
FEMALE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS- PERCEPTIONS OF LEADERSHIP IN A MALE DOMINATED EDUCATION ENVIRONMENT

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I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.
Philippians 4:13

ABSTRACT

Many well-known studies on leadership have ignored the perspective of women yet bear an emphasis on the importance of portraying leadership in its entirety. This would mean that all leadership perspectives are included and that leaders are allowed to speak for themselves and about themselves.

It is this connection I have sought to establish how women perceive leadership by relating the experiences of four women in school principalship. I have used a factual questionnaire to establish the background of each one but, it is the in-depth interviews that yield the leadership perceptions. Borrowing from phenomenological procedures, the leadership experiences are related as Natural Meaning Units (NMUS) whereby all prior knowledge and possible bias are bracketed out. Reinforced by their journal entries, it is only the voice of the women that is heard.

My study reinforces the observation of researchers and feminist scholars that women leaders are not only marginalised but also viewed from a perspective that is not their own. From the study, however, the one element about leadership that emerges as unique is the functioning of transformational leadership elements among women leaders in educational set-ups that are inherently traditional, bureaucratic and hierarchical. This is significant because there is an indication that women leaders are inclined to transformational leadership because it favours their feminine qualities. There is also evidence that school principals can embrace leadership diversity and finally, that leadership and the structures of leadership operation are not developed from without but from within the person of the leader and this is an incorporation of their vision and beliefs.

In the context of South Africa, this study should be of potential significance because of the change that is taking place in the development and training of school principals.

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DECLARATION

This research represents original work by the author and has not been submitted in any other form to another university. Where use was made of the work of others, it has been duly acknowledged in the text.

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CHAPTER ONE

AN OVERVIEW

1.1 Introduction

There is virtually no literature on South African school leaders - men or women. Moreover, it is generally known that there are significantly fewer women principals than there are men and that women school leaders tend to be concentrated at the junior primary levels where they are likely to supervise female teachers. Furthermore even though they hold the same title as their male colleagues, women principals are rarely viewed as equals by their male colleagues and by their male or female staff (Atkinson, Wyatt and Senkhane 1994:19).

1.2 Overview of gender equity

The 1996 UNDP Report showed that there was a significantly smaller percentage of women in high level posts compared to men, the striking feature being that this disparity was similar across the developed and the developing countries. The following percentages of women in high positions or administrative and managerial positions were selected randomly and categorised to give focus to Africa against the rest of the world. It is worth noting that that all of them fall below the fifty-percent average.

With only 17.4% of the South African women in positions requiring leadership and management skill, it is worthwhile to find out why these figures are low and why the upward mobility of women, which is small in percentage, is divided along racial disparities. These features characterise the work force despite there being an increase of women in the labour force from 23% in 1960 to 40% in 1991 (Barker cited in Erasmus 1997).

Southern Africa	Eastern and Central Africa	Northern and West Africa	Asia and Australia	Europe	North and South America
Botswana 36.1%	Ethiopia 11.2%	Egypt 16.0%	Australia 43.4%	UK 33.0%	US 42.0%
Lesotho 33.4%	Zaire 9.0%	Gambia 15.5%	Singapore 34.3%	Norway 30.0%	Mexico 20.0%
Namibia 20.8%	Rwanda 8.2%	Ghana 8.8%	China 11.6%	Finland 26.4%	Peru 20.0%
South Africa 17.4%	Congo 6.1%	Mauritania 7.7%	Indonesia 6.6%	Belgium 18.8%	Venezuela 17.6%
Zimbabwe 15.4%	Sudan 2.4%	Algeria 5.6%	Iran 3.5%	Germany 17.2%	Chile 17.4%
Zambia 6.0%	Comoros 0.1%	Equatorial Guinea 1.6%	India 2.3%	France 9.4%	Brazil 17.3%

(1996 Statistics on Women in High Level Positions: adapted from World Guide 1997)

According to the 1995 Annual Household Survey, women accounted for less than a quarter of all managerial, legislative and senior official positions in the workforce. African women accounted for 36%, Coloured 4% and White 56%. Of professional women the representation was 38.1% with 42% African, 6% Coloured and Indian and 46% white (Central Statistics Service cited in Erasmus 1997). Included in these percentages were nursing and teaching, both of which have large numbers of women. At the apex, the managerial level representation of women became smaller with 8% White, 5% Indian, 4% African and 1% Coloured. Included in this category were be school leaders and senior educators. Comparatively, however, the number of school leaders did not reflect or even correspond equitably to the large number of women that were in education, specifically teaching. This same disparity is seen today and was documented in the Draft White Paper on Education and training in South Africa, where it was recognised that gender inequity problems were “deep seated within society at large” and that “a patriarchal culture therefore dominates educational organization” (Greyvenstein 1996).

1.3 Context of research

The constitution of the republic of South Africa gives recognition to equal opportunities. In education this is endorsed by the White Paper on Education and Training, which in the fourth chapter stipulates:

Education and training are basic human rights. The state has an obligation to protect and advance these rights, so that all citizens irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age have the opportunity to develop their capacities and potential and make a full contribution to the society (1995:21).

Clearly there has been every effort made to attain equity and to make it a social reality, however, the current efforts to do so through policies of affirmative action and gender preference, have not solved the under representation of women. Meanwhile, the Gender Equity Act which is an enforcement arm, must endeavour to work more aggressively if women are to be included in the job market with greater influx of women workers that are educated, skilled and driven towards leadership and management positions.

Equity is more than just numbers. In the case of school leadership, equity means more than additional female school principals. According to Wamahiu (1996) Equity is the conscious endeavour to break away from the pedagogy of difference that is the order inherent in deeply seated patriarchal societies towards a pedagogy that includes a different ideology; one that embraces and is responsive to the views, vision and aspirations of the minority group. In the case of women in leadership, equity would entail a pedagogy of empowerment where the status and gender roles of women are recognized on precepts other than biological differences and religious traditions.

This means that gender equity should be translated beyond the mere numerical increase of women, beyond merely window dressing the issue. There needs to be reliable and validated frames of reference from which to develop criteria for school leaders; criteria that embody the diversity that there is in leadership and that are able to facilitate at the individual level the effectiveness and productivity of the school principal. This kind of

arbitration is much needed in a society that is as diverse as South Africa is in its cultural and racial history.

1.4 Motivation for research

While the rest of the world moves on towards the twenty-first century, it is the observation of Wamahiu (1996) that in most parts of Africa, education remains a distant dream and where there is education, the systems are characterised by authoritarian climates. The challenge is for education, in this day and age, to be transformational, liberating and empowering for both genders through teaching them to “advance their own development (ibid.1996:56).

It is in affirmation of Wamahiu’s thoughts that this research was born, in fact out of a curious observation of the set-up of school leadership in South African schools. My observation that a good number of single sex girls schools were headed by male principals came as quite a surprise. Out of this I decided to observe the school leadership trend in a small city in the Eastern Cape in South Africa. Armed with the statistics on women in the labour market I was alerted to the fact that though women were the majority of teachers, in school leadership they were predominantly in preparatory and junior schools with markedly small numbers in high schools and countable heads in tertiary institutions. While many questions did arise, I felt the particular need to know whether this gender disparity was perpetrated by the failure of women school leaders or it was as a result of other factors emanating from their gender (Atkinson et al. 1994). It was also my interest to know of other reasons not envisaged. In as much as it would have been ideal to undertake a large scale research, the magnitude of the undertaking in terms of time and purpose was feasible in the circumstances. For this reason, a case study was found to be both a fitting and appropriate option. The option was also found well suited to opinion seeking and the relation of experiences. As such, for the purposes of building the lived world of women leaders, the case study scored. In addition, the method, I envisioned, was legitimate because the leaders perceptions were going to shed light on how women school

leaders experience leadership. It was in many ways going to be a pertinent research contribution in terms of entering a leadership world that was essentially closed domain.

A sample of four women school leaders was found a convenient selection because the study intended to engage only those respondents who were willing to undergo the rigour of interviews as well as to spend time reflecting on themselves as leaders. The building of this “internal rapport” I found instrumental in making the research process particularly enriching for both myself and those involved. The selection of leaders from across a socio/racial background gave the essence of the leadership from the experiences of women from black and white and coloured backgrounds. Also from their involvement in the leadership and management of different school types: preparatory, primary and senior school or former model “C” school¹, and DET schools.

Also, the other reason why the sample was small was that the geographical area from which the study was undertaken was unyielding of large numbers of female principals!

1.5 Goals of the research

With the evidence that school leadership is predominantly a male domain, it was the intention of this study to investigate the leadership experience of women school leaders with the view to bringing out their perceptions. It was found important that these insights be drawn out using research methods that favoured an unbiased viewpoint and that allowed the women to speak out themselves. The necessity for this was found in the light of the heavy male predominance that there is in leadership studies (see also, Rosener 1990, Gosetti et al. 1991, Morgan 1994, Marshall 1995). I also found it necessary to obtain the viewpoint of women because there is need to envision leadership as a dynamic form, as a way of thinking that is interconnected with the influences around and the transitions that take place within the leader

1. Under the Apartheid regime, Model “C” schools were primarily for white learners and DET schools for blacks.

1.6 Outline of the research

This first chapter highlights the motivation, intention and focus of the study. It emphasizes the significance of the study on women in school leadership in respect to where women are at in South Africa, in terms of their numbers, representation, effectiveness and productivity.

Chapter two documents the informing literature and locates the trends and developments in leadership. Transformational leadership, the feminist viewpoint and subsequent developments related to school leadership are discussed.

Chapter three is on research methodology. Here the rationale for the use of in-depth interviews, journal entries and a questionnaire is addressed as well as the procedures and ethics guiding the data collection.

Chapter four, is closely linked to the third chapter and is the discussion of the data.

Chapter five is the link between the data analysis and the theoretical framework. The discussion here highlights values pertinent to leadership from the point of view of the four women. Commonalities that emerge are linked to literature and research done elsewhere. There is particular emphasis on issues that are pertinent to the South African context.

Finally, chapter six provides a synopsis of the study by drawing conclusions from the findings and by making recommendations and an evaluation of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter explores male dominance in leadership and the impact that it has upon women and their socialisation into leadership. The super ordination of the male and the distinct male orientation is rooted in the social construction of gender and the subsequent stereotypes to which our societies have succumbed. This is examined in the light of religious order and its literary influence upon the thinking of the day. Identity, the social construction of gender, the resulting legacy and the implications for society is also considered.

Therein, school leadership is placed, in the broad context of leadership, with initial focus on leadership theories and leadership models, and then on alternative perspectives to leadership. In this latter dimension the focus on women leadership is acuminate.

2.2 Background to patriarchy

Patriarchy or male domination are synonyms that designate a social and political power system. This domination under which our current leadership dispensation suffocates is both culturally and historically rooted (Jonasdottir 1994).

Feminist researchers explain the dimensional power structures in which men and women find themselves from two perspectives. First, they state that the inequality between the sexes has always existed. Second, that a systematic and institutionalised inequality and oppression of women emerged historically. This is linked to the development of other social inequalities and mainly those of class (Jonasdottir 1994, Mandell 1995). The first perspective charges that women and men are inherently unequal while the second purports

this inequality to be a socially constructed form (O'Kelley 1980, Robertson and Berger 1986, Walker 1990, Mail and Guardian 1998). This latter perspective also attributes the discrimination of women to male dominance.

Placed in its historical, sociological and religious contexts, the rootedness and impact of patriarchy on the lives of women of all races illustrates the depth to which patriarchy has affected women and created an ethos of acceptance over their position and status, that is frighteningly unquestioning. It might be argued that a socialisation such as this is unique to women solely because of their femaleness, a feature of their vulnerability and therefore is a vehicle of their entrapment. Because of this assumed vulnerability, social structures relegate women into roles of subservience and even social confinement, the result of which is that women remain unheard in their activity, and unseen in their contribution and membership to public leadership.

By and large, women the world over, regardless of race, colour or creed have for decades been excluded from the spheres in which early philosophies found expression and publication (O'Kelley 1980, Jonasdottir1994). It was only through the channels that were designed and constructed for them that they could express themselves and these did not necessarily reflect what they felt or promoted. Their expression therefore had little impact on themselves as it was voiceless and inconsequential (Gosetti et al. 1991, Klapisch-Zuber 1992, Pantel 1992). Unquestionably, a repressive climate is well suited to any form of domination. Here one can begin to understand how a legacy of dominance roots itself into the thinking of a society so that the influence upon the subjects becomes almost legitimate where one's status and position is no longer is a subject of contest.

According to Meer (1990), there are two aspects to the domination of women. To begin with there is the objective fact of the domination and second the subjective experience of that domination. She argues that women are dominated by men and that such domination is almost entirely a universal phenomenon where socially engineered structures of inequality are accepted and enforced in our patriarchal societies so that individuals feel or

are obliged to conform. She cites that, “all social institutions are initially dependent on some form of rationalisation, an ideological construct legitimating their functional necessity” (Meer 1990:15). In other words, society designs parameters for the functioning and understanding of itself and once this reaches a state of permanency through inter-generational roots, it outgrows the need for legitimacy and the construction takes on the character of an almost natural determinant or is “God decreed” (ibid 1991:15). From the point of view of this ideology, women and men would be viewed in naturally and unequivocally defined categories with distinctive psychological and behaviour categories. Needless to state, it is this biological or divine determinism that feminists reject as the basis of inequality between the sexes (Lorber and Farrell 1991, Rajaswari 1993 Beck and Keddie 1998)

2.3 Religious socialisation

According to O’Kelley (1980) the great universalistic religions, Christianity, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Judaism support and legitimise the power of the ruling classes. When religious ideology spreads it becomes institutionalised and enforces the power of rulers as by “divine right” and “just as political and economic power is in the hands of men” (Lessing 1994:283), religion then becomes a power in its own right.

2.3.1 Judeo-Christianity

The early Greek and Roman civilisations are recorded to have been patriarchal and to have propagated cultures that favoured the intellectual development of males stressing on their patriarchal duties and obligations. Consequently, the roles of women, as wife and mother required little if any formal education (Greyvenstein 1996). It followed that the Judeo-Christian tradition which quickly found ground on which to settle the philosophy of male supremacy, was readily favoured among cultures practising patriarchal ordinance. Again, the authority in the creation story where Adam the recipient of God’s personality, stands as authority and replicates all that embodies God’s authority, might, power and supremacy (Rockwood cited in Greyvenstein 1996) gave even more credibility to the status and

position of men and women. As a consequence, the elevation of the male and the masculine is invariably open to abuse and misuse even though the initial intention might have been for Adam to serve complementary purposes. The crux of super ordinate and subordinate roles lies here.

Christian teaching as we know and receive it today is built on interpretations, and for every era there is a predominant thought. Nonetheless, the single commonness through the eras is the orientation of difference between men and women which is traceable throughout church history, with the subsequent result being the stereotyping of gender roles and role socialisation.

Enabled by their own interpretation of the old-testament, church leaders and prominent writers propagated philosophies that promoted and sustained male sexism (Greyvenstein 1996). The writings of men like John Chrysostum, a prominent Anglican theologian, writer and spiritual leader of his time illustrates this:

To women is assigned the presidency of the household, to men all the business of justice, government, the military... In deed this the work of God's love and wisdom the one who is skilled at the greater things is downright inept and useless at the performance of less important ones, so that the women's service is necessary...If the more important, more beneficial concerns were turned over to the woman she would go quite mad...[Emphasis mine] (Meer 1990:14)

With the support of the highest church office, the impact of philosophies is expansive and the effect on gender status and positions adverse. Pope Gregory 1, the head of the Catholic Church in the early eighteenth century, declared that a woman was slow in understanding, unstable, weak and naive and therefore inclined to a natural weakness that necessitated the strong hand of her husband (Meer 1990). Another illustration is that of the conceptualisation of women in Victorian times. Portrayed as desexualized and incapable of little else outside of the home besides, children and domestic duties it was even argued that such was their only passion (Caplan 1987). Whatever the portrayal, women have suffered the besmirching effects of sexist socialisation even upon their roles as homemakers and child rearers.

Changes in favour of women are slow to be effected and it is the contention of Greyvenstein (1996) that the deeply entrenched stereotyped view of women, accumulated over years of inherited history remains at the core of modern society. An exemplification of this is captured at the 1998 Lambeth Conference, the decadal congregation of Anglican bishops held in England. Here, the church's attitude to women in leadership became apparent. Of the seven hundred and eighty bishops, eleven of them were repeatedly referred to as "women bishops" a label impressing peculiarity or incongruence between their position and gender. The announcement to perform a fifteen-minute century-old opening prayer ceremony was headline catching merely because the bishop presiding was a woman! (The Times, July 1998).

According to Brannon (1996), widespread gender stereotyping provides obstacles to the full development of both men and women. For achievement-oriented women, as would be the case of a woman in leadership, the entry into a conspicuous position makes her a token because she comes from a minority. She therefore stands out becoming more visible than her male counterparts and is made to feel the pressure to succeed and to reflect well on the ability of everyone in her minority group. This seemed to be the case at the Lambeth Conference.

In conclusion, the creation of the gender stereotypes can be enforced by a long history of religious pressure so that the stereotype form becomes an intrinsic part of the heritage and paradigm of the society. A woman born into it simply grows to blend into it. The same standards determine the relative position of women.

2.3.2 Islam

Islamic traditions were introduced in the 7th century and constituted a move toward improving the status of women as women were important supporters of Mohammed and his new religion (O'Kelley 1980). In fact, Islam as a religion is so intertwined into the culture and way of life of its believers that it is difficult if not altogether impossible to

remove the religion from the philosophy of the people (Hussain 1994, Mabro and Faruziel-Solh 1994, Meer 1990, Salman et al. 1987).

The Koran states that man and woman were created from a single *nafs* or soul and that both should enjoy equal status fashioned on respect and equity. The spread of Islam through patriarchal structures and the influential scholarly Koranic interpretation, has had women isolated to the domestic sphere and placed in positions that excluded them from the public spheres of power (O'Kelley 1980, Salman et al. 1987). The isolation of the Muslim woman to that inconspicuous position relegates her and clearly marks out her role as that of an inactive and non-participatory member of her society.

The power and influence of Islam lies in the *shari'a* (law) which is the informing law of any Arab state. The *shari'a* defines and governs the land with regard to the status of the family, men and women (Salman et al. 1987). Morteza Motehari, a scholar of repute, identified a natural balance between equal and different roles of men and women with the convincing argument that outside of the family, man-made social laws govern social relations because that is the honest and acceptable thing to do from a religious standpoint. The essence of his argument is clear. In keeping women within the confines of the home, the unspoken law is in operation and it follows that women are perceived as incapable of handling matters outside of their realm because, it can be argued, they are not part of it and therefore do not understand it. It is a world that they require to have defined for them by a member of that world.

Other arguments contend that the confinement and restriction serves the "good" purpose of ascertaining a "guarantee against decadence" (Minces 1992). While this have well.intended purpose it also blocks out the "good" and instead perpetrates a form of decadence by the lack of recognition of women and this further destroys women already positioned low. Unempowered by their state of vulnerability through the generations the position of these "naturally, morally and religiously defective" (Hussain 1994:32) persons is pernicious.

Whether such constructions are a misconception or not can only be answered by the women themselves and there is always the broader social context where competing ideologies contribute to the framing and shaping of the identities of women. Such contexts might be volatile fields, filled with unease, tension and conflict, but it is the same contexts that offer the solution when and where they are embraced and envisioned as platforms for change.

2.3.3 Hinduism

Hindu law was codified in 2 BC and became more restrictive of women so that they were placed under perpetual guard ship of males; first the father then the elder brother then the husband. The consequence of this social set up limited women in their performance, in what they could handle and control, the consequence of which was the loss of among other rights, the right to participate in public life. The design of this was an effective bar because women were already forbidden to read sacred scripture and were deprived of access to the more prestigious aspects of religious life (O'Kelley 1980). Ignorance and a lack of information forced women into a situation of dependency, subsequently causing them to be inferior.

Ironically, Hindus accord mothers honour (Caplan 1987) but not in recognition of their presence; rather because of the God-given nature that makes them different, self-effacing, loving and compassionate beings. These are attributes over which men have no control, the paradox of which is further compounded by the revered "*Satyagraha*" which maintains that leadership comes from the stout heart that comes through suffering and faith rather than from books (Caplan 1987). Such complex links between religious ideology and the role of women is illustrated in the history of India. The women who participated commendably in Mahatma Ghandi's independence campaign served as evidence of leadership ability in a society that frowned upon women:

Woman is the companion of man gifted with equal mental capacities. She has the right to participate in the minutest details of the activities of man, and has the same right to freedom and l

liberty as he...by sheer force of a vicious custom, even the most ignorant and worthless men have been enjoying superiority over women which they do not deserve and ought not to have (Young India Magazine cited in Caplan 1987).

Interesting here is that it needed a man to recognise this noble deed when it was clearly deserving and open to anyone's acknowledgement. Though the woman is revered it is only in her motherhood role. Such reverence might be more significant and meaningful if it bore the basic tenets of empowerment such as freedom, public expression and the recognition of her presence in all her other roles.

2.3.4 African tradition and current context

In much of Africa, gender ideology is embedded in "the pedagogy of difference" (Wamahiu 1996:46). This is as a consequence of indigenous education in pre-colonial Africa, colonial education in christianised Africa and contemporary Africa where there has been little done towards the upliftment of women's position vis-à-vis that of men as all three eras have essentially been patriarchal in ideology.

Because many of the pre-colonial societies were agrarian or pastoral peasant communities where wealth, the only measure of value was in the hands of men, as such women could not command power or influence and remained under the shadow of their families and spouses (Richmond-Abbot 1992, Walker 1990, O'Kelley 1980, Mbiti 1978, Kenyatta 1938). This continues to be the case today. Where women have taken charge of the household and manage family affairs in the absence of a senior male figure women, the same women ironically do not have the independence and autonomy of power.

By tracing the roots of power divisions, indigenous education appears to have had great influence. By maintaining a status quo by the perpetuation of ethnic identities and the preservation of ethnic boundaries, indigenous education had the aim of harmoniously integrating individuals into their social groups (Wamahiu 1996). Evidently, from these

reasons, indigenous education embraced men and women as biologically different and propagated that each belonged to distinct worlds for which each played separate though complementary roles in society (ibid. 1996). Seemingly, from a perspective of equity, this form of education was designed to maintain a pedagogy of difference between gender. Perhaps too this set up served to ensure the success advent of colonialism and Christianity in Africa. In particular, the imposition of a monetary economy and an education system in the nineteenth-century had far reaching consequences for the situation of African women. To begin with, colonial education was used to propagate the view that a woman's place was exclusively at home, within the kitchen. The system gave a head start to African males and limited the education opportunities offered to women. Above that it reinforced the position and place of women by limiting their education to domestic skills appropriate for the English housewife and by design did not prepare them to go on to the high levels of the education system (ibid. 1996). African females for lack of education and skills suffered a disadvantaged position in the employment market and subsequently, were unprepared for positions of public leadership.

It is against such a background that today's African woman has had to make a come back to reassert herself as an individual with the right to freedom, education and, equal opportunities. In her awakening, however, she is faced with a society that is embedded in male dominance and conservative patriarchal practice.

2.4 Identity construction

"Woman makes her own history, but she does not make it under her own choosing" (Marx as quoted in Parpart and Staudt 1989:1). The extent to which they have been discriminated against by their societies is well evidenced in empirical research (Lorber and Farrell 1991) because identity constructs have been the prerogative of a few.

The question, our identity, as men and women is critical to the ideologies that inform societal philosophies. The dictionary defines identity as "who you are" (Collins Co-build Dictionary 1995:833), in which case identity would mean one's own definition of oneself.

However, identity too, can be defined by society, and societies have been known to formulate, structure and ordain such parameters to which the members abide and conform (Parpart and Staudt 1989). In many of our societies the predomination of males has enforced that identity takes on their parameters. Therefore, it is from a male standpoint that the woman is defined including her expectations, aspirations and values and from such a perspective, the true nature and humanity in the female is distorted or even removed.

2.5 Gender construction

Gender construction or the identity a person can be approached from two dimensions. One, there is the simplistic approach, “the fact that they are male or female” (Co-Build Dictionary 1995:700), which is a definition that relays a biological connotation suggesting that there are “traits and behaviours that are regarded by culture as appropriate to men and women” (Brannon 1996: 117). Two, there is one’s femaleness or maleness in the physiological sense including the psychosexual developments, learning roles, and the shaping of one’s sexual preferences (Lorber and Farrell 1991). The latter definition implies that social rearing or socialisation impacts on gender identity as the biological factor of sex i.e. maleness or femaleness is used to construct a social category of gender which in turn is defined as masculinity or femininity. Coupled with one’s race, ethnicity, and social class is the creation of institutionalised cultural and social statuses. Identity, therefore, can be said to be a social label, a social construction to which the members of a society ascribe. Whether or not the label is found agreeable to those upon whom the label is attached is an issue of contention.

Gender construction has evolved, and the last three decades mark an era in where women studies have become accepted in academia and embraced as a legitimate field (Gower et al. 1996). This significant step forward demonstrates that gender studies have received the recognition to speak on women and related matters which societies have known little of or have judged from one perspective. This move indicates that scholars have come to the realisation that societies have had three histories “his”, “hers”, and “ours”. There is also

an acknowledgement of the heritage of male dominance of and especially strong in academia so that “her” story has largely been ignored or else studied mainly in subjugated roles related to the dominant sex and culture. The depiction of women as they know, understand and perceive themselves has been absent from research and subsequently from documentation. What exists are constructions of women by societies that are predominantly ruled by males and therefore the formations are from a viewpoint that is male and masculine with no offer of an alternative.

Alternatives to identity construction are a new avenue that gender studies offer. In that regard there is now the opportunity for women to be perceived from a viewpoint that is their own, defined as they know it (Gosetti et al. 1991). Such a perspective would include the roles, feelings and experiences of a woman’s world, and because her sense of the world is not necessarily the same as that her male counterparts it is favourable because it presents women in an unbiased even if not representative way.

