

**AN EXPLORATION OF PROFESSIONAL SELF ADVANCEMENT OF
WOMEN IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP:
A CASE STUDY OF SIX WOMEN FROM ILEMBE DISTRICT, KZN**

BY

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Abstract

The study sought to explore six women from Ilembe District who are managing in different levels within their organisations. The study focused on Principals, Deputy Principals and HOD's from different schools. The aim of the study was to find out whether Professional self-advancement has embraced women in Education Leadership with skills that would help them withstand the challenges mostly faced by women leaders that are imposed by the patriarchal gendered background. This qualitative study was set in the interpretive paradigm. It used semi structured interviews and documents analysis, as its method of data collection. The findings revealed that women were reluctant at some point to improve themselves professionally because there is lesser advancement of women into leadership positions, as compared to their male counterparts.

It transpired that some women believed that the employment of feminine characteristics of managing embraced women with a sense of worth and responsibility in their organisations. On the other hand some women were pre-conditioned that in order to be recognised as a good leader one had to employ masculine character traits to be acceptable. To most participants professional self-advancement has empowered them to be confident, knowledgeable and be resilient to withstand all negative misconceptions towards them as women leaders.

In large majority, women believed that their exposure to management courses has helped them deal with conflicts and improve inter-relations within their organisations. They see themselves as approachable, nurturing, supportive and relational to all their subordinates and this bring meaning to them as women that they have a major role to play to help shape our education. Grogan (2010) hinted that studies pursued by Shakeshaft and Grogan on US women leaders have noted five different characteristics portrayed by women managers which are; leadership for learning, leadership for social justice, relational leadership, spiritual leadership and balance leadership.

The study recommends that both the victims and perpetrators of gendered situations should work collaboratively to re-socialise both women and men so as to help women find their self worth within the education system. This could be done by assisting women improve themselves through engaging with institutions of higher learning, attending seminars, motivational talks, enhance networking, have mentors and attend departmental programmes that focus on enhancement of leadership skills. Lastly, for outstanding performance, women should be accepted as they are, to regain their self confidence and exhaust all their capabilities, but not to disregard their mothering flair. Lumby and Azaola (2013) in their study on women principals in South Africa said that, their 'mothering identity' develops skills even in areas where they report there is considerable doubt about their competence, for example in disciplining boys. In their study they picked that as mothers, they are better able than men to discipline boys. Through exposure to management studies, some participants have found that they use both feminine and masculine style of leadership. Coleman (1996) as cited in Pace and Pace (2005) found that female head teachers exhibit both feminine and masculine qualities, and hence could be identified as androgynous leaders. It is therefore, important that women are exposed to skills development workshops; nurture their studies, engage in networking, and advance their knowledge in every way possible to become better leaders in education.

Declaration of own work

I, Jacqueline Jabisile Ndadane, declare that this dissertation “The exploration of professional self advancement of women in Educational Leadership, the case study of six women from Ilembe district” is my work. It also abides by the following regulations;

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.....
Date

Supervisor's statement

This dissertation has been submitted with/without my approval

Signed:

Dr TT Bhengu (Supervisor)

Date:

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Dedications

I am dedicating this piece of work to my late grandfather, Robert Dhlamini, who was very passionate about education. Educating his two daughters, impacted positively to all of us, especially his grandchildren. The honour is yours, Sibalukhulu.

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CHAPTER ONE

ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The past and the present women participation in educational management internationally and locally indicate that there is a marked degree of gender imbalances (Lemmer, 1993; Coetzee, 2001). In the struggle to maintain domination of the males, women were kept in a submissive position which includes less educational exposure than their male counterparts, economic dependence, and prohibited from leading positions in education and other societal circles (Lemmer, 1993; Coetzee, 2001). Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) emphasise that women as members of our society like men also deserve an opportunity to practice leadership as well, particularly in the education fraternity. This is an area where they excel in directing, leading, supporting the youth to become successful and productive members of the society (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001). Coetzee (2003) argues that it seems that concerns about gender have not produced the positive results despite all the attempts that have been made to transforming education in South Africa.

Moodie (2010) points out that although improvements have been made, however women academics are still behind as compared to their male counterparts especially in South African universities. The common patriarchal attitudes, the lingering effects of apartheid and women's child bearing responsibilities are major challenges facing women educators as they climb the career ladder. Coombs (2004) elaborates on this point, arguing that teaching has been regarded as historically a profession for women, but it is mainly limited to the positions of a class teacher or subject teacher and not in leadership. The education workforce in South Africa is dominated by women (Coombs, 2004). Given that women constitute the majority of the teachers, one would assume that the number of women in promotion posts should have improved (Coombs, 2004). Reference has been made to the inability of role players to mobilise the space opened by democracy to achieve educational liberation from the intellectual prison that was Bantu education (Pando, 2006).

In view of the above-mentioned problem, the study reported here sought to find answers whether professional self-advancement of women in educational leadership can possibly help women define their identities as women leaders irrespective of gender stereotypes. The study in this regard involves women who have improved themselves professionally and are already leading organisations, also portraying their leadership skills even outside the school situation. The study is located within the interpretive paradigm and expects women to give answers about how they

manage to lead continuously although literature shows that there are fewer women in educational leadership currently.

Antonoros (2009) points out that various studies have noted that some people hold negative perceptions about women as leaders because of certain assumptions about gender and behaviour. Antonoros (2009) further states that behaviour that sees assertiveness in a man can be perceived as abrasiveness in a woman. In various settings women who seem to be more feminine are unpopular and those who are indebted to masculine behaviour are perceived as harsh and trying to be men. This research targeted women who have engaged themselves professional towards self-advancement endeavours within their school environment. They have serviced the Department of Education for a long time and their stories provide some insights about how they dealt with pre-conceived misconceptions about them as women leaders. Lastly, there is much in the literature as stated by (Hill & Ragland, 1995; Singleton, 1996; Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001; Mabileka & Mawila, 2004; Gawe, 2005; Kanjere, 2007) that discusses barriers to women assuming leadership positions.

The next sections provide background to the study, the rationale for the study, research questions that underpin the study, significance of the study, discussion of key concept, namely, professional self-advancement, the review of related literature, research design and methodology, demarcation of the problem and lastly, the presentation of the structure of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

The views expressed in the above introduction indicate that gender equality at the work place would be an illusion rather than a substantial practice in South Africa, despite the inception of a democratic government in 1994. Previously teaching has been viewed as women's responsibility as caring patriarchal wives and mothers (Cullibo & Brown, 2003). On that given note Newman (1994) as cited in Cullibo and Brown (2003), describes this association with a 'caring profession' as one that offers women with familial roles and identities around a core of male hierarchies and privileges. Management on the other hand, was associated with men leading but the notion of women leading was associated with their contribution to nurturing and mothering (Lumby & Azaola, 2013).

Mathiba and Tsoka (2001, p 324) point out that "the disadvantages that women are subjected to, appear not to have anything to do with requirements for positions of leadership, except only to perpetuate a false perception that women lack the personality and experience needed when faced with tough situations". Adding to this debate, Catalyst (2007) states that women who adhere to feminine style of leadership are often admired, but not respected; they are perceived as passive

and unassertive when it comes to decision making. I regard adherents to such views as prescribing the ways in which women should behave when leading, and I consider it to be detrimental to self-advancement and development. According to Phendla (2004) black women school managers are forced to learn how to find the way across the tension perpetuated by culture, language, and customary laws. It is from this given situation that the study aims to find out whether professional self-advancement can possibly be a mechanism that can help women peel off multiple oppressive layers to be effective leaders irrespective of preconceived perceptions against them. Williams (2011) states that since 1994, the South African education system has been transformed in many respects, whereby teachers were increasingly being expected to change their schools onto democratic, professional working environments. The new democratic government propagated equality in all spheres of life including education (Republic of South Africa, 1996). A great number of women in managerial positions have increased in the majority of provinces from 1994 onwards Chisholm (2001), cited in Coombs (2004). Even though there were changes envisaged regarding the issue of women and leadership, but the issue of women being under represented persisted (Williams, 2011).

1.3 Rationale of the study

As a newly appointed educator in a well performing woman headed Catholic school in northern KwaZulu-Natal, in South Africa, I witnessed a very functional organisation, where all the managerial positions were headed by women nuns. The culture of learning and teaching was prioritised; the community was a learning community. The school had a reputation of producing good quality education, well informed academics and leaders from all over the country. I never saw gender as an issue then, but after being transferred into a public township school, I witnessed a completely different scenario. Later on, I became an HOD in a school where all the three HODs were women, and a male principal. The principal was work conscious and delegated us HODs some of the tasks as a way of empowering us. I realised the potential that was displayed by all those women managers in their respective departments. One common thing about us as SMT members was the academic qualifications we had acquired. I realised the importance of continuously furthering my studies after the first professional qualifications.

As part of delegation of duties culture, I was sometimes sent out of the school, on behalf of the principal because we never had a deputy principal. I came to direct contact with different realities in the other schools. I realised that women principals behaved like subordinates scared of their superiors; they were very passive in those meetings I attended. I once had to attend a workshop with my principal for IQMS training sessions. I was shocked. I realised that there were only four women principals out of 35 schools in the circuit. During the meeting, these women leaders were

always silent, passive and receptive of information from their supervisors from the district office. This experience was completely different from the woman nun principal I have worked with in my first school. I found it disturbing because we were already in a democratic era where policies encouraged transformation whereby all stakeholders in education were expected to have a voice including women as well.

The above-mentioned experiences evoked my consciousness that our patriarchal background may have had something to do with what I saw; apparently, it had moulded women leaders to be submissive and it appeared to be a normal behavioural pattern. It appeared to me that, perhaps, these women to be participative, they had to be like man and adopt the masculine posture when presenting themselves. Shakeshaft (2007) cited in Grogan (2010) posits that, there has been a strong body of knowledge which contributes to insights about the procedure on which females head schools in countries that speak English such as the USA, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United Kingdom (UK) Shakeshaft (2007), cited in Grogan (2010). Grogan (2010) highlights some articles written by other scholars such as Agezo, Ngunjiri, Shapira and Speradino help provide a glance into Africa, Arab-Israel, Bangladesh and India regarding women's leadership issues. It is on the bases of these readings and experiences that prompted the desire to want to understand how women leaders are leading in South Africa given the fact that there is an enabling environment that was put in place after 1994. Such environment enabled both males and females as equal role-players in education.

With the inception of the democratic government in South Africa many things had to be transformed, thus affecting all social structures including education (Bhengu, 2005). The South African constitution outlaws all forms of discrimination on the foundation of race, sex, cultural origin, age, religion as well as all other spheres of life (Republic of South Africa, 1996). The post-apartheid South Africa has witnessed a great number of policies and programmes meant to enhance gender equality even in education. The formulation of Gender Equity Task Team by the Department of Education in 1996 propelled the formation of the permanent gender equity in the education sector. The Gender Equity Commission and the Constitution states that: In making of any appointment or filling any post of any educator establishment under the Act, due regards be given to equality, equity and other democratic values and principles which are contemplated in section (195) (Article1) of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996 (Act 108 of 1996). I was therefore, inspired to conduct this research because I have been intrigued by the positive and the negative experiences regarding women leadership roles as alluded to in the previous sections. Previous research has shown that women have the potential to play meaningful leadership roles, but are still dominated by men.

I believe that women have the potential and ability which can be transformed and translated into effective leadership if they grab the opportunity that is provided. To intensify this claim, is a study conducted by Ngcobo (1996) as cited in Coombs (2004), Ngcobo claims that both males and female educators who have worked with woman managers had positive perceptions about them, but they hinted prejudice as the main barrier towards their authority. The following researchers also hinted prejudice against women as a barrier (Lemmer, 1987; Greyvenstein, 1989; Monau, 1995; De Wit, 1991; Van Deventer, 1998; Chisholm, 2001). It is from this stance that I believe the study should seek answers from women who have improved themselves professionally and are occupying leading positions.

The constitution of the country and the contents from Gender Equity structures provide a platform for all, in order to operate equally. The study seeks to understand the strides taken by women in leadership to date. Mazibuko (2006) points out those women are agents of transformation who must adopt human rights and empowerment models of interventions and detach from the victim syndrome and instead, utilise the facility rendered by the Commission for Gender Equality. Chisholm (2001) declares that, the number of women in leading posts did increase nationally since 1994, but it appears as if women are still plagued by a number of unforeseen challenges and pre- conceived perceptions.

1.4 Research questions

1. How do women leaders utilise the platform rendered by the new and enabling environment to advance themselves in leadership positions?
2. How does professional self- advancement equip and boost the morale of women in educational leadership?
3. What leadership styles are seen to sustain and equip women in education leadership?
4. What strategies are used by women in leadership positions to deal with prejudice towards their authority?

1.5 Significance of the study

The study has the potential to make a contribution to national and international debates by providing insight into how professional self-advancement occurs and how it can help women in educational leadership realise their visions and ambitions. The study explores the extent to which professional self-advancement can assist women educators to be active participants in educational leadership. As part of that exploration, it attempts to examine the notion of social stereotypes against women and its possible contribution to their poor self-image, lack of assertiveness and the

resultant poor representation in promotion positions. Finally knowledge gained might add in on the issue of women in higher educational positions, which is mostly clouded by lots of barriers.

1.6 Understanding professional self-advancement

Professional development can be regarded as vital dimension in improving teachers' professional skills and capabilities (Cockburn, 2000; Bush, 2002; Odland, 2002). This view assumes that professional development helps develop teachers' confidence and motivation and also provides opportunity to transform their professional work. In this study professional self-advancement is viewed as career orientated; it involves courses, workshops, seminars, educational conferences, peer collaboration, study groups, academically obtained certification, which are obtained through self-initiated endeavours to improve one's career for productivity (Williams, 2011). The term "advancement" can be ambiguous in a sense that it can mean development or improvement that may be aligned to one's career (Oxford dictionary). The term can also be used to refer advancement to a better position or rank (The New Collins Dictionary and Thesaurus, 1987). Therefore, professional advancement refers to promotion of plan or better position that gives superiority (Oxford English Dictionary, 2011). Williams (2011) mentions that due, to the lack of funding in this country, teachers' development and training workshops which are provided at provincial level are scanty, short and terminal which may not prepare teachers with enough skills to effect change in their respective organisations. However, there is hope that sustained professional development will take place as a result of the new Continuing Professional Teacher Development (CPDT) which is being introduced and is also recognised by SACE.

Bennet (2003) outlines the following implications for professional self-development: (a) extending the reach of leadership programmes and continuing professional development so that teachers have access to leadership development opportunities that will empower all educators to develop communities for diverse learner population.

Professional self-advancement, commonly referred to as professional development in literature is meant for all educators in order to develop their skills. This is propagated by writers such as (Bolam, 2002; Bush, 2002; Bennet, 2003; Fosket & Lumby, 2003). Bush (2002) propagates that the notion of teaching as a career rather than as a job rests mostly on provision of structured professional development opportunities for teachers. In the context of this study, it is used specifically to focus on women in leadership positions, to find out whether or not they had been empowered to withstand various challenges such as pre-conceived perceptions and prejudice against them. Mazibuko (2006) advocates the view that women in leadership must be seen to be

doing things differently; practicing the culture of inclusion; challenging the *status quo*, rather than being co-opted into the dominant power structures.

1.7 Literature review

International, continental and national literature on various issues relating to women leadership is reviewed, and the details are provided in Chapter Two. The main aim of that section is to provide a broad landscape about debates and other issues relating to women in leadership and professional self-advancement. The literature review also provides some insights about the strides and improvements that have been made internationally and nationally since women form a majority of the labour market within the educational terrain (Cullibo & Brown, 2003).

1.8 Research design and methodology

Mouton (2011) refers to research design as a blueprint of how you intend conducting your research. Yin (2003) defines research design as the sequential pattern that binds empirical data to a study's actual research questions, which would finally portray a complete picture of the study. In order to understand women in educational leadership and the impact of professional self-advancement, a qualitative research approach comprising a case study was used. Qualitative researchers are typically interested in learning what the participants in a study are thinking and why they think what they are thinking (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006).

