sponsors and people at senior level in order to be competent in their roles of leading and managing secondary schools.

5.5 THE FINDINGS AND THE STUDY OF THIS RESEARCH CONFIRMED THE FOLLOWING

Within the context of the South African educational system, women managers could be considered as crucial. This is concretized by management approaches by women such as collaboration and communication, shared-power, core principalship, professionalism, ethics of care and motherhood. With regard to this, the researcher is convinced that women's leadership are imperative in uplifting and advancing the education system.

What is encouraging despite the negative discriminatory elements that surfaced is that, these female principals interviewed, have defied the odds in creating opportunities to climb the leadership ladder. However, it is imperative that the education department creates opportunities to enable more women to be content with applying for top managerial post particularly in secondary schools.

5.6 CONCLUSION

It can be deduced from this research that there is a pervasive hunger for trustworthiness, commitment, responsibility and competent leadership in education. It is important to mention that some secondary school principals had no formal training in leadership and or management skills. Some of these women principals were appointed into these posts without any formal induction programme to start off with.

The perception that women principals will never be able to cope in this male dominated environment, the cultural and sexist prejudices from communities around schools were some of the obstacles that impede the performances of women principals. Schools have become extremely complex and specialized thus requiring effective skillful leaders who know exactly what to do from day one in this position. Women have got to recognize that the skills that they have are valuable; they devalue their feminine skills because they don't feel that they are important, but these are the skills that help them manage better to avoid conflict and allow them to operate more collegially.

It is the researcher's observation that women managers are ideal change agents who need to overcome gender discrimination in transforming secondary schools. They possess a wealth of skills and have the ability to manage secondary schools as competent as their male counterparts, irrespective of the impeding barriers. More women ought to be appointed into senior positions, with proper induction programmes, constant training, mentoring and coaching so that the balance in terms of gender is maintained and that a

wrong message is not projected out to the young, that secondary school management, is designed for men.

The study gave us an indication that some women are effecting change in the educational management domain. But it would be oversimplifying a complex situation and trivializing the obstacles facing women working within it if the researcher concluded that there had been a major shift in attitudes towards women and female styles of management. Despite the recognition that women make excellent managers and that the female style of management is effective, the number of women managers in senior positions does not justify their underrepresentation in educational management.

5.7 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

In this research study, female principals were regarded as the central theme of school effectiveness and development. Arguably, it is not only the principals who form and manage the school system. Therefore, the research should also be directed at parents, learners, school governing body members, school management teams, administrative staff and educators as participants in exploring women principal's management and leadership approaches in secondary schools. Further research could also investigate the emotional intelligence of female principals, their leadership styles and the relationship with educators.

The logo of the University of Johannesburg features two stylized human figures in orange, facing each other with their arms raised, holding an open book. Above the book are three sunburst-like symbols. To the right of the figures, the text 'UNIVERSITY OF JOHANNESBURG' is displayed in a light grey, sans-serif font, with 'OF' centered between two horizontal lines.

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APPENDIX A

3 Bradfield Street
Horizon View
1724
13 February 2007

The Principal
Department of Education
Johannesburg South
Gauteng
2000

Dear Sir/Madam

This letter is to request permission to interview female principals in district 11, Johannesburg South Secondary Schools.

I am conducting a qualitative research study at secondary schools. The study focuses on the performance of female principals in secondary schools and the barriers impeding on their effectiveness as managers. Theoretically and conceptually, it is believed that female's ways of managing and leading can transform South African education into a quality one, but little is known about their management and leadership abilities.

In order to get the relevant and valid information about this study, female principals' participation and co-operation in the D 11 district is essential. Your opinion is required to assist in obtaining data, which will help in preparing a comprehensive report on the performance of female managers in the district.

Confidentiality and anonymity will be respected in the interviews and the report.

Thank you in anticipation.

Melvin H. Damons.

APPENDIX C
Interview Schedule

Interview with the principals.

1. Women in leadership (management) in secondary schools appear to be less represented as compared to their male counterpart. How would you respond to this statement?
 1. Why do you think this situation prevails?
 2. What are your views on school management?
 4. Is delegation a component of your management style? (Please elaborate).
 5. Do you think female educators aspire to be managers? Why? / (not)?
 6. Do you experience any barriers in your role as a school manager?
If yes/no prompt response.
 7. What kind of support has been offered to assist you in your management task?
 8. Were you ever in a situation where your competency as a manager has been questioned?
 9. How do you manage conflict in your school?
 10. If I said to you that there is a perception that male principals make better leaders than females. What would your response be to this statement?

APPENDIX D

Interview One

School : St Matrix Secondary School

Time: 8h-15 – 9h- 35

Researcher = R

Principal = FP

1. R: This interview will be conducted with the principal of St Matrix Secondary School,
2. Ms F, thank you for availing yourself for this interview madam. I'll immediately
3. go to my statement. My research focuses on the performance of female principals in the
4. management of secondary schools in the Gauteng province and I would like to start this
5. interview with a statement and the statement leads:
6. Women in leadership or management in secondary schools appear to be less represented
7. compared to their male counterparts. How would you respond to this statement?

8. FP: Uhm I just think that people belief that males are stronger, that is a perception which
9. I think it's wrong , uhm... women tend to have, what I would call the motherly instinct,
10. which makes a remarkable difference when it comes to young people in understanding
11. them. So, women definitely can play an equally, prominent role in leading a secondary
12. school.

13. R: Now why do you think this situation prevails where females are less represented in
14. high schools?

15. FP: Uhm...you know as I indicated earlier, we , uhm they are looked upon as weaker and

16. the perception is that if there's a strong man right in front, children will tend to be afraid.
17. But ...I don't think today's children is about fear. Today's children is about
18. communicating and understanding and the social issues that children are faced with uhm,
19. women tend to understand more and when a child's pick that up, that she (the principal)
20. knows what I am going through, or she understand, the child becomes more
21. cooperative, so uhm ...its no about a strong men, its about a strong person that will
22. understand.