Finally, collectively women might have similar experiences in that they are marginalised and discriminated against, but their ideals and ambitions are individual and are not in the pattern portrayed by white western oriented writers (Gosetti et al. 1991, Gower et al. 1996), many of whom have in many ways held a monopoly in the whole study of gender.

2.6 Gender history

For women to be in the place and position that they are in today they have had to break through an established order of patriarchy. In scholarship, masculine domination has been characteristic of the sciences as has been the case with the social sciences (Lather 1991, O’Kelley 1980). According to O’Kelley (1980), masculine bias has been evident since the inception of the social sciences because of the exclusion of women in the study of gender roles and also because of the colouring of pre-existing sexist beliefs about the natures of women and men.

The history of the social sciences records that the 19th century European sociologists were influenced by the gender stereotype of their time, where males were represented as the naturally dominant, aggressive and masterful sex, and the rightful leaders of society. Females, on the other hand, were seen as passive, innocent and pure, the natural mothers and the subordinates of males (O'Kelley 1980). Auguste Comte, a founding father of a predominating, widely informing and influencing gender shaping trend held the sexist ideology that women were both mental and physiological inferiors to men in all kinds of ways whether physical, intellectual or practical. He claimed that man surpassed woman in every respect with the exception of the areas of emotion, love and maturity. Such explains why women through history have had to fight their way, be it into professions, to be included in "male only" careers or to exercise public leadership (O'Kelley 1980). Like many before him and of his time, Comte set a trend around which the society built its construction of women. The writings of Herbert Spencer and evolutionist Frederick Engels did not change society's view of women, rather they reinforced what society had come to believe as true. This position was encouraged because these two influential men maintained that males were naturally more forceful than women, a standpoint that was maintained because of the influence of Sigmund Freud's psychoanalytic theory and the basis on which there was developed, a rationale for gender roles based on biological differences (O'Kelley 1980).

It is suggested that the brain physiology of men and women differs so that women have more integrated brain functioning than men. Men are better developed in spatial, mathematical and structured thinking and women are better developed in communicative and emotive areas (Wolmarans cited in Erasmus 1997). While such studies attempt to explain gender functions in general, there lacks convincing proof for many of the exceptions that occur. However, that notwithstanding, it is true that a maternal instinctiveness causes women to be comparatively more emotional and loving. Again the prevalence of these attributes predominantly in women does not indicate lack of them in men and neither should it demean them as weakness or lesser endowment.

Seemingly, the advent of gender studies has been marked with contentious issues around males and females and the nature of their personalities, attitudes and precepts. Though very little has been done in Africa, this has been the subject of many studies in the US and the UK. A study done by Paul Rosenkrantz in the 1960's found strong evidence for the acceptance of gender stereotypes by both men and women. These college students evaluated themselves on personal self concepts that reflected the stereotypical gender differences. Two findings that came out of this study were that, both men and women positively rated more masculine than feminine and women gave negative evaluation to the stereotypical feminine characteristics that they acknowledged they possessed. The turbulent sixties were not unmarked by the history of gendered socialisation. In particular these women believed that feminine qualities were inferior and they did not want, therefore, to identify themselves with them. In a similar study, Broverman et al. drew the conclusion that "stereotypically masculine traits are often perceived to be more desirable than are the stereotypical feminine characteristics" (Bass 1990:75). They proved that the extent to which women were socialised against themselves impacted upon them greatly enough to have them questioning themselves and even believing that there was something improper about feminine endowments.

Another large internationally representative study conducted in a US college, Eagly and Kite (Eagly 1983) found in ratings of 28 students from different countries, that stereotypes of nationalities were more similar to the stereotypes of men than of the women of those nationalities. There was, however, a large significant difference between countries. Also, the anticipated response pattern that the national stereotype would match men more than it did women did not occur. This study showed that stereotyping was not uncommon across nations. This was significant because it questioned the rationale behind western thinking and ideology of construction of women.

It is significant that it is acceptable that gender stereotyping is a normal cognitive process, if it can be understood in developmental terms as a useful approach to understanding the complexities of gender. It is, however, not acceptable that there be and perhaps continues to be an oversimplification and over generalisation of the male/female experience which is

diverse and complex. This criticism reinstates the question of saturation and the static state as opposed to the being fluid and change embracing, the latter of which is the characteristic of perceptions as a consequence of the influence one's experiences, knowledge, personality, mindset and beliefs. Plainly the term gender while making clear the domain of study, does not accurately capture the sum and substance of the persona. A persona or phenomena has a reality, a lived world.

In his aversion to "grand narratives" (Lyotard as cited in Gower et al. 1996) Lyotard asserts that there has been too much weight placed on theoretical commonalities at the expense of historically specific, plural and local variables in the studies on women. Grand narratives were the characteristic of the 1970's feminist movement and some studies on gender then positioned women stereotypically. Generalities of this nature disadvantage women because stereotypes create simplifications and again fail to give sufficient credence to differences in race, class and ethnicity, education (ibid. 1996).

Findings of studies on women often dwell on the stereotype. In a study by Bass et al (Bass, Kruss and Alexander as cited in Bass 1990) of the 176 male responses, the following were the attitudes to working women. They cited that women lacked career orientation, that they lacked leadership potential and were undependable and emotionally less stable than men. Heller, (cited in Bass 1990) in another study found that female leaders were negatively stereotyped into two extremes of a continuum. At the one extreme was the mother, pet or sex object where women were conceived as too submissive or too emotional to be effective leaders. At the other extreme, women violated what was expected of them as women and they were seen as iron maidens, aggressive workaholics, domineering and manipulative.

Studies of this kind tend to be presumptions perhaps even inaccurate in their perceptions because women in leadership are defined and compared using a criterion that does not always favour them because of the viewpoint from which the perception is conceived. Besides, generalisations ignore uniqueness, difference and the possibility of duality.

The absence of accurate data on women in education leadership is by design a conspiracy of silence (Shakeshaft 1989). Broverman et al. (cited in Bass 1990:712) investigated sex roles among 100 college students indicating the characteristics, attitudes and behaviours in which men and women differed. The female role stereotypes that emerged described the woman as among other things “more dependent ... more emotional, did not hide her emotions, was subjective, easily influenced, submissive, home oriented, unable to separate feelings from ideas, had a strong need for security and easily expressed tender feelings”. Seemingly, all these are characteristics would be incongruent with effective leadership and management in a male orientation.

The consequences of stereotyping are complex and far reaching. The legacy has resulted in self-imposed attitudinal barriers where women experience hindrances that prevent their entry into positions of leadership. According to Heller (cited in Bass 1990), these barriers may cause women to be reluctant to assert themselves for fear of failure. Brannon (1996) states that gender stereotypes are very influential, and that they affect the conceptualisation of women and men and establish social categories for gender which represent how people think. This is indeed true.

2.7 Educational leadership

Collectively, nursing and teaching are the two professions where the majority of women are found (Shakeshaft 1989, Lessing 1994). In South Africa, employment in the “educationalist” occupations stood at 163,652 African, 21,912 Coloured, 6995 Indian, and 58152 White women (Volmink 1994:66). These figures were the highest of all the seventeen selected occupations. It was the expectation that an equally proportionate number be reflected of leadership but this was not the case, and is still not the reality with school leadership.

The evolvement of education leadership has largely been influenced by the trends in corporate management and administration both of which are heavily modelled on the

structures and organisation of the manufacturing and industrial sectors (Hughes 1985, Bush 1995). The rapid change in these sectors demands that change take place in leadership and management in order to meet the needs of a rigorous and unpredictable commercial world. The contrary is the case with education. Change comes slowly and trends over the years are deeply entrenched in a system that feels threatened by change and therefore behaves in a slow and suspicious manner towards the incorporation of anything new including government policy.

The sluggishness in education can be attributed to that fact that scholarly literature on the current theory and practice of the impact of gender in education has only been there since the past decade (Shakeshaft 1989). The reason for this is twofold: first, traditional leadership literature had more focus on male leadership, because for decades men have been the influencing scholars. Again, leadership research has had a focus and orientation towards masculinity both in form and authorship. Second, seeing that women have been absent from general leadership and subsequently from school administration, not much has been documented about them. In an attempt to try and explain the slack in the situation in the last 100 years, Pigford and Tonssen (1993) advance that even though women may have come a long way in some fields, education has not been one of them

It is important to understand the history of education administration and how it is intertwined with the history of teaching (Shakeshaft 1989, Van der Westhuizen 1991) in order to understand why women are as few as they are in education leadership. It is my contention that gender socialisation has played a significant role here because the characteristics that society maintains of women and of men also influence the social roles that they take and who holds the stakes. These characteristics include the expectation of certain personality traits such as women being nurturant and dependent and men assertive and independent (Richmond-Abbott 1992), following which in the education scene, women can only be teachers and men the principals! Briefly tracing the trends should generate a picture of where education leadership has come from in the following three countries. The first two are countries where leadership influence through studies and research emanates.

2.7.1 The United States of America

Shakeshaft (1989) records that from 1905 in the US, school administration was solely a male domain with secondary school principalship and district superintendency posts occupied by men. This trend was embedded in two social factors; first, a masculine socialisation that held women as inferior and as persons oriented only for domestic duty and the home. A mindset that held women as incapable of leadership, so that even when the men did eventually leave teaching, leadership posts still remained the domain of men (Sergiovanni 1990, Pigford and Tonssen 1993). Secondly, the industrialisation era between 1820-1830 developed a job market that attracted men away from teaching to better paying jobs in manufacturing and commerce leaving more teaching opportunities to women but not leadership positions. To generate an era of women in school leadership was not possible, even though the positions were available. This was because of the hostility on the women aspirants caused by a socialisation that was evidently non conducive to the progression of women.

Though records in later years showed a significant change the 1960-1970's, comparative statistics taken in 1985 showed continued under representation of women in school leadership (Shakeshaft 1989) with the same in 1990. In this particular year, however, women comprised three thirds of America's public school teachers but held only 34% of the elementary principalships, 12% secondary and 5% of the superintendships (Pigford and Tonssen 1993). Though there had been a remarkable improvement in the representation of female principals in the last twenty years, this "statistically significant" advancement (Mertz and McNeely 1998:196) presents a reality that is still in need of redress.

The United Kingdom

Like the US, teachers in the UK are predominantly women and have had a similar history of under representation. Of all teachers, women make up the 74% in primary schools and 45% in secondary school (Miller 1996). However, their numbers are not proportionate in

school leadership the reason for which Coleman (1996) attributed to social barriers and hindrances both of which are the main obstacle to women's advancement.

2.7.2 South Africa

The manner in which a society is socialised permeates into its fabric. Such is the case with religion and colonialism and its impact on education in South Africa, an impact which is still felt today.

In 1652 the Dutch settlers brought to South Africa the influencing European practice and religion of their time. Following, in 1882 were the Anglican, German Lutheran and Methodist missionaries who converted large numbers of the Xhosa and Tswana communities to Christianity thereafter transforming the division of labour in African homes in order to fulfil the Victorian ideals of devout domesticity. The woman's domain was around the home where she was a dependent as wife and mother and separated from the public male world of work and independent citizenship (Walker 1990).

Education assumed a similar hierarchical structure in exact replication of the new order. Later, in 1953 when the separate departments were set up to serve the needs of each race on its own (see Behr 1984, Cross 1992) the ideals were enacted so that women teachers and in particular those of the disadvantaged Black and Coloured race experienced the brunt of discrimination and stalled career development. The development of the various facets of education was in many ways choked and in particular, the opportunities for the appointment of women school leaders was almost non-existent. The following anecdotes capture the feelings of women caught in this web:

The Education Department was extremely discriminatory in those days. Women were paid two notches lower than men just because they were women. There was no housing subsidy for women. I soon decided it was not the kind of environment I wanted to work in (Katie, 1998). The early years of my teaching life, when fear of the dominant authorities silenced my voice, my growth as a teacher was inhibited by an absence of other educators' views and insights to illuminate my troubled

thinking processes. During the 1950's in Apartheid South Africa, a coloured female had limited career choices (Jantjes cited in Morrow and King 1998:163).

The changes to the constitution in 1994 and subsequently the changed policies favoured of the immediate removal of structures and forms that stood as obstacles in the way of the advancement of women. At the micro or normative/cultural level, change in South African schools is determined by the school type. That is, whether a school is private or state owned. The entrenchment of years of socialisation prior to 1994 cannot be ignored either. In the majority of cases the private schools are more given to accommodate structural changes and this is mainly because of the governing autonomy that they enjoy. State schools on the other hand, are controlled by the Department of Education, the School Governing Body and even the politics of a place. Some of these controls can be stringent and debilitating to change endeavours over and above change and autonomy being a newcomer in a tightly controlled school arena. The post 1994 democratic position towards school governance and the responsibility that goes with it is therefore challenge that many schools have to quickly settle and even find their own footing in the flux of change.

2.8 Leadership

2.8.1 A definition

Leadership today is somewhat of a buzz word for the study of an area that is of increasing interest to organisations and institutions. Leadership is as elusive to capture as it is to define and as Hoy and Miskel state, "...it is not surprising that definitions of the concept are almost as numerous as the scholars engaged in the study" (1987:270). In this age of eclecticism, it is wise not to confine leadership to a particular definition. According to Vecchio (1997) leadership is a broad social-influence that is distinctly different in form depending on the institution in which it is found. Leadership fluctuates conforming to the leader, the followers and the needs. Yet again, leadership does have recurrent patterns that may well allow some form of categorisation.

To begin with, leadership is the focus of a group process, whereby there is the leader and the follower; “the leader is the individual in the group given the task of directing and coordinating task-relevant group activities” (Fiedler as cited in Hoy and Miskel 1987:270). It is “... influential increment over and above mechanical compliance” (Katz and Kahn cited in Hoy and Miskel 1996:373). In other words, leadership involves the engagement of a relationship whereby interactions between the leader and the lead take place advancing the persuasion to influence the performance of tasks leading to the empowerment or disempowerment of members.

2.8.2 An introduction to leadership

Leadership theory reflects a history that is schooled into an exclusively Anglo-American masculine mind-set (Gosetti et al.1991, Brandt 1992, Coleman 1996, Swanepoel et al. 1998). Likewise, modern leadership thinking is characterised by a patriarchal orientation which, according to Gosetti et al. (1991), may be traced back to the influential and widely quoted publication Leadership by James McGregor Burns in 1978. According to Gosetti et al. (1991), Burns’ treatise on leadership is the foundation for the popular books of Peters and Waterman (1982), Bennis and Nanus (1985), Peters and Austin (1985), Bennis (1989) and Sergiovanni (1990). This is not to say that in the midst of Burns’ influence, there were not other notable contributions.

The Human Relations Approach of the 1930’s is probably the genesis of transformational leadership where Mary Parker Follet discovered that informal teams worked better, and that less control by management yielded better results because the team nurtured collegiality by inventing its own norms and work ethic. Unfortunately, this exponent of human and relational leadership has been little acknowledged. Burn’s silence on gender equality and his hierarchical construction of leader/follower relations magnifies his bias and indicates his leadership orientation. Conceived out of the theories of Maslow, Erickson and Kolhberg, there is a clear demonstration of the enormity of influence of the male and the masculine.

2.8.3 Great man theory

The “great man” theory proposes that leadership exists in a superior few with in-born traits evident in their capacity and manifest in their achievement, responsibility, participation and status (Hoy and Miskel 1996) thereby making them an elite that is distinguishable from the masses. The key characteristic of this theory is that it locates the masses as devoid of leadership ability and portrays them as needing leadership. The “great man” theory, as history records it, is unique and predominantly a characteristic of the menfolk. Among leaders like Moses who lead the Israelites out of Egyptian bondage, Winston Churchill who rallied the British through wars of victory and now, Lee Iacocca the corporate transforming enterprenual guru, little is recorded of the leadership feats of women with the exception of Joan of Arc, Elizabeth 1 and Catherine the Great (Bass 1990). Perhaps it was because their leadership accomplishments were befitting of leadership within masculine leadership parameters. Women in leadership like Margaret Thatcher and the late Indira Ghandi are renowned possibly because they too had similar leanings.

The great man type leader has the power to lead because he is sanctioned to do so by the masses (followers) who elevate him to that position because he has the ability to serve their needs. Once the needs are served the “contract” as it were, is broken with the masses (followers) remaining unchanged and unempowered because in the event of another need the followers will have to look for yet another leader.

The claim made of the great-man theory is that the ability, vision and foresight to lead resides in a few persons. The contest over these special persons with special endowments had the case of the great-man theory put to rest after reviews of hundreds of trait case studies yielded negligible and confusing results. This single characteristic in itself rendered the theory on its own an invalid approach to leadership (Bass 1990).

2.8.4 Leadership behaviour

The impetus for research on leadership behaviour began in the 1930's because attempts to identify leaders on the basis of traits was disillusionary. Like the great-man approach, here too a broad range of behavioural theories were tested. The person-centred (Sashkin and Lassey 1983) or else employee-centered, relations-centered was a one-dimensional approach to behavioural leadership that arose out of the Michigan and subsequent Ohio State leadership studies where the contention was for a style that would yield more production among employees in industry. Though the Ohio studies yielded positive aspects of leader behaviour where “consideration” for subordinates and “initiating structure” through the giving of directions and orders were the two dimensions that enabled effective leadership. Behavioural leadership still had its focus on task accomplishment and above all else held little regard for the individual’s inspiration and motivation to leadership. The leadership objective was to get the subordinates (or followers) to accomplish tasks. So while the leadership might be conceived as democratic and empowering because there is the consideration of the followers through supportiveness, interaction facilitation, work facilitation and goal emphasis (Bowers and Seashore as cited in Sashkin and Lassey 1983), it is essential to note that the power that lies with the leader is purely of a functional nature.

The popularity of this approach has given rise to leadership grids that model leadership patterns that can be learned and repeated as in the Hersey and Blanchard and the Blake and Mouton grids (Hersey 1984). Because they are modelled on behaviourism or the stimulus response theory where leadership relationships are based on achievements and rewards these “applications of tested concepts and timing skills” (Hersey 1984) are limited in how much they can allow for the autonomy of the leader. A major criticism of the grids is that they address every situation with precise language making both leader and follower patterned into a maze of responses dependent on the situation. The assumption that a situation may not change drastically is also erroneous. The leader in particular is limited in the growth of his genius and creativity and the followers easily become puppets on a string.

The education institution is in constant flux with situations and events being patterned according to the human make up of the institution, these models are therefore not likely to work well because they come into conflict with the unplanned and the unpredictable and are limited in their contingencies since each grid only provides four quadrants of operation.

2.8.5 Contingency approach

Hoy and Miskel (1996) define the contingency approach as a contemporary leadership theory because of the fit maintained between personality characteristics and the behaviour of the leader. The Contingency Approach grew out of the need to find a linkage between leadership, effectiveness and achievement, a predicament that the trait-situation approach was unable to provide.

The Fiedler model posits that the motivational system of the leader is the one that determines leadership style and together with the favourableness of a situation causes the group to be effective in the task of accomplishment or performance (Sashkin and Lassey 1983, Hoy and Miskel 1996). Though the leadership seeks to satisfy both the personal needs of the leader and the worker and to meet organisational goals, the leader is still modelled on “personal characteristics” (Hoy and Miskel 1996) and the approach presumes that the situation can be changed to suit leadership style.

The Fiedler Contingency model is the first to propose contingency relationships and postulates that leadership style is determined by motivational systems of the leader and by the group effectiveness which is the joint function of the leader's style, and the favourableness of the situation (Hoy and Miskel 1987, Vecchio 1997). Evidently, the focus of the model is on the leader whereby the leader is seen as the one who seeks to satisfy personal needs by a motivational system that draws from his personality. Again he is the one that seeks to accomplish organisational goals for the group's satisfaction and effectiveness. While the situation enables the leader to exert influence, the favourability of the group situation is determined more by the position of power of the leader (power

that is given by the organisation in the form of reward and punishment) or the degree which he can get the subjects to comply (Hoy and Miskel 1987). Therefore, the leader member relationships rest on the acceptance and respect that the leader is able to command from the group. The more acceptance and respect, the higher the level of informal authority and inclination to a relation-orientation and the lower the levels of acceptance and respect, the more formal the authority and inclination to a task-orientation. In fact, leader effectiveness is an objective perception that is seen in the accomplishment of tasks and for the leader to maintain effectiveness he has to move the situation to a state of favourableness. The needs of the subordinates are of lesser significance to the tasks that have to be accomplished the latter of which is used as the criterion to “measure” leadership effectiveness. In an education set-up leadership effectiveness and the idea of measurability might be problematic because it would be difficult to define or even operate.

The House Path-Goal model is similar to the Fiedler model but revolves around leader’s influence upon subordinates’ perceptions of work goals, personal goals and paths to goal attainment (Hoy and Miskel 1987) and as such, is relations oriented with the key factors to effective leadership being the enhancement of subordinates psychological states of acceptance, satisfaction and motivation. In order to achieve such effectiveness there are four items focusing on leader behaviour. These are: directive leadership, achievement, supportiveness and participation (Hoy and Miskel 1987, Vecchio 1997). Evidently, the leader’s behaviour can only be motivating to the extent that it increases subordinates’ goal attainment through clarifying the paths to the goals via a system that is contingent on value rewards. Thus, the model opens a possibility for the leader to be manipulative and the subordinates are likely to be oriented to maintaining a focus or specialisation whereby they remain ignorant of other areas. The fact that the leader in his support for the subordinates is concerned about their status, welfare and comfort (Vecchio 1997), makes the leader powerful but again his position is of limited influence on his subordinates, and is rather more geared to the accomplishment of tasks. While it true that the leadership may be described as acceptable and satisfying because the subordinates experience behaviour such as involving their participation, there is probable dependency on the leader in the long term because the model posits that motivation emanates only from the leader.

Again the leadership concern lies in getting followers to accomplish or perform tasks rather than gaining overall co-operation and energetic participation from the members. The contingency approach is rather like a settled culture where the leader is entrusted to the supervisory role of standardised work activities.

The major element lacking in these earlier approaches is a dyadic process or relationship between two people. These models are by and large a group wide process whereby the relationship between leader and subordinate is focussed more on task accomplishment than it is on releasing the subordinates' levels of empowerment. Transformational experiences are experiences that transformational leaders release upon their followers by motivating them to perform beyond their expectations. Resultantly, the motivation heightens their awareness of value designated goals by inducing them to transcend self-interest in favour of the organisation, consequently raising the subordinates motivational level in terms of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (Singer and Singer 1990).

2.8.6 Transformational and Transactional leadership

The legacy of leadership shows that leadership depends on legitimate power or coercive power. According to Burns, transactional leadership "occurs when one person takes the initiative in making contact with others for the purpose of an exchange of valued things" (Burns 1978:19). The extent to which this is the known form of leadership is assessed by Bass when he states that leadership has generally been conceptualised as transaction (Bass as cited in Singer and Singer 1990) or as cost-benefit exchange process. Transaction is between leader and subordinates whereby the authority governing the performance of tasks emanates from the leadership, here leadership is endorsed by the organisation as a formal authority. Transactional leadership is more typical of a mechanistic organisation than it is of an organic one. The leadership is characterised by a type of central authority or "top- down" leadership with standardised operational procedures that are enabled by the formal and rigid structures and the leadership is driven to get followers to conformance rather than to innovation and creativity (Singer and Singer 1990).

Leaders operate in organisations and are anchored to some form of structure that they find, create, compete against, conform to. In educational administration Sergiovanni cites four “systematic approximations of reality” (Sergiovanni cited in Marshall et al. 1996:272) that guide administrative practice. These are: the rational/scientific, mechanistic/ bureaucratic, organic/collegial, bargaining/ political management forms. According to them, all four have limitations first and foremost because “no administrator adheres exclusively to any one theory of management or relies on any one perspective of leadership in day to day practice. On the contrary most leaders draw on several” (Marshall et al. 1996:274). The implication of this is significant, perceiving that leadership is not value neutral and is governed and guided by laws and policy that are applied equally to all. It is, in fact, in the because of such assumptions that traditional theories are notoriously bureaucratic and male superior so that the behaviours and values of women, minorities and others have been excluded from leadership theory and research. Marshall et al. captures the truth of where leadership comes from and explains that “ behaviours, background, appearance, language and difference that were different or atypical were dismissed as non leadership-like, deviant or deficient. Diversity, alternate models, or variations from the norm were seen as signs of incompetence” (Marshall et al. 1996:275).

There is a linkage of gender to power, taking that leadership and power in this instance are synonymous. The historically derived definitions of masculinity and femininity are seen and reproduced in leadership relations so that the stratification of leadership has men at the helm, dominating and controlling those institutions with their definition of leadership, their traits and values. While it may be seen as difficult to change the institutions and the value structure, it is another matter to begin to appreciate that values can be different and that leadership power does not stem from being a conspicuous figure.

It is in this connection that transformational leadership is appraised as a leadership form that appreciates the values of diversity. Transforming unlike transactional leadership occurs “when one or more persons engage with others in such a way that leaders and followers raise one another to higher levels of motivation and morality” (Burns 1978:20).

The leadership is inclined to be charismatic, with individualised consideration for followers and intellectual stimulation (Bass cited in Singer and Singer1990) so that followers are raised in motivational levels to attain higher needs or reach actualisation in reference of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. As such, transformational leadership best operates in an organisation that is organic and where the climate is warm and trusting.

In conclusion, the investigation of leadership theories and the models that have been developed thereof show that whereas leadership has evolved to include a diversity of models and styles, many of which are popular in leadership training, the basis of their foundation has remained largely unchanged because there has not been an alternative viewpoint to leadership or a "non traditional leadership style" (Rosener1990).

2.8.7 The leadership of women

School leaders are challenged to adopt the ethic of caring to enable schools to become caring communities that nurture all children, regardless of their race, class, or gender. It starts not with structures and organisations or leadership but with people and an ethic of relationships (Marshall et al. 1996). Among the criticism of leadership theories is that leadership is masculine in mind-set and demands for an adherence to "rules of conduct" (Rosener 1990:119). The rules are basically the adoption of "male characteristics" such as assertiveness, competitiveness, social and political astuteness (Gosetti et al. 1991).

Invariably, the configuration of leadership theories and models characterises intentionally or unintentionally the systematic exclusion of the values of women, the values that inform their practice and those attributes that enable them to function as effective leaders.

