UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

PIETERMARITZBURG

EXPLORING WOMEN PRINCIPALS' UNDERSTANDINGS AND EXPERIENCES OF LEADERSHIP AND MANAGEMENT

A dissertation submitted in partial fulfilment of the academic requirements for the degree of Master of Education: Education Leadership, Management and Policy

KHAYELIHLE JEFFREY SHEZI

2014

DECLARATION OF ORIGINALITY

I, Khayelihle Jeffrey Shezi, declare that this research report, **"Women principals'**
understanding and experiences of leadership and management: A small-scale
qualitative study" abides the by the following rules:

i.   The research presented in this dissertation, except where indicated otherwise, is my original work.

ii.   This dissertation has not been submitted for any degree or examination of any other university.

iii.   The dissertation does not contain persons' data, pictures, graphs or other information, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other persons.

iv.   This dissertation does not contain other persons' writing, unless specifically acknowledged as being sourced from other researchers. Where other written source has been quoted, then:

- their words have been re-written but the general information attributed to them has been referenced;
- where their exact words have been used, their writing has been placed inside quotation marks and referenced.

v.   Where I have reproduced a publication of which I am an author, co-author or editor, I have indicated in detail which part of the publication was actually written by myself alone and have fully referenced such publications.

vi.   This dissertation does not contain text, graphics or tables copies pasted from the internet, unless specifically acknowledged, and the source being detailed in the dissertation and in the Reference Sections.

Students' name: …………………………… ……………………………

K.J Shezi (203400136) Date

SUPERVISOR'S STATEMENT

This dissertation has been submitted with my approval

_____

Mr Siphiwe Eric Mthiyane (Supervisor)

November 2014

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Firstly, I wish to acknowledge God, the Creator of everything for the power He gave me in this study. I believe that it is through His guidance that I have managed to overcome the challenges of this research study.

Secondly, I also acknowledge the following individuals who without their support and love, this study would not have been successful.

- Dr Irene Muzvidziwa and Dr S.E Mthiyane, my honourable supervisors, for their love and guidance in this study.
- My colleagues, the three women principals, who positively participated in this research study. I thank you for granting me the privilege of sharing your understandings and experiences of leadership and management.
- All the academic staff at the University of KwaZulu-Natal that lectured me and helped in the completion of this dissertation.
- My eternally supportive wife Sithembile and my children Awande and Nqubeko for encouraging me to work on the study.
- My friend, Njabulo Nzama, for his love, support, inspiration and assistance in the typing process
- My sister, Alzina, for her motivating comments.
- Librarians, Sonto Moleme and Simon Shezi for coming to my rescue on several occasions.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late mother, Nomathonyane Ellianorah Shezi who brought me up, took care of me, provided me with clothing and shelter from birth, sent me to school and paid school fees for me from grade one until I obtained my Teacher Diploma.

ABSTRACT

This research project explored women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management. It was conducted as small-scale qualitative inquiry in three schools, two primaries and one secondary, of one education district in KwaZulu –Natal. The study explored what women principals understand about leadership and management, what they experience as they lead and how they navigate these challenges.

This small-scale qualitative study was located within an interpretive research paradigm. Transformational leadership theory and Ubuntu, an African philosophy were adopted for this study. International and national scholastic literature was interrogated to seek more insight on the research topic. One-on-one in-depth semi structured interviews and questionnaires constructed data generation instruments. Data generated was analysed employing thematic analysis that identified codes, categories and themes.

The findings revealed that the concept of leadership and management were understood by women principals as two inter-related aspects that should be applied in the South African education system. According to the findings, leadership was understood as an influence to attain goals; creation of vision; and flexible activity. Management was understood by women principals as tools and methods to attain goals and an activity to work with other people. Also, the findings revealed that women principals experienced these two concepts as rejection, nurturing people and exposure to management of funds and School Governing Body matters. The findings also revealed that women principals experience different challenges such as rejection, disrespect and discrimination. In arrogating these challenges, the findings revealed that they are guided by certain ethics and values that reflect Ubuntu which is also a prerequisite of transformation.

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACE   Advanced Certificate in Education

DOE   Department of Education

HOD   Head of Department

LTSM   Learning and Teaching Support Material

SGB   School Governing Body

SMT   School Management Team

DP   Deputy Principal

PFMA   Public Finance Management Act

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Since the Democratic Government came into power in 1994, several new educational policies that address issues of gender equity were designed and implemented. Despite these new policies, women are still marginalised and do not access principalship positions, even though they dominate in the teaching profession. Men still occupy most principalship positions.

This chapter gives an overview of the study by discussing the background, focus, and purpose of the study.

1.2 Background to the study

Schools in South Africa and abroad have been organised in a hierarchical manner that placed mostly men in leadership roles. Women represent the majority of teachers, but men occupy most principalship positions. Even findings of early research studies confirm this when they reflect that men usually outnumber women as leaders in schools (Azoola, 2011; Moorosi, 2010; Celikten, 2005; Coleman, 2003).

The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, 1996, is an authoritative book of the Republic. Any regulation and behaviour that does not comply with it is unacceptable, and the rules imposed by it must be obeyed. Section 9 of the Constitution stipulates that "no person may unfairly discriminate, directly or indirectly, against anyone on one or more grounds including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, mental status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth" (The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108, p.7). Furthermore, the Employment of Educators Act (EEA), Act 76 of 1998, seeks to redress past imbalances by requiring employers to take measures aimed at bringing about equity in the workplace. However, early research studies reveal that, worldwide, the teaching profession has a large number of females than males, but in South Africa and abroad women do not get a fair amount of leadership positions (Mapolisa and Madziyire, 2012;

Azoola, 2011; Nogay and Beebe, 2008; Aladejana and Aladejana, 2005; Coleman, 2003, 2004, 2005).

However, more women are entering leadership roles that have been previously reserved for and occupied by men. This may lead to women principals facing a plurality of the dilemmas. Women may be tempted to imitate masculine leadership habits, whereas

feminine leadership processes may be valuable in the leadership of schools. Hence, this study aims to explore women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management.

Moreover, the reviewed literature reveals that women view the role of principalship differently from men (Coleman, 2005; Brooking, 2005). Also, it is evident in the findings of early research studies that male dominance in school leadership results in women principals being rejected by their subordinates (Moorosi, 2010; Aladejana and Aladejana, 2005).

The challenges faced by women generate a question about whether the women principals adapt to traditional approaches of leadership or adopt a different culture in leading schools. The problem revolves around whether women who enter into leadership positions imitate men in their leadership or lead in a different manner based on their own understanding of leadership and management.

1.3 Focus and purpose of the study

This study focuses on women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management. The purpose of the study is to explore women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management and to find out whether women lead schools in a way that brings about transformation and promotes Ubuntu, an African philosophy.

Owing to the reason why this study has been undertaken, I have decided to focus on the experiences of two primary schools, and one secondary school, principals in the uMgungundlovu District of Pietermaritzburg who have been involved in the School Management Team (SMT) for more than five years.

1.4 The Rationale

The motivation for this study comes from my interest as an educator and principal. Having taught for 13 years in seven schools, five primary and two secondary schools, I witnessed two things: firstly, I noticed that there is a discrepancy between the number of men and women in leadership positions; and, secondly, I observed that women and men seem to differ when it comes to their beliefs about how schools should be led and managed.

Also, my promotion to the principalship post contributed to the rationale for this study. I was promoted to the principalship post in August 2009, succeeding two women principals, who also led the school at different periods. In the first week, one female educator, who acted in the post before I was appointed, openly said, *"I am pleased that the school is getting a male principal"*. This showed me that some individuals still prefer masculine leadership to feminine leadership.

The school where I have been appointed as a principal is under one of the circuits of uMgungundlovu District. The circuit has 32 schools, 24 primary and eight secondary schools. Surprisingly, out of 32 schools, 24 are headed by men and only eight schools are headed by females. There is only one woman in charge of a secondary school. This also seems to reflect that there is some form of discrepancy between women and men in relation to how they are employed in leadership positions. Hence, all these issues pertaining to leadership and management of schools have awoken my interest in wanting to explore the understanding and experience of women principals with regard to leadership and management and to discover whether they lead in a manner that transforms schools and reflects Ubuntu.

Transformational leaders empower and motivate those around themselves. Key concepts among those who adopt a transformational framework include issues such as mentorship, reciprocity of dialogue, creativity, empowering people, social justice, managing diversity and making a positive difference in people's lives. Nowadays, leadership that always recognises the presence of others situated culturally and historically within the school setting is needed. Therefore, through this study, we can build a strong base for understanding educational leadership and management by drawing from women principals' understanding and experience. This will help us understand whether women principals include Ubuntu and employ transformational leadership approaches in school leadership and management.

1.5 Key Research questions

The three key research questions which this study aimed to achieve were:

- What are the understanding and experience of women principals with regard to leadership and management?

- What challenges do women principals experience on becoming and being leaders in schools?
- How do women principals overcome the challenges they experience as leaders?

1.6 Research objectives

The research objectives of this study were:

- to find out women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management;
- to find out the challenges women principals experience on their entry into principalship and as leaders in schools; and
- to find out how women principals overcome the challenges they experience as leaders.

1.7 Methodology

A small-scale, qualitative study situated in the interpretive paradigm was chosen to investigate three women principals of two primary schools and one secondary school in the uMgungundlovu District of Pietermaritzburg in KwaZulu-Natal. The data from the interview transcripts and reflective personal notes were inductively analysed, with the main intention being to generate themes.

One-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured and tape-recorded interviews, as well as document analysis, were used as two appropriate methods of data collection and to enhance validity.

1.8. Conclusion

Following on from this chapter, which is an introductory chapter outlining the background of this study, rationale for this study, key research questions and the methodological approach, Chapter Two covers a brief discussion on related research literature. Chapter Three outlines the research design and methodological procedures employed in this study. In Chapter Four, findings and qualitative analysis of the data collected are presented. Chapter Five deals with the discussion of the findings, and links them back to Chapter Two and Chapter Three. Chapter Six provides the conclusion arrived at and recommendations for the promotion of meaningful leadership and management in schools.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

It is obvious that in any school there is a principal who serves as a leader or manager. He/she is responsible and accountable for the smooth functioning of the school. The principal is the most senior individual within the school, who plays a great role in leading and managing the school to achieve its goals. It is well understood that the school principal does not operate individually. He or she should be part of the structures, such as the School Management Team (SMT) and the School Governing Body (SGB). Even though there should be structures formed in the school, the principal remains the engine in leading and managing those structures. He or she plays a vital part in ensuring that the school takes the direction it is supposed to take. According to the Department of Education, the school principal should bring about and execute management duties in a manner that promotes professionalism. He/she should run daily activities related to teaching and learning; execute departmental duties in accordance with the relevant policies; ensures that teaching and learning is supported; in charge of personnel and financial matters; design intra-mural curriculum and chooses Learning and Teaching Support Materials (LTSMs) to be bought (Department of Education, 1997).

From the above-listed core functions of the principal, one could understand that anybody who qualifies to be a principal can perform these core functions irrespective of gender (it matters not whether the principal is a male or female). However, my observation as a principal is that the teaching profession is dominated by female teachers, but there are more males than females in principalship positions. Additionally, the literature shows that even though there are more women than men in the teaching profession, but a little number of women access leadership positions (Coleman, 2005).

Since the aim of this study is to explore women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management, this chapter examines literature (both local and international) describing leadership and management (in the more general sense) and then specifically the literature that relates to women as leaders of schools.

Firstly, the concepts of leadership and management will be discussed. I believe that it is vital to understand the distinction and relationship between these two concepts and acknowledge that it might be impossible for a school to function properly without leadership and management being put in place. Secondly, there is a discussion on women as principals, the challenges women principals experience on becoming and being leaders in schools, and the manner in which they overcome the experienced challenges. Lastly, the conceptual and theoretical framings that underpin this study will be highlighted.

2.2 Leadership versus management

Leadership and management are two related concepts which play a vital role in school functionality. Kotter (1990) refers to leadership and management as two sides of the same coin. This implies that these concepts influence each other. For example, it might be problematic to view the school principal as a leader only or as a manager only. Thus, in this chapter, these two concepts will be used simultaneously, as the principal should be the one who simultaneously leads and manages within the school.

Kotter (1990) presents that leadership is associated with words such as guides, motivates, initiates or introduces, anticipates or expects, builds visions, creates, moves forward, inspires and breaks or crosses boundaries. Management is associated with words such as co-ordinates or harmonises, organises, maintains, stabilises, realises, structures, establishes parameters, handles and sets boundaries. This makes it clear that the school will lose its direction if the principal fails to devote more time to the way the school is led or managed. Davidoff and Lazarus (1997) confirm this when they present that leadership is about moving forward and having a sense of direction. They go on to say that management is about holding the organisation, and establishing certainty, confidence and security. Furthermore, management is seen as the provision of stability in the daily activities of an organisation pertaining to day-to-day operations (Holdford, 2003). Holdford goes on to say that management works successfully in peaceful situations, when there is no change required. Management means the accomplishment of organisational objectives in the appropriate manner through planning, organising, leading, controlling organisational resources, budgeting, staffing and problem solving (Kotter, 1990, cited in Holdford, 2003; Benns, 1989). According to Kotter (1990) cited in Holdford (2003) "leaders excel at coping with change, setting direction for others, communicating a common vision and inspiring followers" (p.178).