23. R: Will you then say that women are more sympathetic and empathetic to the needs of
24. children?

25. FP: I definitely do think so, because I feel that uhm ...as a women I have more patients
26. and I won't just through in the towel and you know before I'll slap you or say go out of
27. my sight, a woman doesn't do that. Uhm as mothers I think we tend to understand our
28. children and our children meaning the children in our community and we show more
29. empathy and emotions which I think today that's what today's kids are needing.
30. Today's kids don't need the rod. The rod work in the past. Today's kids needs
31. communication which I think we can give them.

32. R: Madam, tell me about your views on management, and what is your managerial style?
33. (Learner busy organizing a plug in the office, whilst the head is busy with the interview)

34. FP: Uhm.. management is about communication . My management style is very firm,

35. yet friendly in other words, uhm... I am gonna talk about uhm I think the questions
36. here comes in with regards to leadership and management. When I am just a leader, I
37. have to take a decision on the spot and that is where the firmness comes about.
38. As a manager, at a school level, there are lots of processes and procedures that take place
39. from point A to point B over a certain period of time, and as a manager one sees the
40. process through. There are times when you working with the team to accomplish a task,
41. and there are times when you lead the team and take on the spot decisions. So,
42. management style, yes my is firm, but friendly and I am sure the staff and learners will
43. agree that I am very approachable. I make it important for them to know that they know
44. that they can walk in and they can talk about things. Communication is absolutely
45. important, and you can not stand isolated and say I make the rules and you follow,
46. it doesn't work
47. R: How does your personality err ...support your managerial style?
48. FP: I have a strong personality, uhm maybe I should say at times I become fearless,
49. uhm you know ... there have been uhm ...situations where parents walk into the school
50. thinking it's a tiny little woman , my child has failed, and I am going to , you know , sort
51. her out.

52. I try not to show fear, when you have systems in place and you can present to the parent
53. or to anyone. The question here is integrity, as to why a certain situation came about.
54. They tend to understand so I think what is important here is that you always need to be
55. prepared, uhm for a situation and the preparation involve be able to substantiate why a
56. particular situation occurred . You don't just tell to a parent , your child failed because he
57. is stupid. uhm you know, it doesn't help. You have to look at the systems in place.
58. R: You talk about systems and putting systems in place. How do you implement and
59. reinforce that systems?
60. FP: Ok, in any situation I think err ... policy is important. If you talk about discipline,
61. you must have a discipline policy. If you talking, uhm on even maybe just on where a
62. staff function is involve. You have a policy on uhm (pondering on the correct word), you
63. know where we have a little function, what you call it ,uhm ... a policy on how do you go
64. about organizing a function, where do we get the funds, who is managing who, whose
65. money do we use? What type of function is given for what and what structure, etc. all
66. that also require policy. So I would call that a uhm ...(searching for an appropriate word)

67. catering policy. So anything you do, you have something in place to say this is our
68. starting point, this is how we will go about and you take it from there. So people don't
69. question. You don't just do anything and anyhow and that is what we trying to do. We
70. trying to form committees of every aspect of schooling, we'll be looking at children's
71. emotional needs. Lots of children have social issues, but we don't have councilors
72. anymore. So you have a group of educators which we call SBST (School Base Support
73. Teams). That is a little group who have their support team policy and procedure in
74. place. The teacher identify a learner with a problem, from there where does he go to
75. SBST from there he will go further. So once you have a policy and channel of
76. communication it makes it much easier, but when I came in, I just a principal for one
77. year having acted for fifteen months, all policy are not yet in place, but we are in the
78. process of developing policies so that we can have a structure in the school.
79. R: Right, do you think that females on your staff aspire to be managers and if so uhm ...if
80. not, why not?
81. FP: Well... the answers will be **No**. I don't think they aspire. uhm what 's happening in
82. education, err...your teacher can now be called a senior teacher and can earn equally as

83. someone in management although that person remains in the classroom. So females are
84. very security conscious and they like a comfortable environment (underlining the point)
85. and they fell as a manager, or a principal of a school uhm ...that security and comfort is
86. not there because anybody and everybody can have any issues and you have to deal with
87. it ,whereas when you in your classroom, uhm... you are the owner of you own space and
88. If I am earning that same amount of money, why should I go for more stress?
89. So I think females err... are lacking in terms of wanting greater challenges, especially in
90. teaching. They are not interested in going higher. I think it's in terms of there uhm...
91. when you go to a person and say, why don't you apply for the post, you've got it all, oh I
92. don't need that, no, I am happy in my class.
93. R: Do you think they are reluctant for the challenge?
94. FP: Ja, I think the challenges are far to great, you need to be made of some kind of stuff,
95. uhm...I...if you look at fifteen months ago I ...wasn't so strong as I sound know. Many a
96. times a broke down and I said this is the key, I am not forced to acted, I didn't ask for this
97. I am not interested and it took guts from the department to say, at the moment we don't
98. have anyone, you just got to hold the fort, but as I went along with it, it becomes
99. easier and you did indicate to me that you are going to ask me about support,

100 if I didn't have that kind of support I received, I wouldn't have been
where I am

101 So as a woman, yes I did through in the towel a few times, as an acting
principal.

102 R: but obviously there were barriers you've encountered along the way.
Tell me

103 about the barriers and the support that you have been granted or given by
the

104 dept?

105 FP: I think the biggest barrier would be err...how parents perceive a
female

106 principal. I would have to sight an example to explain this one uhm...

107 The school policy is that we don't allow cellphones. A little girl came to
me said

108 that her cell got missing. I told her that she wasn't suppose to have a
phone at

109 school. She started crying, I helped her. I went to the class, she told me
that

110 there's about ten guys that she suspecting.

111 I spoke to the boys and said look, things are not good at home, just give
her the

112 cell back if you guys have it. Nobody had the phone. And unfortunately
that

113 evening I was held up at gunpoint at my home , uhm ...because the little
girl told

114 the mother that I took the cellphone to school and the new principal stole
to

115 phone. So, It was quite a bad on err...my family was at risk, they threaten
to hurt

116 my kids, etc, etc, but the **support** carried me through.

