

MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN PRINCIPALS IN

THREE RURAL SECONDARY SCHOOLS IN NDWEDWE CIRCUIT IN THE

ILEMBE DISTRICT

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2013

MANAGEMENT CHALLENGES EXPERIENCED BY WOMEN PRINCIPALS IN

THREE RURAL SCONDARY SCHOOLS IN NDWEDWE CIRCUIT IN THE

ILEMBE DISRTICT

BY

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**A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Masters of Education in Educational Leadership, Management and Policy in the School
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2013

SUPERVISORS' STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with my approval

Mr Siphiwe Eric Mthiyane (Supervisor)

November 2013

DECLARATION

I, Patience NonkululekoNtaka, declare that this research report, **“Management challenges experienced by women principals in three rural secondary schools in Ndwedwe Circuit in the Ilembe District”** abides by the following rules:

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this study to my late grandmothers, Mrs Girlie Ntaka and Ms Eslinah Margaret Ntaka (sister of my late grandfather Panana Assah Ntaka) who showed me that education is the only key to success in life. I know that they are proud that I have completed this study.

I also dedicate this study to my daughter Nokubonga, hope this study will inspire her to see education as the only weapon to open closed doors and that it doesn't matter how old you are, you can achieve your goals.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the management challenges experienced by women principals in Ndwedwe Circuit in the Ilembe District. The rationale of the study was to explore women principals' experiences and strategies in a male dominated environment and their perceptions on gender equity issues in educational management. This qualitative study was set in interpretive paradigm.

The research tools comprised of semi-structured interviews, documents review and observations. The two theories which underpinned this study are theories of inequality and rurality theories. A review of international and local literature on issues of women in management positions revealed that women in management experience challenges in the work place.

The findings of this research were an eye-opener to me. Conclusions such as underdevelopment of rural areas; illiteracy of some parent component members; scarce public transport; women experience inequality; learners also one of the biggest challenge and the Department of Education not fulfilling its obligation to capacitate women principals.

Some of the recommendations based on the findings are that rural areas must be developed. The SGBs must continuously be work-shopped so that they can be capacitated and empowered to contribute efficiently to the school. Gender education and community involvement will also assist women managers in managing schools freely and confidently because they will be judged as principals not as women.

The Department of Education officials must implement the programmes that are in place on developing women managers so that they are compared to male counterparts because they need to prove that they are capable to hold those positions.

LIST OF ACRONYMS

SGB- School Governing Body

SMT-School Management Team

DOE Department of Education

PPM- Post Provisioning Model

PPN- Post Provisioning Norm

HOD-Head of the Department

SANCA- South African National Cancer Association

SAPS- South African Police Services

ANC- African National Congress

TLS- Teaching and Learning Services

UTES- Unprotected Temporary Educators

KZN- KwaZulu Natal

LTSM- Learner Teacher Support Material

HIV/AIDS- Human Immunodeficiency Virus/Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome

TB- Tuberculosis

NGOs-Non Government Organisations

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CHAPTER ONE

BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

The management of schools by women in South Africa has over the years been confined to the primary school level. This has particularly been the case before the 1994 period. Partly because of the patriarchal nature of our society and the resultant attitude to women in general, and the perception that leadership realm naturally belongs to males. Secondary schools management remained the male responsibility and domain. It is under these circumstances, as research shows, that management in secondary schools and higher education was, and in some contexts still is, synonymous with “masculinity” (Al-Khali; Shakeshaft; Ozga cited in Leonard, 1998). Under the cloud of general discrimination engineered through apartheid legislation, blatant discrimination led to major racial inequalities in the labour market. Black women, however, experienced double oppression: as the black people and as female. As a consequence, promotion opportunities to leadership positions remained, and in most contexts still remain, male dominated, with women involved mainly with teaching (Van Deventer & Van der Westhuizen cited in Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003). The nature of the South African politics, furthermore, meant that white men dominated suburban schools, with black people in general, and black women in particular, strongly represented in township schools at primary level (Department of Education, 1996). Despite these imbalances, spread of the population, women in general are still under-represented in promotion posts at the school level even in township schools (Department of Education, 1996). This is an international phenomenon. In Wales, for example, management positions by women are mainly in primary schools, and Wilson (1997) associates this with direct discrimination based on traditional ideas about sexual division of labour.

The post 1994 era in South Africa, however, created conditions of democracy which promoted and supported gender equity and social justice. Accompanying these changes was the implementation of policies that enabled women to enter leadership domains previously set apart for men within the educational bureaucracy (Chisholm, 2001). The South African Constitution, Act No.108 of 1996; National Education Policy Act No.27 of 1996;

Commission on Gender Equity Act No.39 of 1996; South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996 and Employment Equity Act No.55 of 1998 represented deliberate moves by the government to bring about gender redress. The Constitution, for example, states that the state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, marital status, [...] belief, culture, language and birth (Van Deventer and Kruger, 2003 p 268). National Education Policy Act No.27 of 1996, furthermore, speaks of improvement and protection of the fundamental rights of the people against unfair discrimination within or by an Education Department or any education institution (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003). The Commission on Gender Equity Act No.39 of 1996, most interestingly, is empowered to promote not only respect of gender equality, but also the protection, development and attainment of gender equality (Dhlamini cited in Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003). The South African Schools Act No.84 of 1996, most crucially, aims to transform education by creating and managing a national school that will give everyone an equal opportunity to develop his or her talents through combating racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance (Joubert & Prinsloo cited in Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003).

In some rural contexts, however, it is still difficult to implement gender equity. This is because there are certain cultural beliefs and traditional values about women that still construct women as mothers and homemakers. For Gordon (1997), many rural people in former homeland areas still leave economic and social decision making to males, and this result into unequal and distorted access to markets, social services and opportunities. School management in secondary schools, as a result, is still perceived as not a women sphere of operation (Angrist & Almquist cited in Bhalalusesa, 1998). The general perception is that women are seen as people who cannot be heads of the group of people or organizations where there are male subordinates. Culturally, women just cannot be in charge of men. The rural communities, for example, mostly believe that there is no voice or law which can be above their culture (Gordon, 1997). This leads to confusion of traditional leadership and democratic governance, socio-cultural and politics. While South Africa is acknowledging the rights the women have as stipulated in the constitution of the country, this somehow contradicts one way or another with what is culturally entrenched. In these contexts, democracy is somewhat forced because in as far as culture is concerned, women are still seen as human beings who do not have the potential and capacity to lead and occupy previously male dominated positions. This is confirmed in the discussion document of the African National Congress for

52nd National Conference in 2007. In this document it was stipulated that the values and culture, the attitudes and traditional practices and all the unequal power relations between men and women must be systematically changed. That led to a resolution of 50/50 representation of women and men in all structures of leadership (ANC Constitution, 2007). According to Ozga (1993), women who get into management positions as a result of these laudable policy changes are subject to pressures and experiences which are not experienced by men. Black women in management positions in schools, while sharing some of the same experiences as other women managers, are subject to other experiences which are unique to themselves (Ozga, 1993). This is also supported by Adler, Laney and Packer (1993) on the issue that experiences of women managers in schools were different from those of men managers.

This chapter introduces the study by looking at the background and purpose of the study, statement of the problem, key research questions, research design and methodology, significance of the study, limitations and the layout of the study. It seeks to investigate management challenges that are experienced by women principals in three rural secondary schools in the Ndwedwe Circuit in the Ilembe District.

1.2 Purpose of the study

As a woman principal, who is also facing challenges on a daily basis in an urban junior primary school managing mostly women (teaching and administrative staff) and few men (general staff), through this study I wish to investigate the unique challenges that women principals face, especially in rural secondary schools. The purpose is to ascertain how these women principals cope and manage the daily challenges they are confronted with. Indeed, there is a vacuum in scholarship when it comes to exploring the experiences of women principals in general and in South Africa in particular. This is especially true in the context of rural areas, where patriarchal values and belief systems still prevail. In such a context, it is important to investigate how women are managing to cope in “managerial posts” which have traditionally been viewed as the male domain who are seen as hard-nosed and aggressive (Leonard, 1998). Ngcobo’s (1999) study, for example, does investigate women management challenges as they have entered the so called “male stereotyped positions”, but this does not delve into women principals in rural settings.

Given the fact that the Department of Education (2003) also reports that conflict of religion and tradition (culture), both of which are based on patriarchal norms, has an impact on women's rights, especially in rural areas. The oppression of women is the norm in rural areas and there is need for change of customary laws and practises for the entire context to be transformed to suite all people, irrespective of the belief and culture (Department of Education, 2003). It is for these reasons that this study's investigation incorporates the effects of culture and traditional values versus the transformation or social justice and gender equity in educational management. This will enable the study to engage with women in management on how to cope and manage day-to-day unique management challenges, how education sector and society have transformed and the impact of support and relationship of stakeholders.

1.3 Statement of the problem

Chisholm's (2001) study reveals that, while women continuously feel undermined and challenged with regard to their competences and ability in exercising strong leadership, they are also unsupported by the departmental management structure. This is mainly the reason this study investigates three women's about three aspects: first, reasons for wanting to be school principals, secondly, their management strategies and experiences in a male dominated environment and, thirdly, their perceptions on gender equity issues within the context of educational management.

1.4 Research questions

In order to investigate issues around the management challenges experienced by women principals in rural secondary schools, the study is guided by the following research questions:

- What are the management challenges experienced by women principals of three rural secondary schools in Indwedwe Circuit?
- How do women managers overcome or cope with the challenges facing them?
- What forms of support, if any, are provided to women managers and by whom?

1.5 Significance of the study

There are many studies that have been conducted on women in management and leadership involvement. Bhalalusesa (1998), for example, demonstrates that despite the fact that women are constructed in particular ways with the culture, they still resemble certain characteristics which are associated mainly with men. Coleman's (1994) study, on the other hand, found that women could and should be re-socialized and adopt male style management so that they can succeed in management and male cultural domination. My study, as an extension of the subject and an attempt to address another aspect, explores women experiences in management capacity within rural secondary schools where gender, culture and stereotyped society might play a role in disturbing the transformation of the society. This is also confirmed by (Sherman,2000) when she says little research has been carried out to investigate ways in which female administrators attempt to incorporate preferred, alternate leadership styles into their school management, or find ways to share strategies with other women, particularly in rural settings where distances between colleagues creates an additional barrier.

1.6 Definition of concepts

1.6.1 Management

McCrimmon (2007) defines management as the organizational function that, like investment, needs to ensure that things get done efficiently to gain the best return on all resources. Management is also defined as the process of getting activities completed efficiently and effectively with and through other people. Davidoff and Lazarus (2002) define management as the function which ensures that things are operating smoothly, that structures are in place to support progress, that processes are contained, and that the school is operating efficiently. The Department of Education (1996) also defines management as an activity that is about doing things and working with people to make things happen, i.e. it is a process to which all contribute and in which everyone in an organisation ought to be involved.

1.6.2 Leadership

Horner (2003) defines leadership as a process in which leaders are not seen as individuals in charge of followers, but as a member of community of practice that is people united in a

common enterprise who share a history, and thus certain values, beliefs, ways of doing things i.e. process of coordinating efforts and moving together as a group. Bush (2003) also defines educational leadership as a process of influence which involves influence, whereby intentional influence is intended to lead to specific outcomes around key values and vision. A school is an organisation that has two tasks, i.e. functional task (core task which is the reason why the school exist) and management task. For the school to achieve objectives set, effective management and leadership are required.

Leadership and management are about balance, holding the centre, having a picture of the whole, attending to parts, moving forward when it's time to move forward, staying put when it's time to reflect, understand and consolidate, ensuring that everyone is "on board". It is in this context that people are in fact on a journey with direction, that they are all aware of the direction, and that they have all agreed that, that is where they would like to go (Davidoff & Lazarus, 2002).

1.6.3 Rural/rurality

Rural areas (also referred to as "the country," and/or "the country side,") are settled places outside towns and cities. In modern usage, rural areas can have an agricultural character. There are limited public services, such as public transport, and government services are generally available, but not in the same magnitude as in urban areas (<http://encyclopedia.thefreedictionary.com>). In the South African context, rural areas are also known as farms, where the chief is the one who is making rules for the people under his leadership. On the other hand, there are farms that were previously and mostly owned by white farmers and black people living in those farms had to work for a living for those white farmers. Black people are mostly the ones living in these rural areas, where there is high rate of poverty and unemployment.

1.6.4 Challenges

Roosevelt (2005) defines a challenge as a demanding or stimulating situation, state of affairs, the general state of things or the combination of circumstances at a given time. Macmillan

(2010) dictionary also defines challenge as something difficult (uncountable and countable), something that tests strength, skill, or ability, especially in a way that is interesting.

1.6.5 Equity

Equity is the name given to the whole area of the legal system in countries following the English common law tradition that resolves dispute between persons by resorting to principles of fairness and justness. Equity comes into play typically when none of the parties in the dispute has done anything against the law, but their rights or claims are in conflict (Macmillan, 2010).

1.6.6 Secondary school

Macmillan dictionary (2010) defines a secondary school as a school for children between the ages of 11 and 16 or 18. It was before known as a high school. It starts from grade 8 to grade 12.

1.7 Research design and methodology

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) define research design as the plan of research and depend on the kinds of questions being asked or investigated. My study utilises a case study approach. A case study is an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth collection involving multiple sources of information rich in context (Stephens, 2009). I chose a case study approach because it provides a unique example of real people in real situations, and can establish cause and effect (‘how’ and ‘why’) (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

Research methodology is a way to systematically solve the research problem. My study is located on qualitative research methodology because qualitative research is about capturing the individual’s point of views examining the constraints of everyday life and securing thick descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003). I chose qualitative methodology because qualitative researchers study things in their natural settings, attempting to make sense of, or interpret

phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Denzin & Lincoln cited in Stephens, 2009).

1.7.1 Research paradigms

According to Creswell (2007), there are four research paradigms, namely: positivism/ post-positivism, interpretivism/ social constructivism, advocacy/ participatory/ critical/emancipatory/ transformative and pragmatism/ post-modernism. My study is located on interpretive paradigm because qualitative research is multi-method in focus, involving and interpretive, use naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin & Lincoln cited in Stephens, 2009).

1.7.2 Sampling

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) define sampling as the population on which the research will focus. I chose purposive sampling under non-probability samples because non-probability sample derives from the researcher targeting a particular group, in full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population, it simply represents itself (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). More and above that, I chose a purposive sample because, as its name suggests, a sample is chosen for a specific purpose and also a feature of qualitative research (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

My study constitutes three women principals of rural secondary schools as participants. These participants are of the same race and gender because I intended to explore the nature of gender experiences of women from the same race. These participants have been in management positions for more than three years and they are all single and two of them are mothers.

1.7.3 Methods of data generation

My study uses three methods of data generation, namely: semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review.

Semi-structured interviews for data generation will be of benefit because it allows the researcher to probe deeper into more sensitive and complex questions and issues. They are focused, conversational and two-way communication (De Vos, 2002). I chose semi-structured interviews because when individuals are engaged in an interview, that is, one to one basis, they are more likely to discuss sensitive issues (De Vos, 2002).

Observation is not just looking, but looking and noting systematically people, events, behaviours, settings, artefacts and routines (Marshall & Rossman; Simpson & Tuson cited in Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). I chose observation because it offers an investigator an opportunity to gather 'live' data from naturally occurring social situations (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

In document analysis there is little direct interaction with those being researched. As documents (brief records of events and processes) do not speak for themselves, document analysis is when the researchers carefully analyse, theorize and interpret the located documents with close examination and attention (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). I chose document analysis because there are documents at some cases that may reveal the everyday life and interactions of the principal concerned (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

1.7.4 Data analysis procedures

Stephens (2009) defines data analysis as the search for meaning in relation to the research purpose or question after data has been collected. The data generated is analysed according to the model as suggested by Kumar (2005), that is, editing, classification, tabulation and content analysis (identify the main themes, assign codes to the main themes, classify responses under the main themes and integrate themes and responses into the text of the report).

1.7.5 Ethical issues

Ethics is defined as “a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others”, and that “while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better” (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p. 84).

To show ethical concerns I applied to the University of KwaZulu Natal for ethical clearance. Furthermore, I applied to the KZN Department of Education and to the schools concerned to

do this research. Participants were assured of informed consent, confidentiality, privacy, anonymity, access and acceptance in order to assure them that they could not go on with the research unwillingly. Confidentiality was also ensured, particularly because some of them shared very personal information (McNeil & Chapman, 2005; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

1.8 Limitations of the study

This is a small scale study which investigates management challenges of only three women principals. It can therefore not be generalised to other contexts. However, the findings from the study can be useful in other studies, to people who are aspiring women principals and those who are currently women principals.

