EXPERIENCES OF WOMEN LEADERS AS SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS OF BUTTERWORTH

by

MXUNYELWA MZUKISI

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SUPERVISOR: PROF T. MEYIWA

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR M.P. CEKISO

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify why and how the females are marginalized in senior positions. This qualitative case study explores the experiences of women leaders as school principals in Rural Secondary Schools of Butterworth District. It was undertaken in two conveniently selected Rural Secondary Schools of Butterworth that are led by female principals. The data was collected through the use of interviews. This data was collected directly from the female principals. The findings of this study clearly identified that gender has more effectively worked against the women's success as leaders. Females start to encounter a challenge from even being shortlisted for the senior positions and that becomes worse in being appointed as leaders. Even those few women appointed as leaders are being undermined by fellow colleagues as well as communities around them.

It was recommended that in order to improve women representation in educational leadership, great efforts must be made in addressing a number of issues. A significant step would be to disseminate law on gender equality widely written throughout the country to raise public awareness about gender issues. Women should be encouraged and supported to participate in leadership. Also women should be prepared by being offered leadership preparation and leadership programmes so that they feel more self-confident and function effectively once appointed.

DECLARATION

I declare that:

i. The research reported in this dissertation, except otherwise stated, is my original research.
ii. This dissertation has not been submitted for an award or degree in any other University.
iii. This dissertation does not contain other persons' data, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

CANDIDATE'S SIGNATURE……………………………………..

DATE   :

SUPERVISOR'S NAME   : PROFESSOR T. MEYIWA

SIGNATURE   : ……………………………………….

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(i) I am aware that plagiarism is defined at Walter Sisulu University (WSU) as the inclusion of another's or others' ideas, writings, works, discoveries and inventions from any source in an assignment or research output without the due, correct and appropriate acknowledgement to the author(s) or source(s) in breach of the values, conventions, ethics and norms of the different professional academic and research disciplines and includes unacknowledged copying from intra- and internet and peers/fellow students.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my dear wife Pumla, to my children Siphe, Sinesipho and Sibaphiwe for being so understanding and supportive during the process of writing this study. I further dedicate this work to my parents, the late Tylden and Constance Mxunyelwa, for raising me with such profound principles and values based on love, peace, determination and respect of humanity.

ACCRONYMS AND ABREVIATIONS

STD   -   SENIOR TEACHER'S DIPLOMA

PTD   -   PRIMARY TEACHER'S DIPLOMA

ACE   -   ADVANCED CERTIFICATE IN EDUCATION

P1   -   FIRST PRINCIPAL

P2   -   SECOND PRINCIPAL

SAT   -   SCHOOL A TEACHERS

SBT   -   SCHOOL B TEACHERS

SAP   -   SCHOOL A PARENT

SBP   -   SCHOOL B PARENT

CHAPTER 1

CHAPTER 2

CHAPTER 3

1. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The focus of this research is on women leaders who serve as school principals in rural areas of Butterworth. It is important to analyse the existing data to determine whether lack of women at senior levels is explainable or justifiable or whether it is as a result of systematic barriers to advancement. The low level of representation of women in senior roles may be a significant contributing factor in an organization having a gender pay gap (Labour Relations Division www.payequity.wa.gov.an). According to van der Westhuizen (1991), women are at a disadvantage in the hiring system, which forms a major barrier to entrance into promotion positions. Westhuizen further points out that what complicates matters further is that women in educational management posts are seen as representatives of the gender and that they are not being judged according to their actual abilities as individuals. When they are in these positions of leadership all eyes are turned critically on them. Comments are passed on their smallest error of judgment; any differences in their approach to work are totally distorted. Men are still given preference when discussions are held on educational management posts; men prefer to appoint men because the homogeneity of the top management team is held in very high regard by them (Westhuizen, 1991).

South African government school educators comprise 65% women, yet women hold only 10% of managerial positions. In European countries such as the United Kingdom, France, Italy, the Netherlands, Portugal and Spain, 40% of the teachers in secondary schools are women but they make up between 10% and 30% of secondary school heads. None of the countries quoted above have more than 20% of women as university professors; usually they fall between 3% and 10%. (International labour resource and information group, March 2000).

The scarcity of women in the role of secondary principal is a phenomenon worldwide (Colemon, 2001). Women make up at least 50% of secondary administrative positions (Coleman, Mclay & Brown 2001). Women are also said to be absent in the upper echelons of organizations as well as professions such as technical and commercial sectors (Evetts, 2000). According to Phendla (2004), women are expected to be caring, to be the mothers of other people's children and at the same time struggle with efficiency, responsibility and dealing with the numerous difficulties of managing a school. Phendla further points out that as a result women have to acquire strategies for holding these knives without being cut and knowing how to navigate tensions within and across the personal, public and professional fields.

According to Irechukwu (2010), women as managers and their roles in management has become a topic of special interest and importance in the present decade. His study was conducted to find out the general perception of a woman educator and her role as a school administrator in the society. The main focus of his study was on performance of women managers or principals in their various managerial capacities. The study showed that in terms of abilities in all the areas reviewed, women were able to attain management positions and could perform creditably in school management. Specifically, the study discovered that female school managers could perform with regard to aspects of school management and administration including instructional supervision, relations with students, parents and community. Therefore, equal opportunities should be given to both genders in order to tap their talents and abilities for societal progress.

Sweden is internationally recognized as an example of state feminism. Feminists in high level positions were able to put gender as a priority on the state agenda (Florin & Nilsson, 1999). Ngan Thi Thuy Le (2011) stated that women, who make up half of society, suffer from discrimination and inequality in all societies, especially in the developing world. Ngan Thi Thuy Le further stated that women are disadvantaged, marginalized and invisible in many aspects of lives, and their poor representation in leadership positions is one form of such discrimination. Men still dominate in

leadership positions including in the education sector, despite female teachers outnumbering male teachers. Women all over the world are fighting for their rights and trying to have their capabilities recognized. They are networking and uniting to empower themselves (Ngan Thi Thuy Le, 2011).

The affirmative action policy has been hailed as a milestone in the emancipation of women but, although they have gained increasing representation in middle management ranks, access to the most senior post is very limited. Even in the United States of America, where a history of affirmative action and corporate efforts to promote diversity has improved female representation, women accounted for just 11.2 per cent of Fortune 500 corporate officers in 1997. A United States report in the same year stated that women held only two to three per cent of top jobs worldwide (Workinfo.com, 2011).

There is a growing need for research on women in educational leadership in developing countries so that indigenous scholars have access to research within contexts that are more relevant (Strachan, 2010, pp.66). This research is envisaged to contribute to raising public awareness about discrimination and marginalization of women.

In the Butterworth District, women's representation in management of secondary schools is 82 to 230 male principals (Education Management Information System, 2011). As a male principal of (Khulile Junior Secondary School) I know that it is very difficult for a black woman to challenge and introduce discussions in something that is directly affecting her. It is for this reason that the researcher decided to conduct research around this marginalization of women in management positions and the unfair practices applied to those few that are considered.

1.2 RATIONALE FOR THE STUDY

As a male principal of Khulile J.S.S who has worked with a number of very diligent female educators, it is worthwhile for the researcher to understand the kind of challenges these educators experience when they are placed in management posts more especially in rural secondary schools of Butterworth District. The investigation is likely to create a platform on which to make recommendations in an attempt to address these problems, and establish what is directly affecting them. After all the findings have been made the researcher hopes to write a paper derived from the opinions of the respondents to questions posed by the research in relation to the manner in which female managers could best be treated by everyone whether junior or senior in the workplace, so as to ensure dignity and respect for everyone in any kind of work. The paper will be shared with readers, scholars and other researchers, making it a source for further research. The profoundly skewed view that leadership, like fatherhood, is only for men must be excised, ensuring that daughters of the upcoming generation are not marginalized because of their gender.

1.3. PROBLEM STATEMENT

A number of South African women have assumed leadership positions in various sectors e.g. National Minister for Basic Education ANGIE MOTSEKGA; Former Deputy President of South Africa Pumzile Mlambo Ngcuka; Former Minister of Foreign Affairs Dr Nkosazana Dlamini Zuma and others. In the rural secondary schools of Butterworth District, however, women are highly marginalized where appointments to management positions are concerned. While these women are in the majority in all the secondary schools of this district, they are in the minority in leadership positions. In the history of the education department there seems that no women have been found guilty of drinking alcohol at school or sexually abusing children. These practices are common amongst male teachers and they therefore affect their track records; yet when a senior position becomes available the same men are appointed principals of schools. This is an untenable situation, one that leaves a big question mark. Certain male principals remain in these positions until they retire but the few female principals appointed often resign within a short space of time. In many instances women resign because of conflict with community

members. Some are simply frustrated by the department policies. A number of these female principals die before they reach retirement age. These challenges sparked the interest of the researcher to investigate the experiences female principals encounter both in their schools and in their communities.

1.4   THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

While the affirmative action policy towards females has been hailed as a milestone in their emancipation, few insights exist regarding women's challenges in leadership (Makura, 2005). This research shows the experiences faced by female principals in Butterworth District. Although the research is based on Butterworth District, this phenomenon is nationwide. (Moorosi, 2007) stated that within the South African Education System, while women have had access to employment at various levels of organizations for a long time, their participation in the management and leadership of these organizations is still a matter of concern. Grogan (1996) also argued that the absence of women in power positions suggests that women are being seen through traditional theoretical lenses and are being measured against ideals that have historically served the men best. According to Grogan (2000), if we deem gender as a valid way of looking at leadership, then we need to draw attention to women's experience and hear their voice.

According to Moorosi (2006), the South African policy guarantees equal treatment of everyone before the law but the reality of women principals' experiences suggests that women fight a constant battle against discrimination at two different levels: the organizational and the social level. At the organizational level women are prejudiced by traditional and deeply embedded patriarchal values and practices that devalue transformation processes aimed at achieving gender equity (Chisholm, 2001). He furthers stated that at the social level women are hindered by the lack of support from their families and the cultural association of principalship with masculinity.

 The theoretical framework discussed below illuminates the gendered social practices affecting women principals' performance in their appointments, management, governance as well as their recognition by the stakeholders of the school. Liberal

Feminism seems to be the most appropriate theory to address these aspects: Liberal Feminism is an individualistic form of feminism theory, which primarily focuses on women's ability to show and maintain their equality through their own actions and choices (Wikipedia, 2011).

According to Wollstonecraft, Mill, Friedan and Steinem (2010), liberal feminism asserts the equality of men and women through political and legal reform. It must be made clear what is expected of men as opposed to women in avoiding clashes and various conflicts. They further explain that liberal feminism looks at the personal interactions of men and women as the starting ground from which to transform society into a more gender-equitable place. Issues important to liberal feminists include reproductive rights and abortion access, sexual harassment, voting, education, fair compensation for work, affordable child care, affordable health care and the bringing to light of the frequency of sexual and domestic violence against women.

Ely and Meyerson (2000) further argued that because the social practices within organizations were designed by and for some privileged men who have always dominated the management field, they appear to be neutral and tend to uphold gender as fixed, ranked oppositions. This representation of gender differences originate and preserve male privilege and view 'management' work as part of the public domain associated with men and thus afford privileges to men while disadvantaging women. The theory suggested as an alternative acknowledges the difference in the way women and men are affected by these social practices which are determined by their historical background, race, ethnicity, social class, and other issues of diversity and that these gender boundaries should be blended.

Ely and Meyerson further remarked that this theory therefore starts with premise that gender inequality is deeply rooted in cultural patterns and organizational systems and can only be addressed by a persistent campaign of incremental changes that discover and destroy the deeply-embedded roots of discrimination

driven by both women and men. The target is to benefit both gender groups by creating a world where gender is not an issue. Intervention here starts with the identification of the problem and the premise that unless these gendered social practices are acknowledged as problems and subsequently disentangled, gender inequity will not be uprooted from the organizations. The theory acknowledges the differences in experiences shaped by these social practices, and suggests multiple solutions to all gender problems in the management of organizations.

Liberal feminists generally work for the eradication of institutional bias and the implementation of better laws. In the United States, liberal feminists have historically worked for the ratification of the Equal Rights Amendment or Institutional Equity Amendment, with the hope that it will ensure that men and women are treated as equals under the democratic laws that also influence the important sphere of women's lives, including reproduction, work and equal-pay issues (Wollstonecraft, Mill, Friedan & Steinem, 2010). Feminists subsequently began challenging gender roles and gender identities that defined men as superior and women as subordinate. Their point of reference was that "male-identified roles" were frequently seen to be more important and deserving greater social rewards than female-identified roles (Steares, 1998, p.11). This is what is really happening in this study: females appear to be marginalized in the education fraternity and therefore the researcher seeks to identify the relevant causes of and solutions to the problem.

1.5.1 MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the experiences faced by the researcher in his career as a teacher where he started teaching under the leadership of a female principal and later working as a principal with a number of male teachers on the staff, he became aware of the dire need to discover more about the experiences of women leaders as school principals in rural secondary schools.

1.5.2 Sub – questions

The following sub-questions were asked in an attempt to answer the main research question:

1. What could be the impact of gender discrimination on the general behaviour of women?
2. What can be done to support female principals to maximize gender equality in our workplaces?

1.6 RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

1 To establish what could be the impact of gender discrimination on the general behaviour of women.

2 To explore what can be done to support female principals to maximize gender equality in our workplaces.

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1.7 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Firstly, the research findings are envisaged to be useful for institutional authorities in understanding the obstacles that female staff encounter. An understanding of this situation is very important in deciding on appointments and in guaranteeing equal employment opportunities for both women and men.

Secondly, there is a growing need for research on women in educational leadership in developing countries "so that indigenous scholars have access to research within contexts that are more relevant" (Strachan, 2010.p.66).

This study intends encouraging the government to strongly pursue implementation of Employment Equity Act, no.55 of 1998, which is based on the promotion of the constitutional right of equality and the exercising of true democracy (South African Department of labour, 2004).

The national government is likely to be put on the alert that schools should be made centres for the utilization of the South African Bill of Rights as it is stipulated in constitution of the Republic of South Africa of 1994.

When the findings of the study are made available to stakeholders, it is hoped that they are likely to provide support to women leaders.

Lastly, this study is likely to give prominence to successful women in higher education who can serve as role models for aspiring female leaders at university. It is important to bear in mind that "Silence perpetuates discrimination" (Strachan, 2009,p.107).

1.1   LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

1.2   This study sought to reveal the specific experiences confronting female principals of Butterworth District. The following limitations were encountered:

- Butterworth District is composed of almost inaccessible rural schools: it is not always easy to reach those schools in rainy weather.

- Financial constraints also limited the researcher as it was difficult to fund trips to certain sampled schools.

- The sample size (only two principals, chairperson of SGB in each school and three teachers in each school) was also a limitation. It would be difficult to generalize the findings of this study to other schools and principals.

1.7.1 **STEPS TO OVERCOME LIMITATIONS**

The researcher had an itinerary for attending the schools but it was flexible on account of weather conditions. It was not easy for the researcher to access the schools in inclement weather. The researcher applied for a research fund from his University (Walter Sisulu University) to finance his research.

Finally, the aim of the study was not to generalize findings but to gain insight into the experiences of the selected female principals as school managers.

(ii) **DELIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

The study was conducted in isolated rural secondary schools headed by female principals in the Butterworth District. It focused on the experiences that female principals encounter in management, governance and in their recognition by the stakeholders.

1.8 DEFINITIONS OF PERTINENT TERMS

 Some terms that feature prominently in this study:

- Experiences – the process of gaining knowledge or skill by doing, seeing or feeling things.

- Women leader – an adult female in control of a group of people.

- Rural areas secondary school – a countryside school for young people between the ages of 11 and 18.

- Management – management is the process of designing and maintaining an environment in which individuals, working together in groups, efficiently accomplish selected aims.

