AN INVESTIGATION INTO TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS
OF FEMALE SECONDARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS
IN KWAZULU-NATAL

THESIS

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ABSTRACT

There are few female teachers who hold principal positions in schools, especially in secondary schools. This study investigates teachers' perceptions of secondary school female principals' leadership abilities and styles.It also investigates whether teachers' perceptions are influenced either by their sexes or experience or lack-of experience of working with female principals.The reseacher hopes that this research findings will help to either:

*   develop and improve female leadership (where it is found to be wanting); and or

*   influence authorieties to appoint more female teachers to head secondary schools.

The literature surveyed revealed that the appointment of principals in seconday schools is discriminatory against female teachers. It further revealed that principals (mainly male) do not prepare female teachers for management and leadership positions. As a result female potential leaders become demotivated. This is unfortunate as research has found that female principals are as effective as leaders as male principals are. One disadvantage of having a small number of female leaders in education is that this results in an education that only reflects the male perspectives and values. This in turn alienates girls' perspectives from education.

In order to establish teachers' percetions of female secondary school principals a survey of the percptions of teachers in the Maphumolocircuit of female principals in this area was first carried out by means of a questionnaire. This was followed by a case study of one female principal. In depth, semi-stuctured interviews were undertaken with the principal and three teachers working with her in order to establish this principal's leadership style and the teachers' feelings towards her.

(iii)

A statistical analysis of the survey and a content analysis of the case study were carried out. These revealed that the majority of teachers perceive female principals as effective and transformational leaders. These perceptions were found to be minimally influenced by either the teachers' sexes or experience of working with female principals. The majority of those teachers who perceived female principals negatively tended to be males and to be from a group of teachers who had never worked with female principals.
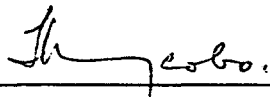
Recommendations for the increase of the number of female principals in secondary schools and for the improvement of leadership in these schools are made.

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my mother, Angeline Nokuthula, for her belief in education and perseverance against all odds and to my daughter, Sbongiseni Nokuthula, for her inspiration.

DECLARATION

This is to declare that this thesis is my work both in conception and in execution. All the sources I have made use of or quoted have been acknowledged by means of complete references.

T.M. Ngcobo.

February 1996.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Table of Contents

TABLES

APPENDICES

A.   Interview guide for the interview with a female principal

B.   Interview guide for the interview with teachers.

C.   Questionnaire on female principals

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   INTRODUCTION

A report on research conducted by the Breakwater Monitor stated that there were 93,2% men and only 6,8% women holding management positions in various organisations in South Africa (Sunday Times, 29 May 1994). It further stated that there was however a move amongst these organisations to reverse the situation and that during the 93/94 financial year 4,97% women compared to 4,5% men were promoted to management positions by these organisations.

The findings of the above report reflect the situation in the education sector where women have, in the past, been excluded from management positions, especially those of running secondary schools and tertiary institutions (Kotecha, 1992). There are, for example, only five out of the fifty three secondary schools in the Maphumulo circuit (this circuit had at the time of the study the highest number of female principals heading secondary schools amongst the circuits in the northern coast of KwaZulu-Natal) that are run by female principals, no college of education in the province is run by a female and only two universities in South Africa have female vice chancellors. All, except two, of these principals were only promoted within the past five years.

However, pressure from women's organisations (Harper in Agenda, 1985) has resulted in a Bill of Rights and an interim constitution that favours equity and equality of opportunities between the sexes. An affirmative employment policy has, as a result, been adopted by certain employer organisations. The Province of KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education and Culture, for example, states when advertising for posts that "due consideration will be given to . . . gender representation" (Advertised Vacant Posts: Regional Offices, Vol 1, 1995:6). This intention will most likely result in an increased number of women teachers applying and being appointed to principalship positions in secondary schools.

The purpose of this study is to determine by means of a survey and a case study whether women already holding these positions are perceived by teachers to be capable leaders, whether teachers feel the leadership styles of female principals are any different from those of males and if they

1

are different whether these styles are preferred or resented by teachers. It is the belief of this author that teachers' perceptions determine, and will either thwart or promote the success of female principals, irrespective of these women's capabilities. Adair (1988 : 13) states this by saying that "you can be appointed a manager but you are not a leader until your appointment is ratified in the hearts and minds of those who work for you." It is hoped that should the findings of this research indicate that female principals are not perceived as suitable to lead secondary schools that the reasons stated for this perception will help female principals know what to change in order to have their appointments "ratified" by their subordinates. It is however, possible that female secondary school principals are perceived as capable. Should the latter be the findings of this research it is then hoped that this will encourage more female teachers to apply for these positions.

1.2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

There are few female principals running secondary schools in the KwaZulu-Natal Province. This means that the pool from which principals are drawn consists of only the male population. The latter is half the population of teachers. The affirmative action policy of the provincial government will result in an increased number of female teachers applying and being appointed as principals of secondary schools. Their success as principals will, to a very large extent, be determined by teachers' perceptions of these principals' leadership.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTION

This study looks at how female secondary school principals are perceived by teachers. It asks whether the perceptions are brought about by:

* female principals' ability or lack of ability to lead; and/or
* female principals' leadership styles.

It further asks whether these perceptions differ according to teachers':
* sex; and/or
* experience.

1.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

Perception

The word perception will be used in this study to mean "the forming of judgements about other people, particularly those that concern people as social animals" (Cook, 1979:2). These judgements, according to Cook (ibid) determine how people behave towards each other, that is, how they "react and respond to others in thought, feeling and action". He further states that perceptions are seldom accurate or stable and may be brought about by superficial characteristics or stereotypes such as sex roles, age, race, occupation and appearance and that stereotyping often leads people to judge positively those people that are similar to them and negatively those that are not.

A Secondary School Principal

The Department of Education and Training Guide for Principals of Schools (1986) views principals as heads of schools whose main responsibilities are the management of physical and personnel resources and the leadership of staff and pupils. The concern of this study is the principal in her capacity as a leader.

A secondary school is a post primary school that offers secondary education (Oxford Dictionary) to pupils in grades seven to twelve.

Principals of secondary schools will, in this study, therefore refer to heads of schools given the task to lead staff and pupils in such a way that good secondary education is provided to the pupils.

Leadership.

There is no consensus among leadership scholars on what is meant by leadership. Some base their definitions on traits possessed by individuals. Etziani's definition is an example of a leadership definition based on traits. He defined leadership as "power based predominantly on personal characteristics" (Hoy and Miskel, 1978:270). Others base theirs on "leader" behaviour. Fiedler (quoted by Hoy and Miskel) for example, stated that "the leader is the individual in the group given the task of directing and co-ordinating task - relevant group activities" (ibid). There is a third group that further defines leadership in terms of outcomes. Hemphill's definition is an

3

illustration of this group's view of leadership. He stated that to lead is to engage in an act that initiates a structure - in - action as part of the process of solving a mutual problem (Hoy and Miskel, op cit).

The context in which the term leadership will be used in this study will be as Burns (in Schmuck, 1986) and Foster (in Smyth, 1989) viewed it. Burns felt that leadership is the ability of an individual "to influence followers to act towards goals that represent the values, aspirations, and expectations of both the leader and the followers" (in Schmuck, 1986:2). This definition saw leadership as an interpersonal influence where the leader and the followers influence each other and share power. Leadership in this study will also be seen as a process that is transformative (oriented towards social change), educative (critiques traditions which can be oppressive), critical (resulting in the reconceptualisation of life practices where common ideals of freedom and democracy stand important) and ethical (carries with it a responsibility to be personally moral and to cause a "civic moral education" which leads to both self-knowledge and community awareness - Foster in Smyth, 1989: 48-56).

Education
The term education will be used here in Kleining's (1986) context which moved away from the view that education referred to those activities which initiate people into or realign people with the evolving traditions, structures and social relations to a view which sees education as those activities which bring about autonomy and enables individuals to transform and not simply conform. It will also refer to the development of one as a rational / feeling, willing agent, able to participate in and change one's world into a realistic understanding of its possibilities (Kleining, 1986).

Educational leadership
Leadership in education / schools will here refer to the facilitation of learning, the capacity to enable, empower or help those in schools to take charge of their lives, "to frame problems and to discuss and work individually and collectively to understand and change the situation that caused these problems" (Codd in Smyth, 1989 : 159 - 60 and 190).

1.5   METHOD OF THE RESEARCH

Literature Survey

Relevant literature will be studied in order to get a grounding on research already completed on female leadership, especially in education.

Survey Method

A survey, which according to Travers (1978) is a study of all or representatives of the individuals in whom a researcher is interested and which according to Huysamen (1994) is often the method of choice when studying peoples' opinions. A survey of teachers' perceptions of female principals will be conducted by means of a questionnaire.

Case Study

A case study of a female principal in charge of a secondary school will be conducted in order to probe teachers' feelings regarding female principals and to determine how this principal experiences leadership as a woman and whether she does feel her style of leadership is similar to that of other female principals but different to that of male principals.

A case study is defined by Merriam (1988) as a study of any single unit.

1.6   ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter two deals with the literature survey on female leadership in education.

Chapters three and four are devoted to the preparation for and the design of the research and the methodology adopted to conduct the research.

Chapter five concentrates on the analysis of the research data.

Chapter six gives a summary of the research and the recommendations made.

CHAPTER 2

FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

(A Literature Review)

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter examines research that has been conducted on female administrators (especially in education) in this country and abroad in an attempt to ascertain their effectiveness. This will be done by addressing the following: the meaning of leadership; whether there is any one form or style of leadership that is more effective than others in educational settings and therefore more acceptable to educators; female leadership styles and their appropriateness or inappropriateness in education and whether there are any barriers to female teachers' career advancement.

2.2 DEFINITION OF LEADERSHIP

There is no consensus among researchers of leadership on what is meant by leadership. As a result the definitions of leadership are, as Hoy and Miskell (1987: 20) put it, "almost as numerous as the researchers engaged in its study." Some researchers define leadership in terms of characteristics or qualities of the individuals, others see it as a process while a third group define it in terms of outcome or what has been achieved.

The following examples, furnished by Hoy and Miskell (1987 : 270-1), illustrate the above:

* "To lead is to engage in an act that initiates a structure - in - action as part of the process of solving a mutual problem." - John K. Hemphill

* "Leadership is power based predominantly on personal characteristics, usually nominative in nature." - Amitai Etzioni

* "The leader is the individual in the group given the task of directing and co-ordinating task - relevant group activities." - Fred E. Fiedler

* "Leadership is a particular type of power relationship characterized by a group members' perception that another group member has the right to prescribe

behaviour patterns for the former regarding his activity as a group member." - Kenneth F. Janda

* "The essence of organizational leadership is the influential increment over and above mechanical compliance with the routine directives of the organization."- Daniel Katz and Robert L. Kahn

* "Leadership is the initiation of a new structure or procedure for accomplishing an organization's goals and objectives." - James Lipham

* "Leadership is the process of influencing the activities of an organized group toward goal setting and goal achievement." - Ralph M. Stogdill

* "Leadership takes place in groups of two or more people and most frequently involves influencing group member behaviour as it relates to the pursuit of group goals." - Robert J House and Mary L. Baetz

Despite the proliferation of definitions of leadership there seems to be some commonalties in how leadership is perceived in that the leader is generally seen as the one who has the ability or power to influence others to willingly carry out certain tasks (see for example Adair 1988 : 5 and Schmuck 1986 : 2).

2.2.1 POWER (AUTHORITY AND INFLUENCE)

Burns (1978) maintains that to understand the nature of leadership requires understanding of the essence of power, for leadership is a special form of power, the exercise of which results in the production of intended effects. He further states that it is important to note that true leadership occurs when the intended effects are produced through getting others to willingly carry out certain tasks. This voluntary submission does not necessarily entail a superior - subordinate relationship. Bacharach and Lawler (in Bush, 1987 : 76) refer to it as "influence". On the other hand when an individual uses structure - based power and/or fear to obtain involuntary submission by subordinates he is said to exercise authority (Bacharach and Lawler - op cit). The latter is, as Burns (1978) maintains, not true leadership but tyranny.

The individual who uses his authority to get others to perform tasks does so not only as a result of his official position but also because he controls rewards and sanctions (punishment). Influence (on the other hand) occurs as a result of the leader's expertise and/or charisma usually

resulting (accruing) from superior verbal skills. Using authority as a source of power produces followers who are seldom committed to their work. Furthermore authority may fail to achieve even involuntary submission when followers do not value rewards controlled by the person in authority. The advantage of using influence therefore is that it usually produces workers that are committed to their work (Bush, 1987).

2.3   APPROACHES IN LEADERSHIP

Students of leadership approach leadership from various angles depending on whether their emphasis lies on leader qualities, process, goal achievement, followers' growth or a combination of some or all of these.

2.3.1.   Traditional Approaches (Transactional Leadership)

Traditional approaches view leadership as a transactional process. This means that they see a leader as one who approaches followers with an eye to exchanging one favour for another, for example - promotion for compliance and support of the leader (Burns, 1979). Traditional approaches also view leadership as a structural, hierarchical and bureaucratic process, that is: they see the power to get others to behave in a particular manner as being possessed by those who occupy higher positions and as always being exercised downwards over subordinates.

2.3.1.1   The Trait Approach

The trait approach or the so called "Great - man" theory postulates that people have inborn qualities which mark them either for subjection or for rule (Hoy and Miskel, 1987). Researchers adopting this approach tried to isolate specific traits or unique qualities that differentiate leaders from followers. Traits such as aggressiveness, forcefulness, competition, independence, intelligence, self-confidence, responsibility and participation were assumed by early researchers to be associated with leadership (Blackmore, 1989 and Hoy and Miskell, 1987).

However studies such as those conducted by Stogdill in 1948 and later by Mann (Hoy and Miskel, 1987) were inconclusive in establishing a connection between personality traits and effective leadership. Many of the traits isolated as crucial to leadership in one study were found to be insignificant in others. These studies further found that leaders with one set of traits are not equally successful in similar situations and also that leaders with different sets of traits can

be successful in the same or similar situations (Hoy and Miskel, 1987).

Despite the failure of the trait approach to link traits with leadership effectiveness, this approach still persists in many forms. According to Watkins (1989) business magnates and/or organizational founders nurture it in order to justify their own positions. Feminist writers such as Blackmore (1989:100), feel the reason the "Great - man" theory persists is that it provides selecting officers (mainly males) with a convenient justification for the exclusion of women from leadership positions on the basis that most women do not possess leadership qualities such as competitiveness, aggressiveness, rationality, forcefulness and independence.

2.3.1.2.   The Situational Approach

When the "Trait Theory" failed to provide a satisfactory explanation of leadership researchers started to believe that successful leadership is determined to a large extent by the demands of the situation in which an individual is to function as a leader. Leaders were now seen as not being born but as being made by the situation (Hoy and Miskel 1987). The task of those researchers who adopted the situational approach was to isolate or identify distinctive characteristics/properties of the situation to which leaders' performance and success could be attributed. Hoy and Miskell (1987 : 273) list the following as properties of the situation that were seen to determine the success or failure of a leader:

* structural properties of the organization (such as size, formalisation and hierarchical structure);

* organizational climate (such as openness, group atmosphere and participativeness);

* role characteristics (such a position power, type and difficulty of task and procedural rules); and

* subordinate characteristics (such as experience and knowledge, tolerance for ambiguity, responsibility and power).

The first study of leadership that used the situational approach was conducted at the Ohio State University (Watkins, 1989). The Ohio study isolated two basic dimensions of leadership, namely - the "initiating" and " consideration" structures. The aim of the study was to find out which of

the dimensions and in what situation brought about acceptance of the leader by his subordinates (acceptance was seen to imply perceived leader effectiveness). The findings were that teachers seemed to work well with and accepted a leader who showed high performance on both the "initiating" and "consideration" structures. The acceptance of principals who scored high on both the structures by his subordinates allowed the principals to obtain "willing compliance from subordinates to directives that clearly are outside the bureaucratic zone of indifference" (Hoy and Miskel, 1987 : 280).