1.9 Layout of the study

Chapter One introduces the study by presenting the background, purpose and significance of the study. It also outlines research questions, research design and methodology. Chapter Two offers the literature review and theoretical frameworks that are relevant to this study. Chapter Three presents research design and methodology that address research questions. Chapter Four focuses on data presentation, analysis and discussion of the research findings. Chapter Five summarises conclusions and recommendations of the study.

1.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a general background and overview of the key aspects of the study. The key research questions were also outlined, as well as the research design and methodology. The next chapter reviews literature that is relevant to this study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORKS

2.1 Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the study by outlining the background, purpose, significance, limitations and the layout of the study; research questions; definition of concepts and research design and methodology. This chapter reviews literature and discusses theoretical frameworks that underpin this study.

There are number of studies (Boulton & Coldron, 1998; Xian & Woodhams, 2006) done on women in different workplaces and on women in leadership and management positions. A number of these studies have focused on the manager-as-male stereotype as a major explanation for discrimination against women in the workplace (Ismail & Ibrahim 2008; Booysen & Nkomo, 2010). According to the manager-as-male stereotype, gender stereotyping of the ideal manager fosters bias against women in managerial selection, placement, promotion, and training decisions (Schein 2007 in Booysen & Nkomo, 2010). Therefore, the existence of gender stereotyping puts women with power in a disadvantaged position compared to their male counterparts, exactly because their gender stereotype conflicts with the leadership stereotypes (Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009).

2.2 Experiences of women in general

Naicker (1994) states that prior to 1994 in South Africa, black women found themselves experiencing triple oppression, i.e. oppression because they were black, oppressed and exploited as workers, and oppressed by sexism. The majority of South African women were black and were subjected to male domination. They also struggled against the apartheid system. Women were the worst hit by apartheid. One of the constraints that women face today is harmful traditional and cultural practices which hinder women's growth (Naicker, 1994). This is also confirmed by the African National Congress (ANC) discussion documents (1997 & 2007), where it points out that in South Africa, while there is the overarching system of patriarchy, different women experience different forms of male domination and oppression according to their class, status, religious, race and even ethnic and cultural backgrounds.

For example, white, middle class women will experience patriarchy differently to rural African women.

ANC (2009) raises the fact that post 1994 women have made great advances in the areas of political representation and decision making at all levels of the society. Currently, for example, South Africa has more than 40% women's representation in the executive (cabinet) and 41% in the legislature. It also has 29% of women in top management positions in the private sector, and is above the international average of 22% (ANC, 2009). Furthermore, black women in South Africa may possess a unique standpoint because of the disadvantaged situation they experienced under apartheid because of race and gender (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). According to Hill-Collins in Booyesen and Nkomo (2010), such a standpoint is grounded in historical group-based experiences and political struggles. It is possible that the black women as a group hold particular images of women rooted in the strong leadership roles black women played in the struggle against apartheid. It is also possible that their images of "women in general" were affected accordingly (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010).

Besides this issue of women being dominated and discriminated along gender lines, race is also a challenge in law firms, particularly in the United States of America. This is confirmed on a report of the Minority Corporate Counsel Association (2009) after a survey was done in the United States Law firms that women of colour consistently reported more negative experiences than their white female minority counterparts within law firms in several categories, including exclusions from work opportunities, networking opportunities, and substantive involvement in developing client relationships. The report went on to illustrate that women of colour also perceived their firms as less committed to diversity than other groups; are experiencing discrimination and bias more often than other respondents (Minority Corporate Counsel Association, 2009).

The experiences of women in urban areas seem to be better when it comes to patriarchal oppression in comparison to women in rural areas. This is because not all patriarchal societies are the same and the oppression of women in various formations differs based on the economic and political differences of those societies. For example, patriarchy will manifest differently in advanced capitalist societies to traditional rural societies, where economies are structured differently (ANC discussion document, 1997). Rural women's lives are shaped by conservative views, including those regarding the proper roles of women. Their situation is characterised by low educational attainment and frequent underemployment. They also have

a tendency toward more traditional views about themselves, believing that their primary role is to bear, raise and protect children (Pruitt, 2007).

Women in many African societies typically face more disadvantages and exploitation than men do. They must cope not only with poverty and underdevelopment; but are also subjected to deep seated patriarchal attitudes and practices (Manyak & Katono, 2010). This is evident when Kisiya (1994) argues that women all over Africa live in difficult conditions, especially rural women, as they experience similar customary, traditional and social treatment. Rural women work very hard and their contributions to development are very big, yet they are not recognised or valued. Mfugale (1994) also raises that, women are discouraged from striving for literacy, although they still need education, they were denied during their early years. Women still face barriers to fully reaping the benefits of literacy classes because of gender related problems, which is based on cultural and religious practices of not mixing men and women (Mfugale, 1994).

Muchenji (1994) states that, 70% of Zimbabweans live in rural areas and most of them are women who lack knowledge and skills that could improve their self-sufficiency and general quality of life, as well as skills that would ensure their participation in developmental activities. Cultural and traditional attitudes demand that women marry to bring income to the family through the bride price, while men were educated (Muchenji, 1994). Ugandan women, for example, are subject to the wishes of their fathers, and later their husbands. Further, it is unusual for a woman to be granted inheritance as it is supposed to follow the patrilineal line. Female subservience (e.g. kneeling while greeting one's father and husband in many areas of Uganda) is an accepted custom by most men and women in Ugandan society (Manyak & Katono, 2010).

In India, furthermore, Ottinger (2002) suggests that culture and tradition militate against women post-primary education opportunities. All of this reveals the extent to which cultural problems are more pronounced for rural women. This is shown by the fact less than 1% of eligible rural women enrolled for higher education (Ottinger, 2002). Naicker (1994) also reveals that tradition has an impact on rural women, that is, women in Africa live in difficult conditions. The husbands, particularly in the African context, control and contain their wives because to them women are their source of production and reproduction (Naicker, 1994).

Another issue concerns salaries for different genders. Within the European context, for example, salary rates are not the same. Male educators are paid more than women educators

(Wilson, 1997). Women, furthermore, are given lower allowances than men for similar responsibilities (Wilson, 1997). Despite the more traditional nature of rural culture, metro and non-metro women are employed at equal rates. Yet, women in rural areas earn only about half of what men are paid for similar jobs, an earnings ratio that is similar to that between urban men and women (Pruitt, 2007). Women residing in rural areas are thus at a significant disadvantage relative, not only to all metro workers, but also relative to the men in their own communities. In summary, rural women tend to be employed in “low-wage, unstable, secondary-sector” gender-segregated jobs (Pruitt, 2007 p. 432).

According to a leading text on gender and employment, discrimination explains at least part of the economy-wide gender earnings gap. Other explanations include women working in fields, employers, and industries that pay less than those in which men work; women’s lower levels of human capital; and fewer hours worked by women (Graham & Hotchkiss, 2009). The gender discrimination encouraged by the widespread pluralistic male cultures is reflected in wages as men earn more than their female counterparts in the majority of the Arab region (Arab Human Development Report (AHRD in Tlaiss & Kauser, 2010). Shain (1999) is also confirming that women are paid less than male peers for carrying out comparable work.

Even in theatre, women are facing gender discrimination. This is revealed by Atkinson in Biehl (2008) that higher female voices, however, are perceived as being less positive than deeper male voices, and this has prompted female politicians to reduce the pitch. Rennenkampff in Biehl (2008 p. 526) has given further evidence of the gendered nature of leadership competence as attributes ascribed to a successful manager having a significantly higher correlation with the description of a typical man than with the description of a typical woman: the more masculine a person’s appearance, including an angular chin, broad shoulders and a high font, the more likely others infer “manager qualities” and “leadership competence”. Until the persistent gendered conceptions have changed with increased female promotion, it is suggested that women should dress in dark colours, tie their hair and wear little make-up to avoid giving indicators of “incompetence” via gendered aspects of appearance (Biehl, 2008 p. 526).

The male is by nature superior and the female inferior [...] the one rules and the other is ruled, according to Aristotle. This appears to still be the perception in many modern societies, like in Greece and the UK (Mitroussi & Mitroussi, 2009 p. 507). Bhalusesa’s (1998) study shows that women educators are faced with culture and traditions of the society which expect them

to maintain a family as imperative and also transformation in education which expects them to take the initiative in social justice and gender equity. For women to succeed in both, a combination of hard work, diligence and determination is needed. That means women experience socio-cultural challenges that are deeply rooted in their traditional values and practices (Bhalusesa, 1998).

Yanez and Moreno (2008) also state that women in general have entered university teaching later than men, and such a kind of isolation in a world of men could have lead to them to encounter some difficulties in getting on with their academic careers. So, many young academics took managerial positions as a platform to help themselves in such advancement and to feel part of an organization that had not exactly stood out for its receptivity to women (Yanez & Moreno, 2008). In the study on challenges faced by female entrepreneurs in Nigeria by Mordi, Sunipson, Singh and Okafor (2010) found that formal avenues of employment are often reserved for men. Although there are significant changes in the perception of the female entrepreneur, many women in Sub-Saharan African countries are still marginalised as a result of their gender (Mordi, Sunipson, Singh & Okafor, 2010).

However, the Department of Education (2003) in South Africa reports that conflict of religion and tradition (culture), which are based on norms, have an impact on women's rights which are not taken seriously, especially in rural areas. The oppression of women is life in the rural areas where there is need for change, where rural customary laws and practices need to be transformed to suit all people, irrespective of the belief and culture (Department of Education, 2003). Ottinger (2002) argues that women's participation in higher education faces additional hurdles of culture and tradition that militate against their post-primary education opportunities. These cultural problems are even more pronounced for rural women, where the old traditions of protection of young women, subordination to their husbands and the place of women society as focused on the home and child rearing (Ottinger, 2002). Therefore, Morris's (1998) study reveals that an Afro-Trinidadian woman applied for the principal's position at a school in an isolated rural community which was largely Indo-Trinidadian. She was the most qualified candidate, but was given the vice-principal's post instead as the selection committee felt that the community would object on grounds of gender and ethnicity. When she took up her post, she found that the committee's assessment of the community's views was accurate, and that in addition she was perceived as being on the wrong side of the political fence (Morris, 1998).

2.3 Women in management

Limited participation of women in managerial and decision-making positions is a common phenomenon in most developed countries (Noble & Moore in Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009). This limited participation of women in top management positions has been closely connected to the so –called “glass ceiling” phenomenon (Black & Rothman 1998; Oakley 2000; Weyer in Galanaki, Papalexandris and Halikias 2009; Mitroussi & Mitroussi 2009). The 2009 annual census conducted by the Business Women’s Association of South Africa in Booysen and Nkomo (2010), for example, reported that despite a slow increase of women in senior positions, they still lag far behind their male counterparts in terms of representation in executive management and Chief Executive Officer positions.

Prior to 1994, South African education system was characterised by racial, regional and gender inequality, as well as ideological distortions in teaching and learning (Department of Education, 1996). Women dominated the teaching profession numerically, but they were proportionately under-represented in positions of management in education (Department of Education, 1996; Ngcobo & Morrel in Kaabwe 2003; Everard, Morris & Wilson, 2004; Mitroussi & Mitroussi, 2009). Even today formal-decision making is still in the hands of male education administration, which is seen as a masculine occupation in many countries (Coleman, 2003). Women tend to occupy the lower level jobs which provide services to the management (e.g. secretaries, cleaners, administrative assistants) (Johanneson, Macquene & Pape, 2002). Under-representation of women in positions of power is an issue closely connected to the issue of high unemployment rate among women (Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009). The literature points out that the dominance of men over women at work is a universal fact (Tlaiss & Kauser, 2010).

In the context of South Africa, although apartheid ended with a historic 1994 elections of a democratic government which was followed by the passage of radical employment equity legislation in 1998, race and gender hierarchy are still evident in current labour force statistics (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). White males still dominate top and senior management positions, followed by white females, black males and black females. Black women, Indian women and Coloured women are the most under-represented groups on all levels of management and the professions (Department of Labour in Booyesen & Nkomo, 2010). The issue of under-representation of women in positions of power is a phenomenon that is wide

spread, even in countries where equal participation policies have been adopted for a very long period, such as the USA or the UK (Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009).

Women continue to constitute the majority of the workforce in Further Education, as is the case in both primary and secondary education, where men outnumber women in senior positions in a predominantly female workforce (Shain, 1999). In Further Education, it is also the case that women are found predominantly in the lower levels of middle management (4th tier and below) where they comprise 50-60% of this level of the workforce, compared with under 20% at the very top (FEDA in Shain 1999). A United Nations study published in 2000 reported women's participation in management and administrative jobs averaged 15% across 26% African countries (United Nations in Booysen & Nkomo, 2010).

There are a number of barriers that may lead to women under representation in top management positions and also in their career progression. The glass ceiling constitutes an invisible barrier for women and minority groups, preventing them from moving up the corporate ladder (Weyer in Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009). The study conducted in Lebanon by Tlaiss and Kauser (2010) identified organizational culture (Ismail & Ibrahim 2008); organizational practices; absence of mentor; tokenism (token status in a male-dominated work environment); absence of organizational networks and interpersonal relationships and the absence of *wasta* (an act and a person who intercedes) in the organization are the six perceived barriers. Women's career progression in Sagamax in Malaysia is hampered by family barriers (domestic responsibilities) and societal barriers (lack of opportunities for women to present their ideas) (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008).

Minority Corporate Counsel Association (2009) illustrates that many women and minorities see their opportunities for advancement and leadership as less realistic than their white and male counterparts. Many minority lawyers expressed that the criteria for advancement were both subjective and shared selectively by partners with whom the partners were comfortable. These results indicate that the minority lawyers often feel excluded from gaining the information they need in order to advance. Furthermore, 23% of female associates and 18% of female partners felt that their gender would hinder their advancement in the firm as compared to only 3% of male associates and 2% of male partners (Minority Corporate Counsel Association, 2009). Galanaki, Papalexandris and Halikias (2009) raises the point that attitudes towards women as managers in relation to their capability to assume leadership roles and their "female" traits can mostly be barriers to undertaking positions of responsibility.

Boulton and Coldron (1998) argue that women educators are not given the opportunity of being in management positions, although they deserve the positions. Women educators are encouraged to apply because there are no women on the management teams. Those women educators who are a threat to men educators, however, are not encouraged to apply. Women educators ended up being discouraged because of the lack of support, lack of sponsorship and mentorship and resentment (Boulton & Coldron, 1998). Women educators argue that they are refused promotion because of direct discrimination based on traditional ideas about sexual division of labour, and that governors say that they are less qualified than their male colleagues and they have less experience (Wilson, 1997). Women aspirants to the superintendence say they are seen as women first and administrators second (Grogan, 1996). This has led women educators to have a notion of rejecting values associated with management because they are facing barriers and prejudice at interviews and working in a gender-hostile climate (Boulton & Coldron, 1998).

Wilson (1997) argues that European countries still have to balance gender issues. In Greece, England and Wales most teaching staff is female and the majority of women are in humanities, while majority of men are in sciences. One of the three categories for selection for a management position is scientific qualifications, and this gives men educators an advantage over female educators a chance to get promotional posts. Even in England and Wales, most women educators are part-time, while male educators are full-time. The high proportion of women educators employed part-time makes it difficult for them to be considered for promotion. It is found that 80% of part-timers in nursery and primary education and 50% in secondary education are female. Experience is one of the categories that are considered for promotion. This means women educators have another disadvantage, as most of the time they are part-timers (Wilson, 1997).

Stereotypes and discrimination, biased recruitment and promotion systems and gender segregation in work and in education are just some of factors which keep the majority of women at the edge of decision-making posts (Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009). Gender-related concerns in educational administration (educational management) are dated back to the early days of public schooling. These concerns, including marginalization through sexist attitudes and the treatment, and the existence of barriers for women advancing to positions of leadership and administration, result from androcentric nature of the traditional educational institution (Sherman, 2000).

Chinese women are under-represented in new, especially technology-intensive, industries. They still overpopulate labour-intensive industries such as textiles and garments, rather than in knowledge-intensive or technology-intensive industries. Two recent reports indicate that although women's participation in work in China continues to grow, women are still encountering significant horizontal and vertical barriers in career progress (Xian & Woodhams, 2006). Chinese female university graduates are reported to face more difficulties in obtaining employment than male graduates (Cookein Xian & Woodhams, 2006). UNDP in Xian and Woodhams (2006) report that, there are very few women who occupy higher paying technical or managerial positions. Elly and Rhode (2010) identify structural barriers and attitudinal barriers which inhibit women in advancing to management positions.