- Principal – the term principal refers to the highest position occupied by the person in charge of a school, answerable for whatever takes place in school (Pope, 1982, p.4 was quoted by Mayana, 2001, p.10)

1.9 ORGANIZATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized in the following manner.

CHAPTER 1

Chapter 1 contains the introduction, rationale for the study, statement of the problem, significance of the study, limitations of the study, definition of terms and summary. The last section of this chapter outlines the organization of the study.

CHAPTER II

This chapter focuses on the review of the literature on which the investigation is based. Literature that looks into the factors that contribute to the marginalization of women in schools internationally is reported.

CHAPTER III

The primary focus of this chapter is the methodology of the study. The case study design, the sampling method, and the procedures for data collection and analysis are described.

CHAPTER IV

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of the collected data.

CHAPTER V

This chapter summarizes the main findings and conclusions of the experiences of women in the management of secondary schools in the Butterworth district.

1.1   SUMMARY

Chapter I focused on the background, rationale, theoretical framework, problem statement, significance, limitations and delimitations of the study. The next chapter gives an overview of the extensive literature on women in educational leadership.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This literature review is structured in such a way that it focuses on the experiences that are faced by women leaders in their schools as well as in their communities. This study covers the aspects of culture and gender which prevailed in the education set up in the past and are still prevailing; and how these aspects influence public opinion of the capabilities of women as leaders. This study will cover the attitudes of people towards female principals, sexism as it pertains to female principals, gender inequality, gender discrimination, leadership by women, the role of female principals, and insufficient support for and among women.

2.2   ATTITUDES TOWARDS FEMALE PRINCIPALS

Botha (2007,p.1) stated that women principals find themselves doubly disadvantaged in the sense that they have to prove to their communities that they are capable of leading; they also have to work harder than their male counterparts. In most cases they work in an environment that does not fully support them. Botha further remarked that men are still promoted in preference to women with equal qualifications; this discourages women from applying for promotion posts. Furthermore women do not stand a chance of being promoted and fully accepted;

eventually they are reluctant to push doors to open, because they believe that leadership, like fatherhood, is for men. Hefferan (2008, p.1) maintained that while rural women are often silent, hidden and under-appreciated they are the key to world stability and understanding; hence the current study seeks to investigate the experiences encountered by women leaders as school principals in rural secondary schools of Butterworth District.

Songca (2006, p.226) stated that women according to the African tradition are classified together with children and thus undermined. He further stated that in South Africa the ideology of looking down upon African women with respect to their leadership skills was further perpetrated by the apartheid regime, which segregated people according to race and culture.

According to Versfeld (2005), the school curriculum in South Africa was designed in such a way that it strengthened the ideology that blacks were inferior and that they could not govern. He further stated that girls were not given equal opportunities within African communities. While the boys were allowed to attend school, the girls were left to assist with the household chores, hence the saying "a woman's place is in the home". This attitude was displayed to both Cecilia Makiwane and Florence Nightingale. Society refused to embrace the capacity of women to influence let alone to lead (Versfeld, 2005, p.7). According to Wisker (1996, p.90), once the few women do get to a senior position, negative responses are heard from others. The organizational myth is that women, when they do become managers, tend to become shrill and assertive, or more like the traditionally stereotypical male managers than men in those positions. He further explains that in many cases both men and women say they would rather not work for a woman boss. For some women, moving into management brings an additional stress because they associate management work with inflexibility and restrictiveness compared with what teaching in the classroom offers them in terms of meeting the demands of their lives (Moorosi, 2007, p.509). According to Dimmock and Walker (2002, p.74), in Bush (1986, p.159) in some societies, the male domination of decision-making in political, economic and professional life is perpetuated. Jacobson, Palus and Bowling (2010),

in their recent paper found evidence that female managers spent less time on internal management and networking relationships than their male counterparts. They also saw that networking with citizens and clientele groups has a positive effect on organizational outcomes for men, whereas networking with peers is more beneficial for women.

The research conducted in eight different divisions of UK companies, an airline and a merchant bank, shows that access to the resource of time is vital for the successful manager. Women are less likely to have equal access to time because of the gendered division of domestic labour, and indeed men's time is often made available to them by their partners (Rutherford, 2001). Another study was conducted by Swamy (1995) with 101 male bank managers on the extent of their interaction with women managers and their attitudes towards women as managers. The results showed little relation between the extent of interaction with women managers and participants' attitude.

Bhatnagar and Swamy (1995) in their study revealed that the women managers' vision that was portrayed by the press, emphasized the dilemmas and role conflicts that the women managers face, whereas for the men manager vision, the emphasis was their managerial abilities. Jean and Martinez (2007) suggested that the landscape of today's society dictates that women must be convinced that they can succeed as secondary school principals.

The little research available on African American women shows that, though they struggle for visibility, their experiences with family, culture and spiritual backgrounds influence who they are as leaders (Bloom & Erlandson, 2003). Research on Hispanic women leaders indicates that family support for achieving educational goals is also crucial (Mendez-Morse, 2004). Women leaders have to work harder to "break away from their stereotypes" and prove their worth (Coleman, 2002, pp.82-3). According to some literature, women prefer teamwork and tend to be more accessible, caring and supportive. They emphasize students' learning achievement through instructional leadership (Coleman, 2003, 2005; Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2009). The

literature has shown that women employ a collaborative and participative leadership style (Coleman, 2002, 2003; Franzen 2005, Lyman et al. 2009).

Regardless of ethnic background, Alston (2005) reported that women leaders "tend to demonstrate a strong sense of efficacy, dedicate themselves to the care of children, practice survival skills, use collaboration that is more relational and consensus building and believe in God." Most women leaders face the act of juggling the competing roles of leader, wife, mother, caretaker of aging parents, etc. (Loder, 2005). According to Phendla (2004), being a woman has its disadvantages. Women educators are expected to do more by virtue of being female teachers than men are. Phendla relates her experience when she was a Head of Department of African languages at a high school where there was a Zulu male teacher who did not like to take instructions from her.

Stemming from the negative societal perceptions, leadership is perceived as a masculine construct based on masculine values (Manwa, 2002). This conceptualization of males as leaders or managers has resulted in contemporary management theory being criticized for being based on masculine values and concepts (Watson & Newby, 2005). Behavioural expectations regarding women's role in the family represent a very real obstacle to their corporate upward mobility. Informal networks and cultures that are male dominated often become barriers to women's progression (Workinfo.com).

 Unexpectedly, gender stereotypes of leaders were least prevalent among Latin respondents compared with those from more egalitarian cultures. In the Nordic and Anglo groups, male participants' stereotypes disparaged women's performance at the most valued leadership competencies (Prime, Jonsen, Carter & Maznevki, 2008). The relative lack of career achievement among female managers compared with male managers, is often attributed to higher turnover rates of women. Such stereotyping may result in the development and perpetuation of a vicious cycle.

Understanding the relationship between organizational performance, gender, and management is crucial to scholars and practitioners alike (Trudgett, January 2000).

Roon and Rooney (2006) report on a qualitative study of a mentoring programme designed to assist women education managers gain promotion by broadening their networks and stimulating insight into the senior management positions for which they are being prepared. Women leaders need to be developed with the purpose of uplifting the lives of the African community. This could be done through embracing the indigenous concept of Ubuntu. According to Teffo (2006, p.23) the concept of Ubuntu may be well defined in "Mothokabatho" and "Umuntu ngumuntu ngabantu"

 (man is a man through other people).

Dana (2009, p 69) contended that culture itself raises barriers for women's aspirations simply because of the attitudes, learned behaviours and routine practices that are practised and reinforced. Culture greatly restricts the efficiency and job-satisfaction of women's leadership (Akao, 2008, p130). Hallinger (2005), said that "how schools are organized and managed is fundamentally related to cultural values of a society". Culture, the shared "symbols, beliefs and patterns of behaviour" (Rutherford, 2001, p.373), is taken for granted and operates almost imperceptibly in a society. According to Weyer (2007), leadership roles have norms that guide their task performance. Therefore, when males and females are in the same leadership position they tend to behave similarly to fulfil their roles.

2.3 SEXISM AS IT PERTAINS TO FEMALE PRINCIPALS

Sexism implies actions based on the belief that the members of one sex are less intelligent, able, skilful, etc. than are the members of the other sex; especially that women are less able than men. Sexism occurs when men and women are framed within two dimensions of social cognition. Even though South Africans have had 16 years of democracy, women still have to define who they are in their communities. (Jansen, 2007, p.4). Luhabe (2007, p.4) observed that a question people constantly ask is the "fitness of Africans, including women, to be in leadership positions". Male

(2006, p.79) stated that a survey conducted in 2004 on behalf of the National College for School leadership in England showed that half of women applying for leadership in a secondary school experienced overt and covert sexism during selection. According to Early and Weindling (2004, p.33), the role played by the governing body in the appointment process is worth further investigation not only to explore governors' views of the merits or otherwise of internal candidates, but also to test out some anecdotal evidence about how appointment panels tend to opt for 'safe' white middle-class male candidates.

Gupton and Slick (1996, p.135) stated that historically, explanations offered for the under-representation of women in educational administration include women's lack of aspiration to assume administrative positions and the inadequate preparation and qualification coupled with their lack of aspiration as a gender of natural leadership ability. Gupton and Slick further stated that women are under-represented in positions of educational management such as principals and senior teachers and inspectors. They continue to say that priority in salaries for women teachers have been subjected to a wide range of discriminatory practices.

2.4 GENDER INEQUALITY AS IT PERTAINS TO FEMALE PRINCIPALS

Gender inequality refers to disparity between individuals owing to gender. Gender is constructed both socially through social interactions as well as biologically through chromosomes, brain structure, and hormonal differences (Wood, 2005). Gender systems are often dichotomous and hierarchical; binary gender systems may reflect the inequalities that manifest in numerous dimensions of daily life. Gender inequality stems from distinctions whether empirically grounded or socially constructed (Wikipedia 2010).

Income disparity between genders stems from processes that determine the quality of jobs and earnings associated with jobs. Earnings associated with jobs will cause income inequality to take the form of placing individuals in particular jobs through

individual qualifications or stereotypical norms such as favouring male principals over female principals in our communities. Placement of men or women into particular job categories may be supported through the human capital theories of qualifications of individuals or abilities associated with biological differences in men and women. Conversely, the placing of men or women in separate job categories is argued to be caused by social status groups who desire to maintain their own position through the placement of those in lower statuses into lower paying positions (Jacobs, 1995). This argument motivated the researcher to investigate the experiences of women principals who are placed in lower paying positions.

The glass ceiling effect is also considered a possible contributor to the gender wage gap or income disparity. This effect suggests that gender provides significant disadvantages to the top-job hierarchies, which worsen as the career progresses. The term glass ceiling implies that invisible or artificial barriers exist which prevent women from advancing in their job situation or receiving promotions such as that of principal. The glass ceiling effect also indicates the limited chances of women for income increase and promotion or advancement to more prestigious positions. As women are prevented by these artificial barriers from receiving job promotion or income increase, the effects of the inequality of the glass ceiling increase over the course of a woman's career (Cotter, Jean, Seth & Reeve, 2001).

Karlovitz (2008) stated that overworked husbands push their wives out of the workforce. Karlovitz further indicated that women whose husbands worked over 60 hours per week are 44 per cent more likely to resign their jobs than women whose husbands worked regular hours. Furthermore, Karlovitz found that the subgroup of professional women with overworked husbands were 52 per cent more likely to resign their jobs than similarly-situated women with husbands who worked normal hours. This would imply that women, more especially those in higher posts, need to share the experiences of their workplace with their husbands; they may then grow impatient with having their husbands away because of work commitment.

The World Economic Forum, which measures gender equity through a series of economic educational, and political benchmarks, ranks the United States as 19th (up from 31st in 2009) in terms of achieving gender equity (World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report, 2009). In the U.S. women are more likely than men to live in poverty, earn less money for the same work, are more likely to be victims of intimate partner violence and rape, and have less of a political voice. A recent statistics from the Department of Labour indicates that in 2009, "the median weekly earnings of women who were full-time wage and salary workers was 80 per cent of men's" (Bursten, 1994). The Department of Justice found that in 2009, "the percentage of female victims (26%) of intimate partner violence was about 5 times that of male victims (5%) (National Crime Victimization Survey, 2010). The United States ranks 41% in a ranking of 184 countries on maternal deaths during pregnancy and childbirth, below all other industrialized nations and a number of developing countries (CEDAW, 2011). Gender inequality is thus a widespread and ingrained social and public health issue. Wage discrimination is the discrepancy of wages between two groups due to a bias towards or against a specific trait with all other characteristics of both groups being equivalent. In the case of gender inequality, wage discrimination exists between the male and female gender. Historically gender inequality has favoured men over women (Bursten, 1994). "

2.5 GENDER DISCRIMINATION AS IT PERTAINS TO FEMALE PRINCIPALS

Discrimination takes place in this manner as men and women are subject to prejudicial treatment on the basis of gender alone. Discrimination also plays out with networking and in preferential treatment within the economic market. Men typically occupy positions of power within the job economy. Due to taste or preference for other men because they share similar characteristics, men in these positions of power are more likely to hire or promote other men, thus discriminating against women (Massey, 2004). Discrimination against women in the workplace is a common occurrence. Only an estimated 1 per cent of roofers in the United States of America are females (Wikipedia, 2010).

While gender discrimination happens to both men and women in individual situations, discrimination against women is an entrenched, global pandemic. This is evidenced in the "missing girls" phenomenon in Asia, where it is estimated that due to the undervaluing of women and girls, over 100 million females are missing as a result of the infanticide of girl children, sex selection for boys, allocation of economic and nutritional resources solely for male children and generalized violence against women and girls (Kristoff, 2011).

According to Murphy (2010), even though there are regulations that are used to promote equality within the workplace, discrimination is still rampant. Women still do not achieve the same standards and norms as men when it comes to income, employment rates and occupational range. He further stated that, in most countries, the glass ceiling is ever present for women and the wage differences are significant compared with men. Based on a report by Catalyst in 2005 only "one in eight women were CEOs in the Fortune 500, and an additional nine were CEOs in Fortune 501 – 1000 companies". Women are also more likely to be stuck in low-paid but more secure positions, such as education and healthcare; the researcher therefore decided to conduct research into the marginalization of women in senior positions.

Education in South Africa was always segregated along racial and gender lines and the apartheid system ensured that women were denied equal management opportunities to men (Google: http//www.com.imm.se/interultural,2004). The first democratic elections in the history of South Africa have taken place, the Government of National Unity has been installed, and as the country at last starts moving towards establishing a non-racial and non-gender biased society based on a constitution that embodies equal rights for every person, the need to establish equitable and effective appointment procedures become a top priority. Redressing historical imbalances relating to female appointments in management positions is imperative for South African Secondary Schools (Google:http/www.com.imm.se/intercultural, 2004). In South Africa many discriminatory legislative provisions have been removed by the introduction of the

Equity Bill of 1997 and affirmative action which is aimed at eradicating barriers to career progress and advancement in the physical and organizational environment and to provide support for its employees (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1994).

Lower salaries, temporary jobs, poor promotion possibilities and unequal access to housing subsidies and pension funds are a common occurrence in females. In this regard, the economic advancement of black women has been subject to limitations imposed by discriminatory policies which have served to protect white interests (Dekker & Lemmer, 1996, p.23). According to Samuel (2005, p.122), women in particular are excluded or subordinated, with traditional forms and elected structures like school governing bodies dominated by men. Samuel further stated that women seem to be relegated to kitchen-oriented activities such as feeding schemes, with little done towards redefining their role in community and school leadership structures.

Ozga (1993, p.16) maintains that, despite the many changes which have taken place in education in recent years, women in management positions are still in the minority. Black women in these positions therefore find themselves as a small group within that female minority.

Asian women's experiences are barely mentioned in early British sociology literature. They were invisible or marginalized within the race, gender and class framework (Law et al, 2004). According to Marley (1999, p.77), these senior women were condemned for their failure to resist and change oppressive structures, and for the role they played in reproducing them. Wooeward and Ross (2000, p.43) stated that women were almost never appointed to senior positions in mixed universities and colleges, other than to designated women-only posts such as senior tutor for women students, even if their qualifications and credentials matched or exceeded those of their male counterparts.