Although the findings of the Ohio State University were confirmed by later studies, such as those conducted at New Jersey, the University of Michigan and Harvard University (Hoy and Miskell, 1987) the situational approach did meet with some criticism. Leavitt, Perrow, Tinker and Low (in Watkins, 1989) feel that the aim of these studies was not to discover the essence of leadership but was aimed at seeking ways in which to manipulate employees and extract greater productivity, while legitimating the power status quo. However the greatest failing of this approach, according to Hoy and Miskel (1987) is its failure to establish a link between leadership and important effectiveness indicators such as satisfaction of followers and achievement.

2.3.1.3. The Contingency Approach

Although Hoy and Miskel (1987) describe the contingency approach as being contemporary it will be classified in this work under traditional approaches, as Watkins (1989) does, on the basis that it still views leadership as a hierarchical process. The Contingency Model of Leadership assumes that leadership effectiveness depends on the fit between the leader's personality characteristic or "leadership style in terms of either task orientation or person orientation, and the favourableness of the situation for the leader" (Watkins, 1987: 284). This approach therefore tries to predict which types of leaders will be effective in different situations (Hoy and Miskel, 1987).

Results from studies by Fiedler, MacNamara and Enns; Hoy and Williams and Martin and Associates all indicate that principals working under favourable conditions (for example, those who are well supported by their staff or working with professional and mature staff) are seen to be effective by their subordinates if they are task orientated. On the other hand principals

10

working under less favourable conditions are perceived as effective if they engage in a relationship-oriented style of leadership (Hoy and Miskel, 1987).

Although the contingency approach has contributed enormously towards the understanding of leadership it also still does not give a satisfactory explanation of the concept. One problem with this approach is its failure to provide us with a single comprehensive and satisfactory definition of leader effectiveness. Fiedler, for example, measures effectiveness "in terms of the extent to which the group accomplishes its task." House, on the other hand, measures leader effectiveness in terms of the psychological motivation and satisfaction of the subordinates (Hoy and Miskel, 1987). Another criticism of the Contingency Model comes form Gidden (in Watkins, 1989 : 19) who maintains that this approach depicts a "static picture of the followers with followers showing no resistance or contestation." He further points out that very few, if any, organisations have such followers. In schools, for example, both teachers and students continually resist, contest or challenge principals' directives even where principals enjoy some support from their subordinates. From the above it can be concluded that traditional approaches of leadership were merely concerned with what leaders could do in order to manipulate follower performance and that they paid no (or little) attention to the needs and aspirations of followers. Contemporary theorists would deviate from traditionalists in that the former became aware that followers were not merely "machines", but beings whose needs and aspirations had to be paid attention to in order to have their commitment to their organisational community.

2.4 CONTEMPORARY APPROACHES

Contemporary approaches differ from traditional ones in that whilst the latter define leadership as making followers do what they would not otherwise do or as "leaders making followers do what leaders want them to do" contemporary approaches define leadership as being a moral exercise that aims at inducing followers to "act for certain goals that represent the values and the motivations - the wants and needs, the aspirations and expectations of both leaders and followers" (Burns, 1987 : 19). Contemporary approaches view leadership as being either transformational or facilitative.

2.4.1 Transformational Leadership

According to Rosener (1990 : 20) transformational leadership is that which induces subordinates

to transform their "self interests into the interests of the group through concern for a broader goal." Sergiovanni (1987) states that in addition to the above transformational leaders are those who help followers become more successful, accomplish the things that they think are important and experience a greater sense of efficacy. He further states that leaders are less concerned with what people are doing but are more concerned with what they are achieving and that leaders help followers become more successful by looking for potential motives in followers and by seeking to satisfy higher needs such as the needs for self esteem and self actualisation (Maslow in Hersey, 1982). Strategies that help leaders transform their followers include participation, sharing of power, energising others and enhancing other people's self-worth (Rosener, 1990). An important aspect or outcome of transformational leadership is that it benefits both the leader and the followers in that it involves mutual stimulation that results in the elevation of one another to higher levels of motivation and morality (Burns, 1979). Burns further adds that a leader's morality has been raised when she no longer insists on social conformity but recognises that followers have the capacity to choose those programs that will allow them to satisfy their needs and aspirations. The levels of human conduct and ethical aspirations are also raised by this form of leadership. Burns gives Gandhi as an example of a true transformational leader who, he says, "aroused and elevated the hopes and demands of millions of Indians and whose life and personality were enhanced in the process" (1979 : 2).

2.4.2. Facilitative Leadership

Dunlap and Goldman (1991 : 13) define facilitative leadership as a process that creates and/or sustains favourable conditions to allow subordinates to "enhance their individual and collective performance." One strategy used by facilitative principals in order to enhance follower performance is to refrain from setting goals or aims for the school but assist the school community to find and develop its own goals (Wilkinson in Watkins, 1989). In summary a facilitative leader acts as a resource and, like the transformational leader, is a change catalyst and works through others - that is : he does not exercise his power over his followers. According to Dunlap and Goldman (1991 : 13) this type of leading is ideal in professional organizations since "professional experience and behaviour clash frequently with bureaucratic preferences and budgetary controls."

In order to create conditions favourable for effective performance facilitative leaders:

* provide and arrange necessary resources,

* select people who can work together effectively,

* provide training for and model collaborative behaviours,

* supervise and monitor activities, not to exercise hierarchical control, but to stress feedback and reinforcement; and

* provide networks for activities and link groups to activities elsewhere (Dunlap and Goldman, 1991 : 14).

In conclusion contemporary leadership approaches view leadership as a follower empowering process. From the discussions of both transformational and facilitative leadership it can be assumed that leaders need to be people of integrity, to be trustworthy, compassionate, self-disciplined, have positive attitudes, communication and problems solving skills and good relations with staff if leaders are to be able to transform, empower others and facilitate willing and optimum follower performance. Smyth (1989) further adds that follower satisfaction and follower transformation are enhanced by the leader's ability to communicate understanding, develop a sense of community and reconstitute power relationships which get in the way of successful processes in organisations. Both approaches also emphasise participatory leadership (Rosener, 1990 and Dunlap and Goldman, 1991).

2.5 LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

This section aims to establish whether there are any particular types of leadership that educationists advocate as being the best in educational settings and to find out reasons for this advocacy. It also aims at finding out whether research has produced enough evidence to support the adoption of these types or forms of leadership.

The Australian Victorian Education Department is an example of an education department that gives guidelines to its principals on how they should perceive their positions. It advises that the principals' administrative practice should not arise from manipulation and direction, but from "the facilitation of collaborative, participatory decision-making process, involving, and unfolding from the dialectical interaction of the school community" (Watkins, 1989 : 13). This view is supported by Dunlap and Goldman (1991) who feel that facilitative leadership is especially suitable for the leadership of teachers. They support their claim by stating that since teachers

13

are increasingly becoming professional and specialists in their fields they need principals who will provide suitable working conditions for the teachers to carry out their tasks and that these teachers would therefore resent manipulation and non-participation in decision making.

Research in schools seems to confirm the above assumptions. Conoley (1980 :39), for example, found that teachers prefer to work under a principal whose style is group-oriented and participatory and that "under most conditions educators prefer a leader who : while injecting personal opinions, also tries to ensure equal participation from all members; works towards the group's goal without self-interest, can reduce group tension, can be a follower when appropriate" and that authoritarian leaders meet with many opposing acts from educators.

Schmuck (1986 : 17) states that Brookover (1978), Edmonds (1979) and Lightfoot (1983) characterise principals of effective or good schools as "inspiring the commitment and energies of the faculty, as raising the respect and admiration of the students, and as enlisting the trust and support of parents." This characterisation corresponds to the description of what transformational leaders achieve. Blase and Blase (1994) are also convinced that facilitative and transformative leadership in schools lead to improved teacher motivation, self-esteem, autonomy, confidence, commitment, innovation and reflection. By stating that the most important function of an educational leader is to "promote and sustain the continuing development of the professional staff", Thomson (1992 :11) also seems to be implying that transformational leadership by principals is important for effective teacher performance in schools.

Although it can be concluded from the above that facilitative, transformative and participatory forms of leadership are suitable and preferred by teachers it is important to note that " it is rare for a single model to capture the reality of management in any particular school . . ." (Bush, 1986 : 131). According to Bush.(op cit), principals, in addition to favouring the above forms of leadership, need to consider other forms should the size, organizational structure, time available, resources available and the nature of the environment demand other forms of leadership: for example, to avoid conflict among staff members a principal might decide against the democratic allocation of scarce resources.

2.6 WOMEN AND LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

Although the teaching profession is "heavily women - dominated" (Kotecha, 1992:4) various researchers agree that the teaching hierarchy is very male dominated (see for example, Ball, 1987, Blackmore, 1989, Davis, 1990, Kotecha, 1992, Sampson, 1987 and Schmuck and Wyant, 1981). Educationists such as Ball (1987) argue that it is desirable that more women should be promoted to leadership positions in schools as this would not only benefit the women leaders but will also benefit female pupils and education in general.

Ball (ibid) states that women who qualify for promotion but have been denied the opportunity to advance lose their self-esteem and sense of personal worth and that the low morale that results prevents women teachers from performing as well as they did before they were denied the opportunity to advance. Ball also maintains that the relatively small numbers of women teachers in senior positions also deprives female pupils of positive role models of female achievement.

Smith (in Ball, 1987 : 73) argues that the dominance of men in senior positions in schools ensures the continued domination of the male perspective in education. He states that this view of the world "from the position of consciousness which has its centre in a ruling class of men" sees women's views being trivialised and unrecognized. As a result the female subordinate position is confirmed and reproduced by educational institutions. Marshall (in Ball, 1987 : 192) adds that because mixed schools, especially secondary schools, are male institutions, the definition of the school tends to "reflect the values and meanings of men's culture and that the language and structure of schooling are predominantly shaped by patriarch." As a result girls in mixed schools feel alienated and tend to perform poorly as compared to girls that attend single-sex (girls only) schools (Jones, 1990).

The question then is why do so few women teachers, especially in secondary and tertiary institutions reach positions of power? The next section attends to this question: for example, is it because women lack leadership skills, or that their leadership style/s is/are not suitable for educational setting or are there some other reasons that prevent women teachers from attaining leadership positions?

2.6.1 Female Leadership Styles.

Skills of leadership are, according to Conoley (1980 : 40) "not biologically rooted or genetically determined but rather shaped, facilitated or stunted by social forces and the entire process of socialisation." From Conoley's statement it can be assumed that an individual's sex is not an indicator of whether she/he can or cannot lead but that her/his socialisation might cause her/him to lead in a particular style. Ball's (1987) research findings confirm the former. He found that for example in Britain women teachers occupying senior positions are as successful as their male counterparts.

In 1990 Rosener (1990) set out to find out whether there is any difference in the way women and men lead. From the male managers' responses Rosener concluded that males adopt or prefer a transactional style of leadership - that is, they view their job as consisting of a series of transactions with subordinates whereby managers reward subordinates for satisfactory performance or punish subordinates for unsatisfactory performance. The study also showed that male managers are more likely to use power that emanates from their organisational positions and therefore from formal authority than women managers are.

The responses by female leaders led Rosener (1990) to conclude that women, because of their socialisation, prefer to adopt a transformational style of leadership and that they ascribe their success to personal charisma, interpersonal and personal skills rather than organizational-stature. These women claimed that they used strategies such as group participation in decision-making, enhancement of subordinates' self-worth, sharing of power and information and getting others excited about their work in order to transform subordinates' self-interest into the interests of the group and concern for broader goals. Rosener (ibid) further concluded that women were succeeding because of - not in spite of - characteristics that are generally considered "inappropriate in leaders and feminine."

The women managers interviewed by Rosener maintained that the advantage of group participation is its ability to instill group identity, increase support for decisions taken, ensure as much as possible that decisions taken are effective (as they reflect as much information as

possible) and make substitution (where necessary) easy because every member of the group is aware of the progress being made (Rosener, 1990).

Sharing power and information with subordinates, according to the women interviewed, not only encourages a two directional communication flow but also creates loyalty among subordinates, signals to them that they are trusted and that their opinions are respected. It also gives the managers an opportunity to hear and attend to problems before the problems explode (Rosener, 1990).

To enhance the self-worth of their subordinates, the female managers give credit and praise to signal recognition of excellence and effort and refrain from asserting their superiority in order not to assert the inferiority of others. The importance of enhancing the self-worth of subordinates, it was felt by the women managers, is especially important for subordinates in jobs that are not clearly defined and are therefore hard on a person's ego (Rosener, 1990).

To energise subordinates Rosener's women respondents made work a challenge that is fun and exhilarating and also made sure that they themselves were enthusiastic about their own work.

Rosener's findings are not unique. Maclean (1992:18) also found that women principals "adopt a collegial model of power sharing rather than a hierarchical and bureaucratic model of personal power, the latter being the approach adopted by many career-orientated men." Ball (1987) quotes similar findings in Britain.

It is however important to note that the above studies were carried out mainly in America and that different forms of socialisation in different countries may influence both men and women to either adopt a transactional or transformational style of leadership. Henkan (in Conoley 1980:39) also cautions against rushing to conclusions that the transformational / interactive style of leadership is the style of choice for women leaders. She says that it is possible that "women are somewhat pigeon - holed in leadership styles in which they may engage" as some studies reveal that "it is less acceptable for women to be very task oriented and authoritarian than it is

for men under any circumstances" and that "women are badly evaluated when they engage in seemingly 'inappropriate' styles of leadership".

Another caution about the so called "female style of leadership" comes from Conoley who states that it may not be successful in all situations. She says, for example, the authoritarian "male" style of leadership fares well in situations that call for a quick decision and that in cultures such as industry and the military any attempts at democratic participatory styles of leadership will be met with hostility and loss of morale. The "female" style of leadership, according to her, is however more acceptable in educational settings as "there is an expectation among group members for group orientated, participatory styles of leadership" (1980:34 and 39).

Coneley also warns that no one style of leadership succeeds in resolving all types of conflict. She maintains that the "male" style tends to function well in intergroup conflict as this style involves exploitative "winner takes all" strategies that are oriented towards winning. The "female" style, on the other hand, seems to be readily acceptable to subordinates who are fraught with internal conflict and where, as a result, the group's morale is low as this style is oriented toward social situations and is interested at arriving at " solutions that are mutually acceptable and beneficial to all present" (1980:39). Since schools are seldom concerned with intergroup conflict it can again be assumed that the latter type of leadership is suitable for educational settings.

Women's Problem with Leadership Assumption.

Although research seems to indicate that women tend to lead in a style that is suitable for educational settings women teachers still are not promoted to senior positions in as great numbers as men are. Conoley (1980) feels that this might be because women who are not in senior positions are not good at asserting or displaying their leadership abilities / potential as they have been socialized into believing that this is not 'appropriate' behaviour for women. Conoley's study (1980) showed for example, that women in mixed sex groups tend to be reactive and expressive while men assume leadership by being initiating and instrumental. She also found that women tend to talk less and make less initiating or less task-related responses than men; agree or disagree with suggestions, opinions or information and generally opt for less

18

visible ways. Stang (in Conoley, 1980:37) maintains "the person who talks the most (not so much as to be obnoxious) is likely to be the most influential and thereby will emerge as the leader." Conoley (ibid) however stresses that the fact that a person is able to sell himself as a leader does not mean that he is a good leader.

Although there might be some truth in the above assumptions the problem with them is that they concentrate only on traits when explaining successful assumption of leadership. Dubuo (in Conoley, 1980:38) points out that "it is far more exact to consider, in addition to the personal traits, the situational constraints, the task and the characteristics of the followers." Henkan (in Conoley, 1980:38) adds that it is "not enough to be dominant, highly verbal, or enthusiastic to assume leadership", but that "the demands of the situation calling for leadership will favour different qualities at different times."

In conclusion the above discussion indicates that women can lead and that they generally lead in a transformational and facilitative manner. It is however important to note that the transformational leadership style is not suitable for all situations and that even in educational settings where it seems to be the preferred style there are times when transactional, and authoritarian styles might be necessary. It is also important to note that the transformational leadership style is not women's exclusive domain (Bradford and Sommerfield in the Harvard Business, 1991). Mnguni (1988:361) also found "there is no difference between the leadership style offered by a female and her male counterpart in secondary schools . . ."