Beach and Reinhart (1989) see leadership as a vital part of the supervision process, which involves persons within the organisation who are expected to demonstrate leadership abilities. Benns (1989) also presents leadership as the use of influence to motivate others and to accomplish organisational objectives. In relation to this, Christie (2010) understands leadership as a "relationship of influence directed towards organisational goals or outcomes, whether formal or informal" (p. 969). Kotter (1990) suggests that leaders create the essence or mission of an organisation - its reason for being - while managers are responsible for helping to achieve the mission or vision. According to Van der Westhuizen (1991) management is a specific is a type of activities in education, which contains those controlled tasks carried out by a person in authority in a specific section, so as to attain quality education. Van der Westhuizen goes on to describe leadership as the combined and energetic utilization of the leader's capability, in persuasive way, which will influence the followers to be aware of prevailing goals.

Now, I have attempted to review the literature that describes leadership and management in relation to my research study. From the various descriptions of leadership and management above, it is clear that women as principals should play a role of being leaders and managers in schools and recognise the presence of others situated culturally and historically within the organisational setting.

2.3 Women as principal

In England, Coleman (2003) conducted a research study and discovered that women used a cooperative way of management which was advisory, transparent and democratic. Rosener (1990), cited in Burns and Martin (2010), also found that women regularly try to establish good relationship with their fellow-workers and subordinates. Rosener further contended that women leaders "encourage participation, share power and information, enhance other people's self-worth, and get others excited about their work" (p.120). Additionally, women were found to use a people- oriented style of leadership; for example, team related, supportive and caring. This has the implication that women lead schools in a manner that considers the presence of others within the school. Therefore, there seems to be evidence that women lead schools in a way that is transformative and reflects Ubuntu.

In agreement with Coleman (2003), Celikten (2005) presents that women were found to "lead in more transformative and inclusive ways" (p. 532). Hurty (1995), cited in Celikten (2005), advocates the idea presented by Celikten when suggesting that women administrators use

their "emotional energies as resources to power - they nurtured growth, pondered decisions with others in mind, used talk as a tool of problem solving, and worked collaboratively for change."(p.533). Also, according to the findings of the study by Coleman (2005), women credit their gender for allowing them to diffuse aggression, empathise with female parents and being able to attract men.

Also, Azoola (2011) found that women leaders use a mothering style in school leadership. The findings also reveal that women leaders are goal oriented, and they are the nurturing, caring type. This shows that leadership can play a significant role in managing change and offering reform initiatives within the school community. Furthermore, principals of schools should be those individuals who have a duty to encourage collaboration among staff, the community and learners to be active participants in the reform initiatives.

According to Brooking (2008) and Coleman (2005) women were found having common power to foster and able to do several activities at one. This was viewed as an advantage in terms of leadership and management. The power to foster and able to do many activities at one is vital in the process of school leadership and management. This implies that women principals support and protect the leaners and educators within the school. The principal should be alert and ensure that the relevant policies are put in place for the benefit of the entire school, which could be achieved through working harmoniously together. Moreover, their ability to multi-task allows them (women) as leaders to engage in various activities simultaneously to benefit the school as a whole.

In Nigeria, Aladejana and Aladejana (2005) engaged in a survey. The findings of their study were that women leaders were probably more effective, careful in handling funds, fully dedicated to work and considerate. Moreover, they discovered that women were concerned about "how decisions are reached, share information, motivate their employees, and delegate tasks more effectively" (p. 74). Also, they discovered that learner achievement is improved in schools guided by females. In addition to this, women school leaders were found to be better role models, more efficient, but rather harsh and difficult compared to males.

The findings of the research study by Nogay and Beebe (2008) reveal that women principals excelled in the following categories: constructing school objectives, transmitting school aim, monitoring teaching and learning, orchestrating learning and teaching activities, guiding students, defending notional time, avail themselves, supplying motives for teachers and learners and encouraging lifelong learning. It is apparent in these research findings that

women principals excelled in the categories of leadership and management that form part of proper school functionality. Moreover, these findings justify that women principals are fully devoted to their leadership roles and, in so doing, the goals of the school are likely to be accomplished. This implies that women lead schools in a way that enhances learner progress. They never forget to employ a transformational approach in leadership and reflect Ubuntu.

In Spanish schools, Santos (1996) found that women had a natural tendency to be more emotional, to look after others, to be more intuitive, to help the weak, to be very patient and to relate better to teaching. Over and above this, women were found to understand leadership as a process of empowering others, not as the exercise of power over them. The most efficient characteristics that were identified by Santos from women leading in Spanish schools were persuasion, guidance, tolerance, follow up and control. These research findings on women reflect that they adopt a mothering approach in school leadership and management. This kind of leadership is very important when dealing with people, more especially children who attend the school. This has an implication that women deal with individuals in a way that make them happy and secure within the school environment. As a result, the organisational goals may be easily accomplished if individuals' needs are considered. Moreover, this reflects that women lead and manage in a manner that transforms schools and promotes Ubuntu.

Young and McLeod (2001), cited in Trinidad and Normore (2004), seem to argue in support of Santos (1996) when they present that women tend to approach the job of school leadership by using transformational styles. This is also justified in the findings of Gupstone and Slick (1996) when they posit that women tend to be more transformational than authoritarian. In comparing women with their male counterparts, women view themselves as more verbally oriented, more concerned about personal relations and more cooperative. An adoption of a transformational approach in school leadership may lead to the promotion of issues like mentorship, empowering people to enhance goal accomplishment, consultation, creativity, social justice and embracing diversity. An inclusion of these issues in school leadership and management would confirm that women lead schools in a manner that allows schools to emerge as teaching and learning contexts that promote stability and learner progress.

According to Regan and Brooks et al. (1992), cited in Trinidad and Normore (2004), women "value close relationships with students, staff, colleagues, parents and community members as a key in school leadership" (p. 583).

Moreover, the findings of the study by Nosike and Oguzor (2011) reveal that female principals are more democratic in their choice of leadership style. Democratic styles of leadership are credited for their recognition of individuals who are culturally and historically situated within the organisation. On the other hand, this study has equally shown that some female principals are often more autocratic in their leadership style.

These findings acknowledge that sometimes there are situations that compel women leaders to be autocratic. Also, the study shows that female principals involve the teachers in decision-making. This makes it clear that women principals ensure the involvement of others in the leadership of schools, while building good rapport with all stakeholders. Owing to this kind of leadership, individuals concerned can work harmoniously together for the benefit of the entire school and decisions taken may be easily implemented without divisions among the stakeholders. As a result, schools may be transformed.

The findings of the research study by Mapolisa and Madziyire (2012) reveal that women leaders lack support from their female subordinates. Additionally, the study also found that female women leaders experience incompetence to construct bold resolutions, have unenthusiastic glamour and skill to permit them to be competent and professional as school leaders, and make unpleasant work atmosphere in their schools-they have an attitude of being harsh on their female subordinates and oppress male subordinates who they view as challenge to their leadership approaches. Also, the study revealed that women school leaders faced a dilemma of verbal abuse from some individuals in the society, especially those from political structures. Over and above this, according to the findings of the study by Mapolisa and Madziyire (2012), women school leaders are perceived as not skilful and precise in designing goals and are easily dominated by factors in their environment.

According to attributes specified from the male and female paradigms of Gay (1993), cited in Coleman (2003), 59.4% of women school leaders were found to use informal approaches in their management. Dealing with issues in an informal way may put those concerned at ease. Moreover, 50.6% of school female leaders were viewed to be competitive in their approach. If a principal competes with other schools or principals, academic performance may improve.

2.4 Challenges women principals experience as leaders in schools

Moorosi (2010) mentions three phases that women principals experience on their calling journey. These phases are: anticipation, acquisition and performance. The anticipation phase,

as presented by Moorosi (2010), is based on the idea that women should be trained for principalship before they get into the position. Moorosi's concern is that women get into principalship positions without being prepared for managerial positions. He states clearly that women should be trained in management before they consider applying for management positions, or, alternatively, they should be promoted into junior management positions such as Head of Department (HOD) and Deputy Principal (DP).

In the acquisition phase, Moorosi (2010) presents that, during the selection process, women become victims of the hidden criteria which identify leadership with men. The selection panels are influenced by the misconception that principalship is for strong men. Experience and familiarity also serve as impediments that hinder women from acquiring principalship positions. This occurs when experience is considered as a prerequisite for accessing a leadership position. The findings of the study by Moorosi also revealed that School Governing Bodies (SGBs) have a tendency to employ those who are familiar to them.

The performance phase was based on circumstances which blocked women leaders from carrying out their duties after appointment. These included the "lack of institutional and professional support which leaves women at a loss in the field they are not familiar with, while they are expected to negotiate a balance between their work and family lives" (Moorosi, 2010, p. 11). Additionally, women were found to encounter traditional and cultural attitudes which identified leadership with men. Over and above this, women principals themselves or their ideas were not accepted by both male and female teachers in their schools.

Aladejana and Aladejana (2005) confirm the findings of Moorosi's study when they posit that male dominance leads to the incompetence of various males to believe in masculine styles of women's leadership. Coleman (2005) presents that women are perceived as not fit for leadership if they possess family burdens. He goes on to say that, during interviews, women's personal appearance is commented upon and the "comments are irrelevant to the post in question" (p.7). This has an implication that women experience various forms of discrimination based on mental status and personal appearance. This also blocks women from accessing senior positions.

Coleman (2004) found that women principals are working in the environment in which they are rejected, and in which masculine leadership is preferred by some of the stakeholders. The findings of early research studies also show that women principals experience sexism

(Coleman, 2003, 2004; Celikten, 2005). In support of these findings, Acker (2001), cited in Coleman (2008), presents that women seem to have a burden to lead the home and nurture children as well as possessing a career. This does not, however, mean that women should be discriminated against, because this double shift gives them ability to multi-task at the workplace. Women principals have to prove themselves and work harder to earn their place as leaders of schools.

2.5 How women handled challenges.

The findings of the study by Eby (2004) reflect that women principals succeed in a male-dominated world owing to mentorship, support at home and role models. In order to succeed, leaders of schools should be lifelong learners. On the other hand, the findings of Eby reflect that women principals search for knowledge from others who are more knowledgeable. This also confirms that they value the social capital which is based on the idea that one should have a good relationship with others, because we all need one another in life. This links with Ubuntu, an African philosophy, which means that, "I am because we are - I can only be a person through others" (Hill & April, 2000, p. 46).

Moorosi (2010) posits that women overcome the challenges by working harder to prove that they can lead in schools. Moreover, women principals, as Moorosi (2010) suggests, tend to network with other people. Rosener (1990), cited by Jankelowitz et al.,(2003), presents that women leaders are accessing top positions by drawing on the knowledge they have learnt from others.

Coleman (2003) also presents that commitment and being more capable than others is the manner in which women principals overcome the challenges they experience in leadership and management. Over and above this, women principals arrive at schools earlier than required and leave late. Early arrival and late departure confirm that women principals go the extra mile for the benefit of their subordinates, especially the learners.

2.6 The Conceptual and Theoretical Framing

My point is that it matters not whether the principal is a man or a woman. What matters is how one works after one's appointment. Since the South African Schools Act, 1996 encouraged decentralized school leadership and management, a leader should be the one who always recognizes the presence of others situated culturally, historically and within organisational settings. This implies that educational leaders should employ leadership and

management approaches that are grounded on Ubuntu, an African philosophy. Ubuntu means "I am because we are - I can only be a person through others." Hill and Kurt (2000, p. 46).

Mbigi and Westbrook (1998), cited in Hill and Kurt (2000), argue that the Ubuntu leadership perspective is about how we feel about ourselves and how we feel about others. It is the essence of our being. April (1999), cited in Hill and April (2000), refers to Ubuntu as an example of the notions that form part of the ancient cultures. It is about "hospitality, caring for one another, solidarity, love, interdependence and being able to go an extra mile for another" (p. 47). This study seeks to explore women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management, the challenges they experience in school leadership and how they overcome these challenges. The literature revealed that women principals employ leadership approaches that reflect the elements of Ubuntu, which is the recognition of the presence of others within the school, supporting, and giving love and caring.

Ubuntu, an African philosophy, resonates well with transformational leadership theory of Burns (1978). To reiterate, key concepts amongst those who adopt a transformational framework include issues such as mentorship, reciprocity of dialogue, creativity, empowering people, social justice, managing diversity and making a difference in people's lives.

According to Covey (2007) Burns first wrote about the concept of transformational leadership in his book *Leadership* (1978) when he studied political leadership. Burns (1978), as cited in Covey (2007), describes transformational leadership "not as set of specific behaviours, but rather as an on-going process by which leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of morality and motivation" (p. 20). Burns (1978), cited in Covey (2007), asserts that genuine leadership not only bring change and attain organisational goals, but transforms people engaged in the functioning of the organisation and make them better persons: both leaders and followers are dignified.