Leedy and Ormrod (2001) propagate that in a case study, the researcher accumulates wide-ranging information on the individual(s) or issues that are being investigated. A case study is described as a comprehensive exploration of a single, restricted entity (McMillan, 2004; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2006). In this study, the single case situation is that of women in leadership. In the context of this study, case study allowed me (the researcher) to arrive at an understanding and interpretation of how professional self-advancement has impacted on each of the participants, who are women in educational leadership.

1.9 Demarcation of the problem

Every study has its own demarcation, this part translate the boundaries. The study focuses on women in educational leadership at school level. Furthermore, women in higher positions, such as those at district level, the regional offices, and universities are not part and parcel of the study. The study is also limited to a smaller portion of a vast district.

1.10 The structure of the study

This report is presented in five chapters that are coherent and form a vivid picture about women in education leadership and professional self-advancement. The outline of chapters is presented as follows:

Chapter One

The opening chapter presents a summary of the study. It provides the background and the need to pursue this particular study. The four research questions that guided the study are also provided. Furthermore this section portrays the necessity to pursue such a study, as well as the worth of the study in question. Chapter one also outlines the type of literature that is deemed relevant for the study. Lastly, the demarcation of the study is presented.

Chapter Two

This chapter reviews literature on women in education and their self- advancement as professionals. It also dwells more on studies that were conducted on the area of women in education leadership. In addition, a critical review of national, continental and international literature that is relevant to the research topic is done in this chapter.

Chapter Three

This chapter presents a detailed explanation of research design, methodology and methods that were followed in carrying out the study. This chapter also reveals research instruments that were used for generating data for this research, as well as issues of analysis procedure and ethical considerations.

Chapter Four

This chapter presents and discusses data that was generated through semi-structured interviews with the participants. Before the data is presented, a short profile of each of the participants is presented. Lastly, the themes that emerged from the data generated are presented and discussed.

Chapter Five

This chapter presents the findings, the study summary and makes recommendations based on the findings.

1.11 Chapter Summary

This chapter introduced the theme of the research project which is called professional self-advancement of women in education leadership. The background, rationale of the study, research questions and the importance of the study were presented in this chapter. Brief descriptions of the concept of professional self-advancement, research pattern the methodology as well as the demarcation of the problem was presented. The next chapter offers the review of the literature relating to women in education leadership and professional self-advancement.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study by providing historical background to the issue and outlining elements of the research process that include the rationale, research questions and the outline of the entire study. Chapter Two provides a detailed discussion of the literature pertaining to women's advancement to leadership positions. Analysis of different themes is a pre-requisite of what the chapter explores. The study focuses on professional self-advancement of women in educational leadership.

This chapter further focuses on various angles relating to the need for professional advancement of women in education leadership. The chapter also interrogates the evolution of women situation with regards to opportunities for them to take up leadership positions. The discussion also explores issues surrounding gender differences in relation to management styles. The establishment of the Gender Equity Task commission is viewed as milestone for women leaders and the work and the findings of this task team is viewed as a benchmark to also assess progress made with regards to women taking on leadership positions. International, continental and national perspectives are also explored in this chapter.

It is essential to interrogate the above mentioned aspects given the fact that various studies indicate that women have a potential to make remarkable contribution to the field of educational leadership and management and this include literature by (Eisler, 1995; Pace & Pace, 2005). Shakeshaft (1989) posits that women's traditional stereotypic styles of communication are more like those of a good manager than men's stereotypic styles. Grogan (2010) posits that figures quoted in their studies, indicate that there is a noticeable move regarding the engagement of women in leadership positions especially in the private sector. Grogan (2010) further propagates that women in education should also follow suit in the increasing presence of women school principals worldwide. Grogan (2010) also suggests that there is more interest today in studying women leaders than ever before.

In my view, the turning point about women in leadership signifies that women should take initiative, and heed the call in order to lead if the platforms are created for them to participate. It is essential that women empower themselves with requisite skills and knowledge that will possibly enable them to play meaningful roles when they assume leadership positions. As part of reviewing related literature, more attention is paid to the concepts of leadership and management.

2.2 Definition of key concepts

The key concepts that drive the story are educational leadership, educational management and professional self-advancement, and discussed below. All these concepts are interwoven hence the study is professional self advancement of women in educational leadership.

2.2.1 Educational leadership

Gunter (2004) states that educational leadership has been given different connotations thus it has been known as educational administration, educational management, and recently educational leadership. Kiamba (2008) argues that educational leadership has originally carried the notion of masculinity and it has always been envisaged that men make better leaders than women and this belief has dominated various communities worldwide to date. This view is not the only dominant one as there are other views which emphasise other characteristics of leadership. For instance, de la Rey (2005) highlights certain traits that are associated with leadership. Among them, de la Rey (2005) lists advanced communication skills, task orientated character, accountability, problem solving skills, creativity, sound judgement, captivity, vision, self-awareness, self worth, knowledge and authority as the main qualities that are commonly associated with leadership. She then argues that such traits or characteristics can be found in any individual regardless of gender.

It is with this kind of awareness that I explored the issue of women leadership and how, if at all, they view professional self-advancement to be. Leaders are individuals who provide direction and give significance to an organisation so that the organisation could yield positive results (Grove & Montgomery, 2008). Kiamba (2008) emphasises that from that perspectives, leaders are alike genderless. In my view, if these traits are regarded as genderless as Kiamba argues, then it should not be a surprise to witness the phenomenon of women and men occupying key positions in schools such as principals, deputy principals and heads of departments. Moreover, Yulk (2002) argues that the definition of leadership is very subjective and can vary from situation to situation. From that perspective, it may be incorrect to assume that leadership is meant for any particular gender as there is no correct interpretation of leadership (Yukl, 2002).

2.2.2 Educational management

Bush (2010) states that management in education can be translated as a field of study that has to do with the operation of education organisations and points that there is no perfect definition of this educational phenomenon. Bush (2003) argues that educational management should encompass the main aim of teaching and learning, which is the central business of schools. Bush (1994) highlights that managers monitor and control the organisational activities, make decisions

and allocate resources. On a similar vein, but from the Indian perspective, Sapre (2002) propagates that leadership is a cluster of endeavours aimed towards resourceful and efficient utilisation of organisational goals.

2.3 Professional self-advancement and women in leadership positions

Boland (2002) propagates that professional improvement is widely recognised as elementary to the empowerment of organisations' performance and defines it as an ongoing process of education, training as well as support activities. To add on that professional development can be regarded as a vital dimension in improving teachers' professional skills and capabilities (Cockburn, 2000; Bush, 2002; Odland, 2002) assume that professional development helps develop teachers' confidence and motivation and it provides the opportunity to transform their professional work.

Fosket and Lumby (2003) claim that providing staff with opportunities to develop is the final step which closes the circle of managing performance. Boland (2003) defines professional improvement as a continuous process of education, which inhibits itself either externally or on work-related settings. Boland (2003) further describes professional self- advancement as primarily an initial engagement of improving learning and development of one's professional knowledge, skills and ideals, so that it can enhance an agreed balance between individual, school and nation. Professional self-advancement particularly of leaders appears to be vital as Bush and Middlewood (2005) emphasises that leaders are people who mould goals, motivations and deeds of others. Leaders should therefore enhance change to reach existing and new goals about the organisations they are heading. Speradino and Kagoda (2008), sharing their Ugandan experience argue that women on leadership can be viewed as an orientation and training for new appointees such as principals and or deputy principals and teachers. Professional development for women leaders was first instituted by the Minister of Education services in 2002. This training addressed various aspects of management including financial management, human resources management, communications and similar important issues relating to leadership and management in institutions.

Speradino and Kagoda (2008) further found that in Uganda individual schools are provided with funding particularly for school leaders to engage in studies with external private organisations like the British Council. Their study also found that in Uganda women, who are heading for leadership positions in secondary schools, are expected to have training for an in-depth knowledge of secondary schools teaching. It also transpired that the present basic requirement for a deputy in smaller grades should include a university degree and a qualification at the diploma level from a

recognised university or training institution. What is evident from reading these studies is the need for capacity and skills to be able to handle any challenge pertaining to managing a school.

Bush and Middlewood (2005) propagate that professional development can be regarded as a vital dimension in improving teachers' professional skills and capabilities. They consider professional development to be an essential part of lifelong learning and that it is likely to yield positive for schools (Bush & Middlewood, 2005). Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) in their analysis suggest that it is essential to re-design strategies to be embarked on to encourage women contribute positively to society's prosperity through positions of leadership in the educational profession.

2.4 The need for professional self-advancement of women

Education is a basic tool for empowering women with knowledge, skills and self-confidence. This is particularly more important for women in disadvantaged communities (Stacki & Monkman, 2003; Bukhesh, 2007) cited in Lemmer (2009). Lemmer (2009) identifies multiple dimensions of personal empowerment, namely, knowledge autonomy, decision-making autonomy, physical, emotional, economic, social and political dimensions. However, in the context of this study on professional self-advancement of women leaders, the focus is on knowledge autonomy interwoven with emotional and decision-making autonomy. Lemmer (2009) points out those self-reliant models propagate that a woman is empowered if she is educated and has productive skills, access capital, and self-confidence within the society. The focus of the study is more on professional self-advancement, although Lemmer (2009) argues that political and ideological gender equity is ignored, therefore when women reach high levels of education, they do not automatically attain commensurate economic and political equality as they theoretically should. Lemmer (2009) further proposes that women's empowerment is incomplete unless it involves the structural transformation of male dominated society. Other scholar who propagate a similar view are Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) who argue that for any programme formulated towards empowering women, there should be an equivalent programme aimed towards transforming men's attitude towards women.

2.5 Evolution of women into leadership positions

In their new book entitled *Influence*, Dychtwald and Larson (2010) write of the emergency of women in recent economist of many countries as the most essential demographic charge of our era (Grogan, 2010). Grogan (2010) further argues that women are enjoying economic stability than ever before. On the other hand Robin (2010), states that in the United States of America (USA), women are advancing professionally thus obtaining degrees in higher education than men. In the corporate world women are breaking or bending the rules and creating new structures and

business models that appeal to men and women in small and not so small companies (Dychtwald & Larson, 2010).

Focusing on education, Grogan (2010) assumes that figures in various studies, indicate a shift in women's advancement towards leadership in the private sector and points out that women educators can as well take charge in leading positions worldwide. Grogan (2010) also points out that there is more interest today in studying leaders than ever before. The findings made by Grogan and Shakeshaft (2010), confirm that there are various characters that are noted in women leaders. Studies indicate that effectiveness of schools is linked with qualities such as empathy, warmth, genuineness and concreteness (Bush & West Burnham, 1994). Good management is seen as empowering of others through transformational leadership. The caring nurturing traits, which are displayed women, are being recognised as their strength in management.

The section that specifically focuses on international, continental, as well as, national literature provides more details about progress that has been made thus with regards to women and leadership issues.

2.5.1 International literature

It has been witnessed that women, more than ever before, have now become feasible and valuable contributors to the workforce, shattering through the glass ceiling and pushing aside glass walls to become leaders in their own right (Brown, 2003). Another scholar who has witnessed the progression of women into better positions is Grogan (2010). Brown (2003) admits that it is true that, more than ever, women are slowly chiselling through the glass barriers to take on leadership positions. To support this contention Grogan (2010), mentions that women in India are learning English more quickly than their male counterparts. They do this in order to take advantage of the explosion of call centres. Drawing from the Indian scenario, one can note that this is one way in which women are improving themselves so that they have an impact in improving their work force and be active participants in improving their countries' economies.

Grogan (2010) further elaborates that modern Chinese women are in control of more than 40% of private businesses. In the USA, there are still loopholes with regard to incentives between men and women, although women occupy 51.4% of leadership and professional jobs. Within the educational sector, it has been highlighted that internationally, the movement of women into leadership has been very slow (Speradino, 2011). Considering a great number of women in junior educational levels in a majority of countries, their failure to progress into decision-making positions, and to take leading positions, has been detrimental to the country's productivity because skills are lost since women form a larger workforce in most countries (Speradino, 2011).

Speradino (2011) further points out that, despite these conditions and increased comprehension of historical cause, progress towards gender equality and educational management goes at a snail's pace when compared to governing boards of public and corporate organisations. Kiamba (2008) also holds similar views that in education and academic circles, women are still under represented in leadership positions with higher education being the worst affected. Rosini (2010) has notes that in the USA, women are more acquainted higher education than men, but also questions whether those findings demonstrates women's presence in leadership positions. Speradino (2011) highlights that the USA is one of the few countries that need certain improved qualifications before appointing newly recruited individuals to school leadership and subsequent promotion to higher leadership positions, such as the state, district and other higher educational portfolios.

It is specifically on this point that the study, being reported in this dissertation, looks into women in leadership and professional self-advancement. Speradino (2011) emphasises academic and experiential qualification as a basic need for women to enter into leadership position in education. Contrary to that, Speradino (2011) also mentions that, although women are advancing their skills professionally, but there is a minimal of progress of women towards leadership positions currently in USA. At the time of writing, Speradino (2010) claim that only 20% women were placed on of the school district superintendent positions in USA.

The above-mentioned scenario is consistent with Lumby and Coleman's (2007) position with regard to women advancement. Lumby and Coleman (2007) state that leadership in Western democracies has been dominated by what they call the *white male middle class* norm. Lumby and Coleman (2007) further point out that the normative view that management is male pursuit inevitably impacts on women who seek and those who access leadership positions. Coleman, Qiary and Liv (1998), cited in Bush (2011), show that there were no women school heads in any of the 89 secondary schools in three countries of the Shaanxi Province of China. Contrary to the above, Purvis (2007) as cited in Bush (2011) has found that the Republic of Seychelles provides one rare exception in that 90% of school principals and most senior Ministry of Education staff, are women. The argument is that, women are capable of leading if given a chance. However, Speradino (2011) points out that endeavours to condition women into leadership positions and changing expectation to make them more gender inclusive, presents an overwhelming volume of obstacles. While negative sentiments are expressed about women leadership capabilities, Growe and Montgomery's (2000) studies of school management claim that schools with female managers were better headed, and on better standardised level, portraying fulfilling performance than those led by men.

To add to Growe and Montgomery's (2000) findings, Aladejana (2005), as cited in Kiamba (2008), in the research that she pursued in South West Nigeria found similar findings about female representation in leadership positions. Eargly and Johnson (1990) as cited in Kiamba (2008), point out that it is evident that women's style of leadership is completely different from the one employed by men. Similarly, this study on women in leadership and professional self-advancement attempts to also explore leadership style employed by women in leadership.

It has been mentioned that the contribution of women in economic circles improves the country's wealth. Grogan (2010) points out that when the country encourages its girls and women to engage in learning activities that strategy might increase the country's domestic gross. In supporting that argument, Grogan (2010), utilises the Gender Institutions and Development Database which gages economic and political influence of women in 162 countries. This database suggests that, the greater the number of women, the greater the success of that country's economy. That is due to the fact that women produce the largest workforce ever (Grogan 2010).

2.5.2 Continental literature

Kiamba (2008) highlights that, although there had been a number of acquaintances to increase female representation at all levels of governance, women are still under-represented in positions of power as well as those of leadership. Sadie (2005), as cited in Kiamba (2008), assumes that women constitute a majority of voters but are less represented in party structures in most of the countries. The author further notes that as much as gender equality is enshrined in the party's constitution, but that might not materialise in the party's hierarchical structures. She further observes that it is only by high merit of their roles as chairpersons of the women's league that they become party executives (Sadie, 2005).