2.6.2. Female Teachers' Career Patterns.

There is evidence that the workplace affords women teachers experience and career patterns that are distinctly different from those of the male teachers (Ball 1987, Sampson 1989, Schmuck and Wyatt 1981, Blackmore 1989, Kotecha 1992, Oram 1989 and Al-Khalika 1989). That the career patterns of women teachers differ form their male counterparts' is evident when one considers that although there are generally more women employed as teachers there are however comparatively few women who attain senior positions in this profession and that generally the most senior positions women attain are supporting ones such as those of deputy

principal or head of department (Kotecha 1992).

The question then is what are the factors that contribute to women teachers' failure to achieve the seniority that male teachers do achieve?

2.6.2.1 Government and Departmental Policies.

Tenure.

One of the policies regulating women employment in South Africa was that a woman teacher lost her permanent position as soon as she got married. This then meant that this woman could not qualify for promotion posts. Tenure for married women was only granted in the 1970's for women teachers in the Houses of Assembly and Delegates and in the early 1980's for the women teachers in the DET and House of Representatives (Kotecha, 1992).

Under qualification.

Women teachers in South Africa, especially Blacks, are generally less qualified than their male colleagues and therefore most of the female teachers do not qualify for most promotional posts, especially in secondary schools (Kotecha 1992:). According to Kotecha (1992:3) it was Verwoerd's intention that Black female teachers be underqualified and work in primary schools where "the great majority of Bantu children are to be found." It then followed that in the DET, although women make up 76% of the teaching profession, only 42% would be in the secondary schools and that of the underqualified teachers 71% would be women (Kotecha 1992).

2.6.2.2. The Androcentric conceptualisation of Leadership.

Jill Blackmore (1989) maintains that the traditional characterisation of leadership is androcentric and blames it for the failure of the majority of women to reach senior positions. She says it is responsible for the perception by selecting officers, and women themselves, that women are not suitable leadership material. She further maintains that the masculine characterisation of leadership cuts across all the traditional approaches of leadership.

The proponents of the trait or the so called "great-man" approach, for example, list traits such

as rationality, aggressiveness, competitiveness, independence, forcefulness and intuitiveness as traits that make a leader (Blackmore 1989 and Hoy & Miskel, 1987). These traits are, according to Kotecha (1992) and Blackmore (1989), historically associated with men and, because women are generally perceived as being emotional, gentle, nurturing, sympathetic and independent, the trait approach renders women aspiring for senior positions invisible to selecting officers. Whether all communities view the above traits as either feminine or masculine in the same manner is debatable. Hofstede, (1984) for example, maintains that the division into what is masculine and/or feminine is not universal. This means that only those countries that are masculine in character will view leadership in the way described by Kotecha and Blackmore above. South Africa is classified by Hofstede (1984) as a moderately masculine country. It is therefore possible that South African communities view leadership as described by the above authors. The perception that only people who are aggressive, forceful and independent are capable of leadership is (as already stated) a consequence of the hierarchical and bureaucratic view of leadership that sees leaders as people who control and manipulate subordinates by exercising power over them in order to achieve personal and preset organisational goals (Watkins 1982).

What is ironic for women seeking senior positions is that, although the trait approach has been denigrated as a result of its failure to illustrate the connection between certain traits and effective leadership, the approach is resuscitated when an explanation is given of why women are thought not to be suitable for leadership (Blackmore 1989). Another disadvantage of the trait theory for women seeking senior positions is that it puts them in a double bind. If they act in a "feminine" manner they are considered "poor" leadership material. If, on the other hand, they display "masculine" characteristics they are then seen as deviants and condemned as being "unfeminine" (Blackmore, ibid).

The situational and contingency approaches which, by definition should offer hope for women aspirant leaders, also discriminate against them. According to the situational approach favourable situations are responsible for effective leadership while contingency theorists (as elaborated in 2.3.1.3 above) maintain that certain traits under certain conditions are important

21

to leader effectiveness. The implication of these approaches is that just about anyone can lead effectively as long as the situation permits or the "leader" changes his behaviour to suit the situation. This however is not the case for women. Blackmore maintains that success by females is attributed to luck whereas success by men is attributed to competence (1989). The above perception is even more puzzling in education when one considers that women's preferred style of leadership has been proved to be successful in education setting.

2.6.2.3. Discrimination by selecting officers.

Various studies (for example by Ball (1989), Sampson (1987), Schmuck & Wyant (1981), Edson (1981) and Tuscott (1992)) indicate that a very large number of female teachers seeking promotion are discriminated against. Edson (in Schmuck & Wyant 1981), for example, states that women teachers in her study claimed that selecting officers use different measures when reviewing female prospective principals than when reviewing men. They felt that, even though authorities often list women's inexperience as reason for their failure to secure senior teaching positions, inexperienced men are often selected for their potential whereas women are required to have already demonstrated their competence. One respondent went on to state that women have to be very good and work twice as hard to get promotion (Schmuck and Wyant, 1981:75). They also felt that discrimination against women does not start with selecting authorities but that it starts in schools where women are never or seldom given the opportunity to gain the necessary experience because females are not generally seen as suitable candidates for leadership jobs.

One reason given for the discrimination is that male "gatekeepers" feel it would be unfair to subject male teachers to leadership by a woman. Oram (1989:28) quotes a British handbook for educational administrators as stating that "it is not customary for a master to serve under his mistress" and a report of a speech in the Time Educational Supplement (1989:30) as pointing out that "only a nation heading for a madhouse would force men, many married with families, such a position as service under spinster headmistresses." The latter part relates to a perception that married women teachers were not expected to pursue careers but that they should be "kept" by their husbands or work as temporary employees. This is evidenced by the fact that married

women only qualified for tenure in Britain in the 1940's (Oram 1989) and in South Africa in the 1970's and 1980's - depending on their race (Kotecha 1992).

Writing about the South African situation Tuscott (1992:37) reports that female teachers here complain that male teachers get promoted faster than women even when both have the same qualifications. They also say that it is difficult for women to be "promoted Head of Department which includes male teachers because men would not accept authority from a woman".

A study by Morgan, Hall and Mc Kay (in Ball 1987) suggests that another reason male authorities discriminate is because they employ stereotypes about women which put women at a disadvantage. Forty one percent of the women respondents who had previously been interviewed for principal positions, for example, stated that they had been asked at interviews questions about matters other than their professional lives, that is, questions in relation to their family commitments. Male respondents, on the other hand, stated they were never asked such questions. Ball (1987) quotes Herber as saying that these stereotype questions arise from the "gatekeepers'" patriarchal tendencies to believe that senior positions for women are incompatible with women's other roles such as being a mother and a wife and feel that women teachers should therefore be protected from this conflict. Edson (1981) feels that there is no need for this "protectionism" as it has been found that women in senior positions are resourceful in handling their varied roles. They, for example, get help in one way or another for child care and household chores.

The problem with claims of discriminations is that they are very difficult to either monitor or prove, especially in teaching, where job requirements for senior positions are usually ill-defined. Schmuck & Wyant (1981:75) found that job descriptions for school administrators are often not very precise and may only state a bare minimum such as: "must have administrative certificate". However, as evidence that discrimination does exist, Edson quotes one respondent who reported that after failing to acquire a principalship position she had applied for, she approached a minister of religion (a member of the committee that had reviewed her) to find out the reason she had not been granted the job. The minister responded by saying: "Gee, you had all the

qualifications, but I'll be honest with you, I couldn't go with a woman" (in Schmuck and Wyant, op cit).

2.6.2.4 Gender Bias in Staff Development in Schools

Schools, according to Sampson (1987 : 36), are guilty of legitimating, for both sexes, "stereotype perceptions concerning authority and appropriate roles" for women and men in schools by creating 'male' and 'female' work. Her study revealed that in Australia principals seldom provide female teachers with confidence-building experiences, for example 57% of women teachers studied had never been allocated administrative or organisational tasks of any kind within their first five years of employment, as opposed to 73% of the male teachers studied. She further found that administrative tasks given to women often involved either running the library or giving guidance to children. These tasks, she feels, are responsible for making women not to view themselves as potential leaders and further influence teachers not to readily expect or accept leadership from women.

Findings similar to Sampson's were also recorded in Britain (Ball, 1987), America (Schmuck & Wyant, 1981) and Africa (Davis, 1990). Ball found that in Britain the discrimination in the allocation of confidence building tasks is not reserved to junior teachers only. He states that senior masters, "apart from occasionally caning boys (discipline), typically deal with school organisation, curricular reconstruction, major administration, CSE examination and resource education, while senior mistresses typically deal with social functions, pregnant school girls, difficult parents, coffee for entertaining visitors . . ." (Ball, 1987 : 205). Davis (1990) adds that, according to her respondents, in Ghana female teachers are expected to deal with gift giving and counselling. She further states that a similar situation exists in India.

In America, according to Schmuck & Wyant (1981), division of labour exists even when men and women teachers have the same job title. They state that many schools in America have more than one vice principal with males generally in charge of discipline - a 'masculine' function - while women are on the other hand, more likely to be assigned responsibilities for curriculum - a "feminist" function.

The South African situation is, according to Kotecha (1992), not different from that observed in overseas countries. She refers to one respondent in Sayedwa's study as stating that "if any woman manages to get herself to a position - ten times out of ten it will be to some obscure position that is often a 'left over' in which no self-respecting male would serve anyway, e.g. catering committee" (Kotecha, 1992:14).

Sampson (1987) found that staff development bias has also raised its ugly head in-service training. She found that in Australia more male teachers (80% compared to 74% females) undertake this retraining and were also more likely to have retrained in areas to do with administration (33% males compared to 18% females). There is however a possibility that the reason few women attended in-service courses is because women do not make themselves available and that therefore authorities cannot always be blamed for the failure of women teachers to attend such courses. Maclean (1992:158-159), for example, points out that a large number of female teachers that enter the profession are not career minded and enter it only because it "combines well with home duties" or is "well suited to a woman's responsibility as a housewife and mother."

2.6.2.5 Family - Related Constraints

A number of female teachers responding to Sampson's study (1987) stated that they did not apply for principalship positions, not because they felt they were not capable, but because of family-related constraints. One such family-related constraint is the 'residential immobility' of married and unmarried women with school going children. Males on the other hand are more willing than female teachers to move their families in order to secure promotion positions (Ball 1987).

Another family-related reason is what Sampson (1987 : 31) terms "The Second Shift". About 65% of female respondents in Sampson's study stated that they would not be able to devote the necessary time to household chores should they take the added responsibility of being a principal. Ball (1987) points out that the question of household chores is not a problem for male teachers as a number of their spouses are not employed outside the home and therefore do the

bulk of the housework. Female teachers, on the other hand, generally come from two-career families where chores are not divided equally between the husband and wife, that is, the bulk is done by the wife. The failure of women teachers to apply for principalship positions as a result of the above-mentioned family-related constraints might not always be perceived as such by males. It is possible that the failure to apply might be perceived by male teachers and authorities to mean that women do not believe they have the ability to lead.

2.6.2.6 Fear of Success

Blackmore (1989) mentions studies that found that women do not aspire to senior positions because they generally fear success. That women fear success has been challenged by Sassen (1987) who found that it is not success women fear but that it is the climate of competition underlying success which encourages anxiety in women. Sassen (op cit) quotes Horner as saying anxiety exists because for most women the anticipation of success in competitive achievement activity, especially against men, produces anticipation of certain negative consequences, for example - threat of social rejection and a 'loss of feminity'. Ball (1987) came up with similar findings where he found that a 'threat' posed by ambitious women is countered by overt sanctions from male colleagues. Sassen (1987) also feels women's fear of competition comes from their concern with preserving interpersonal relationships. Unfortunately for women it is possible that this fear might result in frustrations which might prevent women from working to their capacity (Gillgan in Sassen 1987).

2.7. CONCLUSION

At the moment the number of South African researchers that have focused on female leadership is very small. As a result what we know about the subject is sourced from abroad. From this body of work we gather that there are, without exception, relatively few female principals and that female teachers are not expected to aspire to principalship positions. This perception, that female teachers are not good principal material, can be evidenced from the fact that female teachers are seldom given opportunities to acquire administrative and/or leadership skills by their male principals.

The perception that female teachers are not good principal material is at odds with research findings. Female principals have been found to lead their schools as well as their male counterparts. There do however seem to be differences in the way males and females lead their schools. Female principals tend to view their responsibilities as being transformational, nurturing, educational and leading while male principals tend to view their responsibilities as managerial, controlling and transactional. Female principals' abilities to run schools therefore result from characteristics that have traditionally been considered feminine and as signs of weakness in leaders. Examples of these characteristics are the sharing of power with subordinates, empowering others and concern with enhancing the self-worth of others.

The current South African research does not indicate whether there are any differences or similarities in effectiveness and styles of leadership between South African male and female school principals. The aim of this research is to determine this. The researcher hopes that the findings of this research will contribute towards increasing the number of female school principals by either pointing out to authorities that female teachers are as capable of leadership as male teachers are or by pointing out to female teachers those shortcomings that are prevalent to females and need to be attended to in order to make female teachers better leaders. An increase in the number of female principals, as already pointed out, will benefit education.

CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS AND PROCEDURES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter is concerned with the discussion of **methods** and **procedures** employed in collecting data related to the teachers' perceptions of female principals. It covers the discussion of how the population studied was selected and the selection, design and administration of the instruments used in this research. The methods used for data analysis will be dealt with in the next chapter.

A survey of the perceptions of teachers from twenty schools in the Maphumulo circuit was conducted by means of a questionnaire. A case study of a school in the same circuit was carried out by means of the questionnaire and interviews with the principal and three teachers. The information used for the design of the questionnaire was obtained from responses to unstructured interviews carried out with teachers and through a literature survey of issues related to this investigation.

Most of the questions in the questionnaire were aimed at eliciting the teachers' perceptions of female principals. To determine the teachers' perceptions, the researcher therefore relied on what the teachers said about female principals. A few questions in the questionnaire were of a demographic nature. The purpose of these questions was to determine the characteristics of the teachers being studied.

3.2 THE PREPARATION FOR AND THE DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH

The purpose of this study was to investigate how female principals are perceived by teachers. A literature survey of related research was conducted. A pilot study was then conducted to determine the feasibility of the study, for example to find out the number of female teachers holding principalship positions in various circuits in the north coast of Kwa Zulu-Natal. This was going to help determine whether teachers' perceptions were as a result of stereotyping or

of informed experience. The Maphumulo circuit was selected for study not only because it was physically accessible to the researcher, but also because at the time of this study it had the largest number of female principals. This factor, the researcher hoped, would result in reliable data being collected from "informed" teachers' perceptions.

A decision was made to conduct this research through both quantitative and qualitative methods. The quantitative research was conducted by means of survey questionnaires, whilst the qualitative study was by means of a case study which was carried out through semi-structured interviews. While the purpose of both the quantitative and qualitative methods was to describe the teachers' perceptions, the qualitative method was especially included so as to understand and discover the causes of these perceptions. In order to maximise co-operation permission was sought from concerned individuals. Sampling for both the survey and the case study was then done.

3.2.1 Consent

Consent was obtained by informing participants objectively and honestly about the purpose, nature and importance of the research, their freedom to refuse participation and of any possibility of psychological discomfort (Huysamen, 1994).

According to Maruyama and Deno (1992) informed participant consent is crucial when conducting research, not only for ethical reasons, but also because it increases participant rate as:

*   people are more willing to support and participate in a research they understand and see importance in; and
*   participant apprehension is lessened if participants are aware of the nature and purpose of the research.

Permission to conduct this research was obtained from the circuit inspector and from principals of sample schools. A letter requesting permission to conduct research in schools in the

Maphumulo curcuit was personally handed to the curcuit inspector. This gave the researcher an opportunity to further explain any queries from the inspector regarding the research. A similar procedure was followed to obtain consent from principals of schools to conduct research in their schools.

3.2.2 Sample Selection

Below are strategies used in selecting samples for this study:

a)   Sampling for the Survey

The Maphumulo circuit has a large population of teachers. As a result it was not possible to reach all individual teachers for the purpose of this study. A cluster sample of twenty schools was therefore selected through disproportional stratified sampling. Stratified sampling was also done to ensure that as many female led schools (if not all) as possible were included in the sample since there are still very few schools run by female principals. According to Forcese and Richer (1973 : 130) stratified sampling "involves breaking up the population into various subgroups or strata and taking a separate sample within each subgroup." By including most female-led schools it was hoped to ascertain whether there is any difference in the perceptions of the teachers who were serving or who had served under female principals from the perceptions of those who had never served under a female principal.