According to Sergiovanni (1990), cited in Coleman (2003), argues that transformational leadership guarantees the dedication of subordinates, and that the leaders and subordinates are allied in attaining their goals. They both want to grow and move the school in different direction. On the other hand, Leithwood (1992), cited in Coleman (2003), suggests that change leaders seem to be powerful in supporting their subordinates to work in harmony, maintain professionalism, engage in lifelong learning and helping teachers solve problems

together and promote team spirit. It is now clear that a leader who uses this style of leadership is unselfish and encourages collaboration on the future vision of the institution.

Moreover, the relevance of transformational leadership theory to this study is also justified by what influenced Burns to come up with such theory. Covey (2007) posits that Burns was dominated by Maslow's Theory of Human Needs. It highlights that people have different needs, and their performance in the organisation is determined by the extent to which these needs are fulfilled. This implies that if a leader provides for the followers' needs, achievement of goals could be enhanced.

2.7 Conclusion

This is the chapter in which relevant literature has been reviewed. From the above discussion of relevant literature, it is clear that in all organisations the concepts of leadership and management should be understood and applied for the proper functioning of the institution. The literature indicated that even though teaching has a large number of women, but a little number of women access leadership positions. It also became clear that women are confronted with various challenges on becoming and being leaders of schools, but they have proved to be matured and professional when overcoming these challenges. They were found leading and managing schools in a way that recognises the presence of others within the organisation and promotes Ubuntu. Therefore, this study is informed by Ubuntu, an African philosophy, and the concept of transformational leadership of Burns.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to portray the research design and methods used in this study. To reiterate, the intention is to find out:

- Understanding and experience of women principals with regard to leadership and management.
- Challenges women principals experience on becoming and being leaders in schools.
- How women principals overcome the challenges they experience as leaders.

3.2 Research Design

This study was conducted as a small-scale, qualitative style, since the intention was to compile information directly by communicating with the chosen participants in their setting. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) refer to qualitative research as an "inquiry which aims to collect data in face-to face situations by interacting with the selected persons in their setting" (p. 315). Creswell (2007), cited in McMillan and Schumacher (2010), suggests that qualitative researchers use an emanating qualitative style to enquiry, the compilation of information in a natural setting sensitive to the individuals and environments under study, and data analysis that is inductive and generates patterns or themes. He goes on to say that the final written report involves the voices of participants, and a detailed explanation and analysis of the problem. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) seem to agree with Creswell when they proclaim that the major goal of the qualitative study is to understand social phenomena from participants' perspectives or meanings. They go on to say that participants' meanings include their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions.

This study aimed to explore women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management, the challenges they experienced on becoming and being leaders of schools, and the manner in which they overcame those challenges. With respect to this aim, it is clear that women principals reflected on their feelings, beliefs, ideas, thoughts and actions with regard to leadership and management. Therefore, it is possible to locate this study under the qualitative style.

Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2006) present that "qualitative research is based on a constructivist philosophy, which assumes that reality is a multi-layered, interactive, shared social experience that is interpreted by individuals" (p. 315). According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010) qualitative research aims to understand participants from their own point of view, in their own voice. They go on to say that the focus is on the meaning of events and actions, as expressed by the participants. As I have indicated earlier, this study aims to interpret, understand and construct meaning about the phenomena of leadership and management in the lives of the participants, who are three women principals in the case of this study. Therefore, it is also possible to locate this study within the interpretive paradigm in which qualitative styles of information gathering and information could be used.

3.3 Methodology

The following two methods were used in this study:

- In-depth, semi-structured, qualitative interviews, which were also audio-recorded
- Document analysis

3.4 Setting

Women principals of schools in the uMgungundlovu District of KwaZulu-Natal participated in this study. Two principals of two separate primary schools and one principal leading the secondary school were interviewed at their schools after school hours. Selecting primary and secondary school principals was done purposefully. As one of the characteristic of qualitative research, McMillan and Schumacher (2010) state that it should be context sensitive. They go on to say that the situational context is vital in understanding behaviour. Individual behaviours are vigorously dominated by the environment in which they occur. It is commonly understood that primary schools and secondary schools operate in different contexts owing to differences in the curricula they offer and the age of the learners they admit. Thus involving both primary and secondary school principals was important to determine whether women principals of primary and secondary schools have common understanding and experience of leadership and management.

3.5 Unit of analysis

Three women principals, two leading primary schools and one leading a secondary school, formed the unit of analysis of this study. The selection was based on proximity and experience in school leadership. They were in charge of schools that were easily accessible to the researcher and all of them had leadership experience that was above five years.

3.6. Sampling

Purposeful sampling was used in this study. According to McMillan and Schumacher (2011) a sample was described as a group of subjects from which data are collected, often representative of a specific population. On the other hand, Patton (1990), cited in Creswell (2012), contends that, in purposeful sampling, researchers purposefully select individuals and sites to learn or understand the central phenomena. Patton goes on to say that the standard used in choosing participants and sites is whether they are "information rich" (p.169). Moreover, Cohen and Holiday (1979, 1983, 1996; Schofield, 1996), cited in Cohen et al. (2011), present that, in the purposeful sample, the chances of members of the wider population being selected for the sample are unknown. They go on to say that some members of the wider population definitely will be excluded and others included. The same thing applies to this study, as only three women principals were selected from a large number of women principals in the uMgungundlovu district.

3.7 Data collection methods

3.7.1 Interviews

One-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured, qualitative interviews were used in this study. These interviews took 60 minutes each and were also audio-recorded. Creswell (2012) proclaims that a qualitative interview occurs when researchers ask participants general open-ended questions and record their responses. Asking open-ended questions in qualitative research is credited by Creswell (2012), when he affirms that the participants can freely speak about their experiences without being disturbed by any viewpoint of the researcher or early research findings.

Furthermore, Kvale (1996), cited in Cohen and Manion (2011), refers to an interview as a sharing of ideas between the two or more persons on a topic with an intention to produce knowledge. Interviews, according to Cohen and Manion (2011), enable participants to share

an interpretation of their environment to articulate how they perceive situations from their own viewpoint. They go on to suggest that interview is "a flexible tool for data collection, enabling multi-sensory channels to be employed: verbal sensory channels, spoken and heard" (p. 409). In contrast to an everyday conversation, Dyer (1995), cited in Cohen and Manion (2011), suggests that an interview possesses a particular aim. It enquires, with the questions being asked by the researcher. Dyer further contend that the researcher alone may show unawareness and the answers must be clear and informative.

Since the purpose of this study was to get data on how participants perceive significant experiences in their lives with regard to leadership and management, one-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, with phenomenological aspects, were used. These interviews were tape- recorded with the agreement of the participants and were undertaken at the participant's school after appointment had been made. As I have indicated earlier, each interview was 60 minutes long. This was done to get in-depth descriptions of leadership and management from the women principals' point of view. It was gainful to employ interviews to gather information.

 Another importance of using interviews, according to Gay, Mills and Airasian (2006), is that they can create thorough data which is impossible with a questionnaire. Also, Gay et al. (2006) affirm that, by establishing rapport and trust, the researcher can gather rich data that respondents would not give when responding to a questionnaire. Moreover, they argue that interviews may lead to more accurate and honest responses, because the researcher can explain and clarify both the aim of the research and questions.

McMillan and Schumacher (2006) present that phenomenological study portrays the implication of lived experiences. The researcher puts aside all prejudgements and collects data using in-depth interviews on how individuals make sense out of particular experiences or situations. Manen (2005), cited in McMillan and Schumacher (2006), states that phenomenology aims to change lived events into an explanation of "its essence, in such a way that the effect of the text is at once a reflexive reliving and reflective appropriation of something meaningful." (p.36). In this study, three women principals were interviewed in depth to give a description of their leadership and management experiences as they occurred in everyday life.

3.7.2 Document analysis

Punch (2006) presents that qualitative data is collected by asking (interviewing), watching (observation) or reading (documents), or some combination of these three methods. McMillan and Schumacher (2010) posit that a personal document is any first-person report that attributes an individual's behaviour, experiences, and judgements. According to Creswell (2012), documents are comprised of public and private records that researchers get about a site or participants in a study, and they can involve amongst other things, personal journals and letters. Creswell (2012) also credits the use of documents; when he argues that documents give productive useful data in assisting the researchers perceive fundamental phenomena in qualitative studies. According to Creswell (2012), using documents is advantageous, because, firstly, they are written in the participants' language and participants usually give thoughtful attention to the documents, and, secondly, documents could be interpreted without the essential transcription that is needed in observation or interview. In this study, three women principals wrote a brief record of what they thought it meant to be a woman principal in school.

3.8 Data analysis

Data was analysed using qualitative data analysis methods. McMillan and Schumacher (2006) present that "qualitative data analysis is an inductive process of organising data into categories and identifying patterns among categories" (p. 365). They go on to say that inductive analysis allows categories and repetitions to come up from data, instead of being inflicted on them before compilation. This assisted the researcher to easily work with recorded data. Data was categorised and coded, and themes emerged. Then the findings that spoke to one theme were put together and analysed.

3.9 Issues of trustworthiness and validity

 Dissimilar forms of collecting data were employed in this study to obtain wealthy data and to enhance validity. Winter (2000), cited in Cohen et al. (2011), says that validity is a way to see whether a certain device in fact gauges what it supposes to determine. Cohen, Manion and Morrison, 2007), cited in Mbedla (2011), argue that it is not possible for research to be 100% correct, but the researcher must try his or her best to boost validity of his or her study. In order to enhance validity in this study, I tape-recorded interviews and transcribed them *verbatim* to make sure that I would be operating with truthful data. In addition to the

interviews, I used document analysis as the second method of data collection. The researcher asked the participants to write a brief record of what they thought it meant to be a women leader in school.

3.10 Ethics

Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2011) emphasize that the researchers should be allowed by the participants to undertake a research in their setting. The researcher must write a letter to the participants asking for the permission and ensures that the participant's dignity is not violated. According to the University of KwaZulu-Natal certain procedures must be followed before any empirical research can be undertaken. These procedures were followed, clearance was issued for this study (see page iv attached) before it began. The researcher got the participants to sign a letter of consent to show that they have chosen to participate in the study with the full awareness of what the study entails. Hence, I issued letters of consent (see appendices A&B) to the three women principals. Each letter was issued with a declaration form so that the participants could print their names and sign to indicate that they had read the informed-consent document and agree to avail themselves to participate in the research project.

On the other hand, Deyle et al., (1992), cited by Manion et al. (2011), specify various major ethical affairs that need to be considered when undertaking the research study. The participants in the study gave informed consent to be included in the study. They were informed about the nature and the purpose of the study and assured of confidentiality. For example, pseudonyms were to be used. Participants were made aware that it was their right to participate or not to participate in the study. They were also made aware of their rights to withdraw from the study if they so wished to.

3.11 Reflections on the data collection process

As a male researcher and male principal interacting with female principals, I was faced with a challenge, because I was not absolute whether the women principals might think that my interviews were private in terms of attempting to test their knowledge of leadership and management of schools. However, I was aware that the interpretive researcher attempts to investigate how things are done in a particular context, without prejudice, and so I trusted that my intentions would not be questioned by my participants owing to the fact that I was familiar to them as we all belonged to the same circuit.

3.12 Strengths of qualitative study

This kind of research establishes rapport and trust with research subjects, and promotes high construct validity, as it allows the use of various data collection methods. Furthermore, data was collected from the participants (woman principals) who gave an insider perspective. For example, woman principals' understanding and experience are explored in a natural setting. Additionally, Mouton (2001) posits that the "collaborative and participatory nature of this design minimises suspicion and distrust of research, with a concomitant increase in trust and credibility" (p. 162).

3.13 Limitations of qualitative study

The importance on naturalistic forms of inquiry makes it hard to assess programme results precisely (Mouton 2001). Also, according to Mouton (2001) the result is that "strong casual inferences regarding programme benefits and impact are difficult, if not impossible, to make" (p. 162).

3.14 Conclusion

To sum up, initially four women participants were selected for this study, but later the sample comprised of only three women principals, owing to some reasons stated earlier. Two methods of data collection were employed to gather data and to boost validity. Also, relevant procedures were followed before the study began.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter is organised around the subheadings generated from six field research questions of the study. In presenting the participants' responses, patterns were identified and coded. Creswell (2012) suggests that coding helps to make sense of collected data and to find out whether there are overlaps and repetitions.

As indicated in Chapter Three, pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of the participants. The secondary school principal, who was interviewed first, was named Gesh. The primary school principals interviewed second and third were named Nedin and Zan respectively.

4.2 Profiles of the three principals

4.2.1 A biographical sketch and context of Gesh

Gesh is the principal of a secondary school enrolling learners from grades 8 to 12. She has 18 years teaching experience and has taught in three secondary schools. She had served as Head of Department (HOD) in her current school for three years, acting-principal for one year, and has been a principal for three years.

She is in her fifties, married and the mother of five children. Gesh has a Secondary Teachers' Diploma, a Higher Education Diploma, a Bachelor of Education (Honours) and a Masters Degree in Leadership and Management.

The school has 912 learners and a staff of 31 teachers, one secretary and one cleaner. The school was renovated by the Department in 2010 and there were sufficient classrooms, a library with lots of books, and a kitchen for the nutrition programme. Almost all classrooms were utilised. For four consecutive years, the school has obtained a high pass rate in matric, ranging from 95% to 100%.