Contrary to this, Kiamba (2008) states that some countries such as South Africa, have made a drastic improvement within a short pace of time to address the issue of gender inequality and work towards a gender neutral society. Tsoka (1999) argues that society should perceive the work of women managers just as important as those of their male counterparts. She proposes that women's empowerment centres should be put in place, and work towards the betterment of women only. Tsoka (1999) further propagates the view that in Sudan a special university has been established to cater only for women needs. Tsoka (1999) also points out that Zimbabwe has decided to establish a university as from 2002 that will be devoted only to the uplifting of females. From the Ugandan perspective, the setting up of universal goals for gender equality (UNDP, 2008) and the Ugandan adoption of the gender equality are indicators of the acceptance of gender quality (Speradino, 2011). The use of affirmation as required all government departments to

recruit women is another reference of acceptance of gender equality. Speradino (2011) also highlights the establishment of a private school sector in Bangladesh as an expansion of women opportunities to take leadership and overcome cultural barriers. It has to be noted that as much as manoeuvres have been made to recruit women educational leaders in Uganda promotion requirements and procedures are still excluding aspiring women leadership.

2.5.3 Local literature

This section reviews literature in the context of South Africa where the study is located. In South Africa there is a conscious and deliberate political commitment to address women's issues and participation in political structures and other social institution (Mazibuko, 2006). Coetzee (2003) states that despite attempts to change education in South Africa and legislation ruling out gender prejudice, it seems that a little has been achieved in this regard. Gender prejudice remains interwoven in the new democratic era (Mehlomaqhulu, 1993; Roodie & Liebenberg, 1994; Kruger, 1997; Mosetse, 1999).

Grogan (2010) points out that the contribution of women in economic circles improves the country's wealth. This has also been highlighted by Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) points that women should also be granted equal opportunities to explore their horizon as leaders in the education spectrum as well. On the other hand, as much as women are expected to act decisively and participate in educational leadership but Makgoba (1997), states that women must understand that when they assume leadership roles, they will be confronted by hostility, isolation, lack peer support, lack of alliances and sometimes harsh criticism from all genders, especially from women themselves. Irrespective of these negative encounters, Mazibuko (2006) suggests that women are agents of transformation and that they must detach from victim syndrome, which I believe, refers to isolation.

Chisholm (2001), cited in Coombs (2004), claims that the Department of Education in Gauteng tried in 1994 to address gender equity by appointing more women into senior positions, but in a period of 6 years all these women appointees had left the Department. Chisholm (2004) then conducted a study following these incidences and all the women that were interviewed, pointed out that resistance against their authority imposed a greater challenge. Mazibuko (2006) hold the idea that women have a potential and ability which can be translated into effective leadership. The question therefore is: how can professional self- development be utilised as a tool to create women who will sustain their leadership roles in education, irrespective of all the challenges? Pillay (2001) suggests that data indicates that it may be worthwhile to start professional and educational programmes to empower women to take part in leadership. Pillay (2001) further propagates the

view that training sessions need not only bring women to consciousness but also to critically analyse the barriers and constraints that hamper their progress towards leadership.

2.6 Gender differences in management styles

Leadership and management theory is dominated by a masculinity discourse (Pace & Pace, 2005). These authors further propagate a stereotyped way of thinking that identifies management as largely masculine which still exists nowadays, although such an approach has been questioned problematical. Pace and Pace (2005) show that successful leaders and managers are seen to employ a mix of both male and female characteristic and leadership styles irrespective of their genders.

More scholars have made findings about different styles of leadership that are displayed by both females and males and suggest possible amalgamation of these traits. Scholars holding this idea are (Gray, 1989; Wallace, 1994; Blasé & Kirb, 1992; Coleman, 2002; Rhode, 2003) as cited in Bush (2011). Considering a Turkish point of view, Mustafa (1990), points out that in the field of education, women are dominant in figures, whereas men have total control of power. Women are perceived as conditioned for actual teaching and learning where as the male is often conditioned for decision making. Mustafa (1990) states that men in leadership are generally known for fierceness and being in control, whereas women are usually seen as forceful if they display such qualities. Putting more emphasis on this is, Shakeshaft and Grogan (2010), argue that women have a different style of management compared to that of men. These scholars propagate that women emphasise leadership for empowerment, social justice relational leadership, spiritual motivation and balanced guidance. Sterman (2000) also identifies similar traits which place more emphasis on nurturing, mothering, comforting and empathy. According to the study by Sterman (2000), women believed that the effective way to enhance change was through developments of warm caring attitudes.

Likewise, Kochan (2000), as cited in Celikten (2010), suggest that data shows that women tend to lead in more transformative and inclusive ways compared to their male counterparts. It is said that women consistently defined power as the ability to get their job done (Hurty, 1995 as cited Celikten). This further demonstrates that women do not describe their ways to working in a competitive mode, and portray no dependence on supremacy or compulsion. Hurty (1995), as cited in Celikten (2010), observed that women defined themselves saw themselves as potent in meeting their destination regarding performance for the sake of effective education of the learners. They also do this for purposes of collaborative working with all the stakeholders to yield positive results through the application of their knowledge and interpersonal relations and originality.

Eagly and Johnson (1990), cited in Pace and Pace (2010), conducted a systematic analysis of gender differences in leadership. Their analysis yielded mixed findings with no differences between men and women regarding task orientation and interpersonal oriented styles. On one hand, they found that women adopted an inclusive and participative leadership style, while on the other hand, men tended to use directive and controlling styles. According to Hurty's study (1995), cited in Celikten (2010), women leaders utilised their emotional energies as sources of control; they tended growth; reached decision with others in mind; they communicate verbally in order to solve problems, and work jointly for change.

Shakeshaft (1989), cited in Cullibo and Brown (2003), also suggest that women have shown themselves to be extremely capable educational leaders. It should be noted that Shakeshaft (1989) has earlier identified different qualities and styles of leadership that is called masculine style and feminine style. According to Pace and Pace (2005), it is claimed that nowadays organisations are increasingly sympathetic to qualities that are associated with the feminine rather than the masculine stereotype (Gronn, 1999). Shakeshaft (1987), cited in Pace and Pace (2005) points out that women's traditional and stereotypic style of communication are more like those of a good manager than are men's stereotypic styles. To add on the above mentioned finding, Rosener (1990), argues that women leaders benefit from certain positive attributes acquired through their socialisation (Carson, 1992). Eagly (1992) also points out that women leaders adopt a feminine leadership style characterised by caring and nurture, while male leaders adopt a masculine leadership style which are dominating, directive and task oriented.

There are other characteristics that women leaders and managers display. For instance, Shakeshaft (1989), Hurty (1995), Cullibo (1999), have found that women displayed an ability to transform uplift and a mutual style of leadership. According to Cullibo and Brown (2003), the debate about leadership styles has expanded further to encompass the phenomenon of the androgynous leader whose style of leadership is inclusive to both sets of characteristics of masculinity and feminism as appropriate for the situation. Sherman (2000) argues that successful administration has typically depended upon females adopting traditional masculine 'men in skirts' leadership styles or else they risk marginalisation. Sherman (2000) further acknowledges that current work has argued that triumphant management should be extended to include an optional managing style that would permit the assimilation of the perceptions and experiences of women. Wallace (1994) as cited in Bush (2011), states that findings on the exploration of school management teams in secondary schools proposes that it is possible for management to amalgamate both female and male styles of leadership. Bush (2011) emphasises that the resolution to adopt a unifying approach

that would enhance the employment of both traits portrayed by women and men indicates that there is progress made thus far.

2.7. Theoretical Framework

Research cannot be conducted in a theoretical vacuum, even though it may be exploratory (Henning, Van Rensburg and Smit, 2004). The study is basically based on theories of inequality and theories of feminism. Theory is presented to provide a rationale for decision-making. Leithwood (1999) indicates that theory produces psychological measures to help in the comprehension of the nature and effects of practice.

2.7.1 Theories of Inequality

Shumuck (1986) as cited in Bush and West-Burnham (1994) classifies theories of inequality as individual socialisation process, organisational constraints, theories of socialisation and cultural domination.

2.7.1.1 Overt and covert discrimination

Overt and covert discrimination has more of its emphasis on terms such as prejudice, discrimination, biasness and attitudes (Davidson & Cooper, 1992 as cited in Bush & West-Burnham, 1994). Despite the fact that sex discrimination Act of 1975 makes direct discrimination illegal, women still rate discrimination and prejudice as the greatest barrier to career progression (Bush & West Burnham, 1994). Another scholar to emphasise this attitude is Khalifa (1992) who points out that women are numerically important in education, but there still exists the attitudes. Davidson and Cooper (1992) found that sex was a disadvantage when it comes to job promotion and career prospects. Just like Khalifa (1992), Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) argue that discriminatory elements still surface irrespective of the perception that social equality is the point of departure to be addressed to the organisation of substantial rules for reshaping the equality of life and conditions of living for individuals and masses in society, as well as the revamp of all human relations. Overt and covert discrimination thus focuses on poor self-image, discrimination, lack of assertiveness.

Poor Self-Image

Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) point out that the word self can be defined into two categories, which self referring to and self as procedure. 'Self' as a term, explains how people define themselves, their attitudes and their interpretation of themselves as individuals, the perceptions of themselves and their deeds, this also explains the influence they have on others, the qualities they portray,

their objectives and flaws which finally defines who they are (Morgan, King & Robinson, 1998). Nohria and Khurana (2010) point out that in leadership context, biases against females are portrayed in various levels. The first is in the way that organisation's structure leadership paths and positions. The second is in the way people distinguish women leaders and the third is in the way that women leaders perceive themselves. Recent theory suggests that individuals, who fail to firmly comprehend their self-identity in the leadership roles, may be missing a very important requirement to leadership development (Lord & Hall, 2005). Lord and Hall (2005) conclude their argument by stating that gender bias represents momentous problems not only for women but as well as for organisations.

Discrimination

Discrimination as defined by Morgan, King and Robinson (1981), is explained as an attitude and behaviour of treating a person or group in a bad or unfair way. Auston (1993) argues that discrimination rests on any pre-conceived attitudes between men and females. Auston (1993) points out that these assumptions are ill grounded and immortal since human beings are, by nature, capable of learning. Therefore women are also endowed with the power to learn and it is through knowledge and wisdom that a person (man or women) has the ability adapt to new realities (Auston, 1993).

Lack of Assertiveness

Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) maintain that leading is a taxing job which expects vigilance, determination, inquisitiveness, exploration daringness and antagonism. Back and Back (1991) define assertiveness as fighting up for your rights in a manner that you do not infringe another individual's rights. Assertiveness can also be defined as portraying ones needs, ideologies, feelings and beliefs in a direct, honest and in a proper manner (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001). Mathipa and Tsoka (2001) point out that it is assumed that women do not possess this very essential aspect of leadership, hence, the lack of assertiveness is seen as a major obstacle that disqualifies women when appointees are selected for promotion.

2.7.2 Theories of socialisation

Theories of socialisation do not allow for changes in motivation over time, but what was true for one generation of men and women teachers will not be true for future generations, (Schumuck, 1989). Socialisation of the girl child in most communities is to be blamed for failures on part of women (Emmet, 2001). In the African context, we are conditioned that men are dominant and women submit (Ngcongong, 1993; Grant, 2005). This view propel an idea that originally on societal

grounds, customarily and by virtue women were not entitled to lead but leadership is perceived as a manly sphere of influence (Hojgaard, 2002).

2.7.3 Male cultural domination

Shakeshaft (1987) hints out that males and females divide chores on the basis of gender and jobs scheduled for males are highly commended than those attached to females. Coetzee (2001) asserts that both Western and African beliefs are rooted on an ideology that male domination should be intensified in almost every way, since patriarchy is irretrievably an element of both Eurocentric and Afro centric cultures. The Commission on Gender Equality (1981, p. 1) defines 'patriarchy' as the "common denominator of the South African nation".

Patriarchy can be defined as a system of male superiority over the female domain, which engulfs different economic system, eras, religion and categories (Boonzaaier & Sharp, 1988, as cited in Coetzee 2001). Coetzee (2001) further emphasises that a psychology of patriarchy therefore seems to have been intensified as a result of the endorsing of the idea of the leadership of the fathers in all spheres of our existence. In the process of maintain the supremacy of the male domain; women were thus kept submissive through various measures (Lemmer, 1993).

2.7.4 Theories of feminism

Grundy (1993) argues that educational leadership, informed by feminism, can be a form of emancipator praxis which provides an alternative to traditional male hierarchical and bureaucratic approaches to leadership. It is therefore essential to consider the journey travelled by feminist in obtaining participation of women in leadership and management of organisations. Information has been drawn from various feminist theories which explicitly illustrate how women should be productive participants in leadership. These theories are derived from Gender Reform Feminism. The study therefore draws from Liberal feminism, Radical feminism and socialism feminism.

2.7.4.1 Liberal feminism

Lorber (1997) argues that liberal feminism propagates that all people are equal and there should be equality to all in social process. According to Lorber (1997), liberal feminist propagates elements of the civil rights movement which are anti-discrimination legislation and affirmative action and utilise them to fight gender imbalances. It is said that this theory encourages women to work up to their fullest potential and liberal feminism takes a standpoint that disregards all gender and social injustices against women.

2.7.4.2 Radical feminism

Radical theories hail from Gender resistant feminism. Lorber (1997) propagates the view that radical feminism and social feminism aim at major transformation in order to eliminate social inequalities. Lorber (1997) posits that radical feminism, disregards patriarchy, but remedies women only consciousness, raising groups and alternative organisations that are essential in allowing women a breathing space. Radical feminism neglects ethnic and social class differences among men and women, but disregards other sources of oppression (Lorber, 1997).

2.7.4.3 Developmental feminism

Grogan (2010) state that Dychwald and Larson (2010) in their book called “*Influence*” declares that it is undisputable that the most needy people in the world are women and children, but there is drastic change perceived, as women now gain economic independence. Like Dychwald and Larson’s idea on their book called ‘*Influence*’ as cited in Grogan (2010), developmental feminism brought an essential theoretical donation in normalising the status of women with control on resources.

It is said developmental feminism addressed the economic mistreatment of women in the post-colonial communities on their way to industrialisation. In a way, developmental feminism has made an immense gender analysis of the global economic status (Lorber, 2008). Developmental feminism has more theoretical emphasis on international human rights and exerts more pressure for the education of girls and women. Development feminism frequently has to confront traditional cultural values and practices that give men power over their daughters and wives (Lorber, 2008).

2.8 Feminism and Masculine Paradigm in school management

Hall (1994) posits that research is needed that will dispute customary stereotypes of what constitutes the so called suitable management conduct and procedures. The current research project is premised on the notion of professional self-advancement of women in educational leadership as one of the characteristics that can be incorporated in leadership approaches. In this regard, Grogan and Shakeshaft (2010) consider the entry of many women into leadership positions as an essential state that encourages acknowledgement of women leaders in educational posts. In a research about women leadership in schools, Grogan and Shakeshaft (2010) identified five characteristics that define women’s way of leading, and that might permit them a substantial role as leaders by virtue. They include relational leadership, informative leadership, spiritual motivated leadership, social justice leadership and well-grounded leadership.

Grogan (2010) emphasises that, through sound research, scholars are starting to see patterns of leadership that can be described as preferred by women when they get choice. Grey (1989) adopts a familiar approach in distinguishing between feminine and masculine paradigm in school management. According to Grey (1989), feminine characteristics include gentleness, inventive and instinctive magnitudes, while masculine paradigm features, aggressive, highly synchronised and well organised element.

One scholar who also emphasises the same ideology is Newman (2003), who argues that when women are appointed to leading positions in an institution of teaching and learning, they are likely to be assigned on pastoral caring roles. Cullibo and Brown, 2003; Acker, 1995; cited Cullibo and Brown (2003) argue that such expectations about caring as a calling are a scapegoat to ignore the actual business of teaching and learning. Acker (1995) further emphasises that teaching is work, and the school is a work place for teachers. In a study recently conducted by Lumby and Azaola (2013), the findings also confirmed the existence of mothering styles of leadership. It should be noted that a national policy was developed in South Africa where the study conducted by Lumby and Azoala took place. This lands us squarely on the provision of the Gender Equality Task Team regarding women in leadership and professional self-advancement.