Kaabwe (2003) identifies barriers to females rising to high office in most South African organisations and schools. These are career break (maternity or study leave), sexist attitudes, lack of role models, lack of females on interview/ selection panels, lack of networks and mentors to support females aspiring to management positions, and general lack of supportive environments for women to aspire to and excel in management positions, undervaluing of women's work (women teachers regarded as filling-in rather than having a professional career), women's lack of qualifications (very few women qualify for leave to upgrade their qualification), the persistence of inequalities (women are subordinates) and women's family responsibilities (Kaabwe, 2003) .

2.4 Management experiences of women internationally

Eagly and Carli (2007) in Galanaki, Papalexanris and Halikias (2009) state that the most common gender stereotyping, is related to communal and argentic associations. Women are generally associated with communal qualities (affectionate, helpful, friendly, kind sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, gentle and soft spoken) and men on the other hand associated with argentic qualities (aggressive, ambitious, competing for attention, dominant, self-confident, forceful, self-reliant, individualistic and making problem-focused suggestions). These argentic characteristics are associated in most people's mind with effective leadership possibly because a long experience of male leaders in our society has made it difficult to separate male from leader associations. If women are highly communal, they may be criticised for not being argentic enough (as prescribed by the leader stereotype), whereas, if they are highly argentic, they may be criticised for lacking communion (therefore

overruling their gender stereotype) (Eagly & Carli in Galanaki, Papalexanris & Halikias, 2009). This is the reason women managers' experiences are different from those of male managers (Adler, *et al.*, 1993). It is so because women are not recognized, not seen as capable or treated as women not as managers. These experiences raise a concern as to when this attitude that women are not good enough for the management posts, especially in secondary schools, will dissipate.

Women in traditional male positions are faced with the dilemma of balancing rationality as demanded by institutional norms, and the effective dimension of emotionality, which for them is a preferred mode of negotiating social situations (Sachs & Blackmore, 1998). Sachs and Blackmore (1998) went on to claim that women who are in leadership roles are expected to control their emotions and being professional as a code which is perceived as being in control, efficient and acceptable to the members of the community. The expression of anger has been seen as culturally acceptable for men, but not for women. Women's anger is associated with characteristics of being sharp tongued, cruelly nasty, whiningly unpleasant or persistently annoying, while women expressing anger with tears risks being described as typically emotional or manipulative (Sachs & Blackmore, 1998).

Yanez and Moreno (2008) also urge that women in leadership roles in higher education had to make a double effort in order to build up their competitive curriculum vitae while taking on leadership positions. For example, the fact that the demands of making family life are incompatible with a working life (including demands made on oneself) are a burden that falls on women especially. Women leaders in higher education organizations therefore had to make an extra effort compared to their male colleagues at those critical milestones of their academic career (Yanez & Moreno, 2008). Male Human Resource (HR) directors are responsible for strategic integration and hard functions, while females HR directors are responsible for strategic integration and soft functions. In this case, a higher responsibility of female HR directors for HR functions could be an indicator for the uneven distribution of workload among male and female HR directors, and is thus more likely to occur in low gender egalitarian contexts (Brandl, Mayrhofer & Reichel, 2008).

Snowden and Gorton's (1998) study shows that women principals face many challenges. One female principal received no support from her male deputy principal, as he was also an applicant and did not get the post. The worst part is that there was also no support even from male and female principals in the school district. She was treated more like a woman on a

pedestal than a capable professional who is a superior and given an attitude of “you still need to prove yourself to us” (Snowden & Gorton, 1998, p. 179). This means that being successful in an interview does not mean you are the best candidate for job. Hasibuan-Sedyono (1998) argues that it often happens that management systems, deliberate or not, assume that women are too emotional, not tough enough, cannot make decisions, are not aggressive enough, less committed to their career and discriminate accordingly. Women have to work much harder than men because they have to start at a negative point (Hasibuan-Sedyono, 1998).

Shain (1999, p. 5) states that women managers are given derogatory phrases such as “ice queen”. The Washington Post staff writer Shankar Vedantam in Elly and Rhode (2010 p. 379) also notes a pattern in the phrases used to describe many countries’ first female leaders: “England’s Margaret Thatcher,” he notes, “was called ‘Attila the Hen.’ Golda Meir, Israel’s first female prime minister was “the only woman in the Cabinet.’ Indira Gandhi, India’s first female prime minister, ‘the old witch.’ And Angela Merkel, the current chancellor of Germany, has been dubbed ‘the iron frau’. In short, women, unlike men, face trade-offs between competence (i.e. success) and likeability in traditionally male roles. Hasibuan-Sedyono (1998) also raises this in her study in Indonesia, where women executives still experience obstacles in their environment, such as old-fashioned prejudices like the ‘lady supervisor means trouble’, or myths and stereotyping about gender roles which typecast women into nurturing, supporting types of jobs.

Morris (1998) in her study in Trinidad found that women principals cited difficulties in management which arose from gender bias. She found that two cases in Indo-Trinidadian (rural area), male teachers who came from patriarchal culture and religious background were unwilling to accept the authority of female principals, questioning their decisions and challenging them sometimes, leading to unpleasant confrontations. No support was received from the side of the Department of Education (Morris, 1998). Men at the top are reluctant to accept women as true colleagues (Sharma in Tomlison, 2004). Management in secondary schools is still perceived as not being receptive to women (Angrist & Almgvist in Bhalalusesa, 1998). Thakathi and Lemmer (2002) say that the position of women in management in secondary schools and of black women, in particular, is even weaker.

Blackmore (1999) also raises an argument that women experience both successes and challenges in management. She also revealed that women managers felt isolated in management by the boy’s club as this “club” provided men with the opportunity to meet

informally and provide support to one another. This is also raised by Russel (1995) in Sherman (2000) that isolation of women managers comes from having fewer people with whom to discuss and work through problems. Most black women managers are entirely isolated, either in terms of race or by gender (Walker, 1993). Some executive women do not get personal social support (parents, spouse, children and friends); professional social support (supervisors, mentors, peers and others in their field) and life course strategies (navigating spousal support, reflecting on motherhood, ordering career and family and outsourcing) for career advancement and family balance strategies (Ezzedeen & Ritchey, 2009).

2.5 Management experiences of women continentally and nationally

Mordi, Simpson, Singh and Okafor (2010) claim that women entrepreneurs in Nigeria face challenges like personal factors (lack of education/training and lack of confidence); gender and family-based factors (family responsibilities and gender discrimination) and market-based factors (lack of access to finance, government regulation and economic conditions). It is anticipated that gender discrimination is the key challenge. Sexual harassment was instead, and somewhat paradoxically, a major problem identified (Mordi; Simpson & Singh; Okafor, 2010). Manyak and Katono (2010) say Ugandan women managers are subject to same pressures in the workplace as women and in the private sector that of sexual harassment, occupational segregation and stereotypical attitudes. According to the Association of Lebanese Bank in Tlaiss and Kauser (2010), female managers who are more educated than their male counterparts are paid less for doing the same job.

Chisholm (2001) points out that all women managers in her study painfully and powerfully experience race and gender because leadership is associated with masculinity, rationality and whiteness. She further argues that women managers are lacking recognition, visibility and support from the side of Department of Education officials. This again raises concerns about reasons for male administrators' support for women leaders. It is not clear whether these women managers do not get support from the Department of Education, because officials are males and they want to prove that women are both disempowered by lack of experience, lack of technical knowledge and administrative competence, or not. The reality though is that male managers felt recognised, visible and supported (Chisholm, 2001). Booysen and Nkomo (2010 p. 295) report that "traditional black men who are used to being respected at home by their wives, find it difficult to work under women". This is caused by contradictions between

statutory and customary (traditional) law in some African societies that can result in relations of power which keep in place inequitable social structures that privilege men as well as firmly held beliefs about women's roles in society (Okeke & Steady in Booysen & Nkomo, 2010). There is evidence to suggest that strong patriarchal traditions remain in respect to the role of women in many black African societies (Steady in Booysen & Nkomo, 2010). Women and men communicate differently. Women in the workplace are encouraged to change their communication behaviour and essentially to adopt "male forms" of communication, they find themselves in a no-win situation. Female communicative style should not be dismissed as deficient, but attention be given to the positive aspects of female ways of communicating (Thakathi & Lemmer, 2002 p.194).

2.6 Feminine management styles

Bern in Nelson-Jones (1986) identifies groups of attributes associated with feminine behaviour as affectionate, cheerful, childlike, compassionate, does not use harsh language, eager to soothe hurt feelings, feminine, gentle, flattering, gullible, loves children, loyal, sensitive to the needs of others, shy, soft spoken, sympathetic, tender, understanding, warm and yielding. These attributes are mostly associated with women in leadership roles as it appears in most of the literature. Gray's (1993) experience was that: "the women were free to express themselves as people, more than the men were". This he implicitly associates with tolerance and acceptance and the hope that schools can be more caring and nurturing of individuals, more concerned with individual growth and development, more able to recognize the creative worth of differences rather than requiring uniformity (Gray, 1993).

Shakeshaft (1989) further points out from the research findings that women manage differently from men: women tend to have more contact with superordinates and subordinates, teachers and students; women spend more time with community members and with colleagues, although these are usually other women; they are more informal; they are concerned with the individual differences between students; they view their position as that of an educational leader rather than a manager, and see the job as a service to the community; and in communication they may appear to be more polite and tentative and body language may also be different indicating lower status for women. She concludes from her review of the empirical studies that, "women's traditional and stereotypic styles of communication are more like those of a good manager" (Shakeshaft, 1987 p. 186). This is confirmed by Thakathi

and Lemmer (2000) that women communicate better with subordinates, use different, less dominating body language and different language and procedures. Admittedly, communicators' (women's) language is more hesitant and tentative (Ozga, 1993). Thus, "Feminine management styles" are collegial and consultative, open door policy, collaboration and co-operation, may be more associated with women's style of management (Shakeshaft, 1987; Adler, *et al.*, 1993). This is supported by Coleman and Coleman in Coleman (2003) by saying that the majority of the female secondary head teachers of England and Wales perceived themselves as having a collaborative and people-centred style of management. Holmes in Thakathi & Lemmer (2002) suggests that women's speech tend to be marked by politeness due to their frequent use of devices known as hedges (reduce strength or force of an utterance) and boosters (intensify or emphasise the force). Hedging and bolstering are devices used by women to show that they are taking other people's feelings into account (Thakathi & Lemmer, 2002). It would appear that there is an identifiable style of management that can be deemed "feminine" and that this style of management is more likely to be found among women (Coleman, 2003 p. 167).

Coleman (2003) raises that current thinking on leadership would tend to identify many aspects of feminine management style with effectiveness in education. Shakeshaft (1993), Blackmore (1999) and Ozga (1993) suggest that women in education prefer a different management style from men. They are less hierarchical, more democratic, flexible and sensitive, foster cohesiveness, value trust and openness and are more humane. These features of management are convergent with innovative and "softer" management discourses that focus on people management as the new source of productivity in organisations (Shakeshaft, 1993; Ozga, 1993). Ozga (1993) concludes by saying "we do not suggest that women have a "natural" capacity to manage better, but we do submit that the styles of communication and organisation with which women are familiar are effective management styles, with particular application in education.

This feminine management style is also supported in further education. Salaman in Shain (1999) raises the point that corporate culture advocates and endorses apparently softer, more feminised approaches to management because these are seen to be more effective, more productive in binding individuals to corporate aims and objectives of the organisation. This apparent feminine approach is further supported by evidence of networking and collaboration

between colleges in one area (Shain, 1999). The ‘nurturing’ qualities identified with women are being recognized as strength in management (Coleman, 1994 p.190). Many women leaders appear to adopt a style that could be termed transformational (Coleman, 2003).

2.7 Transformational leadership

Balster (1992) argues that the idea of transformational leadership was first developed by James McGregor Burns in 1978 and later extended by Bernard Bass as well as others. Transformational leadership involves values, ethics, goals and long term goals, treating subordinates as “full human beings” and subsumes charismatic and visionary leadership (Northhouse, 2000). Transformational leadership does not stress the qualities of leadership that are stereotypically identified with masculine behaviour, but rather qualities such as having a clear personal view, which guides them to “a set of assumptions, beliefs, opinions, values and attitudes” and importantly, having the capacity to work with others to formulate a vision (Caldwell & Spinksin Gray, 1993).

There are quite a number of studies that show that most women in leadership are transformational leaders. De Witt (1991) suggests that research has revealed that staff members who work under the leadership of a female principal have greater work satisfaction, and that they are more intensely in their work (Rosenerin Tomlinson, 2004). Women prefer the democratic (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008), participative-this style endorses active participation (Rutherfordin Manyak & Katono, 2010) rather than “exclusivity” and more focused on interpersonal aspect of relationships (de Witt, 1991; Eagly & Johnsonin Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009; Valentinein Manyak & Katomo, 2010). Women’s greater concern for relationships has been largely supported by psychologists, social psychologists and sociologists (Ferrarrioin Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009). This evidence suggests that women have more of the skills that align with those of the transformational leader (Tomlinson, 2004).

Alimo-Metcalf in Tomlinson (2004) designed a psychometric instrument for 360-degree appraisal which showed how women were significantly better as transformational leaders because of the quality of their relationship with subordinates on the key factors for transformational leadership. Those key factors are genuine concern for others, having political sensitivity, being decisive determined and self-confidence, having integrity,

delegating and empowering others, networking, promoting and communicating being accessible, clarifying boundaries and involving others and fostering critical and strategic thinking Alimo-Metcalfe, 1998 in Tomlinson, 2004). The lines of authority are less defined, more dependent on a moral centre. Compassion, empathy, inspiration and directional aspects of nurturance are connective values, better communicated by voice, by tone, than by vision (Helgeson in Tomlinson, 2004).

Reay and Ballin Tomlinson, (2004) suggest that women are transformational so that their subordinates transform their self-interest into group interest. Their power comes from personal characteristics such as charisma (Rutherfordin Manyak & Katomo, 2010), interpersonal skills, hard work, personal contacts rather than the structure. Women are being viewed as more open to new ideas, better suited for teamwork and in possession of good qualities such as listening and negotiating skills (Ismail & Ibrahim, 2008). Manyak and Katono (2010) conclude that women prefer to use negotiation and mediation; women are better able to manage relationships, a combination of these attributes with the ability to manage conflict effectively. Galanaki, Papalexandris and Halikias (2009) argue that transformational leadership agrees with communal behaviour patterns (affectionate, helpful, friendly, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, gentle and soft spoken) that the gender stereotype dictates for women.

The advantages that women have in general are that of managing a variety of communicative and social skills. Such skills are especially appropriate for the more participative, reticular, decentralised, emergent and democratic functioning characteristics of modern organizations and particularly of universities (Grogan, 1996). Although no general conclusion can be established about women leadership or the patterns of performance of the women that manage organizational changes at universities, these cases force us to rethink old categories of leadership theory such as visibility, charisma and inspiration. All of these are supposedly characteristics of strong transformational leadership (Yanez & Moreno, 2008).

Coleman (2003) writes of female leadership where it is raised that female principals and other senior managers tend towards a participative transformative management style. Elly and Rhode (2010) conducted meta-analyses of studies that show that women are more transformational. The research evidence indicates that women are able to bring strengths to leadership and management which may be particular appropriate to effective educational

leadership today (Coleman, 2003). Good management is seen to be the ‘empowering’ of others through transformational leadership (Coleman, 1994).

2.8 Theoretical frameworks

My study is underpinned by the two theories: theories of inequality (Coleman, 1994) and rural/rurality theory (Bouffard and Muftic, 2006).

2.8.1 Theories of inequality

My study is drawn on theories of inequality which embrace firstly overt and covert discrimination; organizational constraints, with the implication that it is the culture that should change and not women; theories of socialization of women, carrying the implication that women could and should be re-socialized and, finally, male domination (Coleman, 1994).

Overt and covert discrimination

Women still rate discrimination and prejudice as the greatest deterrent to career progression, despite the fact that the Sex Discrimination Act of 1975 makes direct and indirect discrimination illegal (Coleman, 1994).