The school is classified as quintile 3 with section 21 status. It serves a learner population who come from a wide range of backgrounds and it was declared a 'no fee' school by the Department of Education.

4.2.2 A biographical sketch of Nedin

At the time of the study, Nedin was in her 50's, married and a mother of four children. She became a teacher because of her passion to work with children. She believes that she still has so much to give youth and grown-ups alike.

Nedin's professional qualifications include a Senior Primary Teachers' Diploma, a Further Diploma in Education with specialization in School Management, and a Bachelor of Education. She served as a deputy-principal for more than four years, acting-principal for two years, and has been a principal for five years.

Nedin's school is located approximately 20 kilometres from the city centre. It had 350 learners, and a staff of eight teachers, one secretary and one cleaner. Like Gesh's school, Nedin's school has a kitchen for the nutrition programme. The learners have access to soccer, netball, music, and cricket. It recently participated in cultural activities and the learners have already made their presence felt. Several trophies reflecting the school's achievement were visible in the principal's office.

The school is classified as quintile 3 and receives funding from the Department of Education. Private enterprise involvement was evident in improvements around the school. For example, the Jojo water tank, which the principal claims was donated by a local company, was less than five years old.

According to her experience and the contexts within which she functioned, one could conclude that she was in a good position to provide data that could assist in the answering of key research questions.

4.2.3 A biographical sketch of Zan

Zan is in her late forties, married and a mother of three children. Besides being the principal of the school, she has also been an activist for her teacher union for the past two years.

Zan has a three-year Teachers' Diploma, a Higher Education Diploma and an Advanced Certificate in Education (ACE), School Leadership and Management. Zan has served as an HOD for five years, acting-principal for three years, and has been a principal for three years.

The school dominates in music and cultural activities. It has recently returned to active participation in soccer and netball. Several certificates and trophies reflecting the school's prizes are visible in the foyer.

The school is classified as quintile 3 and therefore receives little funding from Department of Education. Parental involvement was evident in Zan's school - she claimed that the administration building had been painted by parents.

4.3 Summary of profiles of principals

All three principals were females. Their ages ranged between 40 and 59 years. All of them met the requirements of having the minimum qualifications to be employed as a principal. Their teaching experience ranged from nine to 18 years. What follows next is a description of the three women principals' responses to the first question put to them. With this question I was interested in knowing their understanding of the concepts of leadership and management.

4.4 Principals' understanding of leadership and management

4.4.1 Leadership and management as understood by Gesh

Gesh understood leadership and management as two dissimilar concepts, but akin to each other. She articulated:

I understand leadership and management as two dissimilar concepts but akin to each other.

She elaborated on her understanding of leadership and management as two separate entities, but related, by saying:

If you look in the school, the principal executes both leadership and management duties. The school principal becomes a leader when she executes duties based on guiding, motivating, initiating, anticipating, building visions, moving forward, inspiring, and crossing the boundaries. On the other hand, she co-ordinates, organises, maintains, stabilises, realises, structures, handles and sets parameters, and, in doing so, she becomes a manager. Both leadership and management mechanisms should be put in place for proper accomplishment of the school goals.

In her view of leadership as an influence to attain school goals, she articulated:
Leadership is an influence one has on the people being led. That influence is towards the

25

achievement of school goals which are reflected in the vision and mission statement of the
school. A leader strives for the attainment of these goals.

Gesh understood management as tools and methods used to achieve organisational goals. She
clarified this by saying:

Management tools may be human resources and physical resources within the school. By
human resources I mean teachers, parents, learners and the others employed in the school.
Physical resources are textbooks, furniture, buildings and all other materials used to support
teaching and learning.

I probed further to find out from Gesh how human and physical resources become tools and
methods of management. She elaborated:

Generally a tool is something you need to do your job, whereas methods refer to how you do
your job. A manager relies on both human and physical resources to accomplish
organisational goals. It does not end there, well capacitated staff, which form part of human
resources, has to be supplied with good learning and teaching materials such as textbooks.
These learning and teaching materials should be utilised in well-furnished buildings which
also form part of physical resources. A manager achieves all this through planning,
organising, controlling, budgeting, staffing and problem solving. To me, these are methods a
manager employs in order to meet school goals.

4.4.2 Leadership and management as understood by Nedin

Nedin understood leadership and management as more or less the same concepts with no
clear demarcation. She commented:

Leadership and management are more or less the same, and there is a thin line between a
leader and a manager.

In her strong belief that leadership and management are closely related, Nedin further
elaborated by saying:

For me, one cannot work without the other. Within the school context, both leadership and
management have to be put in place for proper accomplishment of school objectives. In order
to accomplish school goals, a school principal has to balance her execution of both
leadership and management duties. A leader creates missions of an organisation and ensures
that the organisation serves its purpose, whereas a manager helps achieve the mission

through planning, organising, controlling and evaluating. For me a school principal, as a leader, has to manage as well.

Nedin also reflected on the similarities and dissimilarities between a leader and a manager. Her comment was:

Both leaders and managers have to be very proactive in the organisation they are working in, and the most important thing for both of them is to plan, organise, monitor and evaluate. On the other hand, a leader is flexible, whereas a manager follows prescriptions.

When I dug deeply to find out what Nedin meant when she said that a leader is flexible and a manager follows prescriptions, she elaborated:

A leader uses her ability in an authoritative way to persuade and inspire the subordinates to achieve a shared vision. A manager executes regulative tasks in a specific section of operation to obtain high rate of learner progress.

4.4.3 Leadership and management as understood by Zan

Zan understood leadership and management in the same way as other principals interviewed. She responded:

Leadership and management are closely related. If we look in the school situation, the principal serves as a leader when she ensures that the school moves towards the accomplishment of its goals. On the other hand, the principal has to plan, organise, set structures, control and evaluate. She does all this to enhance the achievement of goals by providing what is needed to speed up the process of goal accomplishment.

Zan also strongly believed that leadership is about leading people within the school and outside the school, whereas management deals with both human and physical resources within the school. She commented:

Leadership means to lead your subordinates and manage human resources as well as other resources that are available within the school. Also, it means to work with different people and lead the community towards taking ownership of the school.

4.5 Summary of principals' understanding of leadership and management

All three principals' responses revealed that leadership and management are two distinct concepts related to each other. One principal saw leadership as an influence one has on the people being led, and management as tools and methods that a leader uses to achieve

organisational goals. Another principal said that a leader is flexible in decision-making, whereas a manager follows prescriptions. She also felt that the most important thing for a leader and a manager is to be proactive, plan, organise and evaluate.

Moreover, the woman principal interviewed third understood leadership as a way to lead people and manage human and physical resources that are available within the school. She stressed that leadership and management meant to work with different people, leading them to take the ownership of the school to enhance the achievement of the goals set.

The key issues emerging from the women principals responses regarding their understanding of leadership and management are:

- Leadership and management are closely related.
- Leadership is an influence on others.
- Management entails tools and methods used to achieve goals.
- A leader is flexible, a manager is rigid.

Having an idea of the principals' understanding of leadership and management, I was now interested in their experience of leading and managing schools.

4.6 Principals' experience of leadership and management

All principals interviewed differed in their experience gained through leading and managing a school.

4.6.1 Gesh's experience gained through leading and managing a school

Gesh was excited about being a woman leading a big secondary school with 912 students, male and female teachers and non-teaching staff. She commented:
As a woman principal, I have gained experience in leading and managing a secondary school with 912 students, 31 male and female teachers, one administrative clerk and one cleaner.

I probed further to find out how Gesh, as a woman, felt when she became a principal of a big secondary school. She said:
Initially, I had fear to lead a secondary school with both male and female teachers, but that fear has gone down. Instead, I have learnt to work cooperatively with both males and females.

28

When I dug deeply to find out other experience Gesh had gained as a leader and a manager of a secondary school, she articulated:

I have learnt to understand that sometimes working with males is far better than working with females. When I was promoted to the principalship position, males accepted me more than females. I observed those female things like gossiping and cliques. Female teachers are the ones who speak behind my back, but males come for my protection. Even in terms of cooperation, males cooperate more than females.

I have also gained valuable experience through leading and supporting the School Governing Body (SGB). Leading the SGB is critical, because the SGBs are now politically influenced. When I started, I had a challenge where the local politicians unnecessarily interfered with the school matters. I had to have some creativity to deal with such a problem.

I asked Gesh what she meant by the School Governing Body being a political influence. She articulated:

The government of the day mandated all schools to establish School Governing Bodies. School Governing Body members, as community members, also belong to political parties of their own choice. So they come to school with different opinions about how a school should be led and managed. Sometimes the opinions that they bring to school are based on politics. If they have no idea about the political background of the principal or if the principal does not belong to the political party of theirs, they challenge him/her. No matter what, as a principal, you have to accept them to give support to the governance of the school.

Gesh also showed excitement about experience she gained through managing big school allocation funds. She articulated:

I have also gained experience in financial management skills. Possessing good financial management skills is important, more especially when you are leading a school with such big allocation. At the beginning, I struggled with financial management, but through interacting with other principals and attending relevant workshops, I have gained a lot of experience.

4.6.2 Nedin's experience gained through leading and managing a school

Nedin experienced that people behave in different ways within the school. She articulated:
I have experienced that people differ in their behaviour, and there is a child in every person.

I probed further to get what she meant. Her comment was:
Sometimes people being led behave childishly while others maintain the adulthood

behaviour. So, as a woman leader, I have learnt to push people to do the work, otherwise things would not be done in time.

I asked Nedin to expatiate on how she pushes them to do the work, she said:
I ensure that they are happy at work and really care for their needs, but I don't compromise the task to be done (learning and teaching). When I delegate tasks to people, I support them and do the follow ups. I make sure that everybody is aware of the deadlines, and policies are adhered to if deadlines are not met.

Also, Nedin strongly believed that, if you are a woman leader, not everybody will love you. I asked her to say more. Her comment was:
When I started, I was not accepted by many females and one male, but, as we grew together, the number of the females who rejected me decreased. This taught me that sometimes people are easily influenced negatively by others.

Nedin also acknowledged her experience she gained in paperwork and working with the School Governing Body (SGB).
Even though there is an administrative clerk, but some of the work must be done by me as a principal. Paperwork consumes time and I also go to the classroom to teach. Initially, filing was my weak point, but now I have improved through networking with other schools and attending office-based workshops.

I reminded Nedin to speak on her experience she gained through working with the SGB. She articulated:
Coming to my experience of working with the School Governing Body and the community, I can safely say that this is the best and interesting part of my leadership as a woman. From the beginning, I was accepted and I am still having a good relationship with them. I have gained experience in applying consistency and being unbiased. I appreciate the good work and accept others even if we differ in opinions.

4.6.3 Zan's experience gained through leading and managing a school.

On the question of leadership experience gained, Zan articulated:
I have experienced that some members of the community do not accept a woman leader. Also, I have observed that sometimes females do not accept a woman as a leader. I have gained experience handling conflicts, managing finances of the school in a proper manner and

conducting SGB and School Management Team (SMT) workshops, as well as cluster workshops.

4.7 Summary of principals' experiences gained through leadership

The above description revealed that principals gained various experiences as leaders and managers of schools.

All three principals' responses revealed that school leadership and management have exposed them to the challenges of working with the School Governing Body (SGB). They felt that building a good relationship with the SGB may result in a woman principal being accepted at school and in the community. Also, the three principals stated that, as women leaders, they were not accepted by everybody they worked with. It was evident from their responses that sometimes they were rejected as principals of their schools.

Moreover, one of the three principals pointed out that her school leadership exposed her to working with different people and handling people's different behaviour. She also indicated that, through school leadership, she has learnt to handle paperwork, motivate others and obey deadlines. Two of the three principals acknowledged that school leadership has equipped them with financial management skills, which are a big challenge in most schools.

Gesh was also excited about the experience of leading a secondary school as a woman. She indicated that she gained good experience in interacting and cooperating with others.

Zan pointed out that being a woman principal gave her experience in dealing with conflict within the school.

The key issues emerging from the participants' responses in respect of their experience gained through leadership of schools revealed some similarities and some dissimilarity. Hence, they highlighted the following:

- Working with different people and handling different behaviours
- Motivation and meeting deadlines
- Rejection of women as leaders
- Paperwork challenges
- Involvement in the School Governing Body
- Heading a secondary school

- Cooperation and interaction
- Financial management skills
- Development of self and others

Thus, the participants' responses to their experience gained through school leadership and management yielded a wealth of data. What follows next are their responses to the question enquiring about their own description of a good leader.

4.8 Women principals' description of a good leader

4.8.1 Gesh's description

Gesh strongly believed that a good leader must set an example and acknowledge other peoples' efforts. She elaborated further by saying:

A good leader leads by example and appreciates the good work that is done by people under her supervision. She creates multi-leaders from people under her supervision and develops her followers by delegating tasks to them.

I asked Gesh to say more on her description of a good leader. She elaborated by saying:

A good leader learns from her mistakes. She should be flexible and create the spirit of Ubuntu within the school.