Noting that transformational leadership bears alternative forms, the question of whether transformational leadership is a "woman" style leadership does arise. The key fact here is that women leaders do cut a different type of leadership and they do shape leadership in another form.

Generally speaking, the socialisation of males prepares them to be leaders while the socialisation of females prepares them to be followers (Pigford and Tonssen 1993, Richmond-Abbott 1992). As such, for women seeking leadership positions and for those who have to contend with the definition of a leader as one who has “masculine traits”, this becomes a position of quandary that leaves women with two options:

1. To define leadership to include a “feminine” perspective.
2. To be resocialised (Pigford and Tonssen 1993).

The first option is perhaps the more obvious thing to do and is also timely and in line with current leadership trends. It is an approach that has the potential to inform and perform without having a leader be prescriptive. This being the case transforming leadership is accommodating of feminine attributes and perspectives as it offers new lenses through which to view the world of leadership (Rosener 1990, Gosetti et al.1991, Vecchio 1997). This it does in the natural elements through the recognition and emphasis of experience and viewpoint. There is in essence the appreciation of leadership as an individual thing that blends into the constantly changing person of a leader.

For Sergiovanni this means that leadership as a “personal thing”, a “moral imperative” (1992:321) because it constitutes the entire being of the leader; head, hand and heart. The heart in particular fuses with the concept of experience and viewpoint because the heart encompasses beliefs, values, dreams, thus bearing a commitment to a personal vision. It is a way of thinking, “self knowledge”(Bolman and Deal 1994:10), or even an “individual consciousness” (Gosetti et al. 1991:10).

2.9 Women leadership in South Africa

Gender cannot be studied in isolation from race and from class (Cherryl Walker 1990)

South African women carry a unique heritage that is also replicated in the diversity of the country's races and culture. The socialisation of women has been determined by two factors both of which continue to influence and shape the context of their situation. To begin with, there is the fact of one's race and subsequent experiences of womanhood that are unique to the group. Then there is the impact of a history of separate development a socialisation to which every race in South Africa has had a different experience (Meer 1990, Lessing 1994).

Diversity notwithstanding, it appears that the socialisation of South African women bears some commonality across the races. In interviews conducted on men and women commerce and industry workers of different races, Meer (1990) found that few of them believed that women and men were equal or had equal claims to the job market. There was a general consensus that men and women were different and that these differences were biologically rooted, subsequently that men were superior and had a priority claim to employment. Women essentially owed men their labour and were accountable to them. Her findings reflect a strong masculine socialisation the characteristics of which are manifest in the representation of women in the South African labour market. In the apartheid South Africa where women were unquestionably marginalised, career opportunities were limited to nursing and teaching (Jantjes 1998). The large numbers of teachers and nurses exists and the impact of mass training of teachers is seen in the government's efforts to down-size the numbers by retrenchment and redeployment yet many schools in South Africa, ironically lack teachers and lack qualified and competent school leaders. Again those that are school leaders are predominantly male from within a workforce that is overwhelmingly female.

A report by the Breakwater Monitor in 1996 found that there were 93.2% men and only 6.8% women holding management positions in various organisations in South Africa (Sunday Times cited in Ngcobo 1996). This has not changed in 1999. In a report on women representation in the South African job market, Gauteng province which alone holds 40% of the entire working population of South Africa showed some interesting trends. Alone it has a level of education higher than the national average across all races and sexes and has more educated females than the national average. However, the study showed that women were largely under represented in leadership and management positions with “African women largely relegated to ‘elementary’ jobs and white women predominantly in clerical positions” (Dehghanpisheh 1998:8). Given that Gauteng is the hub of South Africa’s labour market, this under representation is a significant pointer to what is possibly a typical case of women in the labour all the other provinces. The scenario depicts that a labour force that poorly represents the leadership of women, whatever the sector.

In education, to narrow the focus, the absence of women in positions of school leadership is much the same. In an empirical investigation on leadership, from a sample of twenty out of one hundred and one randomly selected schools in Soweto, Evaton, Lekoa and the East Rand region, there were only four women of the twenty principals involved in the study (Mnguni1988). Once again this study conducted in Gauteng did not depict a labour market thriving with women in the top echelons. The findings of this study indicated an absence of women in education leadership showing that this was not primarily a feature in the corporate, industrial and commercial organisations but also an apparent characteristic in schools. Other interesting revelations emerged from this huge survey. It was found that women were acceptable as leaders whereby both men and women followers found them to be competent, effective at work, dedicated and responsible (Mnguni 1988). The acceptance and acknowledgement of their effectiveness as leaders contradicts the fact of their absence, more particularly when this is weighed against the fact that women make the majority of teachers.

Closely following a decade later, similar findings were obtained in a study in secondary schools in Kwa Zulu Natal where followers described women principals as “specifically more hard working, motivating, self disciplined and committed than male principals” (Ngcobo 1996:3). The progress of women into leadership and the equally small numbers albeit the encouragement and accessibility to leadership positions following the new post apartheid constitution raises questions and makes the issue somewhat irregular. Granted that, there is strong evidence to indicate that women are able leaders, the question as to whether their marginalisation has to do with their leadership or with other factors remains unsolved.

Meanwhile, it is the intention of the government that every citizen irrespective of race, class, gender, creed or age has the opportunity to develop his/her capacities and potential and to make a full contribution to society (White Paper on Education, 1995). This in leadership means the acknowledgement and accommodation of distinctiveness, preferential treatment of priorities and values. For a person that is a leader there is the freedom not to succumb to sameness and the provision to be different or unique where the means is geared towards achieving effectiveness. (Cook 1993, Wolmarans 1997).

To conclude, to be different or unique as a leader is to embrace oneself, the qualities and values that one holds and the view that one has of leadership. In order to capture the essence of such leadership, it would require burrowing behind popular leadership rationale. The idea that leadership follows only certain established criteria is a misconception. The reality about leadership is that it is political, moving and dynamic and is not confined to authority or position. It springs from the way that one thinks when moving into effective action.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Within the last decade, the feminist research community has engaged in a dialogue concerning the use of quantitative versus qualitative methods in social research. Much of this debate has concerned the claim that quantitative research techniques - involving the translation of individual experiences into categories predefined by researchers - distort women's experience and result in a silencing of women's own voices. Advocates of qualitative methods have argued that individual women's understandings, emotions and actions in the world must be explored in those women's own terms. (Holland, Blair and Sheldon 1995:217)

3.1 Introduction

It is true that qualitative research has come of age in education (Le Compte et al. 1992) and therefore a development worthy of embrace and certainly a step in the right direction. Unlike factories, education institutions, are human as they comprise people who are social and relate on a plane of emotions and attitudes, likes and dislikes. Research in this field can no longer afford to be entirely quantitative reducing experiences, meanings and viewpoint to impersonal statistical figures because people are in constant interaction with the world they live in and from their engagements conceive attitudes and viewpoints and hold values and beliefs. These aspects of their being are important to them and cannot be held together in a figure. In addition, these attributes like them keep shifting, figures cannot contain flux.

In this regard to capture the subsequent changes and trends would require a versatile method of investigation, one that would capture the essence of the lived world of the phenomenon. The research method would need to be one that faithfully serves the goals and purpose of capturing such experiences or viewpoint. Miller and Dingewell (1997) support this and even argue that the choice between methods of research depends upon pragmatic matters.

Thus, research in education institutions would require that the paradigm be adaptable to accommodate the flux but also penetrative enough to capture the meaning that those in such institutions make of them and the bearing that has upon them.

Basically, this chapter explains the rationale behind using the qualitative paradigm. It explores the case study as a method of research and the role of the in-depth interview, journal entries and questionnaire as complementary research techniques or instruments.

3.2 The research paradigm

Using the qualitative as opposed to the quantitative paradigm in research on school leadership, was not entirely a choice because the trend in education research is increasingly in favour of qualitative research (Keeves1988, Cohen and Manion 1994), but because of the versatility that comes with the paradigm as far as options for methods is concerned and also because of the position the methodology enables the researcher to take. Considering that the focus of this study was on the perceptions of leadership, that is, leadership from the experiences of individual women in school leadership (also referred to as school principals), the study opted for a methodology that would respond suitably to the shift and flux.

In this connection, a methodology inclined to statistical and quantified variables producing generalisable outcomes was found to be unfavourable as the objective of the research was that the subjects be heard or appreciated each as a unique entity. Agreeably, the case study fitted because each principal was appropriated as an individual case or a single entity and presented as she exists in her naturally occurring environment unique with its complexities and particularities and not as a representative in a sample (Johnson 1992, Stake 1995). This is not to say, however, that commonalities were ignored. These were accounted for and comparisons to other studies made.

Cogent support of the methodology comes from Cohen and Manion (1994) who state that the broad qualitative paradigm is able to relate phenomena as we apprehend them through

our senses. This would mean that the qualitative researcher is able to engage in-depth study of the research subject, place emphasis on the rigorous interpretation necessary of a case study, relate meanings out of the substantive and at the same time leave openings for further explorations.

The methodology in this study, enabled the exploration of leadership realities so that each case yielded rich data that gave a thick description of leadership. The data carried the experiences of the lives, careers, hopes and aspirations of the school leaders giving a capacity and “feeling for the data” (Holland et al. 1995:223) that only this paradigm can give.

3.3 School leadership and the qualitative paradigm

It is necessary at this point to locate the place of this methodology in an arena where studies on leadership are countless (Bass 1990). A sizeable chunk of studies on leadership is in the quantitative paradigm. Mills and Tancred (1992) explain this Parsonian dichotomy of instrumentalism/work and affectivity/family as an influential construct, one that has shaped research agendas and is found in theoretical explanations of leadership behaviour.

The prevailing approach to intra family behaviour and structure, to organisational behaviour, and to the interrelationship between family and work has generally been characterised by an empirically oriented world view in which the world exists a priori which is knowable through objective observation. Such an approach obscures understanding of how work and family are experienced, perceived and formulated by women and men and how such perceptions may vary with gender.

In fact, it is on record that women in leadership have generally been ignored. and is evident in the literature of the past twenty years, which demonstrates a gender bias in the interpretations of organisational experience and social domains such as morality and power (ibid. 1992). In education especially, research has been weak both on women in

organisations and on the impact of gender on behaviour (Shakeshaft 1989). Where empirical studies have been conducted, statistical data have merely presented women as figures that are sorely under represented (Lessing 1994, Shakeshaft 1989).

Generally, the research that there is on women in leadership, supposes a false separation of the person, their work, their home and their socialisation, all of which are integral components of leadership. The repeated emphasis that women are under represented and the subsequent little research to explain their viewpoint, is a deterrent that emanates from the absoluteness and finality that characterises empirical research. Here, therefore, the importance of explorative research endeavours is seen. Through exploration, leadership studies can feed research with the viewpoint of a leader, the exigency for this in the study of women in leadership cannot be emphasised.

An appraisal of quantitative methods directs criticism not against every form of statistics but on the monopoly the method claims to have to accurately describe the world (Mies cited in Cook and Fonow 1991). According to Mies, statistics derive their definitions of gender from the prevailing sexist ideology of the 19th century and sadly enough, this image does not correspond with the experience of many women, who now stand to challenge the status quo. To believe that studies derived out of statistical procedures are free from ideologies would therefore be naive. The truth is that many such studies legitimise and universalise power relations because they bear the stamp of “truth” to the definitions that lie at their base.

In the context of this study, the essence of this would be that, where the quantitative methodology lacks, the alternative qualitative methodology gains and despite some ideological distortion the latter does not ignore the living connections in the way that the former does. In respect to women in leadership, this is very important because connections can be drawn and meanings explored. Because there are negative reactions to qualitative research in mainstream academic community whereby it is perceived to be unscientific, politically motivated and suspicious (Cook and Fonow 1991, Healy and

Stewart cited in Holland et al. 1995, Reinharz 1992), this particular method provides the means to a more accurate and valid data about respondents' experiences.

The leader's experience in leadership research is critical if one is to understand leadership perceptions. To place some hypotheses upon such a study would be attempting to test an assumption about leadership, or else make a measure of a leader's efficiency in terms of job output or job performance. Unfortunately, this misses the point as this is only one of the many possible outcomes of leadership. Leadership as stated before is an experience in which a leader develops attitudes, perceptions, ideologies and even biases. Such experiences cannot be quantified and various reasons support this. Cook and Fonow (1991:66) indicate that "experience means taking real life as the starting point, its subjective concreteness as well as its societal entanglements."

It would make sense then to enter this realm using language as the tool of expression (Lather 1991). She emphasises too the need for such expression stating that language is a power tool that tells of experience, and that it is the same tool that contributes to creative endeavours. This is necessitated by the fact that women's lives, their history, their struggles and their ideas constitute no part of the dominant science in research. The engagement of language would therefore be the forum from which they can table themselves away from the restrictions and limitations and bias of the more "traditional" forms. The other thing is that, for research of this kind to make any contribution to leadership studies there is the need to present leadership as it is - an experience. It is also appropriate that this form is recognised as an alternative methodology where leaders, in this case women, can state how perceive leadership.

To conclude, one of the values of the feminist perspective lies in the ability to address issues with new lenses. Here the qualitative paradigm complements such values in three ways: it offers methodologies through which many aspects of women's experiences can be articulated and even conceptualised. Within the social sciences the method permits women to express their experience fully on their own terms describing their world as they experience it. Finally, the methods have the potential to offer a more human, less

mechanical relationship between the researcher and the researched (Holland et al. 1995). additionally, education leadership research is increasingly shifting to the qualitative paradigm because the paradigm allows for personalised investigation (Marshall and Lassey 1983, Shakeshaft 1989, Coleman 1996, Mertz and McNeely 1998).

In the last decade, research on women in education leadership in South Africa has witnessed increase both in quantitative and in qualitative paradigms with the latter taking preference in recent years (Duff 1991, Mnguni 1988, Nzimande 1995, Ngcobo 1996, Van der Mescht 1996).

In an empirical study of 101 high schools Mnguni (1988) was able to survey twenty randomly sampled principals to derive general leadership insights. Her sample had women poorly represented with only four women out of the twenty. Her findings lacked depth from the fact that the study was a survey whose focus was on the peripheral. As such, though the study did reveal an acceptance of women in principalship positions by their followers, their experience of leadership was conspicuously absent making the study helpful only for an overall picture of power relations but wanting where detail and depth of leadership perceptions was concerned.

Duff (1991) in a qualitative study undertook to study white females in education management in an endeavour to review their perceptions as far as barriers, aspirations, motivation, and needs were concerned. She found that women were required to mediate the boundary between the behaviours expected of women and that expected of the overwhelming majority of male administrators when the former became managers. She found too that acculturation and socialisation both played a major role. She also found that essential to the attainment of their aspirations relevant qualifications were vital for women. Her study conspicuously left out women of other races and therefore makes a poor indicator of the leadership scope in South Africa, even then.

Ngcobo (1996) in her research undertook an in-depth study of a single principal but began with a survey whose empirical findings revealed little else other than a general indication

that women were acceptable to their followers. Nevertheless, from her in-depth study of this one principal there was evidence of acceptance on the grounds that she was found to be “specifically more hardworking, motivating, self-disciplined and committed than male principals” (Ngcobo 1993:93). Such findings reveal the potential that qualitative research has in opening up the other side of leadership perceptions.

Van der Mescht (1996) in his phenomenological research undertook an in-depth study of a sample of five leaders, two of whom were women. Though neither of the two were school principals (one was a lecturer and the other a curriculum trainer/developer), both were leaders. The one important thing that came through in his study was that the leaders conceived themselves as being in a state of becoming, as being in transition, in constant change, as dynamic entities. In an argument for the recognition of such realities, he states that “... a phenomenon such as leadership - a human endeavour - should be looked at on its own terms ... clearly leadership research would gain much from the adoption of a different stance, enabling researchers to work within the more naturalist frameworks that embrace and even revel in the complexity and ambiguities that are uncovered” (Van der Mescht 1996:10).

To conclude, it is worth noting the place and status of each method in research. While an empirical study would expose or unveil general insights it would fail to relate how principals feel and how they integrate and relate their circumstances. It is this gap that this study will in a small but a contributory way serve to fill.

3.4 The Case Study

With qualitative research becoming increasingly popular in the social sciences and increasingly so in education, research undertakings motivated by in depth studies make it possible to research on the nature of phenomena and have also have gained respectability and even recognition. Unlike the experimenter who manipulates variables to determine their casual significance or the surveyor who asks standard questions of large representative samples of individuals, the case study researcher typically observes the

characteristics of an individual unit (Cohen and Manion 1994). The case study is a method thereby allows the individuality of each case to come out as a persuasive voice. Where research requires an answer to a “how” and a “why” question and is focussed on a contemporary phenomenon within a real-life context then the case study becomes a suitable research strategy (Yin 1989).

The investigation into the experience of women school leaders in a predominantly male environment raises questions such as how women perceive leadership, why there are few women in such positions and even what the future of leadership is for them. Because there is literally nothing in this area in South Africa (Atkinson et al 1994), it was logical that this study should follow the strategy of a multiple case study (Yin 1989) or collective case study (Stake 1995) as the investigation sought explanations to questions in as much as it explored school leadership. The persuasiveness of the case study further reinforced its choice because of the nature of the phenomena and the subjects under investigation, neither of which the researcher had control over.

To illustrate the value of the case study as a research method with persuasive features is a study on fifty marital rape cases. Yllo (cited in Holland 1995) states the following: “ I learned a great deal about wife abuse from those 50 women that the quantitative data on more than 2,000 couples could not begin to reveal” (ibid. 1995: 222). She reiterates the versatility of the case study as a research method from which a researcher is effectively able to extract information from phenomena that the researcher has little control over, and to emerge with powerfully significant associations which might not have been discovered otherwise without careful survey research.

From this position, the choice for multiple case studies was settled over the single or intrinsic case study (Stake 1995). It was possible with the former to make literal replications whereby the four cases were similar in that they constituted women in school leadership. Theoretical replications including different racial groups, different backgrounds and different schools were considered. Not only was the multiple case study well suited to an investigation of school leadership but it also provided for a vicarious

experience (Stake 1995) like a novel or a narrative told by a superb story teller (Eisner and Peshkin 1995).

The word *dasein* is a German term which means “being there”. Coined by Heidegger, a German philosopher, it is basically the idea of understanding peoples’ contexts in order to understand their world (Becker1984; 1988). Considering that the separation of the person from the world is false as the two interplay on one another the concept of *dasein* reiterates the point that a person possesses a “self”. A person is therefore an integrated system that has working parts and boundaries even though the working systems may not always be working and the purposes might even be irrational (Stake 1995). In other words, people being active subjects cannot be reduced to mechanistic processes because, they are not accumulations of internal and external influences but rather are centres of meaningful action and reaction (Becker 1992). It is here then that the fit of the case study into this research is seen as the case study is able to appreciate the uniqueness and complexities of the research subjects in their embedded and interactional position with their contexts (Stake 1995). Doubtless, the two advantages of the case study are its accessibility and its ability to see through the researcher’s eyes (Eisner and Peskin 1990).

The feature of accessibility in the case study enables the researcher to view leadership from another perspective, and because the case study is sensitive to feminist values, it allows for the powerful expression of an experience that was not merely a feeling or a fading moment but the “sum of the processes which individuals ... have gone through in the production of their lives; [denoting] their reality” (Cook and Fonow 1991:66). Secondly, in seeing through the eyes of the researcher, the invisible became visible and the unheard voiced. In so doing there was the expansion of the cognitive structures as far as understanding leadership was concerned. The latter point was particularly important because leadership definitions, as they prevail today are largely based on ideology that is socialised into male domination. So other than presenting another viewpoint of leadership the study had another significant feature of helping those who are uninitiated to a particular theoretical viewpoint to come to an understanding of it (Eisner and Peshkin 1990). This was particularly needed in capturing the essence of the constituents of the

leadership perceptions of women. In this regard then, my study of four women principals not only offered an opportunity of a methodology which was bias free, in the sense that it allowed the leaders to speak about leadership on their own terms, but it was also instrumental in contesting leadership conceptions that are male dominated (Mertz and McNeely 1998). There are three case study types according to Stake (1995): the intrinsic case study which is drawn out of the interest of the need to learn about a particular case and is not for generalisations. The instrumental case study which has a research question, a puzzlement, a need for general understanding and feel that we might get insight into the question by studying a particular case.

Finally, the collective case study which involves more than one case study where there is a co-ordination between individual studies. My study was a combination of the intrinsic and collective case study. In it was an in depth study of the principalship experience from the of four principals, therefore bringing in diverse perspectives.

3.5 Data Gathering

This research is the study of four women principals. The number was purposively sampled because of manageability, a critical factor given the nature of the study. The four, through the process of snowballing were identified as exceptionally able administrators: “dynamic”, “change movers” and “women who had school leadership at heart”.

In a city where women are numerically few and where the location of the city is not close or in convenient proximity to other localities where more women principals might have been found, providing a larger sample base, the women were accepted on the basis of these very strong recommendations.

Leadership research in recent years has drawn attention to the need to accommodate alternative views to leadership (Shakeshaft 1989, Rosener 1990, Gosetti 1991, Mills and Tancred 1992). According to Lorber and Farrell (1991) the reality of discrimination

against women and their low position in society has been made evident in empirical research where women are portrayed not only as victims of male domination but also as ineffective social agents (Harding 1987). There exists evidence of institutionalised patterns of male dominance, the exploitation and lack of empowerment among women. However, there has been through research, the empowering of women through bringing them into awareness of themselves but this has not been without resistance.

Research on women in leadership is set in motion and it is undisputed and even if the research findings are contested this does not stop women from making themselves heard for whom they are and what they perceive themselves to be. It is for reasons such as these that women ought to be presented as the school leaders that they are. To serve this end, this study gathered data through three methods:

1. questionnaire
2. journal entry
3. interviews

While my study is not emancipatory in the sense of empowering or disempowering women school leaders it was my contention that I should understand the values that they hold, the perceptions that they formulate as leaders in an environment that is predominantly masculine in mindset. The data gathering was in itself an experience for me, the researcher as it was for the respondents. The experience was like travelling on a journey, but only as far afield as would be allowed by the respondents, and it was essentially for this reason that there was the need to elicit as much as possible using the questionnaire to initially break the ice into the leader's world. The journal entry and the two interviews followed with each designed to demand further depth.

For the researched it was an opportunity to speak about leadership as a personal experience beyond the limitations and the strictures that have been placed upon feminist studies by patriarchal academic and research infrastructure (Cook and Fonow cited in Cook and Fonow 1991, Margolis and Romero 1998). In this research particularly,

personal experiences were significant in creating awareness of women's leadership perceptions but again this was done without manipulating those researched into objects of scrutiny.

3.5.1 Questionnaire

Both the questionnaire and the interview contained questions that were formulated in structured and unstructured forms. It was in my interest to relate these to my research goal which was to investigate the leadership experience and the leadership perceptions of female principals. The variables of interest in the questionnaire ranged from factual to attitudinal (Keeves 1988, Oppenheim 1992). The factual questions supplied age, gender, years of principalship and teaching experience, education, marital status, while the attitudinal gathered insights into the principals' conceptions of leadership at that moment in time, the influencing factors for such attitudes and the bearing upon each one of them. This served two purposes. First, it provided profiles on each principal and also drew up a historical account of the current work context. The building of a context is important in a case study because phenomena whether physical, social, physiological or even chemical or biological, take on meaning from their context (Cohen and Manion 1994). It was imperative that I, as the researcher was able to study the phenomena in that context. Second, the questions on attitude served as a point of entry into the first interview. It was important that some of the interview questions emanated from the issues raised in the questionnaire because it indicated that the respondents were voicing what was significant to them. Second, the questionnaire saved valuable time and lessened the number of interviews that would have been conducted.

Because a questionnaire design considers the main and the auxiliary methods of data collection Oppenheim (1992), the initial questionnaire administered was consistent with this, and served to prepare the respondents for the interview by raising issues that required them to engage into deeper reflection of themselves as leaders. The issue of anonymity and confidentiality was addressed. An assurance to the interviewees was made by mutual agreement between both parties that the identity of the schools and the principals would

remain concealed and that a copy of the interview transcripts was to be made available to each one for their scrutiny. This was done in accordance with the guidelines governing ethics and the educational case study whereby it is suggested that the portrayal of persons in forms that subject them to the possibility of recognition should be avoided (Keeves 1988). The interviewees felt assured and placed their confidence in me.

3.5.2 Journal

A journal is a record of thoughts, deeds and hopes. The record and reflection upon one's life is almost an instinctual human need (Kelsey 1980). Because a journal is a play ground into which one can step and play alone, I used it to allow these busy principals to make a regular record of their leadership, objectively looking at themselves and also weighing their inner and outer situation so as to grow in "consciousness" (ibid.1980:37) of themselves in anticipation of the interviews that were to follow. The week long journal entry was necessitated by the fact that none of the principals had been interviewed in depth before (at least not about themselves) and it was therefore imperative that they built internal rapport within themselves. Here they accounted for activities that they performed, actions that they took and decisions that they made, a record of attitudes and perceptions that they conceived was encouraged in these reflective self-focussed daily entries. Each journal helped develop case study material. Where patterns of behaviour emerged in common, a follow-up was made with follow-up questions drawn up and asked at the interviews.

3.5.3 Interviews

According to Seidman (1991), the purpose of in-depth interviewing is neither to get answers to questions, nor to test hypotheses, and certainly not to "evaluate". The purpose is to understand the experiences of other people and the meaning that they make of such experiences, in other words to know what is in their hearts. While it is true that women are under represented in education leadership (Morell 1992, Coleman 1996, Mertz and

McNeely 1998) the thrust of the study was to investigate the principalship experiences and therein draw up the leaders perceptions of principalship.

In order to understand the behaviour of people, it is necessary to gain entry into their experience of life inclusive of the context and environment, the “lived world” (Kvale 1996) that constitutes views, opinions, hopes and dreams. There is therefore a need for a technique that will engage interaction between the narrator of the experience and the hearer of the experience.