Davidson and Cooper in Coleman (1994 p. 179), found that ‘sex was a disadvantage regarding job promotion/ career prospects’, and also reported that women are ‘poor training and promotional investments’ who leave work on marrying and/or starting a family-is particularly detrimental to those who work continuously after marriage and single women who do not marry, a profile which fits the majority of the women in management. Women are numerically important in education but there still exists the attitude expressed by a male teacher, reported by Clwyd Country Council in 1983, “It is greater to have a woman in any position of authority over me” (AlKhalifain Coleman, 1994 p. 180).

Organizational constraints

At every level of an educational or other organization there appears to be barriers to the advancement of women (Coleman, 1994). Such organizational barriers may operate not only against women, but positively in favour of men (Schmuck in Coleman, 1994). These organizational barriers are that women are less persistent than men in applications for promotion, particularly when they are supported actively in their application by 'mentor'. Kanter in Coleman (1994) argues that there is evidence to show that the lack of opportunities may result in women adjusting their aspirations accordingly. Self-confidence is a necessary pre-requisite for successful job applications, and it has been suggested that women are more likely to be lacking in self-confidence than their colleagues, tending, unlike males to apply for jobs for which they are fully qualified (Shakeshaft, 1993).

Women may also be less inclined to advance into management given the potential stress of role conflict that such a move may bring (balancing main burden of dependants and roles and responsibilities of organization) (Al Khalifa in Coleman (1994 p. 183). There is evidence that women take an overview when contemplating a decision about an increase in work-load. Women tend to seek to bridge the personal and professional aspects of their lives and to reduce the gap between public and private roles (realistic assessment of commitment) (Al Khalifa in Coleman, 1994). Coleman (1994) has pointed out that when theories of management were first applied to schools, the application was seen as 'technical' and logical. Therefore those who practiced management were expected to have the 'male' qualities of 'analytic detachment, strong task direction, "hard-nosed" toughness' (antipathy to 'male' concepts of management).

It seems probable that many women in education choose deliberately to stay with classroom teaching rather than opt for a career that moves into school or college management. The same inclinations that make women in general: 'work for self-fulfilment, for social relationships and to feel that they are making a contribution' impel women teachers to: 'value classroom teaching and put it as a priority. For them teaching and not management is 'real work' (evaluation of the worth of work) (Thompson in Coleman, 1994 p. 183). The critical self-evaluation of women may be linked to the lack of career planning that has been typical of even successful women in education (Coleman, 1994). Women are strongly identified with the family. Where both partners are pursuing a career, it is still most common for women's

career to be subordinated to those of the man if there are problems geographically (dual career families) (Coleman, 1994).

In educational management, and in the world of work, generally career breaks are detrimental to women's career development. In education, the career break still inhibits career development and the value of women's experience outside the workplace is not generally recognized (Coleman, 1994). Schmuck in Coleman (1994) contends that educational institutions have 'a gender overlay', that high school principals will interact more with male than female teachers and give more encouragement to young male teachers with leadership potential. There is also the claim that men are given extra responsibilities (differential levels of opportunity) (Schmuck, in Coleman, 1994). Some women are successful in educational management as in other areas of management. If this is the case, the women in question may find that expectations of their behaviour differ from those held about the equivalent male manager (different expectations and resulting role stereotypes) (Coleman, 1994).

Socialisation of women

Women are less likely to be promoted because of the way in which they have been socialised (Coleman, 1994). Girls are socialised for reproductive roles, and thus have career breaks (Kaabwe, 2003). Its remedy is for women to be re-socialised so that they will fit into male world (Shakeshaft, 1989). Theory of socialisation does not account for the complex interactions between personal motives and the structure of institutions. Theories of socialization do not allow for changes in motivation over time, and the fact that it was true for one generation of men and women teachers does not mean that it will be for future generations (Schmuckin Coleman, 1994).

Male cultural domination

The theory of male domination of society and culture is applied to all areas of life, including the world of education. Such theories of patriarchy and 'androcentric' hold that a male-centred culture invests worth in male values and regards female values and experience as less significant (Coleman, 1994).

2.8.2 Rural/rurality theory

My study is also drawn on rural/rurality theory, which Willits, Bealer, and Timbers cited in Bouffard and Muftic (2006) found that rurality is characterised by positive images of pastoral life, honesty, individualism and religiosity. The rural communities are also characterised by more homogeneous population and a greater level of social cohesion and shared values (Websdale cited in Bouffard & Muftic, 2006). The social climate in rural areas tends to be more personal, with a greater number of community members having intimate or personal relationships with other community members. Rural areas also tend to be both geographically and socially isolated (Feyen cited in Bouffard & Muftic, 2006). The gendered nature of rural development in South Africa is linked to cultural forces and limited opportunities that have contributed to the marginalization of rural women (Oberhauser, 1998). May be for us to understand the highly uneven distribution of land and income in South Africa, we need to first examine the history of colonialism and apartheid. Centuries of forced removals and relocation of Blacks have led to a situation where white-owned commercial farms control the vast majority of grazing and suitable land for growing crops (Wilson & Ramphele in Oberhauser, 1998). On the hand, one half to one third of the total Black population of 30 million lives in rural areas, much of which cannot be cultivated and not suitable for growing crops (Levin & Weiner in Oberhauser, 1998). This leads to high levels of poverty in rural areas, which are partly due to the labour system that caused men to migrate to urban factories and mines. Gender relations and divisions in the Bantustans were thus greatly affected by this migrant labour system which left women to maintain households and oversee agricultural production in the rural areas (Beinart, 1994 in Oberhauser, 1998). Statistics South Africa in the 2001 Census had a spatial definition of rurality as a Traditional Authority (TA) primarily community owned areas and formal rural areas which are primarily commercial farms in erstwhile white areas (Ministry of Education, 2005).

In South Africa the following features are the examples of the rural profile that pose a serious challenge to delivery of quality education: distance to towns; topography (conditions of roads, bridges to schools etc); access to communications and information technology; transport infrastructure (roads, buses, taxis); access to services and facilities (electricity, water, sanitation); the health, educational and economic status of the community; access to lifelong opportunities; social conditions in the community and activities of political and civil society organisation (Ministry of Education, 2005).

The Nelson Mandela Foundation also raised the following challenges that are experienced by rural communities: lack of basic services (water, electricity, roads, sanitation) affect access to and quality of schooling; inadequate physical and infrastructure conditions of school-buildings, toilet facilities, telecommunications and equipment a problem; distances travelled to school-children walk long distances, and no adequate transport provision available; quality of education in rural schools-lack of qualified teachers, irrelevance of curriculum, large classes and lack of teaching aids; lack of Early Childhood Development education; lack of capacity of School Governing Bodies; poverty- cost of fees and uniforms a barrier to education; hunger, sickness and diseases affecting education; high attrition and dropout rate at secondary level; educational disparities for girls and boys infringing the right to education and role of traditional leaders and concept of democracy to be understood in context (Nelson Mandela Foundation in Ministry of Education, 2005). It is on these bases that one can make a conclusion and say typically ideas of rurality are concerned with space, isolation, community, poverty, disease, neglect, backwardness, marginalization, depopulation, conservatism, racism, resettlement, corruption, entropy and exclusion (Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008). Education in the rural areas remains beset with problems and challenges simply not considered within policy, theoretical, and pragmatic initiatives (Chisholmin Balfour, Mitchell & Moletsane, 2008).

2.9 Legal frameworks

I think before we could even explain more about legal frameworks, we need first to understand where these emanate from. The issue of women discrimination started long before when they were still girls. Kaabwe (2003, p.201) insists that, according to the analysis, the girl child 'is below the poverty line in education'. This situation arises from the fact that, traditionally, the African girl child has been 'lesser child' when compared to the boy child in most families. There are some explanations for girls' lower educational attainment that are found in tradition. Schooling may increase the ability of the girl child to provide for the family, but because this is at a cost to her parents while the benefits accrue to the (future) family to her husband, decisions against investing in her education have often been made. That is, rarely is the girl child seen as a person in her own right. She is regarded, rather, as a utility good whose main reason for being is to make other peoples' lives better. The value

attached to the girls as wife and mother thus indirectly affects her ability to acquire schooling in many ways (Kaabwe, 2003).

My study is on management challenges experienced by women principals in three rural secondary schools. This means I concentrate on legal framework for employment equity in education in South Africa. Kaabwe (2003) suggests that in South Africa prior 1994, female teachers were discriminated against as they were not entitled to leave, pensions, housing subsidies, retirement funds or medical aid in the same way as their male counterparts, and this was justified and legislated. Although upgrading has been recognised as a priority, very few women qualify for leave to upgrade their qualifications. This is because eight years of continuous service is required and women, with their break in career due to their reproductive roles, are not likely to meet this condition. Women are thus often unable to apply for promotion posts which depend on upgraded qualifications (Kaabwe, 2003).

All South Africans should ideally be able to identify with the vision of a society free of gender discrimination and all other forms of oppression (Sants in van Deventer, 2003). All legislation promoting gender and employment equity in South Africa is under the umbrella of the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act (No 108 of 1996) which is the supreme law of the country. This means that no legislation supersedes this one. The constitution of RSA is based on the principle of upholding the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom. My study focuses on Article 9 subsection 3 and 4 which says no person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds in terms of race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth (Van Deventer, 2003).

The South African Schools Act (No 84 of 1996) aims to transform education by creating and managing a national school system that will give everyone an equal opportunity to develop his or her talents (Joubert & Prinsloo in Van Deventer, 2003). It also aims at combating racism and sexism and all other forms of unfair discrimination and intolerance (Van Deventer, 2003). In addition, the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998) aims to promote equal opportunity and fair treatment in employment through the elimination of unfair discrimination and affirmative action. Women educators must have equal opportunities with regard to appointments, task distribution and responsibilities, and promotion. Fairly means equitably, honestly and justify, when applying for posts and after they have been appointed. In the education sector, schools affirmative action must lead to a situation where women are

represented in the same numbers as men in promotional posts. The Commission of Gender Equality Act (No 39 of 1996) is empowered to promote not only respect for gender equality, but also the protection, development and attainment of gender equality (Dhlamini cited in Van Deventer & Kruger, 2003).

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter has discussed how women experience discrimination and oppression locally, continentally and internationally. It also discussed two theoretical frameworks that underpin the study. It finally discussed the legal frameworks that guide the study. The next chapter focuses on the research design and methodology.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter discussed literature relevant to this study. This discussion also included engagement with the theoretical frameworks used to engage with data in this study. This chapter discusses the research design and methodology employed to collected data necessary to respond to the key research question and the critical questions generated in the introductory chapter. Furthermore, the chapter discusses the research paradigms, the research methods, research participants, the data collection techniques, triangulation, validity, reliability, as well as ethical issues.

3.2 Research design and methodology

Kumar (2005) defines research as a structured enquiry that utilises acceptable scientific methodology to solve problems and create new knowledge that is generally applicable. To collect, analyse, interpret and discover the truth we need to locate a study on a research design and research methodology. Research design, on the other hand, is a plan of action that depends on the kinds of research questions guiding the investigation of the phenomenon (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Research design is also defined as a ‘blue print’ for research, dealing with four problems: what questions to study, what data are relevant, what data to collect, and how to analyse the results. My study utilises a case study approach. A case study is an exploration of a ‘bounded system’ or multiple cases over time through detailed, in-depth collection of data involving multiple sources of information rich in context. (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Stephens, 2009). This bounded system is bounded by time and place, and it is the case being studied (Stephens, 2009). I chose a case study approach because it provides a unique example of real people in real situations, and can establish cause and effect (‘how’ and ‘why’) (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

According to Nieuwenhuis (2007), the following advantages can be associated with the case study:

- it strives towards a comprehensive (holistic) understanding of how participants relate;
- encourages an interaction among participants in a specific situation and how they make meaning of a phenomenon under study;
- it offers a multi-perspective analysis in which the researcher considers not just the voice and perspective of one or two participants in a situation; but also the views of other relevant groups of actors and the interaction between them;
- it opens the possibilities for giving a voice to the powerless and voiceless, like children or marginalised of groups;
- it develops rich and comprehensive understandings about people and;
- it uses multiple sources and techniques in the data gathering process.

There are, however, certain disadvantages in case study research design Nieuwenhuis (2007) and Cohen *et al.* (2011) identify, namely:

- it is incapable of providing a generalising conclusion because it is frequently levelled against its dependence on a single case;
- it is not easily open to cross-checking, hence it may be selective, biased, personal and subjective and;
- it is prone to problems of observer bias, despite attempts made to address reflexivity.

In order to systematically solve the research problem, this study is located within a qualitative research methodology. This methodology is selected because its purpose is to capture the individual's point of views by examining the constraints of everyday life and securing thick descriptions (Denzin & Lincoln, 2003; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The other reason for selecting qualitative methodology, furthermore, is that it enables researchers to study their phenomenon in their natural settings, the intention being to make sense of, or interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to them (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Stephens, 2009).

According to Stephens (2009), the following are the characteristics of qualitative research:

- natural setting(field focused) as source of data;
- researcher as a key instrument of data collection;
- data collected as words or pictures;
- outcomes as process rather than product;
- analysis of data is carried out inductively, with attention paid to particulars and;
- focus on participants' perspectives, their meaning and use of expressive language and persuasion by reason.

3.2.1 Research paradigms

A paradigm is a set of assumptions or beliefs about fundamental aspects of reality which give rise to a particular world-view (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Paradigms represent what we think about the world (but cannot prove) and also serve as a lens or organising principles by which reality is interpreted (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). According to Creswell (2007); Nieuwenhuis (2007); Denzin and Lincoln, (2005) there are four research paradigms, namely: positivism/ post-positivism; interpretivism/ social constructivism; emancipatory/ critical and pragmatism/ postmodernism.

3.2.1.1 Interpretivism/constructivism paradigm

This particular study is located within the interpretivist paradigm. In the context of this study, this paradigm will be used in the process of making sense of participants' feelings and experiences. Interpretivism paradigm was developed in the 19th century by Schleiermacher and Wilhelm Dilthey as a philosophical theory of meaning and understanding, but also of literacy interpretation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). McNeill and Chapman (2005) stated that Interpretivists strongly believe that unique and trusting relationships should be established with those being studied so that a true picture of lives is constructed. The ultimate aim of interpretivist paradigm is thus to understand how members of a social community, through participation in social processes, enact particular realities and endow meaning, and to show these meanings, beliefs and intentions of members help to constitute their social action (Jansen, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). It is for this reason that interpretivism foregrounds the

meaning that individuals or communities assign to their experiences (Jansen, 2007). Cohen *et al.* (2011) found that interpretivist paradigm aims to retain the integrity of the phenomenon being investigated and efforts are made to get inside the person and to understand from within. This paradigm emphasizes how people differ from inanimate natural phenomena and constructivist approaches are concerned with uniqueness of each particular situation (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

3.2.1.2 Ontology of the interpretivism paradigm

In general terms, ontology is the study of the nature and form of reality (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The nature and form of reality is defined differently by different philosophers, and in various research methodologies and approaches to research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The focus is on the social construction of people's ideas and concepts. This means that how and why people interact with each other, and their motives and relationships (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Reality consists of an individual's mental constructions of the objects with which he or she engages, and that the engagement impacts on the observer and the situation being observed (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Reality accepts that the researcher cannot be separated from the research. It also asserts that research findings are created rather than discovered. Truth is therefore not an objective phenomenon that exists independently of the researcher (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.2.1.3 Epistemology of the interpretivism paradigm

Epistemology is concerned with how one knows reality, the method for knowing the nature of such reality, or how one comes to know it, i.e. a relationship between the knower (inquirer) and known (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). In this regard, Interpretivists believe that the world is made up of people with their own assumptions, intentions, attitudes, beliefs and values, and that the way of knowing reality is by exploring the experiences of others regarding a specific phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Knowledge is always subjective/ transactional as it is perceived and described through the observations made subjectively by a human observer. The stories, experiences and voices of the respondents are the mediums through which we explore and understand (know) reality (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The researcher does not decide what counts as knowledge, but what the participants view as

knowledge, emerging from interactions between the participants and the researcher (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.2.1.4 Methodology in interpretivism paradigm

According to Mackenzie and Knipe (2006), methodology within interpretivist paradigm is viewed as the science, especially a branch of logic dealing with the logical principles underlying the organisation of the various special sciences, and the conduct of scientific inquiry. Methodology focuses on the best means for acquiring knowledge about the world (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Interpretivism paradigm, furthermore, adopts a hermeneutic, dialectical methodology (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). This approach, furthermore, relies heavily on naturalistic methods (interviewing and observation and analysis of existing texts). These methods ensure an adequate dialog between the researchers and those with whom they interact in order to collaboratively construct a meaningful reality (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006; Mackenzie & Knipe, 2006). Meanings are emergent from the research process and qualitative methods are used (Cohen & Crabtree, 2006).