The two subgroups identified for this study were:

I)   A group consisting of teachers who were serving or had served under a female principal. This group consisted of teachers from eight schools in the circuit. Two of these schools had been led by a female principal in the past while the other six were presently being led by female principals. Of the eight schools identified, seven responded.

ii)   A group consisting of teachers who had never served under a female principal. This group consisted of teachers from twelve randomly selected schools. Eight of these schools responded.

Out of the 400 questionnaires handed to the twenty sample schools 139 completed questionnaires were returned. A response of 34.8% was therefore obtained from 75% of the schools that responded.

b)   Sampling for the case study

The school to be studied and the teachers to be interviewed were selected by means of purposive sampling:

The school chosen was seen to be representative of the other female-led schools in the area in that the principal of the school had more or less the same experience as the other female principals in the area. The range of experience of the female principals whose schools responded was 1 - 5 years. The principal of the school chosen had been serving as a principal for three years at the time of the study.

Two teachers (one female and one male) who had previously served under a male principal were selected. This, the researcher hoped, would help determine whether teachers perceive male and female principals differently. The vice principal was also included in the group of teachers to be interviewed. The vice principal, it was hoped, would have a deeper and better understanding of the principal. The principal was also to be interviewed. The purpose of interviewing her was to gain an insight into how she experienced her leadership and whether there were things she purposely did to bring about the teachers' perceptions of her.

3.3   RESEARCH TECHNIQUES

This research was conducted by means of unstructured interviews, questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. This method of observing a single event from several points of view, referred to as triangulation, was first advocated by Webb in 1966 (Walker, 1985). Webb felt that the use of several methods would result in a more accurate description of the event being studied.

3.3.1 Unstructured Interviews

Huysamen (1994 : 174) defines unstructured interviews as those where the interviewer "simply

suggests the general theme of the discussion and poses further questions as these come up in the spontaneous development of the interaction between the interviewer and the research participant."

Another characteristic of unstructured interviews is that the interviewer may depart from his or her role as a detached interviewer and interact with the respondent. The aim of the unstructured interviews is to try to "understand how individuals experience their life - worlds and how they make sense of what is happening to them" (Huysamen, 1994:174). The interviewer's questions were therefore directed at the participant's feelings, beliefs, experiences and convictions about the theme in question.

Unstructured interviews were carried out with a few teachers who were known by the researcher to be serving or to have served under a female principal in the past. The teachers' responses helped in the compiling of questions for the questionnaire. Unstructured interviews were also carried out with a few female principals (also known to the researcher) in order to get an indication of how they perceived their leadership. Their responses helped in the compilation of both the survey questionnaire and the interview guide for the case study.

3.3.2 The Questionnaire

The questionnaire was preferred over the interview technique for this survey because of the following advantages (as stated by Forcese and Richer 1973 and Cohen and Manion 1980) :

* It is the most efficient instrument to reach a large number of the population.
* The anonymity ensured by the questionnaire makes it very likely that the responses given by respondents represent their genuine feelings, especially where the topic is sensitive (such as the one under this investigation).
* Questionnaires provide uniformity across measurement situations as each individual responds to exactly the same questions.
* Possible errors by interviewers which may undermine validity of results, are avoided.
* It is quicker, easier and cheaper to administer.

The questionnaire does, however, have some disadvantages which were taken into consideration when preparing for this research:

* The questionnaire lacks the flexibility of interviews. Faulty interpretation of questions by respondents cannot be attended to and ideas and comments cannot be explored further as they can be in an interview. These limitations may jeopardise the validity of information obtained. To overcome this shortcoming questions were made as clear as possible and both structured and unstructured questions were used.

* There is no guarantee that all questions will be answered by all respondents. Embarrassing and lengthy questions were avoided in an attempt to encourage respondents to answer all questions.

* The return rate can be poor. To ensure a high return rate questionnaires were collected personally by the researcher from schools:

a)   The Design of the Questionnaire.

Travers' advice was taken into consideration when designing the questionnaire. He maintains that the design of questionnaire questions determines the response rate, the reliability and validity of the instrument. He therefore advises that it is very important that the construction of questions is good and takes into consideration the choice of subject to be studied, the size of the sample and the analysis of data. He also advises that one should weigh very carefully whether structured or unstructured questions should be used in the questionnaire (Travers, 1978).

For the questionnaire used in this research both structured (67% of the questions) and unstructured questions (33%) were asked. Although structured questions were preferred for their easy processing, unstructured question were also included to allow respondents to justify some of their responses and to allow them more freedom to articulate their feelings.

i)   Structured (closed) Questions

The majority of questions in the questionnaire were structured, (as already dated.) Structured

or closed questions provide the respondent with possible responses to choose from (Forcese and Richer,1973).

The following advantages of a questionnaire consisting of structured questions persuaded the researcher to include more structured than unstructured questions when designing the questionnaire:

*it is easier and less time consuming to complete;

*the information obtained is also easier and less time consuming to code and analyse and;

*it is ideal for asking sensitive questions as it provides options from which respondents can respond.

A disadvantage of structured questions is that they may restrict and frustrate respondents when listed options do not include certain individuals responses. An "other" option was included at the end of the of the list of options in order to overcome this restriction of closed questions (Forcese and Richer, 1973:161). Another disadvantage of closed questions is that responses tend to be superficial as these questions do not allow for free expression by respondents.

ii) Unstructured (open-ended) questions.

The reason open-ended questions were included in the questionnaire is that they (as already stated) give respondents freedom over how they wish to respond and as a result provide with information that would not have been gained by means of structured questions. Another reason for their inclusion is that they are useful if "attitudes, perceptions and views of individuals are the purpose of the study" (Huysamen, 1994:129).

The following guidelines as set out by Huysamen (1994), Walker (1985), Cohen and Manion (1980), Travers (1978) and Foscese and Richer (1973) were further followed when designing the questionnaire used in this research:

*Questions were short and stated in simple terms in order to avoid misunderstandings as

34

any misunderstandings might cause respondents to give inaccurate information.

*Ambiguous questions were avoided. A pilot study was conducted to test whether the questions were clear and unambiguous.

*Embarrassing and offensive questions were avoided.

*To ensure neutrality leading or loaded question were avoided ("a leading question is formulated in such a way that it suggests certain responses rather than others" while a loaded question influences a respondent to respond in a particular manner based on what he or she thinks is socially acceptable or expected by the researcher - Huysamen, 1994:132).

*A justified sequence was followed. The questionnaire begins with general, easy and non-threatening items (multiple-choice questions) followed by more in-depth questions.

*Double-barrelled questions were avoided (each question deals with a single idea) in order not to confuse respondents.

*It was ensured that the questionnaire was long enough to get the required data but at the same time as short as possible to retain respondent interest necessary for the completion of the questionnaire.

*Questions were asked in such a way that they could not be answered without much previous thought.

b) Requirements of the questionnaire.

In designing the questionnaire the researcher ensured that the two basic requirements of a sound questionnaire were met. These requirements are reliability and validity (Maruyama and Deno, 1992 and Huysamen, 1994).

i) Reliability

According to Maruyama and Deno (1992:69) reliability refers to "the accuracy and consistency of a measure in assessing whatever it measures." In addition Huysamen (1994:117) states that an instrument is reliable if it yields comparable measurements irrespective of who is applying it or when it is administered.

The following types of reliability, as differentiated by Huysamen (1994) were ensured when designing the questionnaire:

Test - retest reliability

This refers to the degree to which a questionnaire is immune to variations in occasions (such as fatigue, illness and fluctuation in moods of respondents) on which it is administered so that scores obtained on one occasion can be duplicated and generalised. To ensure test-retest reliability, the researcher ensured that questions were unambiguous and that instructions were clear.

Parallel - forms reliability

Parallel forms reliability occurs when different contents are administered to the same representative sample to produce comparable results. To ensure parallel - forms reliability the researcher asked respondents different questions all aimed at determining the respondents attitudes or opinions on a given topic.

Internal Consistency

This refers to the degree to which all questions in a questionnaire measure the same attribute. One of the reasons for the pilot study was to determine internal consistency.

ii) Validity

Validity refers to the extent to which a measure actually measures what it is intended to measure (Maruyama and Deno, 1992). This means that a valid instrument is one which is able to accomplish the researcher's purpose and "reflects the sureness with which a researcher can draw conclusions" (Abhilaik, 1994:210).

The validity of the questionnaire was tested by means of:

A Random Probe

A random probe occurs when a set of closed questions is randomly followed by an open-ended question where a respondent might be asked to justify his previous choice of an answer. The

aim of the random probe was to overcome the closed questions' inability to really tap respondents true feelings.

Cross-check Questions

To ensure that answers given by respondents' were true the researcher included in the questionnaire questions that could be checked against independent sources, such as record files.

Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted in order to detect invalid questions (the pilot study undertaken in this research is discussed under © below).

c)   The Pilot Study

A pilot study was conducted on a group of high school teachers and female principals before the research proper by:

*Conducting unstructured interviews with teachers and principals. The responses obtained were used in the formulation of the questionnaire; and

*Administering a draft questionnaire to ten teachers in order to detect flaws such as unclear and ambiguous questions. Flaws pointed out were corrected.

d)   The Administration of the Questionnaire

Questionnaires used in this research were handed personally to principals or deputy principals of sample schools. The aim was to make retrieval easy and to obtain a high response rate. A covering letter, explaining the nature and purpose of the research, was handed together with the questionnaires to the principals / deputies.   A date was agreed upon with each principal on which the questionnaires would be collected. Repeat visits were made to schools where questionnaires were not completed and ready for collection on the agreed dates.

3.3.3 Semi - Structured Interviews

Semi - Structured Interviews were conducted with the principal (female), vice principal and two

37

teachers of the school selected for the in-depth study. Interviews were conducted in addition to questionaries, because the former could provide the researcher with details that the latter could not. This was made possible by the "give and take" of interviews that allows respondents to talk themselves until they exhaust the particular topic (Forcese & Richer, 1973). Another advantage of the interviews was that, because the researcher was in control of the situation, she could ensure that all questions were answered, that no one answered on behalf of the target respondent and was able to notice and clear up any misunderstandings.

3.4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

Gay (1976:215) maintains that the choice of appropriate statistical techniques is critical to reaching appropriate conclusions. He further states that the statistical techniques used should be determined to a large extent by the "design of the study" and the type of data collected. This research was conducted by means of both quantitative and qualitative techniques. As a result the data collected was analysed by means of both descriptive and inferential statistics (see Chapter 4).

3.5 LIMITATIONS OF THIS RESEARCH

This research has the following limitations:

a) The research studied mainly "Black" teachers' perceptions. Their views may not represent the views of the general teacher population in KwaZulu-Natal.

b) For manageability only teachers in the Maphumulo circuit were studied. It is possible that these teachers form a homogenous group in terms of educational and cultural background. This would then limit the range of responses and limit the generalisability of the conclusions reached.

c) The topic under research was of a sensitive nature. This might have prevented some respondents from airing their true feelings, especially in the interview situation.

d)   The response rate to the questionnaire was very low (35%). There is a possibility that the findings might have been different if the response was larger.

3.6. SUMMARY

The purpose of this research was to investigate the perceptions of teachers in KwaZulu-Natal towards female principals. This information was not available from other sources. This chapter discussed how the population for the study was sampled and the methods, techniques and procedures followed when conducting the research. A survey of the teachers in the Maphumulo area was conducted by means of a questionnaire. A case study of one school was conducted in order to gain a deeper insight into the teachers' perceptions. The principal, vice principal and two teachers were interviewed for this purpose. Chapter 4 deals with the analysis of the data collected.

CHAPTER 4

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF QUANTITATIVE RESEARCH DATA

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to present and analyse the research data consisting of responses to the survey questionnaire and the semi-structured interviews. Although the main purpose of the research was to investigate the teachers' perceptions of women principals, the research also aimed at finding out whether (and how far) the perceptions are a result of:

* teachers' exposure or lack of exposure to leadership by a female principal;
* teachers' gender and educational level;
* female principals' managerial and leadership expertise; and
* female principals' styles of leadership vis-à-vis that of male principals',

Questions 1-5 of the questionnaire were aimed at obtaining respondents' biographical information. Teachers' views regarding the acceptability or lack of acceptability of female principals and the reasons thereof were the concerns of questions 6-10, 13 and 14, while questions 11 and 12 were aimed at finding out the yardsticks against which principals are "judged" by teachers and, in particular, whether leadership plays an important role in the teachers' assessment of principals. Question 15 was aimed at finding out whether teachers are happy with the principal selection process. The concern of the remaining questions (16-20) was to find out whether teachers feel there are any differences between male and female principals' leadership.

In-depth interviews were conducted with teachers of a school run by a female, as a follow-up to the survey questionnaire. The purpose of the interviews was to gain a deeper understanding into teachers' feelings about female principals and insight into whether the principal runs her school in any special way that can be said to be different from the way her male counterparts run theirs. The principal of the school was also interviewed, partly for the same reasons that the

teachers were interviewed for, but also to find out how, as a woman, she experiences principalship.

4.2   DATA ANALYSIS PROCEDURES USED

The procedures used to analyse the data from structured questions of the questionnaire were different from the one used to analyse the in-depth interview and questionnaire data resulting from unstructured questions.

a)   The procedure used to analyse data resulting from the structured questions of the questionnaire.

Inferential statistics were used for the purpose of making inferences from the research data obtained as, according to Gay (1976 : 349), research findings are only of use if they can be used "to make inferences about the defined population." The instrument used for this purpose is the chi-square (X^2) test of significance which was carried out at the 0,05 level. Borg and Gall (1989) define the chi square test as a "non parametric statistical test that is used when the research data are in the form of frequency counts" in order to determine whether the " frequency distributions differ significantly from each other".

To calculate the chi-square the following formula was used: $X^2 = \dfrac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe} + \dfrac{(fo-fe)^2}{fe}$

fo = observed frequency

fe = expected frequency (Senter, 1969 : 349)

The table used to determine the critical values of X^2 is taken from Senter (1969 : 501)

b)   The procedure used to analyse data from the unstructured questions of the questionnaire and the in-depth interviews.

Both qualitative and quantitative procedures were used to analyse this data. According to Marshall and Rossman (1989 : 112) qualitative data analysis are that which searches for "general statements about relationships among categories of data". The purpose of quantifying qualitative data, on the other hand, is to indicate the magnitude of certain response sets (Berg, 1989 : 125).

Qualitative data analysis was conducted by means of content analysis. Berg (1989 : 42) finds that content analysis is the "most obvious way to analyse interview data" and unstructured questionnaire data. He defines content analysis as "any technique for making inferences by systematic and objective" identification of special characteristics of messages (1989 : 106). A modified Marshall and Rossman's data analysis strategy was used to conduct the content analysis (1989 : 144 - 199):

a)   Data organization.
The available data were listed on note cards in order to make it easily retrievable.

b)   Generating Categories, Themes and Patterns.
Recurring ideas and patterns were identified, classified and filed on separate sheets.

c)   Quantification of categories and patterns
The various emergent categories were counted and compared with one another in order to indicate the magnitude of responses .

d)   Search for Explanation.
The data patterns and their magnitudes were viewed critically so as to find plausible explanations for the data.

4.3   QUESTIONNAIRE DATA ANALYSIS
The following is an analysis of both structured and unstructured questions of the questionnaire.

4.3.1   Respondents' Biographical Details
The respondents biographical details were gathered for the purpose of gaining knowledge about the composition of the population under study in order to make it possible to determine if inferences can be made from the findings of this research.

Q:1   The sexual composition of the respondents.
One hundred and thirty nine (139) teachers completed and returned the completed

questionnaires. Of these 74 were male (53,24%) while 65 (46,76%) were female teachers. The difference in the frequency of male and female respondents was found not to be significant. Furthermore the sex distribution of respondents in the sample studied may be seen to represent the sexual distribution of the teacher population in secondary schools as, according to Kotecha (1992), there are (at least in the secondary schools previously controlled by the Ex - Department of Education and Training) more male than female teachers employed in secondary schools: the ratio was 57,1% : 42,9% in 1992.

Table 1.   The distribution of respondents according to their gender.