I probed further to find out what she meant by being flexible and creating the spirit of Ubuntu. She elaborated:

By being flexible I mean that a leader should look at the situation before she takes a decision. Some situations might compel the leader to take quick decisions irrespective of what is contained in the policies. In short, she should be ready to compromise in some circumstances. To create the spirit of Ubuntu, she should acknowledge that everybody's presence is important within the school; we need one another to be successful in our endeavours. Also, the good leader should involve others in decision-making and ensure that decisions are taken democratically.

Gesh also believed that a good leader is very much concerned about the culture of learning and teaching, and employs leadership styles that recognise the presence of others who are historically and culturally situated within the school. She further elaborated by saying:

A good leader protects learning and teaching at school and shares ideas with other staff members.

4.8.2 Nedin's description

Nedin's description of a good leader was almost the same as Gesh's description. She articulated:

A good leader is the one who studies situations and becomes flexible. A good leader delegates tasks to people to empower them, recognises good work, and praises people for the work done.

Also, Nedin strongly believed that a good leader should possess good leadership skills, the appropriate skills. She said:

A good leader should have good communication skills, because a leader has to communicate daily. She has to be a good listener, so that she does not miss out on any information. Also, she should be sympathetic and empathetic, even to people outside the school. She is the one who is self-motivated to motivate others.

I encouraged Nedin to say more on her description of a good leader. She added:

First, a good leader must be visionary, firm and friendly, able to consult and take informed decisions. A good leader is the one who is well trained in time management. She collaborates with others and follows democratic procedures. A good leader is task-oriented, proactive, able to organise and leads from the front.

I asked Nedin to give clarity on being task-oriented and proactive. She clarified as follows:

By being task-oriented I mean that a leader should always promote the culture of learning and teaching. By being proactive I mean that a good leader should plan in advance for unpredictable (sic) circumstances.

4.8.3 Zan's description

Zan's description of a good leader was more or less the same as Gesh's and Nedin's descriptions. She articulated:

A good leader acknowledges others' potential and delegate tasks to empower her subordinates. He listens to other people's views.

Zan strongly believed that a good leader is the one who reacts appropriately to serious and urgent situations. Some situations may demand urgent attention and may not allow for collaboration. She elaborated:

A good leader takes quick decisions on her own when she is faced with urgent and serious situations which require urgent attention.

The key issues emerging from the participants' responses in respect of their description of a good leader were that a good leader must have good leadership qualities. They highlighted the following:

- Lead by example
- Appreciate the good work
- Develop her followers to be leaders
- Create the spirit of Ubuntu
- Protect teaching and learning
- Recognise the presence of others
- Good communication skills
- Good listener
- Sympathetic and empathetic
- Self-motivated
- Visionary
- Task-oriented
- Proactive
- Firm and friendly
- Manage time well
- Autocracy

Now the participants have given their own views of a good leader. What follows next are the challenges they faced as leaders in schools.

4.9 Challenges

4.9.1 Gesh's challenges

On the question enquiring about challenges Gesh experienced at her entry into principalship and as a leader, she said:

I applied for the principalship position while I was the acting-principal. If you are a female, people think you cannot lead a secondary school. There were some rumours going around that the male would be appointed to the post, because this is a secondary school. Some other

rumour was that one local male teacher was approached by the School Governing Body to apply because of his familiarity to the SGB.

Commenting further on her challenges, Gesh articulated:

When the panel was shortlisting for the post, teachers presented a list of concerns. That depressed me, as it happened while I was preparing myself to contest for the post. I thought this was some kind of destruction (sic). Also, I felt that they were trying to say to the panel, "Look, this one is not suitable for the post". In addition, most members of the panel were males; if there was a female, she was a secretary. So, I felt intimidated by this patriarchal structure.

Moreover, Gesh strongly believed that women are not accepted as leaders until they prove that they can lead. She stated:

At the beginning I was not accepted by females, but now I can safely say that they have accepted me. A community member said to me, "I thought this school would go down under the hands of a female principal, but now it is going up." Matric results were also a challenge, as it was at 62% when I was appointed to the post.

4.9.2 Nedin's challenges

Nedin articulated the challenges she experienced as follows:

When the post was advertised, I was acting on it (sic). The attitude of teachers began to change when I was put into [an] acting position. Then I began to realise that it was not going to be easy even when I was appointed to the post.

I asked Nedin to explain why she thought in this way. She elaborated:

When I was acting, there were sarcastic remarks about me. As a female principal, I was not respected by most members of the staff. People were arrogant and sometimes did not want to comply. The arrogance was apparent in staff meetings, where teachers played with cell-phones, and this showed me that I was not accepted. Some teachers did not want to call me principal. They compared me with the former principals who were males. Moreover, my car keys were taken away for two days. I left them on the table in the office when I was going to the classroom. To my surprise, my keys were put back on the table after two days.

4.9.3 Zan's challenges

Zan reported that, on her promotion to the principalship post and as a leader, she experienced different forms of discrimination based on familiarity and gender. To elaborate on this, she said:

When the post was advertised, most people were interested in it. There were some males who claimed that the post belongs (sic) to them. They said they were entitled to the post because the school is in their community. They also said that I was not suitable for the post because I am a woman. It was also rumoured that one local educator tried to bribe the SGB so that the post would be given to him.

The key issues emerging from the principals' responses regarding the challenges they experienced as leaders are:

- Gender discrimination
- Lack of familiarity to the SGB
- Rejection by staff members
- Male dominance
- Disrespect
- Arrogance
- Pass-rate improvement

Having an idea of the challenges faced by women principals as leaders in schools, I was now interested in how they handled these challenges.

4.10 Handling of challenges

4.10.1 Handling of challenges by Gesh

On the question of how Gesh handled challenges she faced as a woman leader, she articulated:

When the problems are approaching me, I think before I act. I become calm and I am proactive to unforeseen circumstances to prevent problems from occurring. I lead by example, always at school, arrive early and leave late, and exercise collaborative ways of decision-making.

I probed further to find out how Gesh handled the challenge of Grade 12 results. She strongly believed that working together and commitment were the solutions to a low matric pass-rate. She elaborated by saying:

Grade 12 parents' meetings were held and Grade 12 classes started at 06h00 to 16h00, with two breaks in between. We organised some refreshments for the learners other than the nutrition programme because they came early and left late. I introduced Saturday classes and teachers were compensated from fundraising in terms of their travelling expenses. Teachers who obtained a 100% pass-rate in their subjects were awarded certificates of appreciation.

4.10.2 Handling of challenges by Nedin

In response to the question of how Nedin handled the challenges she experienced as a woman principal, she strongly believed that applying learnt knowledge and adherence to the policies are the solutions when facing challenges. She explained this by saying:

I have drawn knowledge from my leadership and management studies, more especially my Further Diploma in Education. Also, I have ensured that everybody comply (sic) with the policies. I put aside my feelings and stick to the principles that govern the institution. I think before I act, and lead by example - I arrive early and leave last. I am the one who goes to the classroom first and support others.

4.10.3 Handling of challenges by Zan

Zan articulated that she handled the challenges she has experienced in this way:

I think before I act. Hard work has helped me a lot. I have built a good relationship with the teachers. I give respect to those who challenge my leadership to gain their respect and become calm in challenging situations. I look at the situation from different angles before I take a decision.

The following are the patterns that emerged from the responses of the women principals in regard to the handling of challenges:

- Careful thinker
- Proactive and calm
- Commitment
- Teacher and learner incentives
- Setting an example

- Application of learnt knowledge

- Adherence to policies

- Love and respect others

Having an idea of the manner in which women principals handled the challenges they faced as leaders of schools, I was now interested in the meaning they attached to being a woman leader; hence, they were asked to write a brief statement of what they thought it meant to be a woman leader.

4.11 Principals' brief statements on being a woman leader

4.11.1 Gesh's statement

In giving a record of what she thought it meant to be a woman leader, Gesh wrote:
You have to be more powerful than men. To be a woman leader means to be fully committed in what you are doing. You provide guidance and support to your subordinates. It also means not to be bossy. A woman leader is humble and adds the motherly spice in her leadership. It means to sympathize and empathize with people under your supervision. You have to exercise leadership with authority and care but not forgetting (sic) learning and teaching. It means to be confident and believe in you (sic). It means to listen to other people's views and become strong to emerge above challenging situations.

4.11.2 Nedin's statement

In her statement of what she thought it meant to be a woman leader, Nedin wrote:
You have to believe in God, pray for yourself and the people you lead. It means to develop a culture of mutual respect. It also means to fight against gender inequalities and strengths ascribed to women. Woman leadership in school means giving a voice to the issues of domestic violence, sexual and physical abuse and issues of imbalances.
You excel in everything you do to compete at all times, irrespective of criticism and your efforts not being appreciated. It means to build partnership with other women. It also means to be pro-active, organise, control and solve problems and resolve conflicts. Being a woman leader, you have to empower other women, finding out what skills they possess and nurturing those skills. Also, it means to balance work both at work and home and instil values to people you lead and children (sic). You have to know that leadership comes with responsibility and accountability.

4.11.3 Zan's statement

To be a woman leader means to fulfil your God-given responsibility. A woman leader should go beyond her call of duty and expectations when leading or delivering services. It also means to be a good listener who empathizes with her subordinates.

I probed further to find out more from Zan about what she thought it meant to be a woman leader. She articulated:

Being a woman leader means to be humble and able to accept constructive criticism. It means to be bold and honest, and accept your own mistakes and correct them. A woman leader is the one who is optimistic. Also, you have to believe in what you and your team are doing. It means to be realistic when setting goals and also be visionary. It means to use your heart and head and lead with calm reason and sincere humanity. You have to show that you care for others. It means to have integrity and avoiding unpleasant situations (sic). A woman leader is the one who is not afraid to take unpopular decisions. You have to be firm but fair.

The key issues emerging from women principals' responses regarding their thinking about what it means to be a woman leader are:

- More powerful than men
- Commitment
- Guidance and support
- Humble and care
- Confidence
- Sympathy and empathy
- Culture of mutual respect
- Gender discrimination and women abuse
- Perseverance
- Proactive/planning in advance
- Women empowerment
- Multi-task
- Balance work and home
- Responsibility and accountability
- Good listener
- Visionary

- Risk taking
- Firmness and fairness

The themes that emerged from the patterns are discussed in the next chapter. These themes will be discussed in the light of relevant literature.

The patterns were grouped together to form seven dominant categories of the findings. Hence, under each category, emerging themes were discussed as sub-categories. The sub-categories are listed as follows:

- Understanding leadership
- Understanding management
- Experiences
- Good leader
- Challenges
- Handling challenges
- Being a woman leader

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the findings of the study. The findings will be discussed in relation to the theories of transformational leadership and Ubuntu, an African philosophy, thinking emanating from relevant literature in Chapter 2, as well as my own views. The dominant patterns that emerged in Chapter 4 in relation to participants' responses to the questions posed by the researcher are listed below:

- Leadership and management as closely-related concepts
- Leadership as an influence to attain school goals
- Leadership as creation of vision and mission
- Leadership as a flexible activity
- Management as tools and methods used to achieve goals
- Management as an activity of planning, organising, controlling and evaluating
- Management as a duty to work with people and handle their behaviour
- Rejection of women as leaders
- Involvement in the School Governing Body
- Heading a secondary school
- Cooperation and interaction
- Financial management skills
- Development of self and others
- Leading by example
- Values and ethics
- Good communication skills
- Visionary
- Task oriented
- Time management
- Discrimination
- Arrogance
- Pass-rate improvement
- Considering the effect of your actions, caring for other people
- Calm and proactive

- Commitment to work
- Incentives
- Setting an example
- Application of learnt knowledge
- Adherence to policies
- Love and respect
- More powerful than men
- Guidance and support
- Humility and care
- Confidence
- Risk taking

These patterns were grouped together to form seven main categories. Hence, under each category, emerging themes were discussed as thematic sub-categories of the present study. The main categories are:

- Understanding leadership
- Understanding management
- Gained experience
- Good leader
- Faced challenges
- Handling challenges
- Woman leader

5.2 Understanding leadership

5.2.1 Leadership as an action connected to management

The findings of the present study revealed that leadership and management are viewed as two related concepts. All principals interviewed felt that leadership and management are two dissimilar entities, but akin to each other. Nedin confirmed this when she said, "*Leadership and management are more or less a thin line between a leader and a manager (sic).*" (Interview B, p.1). This is credited by Kotter (1990) when he views leadership and management as two sides of the same coin. My own interpretation of what Kotter says is that, in order to be successful, leadership and management are interwoven activities which should be put in place to attain school goals. This implies that, in the school context, principals

42

should work as both leaders and managers to enhance the achievement of goals. Botha and Marishane (2011)   also support this when they present that, for success, school-based management requires both strong leadership and strong management, both of which the school should exercise effectively.

5.2.2 Leadership as an influence to attain goals

According to the findings of this study, leadership was viewed as an influence to attain school goals. Gesh stated, *"Leadership is an influence one has on the people led, that influence is towards the achievement of school goals. Every school has its own goals which are reflected in the vision and mission statement of the school. A leader strives for the attainment of these goals."* (Interview A, p.1). Benns (1989) advocates this when he presents that leadership is the use of influence to motivate others to attain school objectives. Benns' idea is credited by Christie (2010), when she argues that leadership is an influence channelled towards the achievement of formal or informal organisational outcomes. Now, I fully understand that the school principal cannot work on his/her own to achieve school goals. His or her own success relies mostly on involving others under his/her supervision. In doing so, the principal must share the vision with others and ensure that they own it, then influence them to work towards the achievement of goals set and involve them in all parts of decision-making.