2.9 The Provision of the Gender Equity Task and Women in Leadership

Gender equity as propagated by the Gender Equity Task Team is concerned with the promotion of equivalent opportunities and fair treatment for men and women in personal, collective, cultural, political and economic arenas. Therefore, gender equity entails meeting women's and men's, girls' and boys' needs in order to fairly compete in a formal and informal labour markets; participate fully in civil society and fulfil their roles adequately without being discriminated against because of gender (Chisholm & September, 2005).

Regarding the issue of women and social imbalances, the Gender Equity Task Team came up with the following recommendations: they proposed the establishment of guidelines to address gender in curriculum, textbooks, teaching and guidance. The team also proposed affirmative action strategies for increasing representation of women in professional leadership and management (Redpath, 2008). Moorosi (2010), cited in Lumby and Azaola (2011) argues that despite national intentions, women's careers are small and gendered.

It is undeniable women's productive labour is seen as fundamental to the achievement of development goals. For example, mothers are identified as central drivers of their daughter's educational rights (Millennium Project, 2004) although motherhood remains, by and large, a

neglected social policy. Given these conditions, Mazibuko (2006), proposes that women in leadership must engage in different activities, practising the culture of inclusion, challenging the hierarchical power status, rather than being co-opted into the affirmative power structures, mentoring young up and coming scholars and adapting engaging leadership styles.

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has elaborated more about international, continental and national literature about professional self-advancement of women in order to attain or cope with leadership positions. This focus was inspired by the fact an overwhelming figure of women occupy lower ranks of education in various societies. Their failure to progress to decision-making and leadership roles is detrimental to improving economies, and by them taking up such responsibilities does make a difference. Literature of the study has revolved more around women and professional advancement in order for them to attain leading positions. This chapter has also brought forward the strides that women's work status has evolved throughout the years with regard to advancement to leadership. The next chapter provides a detailed discussion about design and methodology that was used to produce data.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

An integral part of a study is to probe the impact of professional self-advancement endeavours on women in educational leadership. This chapter outlines research design and methodology for the study. The brief explanation of the paradigm that informs the study is also explored in this chapter, as well as the approach which was followed. Methods featured in the research to generate data on which to base findings are also analysed in this chapter. Finally the ethical measures which were taken into consideration before and during the research are also outlined. Essential parts such as trustworthiness and data analysis will also be explored.

3.2 Research design

Yin (2003) defines a research pattern as a sequential plan that connects the empirical data to a study's initial research questions and ultimately to its final destiny. Leedy and Ormrod (2001) state that the research design provides the overall plan to be followed by the researcher to reach desired goals, and this may include data generated and the data analysis in order to draw conclusions. According to Yin (2003), colloquially a research design is a coherent plan for getting from here to there, where here may carry initial set of questions to be answered and there is some set of conclusions (answers) about the question. Yin (2003) further points out that between 'here' and 'there' may be found a number of major steps including the generation and the analysis of relevant data. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) hold the view that research design is governed by the notion of fitness of purpose. This simply means that the research design is determined by the purpose of the research. The design is therefore discussed under the following headings namely the paradigm, approach and strategy.

3.3 Qualitative research approach

Qualitative approach was used to pursue this study. A qualitative study is a study whose findings and analysis are done through the use of language and it is about the meaning that is constructed from the language that presents the data (Henning, Van Rensburg & Smit, 2004). Other scholars such as Creswell (2007), posit that qualitative studies are conducted with an aim of capturing a complex detailed comprehension of an issue that is studied. These details can be retrieved only by engaging directly with individuals in their real life surroundings, in order to capture first hand information.

Many qualitative studies have been pursued on this matter of women in educational leadership, and more rich data is already in public domain. To mention just a few, the following scholars have made a contribution in the study of women in educational leadership, (Pillay, 2001; Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001; Kiamba, 2008; Mazibuko, 2010).

The qualitative study sought answers from women leaders about their experiences in leadership positions, as well as what they did as a way of advancing themselves. I also wanted to know, what meaning they attached to their self-advancement activities. The participants in the study had been leading schools for more than a decade, despite the issues of gender imbalances that is reported in the literature. The study focuses on personal endeavours by women in education that could have helped them to sustain their roles as leaders, thus professional self-advancement becomes a key concept in this research.

3.4 Interpretative paradigm

This study is underpinned by an interpretive research paradigm. The study is focused on understanding whether professional self-advancement activities or programmes or qualifications attained by the women in management positions had empowered them in any way. Amongst others, I wanted to know if by advancing themselves, these women leaders had built capacity to withstand the challenges by people in such positions and whether or not these women leaders were able to advance to better positions.

Participants in this study were women, and as such, represent a section of the population that is largely less represented when it comes to leadership positions despite the fact that they constitute a large number within the education spectrum (Celikten, 2010). Chase and Bell (1994) as cited in Celikten (2010) posit that males hold more educational positions even though women comprise sixty percent of teachers

An inquiry that premised within interpretive paradigm, assumes that there is no just one particular reality or knowledge and also that the findings are not intended for generalisation (Creswell, 2009). This scholar goes on to argue that such research is intended for the provision of in-depth description of a phenomenon under investigation for better comprehension. In this study, the phenomenon is women leaders who are also advancing themselves professionally. Interpretive researchers carry out their inquiry in the natural settings of the participants and in so doing; they attempt to reach best possible understanding (Lincoln & Guba, 1995). Such approaches to research usually employ case study designs and that is why this study is also a case study. Henning, van Rensburg and Smit (2004) maintain that case studies strive towards a holistic understanding of how participants construct meaning of a phenomenon under scrutiny.

3.5 Case study design

A case study design was adopted as a preferred methodology used to help me understand complexities surrounding women in leadership and how these leaders advanced themselves in order to cope with changes and instability in the education environment. Yin (1984) defines the case study as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon with its real life context. According to Yin (1984) a case study research assist us to an understanding of complex issue or object and can extend experience or add value to what is already known through previous studies.

3.6 Context of the study

The study was conducted with women educators in both primary schools and secondary schools in the North Coast of KwaZulu-Natal in the Ilembe District. Ilembe District comprises four municipalities, namely, Ndwedwe, Maphumulo, Mandini and KwaDukuza. Mandini and KwaDukuza are semi urban and semi industrialised, while Maphumulo and Ndwedwe are completely rural with no industrial activities. According to the participants, these areas which are faced with a number of socio-economic ills which are usually associated with rural areas include poor infrastructure, high levels of unemployment and poverty, largely due to lack of job opportunities. Perceptions about women and their leadership styles usually vary from one area to another within the district. Two women leaders came from rural schools, the other two participants came from semi-urban schools; one educator from a boarding school that accommodates learners and educators from various parts of the province. One educator was from an urban-setting, teaching in a well performing ex-Model-C school, and also where both the staff and the learners are from mixed racial groups. It is evident therefore that the data was elicited from a variety of settings and this enriched the findings. In the communities where the participating schools are located, men are regarded as the head of family and also the only people with authority. Patriarchal tendencies in the largely Zulu culture promoted the interest of men compared to that of women. Women are therefore expected to nurture and take care of the families while men are expected to go and fend for their families. These expectations when put into practice may have the effect of limiting the freedom and the rights of women, although the provision of the gender equality commission allows women to be active participants in the job market. This is the context of the setting of the majority of the schools that participated in the study.

3.7 Sample and sampling procedure

Sampling refers to the process used to select the participants of a study (du Plooy, 2009). For the purpose of this study, purposive sampling was used to select women in leadership positions at a school level. Purposive selection or sampling was preferred because the focus of the study is on women in leadership at a school level. The participants were chosen because I was convinced that they possessed rich and valuable information due to their experience in leadership responsibilities, and the fact that they were women and understood working under gendered surroundings, but still they managed to sustain their leadership roles.

The question that was always in my mind is “How has their professional achievements been a factor in their performance as leaders? The area where the study was conducted was predominantly rural, and the schools and the community were under the authority of *Amakhosi* as defined in terms of both the national Traditional Leadership Framework Act (No. 21 of 2003) and the KwaZulu-Natal Traditional Leadership and Governance Act (No. 5 of 2005). According to these pieces of legislations *Amakhosi* are custodians of culture. Two women principals headed larger schools bearing names of historical renowned local warrior. One was an HOD from an urban” ex-Model C school, and also headed an influential science department and was also the head of a cluster in the ward. The selection of these women was based on their experience and the leadership skills they have portrayed over a decade. Two women leaders were deputy principals in well performing secondary schools, of which one was a boarding school. Both participants have acquired BEd Honours degrees and played active roles in promoting learning community structures within their ward. Two HODs were in charge of their respective departments. One of them had taught in Swaziland and came to South Africa where she attained her MEd degree.

She worked as deputy principal and left the profession in South Africa and headed for England where she became a teacher and taught life science. Currently, she works as an HOD in an ex Model-C school. In addition, she also heads a science project which is broadcasted in one of the community radio stations in the north coast. Both principals were in possession of MEd degrees.

I believe all these women having made conscious decisions to acquire higher degrees qualifications, and they believed that such qualifications which formed part of self-advancement as women in leadership positions are their self endeavours to improve the culture of learning within their organisation.

Women in the study were selected using the following criteria:

- * Women who have been active participants within their school borders and outside.

- * Women who have improved themselves professionally beyond a junior diploma.
- * Leaders of curriculum, schools and deputing.
- * Women who are keen to participate.
- * Women who have served more than 10 years as leaders, and contributing with extra responsibilities towards the betterment of our education system.

3.8 Data generation methods

It is said that tools to generate or produce data can include surveys questionnaires, interviews, documentation review, observation, and even the collection of physical artefacts (du Plooy, 2009). Data for this study was generated through face-to-face interviews with women leaders who occupied various management positions in their schools. Another method that was used was documents analysis. These interviews were conducted with participants either in their working environments or any favoured environment such as their homes. An interview guide was prepared beforehand in order to direct the focus of the interview. According to Yin (2009) a case study provides an exceptional example of living beings in real life settings; it allows the readers to comprehend ideas more clearly than simply presenting them with intangible theories. Yin (2009) further elaborates that case studies can indulge into situations in ways that are not always vulnerable to numerical analysis. On the same vein, Du Plooy (2009) points out that procedures and tactics that can be used to generate data contain participation observation, qualitative content analysis and open ended questions in questionnaires or interview schedules.

3.8.1 Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were used in producing data from women leaders that participated in this study. Creswell (2007) posits that it is important to determine what type of interview is practical and will be the most useful information to answer research questions. As a point of departure pilot tests are essential whereby a pilot test method used will be conducted to determine whether relevant information can be gathered from the participants. In the context of this study, semi-structure interviews were used to enable me (the researcher) to gain more insight about the intensity of professional self-advancement of those women who are leaders at various schools. Creswell (2007) stresses that of all the data production sources, interviewing and observing deserve special attention because they are frequently used in all five of approaches to research. Welman and Kruger (2001) indicate that semi-structure interview offer a versatile way of generating data from participants. They can be used with all age groups and they allow the interviewer to use probes with a view in clearing up any vague information.

3.8.2 Documents analysis

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) states that documents analysis may be defined as a record of an event or a process. In this study, the documents that are meant to be studied were records of workshops conducted, meetings conducted and also records of seminars attended. For those women who are conducting educational projects on behalf of various Non-Governmental Organisations (NGOs), photographs, registers and communication books were viewed. These documents were analysed in order to see the role of women in schools and outside the school where this was applicable.

3.9 Ethical Issues

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) define ethical behaviour as a set of acceptable principles or standards governing an individual or a profession. Ethical means to do good and avoid evil deeds. Cohen *et al.* (2007) list a set of ethical behaviour that human beings have to follow, and these are observation of privacy and anonymity, confidentiality and to do no harm to the participants. Frankael and Wallen (2003) point out that ethics refers to questions of right or wrong. Lapson (1994) groups ethical issues as informed consent procedures; deception or covert activities, confidentiality towards participants, benefits of research to participants over risks and participants request to go beyond social norms. As you can see, some of these issues are quite negative. For instance, deception or covert activities in the name of research are unacceptable when done in the name of research.

In the context of this study, it was important all aspects of ethical considerations were observed. For instance, the University has an Ethics Committee which gives ethical clearance to all students and lecturers who conduct research within the authority of this institution. To this end, an ethical clearance application was done and submitted to the Research Ethics committee of the University of KwaZulu-Natal. As mentioned, the purpose of that process is to ensure that all ethical issues were adequately addressed in the proposal and ethical clearance application form. Then, I submitted permission letter to the research office of the KwaZulu-Natal Department of Education. However, the response from that office was that, it was not granting any permission to conduct research to its schools, but advised that I should contact the principal of each school for permission request.

Principals in those schools were given an overview of what the research is about. Individuals participants were initially requested telephonically and later letters with attached consent forms were sent to them. According to Cohen (2007) informed consent is required to make sure that participants are informed to the extent possible about the nature of the study even though it might

not be easy to detect the direction of the study, but it is essential to provide participants with complete information. All principals gave me permission to conduct the study and they signed permission letters as evidence. For more details, refer to at the end of this report on Appendix C. The participants were also contacted; they all agreed to participate in the study and they also signed informed consent letters as evidence that they understood what their rights were and that they understood the nature of the research.

3.10 Trustworthiness of findings

The purpose of trustworthiness in qualitative inquest is to support the argument that the inquiry's findings are worth taking consideration of (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985). In any qualitative research investigation, four issues of trustworthiness demand attention, and these are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability (Lincoln & Cuba, 1985). According to Cohen *et al.* (2011), threats to credibility can be eliminated in the design stage by selecting appropriate instrumentation for gathering the type of data required.

Creswell (2005) also states that throughout the process of data generation and analysis, the researcher must ensure that his or her findings and interpretation are accurate. De Vos (2011) like Lincoln and Cuba (1985), also emphasises credibility, transparency, dependency and confirmability criteria for assessing trustworthiness of the findings in qualitative research. Credibility is refers to an evaluation of whether or not the research finding present a credible conceptual interpretation of data delivered from participants. Transferability refers to the extent to which the findings can be applied to other settings or groups (De Vos, *et.al.*, 2011). Dependability measures the consistency of the findings if the same research would be repeated with similar subject in a similar context. Lastly, confirmability refers to the manner in which the findings of the inquiry can be supported by the data generated. In other words, it is important what the research claims to have found is actually a finding, and this can be done by confirming the findings with the participants and not to base them on personal interpretations which have not been confirmed.

3.11 Data Analysis

Data analysis is an iterative and reflexive process that begins as data is being generated rather than after data generation process had ended (Stade, 1995). In qualitative approach, data investigation includes organising, accounting for and explaining the data; in short, analysis refers to the process of making sense of data with regard to the participants' interpretation of the situation, taking into consideration patterns as analysed by the researcher to be able to identify relevant theme .In the study, audio recordings of the interviews were played repeatedly and later transcribed into

written document in order to become familiar with the data. Information from the transcripts was then organised into small chunks of meanings or categories which were grouped into themes. These themes were then presented and discussed using participants' direct words as evidence of what they said and to support the claims I was making. Data was analysed in the following sequence: by exploring the themes that transpired during the discussions which are: professional self-advancement: enhancing improved leadership strategies, challenges discouraging women to improve professionally, leadership styles employed by women in leadership, perceptions towards women in leadership, and gender equity structures and women in leadership.