117 The support I received from the staff, first of all, they know the child and

118 the parent and the parent has been to school a few times with a gun ,so I
got a lot

119 of support from the staff. The SGB was **phenomenal**, they were just on
top of

120 things as far as the situation was concern. We had lots of meetings, they
called in

121 the grandparents of the child, because the child was from a broken home
and they

122 assist. I think the cherry on the top was the departmental officials.

123 The help I receive from M. especially meetings, with regard to my safety
and

124 security. Because the child's mother have been involve at another school
with a

125 gun incident. I was given phenomenal support.

126 Then I realize that people are (ponder) are ...people are concerned. That

127 motivated me. To say I will be faced with these kind of issues, but I am
not alone,

128 and when you deal with a people's job, I deal with learners, educators,
clerical

129 staff, the school cleaners and most of all, the parent community. You are
in a

130 people's job all the time, it is **inevitable** that you are going to be meeting
with

131 different kind of elements in the society, but what keeps you going is to
say when

132 I am face with a difficult situation, I am not alone. And that prompted me
to say

133 uhm...if I can go through this one, I am going to apply for the post, I can
go

134 through with anything. And I go through.

135 R: The mere fact that you are a female, did that in any way compound the
136 barriers that you've encountered along the way, being in the acting
position and
137 now as the appointed principal?

138 FP: **Definitely**, there were times that males, a father would walk into the
school

139 and show a lot of aggression to say that uhm... this one is a failure.

140 My son has failed and you have never phoned me once.

141 What the hell is going on? I feel a parent would not have walked into the
school

142 if the principal was a male. Because they know that he would not tolerate
a thing

143 like that. So in a situation like that, yes definitely, they treat you
differently

144 being a women, thinking that if they can intimidate you, they might
accomplished

145 what they want. Some parents or a parent sometimes feel I have got
problems at

146 home, my poor child failed and they will say let me see what I can do .

147 So they would come with that kind of approach and that is very
intimidating, and

148 that initially got me down and I would say, God do I have to deal with
this? And

149 I would questioned the parent and say, why do you speak to me like that ,

150 but now I don't question it anymore I deal with it head-on .

151 Sorry sir, your child has failed before and I handle it. I don't question
anymore.

152 If it was a male would you have done the same thing, I don't say it
anymore.

153 R: But why do you think a male would act towards you like that?

154 FP: I think there is a general society perception, especially in the black
155 community that women are afraid. Err... women would give in quicker,
let me

156 just try.(in Afrikaans sê 'n mens clevarskap) they try.

157 R: The support that has been offered to you by the department, SBG, your
staff

158 and the community outside?

159 FP: The support from the dept, especially from M, my IDSO, with any
issues,

160 M has followed it up and if he needed to get maybe labour or HR,
anyone

161 involve in a particular issues M has seen to it. So I have received
phenomenal

162 support from my IDSO.

163 He than gave me all the relevant support what I have been needed and that
has

164 been excellent. As far as this school is concerned, the SGB, we have a
very, very

165 committed SGB, they really care about their children. Which makes a
remarkable

166 difference to us , because when you need the help, you get the support and
167 ultimately the child gain.

168 Err... staff, excellent support err...because it wasn't a principal that came
from

169 the outside. I was in the school as the deputy principal, then I was acting
principal

170 and when I got the post it wasn't someone that they don't know. But I
think what

171 also made a difference is , uhm...they've seen the changes. The staff have
172 seen the changes. If they come to me with an issue, I follow it up through
the end,

173 no matter how prevalent.

174 A teacher (madam) will come to me and say, Ms F, I can't handle grade
10 ,

175 I can't teach that class Business Economics. I won't tell the teacher, you
will have

176 to teach it. I will follow it up, go to the class or HOD and show them the
support

177 and I think I am getting the support in turn.

178 As far as the community is concern, that was for me an issue.

179 As you know err...I am the only female principal in this area, it was a kind
180 of a shock to parents to say a school of this size, and a school with such
good

181 reputation is now been given to a woman. Now what is going to happen?
And in

182 the time of acting principal, err... I had **that** (referring to the challenge)
all the

183 time, the phone would ring and somebody would say, are you coping or
are you

184 not coping ? Why are the children walking outside the school? And when
we

185 followed it up, those kids didn't belong to our school, it wasn't St
mattrix's

186 children. But it was always a case of **because it is a woman.**

187 If you can't handle it, let us know and we will find someone else.
However with
188 time, as St Matrix prove itself to be err...in an upwards direction, in
terms of the
189 kind of results that we producing and other issues, referring to improve
190 discipline, without being harsh, moving in the confines of the department
policy,
191 no corporal punishment, etc. As the community see improvement, and the
press
192 publish St Matrix and every statement with regards to our results you
know, we
193 the best public school in the area in 2006. **There has been a remarkable
change.**
194 The same parents who walk in a year ago, would walk in and say Madam
F,
195 one thing I must tell you is: It is a good school, but I think my son doesn't
196 want to listen. So there has been a change. So what I would advise
anybody is that
197 it is a matter of time. Initially, the perception would be there, it might even
198 happen to a male. A male that maybe come in say for example not from
the our
199 area, if he is from another area and comes into this area. The initial
reaction
200 would be that you don't know our style and how we do things here.
201 **But give that man or that woman or that manager time**, and my advice
is to
202 that person; prove yourself, and they'll accept it. In my case, initially, I
broke
203 down and said, I can't take it. They expecting to much, but the people who
204 supported me asked me to hang in there, and later it became better, people
show

205 respect. So maybe it's a good thing that a female principal was chosen,
and
206 people have realize that it is not about being a male or female.
207 It is about commitment. How committed is this person? **Not about he or
she?**

208 R: Were there ever a situation in your time of acting principal that the
staff, the
209 SGB, members of the community have questioned your competency?