Growe and Montgomery (2000) defined leaders as people "who provide vision and meaning for an institution and embody the ideals toward which the organization strives". From that perspective, leaders are alike and genderless. However, there is still skepticism when women lead and in many situations, gender, more than age, experience or competence determines the role (positions) one is assigned. There is research to show that such fears or doubts about women are baseless. Growe and Montgomery (2000), in studies on school administration, found that schools with female administrators were better managed (the quality of pupil learning and professional performance of teachers is higher), and on average performed better than those managed by men.

2.6 LEADERSHIP STYLES OF WOMEN

Whereas there are more factors that lead to the marginalization of women in leadership positions, their leadership styles are suspected to have a strong role in the reaction of men towards female leaders. Wikipedia (2010) suggests that jobs which are dominated by women offer lower wages than jobs occupied by males because of the presence of women within the organization. As women enter an occupation, this reduces the amount of prestige associated with the job and men subsequently leave these occupations. He further stated that, the entering of women into specific occupations suggests that less competent workers have begun to be hired or that the occupation is becoming deskilled. Males are reluctant to enter female-dominated occupations because of this and similarly resist the entrance of women into male-dominated occupations (Massey, 2007).

Despite the controversy about gender and leadership, research on how women lead is growing. Leadership style is viewed as a composite of "relatively stable patterns of behaviour that are manifested by leaders" (Eagly & Johannessen – Schmidt, 2001,p781). Work on female leadership style tends to conclude that "women are better educational leaders" than men (Coleman, 2003, p41). Lyman (2009) argued

that women lead more flexibly, intuitively and holistically. Some argued that women embrace superior leadership styles (Coleman, 2003).

According to Thakathi and Lemmer (2002), communication is a key resource for control, particularly within an organization. Talk is used by managers to get others to act in desired ways (Hall, 1996). A large body of research indicates that women prefer verbal and non-verbal behaviour that is equated with powerlessness, while men's communicative styles are associated with professionalism and power (Coates, 1998). According to Thakathi and Lemmer (2002), women's speech tends to be marked by politeness owing to their frequent use of devices known as hedges and boosters. Hedges reduce the strength or force of an utterance, while boosters intensify and emphasize the force. According to Coates (1996), hedging and boosting are devices used by women to show that they are taking other people's feelings into account. In this way they signal a wish not to impose. Thakathi and Lemmer (2002) further explained that women tend to converse cooperatively, whereas male speakers organize their conversations competitively. Furthermore, women tend to put far more effort than men into maintaining and facilitating conversations.

Wetzel (1998) postulated that the "powerlessness" of female patterns exists only relative to the power of so-called masculine patterns and the relatively weaker social position of women. Even when women in the workplace are encouraged to change their communication behaviour to adopt "male forms" of communication, they find themselves in a no-win situation. The characteristics of male forms adopted are ignored, and the assumption of power as domination is reproduction (Thomas & Warieng, 1999, p.80). They further stated that women's communication style may be proper but not the most effective style of communication in a management context.

According to Blackmore (1999), the theory of female style of management is hotly debated. In the same way that women are not a homogeneous group, women managers are not a homogeneous group; they may operate using a variety of

managerial styles depending on the various situations in which they find themselves. He further stated that the theory of a woman's style of management risks creating a meta-narrative universalizing the category of women and idealizing characteristics such as self-sacrifice and caring. Walpe, Quinlan and Martinez (1997) explained that many women managers, in order to succeed in male environments, are forced to adopt the male modus operandi.

Thakathi and Lemmer (2002) said that another common female tendency in the workplace is the use of a question in the place of a direct command or assertion. Questions are experienced as much less threatening than statements or commands, particularly in mixed-gender situations. They further explained that research shows that women leaders are more susceptible to the negative effects of gossip in an organization. Distrust and suspicion engendered by gossip affect communication negatively and increase defensiveness.

There seems to be enough evidence to suggest that men and women lead differently (Eagle & Johnson, 1990 as cited by de la Rey, 2005). For instance, women portray more democracy, allow for power and information sharing, are more sensitive, more nurturing than men, focus on relationships and enable others to make contributions through delegation (de la Rey, 2005; Growe & Montgomery, 2000; Tedrow, 1999). De la Rey et al. also noted that characteristics such as building coalitions and advancing individual and community development are constructs that women display in their relational styles. Women are also better at conflict management, have better listening skills and show more tolerance and empathy. While men and women do have different leadership styles, that should not mean that one is superior or preferable to the other. The differences we see in leadership style are partly due to the way in which men view leadership as leading, while women see leadership as facilitating (Growe & Montgomery, 2000). In contrast to the characteristics given above of women, men lead from the front and attempt to have all the answers while stressing task accomplishment, the achieving of goals, the hoarding of information and winning (Growe & Montgomery, 2000).

Contemporary work environments could unquestionably benefit from leaders who portray more of the traits associated with women (Kiamba, 2008).

In a situation where accepting women as leaders is problematic, it is possible to overlook their positive leadership traits, viewing them rather as weaknesses. The stereotype of how women lead has made it difficult for women to access or even to stay in leadership positions. Tedrow (1999) argued that women who display more relational styles of leading are likely to be marginalized within their organizations and viewed as 'outsiders'. Even more disconcerting is the fact that women who seem to 'make it' as leaders often end up conforming to the strong male culture in the workplace, adopting male leadership styles. As indicated by Growe and Montgomery (2000), since female leaders see gender as a hindrance, they are compelled to lead the way men do, as it is considered the norm. In their view, utilizing men's methods of leadership is not only the easiest way for a woman to be hired for any position of leadership, but it is the most successful method of attracting promotion and recognition.

2.7 ROLES OF WOMEN PRINCIPALS

According to the Non-Freudian view, gender roles develop through internalization and identification during childhood. From birth, parents interact differently with children depending on their sex, and through this interaction parents can instil different values or traits in their children on the basis of what is normative for their sex. This internalization of gender norms may be seen for example in the types of toy parents typically give to their children. "Feminine toys often reinforce interaction, nurturing and closeness; masculine toys often reinforce independence and competitiveness" (Woods, 2005).

While women are dividing their time between work and care of the home, men are pressured into being the primary economic supporter of the home (Jacobs, 2004). Despite different households dividing chores more evenly, there is evidence that women have retained the primary caregiver role within family life despite economic contributions. This evidence suggests that women who work outside the home often

put in an extra 18 hours per week doing household or childcare related chores as opposed to men who average 12 minutes a day in childcare activities. Education also plays an integral role in the creation of gender norms (Vianello & Renata, 2001).

Research on women in the United Kingdom and Greece shows that some women choose not to seek leadership positions because of the perceived stress caused by a conflict of roles (Mitrousthsi & Mitroussi, 2009). Women are concerned about balancing the demands of their job with those of their families. The same people are expected to be academically qualified and diligent but at the same time to maintain the priority of the family's interests. Eddy (2003) points out in her study of college presidents that even though the presidents were described in gendered terms by their campus members as authoritative for men and generative for women, they did not actually lead in strictly gendered ways.

Barriers from the home and the ways in which women are perceived culturally and historically, are also regarded as barriers to women's advancement. In the view of many organizations including schools, work and home life should be kept separate for women who are in positions of power. This view consequently constitutes a barrier for women teachers whose personal lives are inextricably linked to their work life (Moorosi, 2007). Dunlap and Schmuck (1995) explained that women managers have additional difficulty performing their management role because of the conflicting attitudes and the stereotypes regarding what it means to be a woman and what it means to be a manager. Women who are managers and have children therefore, straddle the dual worlds of parenting and working and are often not successful in balancing the two. Furthermore, Dunlap and Schmuck remarked that "while the world of teaching more easily accommodates the dual world of many women, the demands of administration still often presume one has a 'wife' at home".

Moorosi (2007), stated that for some women, moving into management brings an additional stress, because they associate management work with inflexibility and

restrictiveness as compared with what teaching in the classroom offers them in terms of meeting the demands on their time. He further stated that, this is arguably because women's personal priorities and responsibilities outside their work roles can be seen to vie with professional commitments once they are in management, and the balancing of these various roles and responsibilities may be a source of pressure. Thus, in their attempt to balance their personal and professional lives, some women hesitate to seek promotion into management posts during their careers because they anticipate difficulty in maintaining the balance between the two. And for those who achieve promotion, balancing these responsibilities becomes a problem as pressure on them in the family domain is not reduced. This suggests that the problems women experience after being appointed into the position of principal, add to the already existing pressure they have as women in negotiating a balance between home and work. There is an obvious need to undertake research into the experiences females encounter as principals and to investigate steps that can then be taken to improve them.

Furthermore, the problems associated with the private-public dichotomy are understood as problems of time - allocation of time to both work and family which arguably affects women differently from their male counterparts (Meyerson, 2000). According to Ely and Meyerson (2000), the image of the ideal manager suggests commitment of one who is willing to put family obligations second to work-related obligations, creating an illusory picture of workplace as asexual. Ely and Meyerson (2000) stated that the social practices still appear gender neutral because everyone appears to be subjected to them, while the reality is that these social practices sabotage women, who cannot be available for work all the time. They further explained that these social practices are therefore gendered in the sense that they tend to affect men and women differently: they bear disproportionate responsibility between home and work, making it difficult for women to strike a balance between the private and public spheres of their lives. The split makes it even more difficult for women principals who are married and/or of reproductive age to balance both public and private responsibilities. They are still expected to play their cultural roles as mothers and wives over and above their commitment to their work as school

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managers. Ely and Meyerson (2000) further stated that this cultural split of responsibilities therefore makes it difficult for women to be adequately available for work and therefore leads to their being labeled as less task oriented.

2.8 INSUFFICIENT SUPPORT FOR WOMEN

Lack of support from the organization in which one works may lead to under-development of women. Women do not always receive the feedback they need, or any corrective mechanism. The opposite occurs to men who are corrected in order to understand various situations and for reasons of development.

When the performance evaluation is done, males predicate much higher performance ability than females. This is owing in most cases to the appraiser being male, seeing himself as a role model. The lack of female role models may also increase the problem (Mayana, 2001, p.29).

Regon and Brooks (1995) maintain that the lack of networking, the scarcity of positive role models and inadequate sponsorships and mentoring among women are often cited as major barriers to women's career advancement in educational administration as well as in executive positions across all professions.

The social practices, as seen by Ely and Meyerson (2000), tend to reflect and support men's experiences and life situations by placing a higher value on masculine identity, because they have been created largely by and for men and are based on male experiences. Because these social practices are deeply embedded in the culture of organizations, they have to be perceived as gender neutral and therefore regarded as the   natural way in which organizations operate. Ely and Meyerson (2000) explained that the perceived neutrality of these social practices is what is problematic because it widens the split in the traditional notions of male and female, masculine and feminine, public and private dichotomies that are reflected by the daily social practices inherent in all organizations. This neutrality is argued as

inaccurately shaping the discourses of what constitutes leadership and management within all organizations, including schools and it continues to disadvantage women.

2.9 THE IMPACT OF GENDER INEQUALITY, GENDER DISCRIMINATION AS WELL AS SEXISM AS THEY PERTAIN TO FEMALE PRINCIPALS

According to research by Berta Estere Volart (2004), excluding women from managerial positions is clearly damaging for economic growth. Her research examined the implications for economic development of gender discriminations analysing it firstly as the exclusion of women from management positions, and secondly as the complete exclusion of women from the labour market. She revealed that excluding women from management positions clearly hinders economic development. The intuition behind this result is that when there is discrimination in the sense that women face barriers to becoming managers, the managerial talent that is inherent in women is not efficiently used; quality of managers in the economy, that is, their average managerial talent is lower than when there is no discrimination.

According to Black and Brainerd (2002), while researchers have long held that discrimination cannot endure in an increasingly competitive environment, there has been little testing of this dynamic process. According to TNBS Research Surveys, 68 per cent of women surveyed believed gender discrimination exists in the workplace.

There are indeed various protections but many women still feel that gender-based discrimination is a problem. Galkina (2011) argued that victims of gender discrimination lose productivity because the motivation and morale necessary to perform their jobs effectively is lost. Stereotypical views regarding gender may cause supervisors to engage in the illegal practice of passing a person over for promotion owing to gender. While this can happen to both genders, supervisors most often pass over women for promotion owing to preconceived notions about their roles and abilities. Women who have young children at home may experience 'push-back' when interviewed, because they are found to have family responsibilities. Although law prohibits a prospective employer from asking outright about family

responsibilities the facts often emerge during the interview process. This may provoke the hiring manager to pass over a qualified female candidate if he feels she will be torn between her home and work responsibilities (Galkina, 2011). Galkina (2011) further explains that those discriminated against may feel such strong resentment and loss of self-worth that they resort to destruction as a way of hitting back at the discriminatory employer. Destructiveness may manifest itself as physical violence against others, destruction of property or propagation of malicious rumours about people in the company.

Gender inequality and discrimination arguably cause and perpetuate poverty and vulnerability in the society as a whole (Nicola, 2008). He stated that household and intra-household knowledge and resources are key influences in the individuals' ability to take advantage of external livelihood opportunities or to respond appropriately to threats. High education levels and social integration significantly improve the productivity of all members of the household and improve equity throughout society.

According to Moorosi (2007), women who aspire for school management positions often face barriers of administration in hiring and promotion that may limit their upward movement. He further stated that some women principals were found to have blatant discrimination against them in their attempts to participate in management on the grounds that male candidates were required. He mentioned that many women principals continued to face obstacles in performing management functions even after they have been appointed. This manifests a lack of acceptance and a resistance to the authority of women principals. This attitude negatively affects women in promotion positions and those who are aspiring to become school principals.

Mahlase (1997) in Moorosi (2007, p 509) investigated the position and experiences of black women teachers and managers and acknowledged that the treatment of race, culture and ethnicity are issues affecting and defining experiences of women in education in general and in education management in particular. Mahlase identified

marriage and child-rearing as factors that continue to have a negative impact on women's progress in their management career, because management continues to be defined in male terms. Greyvenstein (2000) also concluded that barriers facing South African women in education management are "numerous, multi-faceted, highly complex in nature and deeply interwoven in cultural norms and values." That is why further exploration of this situation must be undertaken to bring to light the experiences women encounter as school principals in the rural areas of Butterworth District.

2.10 CULTURAL AND SOCIAL STEREOTYPES THAT RESULT IN BIAS AGAINST WOMEN

Despite efforts made to ensure that female representation is achieved at all levels of governance, women are still under-represented in many government and non-government organizations particularly in positions of power and leadership (de la Rey, 2005). There are hidden barriers related to social and cultural stereotypes that have to be identified. The choice or balance between work and family, and women's own fear of success form two of those barriers. According to Mathipa and Tsoka (2001), the disadvantages of women appear not to have anything to do with the requirements for positions of leadership, only a perpetuation of a false perception that women lack the personality and the experience needed when faced with tough situations. In putting the problems faced by women into perspective, Wisker (1996, p.90) pertinently argued that "women are under-represented in higher- and middle-management positions in higher education, even in the current post-feminist climate where many people claim that there is no need to assert that equality must continue to be striven for".

Historically, leadership has carried the notion of masculinity; the belief that men make better leaders than women is still common today. According to Hojgaard (2002), the societal conventions regarding gender and leadership traditionally exclude women, and top leadership is viewed as a masculine domain. The same author further argued that the cultural construction of leadership in itself instigates

differences and this is only now being transformed or contested as women gain access to leadership positions. In African societies it is believed that men lead and women follow (Ngcongo, 1993; in Grant, 2005). He also argued that it is not uncommon in rural villages in Africa to find the man literally walking ahead of the woman. Various reasons may be advanced for this but ultimately it illustrates the deeply-held notion of leadership as masculine. Cheryl de la Rey (2005) listed the traits commonly associated with leadership as: effective communication skills, task completion, responsibility, problem-solving, self-awareness, confidence, experience and power. While it is possible to develop these traits in any individual regardless of gender. In male-dominated societies (as is often the case in African societies) male leadership and leadership styles predominate and are regarded as more acceptable forms of leadership.