3.2.1.5 Rationale for using the interpretivism paradigm

The demands of the study put the focus on the management challenges experienced by women principals in three rural secondary schools. Drawing from the interpretive paradigm, the study is based on the following assumptions:

- human life can only be understood from within;
- social life is a distinctively human product;
- the human mind is the purposive source or origin of meaning;
- human behaviour is affected by knowledge of the social world and;
- the social world does “exist” independently of human knowledge (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.3 Methods of data generation

Bertram in Shabalala (2009 p. 79) defines data as “the evidence that a researcher collects in order to shed light on the particular question he or she is asking”. Nieuwenhuis (2007) sees data collection and data analysis as an on-going, cyclical and iterative (non-linear) process because ideas and insights are brought to the fore. My study utilises three methods of data generation namely: semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review.

3.3.1 Semi-structured interviews

An interview is a flexible tool for data generation, enabling multi-sensory channels to be used: verbal, non-verbal, spoken and heard. It is not an ordinary, everyday conversation, has a specific purpose: to obtain descriptive data that will help to understand the participants’ construction of knowledge and social reality and it is question-based (Cohen, *et al.*, 2007; Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The type of interviews utilised in the study are semi-structured, meaning they have a given agenda and open-ended questions (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Semi-structured tape recorded interviews for data collection are of benefit because it allows the researcher to probe deeper into more sensitive and complex questions and issue, and they are focused, conversational and two-way communication (DeVos, 2002; Nieuwenhuis, 2007). I chose semi-structured interviews as the first method of collection because when individuals are engaged in interviews (one-on-one basis), they are more likely to discuss sensitive issues (De Vos, 2002). Cohen,*et al.* (2011) suggests a disadvantage of interviews that a face-to-face interview might be intimidating. When conducting interviews, it is easy to get side-tracked by trivial aspects that are not related to the study (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.3.2 Observations

Nieuwenhuis (2007) sees observation as an everyday activity whereby we use our senses (seeing, hearing, touching, smelling, tasting) to gather bits of data. In my study observation is not just looking but looking and noting systematically people, events, behaviour, settings, artefacts and routines (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Observation is used to enable the researcher to gain a deeper insight and understanding of the phenomenon being observed (Nieuwenhuis,

2007). I used observer as participant type of observation because the researcher gets into the situation, but focuses mainly on his or her role in the situation; observe patterns of behaviour to understand the assumptions, values and beliefs of the participants and remains uninvolved and not influence the dynamics of the setting (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011)).

I chose observation as a second method of data generation because it offers an investigator an opportunity to gather 'live' data naturally occurring social situations (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Observations enable the researcher to collect data on: the physical setting (physical environment and its organization); the human setting (organization of the people); the interactional setting (interactions taking place, formal or informal etc) and the programme setting (the resources and their organization) (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Nieuwenhuis (2007) raises that observation by its very nature, is highly selective and subjective as one of the disadvantage of observations. Cohen *et al.* (2011) also suggest other disadvantages, that many observation situations carry the risk of bias: selective attention of the observer; reactivity (participants may change their behaviour if they know that they are being observed); attention deficit (if the observer is distracted and misses the event); validity of constructs (decisions have to be taken on what counts as valid evidence for a judgement) and the problem of interference (observations can only record what happens and what can be seen and that may be dangerous without any other evidence).

3.3.3 Documents review

A document is a record of an event or process, which may be produced by individuals or groups and it can take many different forms (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Documents as a data generation method, focus on all types of written communications (published and unpublished) that may shed light on the phenomenon that is investigated (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). There are primary sources (unpublished but it may be published) and secondary sources (published) of data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). In documents review there is little direct interaction with those being researched. As documents do not speak for themselves, documents review is when the researchers carefully analyse, theorize and interpret the located documents with close examination and attention (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). I chose documents review as the third method of data generation because there are documents such as log books, minute books for SGB, SMT and staff etc, at some cases that may reveal the everyday life and interactions of the participants concerned (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

One of the advantages of documents review is that documents could serve to corroborate the evidence from other sources (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Cohen et al. 2011 argued that documentary sources have encouraged too great an emphasis on 'acts and facts'. Nieuwenhuis (2007) suggests disadvantages of document review that authors are selective, unfair treatment of authors, misinterpretation of author's ideas, poor organisation of the information and poor integration.

3.4 Data generation procedures

Data generation procedures will be done in four stages. The initial interview will be conducted for fact finding where participants will give information about the school i.e. number of staff members, school governing body (SGB) members, sex distribution of staff and SGB, history of the school and community key values. The second stage will be observation where I will check how participants respond to challenges on day to day running of the school. The third stage will be to do main interview where research questions will be addressed. The last stage of data collection will be documents review where documents such as log books, minute books for staff, school management team (SMT) and SGB are looked at thoroughly.

3.5 Data analysis procedures

Stephens (2009) defines data analysis as the search for meaning in relation to the research purpose or question after data has been generated. When analysing data, the researchers summarise what they have seen or heard in terms of common words, phrases, themes or patterns that would aid their understanding and interpretation of that which is emerging (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The data generated in my study will be analysed according to the model as suggested by Kumar (2005) that is editing, classification, tabulation and content analysis. Kumar (2005) defines editing as a process of examining the collected raw data to detect errors and omissions and to correct these when possible. Classification is a process of arranging data in groups or classes on the basis of common characteristics (classification according to attributes or according to class) (Kumar, 2005). Tabulation is defined as the process of summarizing raw data and displaying the same in compact form for further analysis (Kumar, 2005). Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines content analysis as the process of

looking at data from different angles with a view of identifying keys in the text that will help us to understand and interpret the raw data.

Kumar (2005) suggests a number of steps when doing content analysis: identify the main themes, assign codes to the main themes, classify responses under the main themes and integrate themes and responses into the text of the report. When identifying the main theme, the researcher carefully goes through the descriptive responses given by respondents to each question in order to understand the meaning they communicate and develop responses to broad themes (Kumar, 2005). The researcher assigns codes to the main themes i.e. the researcher counts the number of times a theme occurred in an interview and then he or she selects few responses to an open-ended question and identify the main themes from the same question till a saturation point is reached (Kumar, 2005). The researcher after identifying the themes will go through the transcripts of all the interviews and classify the responses under the new themes. The next step is to integrate themes and responses into the text of the report (use verbatim responses to keep the feel of the response and count how frequently a theme has occurred and then provide a sample of the responses) (Kumar, 2005).

3.6 Sampling

Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) define sampling as the population on which the research will focus. I chose purposive sampling under non-probability samples because non-probability sample derives from the researcher targeting a particular group, in full knowledge that it does not represent the wider population, it simply represents itself (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Over and above that, I chose a purposive sample because as its name suggests, a sample is chosen for a specific purpose in mind and also a feature of qualitative research (Maree & Pietersen, 2007; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

My study constitutes of three women principals of rural secondary schools as participants. Rural areas are linked to cultural forces and limited economic opportunities that have contributed to the marginalization of women. Patriarchal customs and legal structures restrained women's control over land and agricultural production, women are seen as means of reproduction and primarily responsible for domestic tasks. These participants are the same race and gender because I intended to explore the nature of gender experiences of women

from the same race. These participants have been in management positions for more than three years.

3.7 Ethical issues

Ethics is defined as “a matter of principled sensitivity to the rights of others”, and that “while truth is good, respect for human dignity is better” (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p. 84). To comply with ethical concerns, I applied to the University of KwaZulu Natal for ethical clearance and was granted. Further, I applied to the KZN Department of Education and to the schools concerned to this research. Participants were assured of informed consent, confidentiality, privacy and anonymity because they might share very personal information (McNeill & Chapman, 2005; Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

Cohen, *et al.* (2011 p. 78) define informed consent as “the procedures in which individuals choose whether to participate in an investigation after being informed of facts that would be likely to influence their decisions”. This definition comprises of four elements namely: competence, voluntarism, full information and comprehension (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). ‘Competence’ implies that responsible, mature individuals will make correct decisions if they are given the relevant information (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p.78). ‘Voluntarism’ entails applying the principle of informed consent and thus ensuring that participants freely to take part (or not) in the research and guarantees that exposure to risks is undertaken knowingly and voluntarily (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p. 78).

‘Full information’ implies that consent is fully informed, researchers inform subjects on everything (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). ‘Comprehension’ refers to the fact that participants fully understand the nature of the research project, even when procedures are complicated and entail risks (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p. 78). The present of these four elements in research, assure that the subject’s rights are given appropriate consideration (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) see access and acceptance as the first stage when doing research as it involves the gaining official permission to do research in the target community. It gives the researcher the best opportunity to present and demonstrate his/her credentials as a serious investigator and establish ethical position with respect to the proposed research (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Privacy is a ‘basic human need’ which, like the right to self-determination, ‘trumps’ utilitarian calculations (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011 p. 90).

The right to privacy is more than simple confidentiality, it means that a person has a right take part in the research, not to answer questions, not to be interviewed, not to have their home intruded into, not to answer telephones or emails, and to engage in private behaviour in their own private place without fear of being observed (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

Anonymity is when participant's identities are not revealed and also the information provided by participants should not reveal their identity (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). The names of the participants or any personal means of identification are not used (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Confidentiality is seen as the second way of protecting a participant's right to privacy. This means not disclosing information from a participant in any way that might identify that individual or that might enable the individual to be traced; not discussing an individual with anybody else and the boundaries surrounding the shared secret will be protected (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011).

3.8 Triangulation

Triangulation is defined as the use of two or more methods of data generation in the study of some aspects of human behaviour (Cohen, *et al.*, 2011). Nieuwenhuis (2007) defines triangulation as a traditional strategy for improving the validity and reliability of research or evaluation of findings. Triangulation is used extensively in quantitative studies for the confirmation and generalisation of research (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In qualitative research triangulation is replaced by crystallisation as a better term to use. Crystallisation enables qualitative researchers to shift from seeing something as fixed, rigid, two-dimensional object towards the idea of a crystal, which allows for an infinite variety of shapes, substance, transmutations, dimensions and angles of approach (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). Crystallisation therefore provides researchers with a complex and deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). In my study I have achieved triangulation through the use of three data generation methods, that is semi-structured interviews, observations and documents review.

3.9 Trustworthiness of data

My study is located on qualitative methodology as addressed above. Trustworthiness refers to the "question of whether the group of people or the situation that we are studying are typical

of others, if they are, then we can safely conclude that what is true of this group is also true of others” (McNeill & Chapman, 2005 p. 10). Trustworthiness is of the outmost importance in qualitative research and its key criteria include credibility, applicability, dependability and confirmability (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

In qualitative research ‘reliability’ is preferred to be replaced with the terms such as ‘credibility’, ‘neutrality’, ‘confirmability’, ‘dependability’, ‘consistency’, ‘applicability’, ‘trustworthiness’ and ‘transferability’, in particular the notion of ‘dependability’ (Cohen, *et al.*, p.201). The key criteria of validity in qualitative research are: credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. According to Cohen, *et al.*, (2011) reliability is synonymous to dependability, consistency and replicability.

My study utilises three methods of data generation namely: semi-structured interviews, observations and data review and it is generally accepted that engaging multiple methods of data generation I’ve mentioned lead to trustworthiness (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). The following pointers are used to enhance trustworthiness: using multiple data sources, verifying raw data, coding data, stakeholder checks, verifying and validating findings, controlling for bias, avoiding generalisation, choosing quotes carefully, maintaining confidentiality and anonymity and stating limitations of the study upfront (Nieuwenhuis, 2007).

3.10 Limitations of the study

Limitations are problems often experienced by the researcher when collecting or analysing data (Nieuwenhuis, 2007). To avoid limitations I first identified more than four principals instead of three principals, in the area where I want to do research in case one does not give me permission to do research, I have the number that I need. Principals are very busy people, most of the time they attend meetings unexpectedly, so to avoid cancellations of our meetings I’ll interview them on weekends or during holidays. Some principal’s offices are used as admin offices i.e. secretaries share the offices with the principals (no privacy) and the photocopier is in the office and sometimes it is very noisy, teachers and learners being up and down. Participants will be interviewed on their convenient times and venues, so that no distraction can be experienced. Observations will be done preferably on the day when there will be either staff or SMT meeting. Documents review will be done after interviews and observations.

3.11 Chapter summary

In this chapter I set out the research design and methodology to be used in the study where research questions will be answered. I proceeded to discuss research paradigms, ethical issues, data generation methods, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, triangulation, and trustworthiness of data and limitations of the study. The next chapter focuses on data presentation, analysis and discussion.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented and discussed the research design and methodology used in this study. My research study was driven by the following questions:

- What are management challenges experienced by women principals of three rural secondary schools in Indwedwe Circuit?
- How do women managers overcome/cope with the challenges facing them?
- What forms of support, if any, are provided to women managers and by whom?

In this chapter the findings are presented and discussed thematically as emerged from the data. Interview questions, observations and documents review were used for data generation. The three principals were given fictitious names Ms Moko, Ms Moloko and Ms Mamabolo as elucidated in the previous chapter.

4.2 Biographical Data of Participants:

Participants	MS MOKO	MS MOLOKO	MSMAMABOLO
MARITAL STATUS	SINGLE	SINGLE	SINGLE
AGE	49	62	55
HIGHEST ACADEMIC QUALIFICATION	BA	BA	BA
WORK EXPERIENCE IN EDUCATION	27 YEARS	36 YEARS	29 YEARS
NUMBER OF YEARS AS A PRINCIPAL	16	17	15

The above biographical data shows that all these women principals are single, mature, well educated (qualified), experienced in the teaching fraternity more and in the positions they hold as principals.

4.3 Discussion of findings

In this section, I present the findings from the field. This is done as per themes and sub-themes that were generated by the interview questions.

4.3.1 Challenges women principals experience in managing rural secondary schools

4.3.1.1 School Governing Bodies

The majority of the respondents said that the main challenge was that, some of the parents in the school governing body are illiterate where now and then they had to explain terminology and clarify issues so that they were all on board. Illiteracy meant that they were not effectively contributing towards the development and growth of the school. To this end, Ms Moko said:

They (parents) are mostly illiterate and they are not well informed on how to govern the school.

Ms Mamabolo also said:

It is very difficult to manage a rural secondary school because some SGB members are not literate enough but brilliant as some can count as they have some businesses.

Similarly, Ms Moloko said:

They do not contribute as expected to improve the school..... they sit back and concentrate only on grade 12 results, if the output is okay that is all that matters to them.

Madlala (2007), Paulsen (2009) and Xaba (2011) also raised this challenge of the parent component in the SGB not having good educational background which makes it difficult for

the governing body to perform efficiently. The theory of rurality is also confirming that in the rural schools there is lack of capacity of school governing bodies (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2005).

The challenge of illiteracy further creates a problem of understanding the roles and responsibilities pertaining to school governance and professional issues (Xaba, 2011). This is also raised by Ms Moko as she said:

You also need to determine their boundaries at times as they want to overlap, especially to professional matters, so you have to guide.

What I discovered when I perused the documents in Ms Moloko's school was that there were two sets of minutes. One set written in English and the other in isiZulu. When I asked the principal the reason why there were two versions and said the isiZulu version is used when having SGB meetings and the English version for the submissions to the Department when requested. It is a big challenge for the principal because she must always make sure that both sets of minutes are always ready for meetings and also correctly interpreted.

Ms Mamabolo also said that the SGB blamed her as she accepted a surplus teacher sent by the Department to her school. They did not want the teacher they did not know. This shows that the SGB do not understand the provincial policy of rationalisation of educators and also that as the SGB, they do not understand the powers properly in staff recruitment that they recommend the employment and the Department of Education employs. Ms Mamabolo said:

The SGB did not want to take the HOD of which the Department on the other hand has got the last word in the employment of educators.

It was very interesting though that Ms Mamabolo felt it was a challenge for her to have a chairperson who was very strict in as far as money was concerned because everything must be done by the book. It was very much contrasting because I think for Ms Moko and Ms Moloko it would have been easier if their SGBs were always involved and also knowledgeable with issues and roles to be played in the governance of the school. This chairperson was playing his role in making sure that the correct procurement and procedures were followed. Ms Mamabolo surprisingly said:

There were no problems in the past in terms of money as we did not receive any money from the Department because we were under Section 20. There

was a time when the chairperson refused to sign the cheque for the teacher a special SGB meeting was called.