Man is an orate being and throughout history conversation has been the mode of expression for all his experiences, thoughts and ideas. Oral history has by and large been the medium through which knowledge is expressed. In fact, Socrates used dialogue to obtain philosophical knowledge (Kvale 1996). Both Kvale (1996) and Silverman (1993) acknowledge that speech expressed as conversation is the basic mode of social interaction by which human beings talk with each other posing questions and answering questions. It is from such a light that the interview was selected as the major research technique. Also because of the following other characteristics: firstly, the nature of conversation is fluid and therefore the interview as a research technique was suitable and had ability to penetrate the research subject exploring the person in his world and allowing the experiences to speak for themselves, subsequently, giving shape to individual leadership perceptions. Secondly, contained in interviews is the power of words to express and develop thought so that the language itself becomes a tool for representing experience (Lather 1991). As such, even though warning is given of the complexity that language has particularly with regard to inference from answers taken at face value (Schuman cited in Mishler 1979), the interview did not cease to be the natural choice when it came to a technique that would yield rich data or descriptions. Thirdly, the interview was the method best able to capture the synthesis leadership perceptions as the culmination of past and present and perhaps even future or anticipated experiences.

It is acceptable that arguments against the interview as a research technique should arise. It would be foolhardy to ignored this, especially in the light of the fact that talk or speech

or conversation is sometimes seen as trivial and is therefore questioned for its reliability (Silverman1993). While it can be argued that the expression of one's experiences contains high levels of validity because it is an expression of that which is significant and meaningful to one, one cannot ignore the prejudice that emanates from that traditional research that finds it difficult to comprehend the absence of generalisability (Yin 1989). To reinforce one's viewpoint as a solid base of a study the feminist viewpoint offers support and consolidation. As mentioned earlier, the feminist viewpoint supports research methods that are sensitive to the values of feminism. In event of the interview as a technique being limited in the extent to which the researcher is able to make accurate reporting and proficient analysis (Silverman 1993), it retains one advantage: that of being better in the assessment of personal qualities which is a feature that has definite values for diagnosis.

In this research the interview was able to serve effectively as a technique where the researcher was able to "travel" (Kvale 1996) with the respondents through the interview schedule as they built descriptions of their lived world (Mishler 1979, Seidman 1991, Kvale 1996). To maximumly gain from this technique, the interview is largely dependent on style and personality. This means that in the interview process one can use their personality to their advantage and guard against the inadequacies that arise from the tensions that come with the formality of tape recording (Stenhouse cited in Keeves 1998). An illustration of this is seen in the schedule used in this study. It was designed around Seidman's three- stage interview where each session is ninety-minutes (Seidman 1991). The idea in this lengthy interview, I found, ensured that the interviewer and the respondents literally grew in a relationship of exchange whose end was reached when there is nothing more to probe, questioning having reached a point of exhaustion. This exploration was vitally important to the construction of the leadership experience. To gain meaningful description necessitated in-depth interviewing but at the same time, constraints had to be taken into account. It was by eventually by an adaptation of Seidman's schedule that a schedule compatible with the needs of the interviewer and the programme of the school principals was designed and interview tasks accomplished.

Exploratory questions formed the main design of the question schedules so that where a response was inadequate, or where there was a new thought. I would immediately follow up exploring the responses. As such, even though the interview was a formal written schedule, the eventualities that lead to other questions enriched the interview as a whole without the interviewer influencing the content of the response. I used in these instances “‘non-directive’ probes” (Keeves 1988) which is basically asking questions like: “is there anything else?” “why do you think so?” “how is that?”, to steer communication and also to motivate the respondents. The provision for the exploration of each question to its exhaustion was one of the benefits of conducting two separate interviews. The interview schedule was designed so that the initial questions were structured with the ones that followed becoming increasingly unstructured as rapport built subsequently the spontaneity of the responses. For this reason, parts of the interview comprised sections with questions that were unique and designed for each individual principal as a follow up seeking clarification, illustration or illumination of earlier made statements.

Giving an account of oneself on a tape recording can be tedious even with the best of interviewers, more especially when an interview is as long as 90 minutes for a single session. Here I chose to make an adaptation of Seidman’s ninety minute individual session and instead elect a schedule that was going to serve my needs within the time restraints that the principals worked under. The interviews were reduced to two instead of three with each lasting between 30-45 minutes. The time limit was left entirely as the prerogative of the interviewees. The interviews were also separated within two weeks of each other. These two-week lapse I used to transcribe (Kvale 1996, Seidman 1991). I also allowed the interviewees to have a copy of the raw transcription as had been the mutual agreement between us. Finally, Seidman (1991) recommends that the interviews be a succession of context building and meaningful experience. This was achieved not through a neat linear progression but a cyclical process where ideas came in segments but nonetheless enriched the description as the motions giving the details of the experiences culminated into the description of one’s own leadership experience.

3.6 Data analysis

The interviews, which were the predominant research techniques, were analysed following grounded theory which according to Miller and Dingewell (1997) follows up conceptually fruitful avenues in order that emergent concepts dictate and direct the nature of data collection. The concepts that emerged from the questionnaire were followed in the first interview, and those from the first interview in the second. Since the data was literally directed and dictated by the respondents the analysis needed to follow suit hence the interviews borrowed from the phenomenological procedure as follows:

1. Transcription of interviews including literal statements, non-verbal and paralinguistic communication.
2. Bracketing, i.e suspending the researcher's interpretations and meanings.
3. Delineation of units of general meaning relevant to research question.
4. Clustering of units of relevant meaning and determining themes.
5. Summarising of individual interviews.
6. Returning to respondents the summary and the themes and conducting a second interview.
7. Modifying themes and summary with new data.
8. Identifying general and unique themes for all interviews.
9. Contextualization of themes.
10. Composite summary.

I found that a phenomenological perspective opened up the lived world or the experiences of the school leaders, which was the primary objective of this study. I was alert to that fact that I was not to prejudge any of the phenomena, neither to see them through any prescribed perspective because of the influence of previous knowledge (Stones 1988). I was not to interfere and introduce bias, the study was to be shaped and influenced solely by the phenomena.

For this reason bracketing foreknowledge and searching for invariant essential meanings in the descriptions (Kvale 1996) was imperative in keeping the data, now in the form of Natural Meaning Units (NMUS) unadulterated as the phenomenon was the priority of the investigation. Here too, the descriptions from the journal entries I found reliable and powerful reinforcements to the NMU's in relating the lived world or the leadership experience. The validity, if one were to use the criterion of unity, consistency and internal logic of a statement (Kvale 1989) lay in the responses being directed and shaped by the respondents themselves in the way that they felt would bring out only that which was meaningful and significant to them.

Finally, on the question of the generaliseability the following sums up what was my purpose and stand in this study: "the job of an in-depth interviewer is to go to such depth in the interviews that the surface considerations or representativeness and generaliseability are replaced by a compelling evocation of an individual's experience" (Seidman 1992:42).

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter presents the profile of the composite woman administrator and a description of her career path, illustrating that the literature on men is insufficient for understanding women in education leadership (Shakeshaft 1989:57).

4.1 Introduction

Of the research that has been undertaken to understand the career paths of women in administration, that which is documented is modeled upon the male-generated assumption of a career. Shakeshaft (1989) recounts that the aggregate descriptions of women who have chosen to work in the male enclave of education administration are abundant although individual accounts are rare. She points out that few biographies of women administrators are written and that histories, case studies and ethnographies almost always centre on the male principal or superintendent. Altogether, it is almost as if it were by design that there is, generally, a lack of documentation on women in principalship.

Fortunately, all is not lost. Dissertations more than any other source have provided research on women in administration. Apart from being ideal because they reflect the newest direction and the current interests within the field, they maintain the cutting edge of education administration research (ibid. 1989). A similar principal governs the undertaking of this study.

This study aims at providing a description of the woman as a leader in a synthesized form in order to capture the constituents of her leadership from her point of view. As such most of the data is drawn from in-depth interviews, and is particularly important because such data is underscored as unmatched in illuminating phenomena.

...these voices [in the interview] helped me to understand more clearly the world of women in schools as well as to ask questions of the theory and lore of the field that would not have presented themselves had I not heard women speak (Shakeshaft 1989:12).

In his research, Van der Mescht allowed the data to speak for itself, and even though he faced the challenge of retaining the “wholeness” of each of the protocols he stresses that it was the only means by which he could have left the data undisturbed “retaining the ‘voice’ and the sense of the original” (Van der Mescht 1996:63). Similar consideration is made by Stones (1988) who stresses that the aim of the researcher should be to describe as accurately as possible the phenomenon as it appears, rather than indulging in attempts to explain it within a pre-given framework.

In this chapter, the data presents four women in leadership positions and gives a composite description of each. The four are individual case studies. The data collected through questionnaire, in-depth interview and journal entry (this particular category was made by only two of the principals), was intended to construct the principalship experience of these women. As such, their biographical profiles and the history of their current working environment were used in the descriptions that gave as accurate a presentation as was feasible.

While it is not in the interest of this study to make generalisations, where there occurred recurrent patterns and consistencies among the four these features were noted separately on each account and so in some instances there may appear to be repetition. This was found necessary as the study was not aimed at making comparisons but rather at presenting each case in its own peculiarity or uniqueness. To treat recurrence of this nature is acceptable and treating it as a generalisation is not uncommon. According to Stake and Trumbull (cited in Shakeshaft 1989), there are generalisations that are feasible conclusions because they are personal engagements in the affairs of life or vicarious experiences. Such generalisations are referred to as “naturalistic generalisations” because they refer to understandings that are private (Stake 1995). For this reason, vicarious experiences presented in this analysis account for among other things personal descriptions that emphasise time and place and person. The analysis challenges the

conventionalities such as those described by Cawood and Gibbon (1980) where, for instance, job descriptions drawn up by the education department consider that instructional leadership is the major responsibility of an educational leader. Ironically, available data on the leadership role of school principals in South Africa reveals that the job that most principals do is essentially administrative and clerical!

It was the intention that the data in this study should shed some light on the discrepancy between the ideal and the reality. Whatever a school principals' inclinations are there are certain considerations around principalship that must be understood. To begin with, the principal is related to the job, to the setting of the job, the social setting of the job and to the person that she is.

It was in order, therefore, that the data in this study was analyzed without any conventional structure in mind and particularly not from the point of view of instructional leadership. Rather, the analysis aimed at gaining insight into leadership experience without the clutter of definitions and structures. The procedure I used was to identify natural meaning units (NMUS). These were loosely structured in groups that had commonalities with the intention that the structures give order and flow to what might otherwise have been jumbled up statements. Each NMU was followed by an explication of the themes. The concern of the study and the rationale behind the analysis was twofold: firstly, to reveal everyday meanings of the experiences of the women in principalship positions and the factors that have determined their being or composition, and secondly, to be able to do so without the interposition of performed assumptions, categories or explanations. Like other researchers who are critical about the inadequacy of traditional social scientific principles and research methods in the field of education I sought to articulate the structures of the lived experience and the relations of principals in school settings. The fundamental attitude with which the data was handled was one of wonder and attentiveness to the details of the lived experience.

4.2 A profile of PA

PA is the principal of a former model “C” primary school with boarding facilities in the Eastern Cape. The school is now multi-racial in its enrolment with a population of about 330 all of whom are girls. Of the fifteen teachers, one of whom is male, two are Heads of Department (HOD). There are two administrative staff and six support staff.

PA started her professional career as a teacher moving to become a Head of Department (HOD) and eventually a principal. She was a teacher for 12 years, a HOD for two and has been the principal of her school for the last six years. She holds a post graduate diploma in Special Education among other degrees and is married with grown up children. She is in her late forties.

4.3 PA as a leader

PA has been in education for a long time: twelve years as a teacher, two as a Head of Department (HOD) and seven as a principal. Her experience of principalship or leadership has been enjoyable even though she was led to it by “forces or circumstances”(A56), external factors beyond her. She “was never keen on climbing the corporate ladder” (A56) as her primary concern was teaching and therefore school principalship was not her end objective. All the same, her reason for taking on leadership appears to have been rewarded and leadership has become a source of joy for her:

I love children and I believe in education. I think the sheer joy of seeing children grow and become little people that have self confidence motivated me as a leader (A34).

It is apparent that money and prestige were not and still are not PA’s concern as far as leadership is concerned. Rather, she feels that principalship is “a calling rather than a job as it were ... a commitment to improving the standards of education, to seeing children grow to maturity” (A4). She perceives school leadership as a job of esteemed status because of the fact that it appeals to the noble nature in a person, it is a job that does not

return any form of reward more particularly not financial. Besides being committed to the welfare of the children, returning something of her own schooling back into education is a priority and a source of motivation from which she derives unmatched satisfaction. She perceives her job as noble, an enrichment that cannot be quantified:

I would like to feel that a child who has been through my care goes and does make a contribution, then that in itself is a motivational factor **(A35)**.

It is apparent that for her leadership emanates out of such high calling that she is prepared to go the extra mile:

... not because I will get overtime or I will become famous or because there will be some sort of external reward but because of the reward of actually knowing that you have done your job well **(A39)**.

Her leadership experience is a personal success story, and not a duty executed with drudgery.

The extent to which PA is able to enjoy being a leader can be traced to two factors: the social influences and experiences that colour one's life, and her own perceptions of leadership. It is apparent that a role model played an important part in her decision to take on leadership and the shaping and influence of the ethos she has nurtured and adopted as a leader. She attributes her early initiation to the influence of this exceptional leader whom she was "very fortunate to work under"**(A1)**. She maintains too that this man was "a principal who was a very good role model" **(A1)**. Her decision to become a leader was enriched by working with a leader who "had dignity", and who "was an extremely caring person and who believed in the dignity of children" **(A2)** all of which are important features that amplify and draw one to the often ignored human aspect of leadership. The extent to which this exceptional leader influenced her is evident in words that have become profound in her life:

... one of the statements he said which I still remember was that, 'Every child deserves his place under the sun.' I thought that was a beautiful way of focusing on what we as teachers and what we as principals should be doing (A3).

The second feature, life's experiences, impact upon what one believes in. To begin with, PA believes that a leader is influenced by the dynamism in the leadership. For her, there are attractive leadership alternatives and ²increasingly many democratic styles emerging. She feels too, that leadership grows progressively and is influenced by characteristics emulated or acquired from others. There are other factors too that build and colour this experience, such as "reading books and talking to people" (A28). Other spheres of influence include the example of past and current leaders. President Mandela, Winston Churchill and Margaret Thatcher stand out as examples worthy emulating. For PA, Mandela epitomizes sound democratic leadership, Churchill effective expression and Thatcher fastidiousness and iron-willed determination. All three leaders impress on her the importance of maintaining what one believes in. That notwithstanding, she is wary of morally questionable leaders of the likes of Hitler and Clinton and charismatic leadership, the latter of which she finds questionable because, in her view, what such leaders do is "to sway people to follow one"(A30) and that to her is "immoral" (A30).

Since life's experiences impact on PA so powerfully, as the principal of her school she endeavours to "colour" the experiences of those students in her charge because she believes that "children need to develop skills ... self responsibility and maturity" (A31). For PA, leadership constitutes investing teachable concepts and learnable skills in children. Again because she believes that leadership is intertwined with parenting the weekend camp for prefects is her way of colouring their experience of leadership so that they see leadership as an extension of the authority that they are familiar with at home.

Humanness or sensitivity towards others is an important characteristic for any leader because the leader is able to discern the various experiences that affect children within

1 Model "C" schools were primarily for white scholars under the Apartheid regime
2.DET schools were primarily for blacks

their learning environment. In this connection, PA teaches a class once a cycle in order to experience classroom dynamics and to know the children. She keeps to her plans even though they come under threat as the pressure to attend to other duties drain her time and energy. Her thoughts and feelings about this are professed in the following entry in her journal:

So much of a principal's time is spent with diverse matters. Yesterday was no exception - from medical doctors to psychologists, parents who refuse to take responsibility for their own children to members of the public who consider it their right to use the school facilities as if they were their own.

Often there is very little time for interaction with the children once the needs of parents, teachers and the community have been met. I thoroughly enjoy my time in the classroom but I fail to see how any principal can be effective if they carry a full teaching load in addition to the administrative tasks each day brings.

One of the joys of teaching is that no two days are ever the same and things do not always run according to plan. **Thursday 20th August**

Very important is the fact that she takes it upon herself to maintain close contact with the children at all times, "I do not move too far away from the children in assuming these leadership roles" (A24).

From her journal entries it is evident that PA is close to, informed and involved in the on-goings in the lives of the children to the extent that she is affected by their circumstances and even feels as they do:

The netball team arrived in the evening to collect the key for the holiday home. They were all full of energy - despite the miserable weather, the journey and the match they played. Even the teachers did not look too jaded.

Sunday 16th August

Yet another accident involving a "School C" pupil yesterday. Are motorists becoming more important?

Tuesday 18th August

The inter-house hockey was well supported and the girls thoroughly enjoyed their matches.

Wednesday 19th August.

These accounts portray a leader who has elected to lead with her heart first giving herself to what might appear to be small and irrelevant details.

While people seek a “great man” type leader (Hoy and Miskel 1987), PA believes that a leader need not be a high profile dictatorial type. She is conscious of herself as a leader. She says, “I would like to feel that people see me as someone that they can approach, feel free to give their ideas and impressions” (A7). To be approachable means being open and available, to parents for instance, she believes that it is her duty to assist and direct them. Finally, in her view, leadership best operates in a team where the abilities of others are tapped for the benefit of all. Again this points to her idea that leadership is diverse and not focused on a single area or on one person. A leader needs to be wary of allowing a narrow focus on the self to develop as the result would be that the leader could lose touch with reality and become insulated.

The family is important to PA and as far as her leadership is concerned, she describes hers as “very supportive” (A38), one from which she draws a great source of motivation. She singles out her husband as particularly supportive: “my husband will phone and ask how did it go”(A53), implying that he is not only her keen supporter but that he is also informed and concerned about the on-goings in her school. Again the fact that the family is “very impressed with what is happening” (A38) suggests that they share in her leadership experiences, supporting her and encouraging in her endeavours and plans.

With regard to her style of leadership, PA is convinced that she operates democratically. Consensus is important and is reached by operating on the principle of delegation of duties with “people accepting responsibility for their actions, their decision making”(A11). There are three principles evident in her leadership. First, she engages the staff in decision-making; “we introduce things and allow the staff to speak through them and we put their point of view on them” (A13). The people whom she works with matter to her as professionals and as co-workers. Their input is significant and contributory to her success as a leader. The team concept that she elects to use is particularly well captured in this conflict situation entered in her journal:

Yesterday was not one of those days I do not like a replay of for a long while. There seemed to be so many fires to put out. Duty teachers upset with matrons, general assistants angry with their supervisor and vice versa. The net-ball tour organizers had failed to budget correctly and there will be a huge deficit, according to calculations, if no alternative arrangement is made.

However, there were positives as well. Much of the above was amicably resolved and there has been a learning curve for all concerned.

Friday 14th August

Second, she taps into the leadership and experience of her teachers and especially the wisdom of “a small group of experienced teachers in leadership roles” (A13). By doing so everybody has the opportunity to “make some sort of meaningful contribution”(A13). She invests in the talents and abilities of her teachers and demonstrates as she is in constant liaison with them, giving a sense of security rather than of threat. Third, she is a conscientious leader who encourages critical evaluation. By allowing a post-mortem of all school activities she develops in the staff constructive criticism and invites them to develop into sharing professionals who strive for a harmonious working relationship.

PA strives to maintain the school as a family and does so by being in constant interaction with each member of her staff observing the group dynamics on a daily basis:

I regard the break times as critical ... for me, it is probably one of the most important times just to see each staff member (A18). I have to greet them in the morning just to see that they are well and that they are happy with what they are doing ... then at least it sets for me the tone for the day (A19).

Public relations matter and she initiates her own style which is friendly and open, and at the same time sets up structures within which she can execute her leadership in a free and informal atmosphere. It is perhaps the reason why for instance, she is able to discern when staff “are not functioning”(A20). Here she opts to use the two-way cushion of support that is already established. She describes her staff as “supportive” (A21) of her in the same way that she is of them. Of herself she says:

I care for every single teacher knowing that some of them have problems at home, some of them worries ... concerns ... (A51).

Evidently the atmosphere of nurture and family is predominant. However, even though her vulnerability is open to them, she is aware of her position and is “not advocating that the leadership role fall away” because as she quips “the buck has got to stop with somebody”(A21).

PA operates dual roles; that of a teacher and that of principal. She also experiences each role differently. As principal, leadership predominates and she is the leader of the school. As a teacher her focus is on the children and she is closer to them as a teacher than as principal but essentially she is the same person. She believes that it is important that as a leader she keeps in touch with the children. She is emphatic that she,

... must be there for them . . . must be involved in their leadership group . . . must be in contact with them, know what they are thinking about . . . what they are interested in (A49).

Perhaps this is why it is important to her that she facilitates everything within her means, to see to it that the children have the best. Initiating is something that she does not only with pleasure but with gusto. It appears that she draws inspiration and motivation from just doing it:

The plans to improve the appearance of the classrooms are going ahead - and that is exciting for the children. They always are positive, cheerful and friendly. It is such a pleasure going the extra mile for them.

Friday 14th August

Other roles that she finds herself engaged in include financial management. Besides making sure that teachers have facilities with which to function effectively, she has to handle money matters with keenness and accountability. This is a particularly demanding job that can be sensitive too. PA believes that being a wife and a mother makes her advantaged as a leader because she can relate with understanding to the position of a family with school-going children.

Again, being in education gives one the advantage of more time with the family; this is an advantage that she enjoyed while raising her own children. As a consequence, the perception that women are a weaker sort of sex and incapable of making management decisions is for her false because women are able to attend to the domestic and the career roles simultaneously. In particular she thinks that “the apartheid, pre-apartheid era, colonial era where women were expected to be at home and to bring up the children and to leave the management and leadership of course to the men” (A62) influenced the stereotyped roles that women have been caught up in. Compounded by her own experience of gender discrimination working in a boys’ school where “the policy was not to give women permanent teaching status and to employ men only” (A61), PA believes that women ought not to be treated in such a discriminatory way. She is adamant that they should be defended because of “... how hard we [women] have had to work to get the recognition for what we [women] have done” (A58).

Dual roles of the family and career woman are not easily settled in an unrelenting frame of traditional cultural. PA regards this as a stumbling block to which women allow themselves to be caught in. She cites the example of the Afrikaner folk who believe “that men should be better qualified than women”. According to her these are obstacles to the advancement and progress that women are making (A63). It is in the light of such obstacles and misconceptions that she envisions the importance of speaking out for women. For her this is empowerment, and an undertaking that she is familiar with: “I was known for the person who always used to make my voice heard for the woman”(A64). Perhaps this is why her experience working among male colleagues has had her believe that male leaders are insensitive to general feelings. She, however, did not stop there as she states, “ I have been prepared to go to the male bosses and say, ‘Well, I do not think you handled that matter well’.” (A60). As far as her experience in this is concerned she finds that men lack interpersonal skills “because they think that to talk people down or to argue with is the way to win, whereas women will be first more reasoning and more involved in trying to sort out things logically”(A60).

For PA empowerment simply is “putting a different point of view to the one that they may have advanced” (A65). She values the recognition that she gets when people are prepared to listen to her. She concludes the matter by saying:

I would like to think that we have something special to add to the management of leadership . . . we are cutting ground all the time proving that we have valuable contribution to make in whatever field we are in(A66).

Finally, of the many challenges in leadership the following entry captures the opposition and negative attitude that contests the noble efforts of all conscientious school leaders in their efforts and endeavours to make their schools havens of learning:

It was good to relax and do very little yesterday. The news report on education was rather depressing. What struck me as a poor reflection on the state of education was the report that in order to improve education pupils should report their “lazy teachers” to their governing bodies and that one plan to improve standard 10 results would be to only allow the pupils who did well in the trial exam to sit the final exam. That seems like manipulation of statistics to me!

Sunday 16th August

The negative reports such as this one reflects that there is a gap or misunderstanding between those in schools and those in the education offices. This is perhaps perpetrated further by the “lack of communication between the education department and school” (A43). The result is a “feeling of insecurity”(A43) because the two teams could be pulling in different directions. PA blames the current state of flux in the country for the current uncertainties among education leaders, the consequence of which has been difficulties in decision making. She points out the “need to get as many principals together to work towards looking at the future of education in this country”(A41). She feels that the cohesion between principals would build a vision that would supersede the current stalled situation that the education situation is in. There are unfortunately, other factors such as factions and the lack of union support over and above principals having different concerns. Perhaps then in the absence of a cohesive association of principals a workable remedy would be as is described here:

... as a principal I have built up a network of principals that I feel free to phone if I wish to discuss anything . . . probably all principals have internal networks where they can discuss and share ideas in a non threatening way and I think that is essential (A40).

4.4 A profile of PB

PB is the principal of a former model “C” preparatory school in the Eastern Cape. Her school is multi-racial with a population of about 250 boys and girls. The entire school staff has ten people, eight of whom are teachers, the senior teachers include herself and one Head of Department (HOD). The entire teaching staff is female. There is one administrative and one support staff member and a male gardener.

PB has been the school principal for less than a year although she has been in the teaching profession for twenty five years. Some of her teaching experience she obtained abroad. Prior to her current position, she had not served as a deputy principal or as a HOD. She has a Higher Diploma in Education and is married with grown-up children. She is in her late forties.

4.5 PB as leader

PB thinks that her inspiration to become a leader comes from the encouragement of her father who enjoyed seeing her in leadership roles. She recounts that her father told them, as they were all girls in their family, that they “could do anything” (B1). It is this encouragement and recognition that motivated her to accept leadership roles such as class captain and captain of tennis when she was in school.

Even though PB was involved in leadership roles in school and in college she never really exerted herself to become the leader that she became later in life. She had no ambitions about it:

It was not something that I wanted to do or had a big problem about (B34).

If anything she was totally ignorant of public leadership because much of her life was spent in the classroom teaching or as she puts it:

... just minding my own business in the classroom with my little pupils **(B24)**.

It appears that the reins of leadership were literally placed in her hands, possibly because someone recognized leadership ability in her:

I was asked by the previous principal if I would take the position **(B35)**.