Various factors are at work in limiting women's potential to aspire to positions of leadership. Sadie (2005) advanced the argument that the least of the constraints that women face is the patriarchal system where decision-making powers are in the hands of males. In the African context, traditional beliefs and cultural attitudes regarding the role and status of women in society are still prevalent and many women are part of this system, finding it difficult to dislocate from this culture and tradition lest they be ostracized. Despite women's education and entry into the job market, the woman's role is typically one of homemaker. The man on the other hand is a bread winner, head of the household and therefore having the right to public life (Sadie, 2005).

The socialization of the girl child in many societies is also to blame for perceived inabilities on the part of women. To quote Emmett (2001, p 67), "The life passages of women are not sacramentalized, celebrated or even acknowledged". This is illustrative of the position ascribed to women right from the birth of the girl child, in comparison with the boy child and the subsequent position of men in society. In many African cultures, the rituals and rites of passage pertaining to the boy child nurture them for leadership positions, whether at local or national levels of

governance, in business, politics or public administration. Religion tends to cement these cultural norms. As observed by Emmett (2001), all mainstream religions have stereotypical roles for men and women where women are perceived as less equal than men, often being kept separate in the way roles are assigned. In her discussion of women's experience of religion, Emmett (2001), analysed the rituals performed for and by men in various religions (including Hinduism, Islam and Christianity), finding that men are generally valued and empowered in many ways by religion. Women do not enjoy such privilege, being disempowered by religious structures and practices. Kiamba (2008) stated that in other public arenas women's access to leadership positions has been hindered by discrimination and stereotyping. Women are more or less persecuted for seeking an executive position. Gowe and Montgomery (2000) stated that compared with men, women receive little or no encouragement to seek leadership positions. There are also few social networks (formal and informal) for women such as membership of clubs, resulting in a lack of recognition that would lead to advancement.

Administrative or leadership positions require hard work, long hours and they are stressful. For women, this burden is added to their childcare, home and family responsibilities, a phenomenon referred to as the 'double shift' in Sader (2005). These observations are also true of women in higher education. In addition to issues of family responsibility that make it difficult for women to advance, cultural beliefs about the roles of men and women inhibit women's advancement to top leadership as much as it does in politics (Pandor, 2006). Institutional culture and micropolitics do act as barriers for women, implicitly or explicitly influencing the research environment that breeds professors and executive leaders. For many women, the time demands of such positions conflict with the demands of the family, and this in itself is a barrier (Pandor, 2006). It is little wonder that many women are hesitant to take up positions of leadership because of the stress involved. For women who do seek leadership positions, some factors that contribute to this stress include balancing work and family, domestic violence and discrimination (Cole, 2006; Gardiner and Tiggermann, 1999). In the African context, the work and family dichotomy is filled with many stress-provoking contradictions for women.

African women have certain roles to play. They are expected to bear and nurture children, as well as to manage the home. At the same time, today's African woman is expected to earn a living and contribute to the running of society (BBC News, 2005). In short, Gwendolyn Mikell (1997) referred to contemporary African women as walking a political and gender tightrope, but it is also a leadership and gender tightrope. Moutlana (2001) noted that the socialization of women in the workplace occurs within a system of power and inequality; such systems tend to reproduce various forms of inequality. In South Africa, traditional universities have had corporate cultures whose norms and values were those of the dominant white male society (Moutlana 2001). When women joined such institutions as leaders, they soon realized that they were expected to conform to or be assimilated into the established culture. Moutlana argued that women (black women particularly) in management are more visible, experience more hardship and feel isolated.

2.11 LACK OF POLITICAL SAVVY IN WOMEN

Women continue to aspire to leadership positions in all spheres of governance both in the public and private sectors. Great strides have been made in the political realm, and women's participation in both the freedom struggles and democratic processes in many African countries have been notable. However, this participation has not always translated into equal representation in political positions. Once elections are conducted, and positions are assigned, one realizes that women are no longer visible (Kiamba, 2006). Gwendolyn Mikell (1997) captured the dilemma for women in her statement that "Contemporary African women sometimes think of themselves as walking a political or gender tightrope" in that African women are concerned about the large number of economic and political problems facing their communities, but at the same time they are "grappling with how to affirm their own identities while transforming societal notions of gender and familial roles".

From statistics presented by Sadie (2005) on the Southern African Development Community (SADC) parliamentary structures, it is evident that the target of 30%

representation by women in political and decision-making structures of member states (set by heads of state and government in adopting the 1997 Declaration of Gender and Development to be achieved by 2005) was not met. Another discrepancy in the SADC region is evident in party structures. Although women constitute the majority of voters, Sadie (2005) observed that they are severely under-represented in party structures and on party lists, to the extent that while gender equality is enshrined in the party constitutions and manifestos, it is not integrated into party structures. In some cases where women serve as party executives, this is so because they move in as ex-officio members by virtue of their role as chairpersons of the women's leagues.

In Kenya, the progress towards women's involvement in politics was initially very slow; noticeable changes have only been observed within the last 10 years. According to Nzomo (1997), although the post–independence government brought new possibilities for political involvement, Kenyan women were not granted the same political access as men. For this reason, equitable democratic participation at the level of gender has yet to be attained. A recent Kenyan newspaper report showed that although women make up 52% of the Kenyan population, only 18 out of 222 parliamentary members are women (8 of whom are nominated), and only 377 out of 2837 seats in local government are held by women (Daily Nation, July 2007). This newspaper further reflects the serious under-representation of women in governance and decision-making structures. The build-up to the 2007 elections in Kenya still showed imbalances in the fielding of female candidates because the electorate showed a lack of confidence in them.

In politics, women have been marginalized because men monopolize the decision-making structures; men are in the majority. One underlying problem for women has been the difficulty in dealing with the inherent patriarchal structures that pervade the lives of people, the processes of state and the party (Nzomo, 1997). In many societies, women are still assigned a secondary place by the customs and culture. Examples abound of efforts that have been made to include and involve women but

for the most part, these are superficial changes (such as minimum quotas of 30% women introduced by certain parties; or the constitution is changed to allow for representation by women, as in Tanzania). However, on careful examination of the situation one finds that implementation is lacking.

In many African countries there is no relationship between the number of women voters and the representation by women in party structures. To what extent women themselves actively strive to fulfil these mandates is worth investigating. It has been said of women in Kenya that not only are societal customs and attitudes to blame for their small part in politics, but their education and training tend to make women accept their secondary status as the natural order of things (Duvenger, 1975 as cited in Nzomo, 1997). Confining women's identity to the domestic sphere is one of the barriers to women's entry into politics; politics by its nature catapults one into public life. Generally, cultural attitudes are hostile to women's involvement in politics. Some women were able to transcend cultural barriers and rise to positions of leadership (whether in politics or elsewhere), but more often than not this meant having to juggle cultural expectations with their leadership roles. Perhaps one of the most notable examples in literature is Grace Onyango who in 1969 was the first female elected Member of Parliament in Kenya. She had previously held several leadership positions including that of mayor of the third largest city in Kenya. Grace Onyango was well versed in the Luo tradition which she respected and adhered to, while at the same time playing the political or official role of mayor, then parliamentarian. It must be realized that the Luo, like many ethnic groups in Kenya, is traditionally patriarchal. When Onyango came to power in the 1960s, Africa, according to Tripp (2001), had the lowest rate of female legislative participation in the world and politics was a male affair. Tripp (2001) also stated that ascending to leadership or a position of power was not easy for Onyango. She often faced opposition from people, men in particular, who argued that these positions were only suitable for men. Musandu's (2008) Chronicle of Onyango's political career shows a woman who was bold, knew what she wanted, and had specific skills that appealed to both men and women. Onyango seems to have been cautious not to offend her people by opposing respected male elders, and Masandu (2008, p. 14)

maintains that at one point Grace Onyango was "at an ethnic and national political crossroads and her survival as a politician depended on the successful balancing of the two important interests".

It has been argued that women themselves are often reluctant to run for public positions and this is partly attributed to cultural prohibitions on women speaking in public or going to public places. Political campaigning requires that one travel extensively, spend nights away from home, go into bars, and for women it means meeting men. All of this is not easily accepted for women in many African societies (Tripp, 2001). Women who vie for public office have to consider the risk of being labeled "loose" or "unfit" as mothers and wives, and being socially stigmatized. Such considerations make many women shy away from politics that put them in the public eye.

Another factor which has played a role in influencing women's political support is the media (Sadie, 2005). For instance, in Botswana and Mozambique the media often fails to give coverage to the campaigns of female candidates or to interview them. Kiamba (2008) argued that men have also been known to treat women with hostility during political campaigns. Alli Mari Tripp (2003) reported that in the 1996 presidential elections in Uganda, there were many incidents of intimidation and harassment of women by men (even husbands), who had different political opinions. Politically active women in that country were threatened with withdrawal of family support; some were thrown out of their homes, and others killed. Data from the Danish sample of the Comparative Leadership Study found that certain access conditions and conditions of gender positioning seem to predetermine access to top leadership positions in business and public administration. Hojgaard (2002) found that the social background of male and female leaders played a particular role in political leadership. The sample of politicians showed that both parents of female leaders had had better education and more highly-placed jobs than parents of male politicians. The main conclusion was that in order for women to achieve top

positions in politics they have to come from a more privileged social background than men.

2.12 STEPS TO BE TAKEN TO CURB LOW REGARD FOR WOMEN

According to King (1981, p.188), in Van der Westhuizen (1991, p.536) the media should be used more often to counteract the negative image of the community regarding the career capabilities of women in education instead of focusing on the shortage of men in the teaching profession. Higgs (2003, p.3) maintained that women are to a certain extent responsible for the transformation of the mindset of people around them. According to Higgs, women will have to defy capitalist exploitation where they are included in higher position just for window dressing and conformity to affirmation action. According to Gronn (1999, p.122), in trying to remedy a range of structural impediments which discriminate against women by narrowing their employment and career opportunities, many reformers have also been critical of traditional patterns of women's socialization which create psychological barriers to their advancement and success.

Mutopa (2006) explains that debates on the relationship between gender and leadership and whether women are better leaders than men are part of increasing scholarly attention being given to the topic of women and educational leadership. Even though many findings show minor differences or make no distinction between male and female leadership styles, other evidence suggests that leadership is not gender neutral and that, as Coleman (2003) argued, "leadership is a very gendered concept" as it is across cultures typically identified with men.

Androgynous leadership that combines both masculine and feminine styles is also employed by women. This may blur the relationship between gender and leadership and it also indicates a shift in female leadership style which is likely to be more relevant to managing modern organizations with "multi-gender, multinational and multi-social environments" (Pounder & Coleman, 2002, p.128). These findings

support the claim that women can be better educational leaders than men. However, as Pounder and Coleman (2002, p129) caution, it all depends on such different factors as national culture, socialization and organizational culture.

Matthews (2006) in Skelton (2001, p73) provided evidence that feminists saw education as a way of changing sex-power inequalities through showing children how they could act differently from the societal script of being either masculine or feminine. Hansen (2007,p.84) further stated that for pragmatists like Addams, learning requires intelligent engagement in the world, which means approaching experience experimentally. Such engagement is optimized through sympathetic understanding, an attitude that opens the inquirer to new perspectives and encourages receptive responses. Therefore, education is an ongoing process transforming both those engaged in it and the situations in which it takes place. One of the most important findings against women's marginalization in leadership positions comes from (Baeyens, 2003, p.163).

Efa Global Monitoring (nd) mentioned that "several countries have created special mechanisms to address gender equality in education. It stated that in the Islamic Republic of Iran, the establishments of the Bureau of Women's Affairs (affiliated with the office of the President) in the early 1990s, replaced by the centre for women's participation in 1997, resulted from an initiative to focus on the condition of women, to address their concerns and to increase their participation in various arenas, including education. The centre set up special women's units in government ministries and organizations among which was the Bureau of Women's Affairs at the ministry of education. The mandate of the Bureau of Women's Affairs is to campaign against undesirable gender attitudes. The Bureau organizes workshops and seminars at all levels of the ministry of education to raise awareness of the need for gender sensitivity in schools among teachers and school administrators.

Baeyens (2003, p.162) suggested that legal measures to ensure that women enjoy rights to non-discrimination and the protection of fundamental freedoms are

necessary bases for gender equality. He further stated that property rights, inheritance rights and establishment of gender equality in family law are all crucial cornerstones for securing economic and social justice for women. Baeyens continued to say that political backing is crucial for the introduction of policy reforms affecting gender equality; effective implementation should be introduced. Ivinson and Murphy (2007, p.142) stated that "by bringing historical legacies of subject cultures to light we suggest that commonsense beliefs about gender can and should be challenged.

CONCLUSION

In the review of related literature it was clearly stipulated that the undermining attitudes of stakeholders towards women serve to marginalize them in employment as principals of senior secondary schools. These attitudes and unfair practices also affect them in their management and governance. The general habit of treating women as inferior to men is evident everywhere. This study therefore seeks to prove all of these existing prejudices and impediments to women who seek highly responsible positions;   aiming to make appropriate recommendations as to how these may be curbed in Butterworth District Rural Secondary Schools. The following chapter focuses on methodology of the study.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes the research design, the research site, the research population and sampling, the data-collecting instruments and data analysis technique. Because this study explores the experiences of women leaders as school principals in rural secondary schools of Butterworth, qualitative research was appropriate. As a method of data collection, interviews were used: this is a very flexible tool albeit having to be used carefully in fulfilling the requirement of a particular piece of research (Walliman, 2006, p281). In order to achieve high quality research validity, trustworthiness and ethics were thoroughly considered. According to Tuckman, as cited by Cohen and Manion (1981: p.243) an interview "provides access to what is inside a person's head, makes it possible to measure what a person knows (knowledge or information), what a person likes or dislikes (value and preferences) and what a person thinks (attitudes and beliefs)". Generally, the interviewer uses smaller samples. The interviewer should know how to establish rapport, thus allowing the interviewee to feel at ease. This was the method used by the researcher in this study.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Researchers have to be able to justify methodologies in choosing a particular approach and specific procedures (Opie, 2006, 16). The research method used in this study is the qualitative research method. This method primarily aims at

description and understanding of actions and events (Monton, 2009, 270). According to Mutch (2005, p.19), qualitative research, aims at exploring "the unique lived experiences of the participants to enhance understanding of particular phenomena". This kind of research enables the investigator to capture participants' interpretation of their complex world and to understand the phenomenon from their viewpoint by standing "in the shoes of those being studied" (Burns, 2000). The concern is with understanding social phenomena from the participant's perspective and also understanding that which is achieved by analysing many details supplied by the participants and by narrating participant's meanings of these situations (McMillan & Schumacher, 2006, 315). In a qualitative study, the investigator is also "the research instrument"as he or she will do both the data collection and the analysis simultaneously (Tolich & Davidson, 2003, p.98). An example of qualitative data is the data generated by the use of questions (Maree, 2010, 183). Qualitative research is intended to approach the world "out there" and to understand, describe and sometimes explain social phenomena "from the inside" in a number of different ways. Common to such approaches is that they seek to display how people construct the world around them, what they are doing or what is happening to them in terms that are meaningful and that offer rich insight (Gibbs, 2009, x). Research methodology is the theory of how and why researchers gain knowledge in research contexts. Methodology provides a rationale for the ways in which researchers conduct research activities (Briggs & Coleman, 2007,19).