210 FP: Yes it has happened. The biggest issue that education are facing now
is the
211 lack of teachers. Err...there are no teachers and it is not the responsibility
of the
212 principal of a school to **employ people. I don't pay teachers.** Employing
213 teachers is the job description of the department. And what has happened
now is,
214 because there are no teachers, the department will phone and tell you that
they
215 cannot find you a math's teacher. In your class you will sit without a
teacher. It
216 has been a problem in the school where your colleagues and the parent
217 community believe that you as a principal, you are not doing your job.
You can
218 go blue in the face and explain to them that you cannot find a teacher, they
will
219 say look , five years ago we never had this problem. They don't
understand it as a
220 global issue. They do definitely look at it because you are here that's why
this is

221 happening. I did face that situation and to overcome it ...what I have done
is

222 err...at the end of 2006 err... we had nine teachers that left. Some people
just left

223 the teaching profession, they resigned, and we had madam N who retired,
224 Mr.T who relocated to Queenstown, two ladies who relocated to the East
Rand

225 Benoni, one math teacher who felt he needed to go to a private school
because

226 he wanted her own kids in the private school and that would have worked
out

227 cheaper in terms of school fees. And for me I realize we were facing a
crisis and

228 the only way that I can resolve the issue is that I had to contacted
institutions

229 who train teachers, check how many final years are coming out, look at
the

230 learning area where we had a need and contacted those people and I got
my

231 teachers. At the moment, from the beginning of 2007 St Matrix has been
fully

232 staffed and I must add on, the young blood, about seven of them have
change the

233 **tone of the school.** It doesn't mean they are young they don't know
anything.

234 They are young, they come in with the new ideas, they know what the
FET is all

235 about, they know how to handle OBE and err... they have been trained to
deal

236 with the new curriculum. They have made a remarkable, positive
difference to the

237 climate of the school.

241R: The conflict situation that you've encountered at the school, how did you
242deal with that conflict?

243FP: My style with conflict is it is normally conflict between two people. Err you
244hear the one side alone, you hear the other side alone and most important of all is
245to bring the two parties together and to ensure that you have one neutral party at
246hand, either myself or Mr P, the deputy principal or an HOD, to sit in and try to
247resolve it. That is between two other people. There are times when the conflict is
248with myself, when somebody doesn't like the way I do things and they will
249approach me. Then I will call in a third party and say you sit in and steer. The
250reason why I did it this way, I felt, but this person feel differently, you can
251just decide which one of us...which of point of view should be taken and talk
252about things we go on and on in any situation you have to communicate. If you
253don't, the conflict will get worse and the, the... which we haven't reach yet,
254The worse situation is, when it becomes personal.
255We also talked about things that is work related and resolve it at the workplace.
256Don't ever allow it to become personal and I emphasize that.
257So when we are having our gatherings or little functions at the end of the term,
we
258always talked about whatever happens that was work related, but today it is about
259us and our relationship, so that's important.

260R: How do you delegate work madam?

261FP: OK, I belief in what we call an organogram or you can call it a school
262structure where everybody is aware that a particular aspect is handled by a certain
263person. We are three managers at the school, me and two deputy principals.
264We sit down first of all and decide who will manage which aspect of the school
and

265it goes down the line and it filters right down to the level one. To say when an
issue
266comes up, where does that teacher take it to. You take it to your HOD, your HOD
267will take it to whose accountable and that is ultimately accountable to whom. That
268is a means of channels and delegating becomes very easy. When I receive err... it
269just happened today. You've just receive a whole batch of mail from the
department
270and you got to sit down and sort out that. They want grade 11 results, they want
the
271school survey, teachers now are going to apply for matric marking, there is a new
272uhm.. promotion post available where teachers will assume duty on the first of
July.
273So there is whole lot of issues that have to be dealt with and all you do is that you
274look at your organogram or your structure and say, ok , this deputy deals with that
275and give it to him, I will handle this and the other deputy will handle this,
276this is pertaining maths, That will go the Math HOD and then it become simple.
So
277people need to know their job description from the outset. So when you delegate
a
278task, there is no complain, so this is what I handle, it has come, I have to deal with
279it. Then we have issues that is pertaining to internal exams grade 8 – 11 than you
280have issues pertaining grade 12 exam, which is an external exam. So one deputy
281handles internal the other will handle external. If there anything to do with
external
282exams, you give it to him, he can't complain because when you had your meeting
283about job description, err... everybody agreed.
284That is how I delegate, I don't delegate by bullying. I delegate by saying, sir this
285is in your scope, handle this for me please and you can give it to so and so.
286Another thing which is important is not that I don't do any work, I also teach as a
287principal. I teach matric science. When everybody realizes, that everybody is
288working, delegation is not a problem.

289R: My final question madam, is that err... if I say to you that there is a perception
290that male principals make better leaders than females. How would you respond to
291this statement?

292FP: Err... **I definitely disagree.** I have worked with male principals as
colleagues,
293as a deputy, as a head of dept, so when you become a head of department, you
part of
294management and what I have realize is that err... lots of times err...I have just
295pick up that the males are less tolerant , you know . A male would deal with a
296problem and say alright this is it. I don't want further discussion on this, this is my
297view and there were times that a child would say can I please speak to madam
298F. I make madam F understand, and the child would speak to me and
299say. Mam this is the problem, and I will address the problem and then go back to
300the sir and say, sir, you know what? It's not how you've seen it, there is more to
the
301issue, and I feel that things take a turn.
302Another thing about a female, there's a lot of issues that girl learners are
303having in our school and community. Unfortunately , abuse has become quite
rive.
304There is probably the uncle, the grandfather and most of the time belief
305you me, the child feel very secure in the school situation.
306So although something happened at the mall or it happened during the holidays
they
307will come to school and say, I need to talk and we as teachers we are councilors,
we
308are religious leaders, we are there to teach morals, we are parents , we are friends.
309The child would come to me and say madam, I need to talk and you realize that it
has
310absolutely nothing to do with school, but this child needs help, and that's when I

311see as a woman makes a remarkable difference.