3.12 Chapter summary

In this chapter research design and methodology used were described. Paradigms and the research approach used were described. It was also essential to explore the context of the study in order to understand the relationships and dynamics of the participants. Sampling methods were discussed, as well as, the methods of data generation that were deemed appropriate for the study. The ethical measures which were taken into consideration before and during the research were also outlined. The following chapter focuses on data presentation and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the research design and methodology that was used in generating data. This chapter presents and discusses data that emerged from the field. It also dwells on the interpretation of the data generated from semi-structured interviews and documents review on matters concerning women in educational leadership responsibilities and their professional self-advancement. The research was aimed on answering key questions that underpinned this research project. Reporting of data took the form of thick descriptions and *verbatim* quotations to ensure the participants' voices were not lost. Before the themes that emerged are discussed, the profiles of participants are presented first. This is meant to ensure that readers understand the context from which the data was elicited. As part of profiling the participants, the table summarising personal details of the participants is also provided.

4.2 Profiling the participants

This section summarises the profiles of all participants that were engaged in this study. Participants come from both primary schools and secondary schools and also from different categories of management within the school context. The profiles show the leadership category, age, qualifications, their teaching experience, leadership experience.

TABLE - 1

Participants Codes	A	B	C
Name	Ms Nkosi	Ms Masuku	Ms Mthembi
Leadership category	HOD	Deputy principal	Principal
Age Category	< 40	> 50	> 50
Qualifications	BEd Honours	MEd & MBA	Med
Teaching experience	10 – 15	20 – 30	20 – 30
Experience as a leader	5 – 10	15 – 20	15 – 20
Extra School – Community responsibilities		Manager, science radio programme	Chairperson of Principals' Forum

TABLE - 2

Participants Codes	D	E	F
Name	Ms Mngoma	Ms Dlamini	Ms Dube
Leadership category	Deputy Principal	HOD	Principal
Age Category	> 40	< 40	> 40
Qualifications	B Ed Honours	Junior Degree	Med
Teaching experience	25 – 30	10 – 15	20 – 25
Experience as a leader	15 – 20	5 – 10	10 – 15
Extra School – Community Responsibilities	English cluster coordinator	Science Cluster coordinator	English Teacher Trainer/Facilitator

The profile of participants sheds some light about other activities that in which they participated, and these indicate the extent to which these women leaders were active participants in community activities and programmes. The tables also shows that the women had wealth of academic expertise which might be a reason for them to do some extra school-community responsibilities, but their voices in the discussion below illustrate this further. It is then that we can learn whether their professional advancement endeavours had boosted their morale as women, since literature shows that women are regarded as less competent as compared to their male counterparts. This idea is intensified by (Dubno, 1985; Adler, 1993; Chambers, 1997) as cited in Celikten (2010) who believed that women are stereotyped as lacking career orientation and administration position, being less aggressive, easily influenced, more communal and more emotional than men.

4.2.1 Participants interpretation of professional self-advancement

According to the participants, professional self-advancement referred to all the activities they have voluntarily embarked on in order to improve their qualifications; they did them in order to advance to leadership positions and thus challenge gender stereotypes and attitudes towards them. Some participants also considered work related workshops, subject based meetings, educational seminars, attending motivational talks organised by the Department of Education and co-ordinating professional learning communities outside and inside their schools. Some participants were cluster co-ordinators for subjects that they taught and they regarded that as professional development. This is because they headed those clusters on behalf of the department's subject advisors. It surfaced during interviews that these women leaders concentrated mostly on qualifications they have acquired after their first college or university qualifications. To them learning has always been a continuous engagement which mostly improved their management skills, so as to challenge patriarchal tendencies prevalent in their communities which were accustomed to male headed institutions. Various participants interpreted professional self-advancement as a self-initiated endeavour which they believed has landed them to the management positions they were occupying. This is how their interpretation is explained into themes underneath.

4.3 The emerging themes

After data was analysed, the themes that emerged are outlined below, which are listed as follow (a) professional self-advancement: enhancing improved leadership strategies (b) challenges discouraging women to improve professionally (c) Leadership styles (d) perceptions towards women in leadership (e) Gender Equity and women in leadership.

4.3.1 Professional self-advancement: enhancing improved leadership strategies.

Research shows that preconceived perceptions towards women managers have effect on how they manage (Chisholm, 2001). Black women in particular still feel that there is an ongoing gender orientated discrimination and racial prejudiced against them (Chisholm, 2000; van Deventer, 2000). It is said that challenges that they are still experiencing are that their authority is not recognised; they are not visible and acknowledged; they have no or little support from their spouses at home and also from their respective organisations; there is a lack of mentorship for them and they have an extended role to play as mothers and superiors, (Chisholm, 2000). It is through professional self-advancement endeavours that women in educational leadership improved their inputs. The following benefits emerged from the interviews: their experience of self-advancement was that they improved self-confidence; enhanced professionalism; there was improved relations and improvement in the ways in which mentoring and nurturing their subordinates was done. Women participants made utterances that made it clear that it is through their personal endeavours that they felt better about themselves as leaders; hence they define professional self-advancement as explained above, and what is presented below, is an elaboration of how professional self-advancement improved the way they led their respective departments and schools.

4.3.1.1 Building self-confidence for women in leadership

There were similar views about how the participants in this study felt professional self-advancement assisted them. They all expressed a belief that self-advancement boosted their morale and self-confidence which enabled them to manage better. Cockburn (2000), Bush (2002) and Odland (2002) assume that professional development help develop teachers' confidence and motivation and it provides the opportunity to transform their professional work. In line with the views of these scholars, Ms Nkosi who is the head of department at Lethokuhle Primary School had this to say:

Because of my studies at a later stage of my life, I gained more knowledge and I have in-depth knowledge about dealing with educators. I can walk tall knowing that I have achieved some skills.

The other participant, Ms Masuku also had similar view when it comes to professional self-advancement. She frankly pointed out that her studies at a higher level had added more value on her stature as a woman in leadership position. This is how Ms Masuku tells her story:

I think studies that I have done and completed at university have added more value to me as an individual and as a woman in leadership position. I can now be able to confront any situation that can come my way as a woman leader.

Both participants view professional self- advancement as a mechanism to that can be used to improve the way they present themselves as leaders. For instance, Ms Masuku says that it added value to her stature while Ms Nkosi points out that she has in-depth knowledge about dealing with educators. In their utterances there seem to be confidence about themselves as women leaders. Their utterances are consistent with what Chisholm (2000) and Van Deventer (2000) mentioned in the previous paragraphs. This indicates that what the studied women educators had embarked on, had had a positive impact on the way they led their respective teams and organisations. To them, self-improvement is about improving their education which they claim encourages them to play a substantial role to improve the quality of education at a larger scale. When I conducted a documents analysis it highlighted some of the activities they had initiated in order to improve the culture of teaching and learning in their schools and surrounding areas.

Ms Masuku produced registers and photographs of extra activities that she had undertaken after she attained her degree. She highlighted that attaining her degree encouraged her to pursue a mission to improve learner achievement in Mathematics, Physical science and Accounting. Ms Masuku also had documents that supported her claims regarding the slots that she had on the local radio station, Kwethu Community Radio. In that radio station, Ms Masuku presented reviews of Grade 12 question papers on Sciences in the north coast areas. Ms Nkosi had minutes of her mentoring sessions to assist her newly appointed team members. She emphasised that she embarked on those sessions only after engaging with her peers during an induction workshop that was organised by the Department of Education. It is evident that, it did not come naturally for these women to excel, but improving themselves and acquiring new skills immensely contributed to their self-confidence. Some participants brought a different perspective that focused on the way they projected authority as women in leadership. It surfaced during interviews that dedication to work alone would not have given them more exposure and authority. However, professional self-advancement was believed to have given them authority in running their organisations. Mrs Dube, who is a principal at Zazise Primary School, commented:

If you are furthering your studies, you become more knowledgeable and enables you instruct them to do anything and they will respect your word because they would not know whether what you are saying is official or not.

Ms Dlamini, from Mvuzo Secondary School also held the same approach of leading and instructing without difficulty in a school located in very remote rural area. She believed that she was successfully leading her Science department with a number of male educators because of her advanced educational qualification. It surfaced during interviews that, as much as there might be

some beliefs that men are leaders and women just followers, but that did not materialise in her situation. This is how she put it:

.....so it is important to further your studies, so you can lead and lead with dignity. If you further your studies you become confident to say whatever, as long as it is within the school policy because they won't judge you.

It is evident that both Ms Dlamini and Mrs Dube had more in common about authority and they both mentioned that enforcing authority would materialise through adhering to the school policies.

At this juncture Ms Dlamini showed her documents of the assessment progress for her department. This is where each educator had a graph showing the progress within each learning area whether learners have performed well or not. Underneath the graph there was a strategic plan of each educator where an educator would devise some means on how to address or minimise failure rate. According to Ms Dlamini, educators in her Science department had to submit their strategic plan quarterly because it was an obligation and a departmental requirement.

Mrs Dube also produced timetables for all educators in her school. Underneath the time tables, there was a space for other responsibilities performed by each educator. She emphasised that educators also had other duties to perform apart from teaching. She pointed out that that was how she regulated them as that was an obligation that teachers had to do playground duties. It was clear that authority had to be enforced for the proper running of their organisations. It was evident that both participants had gained confidence and they were able to delegate certain duties; they gave credit to professional self-advancement for equipping them with skills of being strict and touch as leaders.

The following scholars (Bush, 2000; Cockburn, 2000; Odland, 2002) corroborate what the participants have mentioned about professional self-advancement helping improve their self-confidence which then encouraged them to be actively involved in their duties as leaders. Bush (2000) posits that professional development improves teachers' skills and capabilities. Cockburn (2000) and Odland (2002) state that professional development creates teachers' confidence and motivation; it improves the opportunity to transform their personal work.

There are other scholars such as Bukkesh (2007), Stacki and Monkman (2003) who hold similar views and state that education is a basic tool for empowering women with knowledge, skills and self-confidence. This is more relevant for women working in rural and conservative communities. Other suggestions have been made in literature about the challenges that affect self-advancement of women in leadership. For instance, Lemmer (2009) points out that adherents of self-reliant model propagate that a woman is empowered if she is educated and has productive skills, access

to capital and self-confidence within the society. Contrary to that thinking, Lemmer (2009) argues that political and ideological gender equity seems to have been completely ignored. As a result, when women reach high levels of education equality, they do not automatically attain commensurate economic and political equality. Lemmer (2009) further points out that women's empowerment is incomplete unless it involves the structural transformation of male dominated society.

The above discussion shows that women in leadership are also leaders on their own right. It also shows that they need some extra engagement to help fuel their energy in order to lead with confidence. It has also surfaced that it is not only the experience and years of service that can help them lead with confidence, but equipping themselves with skills and knowledge has helped them lead and become active participants in education.

4.3.1.2 Professionalism

Some participants gave credit to the knowledge they had acquired for their achievement at later stages of their teaching careers. They believed that such knowledge had impacted positively to the attainment of senior positions they were occupying, and also that the skills and knowledge they had acquired had improved their working conditions and relations. According to the participants, it is important for women in educational setup to further their knowledge and to be ahead of their subordinates. In this regard, Ms Nkosi made the following comment:

I think there is a great need for women to further their studies; I mean it opens your mind; you are able to know things, especially if you are a leader and a woman. You can't lead people with limited information and knowledge. It will make your working situation very challenging and difficult.

Ms Nkosi believed that her professional advancement had placed her in a better position, and this is what she had to say:

I have more knowledge; I have in-depth.....ehknowledge in dealing with educators as a manager; I attend workshops and whatever I learn in seminars, I come back and implement it.

There seemed to be an indication that as a leader you had to be abreast of your subordinates in many ways, and you will not gain their trust if you are less informed as a leader. On the same issue, Ms Masuku made the following comments:

Improving your studies enlightens you; it gives you more about current issues when you address teachers and you talk current not the past. You need to be ahead to be ahead of educators because some of them are learned. It is important to help you face challenges

that may come your way. It will also grant you respect because they won't be able to challenge you.

Another participant, Ms Dlamini, who heads a science department in a rural secondary school, believed that furthering her studies had exposed her to different styles of managing some of which, she was not at all accustomed to. This is what she had to say:

Furthering my studies is one thing that helped me a lot because while I was studying, I learned different management styles, so I had a broader scope to look at the type of leadership that might suit me and benefit my school.

It is clear that three of the above participants held the similar views that as leaders, they had to be abreast of the people they lead and that they had to display professionalism in almost everything they did.

Ms Dlamini substantiated her point by showing her file as a subject co-ordinator for Mathematical literacy in her area for Grade 12 learners' continuous assessment programme. She produced a list of about eight schools that were under her supervision. She indicated that, a subject co-ordinator, in that ward, she had to furnish the subject advisor with information about the progress of the whole team. According to Ms Dlamini, she always implemented every initiative that was introduced at a cluster level to her team at school. This was a good example of a leader who communicated information back to her subordinates at school. This experience was indicative of the fact that as a leader, one has to be ahead of the subordinates, and also that one has to mentor them as well about new developments.

Mazibuko (2006) propagates the view that women should continue playing representative role, and even more critically, they have to assume substantive roles especially when it comes to the fundamental purposes of higher education. Such purposes include researching, teaching and learning which contribute to what Evans (1999), as cited in Mazibuko, refers to as human endeavour and push the boundaries of knowledge. Mazibuko (2006) propagates that women who excel in these scholarly activities, serve as powerful role models. As much as Ms Dlamini was school-based, and her contribution at cluster level and to her subordinates, made her a role model. Traditionally, leadership has always been associated with masculinity and the belief that men make better leaders compared to women is still regular and familiar. For instance, Hojgaard (2002), as cited in Kiamba (2008), propagates that irrespective of the number of female leaders having increased, they are often named as subordinates. The data from the participants seemed to indicate that there was some improvement on the way women in the study viewed themselves. To add on that, Rosini (2010), posits that women in the United States of America (USA) are engaging in professional advancement strategies thus accessing degrees in higher education than their male

counterparts which alone indicates that women will have remarkable opportunities to shape work, their state of working and the implication of working. Considering the participants' perspective, they shaped their own meaning after having improved themselves professionally; they understood their responsibilities, gained confidence and instilled authority over their subordinates.

4.3.1.3 Improved relations

Some participants highlighted their professional self-advancement as being the one that has empowered them to deal better with internal relations within their organisations. Two participants explained how the skills they had acquired from people management studies had helped them deal with very tricky situations within their schools as managers. One good example involved the school where Ms Dlamini taught. She always emphasised that her school was in a very remote setting where the community believed that people who are educated were disrespectful. Members of such communities even believed that educated people had turned their backs against their culture, let alone imagine a school that is led by a woman. Ms Dlamini, who is an HOD and heads a Science department, made the following comment:

As a leader I wouldn't be able to stand in front of the learners to address educators and parents; if I were not educated. If you are educated you learn more communication skills and education management teaches you about conflict management.

Ms Dlamini further elaborated on another situation where a furious parent came to school to complain about an incident that had happened between the teacher who is in her Science Department and his child. Ms Dlamini emphasised that, as a leader, she had to intervene and find out what had happened. She suggested that her exposure to conflict management had helped her deal with that kind of a situation.

Another participant, who shared similar views with Ms Dlamini, is Ms Masuku who made the following comments:

My MEd was based on school management and it also taught me about conflict management. I mean if there is conflict, I am able to call the staff members and solve that conflict.

Participants highlighted a need for leaders to normalise relations within their organisations and they attributed the success with which they played their roles to the knowledge they had acquired in conflict management studies. Ms Dube, who was a principal in a primary school in the north coast, had this to say:

If you have studied educational management, you know how to keep calm and how to manage conflict because it's a skill that you learn and is not something you were born with.

Ms Mngoma who is a deputy principal at Simelwe Secondary School had this to say:

My BEd degree equipped me with conflict management skills, and the Department of Education organised workshops on conflict management, where we were given skills to manage conflict.

4.3.1.4 Women in leadership as mentors and nurturers

There are indications that most women in leadership are also managing in a manner that would mentor and nurturer their subordinates within their organisations. Some participants gave credit to the modules they had been exposed to during some of the professional development activities. To support this view, Ms Mngoma made the following comment:

Some modules are based on development; you learn to develop your staff members and you have to share your skills with them.... I have done people management which helps me to mentor the newly appointed members.....I never had such a skill before, but after I had done my senior degree, I had more knowledge about managing people.