The reason why I say this is a contrast because Xaba (2011) found that a major challenge for the principals was that of the management of the resources in particular the finance management (budgeting, balancing expenditure and budget income, using correct procedures regarding the use of finances and deviation from the budget). I think Ms Mamabolo is fortunate to have a chairperson who is capacitated on financial issues as long as his role as a chairperson does not overlap with that of a treasurer.

Another thing I observed when I visited Ms Mamabolo's school was that most of the talking was done by the chairperson and the principal in the SGB meetings. I think the reason being that both the principal and the chairperson were knowledgeable of the issues that were discussed at hand. I got the information that the chairperson was also the chairperson of the SGB Ward Forum of chairpersons. In Ms Mamabolo's and Ms Moko's schools, SGB attendance of meetings were regularly, but when I went through the minutes there was no standing agenda where sub committees report. In Ms Moloko's school it was different as she a challenge of poor attendance of SGB meetings as most of parent component stay very far from school.

The main function of the school governing body as per South African Schools Act 84 of (1996) as amended is to promote the best interest of the school and to strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at school. This challenge of illiteracy raises a concern on how SGBs contribute in the running of the school.

4.3.1.2 Factors relating to teachers

4.3.1.2.1 Scarce public transport

Ms Moko and Ms Moloko said their schools were lacking highly qualified teachers because of the scarce public transport. The schools were located in areas where there was mostly morning and afternoon public transport from the cities. If you missed the morning transport to school you end up going back home because the next transport will make you to arrive at school very late. This was compromising public quality education because teachers ended

being late to school and also contributing to high rate of absenteeism of teachers. Ms Moko said:

The teachers we have so far especially in the rural areas are not highly qualified. Mostly we have UTEs (Unprotected Temporary Educator) reason being that there is no development in the area, no transport, no toilets no proper infrastructure. Teachers look in the area and leave the school so we are left with UTEs all the time. Even those you have developed end up being taken by urban schools.

Likewise, Ms Moloko said:

It is again availability of teachers. Previously the teachers were only nuns but now it is mixed after the Department took over in 1994. Main problems are scarce transport and no cottages for male teachers who reside far from school. No more briefings before 07h30 and for afternoon meetings periods must be cut short so that teachers do not miss their transport back home.

This finding was similar to the findings by the Nelson Mandela Foundation (2005) which states that the challenges faced by rural communities are inadequate physical and infrastructure conditions of schools-buildings, toilet facilities, lack of qualified teachers and no adequate transport provision available (Nelson Foundation, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2005).

When I visited the schools in the bus-stop shelters near schools, there were many people waiting for the public transport. When I drove around I met people walking in groups long distances. I was even assisted by them for directions to school. There were also pedestrians hiking along the road and other private cars gave them lifts. I also observed that the public transport was a problem because at exactly 14h30 most teachers were outside the school rushing for the transport. They got into that afternoon taxi they even called the one who was a little bit delayed as he was going to miss the taxi.

The unavailability of teachers led some rural schools to employ foreign teachers. The employment of foreign teachers added on the challenges of Ms Moloko. She mentioned that a local teacher was uttering xenophobic statements. According to her investigation it all started as a joke and later ended being serious. She said that foreign teachers were no longer happy at her school and that would compromise team work.

There were recent xenophobic attacks from a teacher who resides locally to foreign teachers employed by the school.

Xenophobic attacks of May 2008 left more than 100 000 people displaced and over 60 lives were lost. The cause was that migrant workers were seen to be accepting low wages and poor working conditions to the detriment of local workers (Hlatshwayo, 2009).

Another challenge for the women principals was scarce public transport which created more challenges to women principals in such a way that they ended up employing any teacher as they were desperate of getting teachers. Another challenge was the lack of commitment to work from young teachers. They organised sports during teaching time, they did not go to class on time after break and they did not complete mark lists on time. Ms Moloko said:

Sometimes teachers do not honour their periods and do not want to account to parents. They do not report absence a day before.

This challenge raises a concern for the future of education in this country because teachers are expected to engage in class teaching, including academic, administrative, educational and disciplinary aspects and to organise extra and co-curricular activities so as to ensure that education of the learners is promoted in a proper manner (Department, 2008). The SMT and Staff minutes showed that this challenge was discussed and strategies were in place to address the matter.

4.3.1.2.2 Non-acceptance by some male teachers

Another finding was that all these women principals also have male teachers in their staff Ms Mamabolo had more male staff members than Ms Moko and Ms Moloko. Only Ms Mamabolo raised a totally different challenge from others. She said that her first years of being a principal were very difficult. She had obstacles with four male teachers. She said they had bad attitude towards her and they disorganised meetings. She thought it was so because may be they were used to the previous male principal who was always absent from school and never strict.

We were fighting, we were fighting everybody knew in the school that myself and those male teachers were fighting. It frustrated me that I fought with them. I manhandled one of them it was very bad in our school.

The same challenge was experienced by three women managers in rural areas in two cases where Indo-Trinidadian men teachers who came from a patriarchal culture and religious background were unwilling to accept the authority from female principals, questioning their decisions and challenging them sometimes leading to unpleasant confrontation (Morris, 1998). There is evidence to suggest strong patriarchal traditions remain in respect to the role of women in many black African societies (Steady in Booysen & Nkomo, 2010).

The theory of inequality which is male cultural domination concurs with Morris (1998) and Booysen and Nkomo (2010) as it says theories of patriarchy and 'androcentric' hold that a male-centred culture invests worth in male values and regards female values and experiences as less significant (Coleman, 1994).

During an observation visit at Ms Moloko's school I noticed a matured man seated in the staffroom and when I checked with the principal who that man was she said he was a deputy principal. I observed his facial expression was not welcoming. The principal instructed him to attend to people who wanted her as she was busy with me. He did not seem indicate that he was taking the orders from his supervisor. When I was busy looking at the documents somebody knocked at the door and wanted to speak to the principal and principal responded to say she could talk to the deputy as she was busy. It was then when she said informally that somebody told her that the male deputy principal when placed at her school said in his whole life he has never been managed by a woman principal.

4.3.1.2.3 Meetings of teacher unions during teaching time

In all three researched schools, all staff members were members of teacher unions. The common challenge with teacher unions was that one of calling out meetings and organising events during teaching time. What makes the situation worse is the arrival of notices to schools late. Sometimes representatives are notified in the morning on the day of the event.

Ms Moko said:

The only challenge that I've got is that one of holding meetings during teaching time. It is a challenge to me because of the fact that if the meeting is at 12 o'clock those teachers who are members of that union will not come to school because of the transport problem I mentioned earlier.

Ms Mamabolo said:

They call their meetings or sports day for teachers during the day (contact time). The teachers had to leave the learners in the morning and adhere to the call of the union. Sometimes you are informed about the meeting on the day of the meeting in the morning.

Ms Moloko said:

Another challenge is the short notice of meetings. The rep will arrive in the morning to request permission to attend the meeting.

Hassen (2011) in his article pointed that trade unions are to blame for no quality education delivery because of the following four reasons: inspectors were not allowed into classrooms because trade unions say they cannot observe teaching; unions cover for lazy teachers; unions hold their meetings during school hours and performance based pay will not happen because the unions do not say so. When I went through the documents review the circulars register showed most invitations from the unions were received late as the date stamped showed

4.3.1.3 Factors relating to learners

In all three researched schools, learners were a challenge in different ways but in two of the three schools there were two common challenges: that is the high rate of teenage pregnancy and drugs and substance abuse.

4.3.1.3.1 Drugs and substance abuse

Drugs and substance abuse was one of the serious common challenges these principals face in the daily running of the schools. This challenge was experienced differently in these schools under study. For an example, Ms Moloko told of an incident where the child brought alcohol to school. Ms Moko said boys are smoking dagga and Ms Mamabolo also said a boy was caught selling dagga in the school premises. Ms Moko said:

They are always cheeky, abusive, smoke of dagga especially by boys.

Ms Moloko similarly said:

...at one incident the child brought a little of alcohol to school.

Likewise, Ms Mamabolo said:

Learners go to the shebeen during school hours and end up coming to school drunk. Learners drink alcohol when they go out on excursions. Recently we also had a case of a grade 8 boy who was caught selling dagga inside the school premises.

The issue of drugs, especially in secondary schools, is a challenge in South Africa, in Africa and worldwide. Most of my colleagues who are secondary school teachers will tell you serious stories of learners who take drugs. Boys used more substance than girls. Boys and girls substance use increase with each grade. Girls are less likely to use spirit, dagga or marijuana, cigarette and even alcohol than boys regardless of grade (Onya & Flisher, 2008).

In the documents reviewed, like SGB, SMT and Staff minute books this challenge was reported. It also appeared in the log books entries and in the incident books.

4.3.1.3.2 Teenage pregnancy

There were a number of reasons that contributed to teenage pregnancy. These principals raised contributory factors on high rate of teenage pregnancy being social grants and second marriage preparation for girls. It is concluded these communities do not see education as the weapon to beat the current situation they were in. Ms Moko said:

Learners are always cheeky, abusive, smoke dagga especially the boys, high rate of teenage pregnancy amongst girls. One of the causes of teenage pregnancy is marriage preparation because it is the practiced in the community that girls are brought up and be prepared to for marriage and serve their husbands as wives. Social grants also contributed to teenage pregnancy as there are no means of getting food on the table. The children leave the school at the age of 17 and sometimes girls will have three children by the time they reach grade 12.

Similarly Ms Mamabolo said:

The challenges I have in as far as learners are concerned are high rates of absenteeism, late coming and teenage pregnancy.

This challenge of teenage pregnancy is also noted by the Department of Basic Education (2012). The Minister Ms Angie Motshekga told parents at a National Council of Provinces meeting in De Aar that ‘teenage pregnancy is a problem imported to school by homes and the community, but it’s a department problem for us’. A study revealed that 160 754 school girls became pregnant between July 2008 and July 2010 (Williams, 2012).

Kaabwe (2003) points out that traditionally the African girl child has been ‘lesser child’ when compared to the boy child in most families. She was regarded as a utility good whose main reason for being is to make other peoples’ lives better. The value attached to the girl as wife and the mother thus indirectly affects her ability to acquire schooling in many ways. This challenge of teenage pregnancy can also be associated with one of the theories of inequality which is socialisation of women. Girls are socialised for productive roles and thus have career breaks (Kaabwe, 2003).

When I visited the schools I witnessed late coming of learners and teenage pregnancy in two schools. There is a corroboration of the methods of data generation. The Quarterly survey used by the Department of Education to monitor attendance of both learners and teachers; dropouts and pregnancy of learners in schools showed quite a big number of dropouts and girls that are pregnant.

4.3.1.3.3 HIV/AIDS, polygamous families and non-exposure to media

HIV/AIDS was also a very serious challenge mentioned by Ms Moko when dealing with learners. Some learners were infected and affected by HIV/AIDS. This pandemic could be perpetuated by the fact that the community’s practice of allowing young girls to be prepared to serve their husbands as wives and also drugs. Ms Moko said:

Most families are child headed families because of HIV/AIDS. Lastly there are also learners who are sick (infected) by HIV/AIDS.

The rurality theory suggests that rural communities experience a challenge of sickness and diseases affecting education, high attrition and dropout rates at secondary level (Ministry of Education, 2005).

Ms Moko's and Ms Mamabolo's schools run projects of orphans and vulnerable children and school nutrition programmes to address the challenge. The annual survey showed quite a number of learners who are orphans.

Another challenge is that most learners are coming from polygamous families. Those learners they continuously fight amongst themselves and with teachers. They also use very abusive language. Ms Moko said:

Most learners are coming from polygamous families. They are always cheeky, abusive, negligent and also ignorant. The use of bad language like swearing to teachers and other learners

Research reveals that polygamy is characterised by competition and jealousy among co-wives which can escalate to intolerable levels resulting in physical injuries sustained by women. Research went on to indicate that children from polygamous families are at a risk of psychological and physical abuse. They can also be affected by rivalry between co-wives and they receive less attention and supervision especially from their fathers (Campbell, 2005).

Incident reports in the incident book showed quite a number of cases of misconduct of learners. In the log book there were also referrals recommended by the principals where learners were advised to go and consult social workers for anger management. Ms Moko also raised a challenge of learners not exposed to any type of media. I think that creates a problem for teachers especially when it comes to research projects given to the learners. The question is how do teachers give marks to those projects and secondly how are they going to give learners those kind of projects knowing very well that they only know the place where they live in. It is also a very serious challenge that compromises development of research skills and grade 12 results. Ms Moko said:

Ooh the learners are a problem! They are not exposed to any type of media so what they know is only the place where they live in. They rely on us (teachers) to get knowledge and information otherwise they can't go any further to look for information for themselves.

Ministry of Education (2005) suggest the reason why the learners of the rural area are not exposed to media. The following features are the examples of a rural profile in South Africa that pose a serious challenge to delivery of quality education: access to communications and information technology. I also observed that there was no public library in the area.

4.3.1.4 Community factors

4.3.1.4.1 Non-involvement from the community

The communities of these rural schools seemed not to worry much about education. They were not involved in the schools. Most of parents were single parents who do not make any contribution to schools instead they expected the school to do everything for them. Ms Moloko said:

There is no connection I can't say there is a challenge or no challenge. It is like the whole complex is a 'no go area'.

Ms Moko also said:

They are not committed to their children's education. They are even reluctant to pay school fees and money for excursions or trips. Sometimes you will speak to a child without knowing that you are provoking a parent. The parent will come to school to fight the teacher. Education is not seen as a tool to open future doors for their children.

The South African rural communities pose a serious challenge in the delivery of education because of the educational and economic status of the community; access to life-long opportunities; social conditions in the community and activities of political and civil society organisation (Ministry of Education, 2005). The Nelson Mandela Foundation also found that telecommunications and equipment were a problem, poverty- cost of fees and school uniforms a barrier to education (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2005).

When I visited the schools I observed that the school communities had poor socio economic background. Most people were not working especially the youth. Most of them were just

loitering around. Their tuck-shops were not up to the required standard. Along the main road they sell avocado pears and sweets and cigarettes on small tables.

4.3.1.4.2 Confrontation by a male parent

Ms Moloko experienced a challenge of being confronted by a male parent at the parents' meeting. According to the principal, that parent was a local police man. She was expecting him to contribute to the school as he is a professional person and also to be a good role model to his community. The principal said the parent was rude to as she was on the floor waiting for parents to respond to the discussion.

He just said loudly "just say what you want to say don't waist our time you called the meeting". I could see that he doesn't like a woman to stand in front of him and give him instructions or orders."

Women managers' experiences are different from those of male managers. It is so because women are not recognized, not seen as capable or treated as women not as managers (Adler, *et al*, 1993). The existence of gender stereotyping puts women with power in a disadvantage position because their gender stereotype conflict with leadership stereotypes (Galanaki, Papalexandris & Halikias, 2009).

4.3.1.4.3 Community leaders

All the principals do not have challenges when it comes to the community leaders. They appreciate having them as community leaders because they take care of schools. Ms Mamabolo said that in the past they were not interested in the schools but now they are very much interested. They are also invited in some events that take place in schools they do attend and also involved in solving some schools problems. As highlighted, Ms Mamabolo said:

They are fully involved they attend parents meetings. If they are unhappy about something they will speak to me, e.g. if they saw a learner who was misbehaving in public they will report to me.

Ms Moko similarly said:

There is a good relationship between Inkosi (chief), community leaders and the school. If there is a problem you go to Inkosi, and he will come to assist the school because he knows whom are we teaching their background, he is always available when called.

Likewise, Ms Moloko said:

No community leader has given a school any problem. The Mayor, local councillor, Inkosi and the izindunas (headmen) were invited to attend a prayer for the schools organised by the school and neighbouring primary school.

The social climate in rural areas, tend to be more personal with a greater number of community members having intimate or personal relationships with other community members. The rural communities are also characterised by role of traditional leaders and concept of democracy to be understood (Nelson Mandela Foundation, 2005; Ministry of Education, 2005).

When I visited Ms Moloko's school, in her office I observed that there were photos taken on different occasions. In some occasions there were photos that were taken with community leaders as they attended those events.

4.3.1.5 Challenges from the Department of Education

4.3.1.5.1 Post Provisioning Model

Ms Moko and Ms Mamabolo also raised a challenge of Post Provisioning Model. Their concern was that the schools lost best teachers and the Department of Education sometimes brought teachers who did not meet the curriculum needs. The Department did not assist on the decrease of the learner's enrolment. Ms Moko said:

PPM is also a very big problem because of the decline enrolment. The cause is that parents take their children and move to better places because there is no development in the area.