GENDER	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Female	65	47%
Male	74	53%
Total	139	100,00%

Q:2   Teachers were requested to state their teaching experience

Table 2 (below) shows that the views of the inexperienced (with 0-2 years teaching experience), the fairly inexperienced (3-4 years), fairly experienced (5-10 year), and well experienced teachers (more than 10 years teaching experience) were all represented . This distribution may be seen to reflect the actual distribution of teachers according to their experience in schools . The majority of teachers in schools are those with less than 5 years teaching experience. That the groups with more experience, especially those with more than 10 years teaching experience are smaller, may be explained by the possibility that a big number of teachers with this experience get promoted into principalship and inspectorship positions or leave the profession for industry.

Table 2. The distribution of respondents according to their teaching experience.

TEACHING EXPERIENCE	No. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
0-2 years	34	24,46%
3-4 years	32	23,02%
5-10 years	50	35,97%
more than 10 years	23	16,55%
Total	139	100,00%

Q.3: Respondents were requested to state their level of employment.

The majority of the respondents (91,37 %) were at post level I of employment (the so called "assistant" teachers). Only three of the respondents (2,16 %)occupied positions of deputy principals. All three are male. Two of them serve under male principals. Heads of departments made up 6,47 % (9 HOD's) of the respondents. It is interesting to note that while three of the four HOD's serving under female principals are females, all five of those serving under male principals are males. This gives the impression that female teachers serving under female principals stand a better chance of promotion then those serving under males. This might be because authorities think it is better to have a female teacher than a male HOD serving under a female principal or probably because female principals are more likely than their male counterparts to recommend a deserving female teacher for promotion.

Table 3 : The frequency table of respondents according to positions occupied

POSITION HELD	FEMALE	MALE	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
"Assistant" teacher (level I)	62	65	127	91,37 %
HOD's	3	6	9	6,47 %
Deputy principals	-	7	7	2,16 %
Total	65	74	139	100,00 %

The likelihood of female teachers discriminating against male teachers is dispelled by Ball(1987) who states that his research found that male and female teachers are treated more equally by

female principals than they are by male principals.

Q:4   The academic and professional qualifications of respondents .

Respondents with matric and no teaching qualification were represented by 16,55% of the total respondents. The majority (52,52%) of the respondents possess college teaching diplomas. Of these 41 are males while 32 are females. The remaining 30,93% of respondents have university degrees and teaching diplomas. The distribution of respondents according to their qualifications shows that the views of both the qualified and unqualified teachers are represented .

Table 4: Frequency table representing respondents highest academic and / or professional qualifications.

QUALIFICATIONS	F	M	TOTAL	PERCENTAGE
Matric	10	13	23	16,55 %
PTD/STD/PTC/JSTC	32	41	71	51,52 %
Bachelors Degree	14	11	25	17,99 %
UED/HED	3	6	9	6,47 %
Honours Degree	5	2	7	5,03 %
Masters Degree	1	1	2	1,44 %
PHD	-	-	-	-
Total	65	74	139	100,00 %

Q:5   Respondents were requested to state whether they had any experience of working under female principals.

Findings in this research consist of views of 36,69 % of respondents (51 teachers) with experience and 63,31 % of respondents (88 teachers) without experience of service under female principals. That the sample would consist of fewer teachers with experience under female principal compared to those without this experience was expected since there are presently few schools run by female principals compared to those run by males. Although the difference is not significant, respondents with experience under female principals consist of more female (52,94%) than male (47,04 %) teachers. The opposite is true of those respondents who have

45

never served under female principals: 56,82 % are men while 43,18 % are women. The latter reflects the sexual composition of secondary school teachers. It is therefore of interest to note that it seems as if as much as authorities prefer to place female HOD'S under female principals, these authorities also seem to prefer to place more female than male teachers under female principals.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents according to experience or lack of experience under female principals .

	Respondents with experience under female principals	Respondents without experience under female principals	T
Male	24	50	74
Female	27	38	65
Total	51	88	139
%	36,69%	63,31%	100%

4.3.2 Questionaire analysis

Q:6   Respondents with experience under female principals were requested to state why they thought these principals had been promoted into these position .

Table 6, below, shows that a large number of respondents (41,18 %) feel that qualifications played an important role in the promotion of female teachers into principalship positions. Female principals are seemingly also perceived by their subordinates to have some leadership skills. The second largest group of respondents to this question (31,37 % of respondents) gave leadership as a reason why female principals are promoted. Other reasons that the respondents felt played an important role in the promotion of female principals are teaching experience (stated by 27,45 % of respondents) and seniority (stated by 25,45% of the respondents).

Female principals were however not perceived to be particularly efficient administrators and instructors. These were given as reasons for their promotion by only 15,69 % and 7,83 % of respondents, respectively. That female principals were hardly seen to be efficient administrators and instructors may be due to the fact that these are aspects that are not usually displayed in

front of teachers, for example it is possible that female principals delegate most of their administrative duties. Furthermore direct pupil instruction does not only form a small part of a principal's task but also occurs away from teacher scrutiny. On the other hand that female principals are not particularly seen to have been promoted because of their instructional efficiency might indicate that these principals unfortunately do not devote sufficient energy supervising and giving instructional advice to their subordinates. Other reasons given for the promotion of female teachers by the remaining 9,80 % of the respondents include hard working, intelligence, and moral and religious convictions .

Table 6: Frequency table representing reasons given by respondents for the promotion of female teachers into principalship positions .

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
a) Qualification	21	41,18 %
b) Experience	14	27,45 %
c) Instructional proficiency	4	7,83 %
d) Administrative efficiency	8	15,69 %
e) Leadership skills	16	31,37 %
f) Seniority	13	25,49 %
g) Other	5	9,80 %

Q.7:   Respondents were requested to state strengths they feel are possessed by the female principals they served or serve under .

a)   Reliability and concern for duty

Thirty of the 51 respondents with experience under female principals felt that female principals' best assets were reliability and concern for duty. Some of the words used to express this opinion are : duty consciousness, reliability, responsibility, diligence and industry, self - disciplined, dedication, hard worker and loyalty.

b)   Good interpersonal relations , good communication skills and ability to work well with others .

The ability to form good relations and to work well with others was seen to be the second strongest asset of female principals. This was the feeling of 26 of the 51 respondents with service under female principals. Words and phrases used to indicate this are: good relations with staff and pupils, good communication skills, understanding and willingness to listen, approachable, friendly, caring, sympathetic, gentleness, sociable, good sense of humour, co-operative, positive attitude, openness, sincerity, love for people, integrity and compassion.

c)   Leadership

Leadership was mentioned as one of the female principals' strengths by 24 of the 51 respondents. To describe the leadership ability of female principals respondents used words such as: good leadership skills, good at motivating people, ability to influence, leads by example, assertive, vision, promotes team spirit, promotes a sense of belonging, dynamic, commands respect, achieves academic progress for the school, integrity and confidence.

A few of the words used that may be seen to be related to leadership did not only portray the female principals' ability to lead but also portrayed their style of leadership. These words are: democracy and facilitates an atmosphere conducive to learning and teaching. Although only few respondents used these words it is apparent that those who did see these principals as facilitative and participatory leaders .

d)   Organizational ability.

Eighteen of the 51 respondents perceived female principals to be good organizers. Words used to describe female principals' organizational abilities are: good organizer, ability to delegate, problem solving skills, fund raising skills, good at motivating people .

e)   Efficiency

Ten of the 51 respondents felt that female principals were efficient managers. This feeling was described by means of words such as initiative, innovative, imaginative, creative, energetic and enthusiastic.

f)   The ability to control

Only six of the 51 respondents saw female principals as controllers. The ability to discipline and the ability to supervise are two phrases used by respondents to describe female principals' ability to control.

g)   Religion

Five of the 51 respondents saw the strength of female principals as lying in their "religious" and "God - fearing" nature.

Table 7 : Respondents opinions regarding female principals strengths

Strength	No. of respondents	Percentage
1. Concern for duty and reliability	30	58,82 %
2. Relations	26	50,98 %
3. Leadership	24	47,06 %
4. Organization	18	35,29 %
5. Efficiency	10	19,6 %
6. Control	6	11,76 %
7. Religion	5	9,80 %

Q.8:   Respondents with experience under female principals were requested to state weaknesses they thought these principals have.

From the responses given (or not given) it seem as if these respondents were reluctant to state their principals' weaknesses. For example some respondents tended to give responses such as "no weaknesses", "loves staff too much", "loves pupils too much" or "works too hard". The last three may not always be seen as weaknesses. The following are weaknesses that a few of the respondents felt female principals possess:

a)   Preoccupation with self

This weakness was stated by 12 of the 51 respondents with experience under female principals. That these respondents saw these principals as being preoccupied with self is evident from responses such as : self-centred, moody, irritable, impatient, not easily pleased, aggressive, has

49

a feminine complex, lack of sensitivity, disciplines staff in front of pupils, looks down upon other people and intimidates unqualified staff.

b)   Leniency

This weakness was stated by 9 of the 51 respondents . They stated that female principals were lenient, did not give corporal punishment, were a bit laissez faire, loved staff too much and loved children too much .

c)   Familiarity and lack of fairness

Nine of the 51 respondents felt that female principals tended to: be too familiar with staff, interfere with teachers' personal matters, gossip about other teachers to some staff members, have favourites, practise nepotism and favour pupils over staff.

d)   Poor decision making

This was felt to be a weakness of female principals by 6 of the 51 respondents. They felt that these principals sometimes took decisions too lightly and could not solve serious problems .

e)   Lack of authority and lack of punctuality

Three respondents felt that female principals lacked authority, two felt they panicked in front of children while three felt that female principals failed to keep time .

Table 8: Frequency table of weaknesses respondents feel female principals posses

Weakness	Frequency	Percentage
1. Preoccupation with self	12	23,53 %
2. Leniency	9	16,65 %
3. Over familiarity and lack of fairness	9	16,65 %
4. Poor decision making	6	11,76 %
5. Lack of authority and lack of punctuality	8	15,69 %

Q.9 : Respondents were requested to state whether they felt female teachers should be promoted to principalship positions .

The majority of respondents (90,20 % of the respondents agreed or strongly agreed) who had served or were serving under female principals had confidence enough in these principals to feel that it is right to allow female teachers to run schools. More females (70,37% of female respondents) than males (66,67% of male respondents) felt that females were capable of running schools. The difference in female and male teachers' opinions in this regard was however not significant. Furthermore more female than male respondents (30,77 % of female respondents compared to 16,22 % of males) tended to strongly agree that female teachers should be allowed to run schools. In addition the better qualified the women teachers were, the more strongly they felt that females should be promoted (61,54 % of the respondents without experience under female principals and 57,14 % of the female respondents with experience under female principals who responded by stating they "strongly agree" have university degrees). These strong feelings may indicate that these women's answers were personal in that these women probably felt that they qualified for principalship and that therefore when or if they applied for promotion they should not be discriminated against on the basis of their gender .

Few respondents with experience under female principals felt that females should not run schools. More males (16,67 % of male respondents) than females (3,70 % of female respondents) were of this opinion .

Table 9(a) : Frequency table representing the views of teachers with service under female principals on whether it is right to promote females into positions of school principals. N=51

Opinion	Females	%	Males	%	Total	Total %
Agree	19	70,37	16	66,67	35	68,63
Strongly agree	7	25,93	4	16,66	11	21,57
Disagree	1	3,70	3	12,50	4	7,84
Strongly disagree	-	-	1	4,17	1	1,96
Total	27	100,00	24	100,00	51	100,00

Table 9(b) below shows that the opinions of teachers who had never served under female principal on whether it is right to promote female teachers to run schools were not different from the opinions of those teachers who had served under female principals. Over 90 % (90,91 %) of the respondents felt it was right for females to run schools. Again more women (94,74 %) than males (88 %) were of this opinion.

Table 9(b): Frequency table of the views of teachers without experience under female principals on whether it is right to allow principals to run schools.

N=88

Opinion	Female Teachers	Percentage	Male Teachers	Percentage	Total	Total
Agree	23	60,53 %	36	72 %	59	67,05%
Strongly agree	13	34,21 %	8	16 %	21	23,86%
Disagree	1	2,63 %	4	8 %	5	5,68%
Strongly disagree	1	2,63 %	2	4 %	3	3,41%
Total	38	100,00 %	50	100 %	88	100,00%

Table 10(a): Distribution of opinions of respondents with experience under female principals on types of schools they felt may be run by female principals .

N=51

Type of schools	Female Resp.	Percentage	Male Resp.	Percentage	Total	Total %
Pre-primary	3	11,11 %	4	16,67 %	7	13,73 %
Primary	1	3,70 %	5	20,83 %	6	11,76 %
Secondary	5	18,52 %	2	8,33 %	7	13,73 %
Tertiary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any	18	66,67 %	13	54,17 %	31	60,78 %
Total	27	-	24	-	51	100,00 %

Table 10(b): Below shows that the opinions of teachers without experience under female principals on the types of schools that may be run by females were not very different from those of the teachers who have worked under female principals. Although in both cases the majority of teachers (both male and female) felt that females may lead any type of school. There was a significant number of males (compared to women teachers) who were not very happy at the prospect of women leading secondary schools and tertiary institutions.

Table 10(b): Frequency table representing the opinions of respondents who had experience under female principal leadership regarding the types of school they felt female principals should be allowed to run .

N=88

Type of school	Female Teachers	Percentage	Male Teachers	Percentage	Total	Total %
Pre - primary	-	-	1	2 %	1	1,14 %
Primary	4	10,53 %	13	26 %	17	19,32 %
Secondary	-	-	4	8 %	8	4,55 %
Tertiary	-	-	-	-	-	-
Any	32	84,21 %	28	56 %	60	68,18 %
No Response	2	5,26 %	4	8 %	6	6,81 %
Total	38	100,00 %	50	100 %	88	100,00 %

Q.10: Respondents were requested to give reasons for their responses to question (9), above.

a) Reasons given by female respondents who stated that they felt females should be allowed to become school heads:

i) Equality of opportunities and ability.

Fifty of the 65 female respondents stated that females should be given opportunities equal to those given to male teachers during the selection process. These respondents stated that, inter alia, each person had a right to hold a position he / she qualified for, sex did not determine a person's performance, women were equally capable of and just as qualified as men were to handle positions of authority / to be in leadership positions, some women did have leadership skills desired in a principal, women were as intelligent, capable and confident as men were, and that women teachers were in the majority.

ii) Reliability

Women were seen by 20 of the 65 female respondents(30,77 %) to be more reliable and responsible than men were and that this quality therefore qualified female teachers to hold positions of responsibilities such as that of running a school. Words used to indicate reliability included words such as: more hardworking, reliable, responsible, dedicated, committed, industrious, willing to work, active, fearful of shame and determined to succeed, and progressive.

iii) Interpersonal relations

Twenty of the 65 female respondents felt that female teachers were especially good in interpersonal relations and are, as a result, quite suitable for principalship positions. Female teachers were described as not being self - centred, as being approachable, diplomatic, good communicators, sympathetic of female problems, experienced in handling children (by virtue of being mothers) and sympathetic to the needs of staff and children.

b) Reasons given by those male respondent who felt females should be allowed to run schools.

Reasons given by male respondents to justify why they felt females should be given opportunities to run schools were not very different from those given by female respondents. They include:

i) Equality of opportunities and capabilities .

Fifty of the 74 male respondents felt women teachers should enjoy promotion opportunities equal to those given to men because, amongst other things, women were more numerous than males, possessed the same abilities as males, gender should not be the determining factor, everybody must be given the chance they deserve and that women were also capable of leadership.

ii) Reliability

Male respondents also tended to feel that women were more reliable than males. This was stated by 25 of the 74 (33,78 %) male respondents. These respondents gave the following reasons for this opinion: female teachers were always at school, less alcoholic, efficient, faithful, responsible,

had integrity, more capable of maintaining order than males were and to encourage teachers to perform their duties well.

iii)   Interpersonal relations.

This reason was given by only 5 of the 74 male respondents .

Table 11: Frequency table representing reasons given by respondents why they felt females should be allowed to run schools.

a)   Reasons given by female respondents.

Reason	Frequency (%)
1. Equality of opportunities and abilities.	76,92%
2. Reliability	30,77%
3. Good interpersonal relations	30,77%

b)   Reasons given by male respondents.