Research design refers to a plan for carrying out a study (McMillan, 2008:11). In this study a case study design was used. In a case study a particular individual, programme or event is studied in depth for a defined period of time. Sometimes researchers focus on a single case, perhaps for the insight and information it will supply in understanding similar situations (Leedy & Omrod, 2005;135). A case study design is used to determine, give evidence, crucially focused on real situations with real people, in a real environment with the aims of providing a real picture of creative features of social behaviour or social activity in a particular setting and factors influencing the situation (Gerring, 2007,17). The purpose of a case study is to obtain a detailed description or to gain an understanding of the case (McMillan,

2008,288). It is important to bear in mind that generalization is not the ultimate aim of qualitative research, rather, elucidating "the experience or understanding for others" (Mutch, 2005, p.43). These characteristics of qualitative research mark it as the best approach for this study which aimed to uncover the Butterworth women leaders' experiences together with their beliefs and perceptions of leadership.

This study is an educational case study that focuses on one phenomenon: challenges faced by women leaders as school principals, with two principals as the main participants. The purpose of this case is to obtain a detailed description and an understanding of the case (Macmillan, 2008, p.288).In this situation the information that derived from these two schools will assist the researcher to discover the status quo within other schools of the same nature.

Selection of the research site

This research was conducted solely in Butterworth District in two secondary schools that are led by female principals. The main reason for conducting this research in Butterworth is that the researcher is a long-standing secondary school principal of this district. The researcher knew a number of women principals in his neighbouring schools and he was therefore able to observe the many challenges that they experienced in their schools. He had little understanding of their particular challenges and the reasons behind these problems. There are some 82 secondary female principals in the entire district (Education Management Information System, 2011).

Selection of the research population and the sample

Selection of the research population does not necessarily mean a number of people. Population is a collective term used to describe the total number of cases of the type which are the subject of the study. Sampling must be done whenever one can gather information, from only a fraction of the population of a group, on a phenomenon which one wishes to study (Walliman, 2005, 276). In the case of this study there were some 82 secondary school female principals in the Butterworth

District. The researcher chose 2 schools to act as a sample of the research because these are the only female-led schools in the targeted circuits. This is also a case study where it is stipulated that the researcher may be selective, focusing only on one or two issues that are fundamental to understanding the system being examined. These schools were selected through convenience sampling. This is a type of sampling where one must consider many aspects that are to one's advantage, such as accessibility and familiarity. This type of sampling helped the researcher to to obtain the required information easily, being familiar with the persons involved. Both their language and rank are identical. The researcher did not have to travel far to conduct his interviews.

The maps below show the two circuits of Butterworth where the two schools used as research sites are situated. School A is in circuit 7 and School B is in circuit 10. School A is map A and school B is in map B. These schools are both headed by women principals and both are rural secondary schools. School A is to the east of Butterworth and School B lies to the north-east of Butterworth. For ethical reasons the researcher maintains the anonymity of the schools.
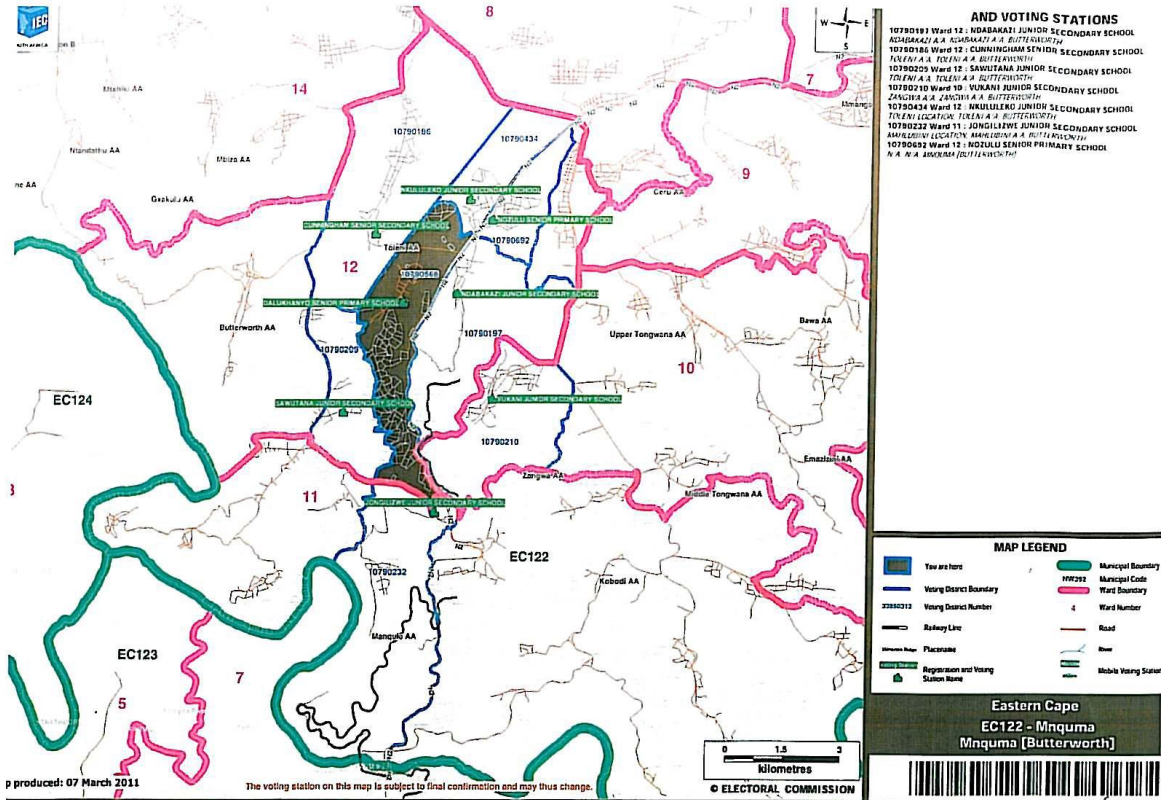
MAP B
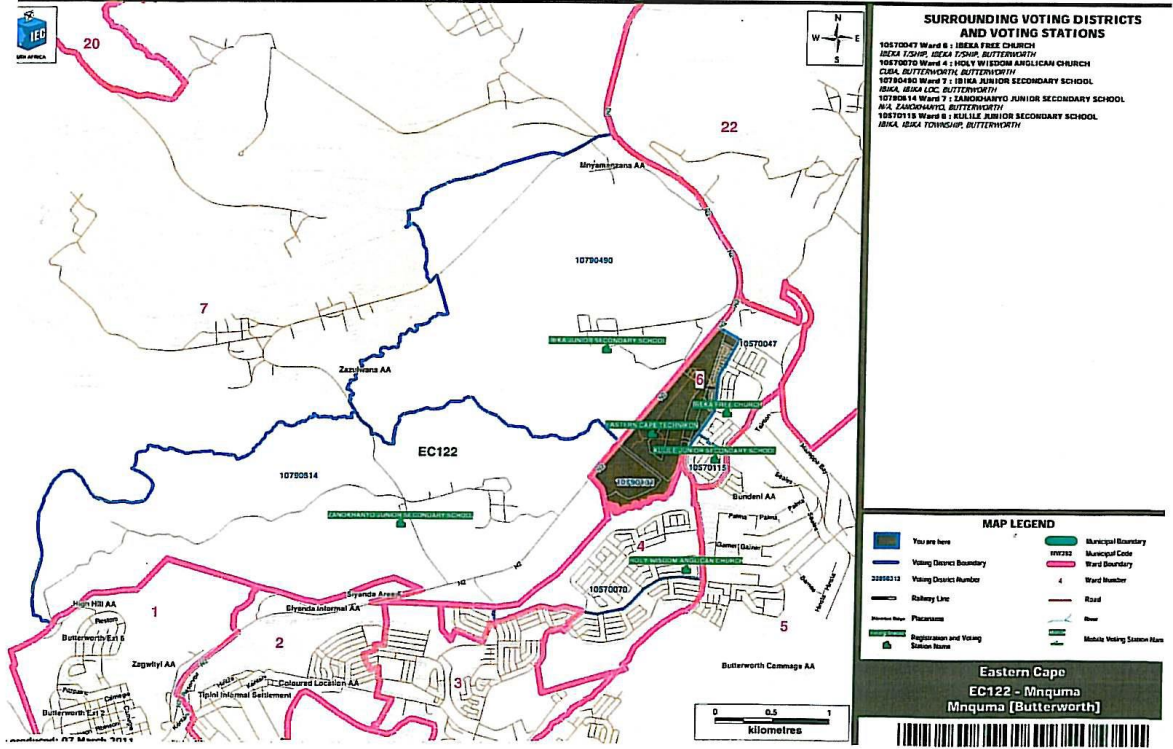
MAP A

Data-collecting instruments

3.5.1 Interviews

Interviews were the most appropriate instrument for the study. Interviewing is defined as "an exchange of view between two persons conversing about a theme of mutual interests" (Kuale 1996, in Thuyle, 2011) and has been used as a central data-generation method in educational research for more than a century (Tierney & Dilley, 2002). Interviews permit people to express their perspectives on a wide range of issues (Walford, 2001). The data collected are a rich resource because interviewing "can reach the parts which other methods cannot reach" (Wellington 2000, p.73). In addition, interviewing is regarded as "a flexible tool" because it can collect the data through "multi-sensory channels... verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard" (Cohen, Manian & Morrison, 2007, p.349). There are various types of interview, however. The purpose of this study was to explore the women leader's experiences and their beliefs and perceptions about leadership; semi-structured interviews were employed to generate the data.

In a semi-structured interview, a key set of questions is followed in an open-ended manner (Mutch, 2005), and this provides the participant with "a sufficient opportunity to express his or her viewpoint extensively" (Giorgi, 1997). Therefore, an interview guide is prepared but the wording and the order of questions are not fixed. The content of the interview aims to focus on significant issues for the study. This flexibility enables the researcher to "improvise follow-up questions" and probe for meaningful clarification as well as to deepen "areas of interest that emerge" (Arskey & Knight, 1999, p.7).

Although interviewing is a relevant instrument, some researchers use it with caution because of its shortcomings. First of all, bias is likely to appear as a result of "the researcher's perceptions and interpretations" of the data (Wellington, 2000, p.73). The researcher therefore decided to listen and capture the data emerging from the interviewee. He also ensured that he did not stray from the main theme. He carefully avoided injecting any personal bias into the conversation.

There can sometimes be a powerful imbalance in the relation between the interviewer and the interviewee where the researcher is usually in a more powerful position that "defines and controls the situation" (Kuale & Brintimann, 2009, p.3). This can cause bias: the interviewer may influence the interviewee's responses.

Another weakness of the interview is the difficulty it poses regarding securing the anonymity of the subject (Cohen,Manion, and Morrison, 2007). Cohen, et al. (2007) argued that, because interviewing is not anonymous, this could discourage honesty in the responses of the participants. Additionally, the researcher may have trouble finding participants because some people may not be willing to talk to a stranger about their life in a face-to- face interview. Interviewing is also time-consuming and requires not only time for the interview itself but for travel and the transcription of the interview. Although "interviewing people of any age may be one of the most enjoyable and interesting activities in a research study" (Wellington, 2000, p.73), it is not simple. The interviewer has to establish trust and a good rapport with the interviewee (Johnson, 2002) and this requires certain skills and qualities which take considerable practice to develop (Rubin and Rubin, 2005).

Despite its weaknesses, many qualitative researchers still consider interviewing as such an important instrument that "many qualitative methods rely heavily or solely on as the primary mechanism for data collection" (Knox & Burkard, 2009, p.571). Because semi-structured interviewing is very powerful in situations where the researcher wants to probe the participant's opinions, feelings or perspective about a particular problem, it was therefore considered the best data-generation method for this study. The interviews were prepared by the researcher as follows:

SECTION A

Biographical data with five variables: age of the participants; gender of the participants; their qualifications (academic and professional); teaching experience; as well as the position held by the participants in their schools.

SECTION B

There were twenty highly structured interview questions regarding each respondent's opinions on the factors that lead to the marginalization of females in management positions, i.e. gender-based, culture-oriented, government-policy based, etc.

SECTION C

The interview questions were structured such that there were open-ended questions where the respondent was asked to air her feelings about the under-representation of women to posts of princioal in Butterworth Secondary Schools. This information was asked from each of these two principals after they were informed about the full purpose of the research. Consent letters were furnished by the researcher; the respondents were free to respond without fear of publicity and disclosure of sensitive information.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

In the information-gathering stages the researcher facilitated the research processes of the study in a manner that ensured that ethical matters related to the participants were adhered to; thus complying with the following principles which aimed at protecting the dignity and privacy of every individual who was directly associated with the project.

Before an individual becomes a participant in a research project, he or she shall be notified of:

the aims, method, anticipated benefits and potential hazards of the research.

his or her right to abstain from participation in the research and his or her right to terminate at any time his or her participation

the confidential nature of his or her replies.

No individual shall become a participant of research unless he/she is given the notice referred to in the preceding paragraph thereafter providing a freely-given consent that he or she agrees to participate.

PERMISSION

The researcher first sought permission to conduct the study from the Circuit Manager of the targeted schools. After receiving a letter allowing him to undertake his research at the schools within his circuit, the researcher wrote letters to the principals of the targeted schools requesting them to participate in his study.

INFORMED CONSENT

The principals were requested to respond in writing to the researcher's letter. The researcher also ensured that all participants of the study signed the consent forms designed by Walter Sisulu University. This was done so that the participants could understand the purpose, nature and procedures of the research study. They were then ready to respond to all relevant questions without fear of being publicized and mentioned in the research. The participants were informed of the purpose of the research, its procedures, risks, benefits, confidentiality and the right to withdraw (Burns, 2000; Johnson & Christense, 2008). Informed consent requires that participation be voluntary. In other words, participants must be volunteers and they must "feel free to choose whether to take part, know all the details about what their involvement will mean" (De Luca & Copper, 2009, p. 2).

FREEDOM OF PARTICIPATION

Once the participants knew the procedures and purpose of the research they were informed that they were to participate freely without any fear of victimization as none of the information they provided would be in any way attached to their identities.

RIGHT TO EXIT THE STUDY AT ANY TIME

The researcher informed the participants that he would stop his research any time he felt that there were threats or barriers to the research. He suggested to the interviewees that if they were uncomfortable with any aspect of the research or if they had concerns with regard to how it might affect their employment and family life, he would be happy to discuss this with them and/ or they could withdraw from the research.

CONFIDENTIALITY

Another important ethical issue is confidentiality, meaning that the identity of the participants and the information they provided is in no way disclosed unless the participants give their permission. This is significant because there are circumstances where data are publicized without participants' permission and this may cause them harm. In this case the researcher assured the participants that stringent efforts would be made to maintain confidentiality. It is hoped that once the participants have placed their trust in him they would be able to express themselves freely. In addition, researchers must pay great attention to preventing "unauthorized use, access, modification, or disclosure of personal information". Confidentiality is essential in research on sensitive topics because of the potential risk of harm to participants who would refuse to cooperate if confidentiality were not clearly guaranteed (Kimmel, 1988). Privacy is a human right that must be protected, and guaranteeing a participant's confidentiality avoids violating their privacy (Johnson & Christensen, 2008). The participants in this study were assured that the information gathered in this research was, in the interests of safety, not to be disclosed to anyone.

ANONYMITY

The researcher clarified to the participants that at the conclusion of the research any information that revealed their identity would be destroyed unless the individual concerned had beforehand consented in writing to its inclusion in the thesis. To

ensure the participants' anonymity, the researcher did not mention their names to anyone who was involved in his research. Their names were changed and their places of employment were not mentioned. The findings were discussed and presented in such a way that their identities could not be deduced.

HARM TO PARTICIPANTS

According to Cohen et al. (2007, p.58) the primary responsibility of a researcher is to do no harm; even if it means that one cannot conduct the research as originally planned. Non-malfeasance (do no harm) is regarded as "a guiding precept" in research (Cohen, 2007, p.58) He also explained that "harm" is defined as "pain, stress, emotional distress, fatigue, embarrassment and exploitation. The researcher has a responsibility to identify possible harm as well as to establish procedures to minimize the risk to potential participants before asking them to take part. Also, it is necessary that a researcher discuss with participants any risk of harm or concerns that they may point out. The researcher must be sensitive and vigilant so as to avoid harming the participants. The researcher must also have personal ethical responsibilities in terms of decisions and actions taken which refer to the research. He has to ensure that he does not ask people embarrassing questions, such as, "Is it politically dangerous for someone to talk to you? Will someone lose her/his job by talking to you?" All the participants in this study were assured of their immunity against any harm (Burns,2000;Johnson & Christense,2008).