It also surfaced during interviews that those women leaders embraced the strategy of self-advancement and mentoring their subordinates was one of the ways in which to maintain sound communication within their organisations. In that regard, Mrs Mthembi had this to say:

As a leader you have to understand human relations. With all those understandings you have to know them all. If someone is a harsh person you have to calm him or her down. If another person is a bit down you have to boost that person. You have to understand all types of reactions with all the people you are working with because if you are stiff, you will meet a big strain, and very soon you will lose your job and be attacked by stress.

The statement made by Mrs Mthembi clarifies the responsibility that is carried by women in education leadership. Two participants highlighted the need to have positive attitude and to be approachable to your subordinates. They emphasised that such attitudes help to maintain good workmanship spirit, which they believed, was through the studies they had completed that made them develop a good communication approach when leading their teams. Mrs Dube who is the principal at Zazise Primary School had this to say:

...You mentor them; you help them; you are with them all the time but you don't pride yourself about your qualifications. So, if you're approachable it helps others to be free to mingle with you.

Ms Mngoma, who is a deputy principal at Simelwe Secondary School, also believed that her approachable character had contributed to improved working relations. This is what she had to say:

...What you give to people is what you get. I respect my subordinates and they respect me. Even if I have done something wrong, they feel free to come to me, and I will also feel very humbled. Sometimes they would say...we came to you madam because you are approachable.

One participant made it clear that, women leaders are always placed on a challenging situation, and also that they must to project their authority and leadership. In that regard, Ms Dlamini had this to say:

But even those who don't appreciate you, you must embrace them; assist them in such a way that they would value your presence. If you are a manager your team is like your kids, and children are different, some are good and some are bad; so you can't throw the bad ones away.

It is evident that women tend to engage in different social cycles and economic practices than men and they bring different experiences and perspectives to their workplace. Organisations that fail to master this reality tend to be missing out a great deal this valuable resource for re-thinking and improving their productivity (Ely & Thomas, 2001; Meyerson & Ely, 2003) state that women are now a majority of college and master's degree graduates and represent an equal share of the talent available for leadership in order to reduce obstacles to women's success. This emphasised the characteristics that women bring to the workplace. Shakeshaft and Grogan (2010) posit that women have some valuable characteristics in the form of balanced leadership. Sterman (2000) also identifies the similar traits which pay more attention on nurturing, mothering, comforting, and empathy. All these traits have been made explicit by all the participants that were spread over professionalism, relations, mentorship and nurturing.

4.3.2 Challenges discouraging women to advance professionally

As much as women participants indicated that the knowledge they have acquired professionally, together with experience and long service, they still faced challenges that are gender biased. They felt that they were undermined because of the way they were socialised, thus they also faced extrinsic barriers as well as intrinsic barriers to professional self- advancement and attaining leading positions.

4.3.2.1 Gender stereotypes: "Men lead and Women follow!"

When asked about the staff's reaction towards them and their leadership, women leaders answered differently. Some indicated that there were still discriminatory elements which discouraged them from improving themselves professionally and thus preventing them from assuming or even aspiring for senior positions. This is how Ms Dlamini, who is an HOD at Mvuzo Secondary School, put her views:

They don't believe a woman can perform better; I am not sure whether it's a perception or what?

Ms Mngoma also held a similar view had this to say:

.....It's because of our society; it is patriarchal and they still believe that leadership is meant for men. To them if you are a woman no matter how qualified you are, but you are not capable.

To add on this, Ms Mngoma who is a deputy principal at Simelwe Secondary School gave a practical scenario of a gender biased community. She pointed out that, as a deputy principal for many occasions during the principal's absence, she used to head the school all by herself. She said at one stage a senior citizen from the community visited the school seeking assistance, but his problem could not be solved due to her attitude towards me as a woman who happened to be a school principal at that time. Ms Mngoma had this to say:

Sometimes, some people have come and questioned something, so if you tell them that there has been delaying tactics, they would say, 'ooh if the head of the school was a man this matter could have long been resolved'

Some participants made it clear that there were still a number of barriers that limited women to advance professionally and access leading positions in education. For instance, Ms Nkosi shed more light on this issue by narrating a story from her experience. This is what she had to say:

When I came to this school I was already an HOD. So things were really difficult for me because they did not think that I had what it takes as a woman and also as an outsider. This changed gradually when they saw that I was delivering.

Ms Dube, who heads Zazise Primary School, made the same observation and comment about women being undermined by the way they were brought up. This is what she said:

As women we have been under-estimated for a very long time because we were seen as people who belong in the kitchen, where you don't need any education, and it is detrimental to our progress.

Both Ms Nkosi and Mrs Dube raised a common point drawing from different scenarios, but they both implied that there were pre- conceived attitudes towards women, and such attitudes made it hard for women to perform. Ms Nkosi clarified this even further when she stated that such attitudes changed gradually when everybody saw that in fact, she was delivering the goods.

Contrary to women being seen as weak and being led, some participants made it evident that professional self-advancement had made them to be less popular or even feared by their superiors. Ms Nkosi for instance, pointed out that it was difficult for women to be placed on better positions because of the skills they possessed. She elaborated on that point by saying that:

Even if you have masters' degree you can still be stuck in the lowest rank. I am just an ordinary HOD and yet I am pursuing my masters' degree. Sometimes, during our staff meeting I ask questions because I need clarity, but my senior feels inferior and express dislike of my asking questions and apparently, they feel like I'm challenging their authority.

Another participant brought another subject of women being competent but being ostracised because of their capabilities. She vehemently disagreed with the notion that women were less capable of leading compared to men but she believed that both male and female managers and leaders have functioning brains.

This is what Mrs Dube had to say on this point:

...We've got the brains that men have even more than that because we manage our homes; we manage our kids and we manage everything. Mrs Dube believed that women are multi skilled. Ms Nkosi pointed out that, the more knowledgeable women are, the more unpopular they may be to those who seek to undermine them. Mrs Dube also believed that, women were now reluctant to improve themselves professionally because they did not gain recognition, but also that it did not make any difference. Mrs Dube strongly believed that nothing motivated women educators to pursue their studies. In pursuance of her argument, Mrs Dube had this to say:

I think there is nothing that motivates them because they know that even if they study they won't get any promotion and they won't gain anything else. That is a demotivation for people to further their studies.

Some participants believed that the socialisation process had brainwashed women into thinking that they are incompetent in the work place, thus opportunities only favour males. Ms Masuku made a scenario which explained why women were discouraged from furthering their studies in order to stand a chance to be promoted to leadership positions. When asked whether women in the education sector were climbing leadership hierarchy better compared to those on the corporate sector, Ms Masuku responded like this:

Not at all; female educators are not climbing the leadership ladder faster even if they are educated, it's because of sexism; men still believe that they are dominating and they still use that.

Ms Masuku continued saying that:

Even when you get to interviews, you will find that the panel is composed of males; out of six interviewers only one could be a female. Obviously males will opt for a male figure. And then of course, the fact that women undermine themselves is always a prominent factor.

Some scholars corroborate what has transpired from the utterances made by women in educational leadership; that is, irrespective of some engagements to improve themselves professionally but men still dominated leadership positions in education. This condition intensifies the fact that women are always subordinates to their male counterparts. On this issue, Coetzee (2001) asserts that both Western and African cultures are deeply rooted in hegemonic aspirations by men exert supreme power in every sphere of our existence, both in European and African cultures. To sum this idea up, Lemmer (1993) propagates that, in the struggle to maintain the supremacy of the fathers, women were kept in their position of subservience through measures such as less educational opportunities, economic dependency, and exclusion from leading roles in education, politics, the church and society at large. On the other hand, Lemmer (2009) propagates that women's empowerment is incomplete unless it involves the structural transformation of male dominated society. Lemmer (2009) also identifies multiple dimensions of personal empowerment, knowledge autonomy, decision making autonomy, physical, emotional, economic, social and political.

There is evidence that women are trying to engage in a number of activities but this should be a joint effort of both males and females to work out strategies that would also educate males as well to be highly supportive towards females.

4.3.2.2 Low self-image

It emerged from the participants' utterances that the socialisation process has conditioned women's minds in many ways. They believed that people in all sectors are clouded by male supremacy and that this is detrimental to women in education breaking the glass ceiling. They also felt that it discouraged them from improving themselves professionally. This notion confirms the theories of masculinity and feminism in the work place. Most participants mentioned such thinking and condition as a barrier to women improving themselves professionally so as to access leadership positions. In this regard, Mrs V Nkosi had this to say:

I think women in most cases look down upon themselves.....they think if something is done by men it is good. If my superior is a woman we as women don't regard her as a leader. We look down upon her and we need to change our mindset. We need to change the way we perceive ourselves as women.

On the same issue, Mrs Nkosi further made comments that women must take responsibility of challenging their fears. Her comments went like this:

We have that in mind; we feel threatened by men, but if we can overcome that, we can take all the leading positions.

Mrs V Nkosi was so adamant that even if women advance professionally, they remain stagnant because they feel threatened by men. In her perception, our professional advancement is hindered by intrinsic barriers where women themselves are fearful to take an initiative. On the other hand she is convinced that women can overcome this inferiority complex. This is what she had to say:

We can overcome that by not feeling inferior. At the present moment inferiority clouds our minds, and we always think that a good thing can be done only by men. As women we need to find ourselves and do the right thing.

Mr Mngoma came with a different perspective, where she pointed out that women were stranded, and many women were still improving themselves professionally, but they were incompetent. She passionately expressed her views like this:

Women undermine themselves; they are educated but they are not competent. As much as affirmative action and gender equality structures have been put in place to assist them but....., we are just incompetent.

Like Ms Masuku, Ms Mngoma also made an example of interview panels, which may be desperately, be in need of women to fill a position, but fail to get suitable candidates. Ms Mngoma elaborated on this point like this:

An interview panel may be looking for a female manager but because of the unavailability of competent women, they end up taking a male candidate. Women just feel intimidated and I don't know why.

Another participant made it clear that women were still trapped in the past where they believed that a woman should only be a home maker and not a manager. She believed that opportunities had been made available for women to grab but women were still living in the past. Mrs Dube believed that women should be knowledgeable in order to be good leaders. This is what she had to say:

It's a small percentage of women who seize the opportunity to improve themselves professionally, but some are stuck in the past.

Mrs Dube elaborated and further said that:

In the past you would say I am a woman; I have got to give birth to the children; I need to look after my children and that's all. Such thinking truly delays our progress.

Mrs Dube also put more emphasis on the mindset, arguing that women themselves must encourage some change. This is what she had to say:

The mindset needs to be changed, and it is going to be a struggle. It will take time but gradually it will change. One important thing is that you need to be professionally fit not rely on affirmative action.

Mrs Mthembu, who is a principal at Zamokwethu Primary School, was very radical about women and low self-image. She believed that women in education must stand on their toes and change their mindset. She passionately elaborated on this point as said:

You need to produce as a woman; you need to develop yourself and be productive. It's high time that females learn the harder way and produce the goods. Women need to produce and fight this apartheid stigma of knowing that women are subordinates and males are superior.

Mrs Mthembu was also convinced that women were good and intelligent but should change the way they perceived themselves. She emphasised that point by saying:

Most women are intelligent but it's this stigma of knowing that I am a woman, who am I? I can't do it!

Ms Masuku came with a different interpretation of the portrayal of self-image by women in her organisation. She pointed out that as a deputy principal; she had witnessed scenarios where women were a contributory factor towards the down fall of other women. She referred to it as a “pull her down syndrome”. Expressing anger and frustration, Ms Masuku had this to say:

There are women who always say “I can” but they don't get respect they deserve, unfortunately, from other females. Even if you delegate the female team, females will be more negative compared to male educators. When you are doing things males will agree but females will always query your authority. They will then start to stand in groups talking about you and start being sarcastic when you pass.

Ms Masuku was just trying to elaborate about extrinsic factors that might discourage other women educators to improve professionally so as to embark on leading positions. Nohria and Khurana (2010) argue that in leadership context, biases against women are portrayed on several categories. It is in the way that the organisation's leadership path is structured and positioned; it is in the way the society perceive women leaders to be, and it is also in the way that women leaders regard themselves. Lord and Hall (2005) propagate the view that recent theory suggests that individuals, who are unable to define themselves their self- worth and self-identity in the leadership roles, may be missing an essential characteristic to leadership growth. Makgoba (1997), in his paper cited in Mazibuko (2006), states that women must understand that when they assume leadership roles they will be confronted by hostility, isolation, lack of peer support, lack of alliances and sometimes harsh criticism from all genders, especially from women. Unfortunately, Lord and Hall (2005) conclude that gender bias represent momentous problems not only for women but also for organisations. It is evident that barriers that are associated with self-image are real and are practically causing a severe blow towards the advancement of women and their organisations.

4.3.2.3 Lack of Mentorship

Gender stereotypes as well as the socialisation have made it clear that women are placed in a very challenging position. They lack the spirit that propels them to further their studies and attain leadership positions. When asked about the support and mentorship that they received, some participants did not give explicit responses. They felt that the support from the Department of Education was inadequate and they relied mainly on intrinsic motivation (self-motivation) which kept them going. Mrs Dube who heads Zazise Primary School made the following comments:

.....We don't normally get any support from the DoE; as a leader you need intrinsic motivation and you need to be internally motivated. Sometimes your family is the one that keeps you motivated. Sometimes I share my challenges with my partner and my colleagues who are also occupying the similar positions.

Mrs Mthembu from Zamokwethu Primary School said:

As a leader you have to attend workshops, network with other people to be motivated.

When asked about the form of support and mentorship she received as a woman in leadership, Ms Nkosi responded like this:

There are few cases where someone who is a woman could receive support and mentorship. I don't think our Department of Education or the system as a whole does consider that as women leaders we need a support. I think it happens for those who are in politics, but when it comes to the workplace it is not a true reflection of what is happening nationally because most positions in education are still led by men.

Some participants believed that motivation should be intrinsic rather than expecting the Department of Education to organise it for women leaders. Mrs Mngoma elaborates on this issue like this:

.....There is no time to go to seminars but I read a lot; I read motivation books. I also attend women conferences about empowerment and development in order to stop being inferior or feeling inferior.

Mrs Masuku also had the same opinion regarding the need for women to uplift themselves. She believed that mentorship can assist a lot and this is what she said:

.....I read newspapers to know more about current issues and I know that I must be abreast of my staff members and it gives me respect because teachers can calculate if you are empty. For example, if the teachers argue about something unfounded, you must show them that you are well off with the constitution of the country or policies.

When asked about support and mentorship this is what Mrs Masuku had to say:

I wouldn't say I received any support because generally as a woman in the position, you mostly receive criticism than mentorship. So what keeps me going is to know that I don't

want failure and what keeps me going is the thought of knowing that I will grow from strength to strength.

The above extracts from the participants emphasise the benefits of internal motivation rather than relying on external support in order to cope with challenges posed by positions of management and leadership, especially if you are a woman.

4.3.2.4 Balance work and domestic chores

It was made clear by some participants that the power of socialisation has shaped women to be nurturers, home makers and caregivers for their families and learners. Some participants believed that characteristics portrayed by women should be smoothly transferred to the work place. It was made clear that women are discouraged to further themselves professionally, implying that and being consistent with the expectations of the role they play at home as mothers and house wives. When asked about barriers towards self-development, Ms Dlamini an HOD at Mvuzo Secondary School had this to say:

Women have many tasks ahead of them; they are full time teachers; full time parents in such a way that when you come back from work you still have to pursue your role as a mother; supervise your children and help them with homework.....I mean lot of things.

She further pointed out that as a woman, even if together with your partner you do the same profession, but women are over-burdened and this discourages them to improve themselves professionally. On this point, Ms Dlamini elaborated like this:

You wake up at 4am and go to bed at 11pm; so you don't have time at all to study and develop yourself. When you get home your partner is a 'husband' and you are the 'wife' and you have to fulfil his expectations from a wife.