5.2.3 Leadership as creation of vision

In the findings of the study, it was revealed that leadership is an activity through which the organisational vision is created. Nedin articulated that, *"A leader creates the vision of an organisation…"* (Interview B, p.1). Kotter (1990) confirms this when he presents that leadership associates with words such as guides, anticipates, creates, build visions, moves forward and across boundaries (Interview). I support the view that leadership without vision is meaningless. The school principal, as a leader, should have a clear vision. It must be understood by all staff members, and, as a result, all role-players can understand where they are and where they want to be. Coleman (2005) refers to this as distributed leadership. According to Coleman, distributed leadership promotes shared leadership rather than having leadership invested in one person.

5.2.4 Leadership as a flexible activity

The findings of the present study revealed that a leader should be flexible. In her comparison of a leader and a manager, Nedin stated, *"Both leaders and managers have to be very*

proactive in the organisation they are working in, and the most important thing for both of them is to plan, organise, monitor and evaluate. A leader is flexible, whereas a manager follows the prescriptions." (Interview B, p.1). Benns (1989) concurs with the view when he presents that leaders do the right things, managers do things right. This is an idea I also concur with. Doing the right things calls for a leader to be flexible. This has an implication that principals, as leaders, are sometimes expected to do the right things. In order to do the right things, they have to be flexible.

5.3 Understanding management

5.3.1 Management as tools and methods to attain goals

The findings of this study revealed that management is viewed as tools and methods used to attain the organisational goals. Gesh elaborated, *"Generally a tool is a resource you need to get to do your job, whereas methods refer to how you use your tools to get the job done. A manager relies on both human and physical resources to accomplish organisational goals."* (Interview A, p1). She further elaborated, *"It does not end there. Well-capacitated staffs, which form part of human resources, have to be supplied with good learning and teaching materials like textbooks and other learning and teaching support materials (LTSMs). These LTSMs should be distributed and utilized in well-furnished buildings which form part of physical resources."* (Interview A, p.1).

According to Gesh, a manager also achieves the goals through planning, organising, controlling, budgeting, staffing and problem-solving. She explained, *"To me, these are the methods a manager employs in order to fulfil the school's goals."*(Interview A, p.1). This is advocated by Botha and Marishane (2011) when they suggest that the principal, as a manager, has to unpack the resources, classify them and distribute them equitably and see to it that they are efficiently used. I agree with this view. As a principal, I am responsible and accountable for the utilisation of resources. It is my duty to ensure that resources are efficiently used to achieve the school's goals.

5.3.2 An activity to work with people and handle behaviour.

The findings of the present study revealed that management involves working in conjunction with people's behaviour. Zan stated, *"Management is about working with different people and seeing to it that their behaviour is controlled for the sake of achieving school goals."*

(Interview C, p.1). Westhuizen (1991) notes that management is a specific type of work in education which comprises those regulative tasks executed by a person in a position of authority in a specific field or area, so as to allow formative education to take place. I support this view. My duty as a principal is to ensure the execution of management roles and encourage adherence to regulative rules so that the school's goals are achieved.

5.4 Experiences

5.4.1 Rejection

The findings of the present study revealed that women principals experienced rejection in leading and managing schools. All three principals interviewed pointed out that they had not been accepted as leaders in schools. Gesh stated, *"I have experienced that working with males is far better than working with females. I have also observed those female things like gossiping. Females are the ones who speak behind my back, but males come to my protection. Even in terms of cooperation, males cooperate more than females."* (Interview A, p.2).

Also, Nedin felt that, if you are a woman principal, not everybody loves you. She elaborated, *"When I started, I was not accepted by many females and one male, but as we grew together, the number of females who rejected me decreased. This taught me that sometimes people are easily influenced negatively by others."* (Interview B, p.2).

Zan responded, *"I have experienced that some members of the community do not accept a woman leader. Also, I have observed that sometimes females do not accept a woman as a leader."* (Interview C, p.1).

These findings agree with the findings of the studies by Mapolisa and Madziyire (2012) which reveal that women leaders are lacking support from their female subordinates. The findings of Moorosi (2010) support the findings of the study of Mapolisa and Madziyire. Women principals themselves and/or their ideas were not accepted by both males and females owing to attitudes resulting from patriarchy. I shall not discuss this in detail, because it is not within the scope of this research study. Aladejana and Aladejana (2005) confirm my interpretation when they posit that male dominance leads to the inability of many males to accept women leaders.

5.4.2 Leading a secondary school

One of the three principals interviewed, whose pseudonym is Gesh, was excited about the experience she gained through leading a secondary school. She articulated, *"I have gained experience in leading and managing a secondary school with 917 students, male and female teachers, 32 altogether, one administrative clerk and one cleaner."* (Interview A, p.2). Additionally, Gesh also said that, as a secondary school principal, she had gained an ability to cooperate with others. She explained this by saying, *"Initially, I had fear to lead a secondary school with both males and females, but that fear has gone down (sic). Instead I have learnt to work cooperatively with both males and females."* (Interview A, p.2).

The findings of the study by Coleman (2005) reveal that women are viewed as not suitable to lead a big secondary school. This view is contradicted by the findings of the present study where a woman is excited about leading a secondary school. The fact that women cooperate with others is supported by the literature. Rosener (1990), cited in Burns and Martin (2010), found that women consistently strive to create positive interactions with co-workers and followers. Those women are likely to bring about change in their schools if they work cooperatively with others.

5.4.3 Involvement in the School Governing Body (SGB)

All three principals acknowledged the experience they gained through their involvement in the SGB. Hence, they viewed school leadership and management as activities to lead and develop the SGB. Gesh elaborated on this point by saying, *"Leading the SGB is critical because the SGBs are now politically influenced. When I started, I had a challenge where the politicians unnecessarily interfered with the school matters. I had to have some creativity to deal with such a problem."* (Interview A, p.2). Zan also revealed that she had developed her SGB through SGB-based workshops. *"I have gained experience in handling conflicts, managing finances of the school in a proper manner and conducting SGB and School Management Team (SMT) workshops as well as cluster workshops."* (Interview C, p.1)

The literature seems to be silent about the experiences of women principals pertaining to their involvement in the SGB. The findings of the present study reveal that women principals were excited about their involvement in the SGB. According to the findings of the present study, women principals, as automatic members of the SGB, have some creativity in handling some challenges and they developed their SGBs. This is supported by literature. According to the findings of the study by Gray (1993), cited in Coleman (2003), 63% of women principals

were found to be creative, as opposed to 51% of male principals. Moreover, according to Santos (1996), women were found to understand leadership as a process of empowering others, not as the exercise of power over them. My interpretation is that women lead in a way that transforms schools. Change is easily accessed through creativity and by developing others. Also, this is affirmed by Amernic, Craig and Tourish (2010) when they suggest that transformational leaders cater for the needs of their followers and assist them to improve their self-esteem.

5.4.4 Financial management

In this present study, two principals interviewed highlighted that school leadership has exposed them to financial management; hence, they have acquired more skills pertaining to the management of school funds. Gesh stated this by saying, *"I have also gained experience in financial management skills. Possessing good financial management skills is most important when you are leading a school with such a big allocation…"* (Interview A, p.3). Also, Zan said, *"I have gained experience in handling conflicts and managing finances of the school in a proper manner…"* (Interview C, p.2). This links up with the findings of the study by Aladejana and Aladejana (2005) when they present that women were found to be prudent in financial management. This has an implication that women principals understand that they are answerable for school funds. Hence, they ensure that the funds are spent in accordance with the Public Finance Management Act (PFMA). There is no doubt that, if school funds are correctly used, transformation is likely to happen.

5.5.5 Nurturing people

Nedin experienced school leadership and management as activities in which people are nurtured. She explained this by saying, *"I have experienced that people differ in their behaviour and there is a child in every person."* (Interview B, p.2).
She further elaborated, *"Sometimes people being led behave childishly, while others maintain the adulthood behaviour, so I have learnt to nurture people to do the work, otherwise things would not be done."* (Interview B, p.2). This is in line with the research studies conducted by Brooking (2008) and Coleman (2005). According to the findings of these research studies, women were found to have common power to foster and do several activities at one. In my own understanding, nurturing people means to give them support and ensure that the attainment of goals is enhanced. This implies that women principals support and protect

others within the school. Ability to nurture and multi-task is vital in the process of leadership and management. Through these abilities, transformation may be apparent within the school.

5.5 A good leader

5.5.1 Ethics and values

All three principals interviewed described a good leader as the one who is guided by certain ethics and values, instils leadership skills in others, and creates the spirit of Ubuntu, an African philosophy, within the school. According to April and Hill (2000) 'Ubuntu' means 'I am because we are - I can only be a person through others' (p. 46). According to Northouse (2009), Ethics refers to being considerate and caring about others. Northouse goes on to specify three major aspects of ethics, namely, self, good and other. He goes on to say that values refer to relatively stable convictions about what is important.

In her description of a good leader, Gesh felt that a good leader leads by example, appreciates the good work done by others, and creates spirit of Ubuntu. She stated this by saying, *"A good leader leads by example and appreciates the good work that is done by people under her supervision, should be flexible and creates the spirit of Ubuntu"*. (Interview A, p3).

Nedin strongly believed that a good leader should have good communication and listening skills, and should be empathetic and sympathetic, self-motivated, visionary, task oriented and proactive. She elaborated by saying, *"A good leader should have good communication skills, because a leader has to communicate daily. You have to be a good listener, so that you don't miss out on any information. A good leader should be very empathetic and sympathetic, even to people outside the school. He/she is the one who is self-motivated. A leader is expected to motivate others. This could not be achieved if a leader himself is demotivated."* (Interview B, p.3).

She further elaborated on her description of a good leader by saying, *"A good leader must be visionary, friendly but firm, and able to consult and take informed decisions. A good leader should collaborate and follow democratic procedures in decision-making, and be trained in time management. She must be proactive, lead from the front, be task oriented and able to organise."* (Interview B, p.3).

Zan's point of view in describing a good leader was slightly different from Gesh's and Nedin's points of view. Zan felt that sometimes a good leader has to be autocratic when

quick decisions have to be taken. She stated, *"A good leader needs to be autocratic when quick and urgent decisions are taken since reliance on others may sometimes delay the process of decision-making."* (Interview C, p.2). On the other hand, Zan also felt that a good leader is guided by ethics and values mentioned by the other two principals. She stated, *"A good leader must acknowledge others potential or opinions. A good leader is the one who delegates tasks and follows up. He/she listens to his/her subordinates."* (Interview C, p.2).

 The way a good leader has been described in the present study also seems to indicate that a good leader is someone with integrity. According to Rossouw and Van Vuuren (2010) integrity refers to the moral character of a person or organisation. They go on to say that a person is observed as someone with integrity when he or she is guided by a set of values. They identified three different kinds of values as follows:

• Strategic values - refer to common beliefs of the organisation about its set standards.

• Work values - refer to priorities that stakeholders should strive to achieve.

• Ethical values - include moral values and obedience to ethical values ensures that organisational members work in harmony.

Also, integrity resonates well with transformational leadership and Ubuntu, an African philosophy. Transformational leaders are known by their ability to recognise the presence of others who are culturally and historically situated within the school. This is supported by Bass and Avolio (1994), although Burns (1977) is credited with the origins of the idea when he proposes that only four factors make up transformational leadership. These are commonly known as the 'Four Is'.

• Idealized influence - refers to the actual leader behaviour in which leaders show the way through moral values and a sense of purpose. Through idealized influence, followers emulate the leaders. The leader does not use his or her authority to exploit others.

• Inspirational motivation - the leader encourage followers by employing participatory approaches in which a vision is shared and understood. Team spirit is encouraged and the vision of the future is communicated.

- Intellectual stimulation - occurs when leaders promote creativity, innovation and curious about the current state. However, a supportive and positive environment prevails. New opinions and methods are not rejected but welcomed.

- Individualised consideration - occurs where the well-being each person is considered, and where nurturing and supporting are the norm.

Hence, the findings of the current study seem to reflect that a good leader is considerate and works with his/her followers in order to transform the followers and the organisation as a whole. These findings are in line with the findings of many research studies. Rosener (1990), cited in Burns and Martin (2010), found that women regularly endeavour to make good relations with their colleagues and subordinates. Rosener's point of view is credited by Coleman (2003) and Celikten (2005) when they present that women were found to lead in more transformative and inclusive ways. Also, Coleman (2005) found that women credit their gender for allowing them to diffuse aggression, empathise with female parents and being able to attract men. Moreover, the findings of the study by Azoola (2011) reflect that women leaders use a mothering style in school leadership, are goal oriented and are the nurturing, caring type. Again, as in the findings of the current study, Santos (1996) found that women had a natural tendency to be more emotional, to look after others, to be more intuitive, to help the weak, to be very patient and to relate better to teaching.