Reason	Frequency (%)
1. Equality of opportunities and capabilities.	67,57%
2. Reliability	33,78%
3. Interpersonal relations	6,76%

c)   Reasons given by those respondents who felt females should not be allowed to run schools.

The reasons given by the three women who felt that female teachers did not deserve to become school principals were that female principals discriminate, had inferiority complexes, were moody, and jealous of teachers who were more qualified than themselves, had favourites, could not be trusted because they gossiped too much, tended to undermine colleagues and did not balance styles of leadership - were either too autocratic or too laissez faire.

The male respondents who felt that females should not run schools justified their opinions by

stating that females lacked qualities of leadership, lacked control, were not courageous, were weak in planning and delegation, too lenient with lazy teachers, were dictators, shy, sensitive, short tempered, lazy and unreliable, panicked easily and took wrong decisions.

Q.11: Respondents were requested to state what they felt were the characteristics of a good principal.

a)   Interpersonal relations

All respondents (both male and female) perceived a principal as being good at his/her work if he/she had good relations with his / her staff. Respondents used words such as good human relations, good communication skills, openness, approachability, compassion and diplomacy to convey this opinion.

b)   Leadership

Leadership was the second most valued (by teachers) characteristic in a principal. Female teachers seemed to value it more than males (stated by 79,92 % of females compared to 67,57% males).

c)   Efficiency

Efficiency as a characteristic of a good principal was also given by significantly more females (78,46 % of females) than male respondents (54,05 %).

d)   Reliability

Significantly more male teachers (63,51 % of the male respondents) than females (33,85% of female respondents) valued reliability in principals.

Table 12 : Frequency table representing respondents views on what they felt are the characteristics of a good principal .

Characteristic	Female Teachers	%	Male Teachers	%	T	T %
Interpersonal Relations	65	100 %	74	100 %	139	100 %
Efficiency	51	78,46 %	40	54,05 %	91	65,47 %
Leadership	50	79,92 %	50	67,57 %	100	71,94 %
Reliability	22	33,85 %	47	63,51 %	69	49,64 %

Q.12: Respondents were requested to state what they thought were the five most important tasks of a principal .

a)   Both male and female respondents gave the following as the most important tasks of a principal

i)   Control

This task was mentioned by 86 respondents (61,87%). They mentioned, for example, that a principal's task was to control, discipline, supervise, evaluate, handle school funds and maintain school buildings.

ii)   Promotion and maintenance of good relations

This, according to 72 respondents, (51,80 %) is the second most important task of a principal. Some of the statements relating to this category that were mentioned by these respondents were that a principal should maintain a healthy atmosphere among staff and pupils, promote unity among staff, support teachers and resolve disputes.

iii)   Leadership

Leadership was seen to be the third most important task of a principal by 62 respondents

(44,60%). These respondents stated, for example, that a principal's task was to lead, guide, direct, set a good example, motivate, initiate and instill a sense of purpose among teachers and pupils.

iv)   Organization

Organization was, together with leadership, also seen as the third most important task of a principal.   To state this task respondents used words such as: organise, delegate duties efficiently, arrange and attend meetings, staffing, and building of morale, pride and tradition.

v)   Planning

Planning was seen by the respondents to be the fourth most important task of a principal. Thirty six respondents (25,90%) mentioned this as being an important task of a principal. They used words such as: planning, decision making, setting of goals and formulation of policies.

vi)   Administration

This was also seen by the respondents as the fourth most important task of a principal (stated by 25,90% of the respondents).

vii)   Liaison

Liaison between staff, pupils and parents was seen to be the fifth most important task of principals. It was mentioned by twenty (24,39%) respondents.

Other tasks mentioned were instructional leadership and curriculum development (10,77% of respondents) and staff development (by 7,17% of respondents).

Q.13: Respondents were requested to state the types of schools they felt females could lead. The majority (60,78%) of respondents with experience under female principals were confident enough about these principals' expertise to feel that female principals should be given opportunities to lead any type of schools. However more women (35,29% of female respondents compared to 25,49%of male respondents) than men were of this opinion.

Seven of the 51 respondents (13,73%)felt women may run secondary schools, but not tertiary institutions. Of these 5 were women whilst 2 were men. More male respondents (20,83% male respondents compared to 3,70% of female respondents) felt women should only lead primary schools. The same went for those who felt females should only be allowed to lead pre - primary schools (16,67% of male respondents compared to 11,11%of females)

Table 13: Frequency table representing what respondents felt were the most important tasks of a principal.

Task	Percentage
1.Control	61,87%
2.Promotion of good relations	51,80%
3.Leadership	44,60%
3.Organization	44,60%
4.Planning	25,90%
4.Administration	25,90%
5.Liaison	14,39%
6.Instructional leadership and curriculum development	10,77%
7.Staff Development	7,19%

Q.14: Respondents were requested to state the sex of a principal they would prefer to serve under.

The majority of teachers did not mind whether the principal they served under was female or male. This opinion was stated by 68,63% of respondents who were working or had worked under a female principal. Of these 54,29% were female and 49,71% were male. It was also

stated by 65,91% of respondents with no experience under a female principal, of which 46,55% were females and 53,45% were males.

Tables 15 (a+b) below show that more females than males were of this opinion. The differences are however not significant but bigger between female and male respondents who have never served under a female principal.

Table 15(a), Frequency table representing the preferences of the respondents who had worked under female principals on the sex of principal they preferred to work under.

Sex	F	%	M	%	T	T%
Female	3	11,11%	1	4,17%	4	7,84%
Male	5	18,52%	7	29,16%	12	23,53%
Sex not important	19	70,37%	16	66,67%	35	68,63%
Total	27	100%	24	100%	51	100%

Table 15(b): Frequency table representing the preferences of the respondents who had never worked under a female principal on the sex of principal they preferred to work under.

Sex	F	%	M	%	T	T%
Female	2	5,26%	2	4%	4	4,55%
Male	6	15,79%	15	30%	21	23,86%
Sex not important	27	71,05%	31	62%	58	65,91%
No Response	3	7,90%	2	4%	5	5,68%
Total	38	100%	50	100%	88	100%

Q 15. Respondents were requested to state whether they felt teachers should be involved in the selection of principals.

The majority of teachers who had served or were serving under female principals (54,91%) felt that teachers should be involved in the principal selection process. This feeling was not shared

61

by teachers who had never served under a female principal. Only 39,77% of these respondents favoured the idea. More male teachers (72,33% compared to 17,99% female irrespective of whether they had or had never worked under a female principal favoured the involvement of teachers in the selection of principals.

Table 16(a): The opinions of respondents with service under female principals on whether teachers should be involved in the selection of principals.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Agree	11	40,74%	9	37,50%	20	39,22%
Strongly Agree	3	11,11%	5	20,83	8	15,69%
Disagree	4	14,28	9	7,50%	3	15,69%
Strongly Disagree	6	22,22%	-	-	6	11,76%
No response	3	11,11%	1	4,17	4	7,84%
Total	27	100,00%	24	100,00%	51	100,00%

Table 16(b): Distribution of opinions of respondents without experience under female principals on whether teachers should be involved in the selection of school principals.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Agree	18	21,05%	16	32%	24	27,27%
Strongly Agree	3	7,89%	8	16%	11	12,50%
Disagree	12	31,58%	14	28%	26	29,55%
Strongly Disagree	11	28,95%	10	20%	21	23,86%
No response	4	10,53%	2	4%	6	6,82%
Total	38	100%	50	100%	88	100%

It seems as if teachers who had never worked under females were generally happy with the way principals of schools were selected whilst those with service under female principals felt the procedure might be improved by means of including teachers in the selection process. These teachers, especially women probably felt that there would be less discrimination if teacher representatives were present during principal selection.

Q.16: Respondents were requested to state whether they felt that female principals possessed strengths as leaders that male principals did not.

The majority of respondents (62,59%) did not feel female principals had strengths that male principals did not have. Only the opinions of female respondents who had never worked under female principals differed from the above. The majority of these respondents (55,26%) felt that female principals did possess strengths not found in male principals.

Table 17: Distribution of respondents' feelings on whether female principals possessed strengths as leaders that male principals did not.

a) Respondents with experience under female principals.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Yes	7	25,93	4	16,67	11	21,57
No	17	62,96	20	83,33	37	72,55
Not sure	3	11,11	-	-	3	5,88
Total	27	100,00	24	100,00	51	100,00

b) Respondents without experience under female principals.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Yes	21	55,26	11	22	32	36,36
No	14	36,84	36	72	50	56,82
Not sure	3	7,90	3	6	6	6,82
Total	38	100,00	50	100,00	88	100,00

Q. 17: Respondents were requested to state the strengths possessed by female principals and not by male principals.

Most of the respondents who stated in Q.16, above, that they felt female principals did have strengths that male principals did not have, consisted of teachers who had never worked under female principals. These respondents were however unable to name these strengths. The following strengths, seen to be possessed by female principals, were therefore listed by the few respondents who had worked under female principals and did feel there was a difference.

Strengths stated were:

a)   Expertise in dealing with volatile situations, problem solving skills, diplomacy and ability to compromise and, ability of not showing signs of stress.

b)   Tolerance, and patience.

c)   Accountability and full responsibility for school domestic matters.

d)   Firmness and consistency.

e)   Expertise in motivating others.

f)   Expertise in dealing with children.

g)   Reliability.

h)   Compassion, gentleness and kindness.

Q.18: Respondents were requested to state whether they thought male principals lead in a manner different from the way females do.

Table 18, below, shows that the number of teachers who felt that males led in a manner different from that of females was equal to that of those who thought that the two led in a similar manner (63 of 139 respondents - 45,32% in each case). However the majority of male teachers (54,05%) thought that males led differently from females whereas the half the females (50,77%) did not think there was any difference between the way males and females lead.

Table 18: Frequency table representing the opinions of teachers with experience under female principals on whether males lead in a manner different from that of females.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Yes	13	48,15%	14	58,33%	27	52,94%
No	11	40,74%	9	37,50%	20	39,22%
Not sure	3	11,11%	1	4,17%	4	7,84%
Total	27	100,00%	24	100,00%	51	100,00

Table 19: Frequency table representing the opinions of respondents without experience under female principal on the question of whether males lead in a manner different from that of females.

Response	F	%	M	%	Total	Total %
Yes	10	26,32	26	52	36	40,91
No	22	57,89	21	42	43	48,86
Not sure	6	15,79	3	6	9	10,23
Total	38	100,00	50	100,00	88	100,00

Q.19:   The respondents who were of the opinion that male principals led in a manner different from the way females led were requested to state these differences.

a)   Differences stated by respondents who felt male principals led in a manner better than that of female principals.

These respondents felt male principals led in the following manner:

i)   Lead with authority and in a dignified manner.

Respondents felt that this was because males tended to naturally command respect than females did, were not arrogant, and enjoyed vocal and physical strength. This difference was

stated by 16 of the 63 (25,40%) respondents who stated that there was a difference between the way females and males lead.

ii)   Problem solving and crisis management.

Ten respondents (15,87%) felt that male principals were especially adept at handling crisis, problem solving, and decision making and that males were not easily frightened, had foresight, were brave and realistic.

iii)   Rationality

Seven respondents (11,11%) felt that males led in a less emotional manner.

IV)   Caring

Five respondents (7,94%) felt that male principals led in a more caring, forgiving and protective (towards staff) manner.

Table 20: Frequency table showing what respondents felt were the difference in the manner in which males lead.

MALE PRINCIPALS' MANNER OF LEADING	PERCENTAGE
1. Authority and Dignity	25,40
2. Problem solving and crisis management	15,87
3. Caring	7,94
4. Authoritarian	7,94
5. Democratic	4,76
6. Rigid	4,76

Q.20 & 21:   Respondents were requested to tick attributes possed by their principals. Question 21 requested that they state the sex of their principal.

Both female and male respondents stated that the best attributes of female principals were: good relations with staff (stated by 94,74% female respondents and 55,56% male respondents), and self discipline (stated by 78,(% females and 55,56% males). Female respondents (89,47%) also felt that female principals were very open. Male respondents, on the other hand, also ranked the ability to create positive change (66,67% of the males) and good communications (55,56%) as being high attributes of female respondents. Male principals were, on the other hand, seen by both male and female respondents as having very good relations with staff (rated by 84,44% of female respondents and 87,27% of males) and as having very positive attitudes (attribute rated by 70,91% of males and 51,115 of females as being male principals' best attributes).

Table 21: The ranking of female principals' attributes as perceived by their female subordinates.

RANK	ATTRIBUTE	PERCENTAGE
1.	Good relations	94,74
2.	Openness	89,47
3.	Self discipline	78,95
4.	Positive attitudes	68,42
	Gentleness	68,42
	Communication skills	68,42
5.	Ability to create positive change	63,16
	Problem solving skills	63,16
6.	Compassion	57,89
7.	Integrity	52,63
	Vision	52,63
8.	Ability to influence	42,3

Rates-3:3:2.

(The high percentages appearing on Table 21 indicate that female respondents were more generous than males (see Table 22) in stating female principals' attributes. On the other hand male respondents were more generous than female respondents in ticking male principals' attributes (see also Tables 23 and 24). The differences in the latter were however not as marked as those in the former. (This probably implies that female teachers are more accepting of male principals than male teachers are accepting of female principals.) As a result the ratio system (not percentages) was used to determine which attributes are perceived by subordinates to be either high, moderate or low in their principals. For example the rating of female principals' attributes by female teachers has 8 ranks. The ratio used to determine high, moderate and low attributes of female principals in Table 21 is 3:3:2. The ranking of the same principals by male respondents in Table 22 has 6 ranks. The ratio used to determine high, moderate and low attributes of female principals is therefore in this case 2:2:2.)

Table 22: Female principals' attributes as perceived by their male subordinates.

RANK	ATTRIBUTE	PERCENTAGE
1.	Ability to create positive change	66,67
2.	Self discipline	55,56
	Communication skills	55,56
	Good relations with staff	55,56
3.	Positive attitude	44,44
	Problem solving skills	44,44
	Gentleness	44,44
4.	Integrity	33,33
	Openness	33,33
5.	Vision	22,22
6.	Ability to influence	11,11
	Compassion	11,11

Ratio - 2:2:2.

Attributes seen as being moderate in female principals by both their male and female subordinates were positive attitudes (68,42% of females and 44,44% of males); gentleness (68,42% of females and of males). Gentleness (rated by 56,36% of males and 46,67%of females) and the ability to create positive change (rated by 42,22%of females and 54,44% of males) were on the other hand, attributes perceived to be moderate in male principals by both their male and female respondents. In addition to the above male respondents perceived communication skills (56,36% of) and integrity (49,10% of males) as being moderate in male principals while female respondents perceived openness (48,89% of females) and problems solving skills (46,67%) as being moderate attributes of male respondents. Attributes seen as being moderate in female principals by female respondents only were communication skills (68,42% of females); ability to create positive change (63,16%); and compassion (57,89%) while male respondents saw integrity (by 33,33% males) and openness (also by 33% males) to be moderate in female principals.

Table 23: Male principals' attributes as perceived by their female subordinates.

RANK	ATTRIBUTE	PERCENTAGE
1.	Good relations with staff	84,44
2.	Self discipline	64,44
3.	Positive attitude	51,11
	Communication skills	51,11
4.	Openness	48,89
5.	Problem solving skills	46,67
	Gentleness	46,67
6.	Ability to create positive change	42,22
7.	Compassion	24,44
8.	Integrity	17,78
9.	Vision	13,33
10	Ability to influence	11,11

Ratio - 3:3:4

Vision and the ability to influence were seen to be low in both female and male principals by their female and male subordinates. Female respondents (52,63%) also perceived integrity to be low in female principals while male respondents (11,11%) also perceived compassion to be low in female principals. Lastly only female respondents (17,78% of males) felt integrity was low in male principals while only male respondents felt self discipline (47,27% of males) and compassion (30,91% of males) were low in male principals.

Table 24: Male principals' attributes as perceived by their male subordinates.