Mrs Dube who emphasised the lack of promotional posts for women in education, was asked whether the lack of promotional posts discharged women to upgrade themselves. Mrs Dube had this to say:

Multi- tasking is not easy for women. We cannot study; we have got kids, we've got house chores and we've got to prepare meals. When you get home you are just a wife, a mother and that alone is challenging. As women we can manage kids, and manage educators. We've got that motherly thing that comes naturally; it can possibly benefit us, but it's not easy.

It is evident that as much as multi skills can be regarded as a bonus for women but it also stood as a barrier because women regarded it as a challenge towards self-advancement. It is stated that when appointed as school managers , women's experience of leadership tend to be unique from that of men, this mostly result from to the gendered response they are likely to receive immediate stakeholders (Blackmore, 1999). In educational and in the world of work generally, career breaks

are detrimental to the women's career development (Davidson and Cooper, 1992). Some researchers have found that women's feminine touch is needed in educational management and thus we have scholars such as Shakeshaft, (1989) and Cullibo (1999). According to these scholars, women have shown themselves to be highly capable as managers within the education fraternity.

Some argue that women present different value and traits to the role of principal as compared to their male counterparts (Brunner, 2002; Coleman, 2002). Participants have emphasised that their mothering responsibility was a barrier that prevented them from advancing professionally, thus failing to attain leadership positions. Krefting (2003), cited in Lumby and Azaola (2013), points out that parenting is more closely associated with mothers than with fathers. Therefore women as mothers (whether real or imagined) may be perceived to be less of a match to an ideal employee and more especially to that of a leader. Therefore, women who wish to achieve or enact leadership roles have to contend with stepping outside the acceptable notion of what it is to be a woman in order to match leadership prototype. Lumby and Azaola (2013), for instance, have found that a self-assessed mothering style of leadership was found in 29 cases out of 54 participants interviewed in a study they conducted in South Africa.

4.3.3 Leadership Styles

The section on leadership styles pays more attention on differences between men and women, and therefore, issues addressed here are masculinity and feminism as well as women and their workmanship spirit.

4.3.3.1 Masculinity versus Feminism

Participants have shown that experience and knowledge accomplished through professional self-advancement have impacted on their leadership styles, although some participants indicated that their leadership styles were shaped by the way they were brought up. For instance, Mrs Mthembi from Zamokwethu Primary is one of those leaders who believed that one's home background is important in influencing one's leadership approach. This is what Mrs Mthembi had to say:

At home there was no division of labour. My father was a very hegemonic person but had lots of love. There was no work meant for girls or boys at home. We were all exposed to the same chores and that is how I was earlier trained. If you had to drive a tractor, you had to do that, whether you are a girl or boy.Females must try to be strong; I know women are soft by nature but that does not take away the brain.

At the same time Mrs Mthembi was convinced that leaders should mingle both styles of leadership, irrespective of gender. This is what she had to say:

Your subordinates must feel comfortable with you. You must be welcoming.....In my case they know that I am strict; I don't stand laziness; I am also a straight talker and I go straight to the point. I need people to work hard at the same time because I don't compromise on the quality of work.

Ms Mngoma brought an aspect that is completely different from that of Mrs Mthembu; she sounded much softer and commented:

You know.....naturally I am an introvert and that helps me a lot. Even when someone has offended me, I do not respond to his comments quickly; I will keep quiet and synthesise what that person has said. But later, when I am calm I will come with a response; it is of no use to be aggressive.

Both participants displayed different ways of dealing with the people; Ms Mthembu said that she is a straight talker, while Ms Mngoma emphasised that she is calmer. There is evidence that both participants would address an issue, but in different ways. This is an indication that women, as much as they may be viewed as softer in character, they do have tactics of dealing with the situations that may suit their character. The important point being made here is that women can bring their different characters to evoke a variety of leadership approaches.

Some participants believed that their fairness in doing things would encourage good human relations within an organisation. One example was made by Mrs Dube when she was asked about the attitudes of the teachers towards her leadership. She commented like this:

It depends on the way you present yourself, your character or else your personality. If you treat them badly because you are educated and you occupy a certain position.....then you are heading for trouble.

Unlike Mrs Mthembu, Mrs Dube was more relational; she believed in characteristics that are genuinely associated with feminism, while at the same time she believed that women should work harder and improve themselves in any way possible. When asked about qualities that she used as a leader, she said:

I believe humbleness.....but if a man speaks, it's easy because he is listened to, but that is also the way we were socialised. Being a figure of authority you need to work with your SMT. That is what I do and you need to be strategic but humble yourself at the same time.

Another participant brought a different perspective on what she thought would benefit women in leadership to be in control as leaders. She believed that women leaders can employ the same skills as their male counterparts. When she was asked whether it was essential for women in leadership to improve themselves professionally even if they are were permanently employed, Ms Mngoma responded like this:

Yes, it is important for them to learn because they need to know and learn the strategies even those that are applied by men.

Mrs Dube from Zazise Primary believed that women in leadership positions should change their attitude but try and act like leaders. She believed that through educating themselves women can rise to the moment. This is what she said:

It's through knowledge. Women need to be told that they are human beings just like men. Women need to be educated then they can do whatever men can do.

All participants were convinced that for women to attain leadership position or recognition as leaders they had to study hard. Some of the participants thought that it was easy for some males to be earmarked for senior positions because of masculinity and socialisation process which is always in their advantage.

In that regard, this is what Mrs Mthembi had to say:

Men are fortunate they were born with.....characters of being leaders, which they automatically inherit from our forefathers..... They are born with it. They are born with this power.

To support this view, Ms Mthembi made an example that women can also employ their character in many ways to create sound working relations. Her comments went like this:

You will find that most women leaders are in primary schools when men are in high schools, of which I believe the idea behind this is that women cannot face hardship, which is also not true. Someone somewhere thought that women are suitable for primary schools because women are care-givers, forgetting that as nurturers, they are also needed in high schools.

At this point Mrs Mthembi presented a discipline register where all disciplinary issues were recorded for both the teachers and the learners. There was also a page on that register where the accused would state her or his comments. The document was confidential, so the researcher would not be allowed to read the contents inside. According to Ms Mthembi, it was her way of encouraging discipline which is work related.

One would not expect a woman leader to have such strategies and manoeuvres to maintain discipline. However, Mrs Mthembi gave credit to the workshops that were rendered to help empower women leaders. Lumby and Coleman (2007) propagate the idea that leadership in Western democracies has been dominated by what they describe as the white, male and middle class norm. Hall (1999), as cited in Lumby and Coleman (2007), assert that it has become part of our taken for granted understanding that men dominate numerically in senior positions in all phases of education with the exception of nursery and infant school.

Evaluating the worth of work, Thompson (1992) states that it seems probable that many women in education choose to stay deliberately with classroom teaching rather than opt for a career that moves them into school or college management. This idea is disputed by Shakeshaft (1989), as cited in Cullibo and Brown (2003) who suggest that women have shown themselves to be extremely capable educational leaders. Shakeshaft (1989) as cited in Pace and Pace (2005), points out that women's traditional and stereotypic style of communication are more like those of a good manager than are men stereotypic styles.

The presumption that a woman can succeed in management only by a re-socialisation process and the adoption of male styles of management has been countered by recognition that the more feminine traits of participatory management and respect for relationships are to be valued (Hall, 1993, as cited in Bush & West-Burnham, 1994). In the mists of debates about women and leadership writers such as Shakeshaft (1987) and Ozga (1993) claim that theory has failed to acknowledge the different values of women and remains largely rooted in a male perspective. They further comment that, the difficulty is that there is little clarity about what constitute a distinctive female theory of educational management.

The point is that women have improved themselves professionally and thus they developed mannerism that complies with their nature and there is evidence in some of their schools that there are majors used to enforce discipline.

4.3.3.2 Women and the workmanship spirit

All participants have mentioned that perceptions and expectations indicate that in many cases, women managers are compared to their male counterparts and that exerted more pressure to women who find them having to be more innovative. Some women highlighted their experiences that show us that they were expected to double their efforts in almost everything they did because the benchmark has been set by the socialisation process. In some utterances it surfaced that to access leadership positions, women needed to empower themselves in many ways. When asked whether it is essential for women to advance themselves professionally even if they were already permanently employed, Ms Mngoma a deputy principal from Simelwe Secondary School made the following comment:

Yes, it is important for women to learn, especially those in or aspiring for leadership because they need to know and learn strategies even those used by men to manage or I mean to adapt to what men do to succeed as leaders.

This is how some women feel as they head their organisations and Ms Mngoma emphasised that she had to adopt a people centred management style so as to gain respect from her subordinates.

She made the utterances that align her appointment to a senior position as a result of extra effort of improving herself professionally, and she had this to say:

...So after graduating for my Bachelor of Education, I think my colleagues saw something that was unique because of the skills I have obtained in that qualification, and I was earmarked for deputyship position.

Ms Mngoma has also indicated that a people centred style of management can benefit women in leadership and she regarded it as the only approach that is relevant to women in leadership. She made the following comment:

My belief is that what you give to the people is what you get. I respect my subordinates and they respect me.

It was evident that some women participants believed that women were placed in a more challenging situation and that they had to exert more energy before they could gain recognition from their peers. Mrs Mthembi, like Ms Mngoma made the following comment:

As a woman you must always benchmark yourself by selecting someone higher than you. As a leader I am looking at schools that are well doing and well performing.

She further points out that again as a leader you need to place your school on the map in terms of achievement. This is what she had to say:

I believe that if you want to achieve something about your school, you must have vision because a leader without vision is as good as dead; and you will kill the whole institution as a leader. In my case, while teachers are busy teaching, in my own world as a leader, I run a meeting in my head, because as a leader you must have vision and you must fulfil the mission.

What Mrs Mthembi said was backed by a series of documents that she produced that indicated that her school was a pilot school in the North Coast Region for a number of projects of which most of them were conducted by the Department of Education. On my arrival it was the day before a visit by a departmental panel for Whole School Evaluation.

Ms Mngoma on the other hand, also gave some copies of her certificates to show that she has, since her accomplishment of the BEd degree, been improving herself professionally and this gives her, self-fulfilment as a woman in leadership. She puts all her successes on her mentorship programme that she conducted for her subordinates and positive attitude towards the entire staff.

Similarly, Kochan (2000), as cited in Celikten (2010), suggest that women tend to lead in more transformative and comprehensive manner as compared to their male counterparts. It is said that women consistently define power as the skill to get their job completed. This further propagates

the view that women do not define their ways to working in hierarchical terms, and they display no reliance on domination or intimidation. To propel this idea of woman and attitudes, Hurly (1995) as cited in Celikten (2010), observes that women see themselves as powerful in meeting their goals. They do this for the sake of effective education of their students and also for in the sake of working with teachers and parents at school where they relied on their own skill in interpersonal relations and creativity.

Eagly and Johnson, as cited in Pace and Pace (2010), conducted the first systematic analysis on gender differences in leadership. That research yielded mixed findings which showed no differences between men and women regarding task orientation and interpersonal orientated styles. Amazingly, they found that women adopted inclusive and participative leadership styles, while men tended to use the directive and controlling styles. According to Hurly's study (1995), women administrators used their emotional energies as a source of power; they nurtured growth, pondered decisions with others in mind; they used talk as a tool of problem solving and for collaboratively work for change. According to Pace and Pace (2005), it is claimed that nowadays organisations are increasingly sympathetic to qualities with feminine touch rather than the masculine stereotype. Contrary to the other findings, Wallace and Wall, as cited in Bush (2011), state that research on senior management teams in secondary schools suggest that it is possible for management to incorporate both females and male style of leadership. This is consistent with the notion expressed earlier in this chapter leadership and management has nothing to do with gender.

4.3.4 Perceptions towards women in leadership

Perceptions towards women in educational leadership are perpetuated by a number of experiences that are aligned to cultural male domination which result from patriarchal order, and the socialisation process. Some women have internalised the fact that they are inferior, and thus they ignore any personal development that can possibly place them in leadership positions. Contrary to the latter, some women are keen to improve themselves, but perceptions towards those who are already in leadership discourage women to press on and improve themselves professionally. Some participants have also indicated that school communities have their own perceptions towards the school and women in authority positions. When asked about attitudes of male authorities towards them, Ms Mngoma who works as deputy principal in a very remote rural area commented:

The one in authority will come with pre conceived ideas, thinking that they will not get what they are looking for when they do school visits. Once they get what they bargained for, you will hear them saying that is why we believe women should get opportunities because they do the work.

When asked about the attitude of the school's governing body (SGB) towards her, Mrs Dlamini who taught in a deep rural school as an HOD said:

They believe you can't lead, if you are not a man, because in my community people are illiterate, so they believe that a woman cannot take decisions.....It is how they were brought up they believe things go in a proper way if they are done by a men.

Grandy (1993), writing from a feminist point of view, argues that educational leadership informed by feminism, can be a form of emancipator praxis which provides an alternative to traditional male hierarchical and bureaucratic approaches to leadership. Lorber (1997) argues that liberal feminism propagates that all are equal and there should be equality to all processes.

4.3.5 Gender equity

It is evident that the post- apartheid government of South Africa has put in place policies and programmes to enhance gender equality. Gender equality process deals with all social structures including the education sector. It is important to investigate whether women in educational leadership benefit from the gender equity provisions or not.

4.3.5.1 Gender equity and women in educational leadership

Some participants came with different perspectives which indicate that the knowledge and skills they attained as they improved themselves professionally nullify the issue of gender when it comes to work performance. In this regard Mrs Mthembi said:

If you have studied and are knowledgeable, you believe in yourself; you feel like you can enter in the boardroom even where you would be outnumbered by an overwhelming number of men and you feel that "I can do it"...Information and knowledge you have acquired will even make you forget about your gender.

Ms Mngoma, a deputy principal at Simelwe Secondary School also propagated the same idea about professional self-advancement which she claimed, sometimes overshadowed gender stereotypes. She also expressed a belief that in some instances it is all about qualifications not your gender. In this regard, Ms Mngoma said:

If you have qualifications that are marketable, the interview panel will forget that you are a woman. They look at your qualifications and they would agree that this is a person we are looking for.

When asked how professional self-advancement has boosted her morale and confidence, Ms Nkosi responded like this:

Yes, there are challenges but as a woman in leadership, working with men, it makes me proud. It makes me see that I am in a position that men are looking up to.

These utterances made by the participants intensified the mission of the Gender Equity Commission because women in leadership positions made it clear that they were improving themselves as per regulations of that commission. It is evident that with the inception of the affirmative action and gender equity, women could have invaded the labour market as well as promotion positions in various sectors. It is essential that we find out whether women in the education sector have improved themselves.

When asked whether women in the education sector have benefited since 1994, Ms Mngoma responded like this:

We do have women in education who are occupying senior positions but they do not constitute a majority as yet.

Ms Mngoma felt that women in the education sector were not sufficiently competent to perform their management duties. Ms Nkosi, an HOD from Lethokuhle Primary School felt that there was not much progress that had impacted positively to women in the education sector since 1994. Her comments went like this:

Not much has been achieved in the education sector because we are still there. We are not getting the positions that we are supposed to get or those that suit our qualifications. If you can collect data in education, you can find that males are still holding most senior positions in education.

Mrs Mthembu is very positive that women were the ones who should place themselves in a marketable position rather than expecting somebody else to do it for them. She believed that women should improve themselves and be knowledgeable. Mrs Mthembu who is the Principal at Zamokuhle Primary School had this to say:

I think in 1994 there was a policy which was developed by the government which is Act No. 27 of 1994 and it promotes women into leadership positions; so it is up to us as women.....

Ms Masuku also believed that it depends to your conduct and inputs. Her response was a bit ambiguous because she also raised some barriers that still exist and said:

Yes! It is because of the inception of the democratic government that I became an HOD in 1996, but still it depends on what you are doing to market yourself.