312Another thing err...I want to make clear, it's not about a woman leader, it's about
313a woman who knows how to be a mother and for me that's very important. When
314the child walks in the door, it's not about me being the boss, the principal of the
315school, it's about : can I relate to that kid? And I do feel as a mother we make a
316big difference and our tolerance level is so high. As a mother err...you can't
317say , I can't turn my back on this child.

318**So definitely, we have compassion** and nobody can tell me that a principal is
about

319err...just making rules. The principal... the situation that I am putting my self
in,

320is to show understanding and compassion all the time. Be it the child or be it a
staff

321member or even a cleaner on the school. Err... everybody has needs and I am not
322saying running a school by just appeasing and making everybody happy.

323We are running a school where we say, ok this is what you facing with, but the
school

324still have to run. So under the circumstances what would be the best outcome?

325So female principals are going to show a little extra that a man may not have.

326**R:** but don't you think that you will be exploited as a female?

327FP: Err... You know as time is going on, you pick up your shearkit [kansvatter]
328you pick up, you know this guy is like its happening to often and that's when you
329say, right that's enough. But once you have a situation where a first timer would
walk

330in and say sorry I am not prepare to listen to you, I have other work to do, I have a
331school to run and sorry sir you got to be in your class. It's not like that and belief
332you me when people see that you care, they give back and they give back to
333who? Ultimately the child. So you just got to show you know ...If I look up to
334you, you going to look out to forty.

335R: Thank you for your time madam, I do value and I appreciate your input.

Would

336you avail yourself for any clarifications from the interview?

337FP: Yes I would and I just want to say that err...I agreed to this interview to say

338that if it can make a difference to education, err... not a problem.

339R: Thank you madam.



Interview Two

School: Morpheus Secondary School

Time: 10h.15 – 11h-10

Keys

Researcher =R

Female Principal = FP

1. R: This interview will be conducted with the principal of Morpheus Secondary
2. School, Mrs C. Thank you for availing yourself for this interview Madam.
3. I would like to start this interview with a statement and the first statement leads as
4. follows that :Women or females in management /leadership of secondary schools
5. appear to be less represented as compare to their male counterparts.
6. How would you respond to this statement?

7. FP: Uhm ... yes good morning, we are less represented, because we are in the
8. minority at this moment in time, but if you look at high schools we will see that
9. the teacher component, women are in the majority and not like the previous years
10. in the minority. So there are more teachers coming up. At our school we have
11. more HOD's that are women, we only have two HOD's who are males. So it
12. seem that the balance is tilting towards female's at this moment in time.

13. R: Your composition of your staff, how many males, females and in management
14. position?

15. FP: In management position, we have four females who are HOD's and two
16. females, our deputies are males and our PL1; we have about twenty females
17. compare to the ten males.

18. R: How long have you been principal of this school madam?

19. FP: I became principal in 2000.

20. R: And ever since 2000 how did the situation change?

21. FP: Uhm... it has change in the sense that we have receive more women, more
22. women have come on board. When I started here there were only one HOD that
23. was female, and now we have four females. So there were changes in that as well.
24. Our girl learner component, there are more girl learners than boys at the school
25. as well, ja.

26. R: Why do you think that we have this misrepresentation of females teachers at
- management level?

27. FP: I think because is when the post was advertised, no females applied for the
28. post. One gentleman was send by the Department, one deputy was send by the
29. Dept to our school, he was on the excess list so he was send over to our school.
30. So that post was not advertised. But the other post that was advertised, that was
31. done by the district, so I cannot say that there were females that was short listed
32. or not, because I don't know what the composition was of the short list by the
33. Dept, but the male got the post.

34. R: But do think that the females aspire to be senior managers?

35. FP: Some of them have the potential and I think if they were given the
36. opportunity they will become good managers.
37. (Pensive Pause)

38. R: Tell me about your view on management, school management?

39. FP: Oh, my views on school management. I think it is becoming more stressful at
40. this moment in time. Uhm more stressful in the sense that there are so many more
41. things that you have to do. Uhm... you supposed to be this person who knows
42. everything and you have to be in your classroom. Ja, because I teach grade 12. So
43. that is a workload on its own. Going to cluster meetings and all that kind of
44. things, but you have to do so many things and the Department expect you to be
45. on top of everything. But if you look at the Dept , you will see that there are
46. people who are sort of in charge of for example; there is somebody who is in
47. charge of LTSM, that only deals with LTSM (emphasizing the point), somebody
48. else that only deals with labour issues, somebody else that only or specifically
49. deals with leave and that kind of things. But we are expected to be on top of
50. everything. So obviously if you have to be in charge of so many things or being
51. overseeing so many things, something is going to suffer somewhere a long the
52. line. And I don't want my children to suffer I have never done that, err...I want to
53. be there for them before I do anything for the Dept. Because the children comes
54. first, always have.

55. R: How do you manage a school of 900+ and you still teach?

56. FP: It becomes difficult at times, but there you have your SMT and your
57. deputies, deputizing for you, and the SMT obviously, they will have to take extra
58. responsibilities. It becomes difficult because our roll is 900 and our educators plus
59. our HOD's as well as our deputies, they don't teach their quota- they teach more
60. than that. So they also fall short on certain areas because they don't have
61. sufficient time to do what they supposed to do and the HOD's.

62. R: and the support by the Department, has there ever been additional support by
the GDE?

63. FP: Well you get support.(reluctant sigh) You do get some support. Uhm ...but it

64. would be more beneficial to the school if we have more support form GDE.

65. R: Tell me about the barriers since 2000 madam. What kind of barriers have you

66. encountered since 2000 as a female in this position?