Her motivation into acceptance was influenced by this recognition and also by family and personal factors. Among other reasons for taking the offer, she says that “nobody on the staff was keen to do it, they had other things to do ...”**(B35)**. Again, her, “... family was no longer young and so I could accept”**(B35)**. The family is important to PB and takes precedence over her career:

... if I am going to do something it is with them in mind as well as everything else. I want to do a good job where I am but not to the detriment of everything else **(B33)**.

It becomes quite clear why she has been in teaching for so many years yet has not been in leadership. Other reasons included her belief in herself and her abilities and that these attributes were going to be an asset to her leadership: “I have always got on very well with fellow teachers and so guess I thought that I would give this position a go” **(B4)**.

Over and above these reasons, PB felt that she wanted to: “... contribute to education, to the little children who were directly with me ...” **(B27)**. Also, she says that she “thoroughly enjoyed this little school”**(B35)** and felt all the more reason to give it a go. Looking back at the many children that she has taught gives her satisfaction, a feeling of accomplishment that brings to her much happiness and joy. Unlike many of her counterparts, she is not far removed from the classroom. Teaching “the little ones” **(B28)** and getting “to know the children and the parents right from the word go” **(B28)** is a

fascinating experience for her. Invariably, PB's leadership encompasses maintaining a direct link with teaching, which is her favourite job. Money is certainly not the motivating factor even though she does admit that it helps in pressing times.

With regard to herself, PB believes that she is fairly driven, full of ideas and a change initiator. She believes that happiness comes from doing something for others and making a difference to society. "To be able to look back on my work and see that I have actually made a difference" **(B6)** is very important, more especially in the current circumstances where there is flux in the education department. It is in this context that she feels that if she can keep her school going as a head, then she has achieved something worthwhile.

PB believes in being organized and would like to be more organized as a school head. She would like to move with technology and even "have more things on computer" **(B8)**. In doing so she feels that she would be more efficient and able to run the school more smoothly because of accessibility to information.

As far as leadership is concerned, PB perceives herself as the captain of the team and conceives that she and her teammates are "working together for the same ends" **(B16)**. There are instances when she steps back and allows others to be the captain of the team. She does so in recognition of the ability and the talents of others:

I took a step back because then she was in charge of producing the play. I helped her in every way I could but she was actually in that case, the captain of the team. But every time there was a problem, she would come to me with it and together we would work on that one, or I would say, I will sort that one out **(B18)**.

She feels that she " ... could never be somebody that worked on her own ..." **(B17)**. Team camaraderie and the involvement of everybody including the "cleaners" and "the people who are in the same position in other schools" is very important to her and to the effectiveness and subsequent success of her leadership.

Fulfillment is important for PB she states: “... it is essential that I have a job that I enjoy” **(B25)**. She derives job satisfaction from a number of things. Firstly, her enjoyment comes from widening her scope of knowledge and resources. She believes that she ought to be knowledgeable and informed about trends in education and the future of it. She is aware that she must not fool herself that she is the only one that can solve all the problems. Taking stock of her performance in her first year of leadership is important and is an endeavour that she looks forward to without even feeling threatened by what she might find:

I would like to reflect when this year is through ... I think I will sit down and reflect right through the year and see where things could have been done better and where things could have been left out; of people around me who I might not have been aware could be very helpful. I need to reflect and certainly when the year comes about again and I am faced with the same thing, I will have some experience to lean on **(B 17)**.

Reading is one source of knowledge that she regards highly as it stimulates the mind birthing ideas and the impetus to action. She is quick to observe that she could “read more ... reflect and take notes” **(B12)**. In this connection she is informed of useful literature. Commenting on her reading, she states:

... a lovely book on discipline called ‘Discipline With Dignity’ that I have read halfway through and that I would like to read more of. Then there is Covey, ‘Seven Principals of the Most Effective People’, ‘Most Effective Families’ **(B12)**.

She is quick to add too that, “ ... there are education journals that are excellent ...” **(B12)**. Another way that PB improves her leadership is by “... keeping in contact with other school principals...” in order to “... share ideas, because there are times when one feels lonely ...” **(B11)**. In her interactions, she includes confidential information that perhaps she would not have otherwise been able to release to other people outside of her leadership circle.

Leadership revolves around the everyday activities in a school and for a leader to function effectively there are basic modes of operation that must be clear to both the leader and the followers. Clear job descriptions and work ethics are some of the things that PB is careful to define because it is important that “... everybody must know what is going on and what is required of them” **(B18)**. In order to effectively do this she believes that it is important to explain to people the roles that are required of them and to chat about them. Likewise when there are problems: “... to talk the problem trying to see it from all angles” **(B19)** or even consulting or “asking the other people for their advice as well” **(B19)**. Evidently, in her type of leadership the team is the focus.

While decision making might be left entirely to the leader there are times when a leader requires the counsel, advice and ideas of others. PB is a decision sharing leader and she does consult with the Governing Body of the school. There are, however, particular members in the Governing Body whom she singles out as persons that she can “lean on and use” **(B20)**. Others whom she consults include her secretary whom she describes as “... a good person to bounce ideas off” **(B20)**. The senior teachers too are good to consult. It is easy to see why she is quick to state that she “could never be somebody who worked on her own ...” **(B17)**.

The ethos in a school determines how the school functions and is influential and effective on general mood and attitude that is carried by people in their work. PB feels strongly that “... teachers must be happy with their job”**(B10)**. Perhaps this is why she says that she “... wouldn’t have taken the job without knowing that there was a hardworking staff who were prepared to work.” It is the commitment and support of all the team that makes her able to say as the principal, “I do feel the support of my staff very much”**(B16)**.

As is the case for all leaders, leadership has challenges. PB has her share of them and more especially because she is very young in leadership with hardly a year to her reign. One of her greatest challenges has been that of leading her staff. As a principal with almost no experience in school headship, she has had to tread cautiously, and to be

sensitive: “... not to manage adults as I do children” **(B9)**. At the same time she has had to establish her own leadership style because she felt, when she took on leadership, that “the previous principal had been here a long time” that some “... things needed to be changed and others needed to be kept ...” **(B 35)**. It is in the area of change that she felt that there were things that she had to offer.

Change and its interventions can be a threat to established order. PB, however, appears to have adopted a philosophy or stand that she was not going to be “worried by” or “stressed by” her leadership but rather elected to find in it what was “stimulating and challenging and able to be done” **(B8)**. Clearly, her positive outlook to leadership places her above her circumstances, and as for obstacles that come her way, she is able to overcome:

I find it difficult to deal with negative people, I find that a real trial and even when hard times are upon us I feel that there is still something that you can be hopeful about and work towards and drive towards **(B42)**.

Personal fulfillment for both the teachers and the students is a challenge that PB takes personally. Apart from feeling happy within herself because she is “doing something for others” **(B25)**, she is keenly interested that she does not only manage the school well but that “... all teachers feel fulfilled in their jobs ... that the children are happy when coming to school” **(B14)**. This for her is a fulfillment as a leader because in reaching her point of actualization, she enables others to reach theirs too.

Such accomplishments are no easy feat. In order for her to make such achievement, PB operates an almost business like portfolio. Apart from managing the general maintenance of the school, she also handles money matters and does things like “representing the school” **(B15)**. Effective leadership is important to her and she is aware that the leadership she adopts will be reflected in the ethos of the school. Her leadership is indicative of a person that likes to be aware of the day to day occurrences in the school. In the latter case, the leadership image that she cuts is very important to her.

Conflict is perhaps one particularly lonely experience for PB. Fortunately, she is aware of its inevitability as she puts it, “nothing always ever runs smoothly” **(B23)**. Sometimes the going becomes difficult so that there are times and situations when she has had to “disagree with them [her colleagues]”**(B23)** and at other times it is “they who disagree with me” **(B23)**. It is at such times that she has to draw on her reserves and make sound decisions that will “not affect a lot of people and affect the school which has had a very good name for a long time” **(B13)**. It is in such circumstances that decision making can become “fairly stressful” **(B13)** and also it is at such times that she “might feel alone” **(B21)** because of decisions that are “not very popular” **(B21)**. However, such instances are not the norm. If anything, she emphasizes, “ the staff are with me most of the time”**(B21)**.

Being the head of a school does not mean that one is the expert or “guru”. Even leaders have their limitations and at times are ignorant or even clueless on some matters. PB is aware of her strengths and her limits as the overall person in charge of her school. She is very aware that in areas that are technical or that otherwise require specialised expertise she has to seek the advice of the experts:

I do not fool myself in being the one who can solve all problems ... I know people who can help who are professionals ... psychologists and speech therapists and occupational therapists and I am quick to give names and numbers **(B22)**.

Nevertheless where she can help she does offer advice and expertise. She has for instance had parents come to her for help and what she has realised is that “what parents want is just to talk, because while we are talking through it, they are working out their own problems” **(B22)**. She is only too glad to be a “therapist” and give guidance and counsel.

Sadly, there are other challenges that are beyond the control of PB. Making decisions such as which children should be allowed entry into the school are difficult. Her description of the typical scenario that repeats itself every year, reveals how overwhelming and frustrating decision making can be:

... having these piles of applications for my school and having to pick and choose ... I have not enjoyed saying 'No' to children because they have special problems (B29).

Other challenges have tested her as a person for her resolution as a head and her endurance to keep afloat even when the going becomes particularly demanding such as when she has to do locum teaching which she describes as "difficult" (B31). The sheer physical demand that it makes on her is depleting coupled with the fact that she has to fit the locum in a full day which already includes teaching in the morning and administration in the afternoon.

Maintaining trust, reliability and approachability is yet another challenge. By being the head of the school PB is placed "in a position of great confidence" (B26). She has people open up to her in total honesty telling her things that are "closest to their hearts and closest to their families" (B26).

When parents place such trust and confidence in her as the head of the school and leave her with the responsibility of schooling their children then it is important that the school remains "a place of refuge"(B7). In striving to keep her school this haven for both the students and the teachers, she in the first place must have the mind-set of a leader who is comfortable in her job and in her position. Fortunately PB is aware of this:

... I suppose fulfilling my own feeling about myself ... it is essential that I have a job that I enjoy. I feel happy with myself that I am actually doing something for others as well as for myself (B25).

The demands and rigours of leadership do take their toll and especially with regard to her social activities and engagements. Her experience of leadership is that it is exacting on her time so that she is "less active in church" and at "personal sport" (B32). She particularly regrets that leadership demands have made her it difficult for her to play tennis with her women partners whom she describes as "very refreshing to be with" (B32). She feels like one suddenly cut off from a favourite pastime to do another equally satisfying job.

It is PB's contention that women in South Africa are ignored and have been for a long time. However, she is quick to observe that they are making progress in their advancement and even "coming forward" (B39), the consequence of which has been that now they are increasingly "being treated like everyone else" (B39). She is a firm believer that "women should be able to take their place in society and do whatever job they want to" (B38). Although she does not consider herself a feminist, she does believe that "female issues" (B38) ought to be addressed perhaps because of the fact that women have been marginalised for such a long time.

Another thing about PB is that she does not perceive people in terms of their sex in the sense of male or female. Her colleagues are simply "hard workers or not" (B40).

4.6 A profile of PC

PC is the principal of a former DET primary school in the Eastern Cape. Her school was founded in 1884 and is among the oldest in her district.

The school has about 290 children, boys and girls of "black" and "coloured" origin and a staff of eight. Of the seven teachers, six are female and one male, the one support staff is female. There is no Head of Department (HOD) likewise, no deputy principal. PC has been the school principal for the last six years.

PC is a career teacher with 28 years of teaching experience. She was never a deputy principal prior to her appointment as principal. She holds a Diploma in Education and is currently pursuing a BEd degree. PC is in her fifties and is married with children in their pre-teens.

4.7 PC as a leader

PC grew up in a family of leaders. She links the leadership attributes that she has today to these past experiences from home and from school too. Many of them she believes were nurtured then.

Other than being a school prefect in standard six and the school head-girl at “matric”, she grew up “aware of the importance of setting an example”(C1). Again, being the eldest child in her family she was expected to “set the tone”(C1), meaning that it was required that she gave direction to her brothers and sisters at home and to her school mates at school.

Teaching Sunday School and being a youth leader played a significant role in plunging her into the real world of leadership. Despite the added responsibility on her young shoulders, PC “readily found” (C2) herself in these positions where she was considered by her mates and her family not only “quite suitable”(C2) but also a “hero” (C2). The example from her parents who were at the time “community leaders involved in the freedom struggle” (C3), probably served as a ground for her to learn about leadership and also to come face to face with the responsibilities, the realities and the difficulties of it. PC literally grew into leadership out of necessity. It is a probably the reason why she was taken as a hero.

The example and influence of others has an impact upon the way that we think and conceive ideas about ourselves and our situations, more especially when such impact comes at an impressionable age or at the critical stage when we seek to formulate perceptions of ourselves. At such a point there is always some hero that we look up to or a mentor whom we seek to be nurtured by. The example and the influence of her parents and later on her science teacher in high school consciously or unconsciously had an impact on the way that PC perceived herself as youthful girl and later as a young adult with the abilities to lead. Her science teacher, for one, gave her a new lease in her self-esteem. In narrating her attitude change to science, it is evident that her science teacher impressed upon her that there was nothing that was really too difficult:

... there is this time I felt perhaps I was not really inclined to science, perhaps I just did not have the natural ability or whatever talent in that direction. I felt very differently about myself in the end, after being in that teacher's class (C5).

The impact made upon her by this teacher went beyond the classroom, he was to her a hero, a leader and “a very exemplary person” (C4). For her, he stood out as having the attributes befitting a leader: respectful and moral, exemplary or one who can be emulated. He was a person that “people looked up to” (C4) suggesting that his attributes stood out in her community making him to be recognised and well liked. She indicates too that he had an overwhelming power of influence, she cites that he was unique as “... he managed to get the best out of us”(C5). In other words, he extracted out of her and nurtured qualities that she was to later recognise as leadership attributes but which had almost been choked by despair and disillusionment.

Having come from such an environment it is easy to see why PC says that she became a school principal because she “always felt” (C11) that she could “contribute significantly”(C11) to the education of the children. With a changed mind-set PC knew that there was nothing that she wanted to do that she could not accomplish. Even today, she perceives herself as a leader with the ability to “do something about the circumstances”(C7). For her, the “question of service” (C7) is the most important thing about leadership. Subsequently, some of her leadership ethos can actually be traced to the influences and experiences she had while growing up.

Other than that, one very important aspect of her leadership is her relationship with God. PC describes herself as a “committed Christian”(C6) and feels very strongly that she owes it to her Master to “do the right thing, to be there for people and to be supportive ...” (C6). It is apparent that PC has a deep moral obligation to her calling. It is from God that she is able to get a focus and to draw on reserves of energy especially when she has to exert herself and when leadership becomes burdensome:

I started the day feeling tired, as I have been feeling since the beginning of the term. We are feeling the effects of overcrowding and the financial constraints of the Education Department. The prayer

of thanksgiving at the beginning of the day was inspirational and I felt that we were one day closer to a solution of our problems.

Thursday 13th August

Certain attributes are almost synonymous with leadership. PC acknowledges such attributes and feels that they are critical to her leadership. She says for instance :

I feel I know and understand people and because of that I will be sensitive to the needs (C8).

In other words, her compassionate orientation is an asset that makes her a leader that is responsive to the needs of her followers. She continues and describes herself as:

... very considerate, patient and I tend to be almost sacrificial (C9)

a truth which is confirmed in this entry that is illustrative of the extent to which she is driven as a leader to perform and to be an example:

I had a tough teaching day and I am about to collapse. I will take two vitamin tablets instead of one when I get home.

Friday 14th August

It is these attributes that enable her to keep afloat as a leader even when the leadership becomes intense and the demands great. Perhaps this is why she describes herself as “a very tolerant person” (C10) one who is able to:

... accept the situation and make the best of a situation even when I disagree with it (C10).

It is this versatility and adaptability that gives her the edge in her leadership or makes “the difference” (C10). Making a difference is important to PC and coming from South Africa, she is painfully aware of the need for “strong leadership and for positive influence” (C13). The children especially need strong leadership, strong role models and that alone serves as a motivation for her to strive towards setting that model because she feels too that she has the “potential to actually fulfill that role”(C13). For this reason she sees

herself as a “guide”(C15) with “some vision of sorts”(C15). She elects to be this way, not only because people are expecting it of her as a leader but because she wants it that way.

PC feels very strongly that she is approachable as a principal. For the time that she is a principal she perceives herself as “a colleague”, “as a friend” (C16), rather than someone who is way above everyone else (C16). Because she perceives herself as one who is approachable, she believes that her followers respect her because she is not domineering, intimidating and wanting to bulldoze everybody around. All the same, like many leaders, she does occasionally wonder whether she is not “too fussy ... too negative about things ... rubbing people up the wrong way” (C18). She is aware of the importance of not being antagonistic or pushy as a leader lest she should become a “slave driver” (C18).

Leadership for PC means being “faithful” (C19) being “trustworthy” (C19), “a role model”, “setting an example and being honest”(C19). It means being considerate of the humanness in people, cultivating a positive attitude, accepting them and believing in them and their efforts. It is being “thankful for what they do and always trying to see that people are trying their best” (C20). Since people are the success of one’s leadership, PC invests in them and has established “a friendly relationship” (C21) where she and her followers can “feel free to share things ... to confide and to talk feelings” (C21). The essence of leadership for her is based on a relationship of friendship and respect.

Motivation in a leader is equally important as motivation from a leader. It is very important for followers to feel appreciated for it is only in that way that they can produce more and can respond in spontaneity to what they are doing and find satisfaction in what they are doing. She believes that a leader has to motivate people “intrinsically” (C22) as it makes people “feel good about themselves” (C22) as such motivation gives them drive and focus, gives them ability to rise above their situation or circumstances. Such is what constitutes empowerment, and for PC empowerment is not a feminist catchphrase but a reality that is translated into everyday work situations where people are seen to work and to be satisfied with their accomplishments. The extent to which PC believes in the power of empowerment is evident in the fact that at 50 years she still believes in “equipping”

(C39) herself, and that such equipping is imperative in facilitating impact upon her staff. Knowledge empowers as it informs and brings awareness. PC is therefore alert to new things that her course opens up to her. She has found the issues discussed there “impacting” (C41) on her work at school and of the many experiences, the BEd course particularly, has helped her in “seeing many things from a different perspective” (C41). This unquenchable desire to learn more so as to be more is well expressed here:

We attended an OBE workshop ...we have been inundated with workshops and I was not particularly interested in going. The dramatic presentation of what OBE entails was good. The message came across very well. Even though it is being implemented in Grade 1 only this year, we have begun doing it in all the grades. Our learners definitely benefit from the new approach. Despite the shortage of resources, we try to overcome the problems by using recycled material.

Tuesday 18th August

Another significant thing about her studies is that they influence her immediate situation and especially the issue of transformation which is a “powerful process” (C40) but again one that she has looked forward to as a career teacher. Her position as school principal has given her the opportunity to “contribute to empowering children, colleagues and people around in general”(C43). She believes that she is blessed to contribute to the “growth and development” (C43) of her institution. To sum up the impact that her course has had on her, PC states:

I found that going to the BEd has helped me a lot ... one sees the ways and means in which you can promote change (C42).

Conflict is an inevitable consequence of the attempts that people make to live in harmony. Since taking on leadership six years ago, PC has had situations in which she has come into conflict with her followers because her leadership which she describes as a “disciplined way of running the school” (C23) came into conflict with that of her predecessor. Even where she has been “very much the principal’ in the sense of being in charge of the school,

conflict has manifested itself in the form of “heavy arguments”(C25), and times when she and her followers have “clashed”(C25). She has been aware of the urgency required to restore peace and harmony and at the same time manage to open channels of communication in a friendly and non intimidating atmosphere. She has in this respect decided to be non confrontational in her manner preferring to be subtle in getting her followers to understand the necessity for and operation of work ethics. For this reason, she chooses not to “say things in so many words”(C24). At meetings for instance she will speak “just drop little suggestions”, and makes the effort “not to be antagonistic about things that people do wrong ...” (C24). She also believes that by setting an example, her leadership ethic will “rub off” (C24).

Of the many forms that conflict manifests itself, power struggles, and conflict emanating from domestic issues and gender discrimination have been the greatest challenges for PC in her tenure as a school principal. Though PC confesses that she has not had serious problems with males and that she generally has felt respected in the circles where she has worked with them, in her current position she has had to address a serious contest of power struggle emanating from a male colleague. This particular struggle was significant to her leadership and the experience and witness of support at some point in the struggle when the situation was threateningly explosive revealed a profound truth about her leadership as she expresses here:

... just their presence [at a meeting] made such a great difference and also that told me where I stood ... (C29).

Clearly, an experience such as this indicates that a leader ought to brace herself for conflict and in a manner that is mature and non-partisan as conflict has the potential to reach highly sensitive and traumatizing levels. Also a leader can never be quite sure of the nature of conflict, as was the case when domestic issues became an official school concern. Though PC was gravely affected to the extent that the experience “haunts” her “every day” (C30), the reminder that our schools have every attribute of the societies that we live in rings loudly. School leaders, in particular are caught in a situation where they

have to provide for the needs of those in our society that are dysfunctional and unfortunately in their care.

It was really very bad and I really do not know what I would do in that situation, if perhaps there was some way of preventing it from happening, you know, I am constantly thinking about it and I am still counselling ... basically as I sit here, I do not know which way I would move if the crisis came back. So it is a very worrying, nagging situation (C30).

Her vulnerability became evident as she watched her efforts as a leader and as a colleague, a family woman and counsellor come to nothing. As evident from her journal entry, this one incident illustrates that every leader has an end to her/his tether.

My colleague who is under stress was very quiet. I hardly heard her teaching at all today. During break colleagues told me that she was dreading the weekend. I felt helpless, as all previous efforts to be of assistance had failed. After school she came to me in the office and cried bitterly ... I held her tightly in my arms and re-assured her of my support. I also said a prayer for her. It was the best I could do.

Friday 14th August

While others might resort to react differently, for PC the open display of compassion and resort to a prayer was most appropriate and telling of the vulnerability and point of weakness in every leader.

PC has come into conflict with educators. In this one particular case that was to impact on her as a leader, she felt that she was discriminated against because of her gender. In her career as a teacher, principalship has been predominantly the domain of men. She recounts how in her eighth year of teaching she was discouraged from applying for a promotion post because as it was put to her, “ ‘...women do not stand a chance!’ ” (C36). Although PC was disappointed she remained unperturbed by the fact that she was denied promotion. She recounts, “I was always convinced that I would have an opportunity at some point” (C38). She knew and felt that she was “quite capable” (C35) and was bent on getting the position when the “opportunity for women” came (C35). Biased and misinformed comments that women could “not be able to encounter stress” (C34) in

positions of leadership did not deter her. In fact, this was somewhat of a turning point from which she made the decision to be a leader.

She believes generally speaking that society is responsible for the discrimination against women and their deprivation of leadership positions. This is because the society does in fact maintain that women are incapable of being effective in dual roles of career and family. A comment like: “ ‘If they [women] are on these promotion posts when they have to go off on leave, it would interfere with their professional life and prevent them from performing on par with men...’ ” (C37) is one of the many comments that indicates the beliefs that are held of women and in a very negative way serves to discredit women and the potential that they have to be leaders.

Being a teacher and head of school at the same time is extremely demanding. PC is often very exhausted and even narrates how her sacrificial attitude bears on her. Her confession that she sometimes feels like she is “going to collapse” (C9) indicates that the job is not only demanding but that it can also be threatening to her well being and health.

Over and above having a full day of administrative work and a teaching load, PC has other duties that make her leadership even more demanding. She has to attend to the “financial management”(C45) of the school and apart from fees collection this includes paying bills and getting a gardener to do the school grounds. She also has to do clerical work as she does not have a secretary. Her biggest complaint is that schools such as hers lack this vital staff support and therefore make the life of a head so much more difficult. It is because of such limitations that she is unable to stay on top her work as is evident from this entry:

I feel more organized today, having some assistance yesterday to tidy my office. Being able to find my way through the papers on my desk is a relief.

Saturday 26th August

Furthermore, she feels that it is of vital importance that she does not break contact with the children as their teacher as she particularly derives joy from this contact.

4.8 A profile of PD

PD is the principal of a former DET junior secondary school in the Eastern Cape. Her school is predominantly “black” and has a population of eleven hundred students, five hundred and sixty four of whom are girls. The school has a large staff of thirty-two teachers, four of whom are Head of Departments (HOD) and one a deputy principal.

PD started her teaching career twenty one years ago with a teaching certificate and has worked her way up the ranks from a classroom teacher to the deputy principal and finally to her current position of principal where she has been for the last 5 years. She holds a BEd degree and is married with a teenage son. She is in her early forties.

4.9 PD as a leader

PD believes that her leadership potential was nurtured as early as childhood. She says that she was one of the bright students and “started being a prefect in standard 8” **(D1)**. This achievement led her to see that she had “leadership qualities”**(D1)**, which she in turn believes were nurtured by discipline, time management and cleanliness. All these attributes she claims she still maintains even today. Other than that, she also feels that she was influenced into leadership by a role model. She describes her male boss as “a very kind person”**(D4)**. He was the kind of person that would say something that would impact on a person in a profound way. It is, she recalls, unsolicited remarks such as this one; ‘You know what, the only mistake with you is that you are a little bit short tempered’**(D4)** that made her begin to reflect on herself as a person with flaws. She recognised too that she needed to change if she was to be a successful leader. Since then she has taught herself to “listen first and keep quiet until the other person has finished their story”**(D4)**. Perhaps that is why she believes that sharing, communication and even conflict are vital ingredients in a leader.

PD perceives herself as “a very ambitious woman”(D5) and is driven by a strong desire to succeed in all her undertakings, a passion that clearly underlies her statement: “I really hate failure”(D5). For her success is a passion and it drives her every effort. In her arguing about her position she is clear in herself that there are demands and expectations made of her:

If I am not exemplary as the leader of the school, what do I expect other teachers will do? (D48).