FEEDBACK TO PARTICIPANTS

After the conclusion of the research the respondents were provided with the findings in the form of a brief typed-out report.

CONCLUSION

This chapter focused on the method and designs used in the study, selection of the research sites, research population and the sample as well as ethical considerations

for this study. The next chapter will focus particularly on women principals' responses to the questions based on how they experienced challenges of appointments, management and governance as well in their recognition by the stakeholders of the school.

CHAPTER 4

DATA PRESENTATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter deals with the presentation of raw data and its analysis. The ultimate aim of the research is to establish the experiences encountered by women leaders as school principals of rural secondary schools of Butterworth District. Another aim is to determine the kind of support that can be provided to those female principals in management, governance and in recognition by the stakeholders of the school. The research questions were:

What is the impact of gender discrimination on the general behaviour of women?

What can be done to support female principals so as to maximize gender equality in our workplaces?

This section begins with some background information derived from the biographical data of the participants (Table 1). This is followed by presentation and analysis of the participants' responses to the interviews, based on their experiences as school principals in rural secondary schools of Butterworth District. P1 refers to the principal of the first school and P2 refers to the principal of the second school.

BIOGRAPHICAL DATA

As already mentioned in chapter 3, the researcher used a qualitative research design in collecting and analysing the data. To make more comprehensive illustrations the researcher used percentages. The following is the demographical data of the participants; this clarifies who they are.

Table 1: Biographical data of key-participants:

Respondents	Biographical Variables	Variable Description	Frequency	Percentage
Principals	Gender	Females	2	100%
	Ages	55 - 60	2	100%
	Children' s ages	10 – 20	1	50%
		20 - 25	1	50%
	QUALIFICATIONS	Bachelor of Education (Honours)	2	100%
	Experience as principals	10 – 20 years	2	100%
	Type of School	Public School	2	100%

Teachers	Gender	Male	3	50%
		Females	3	50%
	Ages	30-50 years	6	100%
	Qualifications	STD	2	34%
		PTD	3	51%
		ACE	1	17%
Parents	Gender	Male	1	50%
		Female	1	50%
		Grade 12	1	50%
		Grade 10	1	50%
	Type of school	Public school	2	100%

Table 1 indicates that the two women leaders involved in the research both come from the rural secondary schools of Butterworth, but from different circuits (circuit 10 and 7). They have been working in Butterworth District for the past 15-20 years. They each hold a Bachelor's Degree (Hons). They are both principals of rural secondary schools and as such responsible for both administrative and academic tasks including teaching, personnel management and syllabus management. Both of them are married with children but the age of their children differs. The mother whose children are still young attends regularly to them, while the mother of older children allows them to take care of themselves. There are also three teachers who were selected from these two schools; in each school three teachers are used as participants. These teachers have different qualifications as stated in Table 1. In

each of these two schools, school governing body chairpersons are used as participants. Their qualifications and ages are reflected in Table 1. The reason for selecting these participants is to ensure that bias on the part of the research is completely avoided. The parents, i.e. the chairpersons are asked the same questions as put to the teachers and principals.

In the following section, the themes that emerged under the umbrella of experiences of women leaders as school principals are presented.

4.3.1 Gender in Leadership

Responses from the principals

Both participants held similar perceptions of women and leadership. They both believed that women could be good leaders if they had leadership abilities. The fact that nowadays many women hold important positions such as premier (e.g. Eastern Cape, Noxolo Kiviet) indicated that gender was not an important factor in leadership. This was only the case for people who were educated and transformed and did not apply to illiterate conservatives of rural areas.

P2 declared that gender was very challenging in her workplace. She stated:

"*One other temporal male teacher was asked to leave the school because of not having Mathematics as it was the requirement of the school. That teacher said that he needed to discuss the matter but the meeting should be led by the Deputy Principal and all other female teachers including the Principal should not be part of the meeting because he could not discuss a serious matter with the females. The Principal had to enforce herself to be part of the meeting and when the Principal entered, this temporal male teacher left the meeting. This resulted to a serious conflict in my school. Some teachers were saying that the principal deprived the teacher concerned his freedom of privacy and others declared that the Principal was*

correct because she was the accounting officer and therefore nothing could happen at school against her back".

P1 claimed that gender was not an important factor in her leadership at her workplace more especially because there were more female teachers amongst her staff members.

She stated:

"*I do not have any problem with the gender in my school more especially that the females are in majority and therefore not being threatened by those few male ideas*".

Responses from the teachers

All three teachers of school A agreed that their principal was very aware of gender equality in their school.

School A Teacher 1 (SAT 1) stated:

 "*she acts as a parent to all of us with no favourites in either males or females*"

School A Teacher 2 (SAT 2&3) explained himself as follows:

 "*Our principal tells us wherever you go wrong without any favour of gender*"

School B: Two of these teachers had similar responses but teacher 1 aired another opinion that was contrary to those of the others.

School B Teacher 1 and 2 (SBT 1 & 2) stated:

 "*Our principal is very good in gender based issues. She respects the gender of everyone and respects men and women equally*"

 School B Teacher 3 (SBT 3) stated:

 "*Our principal is having a negative attitude towards males. She once handled me unfairly when I was late at school, by saying that I am doing this because I wanted her to talk and she was not ready to say anything*"

Responses from the parents

School A Parent (SAP) This parent (chairperson) of the first school declared that he did not have anything negative to say about the way the principal was handling both genders of parents. She stated:

"*Our principal is handling both male and female parents very well and equally at all costs*"

School B Parent (SBP)- This parent agreed that her principal is very good at handling the parents irrespective of gender. She declared:

"*Our principal is treating us with great respect*"

4.3.2 Women's Leadership Style

Responses from the principals

P1 participant agreed that, owing to the uniqueness of individuals, it was difficult to deem women's leadership different from that of male counterparts.

She mentioned that gender did not count when it comes to management but the problem was with the people that they dealt with. P1 and P2 spoke about leadership utilizing descriptors such as "compassionate" and "emotional"; they did not say anything about leadership in traditional terms. For these women, leading with compassion meant more effective leaders.

P1 shared the following thoughts:

"*I can only say that being a woman in this particular role allows me to be more compassionate about things and it allows me to be more comprehensive in the ways I see things. Women convey more emotions and passion in their leadership. I think I'm a caring leader. I think I'm a compassionate leader. I think I am a very strong leader. I think I'm the kind of leader people have faith in*".

P2 stated: Gender has nothing to do with management. The only problem is with the people you are working with. It depends on the support or lack of support the teachers give you as is the case with everybody.

"*I think gender does not matter when it comes to leadership and management because it does not need any energy but good leadership and management skills. I am therefore more cautious to stick to the policies and rules of the government when leading but in some cases teachers have that wrong belief of undermining women but I am stopping that with immediate effect*".

P1 = 1st principal   P2 = 2nd principal   SAT1 = school A teacher 1

SAT2 = school A teacher   SAT3 = school A teacher 3   SBT1 = school B teacher 1

SBT3 = school B teacher 3   SAP = school A parent   SBP = school B parent

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"*When I am sharing with other female principals they spoke of the efforts made to assert their leadership in compassionate ways for school improvement knowing that it was an uphill battle and that the respects that they spend years working for had been a sure bet for many of their male counterparts*".

Responses from the teachers

SAT: All the school teachers of school A agreed that their principal is a satisfactory leader. They stated:

"*Our principal is leading more with compassion and love for all of us in the school*"

SBT: According to the leadership style these teachers were not very different in responses. SBT 1 & 2 stated:

"*Our principal is adhering to the policies of government in whatever that she is doing at school and does not deviate at anytime*"

SBT 3 stated:

"*Our principal is adhering to the policies and procedures of the department but only when they are in favor of her. I do not think she is good by being harsh at some people and lenient to others*"

Responses from the parents

SAP declared that he did not have any problem with the leadership style of the principal. She shared the following thoughts:

"*Our principal arrives at school early and remains at school ensuring the smooth running of the school. Teachers always teach throughout*"

"*I like the way she ensures that teaching and learning is taking place throughout in our school. That is what we want from the principal*"

4.3.3 Male Colleagues' attitude towards Female Leadership Style

Responses from the principals

Female-led male teachers have a tendency to being envious of her as a leader; they often feel jealous and this leads to undermining her.

P1 declared that she was very frustrated by the attitude of male staff members who tended not to take instruction from her because she is a woman.

She stated:

"*In many ways, men can raise an idea and it is supported but if it is raised by me it takes time to be supported. I think what I sense and learn is that I can say something again and again but people do not listen to me. I feel frustrated by how many times do I have to say something or demonstrate something*".

P2 stated that she did not encounter many problems in respect of her leadership style but she sometimes realized that there were questioning looks or questioning tones where some teachers grumble while she is talking. She ignores such remarks because they are not directed to her. She tend not to take those remarks seriously that were not properly addressed to her. Many followers dislike following orders from the leader.

P2 stated:

"*If I am giving an instruction to my teachers I do not care about expressions that are not uttered. I ensure that my work is done. One of my male teachers liked to grumble but I did not consider that as an issue*".

Responses from the teachers

SAT declared that they did not have any problem with their principal; they worked very well with her. Her only irritating trait was that she seemed to panic easily. They shared the following:

"*Our principal is very good in ensuring that there is progress in the school but she is panicking a lot and wants things to be done as quickly as she wants, yet we are not young to run as she likes*"

SBT: agreed that their principal was good and that they work well with her but teacher 3 offered some additional information. SBT 1 & 2 stated that:

"*Our principal is good; she is always in need of job well done*"

SBT 3 shared the following thoughts:

"*Our principal is not very bad but her problem is that she cannot understand that we are from different homes with different lifestyles and we cannot all be as perfect as she wants. She is more of a perfectionist and wants us to be like her*"

Responses from the parents

SAP declared that their principal is very good at handling everyone at school and that makes even male parents respect her greatly. She stated the following:

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

"*Our principal respects us all and we therefore respect her as such*

SBP- A parent of school B responded by saying that they were happy to have a principal of that calibre as she respects everybody equally. They shared the following thoughts:

"*We are happy with the way our principal handles parents and the parents are always trying to give her all the respect she deserves*"

4.3.4 Support from Female Teachers

Responses from the principals

Both principals agreed that the support received from their female staff members was based on sympathy and empathy shared with them because of their being the same gender. The only problem was with P1 who experienced some resistance from elderly female staff members who disliked taking instructions because of her age, undermining her, but this did not bring the school to disrepute. The principal continued to reprimand the staff members when this was called for.

P1 stated:

"It is difficult to work with elderly people who even do not want to take instructions from you forgetting that you are a leader".

P1 = 1st principal   P2 = 2nd principal   SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher   SAT3 = school A teacher 3   SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3   SAP = school A parent   SBP = school B parent

P2 stated:

"*I only tell my teachers with love to do something and they do not hesitate to do it*"

Responses from the female teachers

SAT: According to school A teachers, their principal was receiving the maximum support from female teachers; however, the principal failed to take into account that older teachers needed to rest in the afternoons. She felt that they must work without a rest break. They shared the following thoughts:

"All the female teachers are supporting our principal very much but she fails to differentiate between the quickness of the young ones and the elderly ones"

SBT declared that the female teachers gave their principal limitless support. They explained:

"*All the female teachers are supporting the principal very much*"

Responses from parents

SAP declared that their principal seemed to be a good manager both at home and at school. He explained:

"*This is an example of a good manager where there is no cry at home and at work*"

SBP declared that their principal was very responsible in taking care of schoolwork and there was no time that she continuously absented herself from school.

P1 = 1st principal P2 = 2nd principal SAT1 = school A teacher 1		
SAT2 = school A teacher SAT3 = school A teacher 3 SBT1 = school B teacher 1		
SBT3 = school B teacher 3 SAP = school A parent SBP = school B parent		

4.3.5 Communication within the school premises

Responses from the principals

According to P1, she did not feel comfortable working with older colleagues as they always needed a formal way of communication even if something did not warrant this kind of approach. As a result she had adopted the formal way of communicating

through holding meetings with the teachers. She did not take other matters less seriously and undeserving of being put forward at a meeting. She explained:

"*Although they are my staff members, under my management I have to be careful when communicating with them. They sometimes don't do their tasks well but it's very hard for me to talk to them. I can't criticize them frankly but have to find ways to talk with them. This stresses me since I can't act as a leader. Obviously, I assign you a task and if you don't complete it, I have the right to criticize you so that you can do it better next time. However, it's hard to criticize an older person. I have to find ways to mitigate the problem before talking to her so that she finds it acceptable and understands my good will. I used to criticize an elderly colleague frankly in the hope that she would be more responsible for her work but she was displeased. She complained to other colleagues that I was too rude, just because I'm younger than her*".

P2 declared that she did not have problems with regard to communication; she either communicated formally or informally depending on the nature of the matter: if it deserved formal communication she presented it formally and if it was casual she communicated it informally. This did not offend or challenge her.

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

P2 stated that:

"*If something is not too official and not too formal I even share it with my teachers over a cup of tea or in passages because there is no need of sitting down for a minor thing. I realized that my teachers are pleased with that approach*".

Responses from the teachers

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According to SAT 2 & 3 the school communication within the school premises from their principal was good. They stated that:

"*Our principal does not hide anything; she is transparent with whatever she does at school*"

SAT 1: She declared that their principal did not communicate all items very well. She stated:

"*Our principal takes other things for granted and not address them in meetings forgetting that if they are not addressed in meetings they will not be known by everyone of us*"

SBT: No teachers in school B had a problem with communication by their principal within school premises. They shared the following thoughts:

"*Our principal communicates everything very well*"

Responses from parents

SAP- Our principal tells us everything that is communicated to the parents. He stated:

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

in telling you about what we do not know"

SBP: According to the parent of school B their principal did not hide anything from them. She explained:

Our principal is calling us to the meeting to tell us about all what is new in the school and we are happy with that"

4.3.6 Balancing Work and Family

Responses from the principals

The relationship between family and career was seen as a difficult one for women principals who had families. P1 had great trouble balancing work and family although her children were at high school and were able to look after themselves. Her problem was with her husband who demanded a great deal of attention.

She even stated:

"*My husband doesn't understand in such a way that whenever we come back home he sits on the sofa, then I have to dish for him and take the food to him because he doesn't want his food to be prepared by the kids let alone the maid. So I have to attend to him and after that he puts the dishes, over there and takes his newspaper and reads. He really doesn't understand. But regarding the work and procedures to be followed as well as the management of staff he tells me that situation and work environments differ and therefore he cannot be able to advise me with what to do in my own environment.*"

P1 = 1st principal   P2 = 2nd principal   SAT1 = school A teacher 1

SAT2 = school A teacher   SAT3 = school A teacher 3   SBT1 = school B teacher 1

SBT3 = school B teacher 3   SAP = school A parent   SBP = school B parent

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P2 presented with many problems balancing work and family. These problems result in her inefficiency and lack of attention to her schoolwork.

She stated:

"*You know there is a lot of work at school. There are duties and responsibilities that I have to perform and even after school hours then when I get home kids want to come nearer to me and I have a lot of work to do. At the same time even my husband can't see that I have extra work that I have to do. He wants this and that. So it becomes really difficult. And now I have a lot of responsibilities both at home and school, my children come with homework and I just don't have time. This also disturbs my early arrival at school because I have to attend to them in the morning*".