67. FP: One of the barriers that I have encountered, especially, was that we have
68. African teachers as well as coloured teachers and we have one Indian teacher at
69. our school as well. There... in the beginning there were barriers between the
70. males and myself. A barrier in the sense as I mentioned earlier, that men don't
71. see women as the head of an institution. It must be a man. Uhm... **that** cause a bit
72. of conflict, not much but we could resolve the conflict by speaking and obviously
73. they have a yardstick and you are being measured according to their yardstick and
74. not the other way around. Uhm ... but that has been resolved. We don't have
75. that kind of conflict as much, I think because many of the males fall under the
76. auspices of the deputy err... the HOD's of which is also female. So that have
77. balance out so to say. It is not only myself, it is the HOD's and if you go higher
78. up in the hierarchy our deputy, our deputy director our two deputy directors are
79. also females. We have our director who is female, as well as our MEC who is
80. female and now our minister of education who is a female. So we have a whole
81. line of females, I think men have now realized that we are govern by females. As
82. difficult as it might be for some of them.

83. R: and other barriers that you encountered?

84. FP: Uhm...(considering other barriers) not much really. Not much. That was one
85. of the major issues, the major barriers. People still look at you and question can
86. you do the job even if you have been at this job for seven years. Sometimes yes, it
87. is a difficult job. Let's face it. It is difficult because you have to constantly prove
88. to yourself and to other people that you can do the job. And sometimes
89. you...(pondering) it is a very stressful job. And to be on top of everything, it
90. becomes difficult at some stage- it does. No doubt about it, but I think it goes with
91. the territory. You have so many people that you have to answer to, and everybody
92. wants their pound of flesh when they want it, and you have to juggle between
93. uhm...is this more important that the other thing and for **me** (emphasizing it)
94. being in my class, teaching the children , that is my number one priority, and
95. then other things fall in place.

96. R: and the support that has been offered to you be the Department, other
structures, your SGB, other stakeholders?

97. FP: SGB, we are still in the teething stages with our new SGB. The SGB
98. chairperson is a male , we have two ladies on the SGB from the parent
99. component and then of cause the PS-staff is also a lady. But our SGB
100. has not function optimally. So we still need to sort that kind of thing out.
101. From the other stakeholders, if you are speaking about the community.
102. Our community, most of the children comes from Soweto, we have about

103. ± 50 children from the area, because Utah is an ageing community,
104. so it is mostly grandparents who live here. Some of the younger parents
105. who live here and they are in the minority, their children move to Model
106. C schools. So they don't come to the school here. Many our children who
107. come here, come from the two primary schools and there, those children
108. from the primary school actually comes from Soweto as well. So we don't
109. have much interaction with our parents at parents meetings and kind of
110. things. When you call parents, they don't really come and the parents **you**
111. **want to see** don't actually come to the meeting. So it becomes a bit
112. difficult to get parents here. When you have fundraising, you know when
113. you want parents to come to school, like this Saturday we having a
114. meeting and hopefully those parents who didn't come on the 14 Feb to
115. come and collect their children's report hopefully they will be here this
116. Saturday, uhm... but not much support from the parents. Not much.

117. R: With the changing community in and around the school area, do you
118. think that your role as a principal will change?

119. FP: Most definitely it will change. Because number one, we have parents
120. who can't even speak English, so you always need an interpreter to come
121. in and we have seen a decrease in our role because the Dept has decided
122. that learners who stay closer to schools in the area, should attend there. So
123. I can foresee that the school is rapidly decreasing, for example we use to
124. have six grade 8 classes, this year we only have 3 classes of grade 8. So
125. you can see already that the school is decreasing. What is going to
126. happened next year? Most probably fewer learners because now learners
127. have also realize that money being spend, can be utilized and I explain to
128. the parents that you can save that kind of money for the child tertiary
129. education and some of the parents are coming around to that way of
130. thinking. It is not that I am saying that the school must close down,
131. but you need to be realistic, you need to speak to the parents about budget
132. and the economy as well. And where we can rather save for the child's
133. tertiary education is more important, because many of the learners they
134. know there's nothing for them after matric. There's no jobs, there's
135. nothing else for them either.

136. R: Earlier you spoke about the conflict you have encountered, with the
137. males. How did you resolve that conflict?

138. FP: You have to work very hard, to show them that you are somebody
139. who can be responsible for them, because at the end of the day when you
140. are a principal you are responsible for your teachers,
141. irrespective whether it's on the emotional side, physical side or with the
142. educational side and many of them have come to realize that I can't
143. support them. And I think that is the operative word in education today.
144. If you can't support, you can not hammer someone on the educational side

145. or on the curriculum side. You need to look at people and you need to
146. realize that some people, the reason why they are not performing is, on
147. one side it can be on the emotional side.
148. Last year we had one of our teachers who had died and it hit us really
149. bad. Uhm ...emotionally our school was shattered, because he was a good
150. teacher, he was the person who did the choir . Whenever we had to
151. perform you know, he was there and you could actually see that that
152. person really, when he died, there was a void there and it took us long to
153. fill that void, uhm.. when he had left. So for **me** you have to support
154. people. You need to be there for them, like when something happened at
155. the school that I am uhm...that concerns all of us,
156. I normally send a sms to all to say that this has happened.
157. So that they don't come to school the next day and find out this
158. is happening you know. So that they can also work through the emotions
159. the night before. It is difficult , it really is and conflict, that is a once-off
160. thing, but there are other little things as well, but it's not major conflict.

161. R: Were there ever a situation where your competency has been
162. questioned or challenge?

163. FP: Not in the community, but most probably by the SGB. Uhm... on
164. finances, where they thought that (laughing...) uhm ...we have you
165. know, most SGB's don't have somebody competent as a treasurer, but
166. because the law states that a parent must be the treasurer, a parent must
167. hold the different portfolio's. It has come down to myself to do that kind
168. of thing to find somebody to do it so when documentation goes to the dept
169. it is in order and that has cause a little bit of conflict, because the three
170. treasurers that we had in the past were not people who could, who were
171. not capable to do that kind of thing. So there was that little bit of conflict,
172. but you do it, why are you doing it. For me it is not a case of I
173. am...(selecting her words carefully) not saying that they can't, I
174. know that they can not do it, so obviously as being the head of the
175. institution, those are the things that you need to see that must be done. So
176. whether it's calling in outside help, outsourcing things that sort of thing
177. that is my priority. Because you know it is public money, you need to be
178. very careful about public money and that was a little bit of a conflict.
179. Although for the past SGB we offered the treasure to come to school,
180. the solely elected treasurer from the parent component, to say come to
181. school and we will assist, because that is also a process, because they
182. don't have any accounting background.
183. So it means that we have to get one of the teacher to train them.
184. They have not being forthcoming to the school for that kind of
185. training. So that was a little bit of a conflict as well.
186. With the Dept, when you want to explain yourself, than they say no you
187. are making excuses for the teachers. Uhm... it's not that you are making
188. excuses, if you are on the ground, you can explain why mr so and so have

189. not done this at that particular time, but as far as they concern they feel
190. that you are protecting the teachers.
191. Yes we have to protect our teachers at some stages, but obviously to
192. protect something you have the backup, the notes and everything else to
193. say this is the reason why I am say so and so. And in most cases the Dept
194. is no use. You are protecting them.