Similarly Ms Mamabolo said:

PPN is also a challenge when the school loses the best teachers and sometimes the Department brings a teacher who does not meet the curriculum needs of the school.

Naicker (2005) states that, PPM is used as a tool for the implementation of Resolution 6 of 1998, which set out to redress equity of educator provisioning. Pardesi in Naicker (2005) observes that the implementation of Resolution 6 of 1998 has not benefited rural schools. In the main these schools remained with very few educators. It can be concluded that with the PPM the supply of teachers is based on budget than on the demand of curriculum redress.

When the log books and SGB minutes were perused entries of appointments of the UTEs were recorded.

4.3.1.5.2 Challenges posed by new policies

There was also a challenge of the policies from the Department of Education that was raised by Ms Moko and Ms Moloko. They said the policies were good but mostly impossible to be implemented because of the demographics of the schools. Ms Moloko said:

The policies or how things must be done is 'one shoe fits all'. You know whatever they do they don't think that schools in rural areas are the same. They say in KZN schools must do 1, 2, 3 and 4 without checking whether that is possible to do in rural areas.

Likewise, Ms Moko said:

Policies of a Department are a challenge they do not cater for our schools in rural areas.

This issue of new policies posed in all schools also raises a concern to some researchers as (Gardiner, 2008, p.9) states that a 'one size fits all' approach to policy and its implementation makes it impossible to overlook and disregard important aspects of the lives and the needs of the communities. The realities faced by people in rural areas cannot always be addressed by policy made elsewhere and for everyone.

In Ms Moloko's school the log book showed the visits of subject advisors being invited by HoDs to clarify some policy matters.

4.3.1.5.3 Poor communication and poor service delivery

Ms Moloko also raised that poor communication of sub-directorates within the department and also to schools was also a serious challenge. The information is said to arrive late or sometimes never arrived.

In the Department it is like the right hand doesn't know what the left hand is doing. There is no communication among them because you will be invited to two different meetings at the same time at the same venue. Most of the time the response will be 'I also got the message this morning, in this Department we all run'. There is no accountability.

Ms Moko was not happy about the service delivery on the part of the Department of Education. The poor service delivery compromised quality public education.

Poor service from the Department, it is a disgrace especially when it comes to LTSM as the school is Section 20.

The poor service delivery is also noted by the Department of Education where research was conducted on how to improve the delivery of basic quality education. Department of Education (2003) states that teachers cannot teach effectively without adequate learner support material and that leads to communities not receiving skills and knowledge as it should be. The SMT minutes showed that the principal reported to the SMT about LTSM not delivered.

4.3.2 Coping strategies of women principals

4.3.2.1 School Governing Bodies

4.3.2.1.1 Workshops for the School Governing Bodies

Ms Moko and Ms Mamabolo rely on workshops organised by the Department to capacitate members of the School Governing Bodies.

Ms Mamabolo said:

As a school we do not develop them but the Department is work shopping them.

Ms Moko also said:

I make sure that the SGB members are invited and attending workshops organised by the Department of Education. I usually organise internal workshop to inform them of what is expected of them. I also invite NGOs to also assist with workshops.

Xaba (2011) in his study recommends SGBs training by provincial departments through functional units at head offices and district levels will assists to address the challenges they have. This raised a concern because for the SGBs to be efficient continuing training is required and that the head of the Department must ensure that principals and other officials render all necessary assistance to the SGB (SASA Section 19(1b and 2). The Log books and workshops attended schedules also showed the attendance of the workshop by the school governing bodies although there were not many.

4.3.2.2 Teachers

All three researched women principals overcome challenges with regards to teachers differently.

4.3.2.2.1 Private transport and accommodation

With regards to transport challenge Ms Moko organised private transport for teachers so that they were always present and punctual at school. This private transport arrangement is benefiting both the school and the teachers. And with Ms Moloko the decent families were approached to assist teachers with accommodation. Ms Moko said:

I thought of private transport to transport them from town or cities to school so that they can sleep in their homes and be with their families and be at school on daily basis. This arrangement assisted because I could retain Maths and Physical Science teachers.

Ms Moloko also said:

The school approaches decent families within the area and explain the situation, so that they can assist with the accommodation for the teacher.

Women principals are generally associated with communal qualities (affectionate, helpful, friendly, kind, sympathetic, interpersonally sensitive, gentle and soft spoken (Eagly & Carli, in Galanaki, Papalexanris & Halikias, 2009). These women principals are very much caring for their staff so that the vision and the mission statement of schools are achieved.

What I observed when I visited Ms Moloko's school was that after school other teachers rushed to the bus stop and others remaining as they reside locally. I visited Ms Moloko's school again on a public holiday some teachers were at school busy in the staff room because they reside in the neighbourhood as they rent the accommodation.

4.3.2.2.2 Higher education registration and constructive monitoring

With regards to the unavailability of high qualified teachers Ms Moko motivated teachers to register in higher education institutions to further their studies. This idea benefited both the school and teachers because teachers were more productive in their teaching and also most teachers were retained. Ms Moloko also suggested constructive monitoring of work so that the challenge of young teachers not committed was addressed. Ms Moko said:

Teachers are also encouraged to upgrade themselves and I usually bring them application forms and also assist them in doing assignments.

Ms Moloko also said:

To address the issue of commitment we (principal and the SMT) do constructive monitoring from time to time, go and check whether teachers are in class effectively teaching learners.

As per collective agreement Number 1 of (2008) the principal must develop and empower self and others by assisting educators in developing and achieving educational objectives in accordance with the needs of the school. When I reviewed documents like leave registers and log books both showed recordings of leaves taken by the staff. Exam and study leaves were also recorded.

4.3.2.2.3 Women managers work twice

Ms Mamabolo who experienced a challenge of four male teachers and weak Deputy Principal and HOD overcame the challenge by making sure that the policies are implemented and be a good role model as possible. This principal had to work twice as hard to prove that she can manage the school irrespective of the challenges she faced. She said:

I had to do things by the book all the time to prove that I can manage despite of obstacles facing me. I had to always keep my house clean to prove that I am good. I had to be always punctual and always fight for goodness.

The busy schedule of principals was shown on their time books show early arrival and late departure. They also went to school on Saturdays and public holidays to finish up their work. When I called to secure an appointment with Ms Moloko, she preferred to see me after hours or on a Saturday as she had a busy schedule.

Paulsen (2009) in her study discovered that women managers had to work twice harder than men managers to prove that as they are females they are capable.

4.3.2.2.4 Teacher unions

On the issue of being notified late or in the morning about events and meetings by teacher unions all principals make sure teachers are not compromised of adhering to the call of their unions. They do this though differently Ms Mamabolo let all of them attend and Ms Moko and Ms Moloko only allow reps to attend and give report back to members.

Ms Mamabolo said:

SMT members will stay behind to feed the learners and thereafter the learners are dismissed.

Ms Moko said:

I allow the site steward to attend the meeting.

Ms Moloko also said:

Only the rep will be granted permission to attend that meeting and report back to the respective members.

Ms Moko and Ms Moloko were correct to allow site stewards or reps to attend meetings as SADTU (2006) states that one of duties of the site steward is to attend all branch site steward meetings and other meetings delegated to attend and to report back to the members. The documents like time books, Circular files, Log books, late arrival books and early departure books showed evidence of some entries.

4.3.2.3 Learners

4.3.2.3.1 Involvement of all stakeholders

On the challenge of drugs and substance abuse all principals use the human resource such as the school management teams, teachers, security, school governing bodies and non-profit organisations involved in education to overcome the challenge. Security guards and SGBs are mostly the people that are used to assist in dealing with the problem. Ms Moko said:

Security guard searches them randomly. Random search in the classroom and in hostels is done by the security guard in our presence.

Ms Mamabolo also said:

Security guard instructed not to allow learners to get out of the gate without a permission slip. We also do random searching of drugs.

According to section 20(1) (a) of the Act, the major role of the SGB is to promote the best interest of the school and to strive to ensure its development through this provision of quality education (Xaba, 2011, p.202). Therefore, it is correct for the SGB to make sure that security guards are employed so that all employees and learners are safe and protected in-order to fulfil that task. When I was at the school premises the gates were always locked and occurrence books were signed. The log books and SGB minutes also showed records of the incidents.

4.3.2.3.2 Involvement of other government departments and Non-Profit Organisations

The Department of Education cannot work in isolation with other government departments if the vision and mission stated is to be realised. Working together with all other departments assists in making work easier and more achievements of long and short term goals. This is done when all departments bring their expertise and solve the matter at hand.

All the women principals also utilised the expertise from other departments such as Department of Health, Department of Social Development and Department of Safety and Security when the need arises. To overcome issues of HIV/AIDS, crime, alcohol, social problems and teenage pregnancy they work closely with departments that will assist the school. Ms Moko said:

We usually invite people from SANCA, SAPS, local nurses and Always Pads to address the learners about crime, alcohol and drugs, contraception to avoid teenage pregnancy and HIV/AIDS.

Ms Moloko also said:

Social workers and psychologists are invited to assist those learners with social problems. Nurses also talk to learners about HIV/AIDS, TB and typhoid.

Likewise, Ms Mamabolo said:

Police are called in to assist when a bad situation arises.

The principal must liaise with other relevant Government departments e.g. Departments of Health, Social Development, Safety and Security, Public Works and sports, social, cultural and community organizations as required (Collective Agreement No 1 of 2008).

Ms Mamabolo said something totally different to address a challenge of teenage pregnancy. She mentioned a policy that is in place in dealing with the problem. She said pregnant girls were not allowed wear a school uniform.

4.3.2.4 Community

4.3.2.4.1 Partnership with the community

Schools belong to the communities they are serving, schools must always strive to meet the expectations of the communities irrespective of whether it is possible or not. Schools must make sure that communities are uplifted by imparting skills and knowledge to learners that will assist in developing those communities.

Ms Moko and Ms Moloko shared the same vision with regards to their communities. One school adopts a needy brilliant child to assist in furthering his or her studies. Ms Moko said:

The school is also involved in adopt a child campaign, where teachers contribute their monies to assist those students who are brilliant who do not have registration fees in the universities.

Ms Moloko also said:

We also invite two neighbouring schools we network with for Saturday and holidays extra classes for Maths, Science and Accounting. The reason is that those kids belong to the community so we are like uplifting the community by sharing with them our knowledge and skills.

Collective agreement No 1 of (2008) is implemented by these principal as it says one of the duties of the principal is to work with and for the community as they set up community-school partnerships to support teaching and learning.

4.3.2.4.2 Community leaders

All women principals did not experience any challenge with community leaders, however they wanted to retain good working relations. They said they wanted to always be involved in education as they were very important stakeholders. They invited them in meetings or events that took place in schools and in the community. Ms Moko said:

When there are 'izimbizos' (traditional community meetings) the chief will be asked to render a slot that will speak directly to the problem faced by the school at that particular time.

Ms Moloko also said:

We invited the Mayor to share with learners the importance of the State of the Nation Address by the President of South Africa Mr Zuma.

Collective Agreement Number 1 of (2008) states that principals must participate in community activities in connection with educational matters and community development. Lambert *et al*, (1995 p.32) in Bauch, (2001) also states that constructivist leadership is ‘the reciprocal processes that enable participants in an educational community to construct meanings that lead towards a common purpose of schooling’. At the heart of constructivist leadership is the assumption ‘that adults in a community can work together to construct meaning and knowledge’. The log books showed that community leaders attended some events in the schools. The SGB, SMT and staff minutes showed that there were cases that were resolved by the community leaders.

4.3.2.5 Department of Education

Some of the challenges mentioned above by principals are politically motivated e.g. PPN, poor service delivery and no accountability from the Department office based. According to my experience very few schools succeeded when contesting PPN with the Department of Education. Most of these challenges are beyond their control. Ms Mamabolo said:

You have to work double to cover deadlines of the Department.

Ms Moko also said:

As there are no visits from the subject advisors, we just network with other schools and book publishers.

The Department also states that for many years it has been recognised that lacking capacity in many districts offices across the country has posed a major barrier to delivery in the schooling sector. The National Department is in the process of finalising a recommended set of priorities for district offices (Department of Education, 2010, p.21). The log books and workshops attended books showed that teachers do attend workshops on curriculum organised by other stakeholders who are interested in education.

4.3.3 Forms of support the women principals received

4.3.3.1 Department of Education

4.3.3.1.1 Support from the Ward Manager

From the three researched women principals only two of them that is Ms Moloko and Ms Mamabolo received support from their ward managers. Ms Moloko said:

We do get support through meetings, workshops arranged for us, people visiting the school for support. If I present a problem to my ward manager he assists.

Ms Mamabolo also said:

The ward manager assists with strategies to assist when dealing with learners, educators and parents. He visits the school now and then to assist and monitor grade 12 classes.

The main duty of the ward manager is to support principals, school management teams and school governing bodies in the management, administration and governance of schools (Collective Agreement No 1 of 2008).

Ms Moko raised a contrasting expression with regards to the support by the ward manger. She said she does not receive any support from her ward manager as per her expectation.

Problems are reported to the ward manager he will not come but refer..... He will come and do IQMS without rendering support throughout the year.they only come to hammer us concerning grade 12 results. During the course of the year they are nowhere to be seen.

According to my own observation, these two schools get support from the ward manager because the two schools were located along the so called main road and the other one is located right inside the most remote area. Those are easily accessible although in a rural area than the other one. The log books showed the entries of visits of the ward managers. Ms Moko showed a very unsatisfied facial expression and shook her head when responding on the support issue by the ward manager.

4.3.3.1.2 Support from other Department officials

When talking of other department officials we talk of different sub-directorates within the department of education. To cite the few we talk of Youth affairs, Governance, Teaching and Learning Support Services, Exam section and Psychological Services etc. All these sub-directorates are there to facilitate curriculum delivery through support in various ways (Collective Agreement Number 1 of 2008). The same responses as above were received with regards to other department officials. Two principals do receive support from other department officials and one does not. Ms Mamabolo said:

Subject advisors from TLS do come to school to assist educators. They also do monitoring.

Ms Moloko also said:

Our HoDs invite advisors to school for guidance and some would come without being invited.

The log books showed entries of the visits by the subject advisors which proved that they visited the schools for support.

4.3.3.1.3 Non development from the Department for women managers

It is very confusing though that in as much as Ms Moloko and Ms Mamabolo said they do get support from their ward managers and other department officials but they do not get development as women principals.

Ms Moloko said:

I just get general workshops as a leader not as a woman principal.

Ms Mamabolo also said:

No workshops received specifically for women principals.

Ms Moko lastly said:

I only remember one workshop I attended on gender transformation long time ago that is all. I was never work-shopped by the Department on women in management and leadership.

May be one can raise a question and say is it not so because the ward managers of those women principals are men and also that most higher positions in the Department are occupied by men. So, men do not care about women managers because leadership and management is associated with men. This argument is confirmed by ANC (1997 and 2007) when they say white middle class women experience patriarchy differently to rural African women. As I am a woman principal in the urban primary school I have attended a number of workshops on Women in and into Management organised and facilitated by the same Department of Education.

4.3.3.2 School Governing Bodies support

All participants do receive support from the members of their School Governing Bodies. Ms Moloko said:

Yes they do come to school when there is a problem between a teacher and a learner. They do support teachers especially when the child must be disciplined following the code of conduct.

Ms Moloko also said:

From the individuals yes but not as a team because it is so difficult even to hold a meeting with all members present. The outgoing chairlady was very supportive. I think it is so she is also a principal. She was so committed.

Likewise, Ms Mamabolo said

I do get support from the SGB. They make sure they assist us to maintain order in the school. They also provide security as they appointed security guards to our school.

School Governing Body is a structure that is very important in the school because they are also involved in the decision making in as far as recommendation of the staff, finances and buildings. Their role also as per Section 20(c) is to support the principal, educators and other staff of the school in the execution of their professional functions (Xaba, 2011). The visitors' books, log books and SGB minutes showed good attendance of SGB members in schools' events and also in misconduct hearings.

4.3.3.3 Teachers support

All the participants do get support from teachers in various ways. Ms Mamabolo who encountered a challenge of male teachers used to get support from female teachers as she said they were very powerful.

Ms Mamabolo said I used to get lot of support from female teachers as I had a problem with mostly male teachers. Now I do get support from all teachers as they do everything together.

Ms Moko said I do get support from teachers especially lady teachers they make sure that everything is in order at the school. If I am not at school and the child is misbehaving they make sure that the child is disciplined as per code of conduct. Both male and female teachers make sure the welfare of the learners is on their hands.