Findings of the present study and literature reviewed imply that a good leader is guided by certain ethics and values. Also, it is through the ethics and values that good leaders could transform their organisation, more especially if these are practised together with the spirit of Ubuntu within the organisation.

5.6 Challenges

5.6.1 Gender discrimination

All three principals interviewed pointed out that they experienced different forms of discrimination as leaders in schools. Gesh reflected on the form of discrimination she experienced by saying, *"If you are a female, people think that you cannot lead a secondary school. There was a rumour going around that a male would be appointed to the post because this is a secondary school. Another rumour was that one local male teacher was approached by the School Governing Body because of his familiarity to the SGB."* (Interview A, p.4). This is in agreement with the findings of early research studies. According to the

findings of the study by Moorosi (2010), women were found to experience traditional and cultural attitudes which identified leadership with men. The findings of the study by Coleman (2004) found that women are working in the environment in which they are not accepted, and one in which masculine leadership is preferred by some of the stakeholders. Moreover, Coleman (2005) presents that women seem to have a burden to lead the home and nurture children, as well as possessing a career. He goes on to say that, during interviews as candidates, women's personal appearances were commented upon and the comments were irrelevant to the post in question.

My interpretation of these research findings is that, in many countries including South Africa, women are still experiencing various forms of discrimination based on gender. This hinders them from accessing leadership positions.   In my own view, the misconception that women cannot lead could be easily corrected, as it results from stereotypes, wrongly assigned to women, and patriarchy.

Zan also faced a challenge based on unfamiliarity to the SGB and gender discrimination. To elaborate on this, she said, *"When the post was advertised, most males were interested in it. There were some males who claimed that the post was theirs - they said that they were entitled to the post because the school was in their community. They also said that I was not suitable for the post because I was a woman. It was also rumoured that one local educator tried to bribe the SGB so that the post would be given to him."* (Interview C, p.3).

5.6.2 Rejection

Findings of the present study show that women are rejected by their co-workers as leaders in schools. Gesh strongly felt that women are not accepted as leaders in schools until they prove that they can lead. She stated this by saying, *"At the beginning I was not accepted by females, but now I can safely say that they have accepted me."* (Interview A, p.4).
She further elaborated by saying, a community member said to me *"I thought this school would go down under the hands of a woman principal, but now it is going up."* (Interview A, p.4). This corresponds with the findings of early research studies. According to the findings of the study by Moorosi (2010), women principals themselves and/or their ideas were not accepted by both male and female teachers in their schools. Also, Aladejana and Aladejana (2005) found that male dominance led to the inability of many males to accept women in leadership. This has an implication that women experience leadership differently from men. Although drastic changes have taken place in South Africa and abroad, women still remain

marginalised with regard to accessing leadership posts. The stereotypical thinking that women are a weak sex and cannot lead a school, more especially a secondary school, needs to be reviewed and corrected, because it leads to women being rejected by their subordinates.

5.6.3 Arrogance and disrespect

Findings of the current study also reveal that women principals are subject to arrogance and disrespect. Nedin confirmed this by saying, *"When I was acting in the post, there were sarcastic remarks about me. As a female principal, I was not respected by most members of the staff. People were arrogant and sometimes did not want to comply. The arrogance was apparent in the staff meetings, where teachers played with their cell-phones, and this showed me that I was not respected."* (Interview B, p.4).

The literature reviewed seems not to focus on disrespect and arrogance as such. Instead it focuses on rejection, which, I think, may result in disrespect and arrogance. Hence, it is through the findings of the present study that we can conclude that women principals are also faced with a challenge of arrogance and disrespect. As I was told by Nedin that her school had only one male teacher, my interpretation of these findings is that usually a person in a high position is sometimes most disrespected by the subordinates of his or her own sex. This means that a female principal may be disrespected by female staff, but males may be on to her side, or vice versa.

5.7 Handling challenges

5.7.1 Ethics and values

Findings of the present study reveal that women principals are guided by certain ethics and values that control their behaviour and enable them to handle challenges they face as leaders of schools. Gesh stated, *"When problems are approaching me, I think before I act. I am calm and proactive to unforeseen circumstances to prevent problems from occurring. I lead by example, always at school, arrive early and leave late and exercise collaborative ways of decision-making".* (Interview A, p.5).

This links up with the findings of the study by Trinidad et al., (2004). They propose three fundamental dominant elements that mould the behaviour of women throughout their personal and professional lives. One of these factors is socialization. It refers, according to Merton (1963), cited by Trinidad et al., (2004), to the means by which a person particularly gains wisdom, expertise and positions required to execute a communal duty competently.

They go on to say that, because of the kinship means, "women have developed values and beliefs that translate into specific behaviours arising in the leadership" (p. 577). Moreover, according to Brunner (1989) and Oakley (2000), cited in Trinidad et al., (2004), women are socialised to be listeners and view effects rooted on their influence on kinship. My interpretation is that women principals have acquired good leadership skills through engaging with other people. The acquired skills help them to handle the challenges in a polite manner. This could help them to easily work along with others within the school, and transformation may easily take place.

5.7.2 Commitment and incentives

Gesh was faced with a challenge of improving matric results from 62%. She stressed that working together and commitment were the solutions to improving the low matric pass-rate in her school. She stated, *"Grade 12 parents' meetings were held and classes started at 06h00 to 16h00 with two breaks in between. We organised some refreshments for the learners, other than the nutrition programme, because they came early and left late. I introduced Saturday classes, and teachers who came to teach on Saturdays were compensated from the fundraising in terms of their travelling expenses. Teachers who obtained 100% pass-rates in their subjects were awarded certificates of appreciation."* (Interview A, p.5).

Hence, the findings of the present study reveal that commitment and instituting incentives are a manner in which women principals overcome the challenges they are faced with. The findings of the study by Nogay and Beebe (2005) confirm the findings of the present study. Their findings revealed that women excelled in many categories, including providing incentives for teachers and learners. This has the implication that women principals handle challenges pertaining to school improvement in a way that really transforms schools. In my understanding, working together, commitment and putting incentives are driving forces in the transformation of schools.

5.7.3 Drawing from learnt knowledge and policies

Findings of the present study reveal that women principals apply the knowledge they have acquired and are guided by policies drawn up to rise above challenges. Nedin explained this by saying, *"I have drawn on knowledge from my leadership and management studies, more especially my Further Diploma in Education. Also, I have ensured that everybody complies*

with the policies. I put aside my feelings and stick to the principles that govern the institution…" (Interview B, p.4).

This is in line with the findings of the study by Beebe and Nogay (2008), when they found that women excelled in promoting professional development. Rosener (1990), cited by Jankelowitz et al., (2003), also advocates this when she presents that women leaders are accessing top positions by drawing on distinct expertise and carriage that they have obtained through their company and from communicating knowledge. This has the implication that some challenges may be experienced by them as leaders owing to their subordinates' ignorance. To overcome such challenges, they draw knowledge from their experiences and share it with their subordinates. , This includes implementation of policies. Hence, without any doubt, sharing knowledge with others within the school may lead to transformation.

5.8 Being a woman leader

5.8.1 Guidance and support

Findings of the present study reveal that women principals strongly believed that, as women leaders, they should give guidance and support to others. Gesh wrote: …*you provide guidance and support to your subordinates* (Interview A, p.5). These findings of the study seem to agree with the findings of the study by Rosener (1990), cited in Burns and Martin (2010). According to Rosener, women were found to promote involvement, to apportion authority and knowledge, to promote other individual's self-esteem and make others eager about their job. This seems to confirm that women lead in a participative manner that also reflects Ubuntu. This has the implication that, in schools led by woman, goals may be easily accomplished, because of the guidance and support they give to the people led.

5.8.2 Exercise leadership with authority and care

According to the findings of the present study, the participants also felt that women leaders have a responsibility to exercise leadership with authority and care. This is confirmed by words taken from Gesh's notes: *You have to exercise leadership with authority and care, but not forgetting learning and teaching. It means to listen to other people's views and become strong to emerge above challenging situations* (Interview A, p.5).

In the study by Nogay and Beebe (2008), they found that women principals excelled in protecting instructional time. Also, Santos (1996) found that women had a natural tendency

to be very patient and to relate better to teaching. Thus, the findings of early research studies link with the findings of the present study. My interpretation of these findings is that women do not view principalship as a position only. They also understand it as a process in which interaction and caring should take place. This has the implication that they recognise the presence of others in their schools, and, at the same time, they do not compromise learning and teaching. Hence, transformation is likely to take place in schools led by women.

5.8.3 Submission to God

Findings of the current study reveal that women strongly believe that submission to God is important in school leadership. Gesh's and Zan's notes confirm this:

You have to believe in God, pray for yourself and the people you lead. (Gesh).

To be a woman leader means to fulfil your God-given responsibility. (Zan).

According to my knowledge, good leadership is the one that includes the name of God. A leader has to pray for people being led as well as the organisation. Challenges encountered should be directed to God, Almighty, Creator of everything. This cannot be linked to the literature, because the literature seems to be silent about God's name in leadership. However, the findings of the present study reveal that the participants strongly believe that women leaders should identify with God in order to be successful. This also implies that women are not easily affected by challenges they are faced with in leadership and management of schools. Instead, they submit to God and share the burden with Him.

5.8.4 Excellence

Findings of the present study reveal that women principals associated women's leadership with 'excellence'. Nedin noted: *You have to excel in everything you do to compete at all times irrespective of criticism, and accept your efforts not being appreciated.* This is in line with the findings of early research studies.

In Spanish schools, Nogay and Beebe (2008) found that women excelled in the following categories: constructing organisational objectives, orchestrating learning and teaching activities, guiding students, avail themselves and encouraging lifelong learning. This has the implication that the achievement of goals in schools led by women is enhanced if they believe in excellence. Also, there is no doubt that transformation is taking place if they excel in everything they do.

5.8.5 Women's empowerment

According to the findings of the present study, women principals strongly believe that women in leadership should empower other women and protest against gender inequalities and stereotypes assigned to women. Nedin's response supports this: *It also means to fight against gender inequalities and stereotypes assigned to women. Being a woman leader, you have to empower other women, finding out what skills they possess and nurturing these skills.* This agrees with the findings of the study by Hurty (1995), cited in Celikten (2005). According to Hurty, women were found to use their passionate spirits as tools of authority. They encouraged progress, considerate decision taking, used dialogue as an instrument in challenging situations, and worked with others for improvement. This implies that women in leadership ensure that change becomes apparent in their organisations by working with others. Working with others for change shows that women principals lead in a way that reflects Ubuntu and transforms schools.

5.8.6 Teamwork

According to the findings of the present study, teamwork was considered to be an important aspect of women's leadership. Zan noted: *It means a woman leader is the one who is optimistic. Also you have to believe in what you and your team are doing.* According to the findings of the study by Rosener (1990), cited in Burns and Martin (2010), women were found to use a people-oriented style of leadership. For example, the style was team related, supportive and caring. Working collaboratively in teams implies that women are agents of change, because one of the characteristics of agents of change is that they work together with the subordinates to transform them.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSION

6.1 Introduction

This is a small-scale, qualitative study situated within the interpretive paradigm, and it explores the leadership and management understanding and experience of three women principals, two leading primary schools and one leading a secondary school. The study was undertaken through one-on-one, in-depth, semi-structured interviews, which were also tape-recorded. Document analysis was also used to collect data. The three women principals wrote a brief note on what they thought it meant to be a woman leader based on their experiences.

This introduction provides a brief description of the preceding chapters and the significance and limitations of the research, and concludes with suggestions for future research.

The preceding five chapters provide the basis for the conclusion. The first chapter stated the problem of the study. Chapter Two discussed the literature reviewed in this study, nationally and internationally, in relation to women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management. Transformative leadership theory, as well as Ubuntu, an African philosophy, which is vital in school leadership and management, was also discussed. The third chapter provided the aim of the study and research methodology employed to undertake the research study. In Chapter Four, the data obtained from the participants was presented. The fifth chapter discussed the main findings, linking them back to Chapter Two. This chapter is a concluding one which summarises the findings as discussed in the previous chapter.

6.2 Summary of the main findings

In this research study, leadership and management were understood as two distinct concepts, but closely related to each other. Women principals emphasized that, in the school context, both leadership and management are important aspects to achieve the school's objectives.

The data also showed that leadership was viewed by women principals as an influence exerted on others to achieve the school's goals. Since they understood leadership as an influence on others, not the authority of power, this confirms that women principals lead in a manner that reflects Ubuntu and transforms schools. Transformational leaders are those who

recognise the presence of others within an organisation. They work together with others for total achievement of goals.

In addition, the findings were clear that leadership was understood as an activity in which vision was created. In proper leadership, a leader should have a vision that is shared with others. Coleman (2005) refers to this as a distributed leadership. In a distributed leadership, everybody is clear about the target set and works towards these targets. Hence, transformation is likely to take place.

Evidence from this study also shows that women principals understand leadership as a flexible activity. This is an idea which Benns (1989) concurs with when suggesting that leaders do the right things, while managers do things right. This calls for a leader to be flexible rather than rigid. In doing so, a leader has to employ leadership approaches that reflect Ubuntu in order to transform the entire organisation.