PD perceives herself as a philanthropist of sorts. She states that she is “a Samaritan”(D6) because she likes to help people. She derives such joy from it that she feels called to involve herself and to assist in the on-goings of the lives of the children from underprivileged homes in her community. It is because of her involvement in endeavours such as these that she perceives herself as approachable and open. People become drawn to her because she finds that “... if there is anything, they come to the office” (D7). Thus, this principal believes that she is down to earth:

I do not place my status as principal or teacher ... I am a flexible person, very sociable. I am open to everybody ... my home is the home of the poor (D15).

Communication appears a very important feature of hers as a leader. She believes that it is important to communicate and that it does not matter what form that communication takes. She avoids obstacles that will hamper effective communication. For this reason, she hates gossip and is a reliable confidante, “... if somebody comes to this office and tells me a secret it is not easy for me to tell another person ...”(D14). Perhaps it is because of such a firm stand on interpersonal relationships that she feels accepted and is accorded the respect that she deserves as a principal.

Her leadership style involves working with other people because for her to “share ideas’ is very important. She believes in team work and consultation and involves the “the administration staff and “maintenance staff”(D8). Because of the diversity of people involved she considers respect between herself and her followers pertinent to good leadership. She feels that she particularly needs to “respect others because there is a

tendency that if you are a principal you see things the way you want and do as you want”(D9). Even though her followers see her as a strict person, she believes that she is approachable perhaps because, as she puts it, “they know what I like, they know what I hate ...” (D11).

Seemingly, one important factor about leadership that perhaps brings conflict for PD is that of authority. She believes that people need to understand what authority encompasses and to respect it. She is uncomfortable with disorder and even complains that:

... to do things their own way ... as far as I am concerned is not acceptable (D16).

It is apparent that her position as a leader and a figure of authority is challenged even though she is quick to define that leadership means: “ ... the people responsible for that area” (D17).

Authority carries with it responsibility, her role in this connection is to “manage the school ... to control everything”(D18). Her perception of control is to have a feel for everything. She is able to have that “feel” because she does not have a secretary so she has “to answer even the phone” (D47) and do the more erudite like “drafting letters to parents, organizing parents meetings, giving guidance to teachers, to pupils”(D18). Control to PD means having her say over the on-goings in the school. It means having authority over the use of “buildings and furniture, book requisition”. It means having a say on “reports ... pupils’ work ... teachers’ work” (D18) and finally even to “control meetings” (D18). The nature of control at meetings is of the kind where she is able to make inputs.

A cohesive functioning school body is PD’s vision for her school, and as the leader she believes in working towards this ideal. To begin with openness is imperative:

... the openness that is taking place in our school helps us ... we sit around and discuss things (D23).

For PD openness is a vital ingredient of meaningful and fruitful discussions, and effective leadership. Perhaps that is why she believes that parents are important players in school decision making and in her leadership “... no decisions can be made without parents ...”(D24). In that regard the school is structured so that parents are actively engaged in various forums: “... the school governing body meets, we have parents meetings, we have Parents Day” (D25). According to her such forums have helped the school too because parents are able to “foresee things” and therefore have an input in the decisions that are made in connection with the running of the school. The result is that the burden of leadership is shared. It is very important that she involves all parents; “... there are parents who are illiterate and we have got to show them and they have got to be satisfied ...” (D26). In other words she is convinced that neither literacy nor illiteracy should be a deterrent to a parent who wants to make a contribution to the functioning of the school.

She treats prefects or representatives of learners - whom she believes she needs to invest in as future leaders - in a similar way. She believes in taking an advisory role and involving prefects in school activities and by awarding them their due respect by listening to them and accepting their opinion. In her opinion the relationship between the school principal and prefects is one of partnership, she observes that:

...if you bring them close ... it is not easy for them to take the wrong way because they can see they are allowed, they are respected and their opinion is accepted by the school (D27).

Clearly, communication is important if healthy working relationships are to be sustained. To encourage sustained communication, she encourages informal gatherings because she believes that at such gatherings tensions are more easily broken than at formal ones. She also believes that they bring in an important ingredient to the relationships between people; that of joy and laughter. To illustrate how convinced she is of the importance of such relationships, she was quick to point out her brain-child, “the Tea Club” which was her “initiation” (D28) has stood the test of time and demonstrated effectiveness for the purpose for which it was intended. To this she adds that “everybody appreciates it” (D28).

Another significant feature of her efforts to maintain communication is her involvement in committees where she works with colleagues as part of a team:

I always involve myself ... I have a committee that deals with exams but I am always with them (D29).

Even though she is part of a committee she is quick to add that she is not in the habit of “supervising them or running after them”(D29) rather what she does, in her own words, is: “just helping each other” (D29). PD likes to delegate because sharing enlarges her leadership, and by doing so encourages others to take up the mantle of leadership responsibility. She is keen to have less of her presence and domination at meetings and in the agendas. When her colleagues or followers are given the opportunity to lead, they utilize their abilities, talents and ideas and are in event being nurtured into leadership. Leadership by example is particularly important to her and she places strong emphasis on this principle.

I do not preach and then not practise it (D30).

PD’s motivation for leadership besides being driven by a desire to succeed, is not apparent. She does, however, attribute her rise through the ranks to her management skills, even though her rise has been slow because of personal preferences such as her choice “to stay in one place”(D31). Her disqualification from promotion because she was “not qualified”(D31) for the category and because of the limited “availability of posts”(D31) within her locale were factors that delayed her rise to leadership, but again were factors that she could not control.

Other than being a school principal, PD has found herself in various other leadership roles. As a community leader she has a number of community education related portfolios where she plays a “major role” (D38). One of her leadership accomplishments has been: “to build a club for our street”. It is a club that takes care of the social welfare of the people and helps them in time of bereavement and at funerals. She has served as a member of the

“ASECA and ABET doing the same work of adult education” and also is “a member of the Makanaskop Creche”(D37). She describes herself as simply a church-goer because she has no status and position in her church except that of a “*Manyano mama*”(D37). PD perceives herself as a social worker: “I behave like a social worker”, she says (D39). She increasingly finds herself operating as a problem solver and as a community advisor. She finds herself engaged in very basic activities such as writing letters and making phone calls on behalf of the people of her community. Despite that extra work and demands made upon her, she appears happy to render such services.

Among the greater challenges that PD experiences as a leader, conflict features prominently. Conflict is manifest in the relational sphere of her work. According to her, conflict ought to be handled with caution as there are ways of addressing conflict. As the principal, in event of conflict, she makes the effort to “talk to that teacher”(D22). However, she does indicate that there are times when she feels limited:

... if there is something that I cannot handle, I refer the matter to the governing body (D22).

Keeping politics out of the classroom is another challenge that she has to face. She narrates that the negative effects of politics on her as a person “ ... when it comes to politics I get so unmotivated”(D33). Politics invariably leads to a crisis at school which is a hindrance to the autonomous governance of the school. She comes on strongly and states that “politics should not be mixed with education” (D34). Nonetheless, she values political astuteness because it is a shield of protection in a volatile political world. Such astuteness requires one “to know something concerning politics”(D34) or “having people who are politically minded”(D34). In her assessment it helps not to ignore the politics around one as a school leader.

The family and its attributes are integrated into her leadership in the sense that as a mother she finds herself resorting to motherliness and even to the mother figure; “motherly love helps me”(D41), in particular, in nurturing others to grow. Her role as a mother at home is

carried over to school where she says: “the way I treat those people at home helps even at work”(D41), meaning that her motherliness has no borders. On the other hand, she does acknowledge that her effectiveness is dependent on the peace and harmony that prevails on the domestic front:

... if you are not happy at home then at work you cannot be happy (D46).

The reverse does not appear to be true. She draws the strength to work and the encouragement to go on from “having an understanding husband and child”. They are patient with her and will wait for her to become composed when there is something that is disturbing her.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION OF DATA

5.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the issues concerning women in principalship emanating from the analysis made in chapter four. With leadership trends shifting and accommodating transformational leadership as an alternative form, the discussion explores how women experience principalship and how other significant features that relate and are maintained.

In this discussion, I elected to follow an explorative rationale because it would investigate certain behaviour patterns that characterise leadership by women. Such includes: behaviours that empower, teach, provide role models, encourage openness, advance professionalism and professional development. To enable this exploration, it required that I remained faithful to the data and having to tease out information where it was obscured.

The choice to be explorative was influenced by literature on feminism and transformational leadership. James MacGregor Burns on leadership theory, admitted that there had been little, if any, organised scholarship regarding the standards for assessing past or potential leaders. He stated that it would have been presumptive to declare that leaders were born or made, he felt rather that efforts needed to be made to identify the elusive elements that made a person a leader (Burns 1978). Taking a similar position, feminist proponents Gosetti et al. (1991) powerfully contest our commonly held perceptions of leadership, arguing that the standpoint we take is masculine and that it emanates from a biased socialisation. Together, they appear to suggest that where leadership concerns women, the feminist perspective would be better suited. In particular, Gosetti et al. charge that this perspective not only offers a new lens with which to view the world of leadership, but it also gives the woman leader opportunity to give her perception of leadership. Additionally, Rosener (1990) states that leadership is a consequence of

one's attitudes and perceptions plus the influence of socialisation. For that reason, it ought to be drawn out as unique and particular and not as an enforcement of the expectations of others. It is she emphasises that the experience the reaction and subsequent values emanate from being in that position.

In that connection, the discussion in this chapter is approached and guided by two factors, both of which are a fundamental frame of reference to a case study. As a study that is idiographic and whose purpose is "to better understand the intrinsic aspects" of a phenomenon (Berg 1998:216), the framework of discussion takes on the combination of the exploratory-descriptive and the descriptive-dialogic case study (Edwards 1990). Chapter four was an exploratory-description with a rich and explicate description of each case. Here, there was no urgency towards generalisation, rather, the idea was to attain an in-depth understanding of the background, the experiences, the roles and the motivation to leadership. The second factor is literature. Leadership is rife with arguments and theories but there is not sufficient literature on women in leadership, much less on education leadership. This lack was important in the discussion whose effort was to prove a theory but at least affirm the contentions and arguments about women in leadership even verify the rigour and exactness of these claims. There emerged too, interesting features, new concepts and visualisations that are significant to the growing study of women in leadership.

To know leadership requires "undressing the leader". While dealing with his data van der Mescht underscored the importance of "capturing the essence of what it means to lead for each of the participants" (1996:85). He emphasised that the essence of a leader lay in exploring the *lebenswelt* which is the uniqueness of an individual, the centre or heart of one's being, which translates into one's perceptions, views and outlook. It is influencing elements such as these working within the individual that a leader conceives and builds individual perceptions following which the same individual is compelled or constrained to experience leadership as he/she does.

Now in order that the leadership experience is built purely on the leader's own perceptions, it was important to remain true to the data as already mentioned. I was therefore obliged in the circumstances to work yet again from the protocols and this time to include observations that I made with regard to the ethos of the school at the particular time that I was within the school compound.

Much of the communication was verbalised, but there was powerful communication that came through the observation of body language, para-linguistics and non-participant observation.

5.2 Factors influencing leadership

A person's search for an identity is a life long voyage that is launched in childhood and is propelled further in adolescence perhaps only coming to settlement in old age (Papalia and Olds 1995). It is in adolescence, that many people search for commitments to which they can be faithful with such commitments often being ideological and personal. When and where such commitments are taken seriously, they shape a person's life through a process of continuous growth.

5.2.1 Formative experiences

Leadership roles are familiar to PB, PC and PD all of whom were engaged in leadership in their youth and young adulthood. These early roles appear to have had a bearing on their positions, in particular, on how they construct leadership. Recognition and appreciation for a young leader builds esteem and confidence and both PB and PC received this. PB received recognition for every role that she took up from her father, while PC was the community hero. As school leaders, the same attributes are demonstrated where there is the recognition of the complementary role that each follower plays in their leadership.

The example of PB illustrates this. She views herself as a leader whose relationship with others leaves an impact upon them:

I feel happy within myself that I am actually doing something for others as well as for myself ... to add something to society. To be able to look back on my work and think I have actually made a difference **(B6)**.

It is apparent that the good feelings expressed about her as a young leader constitute her philosophy about leadership so that for her leadership means making a difference, making a contribution and not maintaining a status quo. She nurtures others into leadership in subtle ways and often she allows others to be the “captain of the team” **(B18)** letting them into the knowledge that single-handed she would be unable to solve all the problems and face all the challenges of a leader. She therefore, prefers to perceive herself and her colleagues as partners, as “working together for the same ends”**(B16)**.

In the case of PC, the community “hero” **(C2)** she was also influenced by her parents who were community leaders in the struggle years in South Africa. They served as examples and figures that she could emulate. Like them she grew up a leader with followers drawn to her and rallying behind her. Supported by both her parents and her followers, she “played a significant role”**(C2)** in the positions that she “readily” **(C2)** found herself in. PC grew up with role models around her and her school days were particularly instrumental in shaping her in the line of leadership. Her inclination to be an example that will “rub off” **(C24)** can be traced back to these formative years.

PA’s formative experience overwhelmed her to the extent that when she eventually became a leader, her major obligation was to reciprocate:

I would like to give something back as regards what I got of my education as a child and upbringing I had as a child **(A36)**.

The desire to reciprocate emanates from the satisfaction of esteem needs. Where esteem is high there are feelings of personal worth, self-confidence, physiological strength,

capability and a sense of being useful and needed (Maslow 1954). Like PB, leadership is not about her position and authority, it is about the impact she can have on others so that they, like her, can have a radical experience. She also shows herself as a seasoned leader who believes in herself, her confidence permeates the group that she leads building up a steady assurance, and conviction of competence that is based on training and the gradual accumulation of experience and skill.

Leadership motivation emanates from two factors. First, a situation where a leader is called to lead out of the pressure made by followers so that one finds oneself placed in a leadership position as a result of the collective consensus of the followers. Second, a consequence of nurturing whereby a person will begin to find leadership attractive and even acceptable. The latter is the point of discussion here. According to McIntyre and Haggar (1996) mentoring has become increasingly important as a means to professional development in education. The rationale for its use lies in the fact that the more experienced colleague can facilitate the professional development of a new teacher or a person new to a particular stage in a career. However, mentoring is very different from one country to another. While it is integrated into schools through the administrative structures in the UK and the US, this formal or informal set up is not the practice in South Africa. To begin with, mentoring in South Africa is not enshrined in the policy of education and where it is executed its facilitation will depend on factors such as the school type, school history and ethos. Another important factor is the awareness of its value, interest, commitment and professionalism of the staff.

From this study there is evidence of the fact that all four principals were mentored but not in the structured set up where both mentor and mentee engage in a relationship over a given period of time whereby the mentee becomes a legitimate partner with privileged access to an experienced colleague who provides support and guidance (McIntyre and Haggar 1996). Here, the mentoring was ad hoc arising out of the keen interest on the part of the mentee to learn how to lead as in the case of PD. For PA and PC it was as a consequence of the powerful influence of significant persons in their careers. Mentoring like nurturing is instruction given with care and follow up. Studies have shown that the

psychology of the brains of men and women are different so that women have a brain that is more integrated than that of men, fulfilling both the right and the left brain activities in its function (Wolmarans 1997). As such, women are better than men in their integration of feelings and reason and are predominantly interactive so that they render a more supportive socio-emotional leadership (Rosener cited in Wolmarans 1997).

Three of the four cases point to something interesting; that the mentorship experience was instrumental in PD's decision to become a principal while for PA there was a powerful role model despite her intention not to be one while PB had little external influence on her disinterest notwithstanding. On the other hand, PC's interest in becoming a leader was not prevented by her lack of a role model or mentor, neither by the difficult experiences in her climb to the top. PA and PD worked under role models who were not distant heroes but friends with whom there was a strong sense of collegiality despite these people being their seniors in the job. The relationship demonstrates the integration of the psycho-social or an interpersonal development that enhances career development (Carmin cited in McIntyre and Haggard 1996). The pattern of change or amendment to the individual's perceptions and how they were to later impact on their leadership can be traced quite well. In the excerpt below PA is seen as a person who was principally influenced by a role model, an influence that she thrives on to date:

I was very fortunate when I began teaching to have worked under an exceptional leader ... a principal who was a very good role model. The man that I dealt with was an extremely caring person, he had dignity and he believed in the dignity of children ... one of the statements he said which I still remember was that, "Every child deserves his place under the sun." I thought that was a beautiful way of focussing on what we as teachers and what we as principals should be doing (PA1, PA2, PA3).

Clearly this role model did impact on PA to the extent of her picking up his ethos and making it her own so that eventually when she did become a principal the same ethos became the foundation on which her leadership values grew. Like him, her leadership focus is on the on the well being of the child.

Finally, leaders in their creativity draw from their heroes they are in a sense their psyches.

5.2.2 Leader/follower relations

“Leadership is vulnerability” (Boon 1996:69), and it means being challenged and even facing failure. However, where challenge is taken in a spirit of kindness, trust and openness, character flaws can be addressed and corrected. A challenge on PD’s character enabled her to make a radical change when it was pointed out to her that she was “a little bit short tempered”(D4). Her relationship with her role model was fruit bearing and one that opened her up to accept criticism, a change that was to become very important to her leadership. As of now has developed a listening ear and is able to “keep quiet until the other person has finished his story”(D4). Such an attitude enables channels of communication to remain open between her and her teaching staff. The result is that she now is a confidante enjoying a leadership position where she is trusted and listened to. Her openness also makes her accessible to subordinates and to prefects with both groups feeling at ease to offer information and ideas.

It appears then, that mentoring or role modelling, whether received through formal or the ad hoc processes, serves the same purpose. It would be in order then that school leaders are left to structure their own ways of fitting it into their set up. However, the most important is ensuring that they establish a relationship of trust. Both PA and PD use tea-breaks which are informal set ups as opportunities to reach out to colleagues and to observe and feel the dynamics of the group. It is at the same forums that they inject their enthusiasm and energise (Rosener 1990) their followers, and although it is not always possible to relate to each teacher on a one to one basis, the possibility for the principal to observe each individual allows for special arrangements and the follow up of a teacher if there is seen to be the need for it. An atmosphere fostering open communication and camaraderie is just one of the many long term benefits of the Tea Club that PD herself established. Describing the tea-breaks as times that “everybody appreciates” because there is “openness” and “communication” “lots of laughter” and “happy times” (D28) one can see the necessity for and place of inter-personal interactions. Forums such as these

break tensions and here PD is able to mentor and reach out to her staff in non-threatening ways. Her success comes from interacting with her staff on a person to person basis even when verbal communication is strained or impossible, then she encourages them to express their feelings in writing a small *nyana* or note.

PA on the other hand, undertakes every day a customary greeting for each person, which is a gesture that initiates feelings of goodwill. It is important that her staff is “happy with what they are doing”(A19), an indication that the psycho-socio development of her staff is important to her. Their happiness gives her satisfaction and fulfilment as a leader. Informal set ups such as tea-breaks are good indicators of the spirit of a team. A good team according to Boon (1996) shares the vision of its purpose and is motivated, passionate, caring, loyal and fit for its mission. Its members have total trust for one another and are comfortable discussing their individual weakness.

Leader/follower relationships of a relational kind seem more common among women. Women are able to “feel” or sense and will engage their followers in all possible forms of communication in the endeavour to keep communication going. According to Rosener (1990), whether women create special forums or not, they do try to make people feel included as a matter of course. This they do by trying to draw people into conversation or by soliciting their opinions. In so doing, they consciously or unconsciously cause their followers to meet a need that is basic to all human beings: that of feeling important which is crucial in propagating effective leadership.

Not all mentor/mentee relationship bear the fruit of guiding and empowering the mentee. In some instances such relationships are stalled and where the impact of the relationship is in fact in reverse. Where a leader predecessor is a mentor but has little or no significant impact on the successor, the latter will arise stimulated by this vacuum with ideas for change. A case in point is PB, who for a long time was little influenced by her predecessor and mentor of many years. Her acceptance of the leadership post was triggered by the awareness that she “ had a lot to offer” that she had, “new ideas” (B5). She felt strongly too, “that there were things that needed to be changed”(B5) and therefore

the new post was a challenge to bring in freshness even though she was never bent on leadership and had for many years been content in the classroom as a leader of her “little band of people”(B18).

Finally, in a class of her own PC had no one single mentor to shape her career it was the influence of her high school science teacher that impacted on her. He was in some way, a kind of a hero whom she was powerfully drawn to, one whom she very quickly emulated and based certain decisions about her future on: “If I become a teacher, that is the kind of teacher that I would like to be” (B4). The example of this teacher appears to have made PC want to lead others by her own example. This is not unusual for the young and impressionable and is particularly characteristic of some forms of leadership. According to Bass (1990) charismatic leaders often emerge in times of crises as prospective saviours and are able to fulfil the unmet emotional needs of their completely trusting, overly dependent, and submissive followers and if successful are able to bring about radical change in their groups and organisations. It is conceivable how this “classroom leader” had such impact: he was able to return self esteem back into PC, make her realise her learning potential. Again the fact that he was a highly regarded community member because of, among other things, excellence in character her belief in him and emulation of what he stood for easily lead her into leadership. Unfortunately, however, while followers will identify with a hero as a leader because of the abilities, interests and even personal traits (Bass 1990) eventually this wanes as the needs of the followers are met or otherwise. In other words, the example of a leader is not sufficient to fuel leadership effectively and for PC to believe that she can be a role model her that will be followed is somewhat of a fallacy. A leader has to change and serve into situations and circumstances, and these will demand a different leadership involvement and intensity.

5.3 Reading

According to Van der Mescht (1996), there is very little to be found in literature connecting the role of reading to leadership. While it is true that there is some impact of the written text upon a reader, the extent to which the impact will be followed by action is

unknown. This theme however, does emerge in this study. In particular, PA and PB believe in reading to gain information, to broaden their scope in order to enable them to gain ideas that will empower them in their job, and also purely for the sake of enjoyment.

PA describes herself as an “avid reader” (A27), who reads across the board. Her motivation is her interest in people and she will therefore read history, biographies and autobiographies. Van der Mescht in an explanation on the significance of reading and its bearing on leadership argued that by reading one inevitably involves the self and as one becomes engaged as a reader, the self is challenged in evaluative and critical roles (Van der Mescht 1996). As a leader PA is critical of leaders and alert to the fact that it is not everything that is contained within a leader that is necessarily good or worthy emulating. Clearly that is why she will describe president Mandela as someone that South Africa can be “proud of” yet be open to the reality that he is “not infallible” (A29) despite his example of democratic leadership that is world renowned. Again while she is impressed by the fastidiousness and iron will of Margaret Thatcher to stick to what she believed in, she does not hold her in high esteem as a leader, gender notwithstanding! PA’s reading engagements are definitely purposeful. In regard to outcomes and leadership development, PA is inclined to shift and to keep abreast with the trends, the outcome of which is her becoming more democratic in her style rather than autocratic. Her reading is evidently a reflective endeavour, an interactive engagement where as a leader she is empowered or perhaps even disempowered.

PB has a different engagement with reading. From her description, she is a reader who reads for the functional purpose of getting over the leadership hurdles that she encounters particularly because of her newness to leadership. Of her selection of reading materials - Covey’s *Seven Habits of Highly Effective People* and books on family and discipline - there is the indication that her reading is slanted towards seeking immediate solutions rather than reading for stimulation, enrichment and growth. There is an explanation for this operation. Prior to taking on the position, PB had little or a poor mentoring experience. Once at the helm of it, she goes through leaps and bounds, grappling with the position and feeding off the ideas that she is able to “bounce off” (B20) her secretary and

the advice she that she receives from one member of the board of governors who often just prevents her from “falling flat on the face”. That being the scenario, PB literally has to fend for her leadership needs and quickly too.

5.4 Family

As our societies become more diversified and influenced by the trends and fashions in the current socialisation conventional family as we know it is less common and vulnerable. Besides an increase in dual worker families, families in South Africa are increasingly becoming diversified in their organisation with certain features characterising this diversity. According to Haralambos and Holborn (1995) and Papalia and Olds (1995) the reconstituted family borne out of remarriage is increasingly a common family type, similarly the single parent family and to a lesser extent the lesbian and gay families. Pervading these family types are social influences such as such as cultural diversity, political policy, industrialisation and migration, which are fundamentally affective upon families in that they cause them to vacillate in transition as they adjust or altogether change. Leaders are born into such families or else are the parents in them.

To place this into context, it is important too to understand the point from which South African families have come. It is worthwhile that this is made clear at this point so that two things important in this study are placed into their proper perspective. Firstly, there is the principal or school leader who is a family person and who additionally may find herself operating outside of the bounds of the family. Then there is the background and history against which South African families have grown. This breeds an experience that is unique for every individual as a consequence of their socialisation. South Africa is now in a post-apartheid era, however, this historic indicator bears with it marks of socialisation that only time can erase. These marks are a reality that penetrates into every school, workplace and office. De la Rey et al. (1998) relate this and the current transitory phase in its entirety:

Diversity in family structure and function can be found in any society, but in South Africa it has a number of unique features. Firstly, we are living in a society which is ethnically diverse. This includes a multiplicity of religious and cultural beliefs and practices. Widely different household arrangements, child rearing and kinship patterns, and economic structures grew out of this diversity. Opportunities for assimilation of aspects of one tradition into another have been limited until the very recent past by separation of groups on political grounds. Moreover, segregation, a feature of state policy for the past 100 years, ensured that there were no limits to the circulation of everyday contact and knowledge between the groups.

Secondly, South African society is characterised by class divisions which, by and large, still follow difference in racial classification. White families, whether English - or Afrikaans speaking, have historically had access to middle class opportunities and lifestyle; black families have been confined to the working class. Extreme poverty, unemployment, inadequate or crowded housing, poor or non-existent health and welfare facilities, and grossly inadequate provision of educational resources, all contributed to an on-going cycle of increasing economic, social and emotional distress. Where white families were able to turn to the state to provide assistance in times of crisis, black families had no choice but to draw on informal resources within families and communities.

Thirdly, for a century, a succession of South African governments maintained labour policies which resulted in the separation of black working men and women from their families. In the absence of parents, the care of the children was undertaken by grandmothers, aunts or older sisters. This too affected the meaning of “family” in the South African context.