Responses from the teachers

SAT: All of these teachers agreed that their principal maintained a balance between work and family because she cared for schoolwork. They explained that:

"*Our principal is attending school regularly like all the other teachers*"

SBT: All of them agreed that their principal balanced work and family because there had been no time that they had noticed a clash between their principal and her home. She was always at school during school hours. They stated:

"*Our principal is good in balancing work and family because she cares for both of them*"

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

Responses from the parents

SAP declared that their principal seemed to be a good manager both at home and at school. He explained:

"*This is an example of a good manager where there is no cry at home and at work*"

SBP declared that their principal was very responsible at taking care of school work and there was no time that she continuously absented herself from school. She stated that:

"*This principal is managing our school by availing herself at work all the time*"

4.3.7 Managing Transgressors at School

Both principals agreed that transgression is a major challenge to their management but they preferred to be firm in dealing with transgressors. Both of them tackled the transgressor immediately by reprimanding him/her with the relevant disciplinary

measure that is stipulated in the code of conduct of the school. This code also stipulates the punitive measures to be applied for each offence.

P1 stated that:

"*I immediately call the transgressor and a relevant committee and refer him to the code of conduct that we have drawn together and ask him as to why he breaks the policy drawn by him. I ask the members of the committee concerned (i.e. School Management Team, Disciplinary Committee etc.) to reprimand him for the transgression he made.*"

P1 = 1st principal   P2 = 2nd principal   SAT1 = school A teacher 1

SAT2 = school A teacher   SAT3 = school A teacher 3   SBT1 = school B teacher 1

SBT3 = school B teacher 3   SAP = school A parent   SBP = school B parent

P2 stated:

"*I call a transgressor and ask him or her reason for transgression. Once he or she indicates that he or she accepts that by apologizing. I ask him or her to write his apology down. I also had a recent situation where 80% of the teachers did not attend school because of a union meeting. On the following day I called them and asked them to write the reasons for not attending school. I put all their letters in their files after having had a thorough interaction with them.*"

Responses from the teachers

SAT declared that their principal was managing transgression of teachers very effectively, more especially the problems of late-coming, absenteeism, teaching infractions and others; but the major problem she was faced with was with the learners because of the new legislation that learners should not be beaten. They stated that:

"*She is very good in managing transgression in teachers but very difficult with learners because there are new policies of not beating learners*"

SBT declared that their principal was good at managing transgression at school but SBT 3 opposed the first two. SBT 1 & 2 stated:

"Our principal is very good in managing transgression like late-coming, drunkenness, laziness and others by means of having relevant policies"

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

SBT 3 stated:

"She can be good only if she can have a good approach to everyone of us, otherwise she has got favours"

Responses from the parents

SAP declared that he was comfortable with the way in which the principal was managing transgressors at school; but the parents were still trying to encourage learners to be early for school. He stated:

"The principal is controlling the school very well but our children are still coming late to school because corporal punishment is forbidden"

SBP declared that the school management of transgressors was very good. She explained:

"The principal is good in managing transgression at school and she punishes all the late-comers with her teachers and the teachers are always early at school"

4.3.8 Status of a Woman Leader in the Community

Responses from the principals

Some communities still have a misconception about schools being led by female principals. This was more popular in illiterate communities where their schools had a legacy of being led by male principals.

P1 argued that ever since the principal's post was advertised at her school she had had no rest. She openly said:

P1 = 1st principal   P2 = 2nd principal   SAT1 = school A teacher 1

SAT2 = school A teacher   SAT3 = school A teacher 3   SBT1 = school B teacher 1

SBT3 = school B teacher 3   SAP = school A parent   SBP = school B parent

own male teacher to be appointed to this post but the information leaked and I had to challenge that. Even when I was appointed as a principal, a number of community members were undermining me as if I had to dig stones that need masculinity but I am standing firm to show them that leadership is not about sex but good managing skills but I can see that a number of those community members are seeing the reality now and are gradually drifting to my side and supporting me. Initially they even excused themselves from being members of the School Governing Body as soon as I was appointed but now they are slowly coming back".

P2 declared that she did not have much resistance from the community as a whole, but the problem she had was with male members of the community who were undermining her as a principal, not showing any confidence in her. She decided to take the issue with the male Head of Department to whom the community preferred to turn; she had to define the HOD's parameters.

 It was explained that all problems were to be addressed to the principal. Finally it was accepted that there was one principal in the school whether or not she was trusted.

P2 stated that in the case above:

"I had to show them that I am the principal and they have to recognize me whether they like or not. Even the tendency of the Head of Department to perform my tasks had to be stopped immediately. I even asked the Head of Department to write down all his duties according to his job description and I stopped him from trespassing to my own field. That ended up a joke when I said it in parent's meetings because they realized the seriousness of the matter."

P1 = 1st principal	P2 = 2nd principal	SAT1 = school A teacher 1
SAT2 = school A teacher	SAT3 = school A teacher 3	SBT1 = school B teacher 1
SBT3 = school B teacher 3	SAP = school A parent	SBP = school B parent

SAT declared that their principal was receiving respect from the community but this was a new experience; initially she had not been accepted as the principal of the school; things were, however, changing for the good. They stated that :

"Our principal is good in changing the minds of people through hardworking and honesty otherwise she was not accepted in the community before"

SBT declared that their community was very respectful towards the teachers and the principal who was very close to the community members. She stated:

"Our principal is very much loved and cared by these community members and they even attend school meetings very well".

Responses from the parents

SAP- This parent declared that they cared for their school and because of the care they gave to the school, they therefore respected the government workers who were employed to look after their school and the future of their children. He stated:

"This is our school and these are our teachers therefore we love them as our children because they build the future of our children"

SBP declared that they loved and respected the teachers mainly because they themselves were illiterate and unable to teach their children. She explained:

"We respect the teachers because of the education and knowledge that they have."

4.3.9 Gender Equity in the Department of Education

Both principals agreed that the major problem with the department was that they only talked about gender equity but failed to monitor its implementation in schools.

P1 shared this experience:

"A certain male teacher happened to assault a female teacher at school because of their conflict based on their love affair. The site committees and other teachers reported this matter to the School Management Team for intervention. When we were intervening with the SMT in this conflict the teacher concerned shouted at us and could not be able to listen to whatever we said. We reported this matter to the Department for counter intervention but no response that we got from the Department. They only instructed me to solve this problem according to my Management skills because I am the manager of the school. We are still having this burden of having a monster who cannot even listen to anyone's advice"

That led P2 to address the problem she once encountered in her school:

"When there was a Head of Department post in my school parents wanted it to be given to a male teacher. They based their argument on the fact that a male will be able to take the school problems to the Local Headman's place (Imbizo) so that they can be attended properly. That led to a serious conflict because the school problems do not deserve to be taken to the headman but to the Department Offices. This led to a breach between me and the community members. The School Governing Body recommended a male yet a very good, co-operative and active female teacher applied and qualified for the post. This matter was immediately reported to the Circuit Manager who declared that the SGB has got a right to recommend a person of its own choice and I felt very bad in this regard because this female teacher is not even protected by the department in as far as Employment Equity Act is concerned".

4.3.10 Marginalization of women in positions of principal

Responses from the principals

Both participants agreed that they were under-represented in the position of principal; some reasons were put forward.

P1 stated that:

"Historical background and our own cultural beliefs are major reasons for us to be marginalized in principalship or managerial positions in general. Women are also not prepared to take opportunities. Low self esteem in women due to previous disappointments in seeking such positions is one reason. Less sense of responsibilities to the younger women could also be a contributing factor".

P2 stated all of what had been said by P1 but she added the following:

"Community ignorance of regarding females to be the inherents of caring conditions and not management. Political background whereby leadership was associated with men and Discrimination".

Responses from the teachers

All the participants from both schools agreed that females were marginalized when it came to the position of principal. SAT stated:

"There is only one secondary school in our circuit that is led by a woman principal"

SAB stated that the schools in their circuit were mostly led by women principals.

Responses from the parents

All the parents from both schools agreed that they did not see any marginalization of women in the position of principal because their schools were led by women. SAP stated:

"Women cannot always lead they must be satisfied of the few women that are Leading because leadership is for men"

4.4 Conclusion

This chapter focused on data presentation. The next chapter will focus on findings, conclusion and recommendations.

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the study was to investigate the experiences encountered by women as principals in rural secondary schools of Butterworth district. The findings are based on experiences of women who have chiselled through the glass ceiling (Cubillo & Brown, 2003) and accessed a principal ship post, but it is evident that even at this level women continue to face and experience challenges from within the organizations in which they work and in the societies in which they live. It is evident that the glass barriers are not just at the top but all around women as stated by Cubillo and Brown (2003). This is arguably due to the deep structures (RAO Stuart & Kellener, 1999) and deeply-embedded social practices (ELY and Meyerson, 2000) that devalue women's interests who apply for positions of power in these organizations. The challenges are not tangible and formal, but are intangible, informal, subtle, appearing gender neutral (Ely & Meyerson, 2000). They exist within the home and schools as organizations. The findings of this study were used to draw conclusions and recommendations.

5.2 DISCUSSION OF COLLECTED DATA

5.2.1 GENDER IN LEADERSHIP

It has come to the fore that gender has a substantial influence on leadership practices more especially in deep rural conservative environments. In the findings of this study it is clearly identified that gender has more effectively in most cases worked against the success of women as leaders. Once a woman is placed in a leadership position all the stakeholders tend to forget that every person is unique; they associate every mistake as gender based. This places every woman at a disadvantage. A norm is established that challenges every woman leader. Other

people undermine a woman on the grounds of gender rather than on her lack of leadership skills; maintaining that leadership is for males not for females. The participants and the literature used in this study acknowledged particular advantages of being a female leader which are similar to those perceived by English counterparts (Coleman, 2003), for example, it was easier for them to approach their staff and students and to emotionally share and empathize with them about any difficulties and unhappiness in their families. Caring for subordinates' interests and trying to maintain harmony were tasks which required them to be careful, considerate and meticulous. Their leadership experiences indicated that they could not operate contrary to the traditional gendered stereotypes. Trying to meet the cultural norms prescribed for them resulted in conflict and at times stress. This finding is also supported by Ngan Thi Thuy le of University of Waikato in his thesis (2011, p.74) with his topic "How does culture impact on Women`s Leadership in Higher Education?" He declared that it is the stereotype which associates women with care and consideration that possibly accounts for their leadership style. This is also supported by Jacobs, Jerry and Gerson (2004) when they stated that, despite households' dividing chores more evenly today, there is evidence that women have retained the primary caregiver role within family life despite their economic contributions.

5.2.2 Women leadership style in relation to male counterparts

There is nothing as difficult as comparing two leadership styles of two different leaders with different backgrounds and different roles at home. But this is what takes place at schools when it comes to leadership by a woman. Women leaders are compared with their male counterparts. While noting female attributes, for instance, softness and accessibility as advantages, the female participants in this study believed men to be better leaders because of certain innate traits. Assertiveness, emotional toughness and willingness to take risks were among the male characteristics which were considered more appropriate for leadership. In this study, women perceived themselves to be easily affected by their emotions and sensitivity in dealing with work, which they saw as not good for leadership. Although the

female participants in this study appreciated male attributes, they thought that women had the ability to be good leaders. One possible explanation for the belief of men's superiority over women is that women perceived that they were negatively affected by their feelings in tackling problems at work. In this study women reported that they used a transformational leadership style as they encouraged innovation, considered individual needs and emphasized mentoring and coaching their staff members.

The most significant weakness the female secondary school leaders have in as far as participants are concerned is that they are very soft, shy and patient when dealing with staff and pupils. They agreed that women are naturally soft and motherly. This is supported by Holmes (1995), when he said that women's speech tends to be marked by politeness owing to their frequent use of devices known as hedges and boosters.

5.2.3 Male colleagues' attitude towards female leadership style

It is a matter of serious concern that males tend to undermine a female leader and respond negatively to all her instructions. In this study women perceived themselves as being resisted by male subordinates to perform tasks assigned to them; some of them did not even want to listen to a female leader in terms of being advised and guided in mastering their work. This emanates from the conservative belief that men are superior to females. This should not be the case; the female principal is simply in an administrative position. Thakathi confirms that in South Africa male dominance is prevalent in black schools. Men regard women as less suited for leadership positions.

5.2.4 Support from female teachers

It has been proved that women support each other on the basis of sympathy and empathy. Being of the same gender makes females work in accordance with the

interests of the female leader. This study has revealed that while respect is shown by females, age differences affect women's exercise of leadership. This occurs when a younger female leader leads older female teachers. Older teachers are often reluctant to submit to a younger female, more especially if they are not approached in a respectful manner. (Work info.com ,2011) supported this finding in stating that women's networks provide an excellent opportunity to offer support to other women in their companies.

5.2.5 Communication within the school premises

 No form of communication is always ideal. It depends on the person referred to, his attitude and his choice of words. Communication within the school premises is one of the most important aspects of the running of the school. Teachers respond differently to different communication strategies.   Older teachers expect to be informed in the traditional way of any matters arising.   Younger teachers are less fastidious about formal approaches. Young teachers do not even enjoy attending meetings as in the case of the older ones. Young teachers like to share important information in an informal manner. This finding is supported by Basset and Frankel (2004) when they stated that "For many people in management (Aka administration) communication in the traditional world means to talk to someone. It is seen primarily as information top-down and one-way".

5.2.6 Balancing work and family

The findings of this study indicated that balancing work and family obligations seriously constrained women in fulfilling their roles and advancing their careers. This finding is not surprising because a possible tension between work and home is a barrier to women in South Africa (Akao, 2008, Court,2004, Davis & Johansson, 2005).

As mentioned earlier, the women in this study were overwhelmed with huge workloads and domestic responsibilities, resulting in high levels of stress. These

women leaders had to shoulder the dual burden of responsibilities in their workplace and at home and were under great pressure to meet the norms which forced them to place family and work interests ahead of their own. This finding is supported by Schuler, Hoang, Vu, Tran, Bui, Pham (2006 p. 386). Men,as partners, who do not play a domestic role in the home make it even more difficult for women to handle demanding positions of power in the workplace. Chisholm (2001) also affirmed that in South Africa men hardly take a full domestic responsibility (e.g. childcare and other domestic responsibilities) while women more often seem to be grappling with the issues of career and family at the same time. Earlier, Mahlase (1997) had also observed that married women teachers' attempts to live in both the public sphere of work and the private sphere of home are very stressed and that these problems become acute when women are in the positions of principals. This is perhaps partially the reason for fewer obstacles of this nature being experienced by married women with elder children who are able to take care of themselves, as also unmarried women. This is an example of a gendered social practice to which liberal feminism is completely blind in its campaign for equal treatment of women (Moorosi, 2007,p.517). Men and women start on an unequal playing field owing to social and cultural expectations of gender. Clearly, for as long as cultural roles are gendered, it is not easy for women to create the link between their private and public lives. The demands are higher on them to perform better as principals while they also feel pressurized to perform well as wives and mothers. Therefore, combining a career and family seems problematic for women, especially the younger ones who are still expected to prove themselves to be good mothers and good wives. Women principals clearly suffer the guilt of being good principals at the expense of their families. As a result Nancy Folbre (1991) stated that most political economists reinforced this distinction between the moral (private) and the economic (public) world, neatly assigning women and the family to one, men and the market to the other. Even the prominent English neoclassical, well-known for their emphasis on the competitive marketplace, were reluctant to allow economic self-interest to disrupt the home. Stanley Jevons, an otherwise loyal advocate of laissez-faire, proposed that mothers with children under age 3 should be barred from factories and workshops. Alfred Marshall cautioned against increases in women's wages that might

tempt wives and mothers to neglect their household duties. Victorian culture promoted new, refined ideals that working-class women, busy keeping their families fed and clothed,could seldom afford. In both England and the United states, predominantly male trade unions couched their demands in terms of a "family wage" that only men should earn. When male trade unionists argued that they should earn enough money so that their wives would not have to work, they clearly defined "work" as labour, performed outside the home for wages. Angela Davis made a crucial distinction between the work that women were forced to perform for a master and the domestic labour that they provided for their own families.