195. R: The staff members, have they ever questioned your competency as a
196. manager?

197. FP: Uhm ...(thoughtful) at one stage they said that I am very autocratic
198. and not democratic. But democracy obviously goes with responsibility as
199. well. So teachers would say on the one hand that you autocratic when it
200. suites them and on the other side they say know you too democratic you
201. should do this. So there again it's a fine line that you are walking.
202. Sometimes we feel that you are walking, do introspection and most
203. probably I have been more autocratic, but things need to be done. So you
204. always uhm delegate but sometimes we have to sit on people to say this is
205. the day it has to be in and I know that the dept has deadlines because
206. further up they do have deadlines as well. So we be right at the
207. bottom as suppose to and if we don't hand in things, it has a ripple effect
208. as it goes up.
209. So sometime you just take over again and say I will finish it, you know.
210. And maybe that's not the route to go, maybe you need to say. You need to
211. check and be on time (deputy enter with letter to be signed) with your
212. deadlines and things like that you know so that needs to be done.
213. You can not, you can't just fold your arms and say, I am waiting
214. for so and so. You have to jump in and see that it is completed, because at
215. the end of the day, although you have delegated, you are still responsible
216. for whatever happens in the school.

217. R: How would you describe your managerial style?

218. FP: I think more autocratic than democratic.

219. R: In this democracy?

220. FP: It is a bit difficult, but like I said, you want to get things done. And
221. normally you know your staff, you know your so and so is going to come
222. out tops. You don't have to worry about when things are handed in. As to
223. when you give it to someone else, you know when it comes back, you
224. have to check everything again before it comes in and I think there is
225. where the SMT and deputies come in as well, because they
226. are also management, middle management and top management and
227. **sometimes you have to be very autocratic.**
228. But I think my staff wants to be more democratic, but at some stage they

229. don't want to take the responsibility when you say, you know, take hold
230. and take charge. They still wants you, the principal, you the one that's
231. responsible for that. So ja it becomes difficult.
232. R: but doesn't that type of style create a lot of conflict between you and
233. the staff?
234. FP: Uhm (school siren) not really no, you will assess the situation.
235. Where sometimes you have to be democratic and sometimes you have to
236. be autocratic. If you find people to buy into it, than obviously if you want
237. to sell a new idea, you cannot be autocratic. So your management style
238. changes. You cannot just be the one and not the other one. The situation
239. will dictate your leadership style at that moment,
240. you cannot just say **I got one leadership style. You cannot.**
241. R: Is delegation a part of your managerial style?
242. FP: Yes
243. R: and how do you delegate?
244. FP: It depends on what needs to be delegated. For example, at our school
245. we have grade leaders. Each HOD is in charge of a grade, and
246. obviously there are other people who are in charge of other things, for
247. example one of the post level one teachers heads up the DC. It is not the
248. top management that head up things. We have another PL1 teacher who is
249. in charge of the SBST. So they report as well, but then again it's people
250. whom I trust. I know the things are going to go according to the book,
251. they will report and say. This is happening, we have done that, we've done
252. that . So they manage their own portfolio's. The grade leaders, they have
253. the grade under control, discipline wise we have retain our system. We
254. had a system and it didn't work so now we have changed it, but when we
255. do that kind of thing, we normally sit together or one of the HOD will
256. come and say I have design this form, lets have a look at it.
257. Is it user friendly, can we fill it in easily, not paragraphs and paragraphs to
258. be written in. Maybe a tick sheet. Can we use it for the whole school or
259. can we use it only for the grade 8's .
260. So we have that kind of mutual understanding as well. So it is not just a
261. case of delegating and see whether you have done your work. You need
262. people to buy into it. Uhm... so when they do that kind of thing, obviously
263. my idea when I say my idea I mean the teacher's idea they feel good about
264. it and they are going to make sure it works.
265. R: and when you come up with an idea, how does the teachers react or
266. accept it?

267. FP: We have a discussion about it. I'll first speak to the deputies and SMT
268. about it and see how they feel about it and then we'll take it to the staff. So
269. if there are negatives and positives we as a team can say look these are the
270. negatives and these are the positives.

271. R: ...the last question or statement that I would like to make is that:
272. If I would say to you that there is a perception that male principals make
273. better leaders than females, what would your response be?