On another note, Ms Masuku did mention that some people want to get into power because of some conditions. She said that power was being misused, thus discrediting those who should really occupy leading positions. On the other hand, Mrs Dube who is the principal of Zazise Primary School had a completely different view about women and advancement due to perception

that are in public domain. She pointed out that positions were only held largely by men before the advent of democracy in South Africa and that only black men were also facing great challenge as well. She expressed a belief that as much as women cannot have anything tangible but women in education regained their confidence. This is what she said:

Yes.....in giving us back the confidence to go forward and force our way upward, but previously, it wasn't like that; you wouldn't lead men as a woman because you were seen as inferior. Today we have opportunities and rights but as women we should buck up and take responsibility.

Different policies have been put in place to ensure that there is equality at various levels of organisational set up. The process began with the establishment of Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) by the Department of Education at national level in 1996 (Raj, 2011). Redpath *et.al*, (2008):37 propagate that, "Gender equity as propagated by the GETT is concerned with the promotion of equal opportunities and fair treatment for men and women in personal, social, cultural, political as well as in economical arenas. Gender equity therefore, entails meeting women and men, girls' and boys' needs in order to compete in formal and informal labour markets; fully participate in civil society and fulfil their roles adequately without being discriminated against because of gender."

Consequently a nation's gender policy was developed and structures were set up that were intended to advocate gender equality (Chisholm, 2004). Moorosi (2010), as cited in Lumby and Azeola (2013), points out that despite national intentions, women's careers are still gendered. The study conducted by Lumby and Azeola (2010) focused on assumptions related to ideologies of what it is like to be a woman and a female leader in education. The scholars make it evident that women taking school principal role face continuous and prescriptive prejudice. On the contrary, Mazibuko (2006) proposes that women in leadership must be seen doing things differently; practising the culture of inclusion; challenging the *status quo*, rather than being co-opted into the dormant power structures but mentoring the young up and coming scholars and adapting engaging leadership styles.

There is overwhelming evidence that women have improved themselves professionally after the inception of the gender equity structures which might be a force that drove them to the positions they head today. On the other hand some females feel that they are over qualified for the positions they head, but women are giving credit to their professional self-advancement that they are leading successfully and they do overcome the challenges they face.

4.3.6 Chapter summary

In this chapter, the data from the interviews that were conducted with the principals, HODs and deputy principals were discussed. From the interviews that were conducted, women in leadership positions discussed professional self-advancement of their career, as educators. Challenge and experiences regarding the shortage of women in educational leadership emerged. Such challenges may in some instances be perpetuated by a number of intrinsic and extrinsic barriers which deny women positions as leaders. It transpired that women in leadership can be on the forefront if they empower themselves; if they support their subordinates and help build young scholars to challenge the gender imbalances in educational leadership. It appears that all women in the study have actually been involved in improving their teaching profession and that has landed them in leading positions. It has also surfaced that women were self-sufficient leaders especially when they are educated because they regain confidence and it adds to the characteristics they naturally portray.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

The previous chapter dealt with the presentation and discussion of data that was obtained from semi structured interviews. This chapter is the last one and brings the entire study to a close. Therefore, this chapter presents the findings that are drawn from the data presented in Chapter 4. In doing this, the questions guiding the study have been re-stated in order to assist and guide the discussion and ensure that the extent to which these questions have been answered can be easily assessed. However, before these research questions are re-stated, a brief outline of the study is presented and the intention of that section is to remind both the researcher and the readers about what the dissertation addresses.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter One introduced the study by doing a number of things. These included outlining what the rationale and background of the study is. This chapter also presented a short explanation of the research methodology, the clarifications of the key concepts that encompass the study, as well as, the critical questions that underpinned the study.

Chapter Two outlined the literature review on the issue of women in education leadership and professional self- advancement. This chapter examined the journey of women educators into leadership position backed by their professional achievements and development. The review of literature also addressed the notion of women leaders' progression to various labour markets and areas of expertise, drawing from local, continental and international perspectives and research.

Chapter Three explores the research design and methodology that was utilised in producing data that would assist in answering the research questions. As part of this chapter, the discussions of the qualitative research approach and data generation strategies such as interviews and documents reviews were discussed. This chapter further described how data analysis was conducted and the issues of ensuring trustworthiness of the findings were also discussed. Ethical issues that were considered during the study are also discussed. Chapter Four consisted of a detailed discussion of the data using the themes that emerged after the analysis. The discussion also touched on the means that can make women educators to be active participants on leadership arena so as to challenge previous imbalances.

Chapter Five provides the findings that are drawn from the data presented in Chapter Four. Based on these findings, recommendations are then made.

5.3 Research questions restated

The research questions have been restated and used as a way of presenting the findings. The research questions that are guiding the presentation of the findings are presented below, followed by the discussion of the findings.

5.3.1 How does professional self-advancement equip and boost the morale of women in educational leadership?

(a) The findings show that women in the study believed that by involving themselves with institutions of higher learning through post-graduate studies, they gained confidence as women leaders to become active participants in their organisations. This finding is corroborated by Cockburn (2000) who state that professional development develops teachers' confidence and motivation. It improves the opportunity to transform their personal work. One of the participants aptly captured this when she said "*Professional development gave us back the confidence to go forward and force our way upward*"

(b) The other finding suggests that the skills that participants acquired through professional development programmes and activities assisted them to be actively involved in leadership arenas. Such skills included being able to pursue conflict management strategies, encourage induction and mentoring endeavours, as well as the application of emotional and spiritual motivation to help support their subordinates. When they engaged in such activities, they did them with confidence which they would not have had. It transpired that exposure to management studies, reading motivation books, leadership seminars and attending work related workshops have equipped women leaders to advance even further and be proactive, irrespective of public prejudice towards them as women managers.

5.3.2 How do women utilise the platform rendered by the new enabling environment to advance into leadership positions.

(a) The findings show that some of the women leaders utilised the opportunities proffered by the new and democratic government in South Africa while others did not take such opportunities. The discussion in the previous section was very clear on this aspect and demonstrated how they benefited from this. However, there were others who expressed scepticism about this issue. It emerged in this research that some women in the education sector did not aspire for leadership roles. These women were less willing to improve themselves professionally because in their view, they gain no recognition as women. It had emerged in the data that some schools' top positions were given to men and the whole setting discouraged women to pursue their studies further. One of the participants put it like this, "*Men are fortunate, they are born with characters of being*

leaders". This finding is in line with Eagly and Carli (2007) and Rudman and Kianski (2007), who say that people more readily acknowledge men with leadership ability and more readily recognise men as leaders.

(b) Research shows that exposure to educational management studies, has helped women in leadership master the skill of managing conflict within their teams and the staff at large. All participants mentioned that being ahead of their subordinates in terms of knowledge, and educational issues have earned them the respect they deserve as women leaders, which they believe it is aligned with self-advancement endeavours.

5.3.3 What leadership styles seem to equip and sustain women in education leadership?

The finding from the data shows that there were different styles of leadership that were displayed by various women leaders in the study. (a) Women are more communicative, therefore, if more women can engage themselves professionally or explore other sectors to acquire more knowledge, then young girls can have role models and form a sound mentoring support structures in future.

(b) Women leaders commented about leadership styles that they employed which give them feminine character and identity. It transpired that women in leadership applied relational style of leading and these includes an open door policy, being approachable, giving their subordinates freedom to communicate their opinions and delegating them as a way of empowering them.

(c) Participants elaborated on nurturing and mothering style of management as their strongly believed that such styles gave the learners, the teachers a space and confidence in speaking out their minds.

5.3.4 What strategies are used by women in leadership to deal with prejudice towards their authority?

(a) Women in leadership have mentioned professional self- advancement as a mechanism to deal with prejudice perpetuated by gender stereotypes towards their authority. According to the research, women are more work orientated, more relational and more transformational in their manner of leadership which puts them on the forefront as leaders. Linked to this point is the view that by being knowledgeable in your specialisation area, you add more value to the way they lead. This is encapsulated in the words of some participants who argued that the more they get educated and advance into leadership positions, the more they come across bitter experiences.

5.4 Recommendations

Based on the findings presented above the following recommendations are being made.

5.4.1 Recommendations regarding all the finding

- The first finding indicated that by engaging in professional self-advancement, women leaders gained confidence to face everybody. They even advanced further which also enabled them to be involved in leadership positions. It has also emerged that involvement in professional development activities of various kinds is always recommended. Therefore, it is recommended in this study that women leaders in schools need to upscale their participation in such programmes.
- The second finding has shown that some women in leadership positions utilised the opportunities given to them by a democratic dispensation in South Africa. However, some of them did not. The advent of democracy in the country has addressed most of the obstacles that women faced during the era of apartheid. It is recommended therefore that women should utilise all the opportunities and platforms that have been created for them as a result of democracy and the need to redress all the discrimination of the past. This recommendation addresses a number of findings that have been made as they are all linked.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided summary of the whole study and then presented the findings as well as the recommendations that are linked to the findings.

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APPENDIX - A

(PERMISSION LETTER TO THE KZN DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION)

P. O. Box 4287
Stanger
4450
07-September-2013

Attention: The Head of Department (N.S.P. Sishi)

Department of Education

Province of KwaZulu-Natal

Private Bag x 9137

Pietermaritzburg

3201

Dear Sir

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

My name is Jabulisile Ndadane, M,Ed student in the school of education at the university of Kwa-Zulu Natal (Edgewood Campus) as part of my degree requirement. I am required to conduct research I therefore forward my request to conduct research, whereby some women educators in leadership will be interviewed. The research will involve women in the leadership within your jurisdiction in Ilembe District.

The study aims to understand women in education leadership and professional self advancement. The study aims to make contribution to the national and international debates regarding issue of women and professional self-advancement and development. The study will also raise awareness about women educators' potential to participate towards the betterment of our educational system. The study may also bring awareness about women's styles of leadership, which may yield positive results in our schools. The study envisaged will focus on women in educational leadership whereby 2 Head of Department, 2 Principals and 2 Deputy Principals will be interviewed. The study will use semi structured interviews and questionnaires and an interview schedule.

Semi structured interviews will be held with each other of the participants who are hailing from different schools and settings. Each interview will take 45-60 min.

Responses will be treated with confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of the actual names. Participants will be contacted in advance for interviews, and they will be purposively selected to participate in this study.

For further information on this research project, feel free to contact my supervisor, Dr TT Bhengu, Tel: 031 260 3534, Cell no: 083 447 5321, Email: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za.

You are also permitted to consult the university if the need may arise, the details are as follow: HSSREC Office: Tel: 031 260 3587, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

In addition, should you have any queries feel free to contact me directly using the following contact details: Jabulisile J Ndadane, Tel: 032 551 178, Email: ndadanejj@gmail.com.

Research tools are attached herewith for your perusal.

Your positive response will be highly appreciated

Thank you in advance

Yours sincerely

JJ Ndadane (Mrs)

APPENDIX- B

LETTER TO THE PRINCIPALS REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH

P.O. Box 4287
Stanger
4450
07 – September – 2013

The Principal
P O Box 2449
KwaDukuza
4450
Dear Sir

REQUEST PERMISSION TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am Jabulisile J Ndadane, Master of Education student in the School of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal. I am in a process of conducting research for my dissertation titled: **An exploration of professional self- advancement of women in Educational Leadership: The case study of six women from Ilembe District.**

I request your permission to conduct research at your school. Educators will be required to participate in semi structured interview sessions. Care will be taken in insuring that teaching and learning in the school is not disturbed. Interview will be conducted at a place and time that is convenient to them. The information will be treated with the strictest of confidentiality and will be used for the purpose of this study only.

Participation is voluntary and the participants will be free to withdraw at any point without any negative consequences.

For further information on this project please contact me using the following contact details Jabulisile Jacqueline Ndadane: Tel 032 551 1781; Email: ndadanejj@gmail.com; cell: 083 476 1595

You can also feel free to contact my supervisor Dr. TT Bhengu; Tel: 031 260 3534; Email: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za; Cell: 083 947 5321

For further information if the need may arise feel free to contact the university the details are as follow: HSSREC Office: Tel: 031 260 3587, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or mailto: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za

Yours in Education

Jabusile J. Ndadane (Mrs)

APPENDIX – C

P.O. Box 4287
Stanger
4450
07 – September – 2013

Dear Participant

REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION IN A RESEARCH PROJECT

I am Jabulisile J Ndadane, M.E.d student in the school of Education at the University of KwaZulu-Natal (Edgewood Campus). I am required to do a mini dissertation as part of my studies. The title of my study is: **An exploration of professional self advancement of women in Educational Leadership: The case study of six women from Ilembe District.**

I have taken the liberty of writing to you as one of the participants in order to acquire more information about women in educational leadership and professional self advancement. I humbly seek your participation in this study, and to allow me to audio tape our discussion at a time and place convenient to you.

Be assured that responses will be treated with strictest degree of confidentiality and pseudonyms will be used instead of real names. In no way will your identity be divulged. Be advised that your participation is voluntary and you are free to withdraw from the study at any stage or for any reason without negative or undesirable consequences. There are neither any foreseeable direct benefits nor direct risks associated with your participation in this study.

For further information on this project please contact me using the following contact details Jabulisile Jacqueline Ndadane: Tel 032 551 1781; Email: ndadanejj@gmail.com; cell: 083 476 1595. You can feel free to contact my supervisor Dr. TT Bhengu; Tel: 031 260 3534; Email: bhengutt@ukzn.ac.za; Cell: 083 947 5321. Should there be any queries don't hesitate to consult the university and the details follow: HSSREC Office: Tel: 031 260 3587, Email: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za or [mailto: ximbap@ukzn.ac.za](mailto:ximbap@ukzn.ac.za)

Yours sincerely

Jabusile J. Ndadane (Mrs)

APPENDIX – D

Consent to participate in the research

I(Full Name of the Participant)
hereby, confirm that I understand the contents of this document and the nature of the research
project, and I consent to participate in the research project.

I also understand that I have the right to withdraw from the research without any negative
consequences

Finally, I hereby consent /do not consent to have this interview recorded.

Signature of Participant

Date

APPENDIX- E

An exploration of professional self advancement of women in Educational Leadership: The case study of 6 women from Ilembe District, KZN.

Semi-structured interview schedule for participants

The interview schedule is designed to explore and understand the issue of women in leadership and professional self advancement and development.

A. Biographical Information of the participant

- 1.) Age_____
- 2.) Highest Qualification : _____
- 3.) Work Experience (Number of years involved in education and position held)
:_____
- 4.) How many women and how many men are under your supervision:

B. Duration

How long have you served in this position?_____

C. Tasks/Work Related Information as a Leader

1. What motivated you to apply for the post you are presently occupying?
2. What form of support and mentorship do you receive that keep you going?
3. What would you regard as your strength as a leader?
4. Do you think the staff respond/react to female and male leaders differently? If so why?
5. Do you think it is essential for women to further their studies, even if they are permanently employed, if so why?
6. Statistics show that women in corporate sector climb the corporate ladder faster, do you think the same pattern happens the in education sector? If so why and how, if not why and how?
7. What form of self improvement have you used that could be contributing to the post you are heading today?
8. Does your professional achievement influence the way you lead? Explain how?
9. Have your professional development benefited you as a leader?
10. What perceptions do each of the following hold towards you as a women in leadership
 - ✓ Colleagues
 - ✓ The community
 - ✓ School governing body
11. Do you think the inception of the democratic government in South Africa has benefited women in the education sector, if so how?
12. How are the attitudes of males towards you as a female leader?
13. How are the attitudes of female post level educators towards you?

14. What could be the reasons for you to encourage women to improve themselves professionally, whether in your team or elsewhere? If not, why?
15. What characteristics of leadership do you carry as a women leader that are different from those portrayed by male leaders?
16. How has professional self-advancement boosted your morale/ confidence as a woman leader to withstand challenges faced by women in leadership?