5.2.7 Managing transgressors at school

There is no one method of dealing with transgression in the workplace but the most important aspect an administrator must consider is to tackle the transgression immediately before it becomes uncontrollable. It is inadvisable to allow for something detrimental to one's administration and management to flourish until it becomes difficult to solve. The findings of this study indicate that transgression must be nipped in the bud; the relevant committees should be engaged in any strategies to eradicate all forms of transgression. For instance, if a teacher comes to school late the School Management Team should attend to him immediately before others become influenced and begin to follow his poor example. According to the Manual for School Management (2001,p.j4) discipline is usually maintained through a system of rules and regulations. The employer's responsibility is to act consistently and appropriately within the known procedural framework.

5.2.8 Status of a woman leader in the community

These findings have illuminated the intricacy of the various levels (social and organizational) characterizing factors affecting women's participation in education management. Interaction between social and organizational levels is therefore inevitable, since cultural practices within society shape discourses within schools as organizations. It is the very same people who live in the community who also influence who should run the schools and how they should be run. This has direct

implications for the policy of the school as is indicated in Moorosi (2006), that policy alone cannot guarantee gender equality. Hence, these gendered social practices both within schools and society have to be identified and tackled immediately when they arise, in order to achieve broader and more genuine gender equity.

5.2.9 Gender equity in the Department of Education

The Department of Education is very aware of the challenges faced by women as school principals. This is witnessed by the fact that the department is preaching gender equity to the department offices that takes place through equal employment opportunities and the Employment Equity Act. The department is also very concerned with affirmative action in workplaces. This seems, however, to be mere lip service because the department does not monitor the implementation of this gender equity through workshops and seminars that can guide teachers to work as a cadre of gender equality. Even the community members are not made aware of the policy of gender equality, hence they continue to marginalize women in the workplaces. The Department of Education has a serious responsibility of bringing to the attention of every education stakeholder its stance on gender equity and the outworking of it on the products of the department. The democratic government of South Africa recognized that women have been subordinated throughout their lives and there is a need to take appropriate measures to ensure gender equity. The Department of Education recognized this by including principles of gender equity in a number of its policies. It is also proposed that our vision should be a gender-sensitive education system that facilitates the development of a non-sexist society, as envisaged in the constitution. (www.education.gov.za, May, 2002)

5.4 Recommendations

In order to improve women's representation in educational leadership, serious efforts must be made to address a number of issues. Firstly, women should be encouraged and supported to participate in leadership. Women should also be offered leadership preparation and leadership programmes so that they feel more self-confident and can function effectively once appointed. Also, women should

become aware of the difficulties and challenges of the wide socio-cultural context and be ready to face them. In addition, empowering women by providing them with tasks for management practice is of great importance to the preparation and development of a female cadre of leaders. The women in this study were not offered any preparatory or training course in leadership, neither did they have an opportunity to join forums or conferences on leadership. Experience taught them how to lead but this is not always sufficient. Had they wanted to improve their management skills, they would have had to spend their own time and money taking a management course.

In a context of change and strong cultural influences where experience alone is inadequate, training is fundamental to leadership (Bandiho, 2009). In order to eliminate the outdated concept of 'old is gold', for example, training and mentoring programmes should be offered to young or aspiring leaders. These programmes will prepare them with the skills they need in order to cope with the enormous challenges of an increasingly competitive working environment. Furthermore, organizational authorities must be open-minded and willing to appoint young female staff who are competent.

Apart from the development of supporting programmes and networks, the internal barriers to women's advancement must be changed. This study found constraints caused by balancing work and family, together with working in a male preserve that lowered women's self-confidence and career aspirations. Stereotypical tasks affect women's career choices. There is a general belief that gender equality has been achieved in South Africa since it has been attended to as far back as the attainment of democracy in 1994; as a result, actions designed to promote gender equity and to eliminate sex discrimination are being neglected by many officials and leaders. A significant step would be to widely disseminate law on gender equality throughout the country so as to raise public awareness about gender issues .Women's roles and their contribution to all spheres of life and the barriers to their advancement should be published through educational campaigns that could bring about changes in both

male and female attitudes to gender stereotyping. Domestic duties are not the sole preserve of women. The conventional model of womanhood which confines women's life should therefore be changed. It is essential to re-socialize gender stereotypes. Education and public media are of great benefit in this process .Families and schools are the most important places where knowledge on gender equity should be taught. Gender issues need to be included in the content of leadership training and mentoring courses.

Furthermore, it is also advisable that the following should be taken into cognizance in all our workplaces:

Women are the persons who have the most to lose, owing to the factors that contribute to their under-representation in positions of principal in Butterworth District Secondary Schools, therefore women must come to grips with managerial problems facing them by reading government circulars, discussing issues and attending seminars. Mutually supportive networks and giving one another feedback can be of great value.

Women who are principals already in Butterworth Secondary Schools must accept as a fact of life that they are expected to prove themselves better than men and are advised to apply their energies to proving their abilities rather than wasting their energy on a futile fight against the system. Their proven abilities could contribute much to the formation of positive policies regarding women's reform. Women teachers must guard against blaming all the problems they experience at work on discrimination. Even if this is the case, each woman can do much to break down prejudice and to improve work relations. It is essential that women teachers learn to understand and use the system of policies and power in their organization.

The school governing bodies should have policies in place to counter discrimination. Policies should be understood by all the members of the school governing body and the school staff. These policies should be implemented and monitored by the school

community at large. The committees who represent unions in schools should be vocal about gender issues when it comes to promotion to the post of principal.

Women's organizations in Butterworth must play a leading role in ensuring the implementation of gender equality in appointments and promotion of academically-qualified female teachers to the post of principal.

The Department of Education of Butterworth as well as nationwide should ensure that both girls and boys are brought up with positive, non-stereotypical attitudes from primary school level upwards. Schools should be made gender-sensitive organizations in order to transform the traditional stereotype that only males are suitable for management. This will only be implemented by ensuring that the section panels are well capacitated with affirmative action and gender equity in the workplace. The department officials should ensure that monitoring teams against imbalances in the employment of principal teachers in schools are in place and actively operational.

Women should be invited to workshops or courses where their self-esteem could be raised so that they stop minimizing their ability in the post of a principal. The recommendations of this study are aimed at changing the situation in Butterworth and South Africa as a whole. If this can be implemented, the gender issues that pertain in our country may be curtailed.

5.3 CONCLUSION

For as long as social practices within schools as organizations are viewed as gender neutral, and for as long as women's work and interests outside these organizations is considered less important, there will always be a discrimination in appointment based on gender. Further, unless there is recognition of how gender is conceptualized, attempts to address gender inequality in management within the context of schooling in South Africa will remain superficial. The focus on cultural and

social practices has enabled the researcher to highlight these differences in a way that exposes these insidious and subtle discriminatory practices that affect the welfare of female leaders in workplaces. This exposure enhanced the understanding of some of the tensions shaping the discourses in the management of school and of the means of achieving broader gender equity in school management.

The analysis revealed that female secondary school principals face unique obstacles in their substantive posts in school administration. Subordinate teachers posed the single biggest threat to the effectiveness of the female leaders. Male teachers were reluctant to cooperate and were not sufficiently supportive of the female principal. The surrounding community was reportedly undermining the female principal. Finally, the female secondary school principals caused problems for themselves by virtue of their leadership styles. They reported that they were often too timid to effect decisions and plans. They also feared the old experienced teachers. Other problems faced by them included poor links with the community and a conflict of administrative and instructional roles. These problems were likely to adversely affect the effectiveness of the female secondary principals in Butterworth district. This has significant implications for promoting gender equality because it has unveiled covert barriers inherent in Butterworth society. This study of women's leadership experiences in education paves the way for more research of this kind to empower women. Women's poor representation in educational leadership and gender equality in general can be improved if the deeply-embedded assumptions about gender in schools are exposed and addressed.

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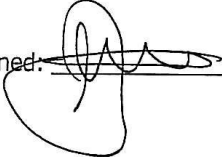World Economic Forum Global Gender Gap Report 2009.

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www.education.gov.za 1 May 2002

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Province of the
EASTERN CAPE
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

CONSENT FORM: PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN BUTTERWORTH DISTRICT

I ___M. MANNYA___ give / do give permission

Mxunyelwa Mzukisi to undertake research at Ibika Junior Secondary School and Ndabakazi Junior Secondary School in Butterworth District.

Signed: _____ Designation: ___HOD___ Date: 30 | 6 | 2011

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY
FACULTY OF EDUCATION
NELSON MANDELA DRIVE
MTATA
13 JULY 2011
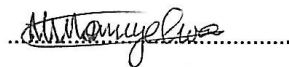
THE PRINCIPAL
IBIKA J.S.S.
BUTTERWORTH

SIR / MADAM

APPLICATION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH AT IBIKA J.S.S.

On behalf of myself, Mr M. Mxunyelwa (WSU) wishes to apply for permission to conduct a research in your school. This research will help me towards obtaining Masters of Education in Educational Management and Policy.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

....
Mr M. Mxunyelwa

95

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

NELSON MANDELA DRIVE

MTATA

13 JULY 2011

THE PRINCIPAL

NDABAKAZI J.S.S.

BUTTERWORTH

SIR / MADAM

APPLICATION FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH AT NDABAKAZI J.S.S.

On behalf of myself, Mr M. Mxunyelwa (WSU) wishes to apply for permission to conduct a research in your school. This research will help me towards obtaining Masters of Education in Educational Management and Policy.

Thank you for your attention.

Yours sincerely

Mr M. Mxunyelwa

96

IBIKA J.S.S.
BOX 147
BUTTERWORTH
4960

Sir

With reference to your letter asking permission to conduct a research required by your studies, we grant
it upon you at the time of your interest.

Trusting and hoping that your time of stay with us will be of value to you and us.

Yours faithfully
Mrs P.X. Vokwana

NDABAKAZI J.S.S

P O NDABAKAZI
BUTTERWORTH
EASTERN CAPE

13 JULY 2011

WALTER SISULU UNIVERSITY

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

NELSON MANDELA DRIVE

MTATA

Sir

ACCEPTANCE LETTER FOR CONDUCTING RESEARCH STUDIES

Kindly be advised that your request to conduct research studies and interviews at the above mentioned school towards your Masters in Education Management and Policy has been successful.

We are looking forward to meet you.

Yours faithfully

S.C. Matinise

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCA
NDABAKAZI J.S. SCHOO
BUTTERWORTH. 4960
PRINCIPAL: Matinise
DATE: 13 / 07 / 2011

APPENDIX F

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO THE PRINCIPALS

WHAT THIS RESEARCH IS ALL ABOUT

The focus of this research is on women leaders who serve as school principals in rural areas of Butterworth. As a male principal of Khulile J.S.S. who has worked with a number of very good female people I feel it is worthwhile for me to understand the kind of experience they encounter when they are placed in management posts more especially in rural secondary schools of Butterworth District. The investigation is likely to create a platform for me to address this problem, and establish what is directly affecting them. After all the findings have been made I want to write a paper based on the way the female managers should be treated by everyone whether junior or senior in the workplaces so as to ensure equality of everyone in any kind of work. I also want to make a contribution towards stopping the belief that leadership like fatherhood is only for men and ensure that our daughters are not marginalized because of their gender. This interview schedule is composed up to 3 sections:

Section A : 5 Biographical Data Questions

Section B : 33 Highly Structured Interview Questions

Section C : Open Ended Interview Question

SECTION A :

5 BIOGRAPHICAL DATA QUESTIONS

How old are you?

What is your gender?

What are your educational qualifications?

How long have you been teaching?

What is your rank at school?

SECTION B

33 HIGHLY STRUCTURED INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

A. What could be the impact of the gender discrimination on the general behaviour of women?

How does your personality or character advantage or disadvantage you in your workplace?

Is there any difference between your leadership style and that of your male counterparts? If there are any mention them.

How is the general behaviour of your male teachers towards your management style?

What can you say about the support that you receive from other female teachers in the school?

How do you normally communicate with your teachers at the workplace? Formally or informally and why?

In the case of a meeting do you allow your teachers to discuss and get to a decision or do you guide them towards your own decision?

Do you sometimes get late at school because of domestic problems?

Is there any policy towards the general appearance of your teachers at work? If there is one how do you reprimand a male teacher who transgresses the policy?

As a female principal how do you punish the naughty boys who transgress the school policies?

When you have had a conflict with your husband or your child how do you present yourself when you are at school?

Generally how do you instill your values / ideas to other people?

How do you feel when one seems to be against your ideas?

How do you begin to address a situation where someone seems to undermine your management style?

What is the women status in the society, and how does it affects you as a principal?

B.What can be done to support female principals to maximize gender equality in our workplaces?

What does the Education Department do to address gender equity?

Are the School Governing Bodies interested to employ women principals in their schools? Support your statement.

What impact does the African culture have in women's employment particularly in high demanding and management positions?

Women seem to be relegated to kitchen oriented activities like feeding schemes, with little done towards redefining their role in community and school leadership structures. Do you support this statement and why?

I think apartheid government is the scarcity of women in management position. Do your support or dispute this statement?

Is the Employment Equity Act strongly successful in Butterworth District? Please support your statement.

Is there any organizational support given by your institution and department to nurture women's leadership?

Are the government polices effectively implemented to emancipate women from traditional myths and organization impediments to women advancement?

Are you comfortable about employment of educational professionals by School Governing Bodies (who are not even transformed)?

Are the SGB capable of identifying skills and candidates potentials? Elaborate.

Are there some bursaries offered by the department for your personal development particularly in management? If yes explain.

Does your department offer chances for you to attend management courses? If yes explain.

Is there any set of unique challenge experienced by you as female teachers when applying for management positions in Secondary Schools?

Are Equal Employment Opportunities in RSA adjudged successful or dismal failure? What is your own perception towards this?

What do you think are serious concerns when a woman applies for a leadership position?

Do you have a specific story on failure of a woman candidate in an interview or being selected due to a specific event not related to job requirements? Narrate a story.

Have you ever heard of a specific experience of a woman principal about unique challenges she faces just because of being woman manager? (E.g. from the staff, male colleagues, female counterparts, lay governors or community or from the department).

Do you think women are abused when looking for higher positions in the department? What nature or type of abuse women experience? Describe specific case if possible.

Are there any legal protection measures by department or Acts that prohibits such kind of behaviour? Be brief.

SECTION C

OPEN ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTION

What do you think are the main causes for under- representation of women to principalship positions in Butterworth Secondary Schools?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO THE TEACHERS

SECTION A

5 BOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONS

How old are you?

What is your gender?

What is your educational qualification?

How long have you been teaching?

What is your rank at school?

SECTION B

What could be the impact the gender discrimination on the general behavior of women?

What type of relationship do you have with your principal?

How does your principal normally address teachers when there is something needs to be attended to?

How does her gender advantage or disadvantage you in your workplace?

How does she ensure gender equity in your school?

What can be done to support female principals to maximize gender equality in our workplace?

Is there any organizational support given by your institution to nurture women's leadership?

How do you support your principal in her day to day running of the school?

How does your principal respond to the assistance provided by the teachers to ensure productivity of the school?

Which support do you think is necessary to improve the management and leadership in your workplace?

SECTION C

Open-ended question

How do you feel by the way your principal is managing your school in general?

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE TO THE SCHOOL GOVERNING BODY (CHAIRPERSON)

SECTION A

5 BIOGRAPHICAL QUESTIONS

How old are you?

What is your gender?

What are your educational qualifications?

How long have you been elected in the school Governing Body?

What is your portfolio in the S.G.B.

SECTION B

What could be the impact of the gender discrimination on the general behavior of women?

What type of relationship do you have with your principal?

How does your principal normally address parents (S.G.B.) when there is something needs to be attended to?

How does her gender advantage or disadvantage you in your school?

How does she ensure gender equity in your school?

What can be done to support female principals to maintain gender equality in our workplaces?

Is there any organizational support given by your institution to nurture women's leadership?

How do you support your principal in her day to day running of the school?

How does your principal respond to the assistance provided by the parents (S.G.B.) to ensure the productivity of the school?

Which support do you think is necessary to improve the management and leadership in your school?

SECTION C

OPEN ENDED INTERVIEW QUESTION

How do you feel by the way your principal is managing your school in general?