In attempting to define management, women principals indicated that management includes tools and methods used to attain goals. It was clear in the data that tools are both human and physical resources that should be available in the school in order to achieve goals, Methods, on the other hand, are activities of planning, organising, controlling, budgeting, staffing and problem-solving. Also, women principals understood management as an activity to work with people and handle their behaviour. Women principals strongly believed that management involves working with people who behave in different ways. They felt that management is an activity in which people's behaviour is controlled for the smooth achievement of goals.

The data also showed that the principals experienced leadership and management as an activity in which women principals are rejected by their subordinates. On the other hand, they were excited about the experience they gained through working with the School Governing Body. One woman principal was also excited about the experience she gained through leading and managing a big secondary school. This also equipped her with good financial management skills.

In attempting to describe a good leader, the principals highlighted that a good leader should be guided by certain values and ethics. According to Northouse (2009), ethics refers to what is good in human interaction, whereas values refer to relatively stable convictions about what is important. They mentioned that a good leader leads by example, praises and listens to

others, sympathizes and empathizes with others, has good communication skills, motivates and develops others, delegates tasks, and is visionary, friendly and firm. A good leader also makes informed decisions. These values seem to show that leaders who are guided by them are the ones who reflect the spirit of Ubuntu and transform their schools. Hence, describing a good leader in this way shows that women principals do transform their schools and lead in a manner that reflects Ubuntu.

In response to the question on challenges faced by women in school leadership, the three women principals highlighted that they were faced with challenges of gender discrimination, rejection, arrogance and disrespect. This shows that, even though women employ democratic leadership approaches in schools, their efforts are not recognised and appreciated.

In response to the question about handling challenges, women principals highlighted that there are certain ethics and values that guide their behaviour. They went on to say that, in order to handle challenges they are confronted with as women principals, they rely most on ethics and values. They are calm and proactive, set an example, and exercise collaborative ways of decision-making. This has the implication that women lead in a way that reflects Ubuntu and transforms their organisations.

Within the study, there was also evidence of the differences in the manner in which women principals handled their challenges. One principal stressed that she managed to overcome some challenges through commitment and by instituting incentives. Beebe (2005) found that women excel in many categories, including providing incentives for teachers and learners. Commitment and incentives are vital in transformation, and a leader is one who reflects Ubuntu.

Another principal suggested that drawing from learnt knowledge and policies also contributes a lot in the handling of challenges. She highlighted that she drew knowledge from her leadership and management studies, as well as policies that govern the institution, rather than being driven by her feelings. Application of learnt knowledge and adherence to policies imply that transformation is likely to happen in schools led by women. It would be difficult to transform an organisation without having knowledge and policies, more especially those that guide human behaviour.

In attempting to write a brief note on the question of what they thought it meant to be a woman leader, the three women principals responded that being a woman leader meant to

give guidance and support to one's subordinates and one had to exercise leadership with authority and care. Moreover, all three women principals highlighted that a woman leader should submit to God and be guided by excellence in her endeavours. They further highlighted that to be a woman leader meant to involve oneself in activities relating to women's empowerment and to use a team-related style of leadership. The meaning women attached to being a woman leader implies that they really transform their schools. Also, using a team-related style of leadership compels them to reflect Ubuntu when they deal with people within their organisations.

6.3 Significance of the study

This research explored women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management. It aimed to find out women principals' understanding and experience of leadership and management, the challenges women principals experience at their entry into principalship and as leaders in schools, and how they overcome the challenges they experienced. The way women principals understand leadership and management determines whether they employ transformational leadership approaches as South Africa is a transforming society in transition. Transformational leaders empower and motivate those around themselves. Key concepts among those who adopt a transformational leadership framework include issues such as mentorship, reciprocity of dialogue, creativity, empowering people, social justice, managing diversity and making a difference in people's lives. Nowadays, leadership that is vested in one person is not recommended. Good leadership recognises the presence of others situated culturally and historically within the organisation. Hence, through this study, we can build a strong base for understanding leadership and management by drawing from women principals' understanding and experience.

6.4 Limitations of the study

The key limitation of this inquiry is a small number of women principals who participated in the study. At the beginning, four women principals were selected, but only three participated in the study. The fourth principal resigned before the research was done. The small number of participants means that the findings cannot be applicable. The participants were not even representative of uMgungundlovu district, as they were from two neighbouring circuits of the district. Therefore, we cannot say the findings reflect how women principals lead and manage in all schools of uMgungundlovu District.

Moreover, the volume of time accessible to collect the necessary data was narrowed by my own commitments. Irrespective of these obstructions, however, I suspect the data that was collected showed a remarkable level of validity and that knowledge can be constructed from this study. The findings from the three women principals in my study might be common to other women principals in other contexts. Over and above this, through this study, masculine leadership ideology could be minimised, and the ability of women in school leadership and management may be acknowledged and appreciated.

6.5 Recommendations

As South Africa has undergone drastic changes in education aiming at the improvement of schools, some recommendations are made in an attempt to improve school leadership and management.

The research showed there was a connection between leadership and management. In the school context, principals should function as both leaders and managers. It was evident in participants' understanding of leadership and management that, if one of these concepts was not considered, goal achievement would be difficult.

South Africa is a country in which democracy must be exercised in all spheres of government. Leadership that is vested in one person is not required. Thus, principals of schools should employ democratic styles of leadership that recognise the presence of others within their schools. In so doing, they would be leading in a manner that transforms schools and reflects Ubuntu.

There are ethics and values required in the transformation of schools. Findings of this study depicted the success of women principals in transforming schools, which was a result of ethics and values that guided them.

6.7 Conclusion

Leadership and management of schools towards the achievement of goals during a transition period require that leaders must possess transformational leadership skills that reflect Ubuntu to improve their schools. This claim is validated by the findings of this research study. This research has also revealed that there is a link between leadership and management. For success at schools, both should be put in place. Kotter (1990) agrees with this when suggesting that leadership and management are two sides of the same coin.

This research has shown that women principals understand leadership and management in a way presented in Chapter Four, discussed in Chapter Five and summarised earlier in this chapter. It stresses that principals should be able to adopt leadership styles that involve others. In so doing, they become transformational leaders who are able to meet the demands of a new South Africa, a transforming country in transition.

REFERENCES

Aladejana, F .& Aladejana, S. (2005). *Leadership in education: The place of Nigerian women.* 33(2). 70-75

April, K.A & Hill, S. (2000). *The uncertainty and ambiguity leadership in the 21st century.* University of Cape Town, South Africa

Azoola, C. (2011). *Women principals in small schools in South Africa. Australian journal of education.*

Beach, D. & Reinhartz, J. (1989). *Supervisory leadership*: Focus on instruction.

Burns, G. & Martin, B. (2010). Examination of the effectiveness of male and female educational leaders who made use of the invitational style of leadership. *Journal of Invitational Theory and Practice,* 16. 29-38

Burns, J.M (1978) *Leadership*. New York: Harper and Row

Brooking, K. (2008). *The future challenge of principal succession in New Zealand primary schools: Implications of quality and gender.* 36(1). 42-55

Celikten, M. (2005). *Attitudes toward women school administrators in Turkey*. 130(4). 531-539

Christie, P. (2010). Landscapes of Leadership in South African Schools: Mapping the changes. *Education Management Administration and Leadership*, 38(6) 694-711.

Coleman, M. (2005). *Gender and secondary school leadership*. 33 (2). 3-20

Coleman, M. (2003). Gender and school leadership: *The experience of women and men in secondary principals.* University of London.

Coleman, M. (2005). "Theories and practice of leadership: an introduction ", in Coleman, M. and Earley, P. (eds). *Leadership and Management in Education: Cultures Change and Context,* Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp.6-25.

Coleman, M. (2004). Gender and Headship in 2004: *reflections of work in progress*, 18(4), 23-27.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. & Morrison, K. (2011). *Research Methods in education* (7th ed.). Oxon: Routledge

Covey, S. (2007). *The Transformational Leadership Report.* Transformational Leadership papers retrieved from URL

http:/leadership.au.af.mil/documents/homrig.htm

Craig, R., Amernic, J. & Tourish, D. (2010). Transformational Leadership Education and Agency Perspectives in Business School Pedagogy: A Marriage of Inconvenience? *British Journal of Management*, 21. 540-556.

Creswell, J.W. (2012). Educational Research: *Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Quantittative and Qualitative Research (4th ed.).* USA: Pearson Education.

Davidoff, S. & Lazarus, S. (1997). *The Learning School.* Cape Town: Juta.

De la Rey, C., Jankelowitz, G. & Suffle, S. (2003). Women's leadership program in South Africa: *A strategy for community intervention.*

Department of Education. (1997). Understanding the SA Schools Act. Pretoria. Government Printer.

Eby, B.J (2004). *Effective Women Principals: Transformational Leadership in Urban Settings.* University of Cincinnati: Education

Gay, L.R., Mills, G.E. and Airasian, P. (2006). Educational Research Competences and Application. Upper Saddle River N.J.: Pearson Merrill Prentice

Holdford, D.A (2003). Leadership theories and their lessons for pharmacists, *Am J Health-Syst Pharm,* 60. 1780-1786

Kotter, J.P (1990) *A force for change: how leadership differs from management*. New York: Free Press.

Mapolisa, T. & Madziyire, N.C. (2012). Female Leadership Dilemmas in Primary Schools: A case study of 18 Primary Schools in Kambuzuma, Warren Park and Kuwadzana Areas of

Harare Province in Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Social Sciences & Education,* 2(3), 447-510.

Marishane, R.N. & Botha, R.J. (2011). *School Leadership in a Changing Context: A case study for school-based Management.* Pretoria: Van Schaik Publishers. pp 31-51.

Mbedla, H. (2011). A qualitative inquiry into the role of the principal and deputy principal in decision making processes in three rural schools in KwaZulu-Natal. Masters thesis, University of KwaZulu-Natal.

McMillan, J. & Schumacher, S. (2006). *Research in education: evidence based inquiry* (6th ed.). Pearson: Boston

McMillan, J. & Schumacher, S. (2011). *Research in education: evidence based inquiry* (7th ed.). Pearson: Boston

Moorosi, P. (2010). South African female principals: *Career path: Understanding the gap in secondary school management:* doi 10.1177/1741143210373741

Mouton, J. (2001). *How to succeed in your Masters & Doctoral Studies.* Pretoria : Van Schaik

Msila, V. (2008). Ubuntu and school leadership. *Journal of Education,* 44. 68-82.

Nogay, K. & Beebe, R. (2008). *Gender and perceptions: Females as secondary principals. Journal of school leadership,* 18. 583-602.

Northouse, P.G. (2009). *Introduction to Leadership: Concepts and practice.* Western Michigan University: Sage.

Nosike, A.N. & Oguzor, N.S. (2011). Understanding School Leadership and Management in Contemporary Nigeria. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, 1. 145-151

Punch, K. (2000). *Developing effective research proposals:* London, SAGE

Rossouw, D. & van Vuuren, L. (2010). *Business Ethics (4th ed.).* Cape Town: Oxford University Press.

Santos, M. (1996). Women and Leadership in the Spanish Educational System. European Journal of Education, 31(4), 435-445.

South Africa. The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa Act 108, 1996

Trinidad, C. & Normore, H.A (2004). *Leadership and gender: a dangerous liaison*?: Leadership and Organization Development Journal, 26(7), 574-590.

Van der Westhuizen, P.C. (1991). *Effective Educational Management* (Eds.). Pretoria: Kagiso

APPENDIX A

P.O. Box 29

Elandskop

3226

22 April 2013

Dear Madam

Name:_____

RE-PARTICIPATION IN THE RESEARCH STUDY PROJECT

You are kindly requested to participate in the research study project.

The following information is provided for you to decide whether you may participate in the study. You should be aware that you are free to decide not to participate or withdraw at any time without any hesitation.

The purpose of this study is to explore women principals' understandings and experiences with regard to leadership and management. The procedure will be a small scale qualitative study with a phenomenological aspect. Data collection will involve interview schedules, tape recorder and journal entries. Individuals involved in the data collection will be the researcher and the participant.

Do not hesitate to ask any questions about the study either before participating or during the time that you are participating. I would be happy to share the findings with you after the research is completed. However, your name will not be associated with the research findings in any way, and your identity as a participant will be known only to the researcher.

There are no known risks and discomforts associated with this study. The expected benefits associated with your participation are the information about the understandings and experiences of women principals with regard to leadership and management.

Please sign your consent with full knowledge of the nature and purpose of the study. A form will be given to you to keep.

I thank you in anticipation.

Yours faithfully

Signature: Date:

K.J. Shezi (Researcher)

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

I,   (Full names in block letters)

consent my participation to be involved in the research study.

I acknowledge that my participation in the research study is voluntary.

Name and Signature:

Date:

APPENDIX C

FIELD RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Tell me your understanding of leadership and management in relation to your role as principal.

2. Can you tell me about experiences you have gained through leading and managing a school?

3. How do you describe a good leader?

4. What challenges have you experienced at your entry into principalship and as a leader in school?

5. How have you handled all the challenges you have experienced?

6. Please write a brief statement of what you think it means to be a woman leader in school. (not more than a page)

APPENDIX E

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please write a brief statement of what you think it means to be a woman leader in school.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____