It is important at this point to understand that while South Africa is a new nation, certain social realities predominant or remain unchanged even where there is every endeavour to bridge the social gaps and to build the nation anew on the principles and ideology of multicultural diversity.

PA, PB, PC and PD are all over forty years of age and have had the experience of both pre-apartheid and post-apartheid South Africa. While there is no intention to judge them on the grounds of these experiences it is plainly evident that each individual’s socialisation has had some bearing upon their awareness and perhaps even shaped their thinking, be it in a conscious or unconscious way.

5.4.1 Marriage

While literature says little on the connection between marriage and leadership, it is clear from a social and psychological point of view that the support given by a spouse is complementary to the effective functioning and consequent job fulfilment of the working partner. According to Papalia and Olds (1995), of the several benefits of marriage that there are, friendship and companionship provide for emotional growth. Married people operate in a reciprocatory relationship and because of that, they tend to be healthier physically and even psychologically. There is evidence of psychological well being as far as the principalship job is concerned in all of the four.

The engagement of and role of spouses came out prominently with PA and PB, showing a bonding that spilled over into their jobs seen in encouragement and support. Of her experiences, PA enjoys the encouragement of her spouse whom she describe as “supportive” and “interested” (A53) in her job. A telephone call to inquire about how a special school event was or a weekend away from home with him to induct new school prefects is one of the ways that she receives this support. PB receives support in practical ways and beyond that her spouse is at times an advisor when his counsel is sought.

In both of these cases, there is evidence that psycho-socio needs that come because of the demands of a stressful job, are met in this partnership. This, however is not to suggest that women in leadership ought to be married in order that such needs are met. It is simply to reiterate that married women tend to involve their spouses in the on-goings of their jobs and find fulfillment in doing so. They also recognise talent and resources available to them and know how to harness them to complement their leadership. This is a natural order as all people have a need or desire for a stable, firmly based evaluation of themselves, a desire for self respect and self esteem as well as the esteem of others (Napoli, Kibridie and Tebbs 1982). Where such need is satisfied prestige, status, fame and glory, dominance, recognition, attention, importance, dignity and appreciation will predominate.

PC and PD made little mention of the involvement of their spouses, but PC did relate that decisions concerning her relationship with her staff were determined by a mutual agreement between herself and her husband. For instance closeness or intimacy between herself and the staff is limited to a respectable and comfortable distance because that is the way that they prefer to work as a couple. Again such her interactions with her staff are solely within the confines of the school. Clearly, her husband is a major player in some of the decisions that she makes.

PD's partnership with her husband tends to be similar to PC's. She describes her husband as "understanding" and patient or "able to wait" until she confides in him of the on-goings at school. She particularly enjoys this support when she is "disturbed" (D44) about the issues at school.

There is every indication that women engage communication all of the time and seemingly have no borders between the office and the home. The home serves to complement the office and is the place where the more personal perhaps even mind boggling job related matters are decided upon. It is also the place where the tired woman leader finds her comfort and peace. In essence, the woman leaders seen here do not limit their communication and expression to work and to the work place. "Garbled communication" (Rosener cited in Grint 1997) that characterises men leaders, where men talk about what they do rather than about how they feel is not a leadership characteristic of women.

5.4.2 Dual careers: the mother/career woman dichotomy

From a social perspective, parenting is perhaps more pronounced in the woman because of a mother's direct psychological, emotional and physiological engagement.

Today women are increasingly finding themselves in dual roles with careers to develop and homes to build. While developing a career may be the demand of an economic need, a good education and self-fulfilment, a social and psychological need respectively,

motherhood is the natural course of nature. For women engaged in both roles, there is contest for time, energy and priorities.

The four principals are mothers: one in the early forties, two in the late forties and one in her early fifties. Collectively, their children are in their preteens, in college and some young working adults. Though all of them have had very long teaching careers with leadership spans of between six months to six years collectively, they all became leaders late in their teaching careers considering that entry into teaching was early. This delay into leadership appears to be the pattern for women.

According to Shakeshaft (1989) the profile of the typical woman administrator differs from the profile of the typical male administrator in a number of ways:

Specifically, women in all levels of administration are older than men in similar positions ...are more likely to have been teachers for a longer period of time, and earn less for doing the same job as a man. Women have moved into administration later in their lives ... women administrators are older than men primarily because of sex discrimination. Literature on life stages of women indicate that career becomes a focus in midlife. Barnett and Baruch (1997) found that at midlife, self esteem increased and women discovered their self-worth. This coupled for women with children with fewer demands as mother, means that middle age often marks the birth of new or renewed career commitment and focus. Paddock (1978) found that the demands of the role of the homemaker and mother were listed as a major difficulty for women attempting to move from teacher to administrator (Shakeshaft 1989: 61).

In a study of Turkish women managers by Katrinli and Ozmen (cited in Morgan 1994), the following findings that are relevant to and that also correspond to my study was found. Of 31 women managers in a pilot study, the demographic characteristic of the sample showed that seven of the single women feared that marriage would affect the success of their careers. They felt that marriage would decrease their effectiveness because they would have to take care of their homes and husbands and children. They felt that they would become tired and would not have the energy to work hard at work. Of the 16 married women some talked of career/parenting related conflicts that they had had in their lives.

In my findings each principal undertook leadership for a different reason, however, the one common reason to all of them was that, they felt that they could be able to cope with the rigours of leadership once their children matured. The argument here is not to say that motherhood was the single one factor that dissuaded them from an early entry into leadership, rather it scored highly when it came to prioritising factors that were to determine the decisions that they had to make in connection with the development of their careers.

According to psychologists, there are personality changes that come as a result of motherhood experiences. Gerdes (1988) identifies four: redefinition of identity, maturity, openness and motherliness. I wish to focus on all four. The contention is that a positive relationship exists between motherliness, self actualisation and meaningfulness in life and that motherhood can serve to integrate these aspects. PB demonstrates the pattern and shows how priorities were ordered among the many other factors that determined her decision to take on leadership: "... my family is no longer a young family as such I could accept that and try it ...[leadership]" (B35). This accomplishment was significant enough to give her the impetus to allow herself to be challenged so that as she accepted to take on leadership she did so believing that she "had things to offer" (B5). Being a leader was like being on a road to her own self-actualisation and the fact that money was and still is not a motivational factor points to her maturity, her redefinition of her identity and her readiness to be involved in the running of a school that she felt had a lot going for it. Her motivation in this matter moves her position of authority and places the welfare of the staff and the children in her charge first. Her sole objective as a school leader is summarised as "doing something for others" (B25).

Motherhood brings about a redefinition of one's identity because it is a role that requires one to relegate their own interests to a lower position than those of their child (Gerdes 1988). This is similar to transformational leadership where a leader relegates his/her interests to those of the followers by seeking to influence for good among potential resources. PA's leadership demonstrates this, she believes in offering the best as a teacher, principal and mother. She also maintains the principle that parenting and

leadership are complementary providing direction with each serving the other. The following statement captures her reality school leadership

If you are a mother or a father you can very easily ascertain with the education that you are offering children ...is this the sort of education that you would want you own children to receive? (A35)

As a school leader, it matters that the quality of education should be of the kind that one would offer one's own child, therefore PA's every facet of leadership maintains this tenet, and though she no longer is a young mother with school going children, she will not allow herself to become removed or isolated. She falls back on her own experiences as a parent and keeps abreast of the changing needs and interests of the children and staff. She is aware that she must be a leader who is contemporary and adjusted to the times. This she does by being "in their classroom at least for one lesson in a cycle so the [she] can see them functioning within their classroom and [she can see] how their classroom dynamics are working" (A26).

Another thing is the dignity of the child. Not only is this important to her but she believes that "every child has a place under the sun" (A3). In the light of the growing multicultural enrolment that is rapidly becoming the norm for the former Model 'C' schools. Of the 330 children in her school, I did observe a representation of the various "colours" of the South African nation. Clearly, because of race, the children were also from different socio-economic backgrounds, cultures and beliefs. An unspoken challenge that PA probably faces is fostering her school through the transition from a previously segregated privileged school to one that is suddenly multicultural in its enrolment and especially at a time when the realities and the tensions of South Africa's apartheid history keep recurring time and again. It is, I believe, in such circumstances that her parenting experiences favour her because they draw on interactive leadership which in this case would be the best suited to the circumstances because first and foremost it enhances other people's self-worth (Rosener 1990, Gosetti et al.1991, Leithwood 1992).

The experiences of mothering and a wifely roles enhance leadership. PA believes that being a wife and a mother makes her more understanding of mothers and family demands. She cites that being familiar with the process involved in getting a child to school on a school day makes her able to understand a flustered or upset school child or even a frustrated mother who might happen to be a teacher on her staff. She is adamant that a school leader cannot afford to isolate knowledge, roles one engages in out of school and experiences. They all serve to enrich one so that where a leader simply devotes energies on school matters alone he/she loses touch with reality and is likely to become insulated. This recognition is made by Sergiovanni, he is emphatic that leaders ought to be holistic and encompassing of all that transpires around them:

... the person in a particular position in an organisation occupies a certain specified role and is shaped through the interaction with his various elements of the social systems, at the same time, as an individual, he/she shapes that role too by his/her needs, drives, talents and training or the various capacities he/she has as an individual (Sergiovanni 1990:22).

Sergiovanni describes leadership administration as a moral craft meaning that there is the integration of the heart, the head and the hand. There is evidence of leadership by the heart in both PB and PA as their leadership has to do with what they believe in their values, dreams about and the things they feel committed to, what is described as a “personal vision” (Sergiovanni 1992: 321).

According to Lasselle and Spokane (cited in Cook 1993), many women continue to choose a continuous career pattern to accommodate the needs of their families although significant occupational advancement often requires more persistent and intensive work over involvement over time. Now, in her fifties and having had a head start at school, PC should have been a leader much earlier in her career. The fact that it took her ten years to get to her current position from the time that she began to seek leadership or “promotion posts” (**C36, C37**) can be attributed to unprecedented family commitments, discrimination against her gender and unfavourable promotion structures within the education department. The second and third point are going to be deferred for discussion to a later point, but it is true to say at this point in the observation of career professionals, Betz and

Fitzgerald, that women's participation in the labour force differs from that of men's (Betz and Fitzgerald cited in Cook 1993). As such, where major developments have occurred in the career development of women, with more women joining the ranks of management and leadership and the narrowing of wage gaps, the fact that women will always be the wives and mothers means that when and if they do prioritise family, these family matters become contentions upon their career progression. Perhaps this is why Cook (1993) argues that our lives are governed by a gendered context whereby the sexes are different and live in different worlds so that in our socialisation processes men and women tend to develop different orientations with respect to achievement and interpersonal relationships. When these differences are coupled with interactions with the broader social cultural norms, the sexes produce a behaviour that is quite different in lifestyle, opportunities and demands.

In this connection then, the situational context that influenced PC's career development was her marriage, her husband's own career and her own health problems. By and large, PC was satisfied to be a music teacher until she got married in the mid seventies and had to move away from her province so as to join her husband who was making his career. The development of her career as a leader was stalled longer by the fact that her new province did not have openings for her music teaching and had to "be satisfied with what was available... and just fall in line with what subjects were passed [her] way" (C33). At any rate, in the seventies this kind of imbalance of opportunities was characteristic of the education system then because of the apartheid policies, in particular, some races were harder hit (see Behr 1988, Hartshorne 1992, Morrow and King 1998). The decision to study and to venture into other subjects was taken as the only alternative to regain her forcibly lost vision. To get promotion she had to start at the bottom rung of the leadership ladder in a small farm school run by her church and suffered the indignity of losing her years of experience as a subject advisor and a substantial teaching experience of fifteen years.

Unlike the others PD's own family does not appear to be instrumental in the development and shaping of her career. However, the one observation that her son makes about never

wanting to be a teacher suggests that there are certain experiences that she has had as a school leader that impact on her in a way that is significant enough for her family to take note of.

The perceptions or values seen here are unique to women leaders when they elect to operate as women rather than as leaders socialised to a masculine way of performance. They use their womanhood to their advantage. Rosener (1990) contends that the success of such leaders comes as a consequence of the fact that they acknowledge that there is strength in being feminine and therefore “womanish” characteristics and other such qualities are applicable to leadership even though they are often slighted as weak and inappropriate for leadership. It is for a reason such as this that leadership ought to be distinctly “a recognition of and emphasis on experience and viewpoint” (Gosetti et al. 1991:10). In other words, there is nothing prescriptive about leadership, it draws on and from a whole variety of things; from the situation of the person to the person himself or herself.

To conclude are the following remarks that draw a parallel to the discussion made here. The comments are taken from a UK study of six senior managers who are also mothers:

Becoming a mother and making decisions about whether to continue their careers had forced these women to consider what gave their lives real meaning, and therefore to rethink the fundamental source of their identity. In doing this, however they did not appear to be denying the value of old sources of identity, but rather to be establishing a new balance, recognizing and valuing different aspects of themselves. This seems to support Joan Gallos’s assertion (Gallos 1989) that, while men look to increased autonomy and distance from others as a means of strengthening their identity and achieving a satisfying lifestyle, women look to their attachments, relationships and responsibilities for their identity formation (Morgan 1994).

5.5 The office of the principal

Roe and Drake back in 1980 described the school office as “the communication, information, and production services center for the school” (Roe and Drake 1980:339).

That role has not changed even where there is decentralisation and other modern forms of office management. The principal's office remains a nerve centre. This seemingly territorial set up is primarily because schools, take much longer to change and do so long after institutions in industry and commerce have.

In South Africa, the set up of a school will differ one from another as a consequence of the of separate schooling policies the effects of which are still evident today. The implication might seem to suggest that it is only among the school leaders of the better equipped schools that effective leadership can be found. This is not true. The absence or the presence of such an office well equipped or otherwise, does not determine a school leader's perception of leadership even though such technology may hinder or enhance efficient job performance.

A case in point is PC whose small cramped office adjacent to a noisy classroom serves as the principal's office, the guidance and counselling room and accounts office. In her multiple roles leadership becomes particularly difficult and strenuous but she is able to brace herself through all the roles including the resultant physical weariness:

I had a tough teaching day and I am about to collapse. I will take two vitamin tablets instead of one when I get home (**Journal entry 14th August 1998**).

Julia came to help me today ... I have to do this every now and again when my office becomes chaotic. She has also helped me with my classroom (**Journal entry 25th August**).

... several calls to different numbers at the Nature Reserve were unsuccessful. I had to do this in between teaching my class, a truly impossible task. I cannot blame the children for making noise when I have to nip out of the classroom (**Journal entry 26th August**).

Ergonomics, the behavioural science that studies people's relationships to their physical environments, seeks to adapt the working condition to suit the task of the worker (Roe and Drake 1980). The challenge of working in difficult circumstances is not unfamiliar to many school leaders. In RSA the challenge is greater for leaders in the former DET schools and PC and PD fall into this category. However, it is significant that as leaders

and within the difficult circumstances and limitations they are in, they maintain versatility. The positions they hold do not stop them from attending to the clerical and administrative work. This essentially is executing leadership beyond the dictates of their limitations.

PA and PB are fortunate to have administrative support but they too have ways to enhance their leadership. PB for one recognises the expertise, knowledge and long experience in her secretary and uses her to “bounce ideas off” (B20), implying that she seeks her counsel even though it may not be in an explicit way. Her plans for a fully computerised office indicates that she has the vision of an office network that will enhance her leadership by creating time away from the paperwork for other things more pertinent and related to leadership, such as meeting special needs among some of the children (B22).

5.6 Stake holders

The office and position of the principal is open and is a place of interaction with stakeholders. There are always people that by chance or plan play a role and impact in some way on the person of the leader. They can be defined as stakeholders because they are in daily interaction with the leader where there develops a relationship that has a conscious or unconscious influence on the leader and impacting on the leadership position. In view of this, it would not be inaccurate to say that such persons shape the developmental path of the leader, and that the collective experiences definitely bear in some way on the leaders’ perceptions and attitudes about leadership. Important, however, is the fact that such influence may or may not be known to the leader.

According to Sarason (1995), it is quite fashionable to proclaim the necessity and desirability of parent involvement in our public schools. Such proclamation has a ring of virtue, inclusion and democratic ethos. This in South Africa is a conflict so that the school leader is torn between the roles of the education department and school governing bodies which largely comprise parents. This extremely thin and delicate ground is compounded in many of the former DET schools by illiterate parents who must be made to understand their role and involvement in the school. The situation is worsened by increasing apathy

and a lack of committed follow-up on the empowerment policies by the department of education department. The frustration that school leaders have to work with is candidly expressed:

... we do not know whether we are going to get teachers appointed ... or to get funding ... we do not know if the decisions we make today are going to be the right decisions which will prepare the school for the future(A42).

There is a lack of communication between the education department and schools and I think that caused a feeling of insecurity because we may well be pulling in different directions (A43).

Since they are department problems, I only just send letters through the correct channels begging them to help us (D42).

Sergiovanni in an explication of this, speaks of principals having “potential power” (Sergiovanni 1990:99). This leadership power evolves from within the leader and from without. The former has to do with the person of the principal while the latter with those “forces of leadership” (ibid.) around the principalship.

The discussion of stakeholders, revolves around these forces of leadership, specifically “the human force” which is the school’s social and interpersonal potential. The human force in the context of this study includes two groups. First, there are the teachers and the students with whom the leader has daily contact and interaction, and there is the second group comprising the governing body, parents and the education department, all of whom are significant contact persons but of a different level of interaction in that they are not engaged in the daily on-goings with the school leader neither are they physically present.

As PB states, “the school must work well” (B15), so irrespective of the prevailing circumstances and obstacles, a school like a business must be steered on. It is in this respect that transformational leadership has the edge, because the transformational leader is versatile, and well adapted to change and unpredictability. Within the school organisation are challenges that test the leadership quality, effectiveness and direction of the leadership.

Contingency arrangements are not uncommon for the transformational leader, PA for lack of a cohesive and professional provincial association of school principals is able to keep herself and her school afloat through the support of a network of principals with whom she shares the same concerns (A40). She believes that cohesiveness among school principals is vital if not critical for the future of schooling in South Africa. Davis (1998) reinstates this when he says that the essence of such leadership diversity, is in principalship, a job that requires a high degree of political acuity, visibility and accessibility, the ability to delegate tasks and the ability to see the big picture.

There is also a role that the education department ought to be playing more effectively, that of mentoring school principals. In the hubbub of transformation, there is more fluidity in education than in the past; apart from teachers changing jobs or professions, or retiring, teacher turnover has been accelerated over the past few years and as such there has been a multitude of new principals with little training for their new responsibilities (Turkington 1998). While it is the responsibility of every school leader to manage his professional growth as a leader, it is also the responsibility of the department to induct, train consistently these principals. It is imperative that the circuit managers should function as mentors to them in order to minimise the likelihood of crisis resulting from poor induction and ignorance.

5.6.2 The school governing body

The White Paper on Education stipulates that governance is based on the core values of democracy which in practical terms translate into a flourishing partnership based on mutual interest and mutual confidence among the many constituencies which make up and support the school (White Paper on Education 1995).

All four principals portray a working partnership with their respective governing bodies but their perceptions of the body partnership differs. PB and PC appear particularly involved in co-leadership. PB not only shares decision making with the body but has

developed a working relationship with the members of the Governing Body whom she is comfortable to “lean on and use” **(B20)**. Understandably, as inexperienced leader she does require the wisdom and the guidance of the more experienced educators and by drawing on this expertise, she is able to maintain the legacy and tradition of this successful school. Similarly, PC takes the advice and counsel of her governing body and in particular enjoys their support in times of crisis. In doing this both principals demonstrate effective administration characterised by intelligence, knowledge and balance. Their counsel with the School Governing Body (SBG) illustrates that their concerns are to do the right thing as opposed to doing things right.

5.6.2 Parents

The involvement of parents perhaps evidenced by frequent visits by parents and their keen involvement in school activities is often telling of the relationship that governs within a school.

It is the school leader that steers a school, and the impact of parents as a body on the leader is indisputable. Where the impact upon the leader is positive there flourishes a working harmony whereby the leader is able to enjoy the counsel and advice of parents in their roles as professionals, as parents, as a younger generation with fresh insights or even as an older generation with the wisdom of experience. The support that comes from parents is critical to a school and in South Africa, this is an area that is particularly wanting. The history of education has records of tensions emanating from a lack of understanding between the leadership and the followers, leaders and parents and even leaders and students. The point is that when parents are in a good or even a bad working relationship with a school leader they are a formidable force. Irresponsible parenting and child neglect are the two things that emerged as particularly harrowing experiences and subsequently great leadership challenges for all four. Perhaps it was because of the fact that all four are mothers. In particular, PA thinks that a lot of her time intended for other things is spent dealing with “parents who refuse to take responsibility for their own

children” (**Journal entry Thursday 20th August**). In a similar situation, PD goes out of her way to make clear to every parent, including the illiterate ones, how the school operates, encouraging them to take greater participatory roles in the school activities such as parents meetings and more interest in the education of their children. PC, often is compelled to be the mother to the children in her school when the parents become negligent. She does however make every effort to guide and counsel such parents making it clear that disadvantaged social circumstances are no excuse for one to abandon parenting. This particular instance explains how her efforts to inform and educate parents at times comes to nothing which is for her a daunting experience.

I had a visit from the parents of three brothers schooling here. The parents worked as cleaners in 1996. Their youngest child was a little girl in grade 1. The child has TB and some problems with her heart valves. I have often had to speak to the parents about the fact that they were neglecting their children. One of the sons also has TB. The parents came to inform me that the little girl died on Friday. They had taken her out of school and she was living on the farm with her parents. The child’s condition deteriorated because she was not on any medication. The parents have also been drinking heavily. They came to ask me to allow the boys to be absent from school this Friday to attend the funeral. The parents also had another baby and I am concerned about her welfare. (**Journal entry Thursday 17th August**).

Following, it does appear that the changing face of principalship includes wearing many hats, all of which carry many roles and responsibilities. As Portin, Shen and Williams (1998) point out, school principals in American schools, are struggling to meet challenges arising from family break-up, poverty. As parents with families, job requirements limit the time available to be with their own children. The impact of these social changes on principals cannot be assumed, and in South Africa, school leaders are especially more pressed with the changes in society having direct impact on schools. The flux from the confusion that comes with the pressure and challenge of adjustments to de-segregate, integrate, and transform directly impacts on school leaders.

5.6.3 Teachers

School leadership revolves on teachers and students but teachers are the more direct recipients of it. Generally, I found all four principals very secure in their leadership whereby they had collegial partnerships with their teachers, they did not claim to be threatened by the size of the staff, gender or even talents and abilities of their staff. Rather, they recognize these abilities and encouraged teachers to use and develop them. The sharing of talents and abilities is characteristic of transformational leadership and in particular common to interactive leadership. The interactive leader has the ability to make things happen; such a leader recognises that results cannot be forced out of the people and can only occur when individuals collaborate under a leader's stimulation and inspiration striving toward a worthy common goal. The line between a leader and a manager is drawn in this relationship between teachers and principals. As Engstrom says, "the leader usually is a good manager, but a good manager is not necessarily a good leader because he may be weak in terms of motivating action in others" (Engstrom 1976:2) While all of them emphasise team work and collegiality each one has a different aspect of attention. Between them there is the corporation and clear guidelines as to how each of the teachers can serve to complement the leadership of the principal and the limits beyond which one can serve.

PA delegates duties, shares decision making with her staff, encourages collegiality, promotes the development of one's skills and professionalism. She is aware that it is these attributes that complement her leadership and make a success of her efforts as a leader **(A8, A12, A13, A14, A15, A16, A21)**. Nevertheless, it is clear from her that they must accept responsibility for their actions and their decision making **(A11)** whereas team work is encouraged, she is aware of the responsibility and accountability she holds in her principalship position, as she puts it the buck stops with her **(A21)**. This, essentially, is leadership maturity, where a leader is able not only to welcome friendship, but also to maintain inner strength to stand alone in the midst of difficult circumstances and opposition.

In effect, her perception of leadership is continuously enriched as she works and interacts with colleagues. Essentially, leadership for her is a partnership even though it is apparent that she is the one that initiates the partnership by reaching out to her staff tirelessly and by showing them that she believes in them. Her partnership network spreads beyond the school and in an effort to keep informed and enriched as a leader she maintains a network of principals like herself with whom she can interact and share ideas. PB like PA perceives leadership in terms of a collegial partnership. For her it is particularly important that teachers feel free to volunteer themselves, and when circumstances dictate she takes a back seat. She is only too willing to do so and to have them as the “captain of the team” (B12).

Similarly, PD often releases the reins of leadership to her staff in similar way to that of her own experience. She will encourage her staff to chair meetings and make reports of proceeding. She likes to throw them into the deep end like she was.

In contrast, PC, appears to do little delegation and where she is not able to communicate in her own subtle way, she does what she has to in the hope that her example will rub off. Evidently, she is unclear of how to execute her role and. Perhaps this emanates from a lack of confidence and clear definition of what leadership is:

... sometimes I wonder whether I am not too fussy, whether I am being too negative about things and in that way that I am rubbing people the wrong way. I would not like to be doing that and I would just wish that people would be free to tell me...(C18).

It is vitally important that a leader knows on what they are grounded.

5.6.4 School prefects

Of the three schools with a school prefect body the principals attached value to the young leadership. This is seen in the way that the body is incorporated as an arm of the school administration. It would be a fallacy to ignore young leaders in the making. Many schools in South Africa are scarred with a history of chaos and disorder and for this

reason, more than anything else, a prefect system is a way of restoring faith in leadership and a way of telling young people that they too have a part to play and a significant contribution to make. It is the recognition that leadership is a game of partnership that operates where one nurtures the other. The nurturing is characteristic of visionary leadership and in these times of change and transformation, it is the collective responsibility of the civil society to promote leaders. Schools particularly, have the responsibility of tapping young leadership, instructing, inducting and guiding these minds in the roles and values of leadership.

Indeed, it because of her awareness of this need, that PB operates a two-week prefect cycle in her preparatory school. She knows that a school replicates the bigger society and for that reason gives recognition to the fact that it is never too early to take on leadership responsibility.