274. FP: Not necessarily. It depends on your circumstance, it depends on
275. the school that you're in and it depends on the environment and
276. also it depends on your staff. Because you uhm...you help your staff. You
277. cannot be a good principal and have bad teachers. So you are going to
278. be dependant on them as well, because if you are bolstering people, you
279. need that as well. I've got an Afrikaans saying that say "die hoogste bome
280. vang die meeste wind" en ook "en as jy in 'n hoe posisie is, jy kry baie
281. skoppe en baie min kloppe" and I think we as principals we also need to
282. be saying and people need to be saying to us as well. You have done well
283. there, because teachers expect to be complimented all the time and they
284. feel good about it, but in very few occasions that anybody else outside
285. would say I 've heard you've done that well, I am proud of you. I am
286. happy that you've done that and I am happy that you have excel. So as
287. little it may seem, but at the moment principals and teachers are feeling
288. very depress, very respondent, because whatever you do it's not been
289. recognize. You are always been told, you are not doing this, you are not
290. doing that and people need to be told. Your prep is of good quality, show
291. somebody else your file, but ja we are being whipped all the time from all
292. the sides, it's the parents, it's the Dept you know and people need to come
293. out of that. If we are saying we want to improve, we need people to push
294. and lift us up. But at the moment we 've got the PHD syndrome. The
295. males and females- that you are been push down. You know the more I
296. tell you that you are useless, the more I tell you that you are rotten
297. eventually you are going to believe you know I am like that and I am
298. never going to come out of that and it is sometimes very difficult to be
299. positive all the time. And as a leader you need to be positive irrespective
300. of what has happened, because people look at you when you come into the
301. school and they will determine-
302. is this going to be a positive day not for the principal, but for all of us.
303. Or are we going into that negativity for the day and Monday is normally
304. the day that sets the tone for the rest of the week. So if you come in and
305. you morbid and you are actually dampening everybody else in the school.
306. And it takes a lot to be positive every day. It takes a lot out of you, but you
307. have to be if you want to get the best out of your teachers and you want
308. the best out of the children.

309. R: Madam, how does your personality compliment your managerial style?

310. FP: Uhm... **first of all I don't like conflict.** I really don't like conflict,
311. because it is very difficult for me to handle conflict. I try my utmost, I've
312. been reading lots of books in how to deal with conflict, I've got other
313. colleagues outside... I have got outside help to assist me as well, but it
314. becomes difficult you know. (Very pensive thought) You just need to
315. reinforce yourself everyday to strengthen your inner self to assist and help
316. yourself, before you can help other people.

317. R: So would you say that your personality assist you when you deal with
318. certain issues pertaining school?

319. FP: It does, because it makes you look at a thing from a different angle.
320. Not only from an educational angle, but from a humanitarian aspect as
321. well. Uhm I've been told that you are speaking softer to so and so as to
322. somebody else, but then it is because I know the circumstance because
323. some of the teachers do confide in me. So I know what the problem is, so
324. obviously you have to spend a little bit more time with that person to build
325. that person's emotional side up again. For example if somebody's husband
326. or wife is ill, it concerns them and it is of more importance to them than
327. being at school. If you understand what I am saying. So you need to, if
328. that person saying to you I am not feeling ok this period, you need to
329. understand that. Now somebody outside the situation would not know how
330. you should have acted, but that person does not know the background.
331. And that becomes difficult, because some things are completely
332. confidential. You cannot go tell somebody else this is what has happened,
333. so please don't do that and please I want my pound of flesh.
334. You have to be confidential. You know [just close the door please]
335. (interruption by deputy)
336. so what you need to do is that you still need to uhm ... you still need to
337. [signing a document] you still need to assist that person, not to be
338. emotional along side that person that you know.
339. I have had teachers who have gone through a lot of trauma and you just
340. need to be there for them and I understand.
341. If it was somebody else, he would have said, No that is irrelevant, that is
342. not important. For **me it is important** because it is important for that
343. teacher at that moment in time. Whether it is a mother or a father or
344. whatever. I mean I have got teachers who have been high-jacked. You can
345. not then say excuse me madam the bell has rung you need to go to your
346. class. You need to deal with that person's emotional needs as well and see
347. whether you need outside help.
348. So that has help me deal with the teachers as well.

349. R: So how would you describe this position as a female?

350. FP: Oh! That's difficult. Uhm sometimes I think I am a little bit soft

351. towards the teachers, I am a little bit gullible and maybe I need to change
352. that a little bit and maybe ask whether the person is speaking the truth .
353. All of us now and then tell a little white lie, but you have to give the
354. teacher the benefit of the doubt. Some of them I have called in and said
355. you are now playing and it has come out.
356. And then I call the teacher and do a one-on-one with the teacher and then
357. they would say that I've realized and I have played you, but have not done
358. it after that. The minute when you call somebody in and say, look now
359. you taking me for granted and they realize if you don't do that kind of
360. thing. What I've been doing now is to call in my HOD one by one.
361. It has nothing to do with – are your teachers strapped on time or how are
362. you heading your dept, it is just a one-on-one. How are you doing, are
363. you ok, do you need any support, where do you need the support?
364. That kind of support you know, I have been lacking, but I am ok with that
365. now, because it's all very well sitting in a meeting and say right the
366. agenda is that and we have to follow the agenda.
367. You didn't do that, it is easy to whip people all the time, but sometimes
368. the HOD's they also need some down time. Down time just to offload and
369. not somebody been there and say you should have done this.
370. Why isn't that done? They need to offload as well and by doing that I feel
371. it is important for them as well, so that is what I have been doing, but it
372. becomes a little bit difficult because you have to check if the person is off
373. or is this person not been on supervision so you need to juggle around that
374. one as well.

375. R: Is there anything that you want to add as a female principal in this
376. position?

377. FP: I think we as female principal's, we applied for the positions, yes
378. we've accepted the nominations when it was given to us, but I think we
379. should have been given a little bit more training. How to handle certain
380. things, the culture shock as I have mentioned earlier, uhm
381. ... other little things that you don't get in your normal training, because
382. the minute you are a principal, everybody expect you to know everything,
383. and for me this is lifelong. Because if you become a principal today,
384. people want to know the leave form, they want to know how do I apply for
385. a housing loan, where do I get that. And it just becomes overwhelming. I
386. ...it would be preferable and I hope that if you become a deputy or if you
387. become a principal there should be at least ongoing training say for the
388. first two, three years and that ongoing support as well.
389. Not just people coming in and say you should know this.
390. You don't know everything, and just moral support and not just for female
391. principals, but for all principals, because this is a very daunting task to be
392. here.

393. R: Thank you for you time madam, I do value your time. We are going to

394. transcribe it and if there are any uncertainties of concerns I would like to
395. come back and verify some of the statements that you have made. Would
396. you avail yourself for that?
397. FP: You more then welcome to do that and I am glad that I could help
398. you. And thank you for listening to me.
399. R: Thank you madam.