RANK	ATTRIBUTE	PERCENTAGE
1.	Good relations with staff	87,27
2.	Positive attitude	70,91
3.	Openness	69,09
4.	Gentleness	56,36
	Communication skills	56,36
5.	Ability to create positive change	54,55
6.	Integrity	49,10
7.	Ability to influence	47,27
	Self discipline	47,27
8.	Problem solving skills	41,82
9.	Vision	38,18
10.	Compassion	30,91

Ratio - 3:3:4

Table 21, 22, 23 and 24 show that teachers perceived there to be more similarities than differences between female and male principals. For example both were seen to have very good communication skills, to be moderately gentle, and to have poor vision, ability to influence and integrity. One difference is that while both male and female respondents saw female principals as being very disciplined, only female respondents saw male principals as being disciplined.

CHAPTER 5

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF THE QUALITATIVE RESEARCH DATA.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the in-depth interviews with a female principal and three of her subordinates was to try and obtain a deeper understanding into some of the survey findings, for example:

* it appears from the survey that females principals are not seen by their subordinates to have as much authority as their male compatriots do. The interview therefore aimed to find out how true this was of this female principals;

* it also appears from the survey that principals, including female principals, lack the "ability to influence". Again the interview aimed at finding out how much this applied to this principal; and

* also to find out about this principal's leadership style, especially whether her style of leading tallies with what existing literature describes as a female leadership style.

5.2 INTERVIEW ANALYSIS

5.2.1 Biographical details of the interview respondents.

a) The principal

The principal served as a head of department and then as a deputy principal before becoming a school principal. She has 22 years of teaching experience. Her academic and professional qualifications include a B.A degree, a B.Ed degree and a primary teachers' certificate. She has also attended a number of managerial in-service courses and has served as a school principal for 2¾ years.

b) The "vice principal"

The school does not qualify for a deputy principal post. That this teacher is referred to as a "vice principal" is a result of an internal arrangement. She holds a Bachelor of arts degree and a teaching diploma and has served under the above principal since the school's inception, 2¾ years ago. She had no teaching experience prior to this.

c) The two teachers.

Two teachers, one male and one female were selected for the interview on account of their previous experience under a male principal. This experience, it was hoped, would enable the interviewees to supply comparative information about how their previous male principals and the present female principal lead. Both teachers possess secondary teachers' diploma. The male teacher has been teaching for four years whilst the female teacher has five years teaching experience. Efforts to get more experienced teachers were unsuccessful as all teachers at the school were young, with teaching experiences that ranged between 1-5 years.

5.2.2 Analysis of the data collected during the interview with the principal.

Topic 1: Appointment

> The principal was asked whether she felt it had been easier or more difficult for her
> to acquire her position as a school principal in comparison with how her male
> counterparts had achieved their positions.

She stated that she found that her qualifications, extensive teaching experience and administrative skills displayed during her service as a head of department and deputy principal, not her gender, resulted in her being appointed a principal in response to her first application. She had waited until she had obtained the necessary academic qualification before applying for the position of school principal. The principal's response indicate that she believed that a female teacher with the required experience and capabilities is unlikely to be discriminated against when applying for a promotion post.

Topic 2:   Teachers' attitudes

The following were discussed under this topic:

* the teacher attitude towards the principal;

* whether she thought these would have been different had she been a male; and

* what she thought were the reason for this attitude.

The principal's response was that her subordinates' attitude towards her was and had always been positive. She believed that this was brought about by:

* her subordinates' awareness, respect for and appreciation of her leadership, administrative and instructional expertise resulting from her extensive teaching experience;

* her involvement with her staff development;

* her fairness; and

* concern for her subordinates well-being.

The principal's response indicates she believed that teachers' attitudes towards a principal are not determined by the principal's gender but by the teachers' perception of the principal's expertise.

Topic 3: Cooperation

The principal was requested to state who she though co-operated more with her, female or male teachers, and to give what she thought were the reason for this.

Her response was: "Both male and female teachers cooperate equally with me". This, she felt, resulted from her ensuring that all teachers were involved in decision making and that she treated all members of staff equally, irrespective of gender. Her remarks were:

* "When delegating duties I make sure that no member of staff is, compared to other staff members, overloaded with work"; and

* "I ensure that what applies to female teachers also applies to males, for example, I censure absenteeism in all teachers, whether male or female."

According to her, teachers cooperate with a principal, not because of his/her gender, but, because of his/her fairness.

Topic 4: Priorities

The principal was asked what she values (and attends to) the most: task completion and efficiency in staff members or good relations with and among staff members.

Her response was: "Although I think task completion and efficiency in staff members are very important, my first priority is with the establishment and maintenance of healthy relations with and among staff members. I believe that once trust and good relations are established between me and staff members it then becomes easy for teachers to accept my leadership, guidance and supervision." She therefore believed that the establishment of good interpersonal relations in a school is not an end in itself but a means to ensuring effective leadership and school management.

Topic 5: The establishment and maintenance of healthy interpersonal relations.

In response to the above response the principal was requested to state how she established and maintained good interpersonal relations with the staff members.

Her response was: "I make sure that I:

* treat everyone with respect;

* establish trust with new staff members by offering effective orientation with respect to their tasks and the ethos of the school;

* appreciate the efforts of all staff members;

* am strict but fair to all teachers;

* encourage informal social contact, for example, co-celebration of staff members' achievements and birthdays and sympathising with teachers in grief;

* am friendly and approachable to all teachers; and

* convey lack of personal dislike to a teacher that I am admonishing for inefficiency or irresponsibility."

The principal's response clearly shows that she valued good interpersonal relations, felt they were important for the effective running of the school and therefor made sure that she put a great effort in the establishment and maintenance of good relations.

Topic 6: Decision making

The principal was asked how decisions were made in her school and to state why she preferred this manner of making decisions.

Her answer was: "The manner in which I take decisions depends on the nature and urgency of the decision. Generally decisions are taken with the participation of staff and/or pupils if the latter is thought to be in a position to make informed decisions and where they would be directly affected by the decision made. I take decisions on my own when an urgent decision has to be made."

In response to the question of what bearing she thought this manner of decision making had on the running of the school, she stated:

* "I believe that this causes teachers to own the decision taken. As a result they feel bound to comply with it"; and

* "teachers feel committed to the achievement of the school goals if they are involved in decision making, for example, I find that they feel committed to bringing emerging problems to my notice even before I become aware of them."

Topic 7: Comparison with male principals.

She was asked whether she felt the manner in which she ran her school and the way in which male principals generally ran theirs.

According to the principal there were differences between the way she ran her school and the way in which male principals generally ran their schools. She stated that:

75

* "male principals are not as involved in staff development, especially with the orientation of new teachers, as much as I am. They usually assume that qualified teachers do not need any orientation and that the only person responsible for a teacher's development is the teacher himself/herself, not the principal";

* "most male principals are authoritarian, while I believe staff should be involved in decision - making"; and

* "I am more sensitive to the needs and feelings of staff and more diplomatic in my approach than my male counterparts."

Topic 8:   Experiences of other female principals.
        She was asked whether the way she ran her school and her experiences as a principal were similar to those of other female principals known to her.

Her observations were that: "comparisons between male and female principals are difficult to make as female principals do not run their schools in a similar manner as much as males do not". She felt that: "gender plays a very small part in determining how individuals run their schools and that past experiences, education and personality of the principal all contribute toward the manner in which individual principals manage and lead subordinates".

Topic 9:   Finally the principal was requested to state, in addition to what had already been discussed with the researcher, what she also thought contributed to her success as a principal. The following are reasons the principal felt contributed towards her success:

* "My self-discipline and commitment to my role as an educator enables me to act as a role-model to both teachers and pupils;

* I encourage as much parental involvement as possible in the running of the

school. I find that their involvement particularly helps in the disciplining of their children;

* engage in introspection;

* give individual attention to both pupils and staff;

* justify my actions to my subordinates, for example, why I occasionally pay class visits without prior notice. This ensures that teachers do thorough lesson preparation at all times; and

* encourage and allow teachers to assume leadership in various school activities."

In conclusion the responses obtained from the principal indicate that the principal felt that her subordinates' perceptions of her were positive, irrespective of the subordinates' sex. She further felt that the teachers' acceptance of her was a result of her leadership style which was characterised by involvement of all staff in decision making, fairness, concern for both interpersonal relations and task completion, staff motivation and concern for staff development. The latter included the development of the leadership and administrative aspects of all her subordinates.

5.2.3 Analysis of the data collected during interviews with the teachers.

Topic 1:   Teachers' feelings towards the principal.
The teachers were requested to state their feelings towards the principal:
They were also requested to give reasons for these feelings.

All three teachers stated that the principal was viewed positively by themselves and other staff members. They further stated that they felt that this was as a result of the principal's:

* fairness

* ability to create a relaxed environment which they felt is favourable to teaching and learning;

* ability to give direction and guidance to teachers. The vice principal, for

example, stated that "the principal is approachable - even with personal problems";

* caring nature. The male respondent, for example, said: "She is motherly and treats us like her own children"; and

* ability to listen and consider other people's views.

Topic 2:   Priorities

The teachers were requested to state what the felt the principal was concerned with the most: whether she was more concerned with relations with staff or more with staff work performance.

The two female teachers stated that the principal was equally concerned with the two, whilst the male's answer was: "The principal is very concerned with the maintenance of good relations with staff but she is more concerned with teachers' work performance." Suspecting that the male teacher's perception that the principal was more concerned with tasks than relations stemmed from the failure of a male to accept an initiating female (as stated by Henkan in Conolye, 1980:39) the male teacher was probed on how he felt about this principal's concern with tasks. He stated that he felt that this concern motivated teachers to do their best at all times. This response was therefore seen as an indication that the male teacher was not at all resentful of working under an initiating female principal.

Topic 3:   Comparisons

The two teachers who had previously worked under a male principal were requested to state which of the two principals they felt was:

a) a better administrator

The female teacher felt that the two principals were equally good at administration while the male teacher felt that the female principal was a better administrator.

b) a better organiser

Again the female teacher felt that her previous male principal was as good an organiser as her

present female principal was, whereas the male teacher felt that his present female principal was a better organiser.

c) more participatory

The female teacher felt the two principals were equally participatory in their management style while the male teacher felt that the female principal was more participatory in her management than his previous male principal.

d) had better relations with staff

The teachers' responses to this question were similar to the above responses.

e) was better at motivating staff

Both teachers felt that the female principal was better at motivating staff than their respective previous male principals.

From the above responses it is apparent that the male teacher felt that the female principal was a better principal than his previous male principal. This teacher, however emphasised that he did not feel that all female principal were better than male principals and stated that: "I am in no position to make such a comparison since I have only worked under one male and one female principal." The female teacher on the other hand felt that her present female principal was as good a leader as her previous male principal was. The only sphere she felt that there was any difference was in relation with staff motivation, where she felt that the female principal was superior than her previous male principal.

Topic 4:   Differences

The two teachers were asked to state any differences they felt existed between the management skills of their previous male principals and that of their present female principal.

The female teacher felt that there were no differences between the way his previous male principal ran his school and the way the female principal ran hers. The male teacher's answer

was: " The female principal is a better leader. She guides and motivates staff and influences the teachers by acting as a role model in everything she does."

Topic 5:   Procedures

The teachers were requested to state how the principal communicated with the staff, took decisions, delegated and monitored tasks and motivated staff.

a) Communication with staff

The responses of the teachers to this question was that the principal's communication with staff was characterised by:

*   friendliness to all staff members;
*   the sharing of feelings. Teachers always know when the principal is displeased or pleased with their performance. The vice principal's statement was: "The principal stands for the truth";
*   approachability and accessibility; and
*   honesty.

b) Decision making

All three interviewees stated that decisions were taken in a participatory manner, that is:

*   staff members were usually involved in decision making. "She involves staff in most decisions" was the female respondent's response;
*   the principal did however take some decisions on her own. When this happened the principal explained why a certain decision was taken. The "vice principal" stated that: "The principal can take good decisions on her own where necessary"; and
*   also involved pupils in decisions that affected them directly.

c) Delegation and monitoring of tasks

Interviewees stated that the principal:

*   involved all teachers at the school in the delegation of duties. The "vice

        principal's" response was: "The principal first asks teachers to volunteer for

        certain tasks," and "where there are no volunteers staff members choose who

        they think is best suited for the task";

*   rotated duties such as supervision of campus care and assembly and the

        carrying out of administrative tasks among all staff members;

*   was fair when delegating. She considered teachers' interest and abilities and

        ensured that all teachers were given opportunities to experience various

        administrative tasks; and

*   was always concerned with whether all tasks were being carried out,

        requested that teachers report their progress regularly and also conducted

        regular class visits but "interferes only where there are problems," stated the

        male respondent.

d) motivates staff

The principal, according to the three respondents, motivates staff by:

*   setting a good example as: "She is hardworking, efficient and conscientious,"

        stated the female respondent;

*   praising good performance;

*   encouraging staff to undertake further studies and attend in-service courses.

        "She further supplies the staff with relevant information on courses offered by

        various institutions and with information on promotion posts available,"

        stated the vice principal; and

*   giving advice to help teachers overcome their instructional problems without

        belittling the teachers concerned. The male respondent stated, for example,

        that: "The principal has been a teacher for over 20 years and, as a result she is

        able to guide us with our teaching." The male respondent added that: " She

        does not make you feel small when she corrects you."

Topic 6:   Best qualities

The interviewees were requested to state what they felt were the principal's best attributes.

The interviewees felt that the principal's best qualities were:

*   her concern that the pupils received good education. She ensured this by motivating pupils to learn, supervising teachers and involving parent in the education of their children;

*   her concern with the development of her subordinates which she achieved by supervising and guiding them. She, as already stated, also encouraged teachers to improve their qualifications;

*   her commitment to her role as an educator; and

*   her deep concern for the well-being of her staff and pupils. All interviewees described her as being "motherly" and stated that they felt free to approach her with their problems, both professional and personal. They also stated that the principal never failed to give them useful advice.

Topic 7:   Dislikes

The teachers were requested to state what, if given the opportunity, they would like to change in the principal.

It seems as if these teachers really adored their principal. None of them came up with what they disliked about the principal. Although the male respondent did not bring this up at this stage of the interview, the researcher gathered during the interview that he found it disconcerting to have to be admonished by the principal. This was gathered from this teachers' comment that he made sure that he did his job and did it well because "the principal really gives it to you if you do not".

In conclusion it is apparent from the three teachers' responses that they perceived their principal to be an efficient and effective manager and that they did not mind working under a female

principal. It is also apparent from the principal's response that she was aware of these teachers' positive perception of her. Besides being seen as being a good manager the teachers also felt that the principal was an able leader and that her style of leadership was participatory, facilitative and transformational. They also felt that she was both a strongly initiating / task oriented and considerate / relations orientated leader.

This was a study of one female principal. This study proves that the female principal studied is an effective, participative, facilitative and transformational leader. However it does not prove that all female principals are effective, participatory, facilitative and transformational leaders.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The analysis of both the quantitative and qualitative research data reveals that female principals, at least amongst "Black" secondary school teachers in the Maphumulo circuit, are acceptable to teachers and are perceived to be as good as their male counterparts are at running their schools. The majority of both male and female teachers believe capable female teachers should be given the same opportunities to run schools that are given to capable male teachers. Female teachers' perception of female principals is however more positive, than that of male teachers. Male teachers who had worked under female teachers were more open to the idea of female principals running secondary schools than those male teachers who had never worked under female principals. The researcher however noted that the few teachers, mostly male, who were against the idea of female principals heading secondary schools had very strong feelings about this. Two male respondents working under a female principal, for example, did not feel their principal had any managerial or leadership strengths!

Teachers perceived the strength of female principals to run schools to be that these principals are usually self disciplined, hardworking, committed and reliable. They were however seen to lack the authority possessed by male principals. Female principals (together with their male counterparts) were also seen to owe their success to the good relation they enjoy with their staff.

Another finding of this research is that female principals are seen by teachers to possess leadership skills. Respondents felt females were as capable of leadership as male principals were.

Both male and female principals were however not seen to possess the ability to influence subordinates this seemingly contradictory statement might be because leadership was viewed by the principals and their subordinates as an ability to control and manipulate, and not as an ability to influence.

The only characteristic of female principals' leadership style established by this research is that they were seen to lead in a more participatory manner than male principals do.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 INTRODUCTION

This final chapter consist of a summary of findings form a literature survey (Chapter 2) on female leadership in education and findings from the study undertaken by the researcher (Chapter 3 and 4) on teachers' perceptions of female principals. From these findings certain recommendations are then made.