Ms Moloko said they are very supportive sometimes I don't even need to do portfolios. People will come forward themselves for whatever portfolio. Female teachers supervising toilets, morning study and afternoon study.

Women use personal power based on charisma and contacts. Women who rely heavily on their predominantly female characteristics tend to enjoy more support than women who adopt the masculine style of leadership (Wolaransin Pillay, 2001). When log books and time books perused confirmed a good attendance of teachers in the schools' events. The staff minutes also showed the involvement of teachers in building up the schools.

4.3.3.4 Support from other networks

All the three women principals did get support from different networks. Ms Mamabolo said:

I do get support from SAPA and Social Welfare when we have social grants cases and also Tongaat Hulletts organised for the school HIV/AIDS awareness programme.

Ms Moloko also said:

From the hospital yes I do get support. The church is also very supportive.

Ms Moko lastly said:

I do get support from principal's forum where they speak of women in management and leadership. I also get support from SANCA, SAPS, Always Pads and the local clinic.

For the school to grow it must network with other local schools, other government departments, business and private sectors (Collective Agreement Number 1 of 2008). Some of these events organised by these other networks were witnessed through photos, newspaper articles and entered in the log books.

4.3.4 Leadership and management styles

4.3.4.1 Democratic leadership and management style

Ms Moko and Ms Mamabolo mentioned that they do not utilise one style but a utilised style that would be suitable to assist them to solve the problem faced on that particular instance. In as much as they said they used more than one style of leadership and management there was a common style they usually adopted. That is a democratic style of leadership and management. They said they use this style most of the time in their schools because they believe all staff members must contribute for the growth and development of the school. Ms Moko said:

Eei! All management styles are there. I think they helped me a lot especially in difficult times. The style I mostly use is democratic style, because I am most transparent and I do not have hidden agendas. I've got an open door policy

the school is ours. Teachers must feel free to voice out suggestions to build the school.

Ms Mamabolo also said:

I do not have one specific leadership style or styles. I utilise a style that will be best suitable for the situation at hand. More and above I am a democratic leader I negotiate issues. I have an open door policy but I am firm and fair.

Many researchers of women management, such as Pillay (2001), Madlala (2007), Ismail and Ibrahim (2008), Paulsen (2009) and Ngcobo (2010) conclude that, most women managers prefer democratic leadership. The female manager especially when still new in a managerial position might benefit from shared decision making in that it might create a positive perception that she is involving the staff in the running of the school (Paulsen, 2009).

4.3.4.2 Participative leadership and management style

Ms Moloko believes in always utilising one style of management and leadership because she believed that more ideas will come forward as people are free to voice their thoughts. She believes that you make people feel free they can do best 'if you make people feel bound' they do not function to their full potential. She said:

As I mentioned before I like participative style. It makes people really want to contribute. I usually say to them 'think aloud'. I've got an open door policy I always encourage them to come to my office and share ideas so that we can all own the school.

Leigh and Walters in Pillay (2001) discovered that participative management style lead to useful involvement in decisions and joint problem-solving. Participatory decision-making and two-way communications are sub-categories of the democratic leadership style. Coleman (2003) also talked of female leadership where it is raised that female principals and other senior managers tend towards a participative transformative management style. Women demonstrate a more democratic and participatory leadership style (Pillay, 2001). Democratic and participatory leadership styles are closely aligned with the core values of feminine paradigm such as nurturing, empathy and consciousness of other's feelings which allows for

tolerance of diversity and enhanced participation, involvement and communication (Ngcobo, 2010).

It is difficult to separate a participatory management style from a democratic one. With a participatory style the ultimate decision making lies with the manager, while using a democratic style will ensure decision that the decision of the majority is adhered to (Paulsen, 2009 p.21). My observation was that staff members of Ms Moloko's schools were free and vocal. In the staff meeting teachers were contributing freely which proved that they were free to voice their suggestions.

4.3.5 Women principals' relationships with other colleagues

All the three women principals have good relationships with their colleagues and also neighbouring schools. Ms Mamabolo said:

Now I have a very good relationship with my colleagues. We work hand in hand. We also do social gatherings like secret pals and also visit bereaved to pay our condolences. This time around I have powerful teachers and good relationship.

Ms Moloko also said:

I have a good relationship with principals of two neighbouring secondary schools. I also have a good relationship with all staff members (teachers, SMT, non-teaching and support staff). We do have even social gatherings like celebrating birthdays.

Ms Moko said:

I think the reason why I've got a good relationship with my colleagues and the community because 'it is easy to talk a woman than to a man'. My relationship with my colleagues is very good.... I also have a good relationship with other school principals of which most of them are males.

Shakeshaft (1989) points out that from research findings women tend to have more contact with teachers and students and spends more time with colleagues and community. Ferrarrio in Galanaki, Papalexandris and Halikias (2009) confirms that psychologists, social

psychologists and sociologists supported that women's greater concern is that of relationships. This evidence suggests that women have more of the skills that align with those of the transformational leader (Tomlinson, 2004).

In my observation most teachers I saw from staff photos of different social gatherings and log books entries showed that they had good relationships with colleagues and with principals. Ms Mamabolo used to have a bad relationship especially with male teachers as she used to have a challenge with four teachers. They used to group together and caucus and expose her in a meeting if she has done something wrong.

Before, I had a good relationship with female teachers because women are committed, very strict and vocal. I had a bad relationship with male teachers. They used to group together and caucus and expose me in a meeting if I have done something wrong.

One woman principal who participated in one of the studies said that males think they should be the domineering ones. She went on to say "Male's egos are affected. Men always have a better than thou attitude. Men think they should be in leadership positions." (Paulsen, 2009, p.53).

4.3.6 Other management experiences shared with the researcher

Ms Moko and Ms Mamabolo also raised that it was not easy to be a woman principal. The reason was that of performing dual roles. At school you are expected to manage a school as a principal and at home expected to perform duties of a mother.

Ms Moko said as a single parent I had to work very hard as I have a school to manage, I have a household to manage and also attend church congregation.

Ms Mamabolo said to be a woman principal is also very challenging because you need to manage your household, the school, the learners, the SGB and the community at large.

Madlala (2007) and Paulsen (2009) also concur with the fact that the multiple roles are also a challenge in women managers as they are working women. They point out that there are intense battles in terms of balancing work and family life.

This was concurred through observation when I had to make interviews appointment. Ms Mamabolo said she needs to fetch grandchildren first from school. Ms Moko was phoned by her daughter as I was interviewing her. She mentioned that she must make sure that she is home early so that she can assist her daughter with school work. Ms Moloko preferred to be interviewed on a weekend.

4.4 Chapter summary

This chapter first presented women's biographical data that was thought relevant to understand the context of the study, followed by the challenges principals experienced and how they cope or overcome them. The next chapter is a concluding chapter and will suggest recommendations as to how women managers can be assisted as well as assist themselves when facing challenges in their work place.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

After careful analysis of the data, very clear conclusions emerged in terms of the critical questions formulated in the introductory chapter. Based on the findings outlined in the previous chapter of this study which were generated from interviews, observations and documents review, pertinent recommendations are made.

5.2 Summary of the study

Chapter one provided an introduction to the study. This chapter provides the background and purpose of the study, statement of the problem, key research questions, research design and methodology. The definition of concepts, data analysis procedures and ethical issues were also clarified in this chapter.

Chapter Two outlined the literature review on experiences of women in general, experiences of women in management continentally and internationally and transformational and feminine management styles. The theoretical frameworks underpinned the study was also outlined.

Chapter Three discussed the research design, methodology and ethical issues of this study. This chapter further explained the discussion on qualitative research methodology, data generation strategies such as interviews, documents review and observations that the researcher used to investigate the management challenges experienced by women principals in three rural secondary schools. This chapter further described how data analysis was conducted and issues of trustworthiness.

Chapter Four discussed the detailed findings, presentation and analysis of the research data. It focussed on how women principals manage their schools as experience challenges in managing the schools and how they overcame those challenges.

Chapter Five provides a summary of the whole study, conclusions generated from the findings of this study and recommendations that will assist women principals to improve their management skills and also those women teachers who aspire to be managers in the future.

5.3 Conclusions

The following conclusions were reached after careful consideration of the findings of the study:

Most of the management challenges women principals experienced emanated from the fact that they are women and also that they are managing secondary schools from rural communities which are characterised by: poor educational and economic status of the community; inadequate physical and infrastructure conditions of schools-buildings especially toilet facilities; no adequate transport available; sickness and diseases affecting the communities; high attrition and drop-out rates at secondary level; educational disparities between girls and boys infringing the right to education; no access to communication and information technology; no access to life-long opportunities; role of traditional leaders and lack of understanding of democracy and conservatism. These above characteristics pose a serious challenge to women leaders and the quality of education delivery at the researched schools.

The School Governing Bodies lack capacity due to illiteracy of some parent component members and this leads to SGBs not contributing efficiently towards the development and growth of schools. Most SGB members do not understand their roles and responsibilities pertaining the school governance and professional matters. The principals regularly need to remind them of academic and governance boundaries which at times they want to overlap.

There is also scarce public transport that leads to schools not having highly qualified teachers; principals compelled to employ unqualified teachers and foreign nationals. Women principals also experience inequality as they experience non-acceptance by some male educators. Sometimes they even lack confidence due to the fact that they are not welcome by sub-ordinates especially male teachers in the authority positions. They also experience too much pressure as they have to work twice to prove that they are capable and have a potential to be managers. Lack of commitment of some young teachers and the meetings or events

organised by teacher unions during contact time especially compromises delivery of quality education especially in rural areas as per above mentioned rural conditions.

Learners are also one of the biggest challenge as they are exposed to drugs and substance abuse; teenage pregnancy; HIV/AIDS; some to polygamous families and non-exposure to electronic and print media. In rural communities girls are still seen as ‘lesser children’ when compared to boys. The girls are prepared to be future wives and mothers and that indirectly affects their abilities to acquire education. Another serious challenge is that of boys sometimes not taking instructions or orders from women principals because they are women. It is so because in some rural communities some people still believe that women are always subordinates of men especially as they are exposed to polygamous families. Boys being future men need to be prepared to lead at a younger age and give instructions so that they become real and better men. At a school environment boys take orders freely from male teachers and HoDs than from women teachers and managers. Now and then male teachers are called in to assist when disciplining the learners especially boys.

Generally, because of low educational and economic status, the rural communities are not involved in education of their children. Women managers still experience a serious challenge as gender stereotypes conflict with leadership stereotypes. In rural communities women managers are still not recognised as managers as they are perceived not capable but treated as women. Some male parents are still having a problem of accepting women as managers especially in secondary schools. There is still a traditional system which expects men to play leading roles in decision making. That means the communities do not have faith in women as leaders.

In addition, the Department of Education on the other hand poses a “one size fits all” approach to policies and expects implementation without a careful consideration of the needs of the rural communities. Furthermore, in some cases the Department of Education does not provide continuous support to rural schools as it is supposed to do. Lastly, the Department of Education has put in place training manuals that aim to capacitate women in and into management leadership positions, but there is no implementation of such a programme by the Department officials. This leads to women principals to not even receive induction, mentoring, and support and coaching from the Department of Education.

Women in this study also demonstrate a more democratic and participatory leadership style. Democratic and participatory leadership styles are closely aligned with the core values of

feminine paradigm such as nurturing, empathy and consciousness of other's feelings which allows for tolerance of diversity and enhanced participation, involvement and communication.

It is also concluded that it is difficult for women principals to maintain a balance between professional and personal life because of the challenges they were facing such as having to work harder than male principals to prove that they were capable of their positions.

5.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations are made based on the above findings and conclusions:

5.4.1 Rural area development

The government must speed up the process of developing rural areas, where intervention strategies should be aimed to address poverty whereby access to economic activities will be expanded, investing in infrastructure and human capital; building skills and knowledge beyond agriculture; sustainable development as well as promoting social cohesion. The government and municipalities must build public libraries, schools, clinics and multipurpose centres for rural communities. By that the state institutions will be made responsive to poor rural people.

Social development in rural development might bring infrastructure; understanding democracy and the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa and women empowerment and change of mind-set in as far as the role of women in society is concerned. If the rural communities are exposed to the fact that any capable person can take a leading role, so they will also welcome the idea of women managing rural secondary schools. The rural development will also assist women principals to easily access information rather than relying on other people for information.

5.4.2 Development of SGBs

There should also be continuous workshops for SGBs organised by the Department of Education and also by the principals as per South African Schools Act Section 19(1b and 2). I think also SASA must be amended to extend the period to be an SGB member from three

years to five years, because I think that will give the Department of Education enough time to capacitate SGBs and also for them to confidently contribute as expected. I think time is too short for them to learn at the same to perform.

These workshops must capacitate them on the South African Schools Act and the Constitution of the Republic Of South Africa where issues of gender equality are emphasised. That will assist them to realise that the composition and positions within the SGB should not be gender based. The SGB is the link between parents and the school, so if they are well capacitated it will be easy for them to influence the parents with issues and that will assist women principals to manage schools smoothly and efficiently.

5.4.3 Gender education

The Department of Education and the teacher unions must design more programmes on gender education, gender equity and affirmative action so that both male and female teachers will be capacitated and be prepared to serve under women managers. The message to do away with sexist attitudes must be conveyed and that women managers must be recognised and be given respect as they deserve. The Department of Education and teacher unions must also workshop newly appointed educators and the principals and SMTs must put induction programmes in place. The teacher unions must schedule their events outside teaching times.

Gender education will assist women principals because they will be judged as principals not as women. Women and male principals of rural secondary schools will be judged at the same level. Lastly, women principals will also receive respect and dignity they deserve as professional human beings. Women principals must also be in charge of their development by setting structures in schools that will address gender issues.

5.4.4 Community involvement in rural areas

Before anything could happen community leaders must first be briefed about the development and discussions so that they can assist to summon their people to community meetings. The communities must be made aware that education, HIV/AIDS, teenage pregnancy, drug and substance abuse are societal issues. That means everybody is expected to take part in addressing and dealing with these issues.

The Department of Education must have meaningful discussions with people in the rural communities about educational matters, so that their main concerns and interests are looked at before discussing schooling itself. The Departments of Health and Safety and Security must also go to communities and teach them how to stay away from drugs and healthy living. On the issue of re-socialisation of girls, the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act No.108 of 1996 and the Commission on Gender Equity Act No.3 of 1996 must be communicated to the communities.

Women in the communities must be given leadership roles in programmes that address the above mentioned challenges. If the community is exposed to the fact that boys and girls are equal, there are no chores for boys and girls and boys are not better than girls. That will assist and change perceptions about women and men roles in education of their children. All members of community irrespective of gender will be involved in building up the growth of the school. If women in the communities are acknowledged that they can lead that also change perceptions about women principals.

5.4.5 The role of the Department of Education

The Department of Education must provide continuous support to women principals by providing workshops or courses that will capacitate them as women managers. The Department must also mentor newly appointed women principals and establish networking system for women principals. Workshops, mentoring and networking will equip women managers to cope with challenges they face on daily running of the schools. If the Department is not doing anything I strongly recommend that women managers themselves must initiate these network programmes in their wards and expand to their districts and regions.

The Department of Education must consult rural communities before policies are gazetted so that they have a voice in the policy formulation as they will be expected to implement. As the Report of the Ministerial Committee on Rural Education (2005) points out, “Current governance policies do not take note of existing organisations in communities and therefore do not draw on their expertise.” The Report recommends, “The broader school communities in rural communities must be drawn into decision-making through broadly-based

participatory processes (Department of Education, 2005: Recommendation 37 in Gardiner, 2008).

5.4.6 Utilisation of feminine management style

Most women managers utilise democratic and participatory leadership and management styles which are aligned with core values of feminine paradigm. These styles seem to be assisting women to cope with challenges they face in the daily running of the schools without getting induction, mentoring, support and workshops as women managers from the Department of Education. If these styles assisted that much it should be strongly recommended that managers utilise these leadership styles in schools so that schools are managed effectively. These leadership styles are significant as they are keeping with democratic principles as enshrined in the Constitution of the Republic of South Africa. Furthermore, all stakeholders are afforded a chance to air their views and lead to everybody owning the decisions. Lastly, these styles promote respect for diversity.

5.5 Chapter summary

This chapter has provided a summary of the study and conclusions based on the findings in the prior chapter. In addition, based on the findings and conclusions above, recommendations I believe to be useful to benefit the women principals and the delivery of quality education are made.

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