6.2 FEMALE LEADERSHIP IN EDUCATION

The literature surveyed revealed that worldwide there are few female principals running secondary schools and tertiary institutions and that the reasons for this have nothing to do with female teachers' efficiency or effectiveness (or lack of) as managers and / or leaders. It was also discovered that some authors, such as Marshall and Smith (in Ball 1987) feel there is a need to reverse the situation, not only for the benefit of the deserving female teachers, but also for the benefit of female pupils and education as a whole.

The following are reasons given by the above authors for their belief that the number of female principals should be increased until it is representative of the female teaching population:

* to prevent the demotivation of capable female teachers which usually occurs when they are denied career advancement opportunities;
* to enable secondary school female pupils to experience positive female role models;
* the likelihood of selecting more efficient and effective principals will increase if the pool from which principals are drawn consists not just of male principals, but of all qualifying teachers;
* to ensure that the school curriculum reflects both male and female values, meanings and perspectives. This, the authors felt would benefit both boys and girls. Girls' perspectives, values and meaning would be recognized and reflected

in the curriculum and teaching methods while boys would benefit in that they would learn to understand and appreciate the differences between boys and girls. They would also learn to see girls as only different but equal to them; and

* the so-called female leadership styles have been found to be suitable in educational settings.

6.2.1 Female Leadership Styles

It was established that, whether a given individual can or cannot lead or lead in a certain style does not depend on their gender but on their socialisation. Conoley (1980:40) advanced this argument by stating that leadership skills are "not biologically rooted or genetically determined but rather shaped, facilitated or stunted by social forces and socialisation."

Writers, such as Rosener (1990) and Conoley (1980) have found that, because of their socialisation, those women who can lead usually attribute their success to **transformational** and **facilitative** leadership styles. These styles were previously viewed as being inappropriate and feminine but are increasingly being advocated for by contemporary writers such as Burns (1978) and Sergiovanni (1987).

Transformational leaders are described as those who transform subordinates' self-interest into the interests of the group and concern for broader goals while satisfying subordinates' needs and helping them to reach higher moral and professional maturity (Rosener, 1990 and Burns, 1987). Transformational leadership was further found to be that which is characterised by subordinate participation in decision making, development and enthusing of subordinates, enhancing of subordinates' self worth and the sharing of power and information with subordinates (Rosener, 1990).

Facilitative leadership was, on other hand, described as a process that creates and/ or sustains favourable conditions to allow subordinates to "enhance their individual and collective perfomance" (Dunlap and Goldman, 1991: 13). A facilitative leader acts as a catalyst, works through others and does not impose his/ her power over others but shares power and allows leadership to develop amongst his/ her subordinates. Facilitative leadership is characterised by

the provision and arrangement of necessary resources; the selection of people who can work together effectively; the provision of training and modelling of collaborative behaviour; the supervision and monitoring of activities and provision of network for activities and to link groups to activities alsewhere (Dunlop and Goldman, 1991).

Leadership in Education

Both the transformational and facilitative leadership styles were found to be generally suitable in educational settings and to be particularly preferred in educational leaders by the majority of educators. As a result these styles have been prescribed for educators by certain department of education, for example, the Australian Victorian Education Department (Watkins, 1989).

The reasons the above leadership styles have been found to be suitable for educational settings are, inter alia, that:

* transformational leadership is, by very nature, educative;

* participative educational leaders are especially desirable in the present day South Africa where pupils are continuosly demanding to be consulted for decision making on matters affecting them;

* facilitative leaders are preferred by professional workers, such as teachers, as professional experieince and behaviour often clash with bureaucratic preference (Dunlop and Goldman, 1991: 13).

6.2.2 Underrepresentation of women in leadership positions in schools

The above proves that the reason there are few female principals, especially in secondary schools, is not because women cannot lead or that they lead in a manner thatis unsuitable for schools but that there were other reasons for this underrepresentation:

The androcentric conceptualisation of leadership was found to be the main cause for the underrepresentation of women occupying leadrship positions in schools by authour such as Blackmore (1989) and Kotecha (1992). This androcentric conceptualisation of leadership influences principals, mianly male, to engage in staff development programmes which exclude women teachers from management and leadership growth. It also influences selecting officers,

also mainly male, not to view female applicants as suitable material for principalship.

Most adherents of traditional approaches to leadership were found to be androcentric. The trait theorists were, for example, found to view leaders as those people who are aggressive, competitive, rational and domineering. This view excludes women as potential leaders as women are generally seen to be gentle, nurturing, emotional and egalitatian (Blackmore, 1989 and Kotecha, 1992). It was noted that this view might not apply to the South African Society which is seen to be moderately masculine (Hofstede, 1984) and that it probably only applies to those countries that are very masculine in character.

Situational contingency theories which, by their very nature should have provided a solution to the dilemma of potential female leaders, were however found not to offer any solution for women. These theories view very good leadership as being determined by the situation that the leader finds him/ herself in and by the fit between the leader' behaviour and follower maturity / characteristic, respectively. Adherents of these theories were still found to discriminate against women. They were found to explained male leadership success in terma of capabilities. They further reject those women whose success are due to initiating/tasks oriented behaviour as being "unfeminine'.

The above theories have been rejected by contemporary leadership theorists on the basis that they not only discriminate against women but view leadership as a **hierarchical** and **bureautic** process whereby leadership is viewed as a **manipulative** and **dominating** process. They were also rejected for their being transactional. Transactional leaders exchange one favour for another such as promotion for subordinate compliance and performance. This rejection gave rise to a call for transformational and facilitative leadership.

Other reasons found to be responsible for the underrepresentation of women in school principalship positions were that female teachers rarely applied for these positions because of:
* **family related constraints** such as residential immobility (where women teachers were found to be reluctant to uproot their families in pursuit of promotion positions) and double shifts (which were found to prevent women

from wanting to take on the added responsibilities of principalship);

* the so called **"fear of success"** which was however explained by the psychologist Sassen's reseach findings (1980) as a fear of competition and rejection that accompany success rather than the fear of success itself;

* governmental and departmental policies which, in the past denied tenure to married women leaving only unmarried women qualified for promotion, at least theoretically; and

* the **failure** of women to **display** or assume informal leadership roles.

6.3   Findings of this Research

The following are the findings of this study on the perception of female principals by teachers:

a)   The acceptability of female principals

The response given by the majority of teachers in this study show that teachers generally do not think that the sex of a principal is important and feel that female principals are as capable as, if sometimes not more capable than thier male colleagues. These teachers felt that what is important in a principal is not his / her gender but his / her capabilities as a principal which, according to the teachers, include:

* the ability to establish and maintain good interpersonal relations with staff, pupils and their parents;

* the ability to lead

* the ability to administrate efficiently; and

* reliability

The above capabilities can be seen to be in keeping with the findings of researchers quoted by Schmuck. These capabilities can be lead to what these researchers felt characterise effective principals. These reseachers feel that effective principals are those who inspire the commitment and energies of the faculty, raise the respect and admiration of the students "and enlist the trust and support of parents" (1986:17).

b) Reasons given for the acceptability of female principals

Those teachers who felt that more female principals should be given the opportunities to run schools, including secondary schools, based their feelings on their perception that female principals;

* have good relations with staff;
* are efficient organisers;
* are very self-disciplined;
* are reliable
* have the ability to bring about positive change;
* have the expertise to deal with volatile situations;
* are democratic leaders; and
* are good at motivating / enthusing subordinates.

The above findings are in keeping with Ball's (1987) and Robertson's (19) findings. These authors also found that women principals do run their schools effectively and that they excell in teacher motivation and the ability to bring about positive change.

c) Comparisons with male principals

According to the respondents there are more similarities than differences between female and male principals. This observation is in keeping with Hofstede (1984) who maintains that South Africa is a moderately masculine country, according to it there should therefore be few differences between male and female behaviours. Perceived similarities include the following: Both male and female principals were seen to:

* be democratic leaders,
* enjoy good relations with staff,
* have moderately good communication skills,
* lack vision,
* lack integrity, and
* lack the ability to influence.

The last three were seen by the researcher to be a cause for concern as they are seen to be an integral part of leadership (Burns, 1978 and Sergiovanni, 1987). That teachers had stated that both male and female principals have leadership skills but also stated that both lack vision, integrity and ability to influence was seen to mean that principals probably "lead" by manipulation and the exercise of power over subordinates. The latter two, according to Burns (1978), may cause subordinates to rebel and probably accounts, at least partly, for the unrest being experienced in a number of black schools.

The differences perceived by teacher to exist between male and female principals include the following:

* female principals were seen to be more self-disciplined, better organised, to be more diplomatic, compassionate, tolerant, adept at handling stress and children, flexible, reliable, hardworking and committed to their work than males, whilst

* male principals were seen to have more authority, to command more respect, to be better and rational decision makers/ problem solvers, to be more caring and to have more positive attitudes than their female counterparts.

The present research findings that both male and female leadership is characterised by participation and good interpersonal skills conflict with Rosener's 1990 findings. She found that only female leaders are participatory and enjoy good interpersonal skills and that male leaders rely on formal authority instead. This discrepancy can be explained in terms of cultural differences as stated by Hofstede above.

d)   Unacceptability of female principals

There are a few teachers who have a negative perception of female pricipals. These teachers feel female teachers should not run schools, especially secondary schools, for the following reasons:

They see female principals as:

* having favourites;
* being moody;

*   being inclined to gossip about certain staff members to other staff members;

*   being either too autocratic or too laissez faire; and

*   tending to undermine teachers in favour of pupils.

5.4   RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the above findings the author recommends that:

*   there be a reconceptualisation of "leadership" so that its view recognises women as potential leaders.

*   universities and colleges of education play leading role in the above by:

    -   providing intensive education, not just on general management, but also on leadership,

    -   allowing and encouraging female students to assume leadership positions so that more males accept and get used to leadership by capable females and that potential females get the necessary experience and confidence to assume and occupy leadership positions after graduation, and

    -   appointing leaders in their institutions who have demonstrated or are found to be capable of leading transformationally or facilitatively. This, it is believed, will provide students with positive role models;

*   staff development programmes in management should accommodate female teachers;

*   selecting officers should be given directives to look for potential in women and not a proven leadership record when selecting teachers for principalship positions as it is unlikely that female teachers will have this record as schools deny them

administrative experience;

* that women teachers should assertively, yet politely, request that schools provide them with opportunities to gain experience in administrative tasks;

* women teachers with leadership potential should display this potential by, for example, voicing their opinions during meetings and at conferences;

* capable women should apply for principalship positions; and

* women leaders (principals) should engage in introspection and strive to eliminate perceived weaknesses such as favouritism, gossiping and moodiness.

6.5 POSSIBLE AREAS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This study was an attempt to better understand leadership, especially female, in education. It only concentrated on teachers' perceptions of female secondary school principals and therefore does not cover all aspects of the topic. The following are some of the possible areas for further research that may help us better understand leadership (including female) in education:

* a study of how female principals experience leadership;
* an investigation into authorities' (for example school inspectors') perception of female leadership; and
* a search for the leadership style most preferred by South African teachers of various races.

6.6 CONCLUSIONS

Both male and female teachers, especially those teachers who have worked with female principals, have a positive perception of female principals. This is because female principals are seen to be generally as capable as male principals are but to be specifically more hardworking, motivating, self-disciplined and committed than male principals. However they are unfortunately seen (together with male principals) to lack vision, integrity and the ability to influence.

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Interview Guide for the Interview with a Female Principal

1.   Topic 1:   Appointment

The principal will be asked whether she felt it had been easier or more difficult for her to acquire her position as a school principal in comparison with how her male counterparts had achieved their position.

Topic 2:   Teachers' attitudes

The following will be discussed under this topic:
*   teachers' attitudes towards the principal and;
*   whether she feels their attitudes would have been different had she been a male and;
*   what she feels are the reasons for the teachers attitudes

Topic 3:   Cooperations

The aim will be to find out:

*   who cooperates more with the principals: male or female teachers; and
*   what the principal thinks are the reasons for this.

Topic 4   Priorities

The principal will be asked what she values the most: task completion and efficiency in staff or good relation with and among staff members.

Topic 5:   The establishment and maintenance of staff efficiency / interpersonal relations.

The principal will be asked how she establishes and maintains what she stated she values the most in (4) above.

Topic 6:   Decision making

The manner in which decisions are taken and the reasons will be discussed.

Topic 7:   Comparison with male principals

The principal will be asked whether she feels the manner in which she runs her school is different from the manner in which male principals run theirs. She will be asked to justify her answer.

Topic 8:   Experience of other female principals

She will be asked whether she feels the manner in which she runs her school is similar to the manner in which female principals known to her run theirs.

Topic 9:   Open discussion

The principal will be requested to state what, in addition to the above, she thinks contributes to her success as a principal.

Interview Guide for the Interviews with Teachers

Topic 1:   Teachers' attitudes towards the principal

The teachers will be requested to state whether their and colleague's attitudes towards the principal are positive or negative and to give reasons.

Topic 2:   Priorities

They will be asked what they feel the principal is more concerned with; relations with staff or staff work performance.

Topic 3:   Comparisons

The teachers will be requested to state whether they feel it is their past male or present female principal who is:

a)   a better administrator;
b)   a better organiser;
c)   more participatory;
d)   has better relations with staff; and
e)   is better at motivating staff.

Topic 4:   Differences

They will be requested to state any differences they feel exist between the management /leadership skills of their previous male principals and that of their present principal.

Topic 5:   Procedures

The teachers will requested to state how their principal:

a) communicates with staff;

b) makes decisions ;

c) delegates and monitors staff; and

d) motivates staff.

Topic 6:   Best qualities

The interviewees will be requested to state what they feel are their principal's best attributes.

Topic 7:   Dislikes

They will be requested to state what they feel are their principal's shortcomings.

QUESTIONNAIRE ON FEMALE PRINCIPALS

1.   Please indicate your sex   F

                                                                 M

2.   How long have you served as a teacher?   0 - 2yrs

                                                                 2 - 4yrs

                                                                 5 - 10yrs

3.   What position do you hold?   Teacher

                                                                 H.O.D

                                                                 Dep Principal

4.   Please indicate your academic and profesional
      qualifications   Matric

                                                                 PTD/STD/PTC/STC

                                                                 B Degree

                                                                 UED/HED

                                                                 H. Degree

                                                                 M. Degree

                                                                 PHD

5.   Are you serving or have you served under
      a female principal   Yes

                                                                 No

      If your answer to no."5" above was "no" please proceed to no. "9"

6. In your opinion why was this principal promoted?

   Was it because of her:
a)	Qualifications
b)	Experience
c)	Instructional efficiency
d)	Administrative efficiency
e)	Leadership skills
f)	Senior position e.g Dep Principal
g)	Other (please state)

   ....

   ....

7. Please list her strengths as a principal

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

8. What are her weakness as a principal?

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

   ....

9. Do you think female teachers should be promoted
   to principalship positions?   Agree

                                    Strongly Agree

                                    Disagree

                                    Strongly Disagree

2

10. Please give reasons for the answer you gave to question no. "9"

....

....

....

....

....

11. What are the five most important qualities / abilities you think a principal should possess?

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

12. What do you think are the five most important tasks of a principal?

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

13. If you answered "yes" to no. 9 above please indicate types of schools you think female principals should head.

a)   Pre - school
b)   Primary schools
c)   Secondary schools
d)   Tertiary schools
e)   Any

14. If you had a choice which principal would you prefer to serve under

    a)   Female principal

    b)   Male

    c)   Sex not important

15. Do you believe teachers (representatives) should be given an opportunity (that is, seat in the selection team) to select a principal for their school?

    Agree

    Strongly agree

    Disagree

    Strongly disagree

16. In your opinion do females have strengths as leaders that males do not have?

    Yes

    No

17. If yes please list these strengths

18. Do you think males lead differently from females?

    Yes

    No

19. Please give reasons for your answer in "18" above.

20. Which of the following attributes does your present principal posses: You may tick more than one
    a) Integrity
    b) Ability to influence
    c) Ability to create
       positive change
    d) Positive attitude
    e) Self discipline
    f) Problem solving skills
    g) Gentleness
    h) Compassion
    i) openness
    j) Vision
    k) Communication skills
    l) Good relations with staff

21. Is your present principal
    a) Male
    b) Female

THANK YOU FOR YOUR COOPERATION