Slightly different is PD's style which revolves around having her representatives of learners involved in matters of school governance. Being the principal of a formerly volatile school she is keen on establishing a new order founded on the guidelines on schools' governance in the new South Africa. For her, change and transformation is an everyday reality as she struggles with the challenge of instilling discipline, order and channels of communication in her school. The disruptive history of "*toyi-toying*" or mass demonstrations and other forms of rebellion is uprooted giving way to diplomatic and democratic forums of communication. She is particularly positive about change because of her belief that students are unlikely to break away when brought close to the leadership of the school, through their representatives. She feels strongly that they witness respect as their opinions are acknowledged and accepted and therefore do not feel marginalised but included.

5.7 Leadership values

Tom Peters, the lifestyle changing leadership guru, states that the leadership era of women succeeding by learning to play men's games is gone (Peters and Waterman cited in Grint

1997). He states that leadership is now played on the basis of who one is and the values that one holds. In other words, there are many factors such as the type of followers, leadership legacy and school tradition that may make support and help to make an effective leader, but the thrust of leadership lies in the person of the leader; the values, beliefs and dreams that one holds and is committed to. This according to Sergiovanni (1992) is the heart of leadership.

It is apparent from this study that leadership fulfilment is vitally important to a leader whether one planned to be in that position or found themselves thrust into it. Empowerment of the self and of others are valued milestones whose attainment is somewhat of an actualisation. Another important factor is the recognition of the leader as able and effective, a leader can make things happen not only because of others but also because of the leader's own initiative and perception of who he/she is as a leader.

There are four significant features that emerged as particularly important values to leadership:

1. Nurturing
2. Democratic values
3. Communication
4. Professional development

5.7.1 Nurturing

Nurturing, in this study emerged as a driving force behind leadership. The inclination to nurture others clearly gave leadership satisfaction to each of the principals. Perhaps it is for this reason that Marshall et al.(1996) say that caring cannot be accomplished by formula and that it is situation and person specific. Compassion is often linked to motherhood and mothering is perhaps peculiar to women and here all four women principals draw on the skills and attitudes that are the shared experience of womanhood, they use them in valuable ways to foster leadership. The values become mechanisms.

PD considers herself a “Samaritan” and in her other role as a community leader and “Manyano mama” she is concerned about the welfare of her immediate community and particularly school going children on her street. While her elevated status in the community might be attributed to her being a school principal, the nurturing attributes are in this instance transferred to the wider community where she makes significant contributions such as being an advisor to her Street Club. The values of community well being, compassion for the less privileged and the initiative to make a difference confirm that real leadership not only stems from the heart (Sergiovanni 1992) but it cannot be confined. A similar value is found in PC who shows deep compassion for her staff. As a head of the school she has had to deal with difficult and perhaps even very personal matters that are not directly the concern of the school but that affect those working there greatly. Family counselling is a role that she has found herself thrown into and she has at times had to draw from her Christian background and offer counsel based on Christian values and where need be pray.

People focussed leadership can be said to come naturally to these women because their nature as mothers is to interact. Women also tend to be more emotive and because of that they are inclined to relationships, perhaps then that is why interactive leadership is well suited and comfortable for them. It is also argued that emotionality is a strength that helps leaders in their relationships (Morgan 1994) and according to Hoy and Miskel (1987), the quality of organisational relationships is primarily determined by the leaders’ personality and behaviour. Marshal et al. state that “the ethic of caring emphasises connection through responsibility to others rather than to rights and rules. It involves fidelity to relationships with others that is based on more than just personal liking or regard. An ethic of caring does not establish a list of guiding principles to blindly follow, but rather a moral touchstone for decision making” (1996:278).

5.7.2 Democratic values

Democratic values are at the core of any leadership that upholds the follower as a partner. Values such as these are now being embraced as vehicles through which change and

transformation can be achieved in increasingly more education institutions in South Africa. This, however, has not been without resistance. PA cites that she has over the years been a spokesperson for women often bringing to the attention of biased school leaders that women are significant contributors to the collective efforts of a school staff and therefore need to be recognised for that. Similarly, PC's adamant refusal to believe that she could not be a school head when told so, does indicate that the leadership climb does not come easily.

In their current experience of leadership, PA and PC, cite that democratic values are important to them and that the contribution of teachers, non teaching staff, students and parents is taken into account where for instance there are decisions to be made. In particular teachers constitute the forums and committees that handle matters such as academic performance, prefect induction, school concerts, trips and sporting activities. The senior teachers especially form many of these groups. They have the mandate to execute their roles in the way that they wish as long as it is within the mission and vision of the school.

5.7.3 Communication

Where leader and followers are in interaction, communication is highly valued both vertically and horizontally. It is the heart beat of effective leadership, group harmony and the proper functioning of a school. A good leader is only too aware of their responsibility and they also are aware that they must be approachable and open to their followers.

5.7.4 Professional development

Professional development is important and the value of it is seen in the fact that all four principals hold more than one college certificate and PA even has a special education degree. The implication of this is that they value professional development and advocate such development in their own respective schools. PB and PD like to attend heads of schools conferences, an experience that PB finds particularly enriching. PC, now in her

early fifties, is a part time student at a university because she wants to improve herself as seen in the way that she uses the information and skills to develop and plant new ideas into her work.

5.8 Gender issues

The discrimination against women and more particularly job related discrimination is not new. Among the difficulties that women face in the job is discrimination against them where it is implied that they are not well suited for management positions because, coming from a traditional mind set, such jobs require rationality and objectivity which women do not have.

For women in school leadership, discrimination on the basis of gender is facilitated and enabled by the following things: discriminatory employment policies where the promotion structures are unfair on women, limited openings for women in the traditionally male school head positions and a strong dominance of male socialization that is characteristic of the races found in South Africa. Generally speaking, men in South Africa continue to occupy the upper categories even where women have the same educational attainment.

A survey of follower perceptions of women leaders by Mnguni's in 1988 echoes this. Asked whether female leaders in secondary schools could control pupils and staff to achieve the aims and the objectives of the school, ninety five percent of the followers conceded positively but with the following reasons: the female leader has to be "firm" and "fair", "not biassed in her judgement" and "have the necessary command" (Mnguni, 1988:201). Underlying these positive remarks was the assumption that school discipline required the traditional authoritative leader, erroneously epitomised solely by males. This same mind-set believes that school leaders must and can only be authoritarian. It is well documented in the South African school scene where it is a serious obstacle, standing in the way of professional development for women. According to Morrell (1992) male educators state that "women are not 'strong' enough to maintain discipline" (ibid. 1992:19). They use this as a reason to bar them from promotion to senior positions.

Critical of this mind-set Paton (1998) attributes the continued existence of this to the old patterns of the former segregated days where the structures caused problems for women, nailing them because of their gender. The challenge to develop policy that is practical and that will tackle gender discrimination is critical if and where opportunities are to be equitable and women allowed to demonstrate their effectiveness even if it be from a different leadership plane.

While much has been done in the new South Africa to streamline the education department, from school governance to the redeployment of teachers (Adkins 1999, Bridgraj 1999), the past legacy of separate policies, gender discrimination, left marks on the careers of those that were unfortunate enough to have had such experiences. The preference to have males rather than females on the teaching staff was one form of discrimination leashed out against PA and PC.

According to PA there are cultural norms among the Afrikaner folk so that “they find it difficult to perceive a woman who has a family and is married and also has a job ... some of them feel that men should be better qualified than women” (A63). To accept this as true would be a real problem for PA and it is also the observation of PB that, “in South Africa, women have been trodden down for a long time” (B37). Clearly this scenario is more than merely the discrimination of women in schools, it is recognisable as an attribute of the socialisation to which much of the South African society is schooled. For PA a school policy that prevented women from becoming full time employees was one way of keeping their numbers down. This experience in a boys school where she taught coupled with the disregard for women on the staff by a male school leader, brought as it were, an awakening to her position and that of her women folk. It is here that PA made the decision to be a voice for the quiet and intimidated women wherever she worked. She came to the realization that this was a form of discrimination deeply entrenched or rooted in socialisation of her society and therefore needing of a person or people to initiate some form of resistance against it.

The 1970's were the years when PC might have made entry into leadership spheres but the fact that women were openly rejected from such positions in some of the provinces then, meant that she had to seek alternative avenues to get to her to the position she always wanted to be in. Gender discrimination has two impacts on women, it either crushes them or causes them to rise above the circumstances and to seek ways of changing the situation for themselves and for others. In this connection, the refusal to accept discrimination is empowerment, it comes with the recognition of one's worth, potential and contribution. The resistance to intimidation on the part of PA and PC and the gain of what was rightfully theirs confirms that though they were victims of discrimination they successfully were able to fight, indicating that it is possible. This is both important and significant in view of the fact that welfare policies and "protective" legislation can only do so much and have their limits. There is need, therefore, for the victimology syndrome to come to a close and to have women perceive themselves as effective social agents Harding (1987). Finally, in school leadership such change is demonstrated by the continued resistance to all forms of discrimination as seen in the way that PA and PC continue to assert themselves.

CHAPTER 6

SUMMARY AND IMPLICATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This final chapter concludes the study first by summarizing those themes that have stood out as unique to women in school leadership, second, by evaluating the study in the light of research methodology; third by making recommendations.

6.2 Research results

This summary is the drawing together of threads because the study in itself is not conclusive or fact finding, rather it is a search endeavour for answers to the many unanswered questions. It is also an opportunity that opens up new avenues that are worthy of further exploration. Nonetheless, it is important that the study draws some conclusion.

As discussed in chapter two, the social factors that influence and drive leadership trends to what we know them to be today are perhaps more concentrated in South Africa where there is a deep patriarchal orientation rooted, perpetuated and sustained by the socio/cultural history of the place. This one factor notwithstanding, the study does confirm the findings of other researchers like Shakeshaft (1989), Rosener (1990), Gosetti et al. (1991) and Morgan (1994) and has shown that women are leaders in their own right and can operate in their own style. As a matter of conclusion only the more pertinent factors will be highlighted.

The leadership values emanating from this study revolve around matters related to the school and the family both of which are inter-linked. In the case of the school, the welfare of the child predominates together with teacher empowerment and professional

development. Those values emanating from the family were role related as were the issues tied to the department of education.

6.2.1 Child-centredness

The well being and welfare of the school going child came out particularly strongly and could be related to the fact that each of these leaders is a mother and therefore the undeniable attributes of motherhood play a significant role, enough for there to emerge attitudinal similarity between the way that they feel about their own children and those in their charge. Strong influencing factors, for instance, the difficulties of raising children with special needs as in the case of a deaf son, children needing special care and attention were personal experiences that made them more sensitive to the needs of children, so that where a child had urgent needs, a break in their professional development was not untypical. Invariably, the same ethos of care and nurture was found to largely influence their perceptions and attitudes towards school leadership so that the well being, dignity and growth of the child was at the fore in all the school plans. This one value is well summed up by one principal who advocates the need of awareness among school leaders that “Every child deserves his place under the sun” **(PA3)**. Such an awareness ought to be borne by school leaders so that the kind of education that they offer in their school is of the kind that they would give to their own children.

This essentially, is a redefinition of what constitutes leadership, a contrary to the rigid control that characterises the set up of education in South Africa. The profound effects of the horizontal or bureaucratic set up in education stands in contest with the liberal form of leadership and management. It is apparent that change is in place and that leadership is in the era of change and transformation.

6.2.2 Leadership, the woman's way

To redefine leadership means that one moves beyond “the office” and begins to view leadership as a partnership; where individuals meet their own personal needs reach self-actualisation. The change trends subsequent to independence in 1994 were slow if one were to look at leadership transformation in the light of changed structures and diverse styles and ethos. This sluggishness, however, is not to indicate that school leaders are unaccommodating of new trends; neither does it mean that change and diverse forms of leadership are not in place. Mkihize (1995) and Nhlabathi (1996) are two school heads in the forefront in initiating change endeavours in their schools and succeeding because of resolving to embrace a vision. This study does demonstrate that there is a form of leadership that is interactive that is perhaps better suited to serve the needs of schools in this era of change and transformation in South Africa.

The term empowerment is often linked to women and is a voice that is in opposition to their discrimination and exploitation. From the perspective of the evolvement of feminism, empowerment carries at least two connotations. The feminism wave of the 1970's was radical and came in blatant confrontation of male establishment, where literally everything male was either contested and/or condemned, so that even reproduction was thought to be tyrannical, and freeing women from it, emancipatory (Mandell 1995). The second wave featured in the late 1980's becoming more refined in the 1990's and here there is neither contest nor confrontation in the severe blatant form, rather there is the recognition of the strength that lies in the attributes, qualities and design of the feminine form. These qualities are seen to enhance rather than detract women in their roles and performance as leaders. This study in particular illuminates an almost inherent ability to nurture. Nurture does not contest the male and the masculine and neither is it a shadow or imitation of a prescriptive form. It is in fact, a trait that easily blends into an interactive form so that leadership bears a people focus, is transformational and inclined to continuously interchange, with the effect, that in their complementary roles, leader and the follower stand to gain (Gosetti et al 1991, Padayachee 1997, Rosener 1990).

In the context of leadership, this study also found the empowerment of followers a significant value because it commanded satisfaction in the leader to a level perhaps only comparable to self -actualisation. Cook (1993) states that women will view their power at work in relation to their capacity to nurture others. As seen earlier in chapter four and five, the values of collegiality, friendliness, communication, openness and responsibility characterise women in leadership. The inclination to nurture a leadership that is relational or bonded is the strength of autonomous operations whereby the leaders allow their followers, including prefects, to make contributions and decisions. The prevalent leadership ethos is effected upon the premise and understanding that all parties should operate around an understanding of the governing ethics, mission and vision of the respective schools. This non-threatened style that gives the follower the power to function as a trusted and productive member of a team is empowerment and is in line with the tenets of transformational leadership.

6.2.3 The person in the leader

An additional finding, was that of leadership and the relationship to intangible human qualities (Bolman and Deal 1994) or leadership that emanates from the heart (Sergiovanni 1992). From this study, there was evidence of the fact that these leaders were steered to leadership by values that they held in high regard values centered around those that they led and the subsequent circumstances.

6.2.4 Professional development

Professional development indicates that empowerment is in play and from this study, there emerged two dimensions to it. There is the professional development of the leader and there is that of the followers, more particularly that of the teachers. Tracing the career path of these leaders tells that their teaching careers culminating in leadership have followed a somewhat discontinuous pattern. The pattern is consistent with patterns documented by Laselle and Spokane (cited in Cook 1993), Morgan (1994), Marshall

(1995) where women discontinue careers for a short while to serve family needs. In South Africa, the consequence of this pattern has been that women have found themselves unfavoured by the promotion structures forcing them to resign or else to compromise their career advancement and accept a lower grade (Paton 1998, Rickard 1998, Women At Work 1998). Mamphela Ramphele illustrates this graphically when she points out that “being a black woman, mother and professional places one in a challenging position anywhere in the world, but more particularly so in South Africa” (Mamphela 1995:153). While highlighting that family needs are strong determinants of the time and place that leadership is tenable, she also suggests that there are boundaries that women have had to traverse of gender, class and race while establishing and maintaining relationships leading to and sustaining their careers. The indication of this is all too clear from this study and the fact that there is need for policies that are more accommodating of the dual roles that women take without leaving them to be discriminated against need not be emphasized. The intersection of the home and career domains is not untypical of professional women much less of those in leadership and as such there has to be a redress to it for the changes that are anticipated with the era of change and transformation to make sense. Role conflict according to Atkinson et al. (1994) is particularly acute among women school leaders in South Africa because of the struggle to excel in a myriad of roles.

The woman’s staying power is illustrated in the small segment of the four leaders in this study who are able to cope in the job embracing it as a growing career marked in this instance by the fact that all four have a college degree with some specialisation, and one principal pursuing an honours degree at the age of 50! Another interesting aspect is the utility of specialised degrees as resource and skill useful in serving special needs found among children.

A further indication of the seriousness with which they undertake professional advancement is the willingness to be involved in the heads’ conferences and seminars. These are professional forums which serve as platforms from which these leaders engage in the exchange of ideas, network and therefore grow in the profession. Maintaining a

network of principals also indicates leadership maturity in as far as the recognition of the need to consult and be informed is concerned.

The forums that the leaders encourage for professional development are both formal and non formal but each serves to complement the well being of the individual and that of the others in an environment that is non threatening and conducive to learning and the exchange of ideas. It is at such particularly at informal forums that leadership and other talents are nurtured, encouraged, shared and sharpened through various forms such as teachers chairing and taking charge of meetings, organising sporting activities, leading a team through assessment evaluation and even inducting new prefects.

6.2.5 Role conflict

According to Cook (1993), traditional roles in our society prescribe that men should be the providers and women the nurturers of the home and family. Because of the dual-career pattern, women find that they are the ones who have to adapt to serve the needs of the family and as such, the demands are conspicuous on them. The case of the South African woman is not untypical of that of her counterparts elsewhere in the world. According to Erasmus (1997) South African working women experience problems in the workplace that are gender specific. Included in the challenges of the job are the realities that confront women such as childcare, elderly care and household responsibilities. These demands notwithstanding, it is evident that women leaders are able to commit themselves to leadership and well beyond the bounds of what their jobs specify so that they serve even their local communities.

Whether the role demands being involved in local sporting activities, church activities or community leadership, the work is viewed as a point from which one can position themselves to lead as well as nurture. It is in such light that an explanation can be found for the strong inclination that women leaders have towards service in the community. Also important is the fact that the lack of women in positions of influence in South Africa,

has had great demands made on women school leaders by the communities and this is especially in roles related to leadership. Cherryl Walker's (1990) exposition of the "*Manyano* mama" clearly shows that women will generate leadership from among themselves, will identify, nurture and support leaders whom they can trust to lead and to serve their needs. This facet of leadership is in many ways consistent with "*ubuntu*" (Mbigi 1995). As advisors and facilitators at the community level, these school leaders exhibit the ethos of the Afro-centric philosophy that encapsulates "*ubuntu*" from which a link that can be drawn between the concept of "*ubuntu*" and transformational leadership. Avolvio (1995) argues that the essence of transformational leadership is consistent with the Afro-centric philosophy and therefore encapsulated is the concept of "*ubuntu*" because enshrined in transformational leadership are values as developing creative co-operation, open communication, teamwork and reciprocal moral obligations.

6.2.6 Where are the women leaders?

The 1995 Annual Household Survey mentioned on in chapter one. illustrates a labour situation that is in dire need of women leaders. Notable is the fact that little has changed where leadership disparities are concerned and in as much as the new South African government has programmes tailored to promote women, the awareness that leadership is from within rather than from without is the one essential element that needs to go with leadership awareness campaigns. It is clear from this study that there still is formidable opposition to the efforts that women make in the climb to leadership. This in itself is an obstacle that women in need to address by asserting themselves in their own style.

6.3 Limitations of the study

In-depth interviews are unmatched where research necessitates an in-depth understanding of the phenomena (Seidman 1991, Kvale 1996, Vandenburg 1997). Nevertheless, the undertaking is not without methodological limitations. The fact that the sample did not

represent a larger segment of the population of school leaders meant that the findings could not be generalised. In addition to that, because the sample was drawn purposively it meant that the views of the respondents could only be generalised to persons that were similar. Regardless of this limitation, the rigour of the study lay in the interviews which, coupled with the journal entries, gave deep insights into the experiences of leadership making clear the leadership perceptions.

A major drawback of the study, however, was that two of the four principals were unable to make the week long journal entries and for that reason, but this is not to say that the leadership values were lacking because of the absence of this confirmatory reinforcement. Perhaps it is necessary to mention here that negotiation with a respondent for access to information is an ongoing process that a researcher must undertake with every stage of the research. Clearly, there is no guarantee that information promised will be given as it is the ethics of goodwill that prevails.

In terms of establishing that certain leadership values are common to the majority of women school leaders it would have been ideal that the study investigate a larger sample but this was not possible given the intensity of and involvement required of the interview as a method. The selection of principals across the board, from preparatory to high school and again from across the races was significant in bringing socio/cultural leadership experiences to the fore. This in the light of South African multi-racial and multi-cultural society it was an important research. The expansion of such research could assist to develop and relate aspects of policy that is informed and integrated and because it is fed from the diversity of the South African Nation. It is therefore important leadership perceptions, ideals, aspirations, vision and even are expressed.

In this respect, I strongly feel the phenomenological technique is particularly appropriate as it elicits these very important values that perhaps have been closeted but reign as important and significant ideals in the leadership of women. Another facet to this is that studies such as this and others like it perhaps on a larger scale could provide valuable information that could form the rationale from which to develop programmes and other

training criteria for school leaders on the basis of values that are defined by the leaders themselves. The need for sound leadership in many of the schools in South Africa need not be emphasized.

6.4 Recommendations

If a new, democratic South Africa is to be realized, efforts must be made to cultivate and develop the potential of all South Africa's citizens. No institution will be more important than that of the school principal (Atkinson et al. 1994).

Research findings on women school leaders in the US suggest that among other things, women are effective principals who are able to build positive school climates that promote better pupil learning and better teacher performance as well as facilitating positive school and community relations (Atkinson et al. 1994). Hence, to deny women opportunities for school leadership when they make the majority of teachers in South African schools is to deny them the opportunity to be all that they can be. This study, though only a small presentation of school leaders, has shown what women school leaders are and therefore has in fact pointed to the enormous potential that lies in women to be effective leaders.

In linking this study to the school leadership situation, I feel obliged to make the following recommendations.

- ❑ As the current redeployment exercise of teachers is carried out, provision for the appointment of senior teachers and especially women into school leadership ought to be made, particularly in secondary schools. Seeing that it is true that women are inclined to a leadership approach that emphasizes participatory and shared decision-making rather than the "take charge" approach, promoting such a stance should promote values that encourage feelings self-worth, active participation and the sharing of power and information. Clearly, whether these values are naturally inherent or are nurtured, transformational leadership is definitely the way to the leadership of the future.

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- ❑ While the department of education draws up manuals for the training of school leaders, it is important that it takes into account the diversity of leadership perceptions that are the result of various backgrounds and socialisation and values the latter of which changes from time to time. It is strongly recommended that leadership training manuals afford the space for experiment too because in this era of change and transformation the prescriptive form will only serve to return leadership to the past forms.
 - ❑ The badly needed effective school leaders can only be born out of the investment that is made in the teacher resource there is now. There is evidence from the study that teachers and principals alike are interested in their personal and professional development the indication of which is that as educators the interest to be properly equipped and knowledgeable ranks high. Incorporating professional development programmes into policy strategies so that opportunities to develop professionally do not come into conflict with the one's terms of employment should be taken on by the department of education as a matter of urgency in view of encouraging professional growth which in turn will become an expanding pool of educators and leaders with expertise in diverse fields.
 - ❑ More studies similar to that of Wyatt, Pigford and Tonnsen in 1992 need to be done but with a shift from leadership barriers to the leadership experiences in the last five years including the perceptions conceived in this era where schools have been seen to become increasingly integrated on a multi-cultural and multiracial basis. It would be expedient to give consideration to the school leader of the future, as and finally when the demanding and challenging Curriculum 2005 is totally instituted in all schools in South Africa, it is only the transformational leader that can have the much needed versatility.
 - ❑ Finally, as the number of women school leaders increases, they will be able to influence the culture of school and perhaps even tertiary leadership in the following ways: they will encourage the elimination of institutionalized gender

stereotypes, they will redefine power and the power structures of institutions, raise institutional consciousness and initiate dialogue on gender and related issues and take a proactive stance on public policy and debate beyond the local institution to important forums of the Teachers' Unions, Principal Associations and Education department.

6.5 Conclusion

The school leader as a person is the one thing that this research has sensitised me to and also brought to my awareness that the crux of leadership first and foremost lies in the values that the person holds and that the background of a leader and even past experiences play a role in the shaping of the values and the perception of leadership that takes form. This important fact is at the base of issues such as:

- 1 What criteria ought to be used in the selection of school leaders?
- 2 How ought the curricula for the training of school leaders be drawn up and by whom?
3. With the implementation of Curriculum 2005, how does the department of education hope to allow and accommodate leadership individualism and flexibility so that it is congruent with this broad child-centred curriculum? How does curriculum 2005 hope to give time, and allowance, and incorporation of the diversity in the multi-racial and multi-cultural form of the South African society.

Finally, I found research in the qualitative paradigm very refreshing because, as was the case in this study, of the penetrative nature that the techniques in the methodology allowed. The insights into leadership are therefore very significant even though this may be a very small study in the context of school leadership in South Africa. I would therefore, strongly recommend that research undertaken on leadership be done along this

paradigm and even employ similar methodology and techniques because the method has enabled me to get into the heart of leadership. What criteria ought to be used in the selection of school leaders?

APPENDIX A

PRINCIPAL A

Natural meaning units (NMUS)	Explication of themes
A1: I was very fortunate when I began teaching to have worked under an exceptional leader ... a principal who was a very good role model.	<i>She attributes her early initiation to leadership to her tenure under this exceptional leader who was in every way a very good role model.</i>
A2: The man that I dealt with was an extremely caring person, he had dignity and he believed in the dignity of children.	<i>She believes that leadership characteristics easily rub off and have a lot to do with the attitude of the leader and the beliefs that one holds.</i>
A3: ... one of the statements he said which I still remember was that, 'Every child deserves his place under the sun.' I thought that was a beautiful way of focussing on what we as teachers and what we as principals should be doing.	<i>It was impressed upon her that leadership is about caring for those that you lead and handling them with dignity.</i>
A4: I do not think that one goes into education for finance or for wealth, I think it really is a calling rather than a job as it were. I would say that it is really a commitment to improving the standards of education, to seeing children grow into maturity.	<i>She believes that education leadership is a calling where the leader's commitment is to the job, to improving standards of education and the children's welfare. Such calling ranks far above financial gain.</i>
A5: One's life experiences as a whole colour your impressions of what you believe in.	<i>She thinks that one's life experiences impress upon what one believes in.</i>
A6: I do not feel that a leader these days needs to be a high profile dictatorial type leader.	<i>She does not believe that leadership need be a high profile dictatorial type.</i>
A7: I would like to feel that people see me as someone they can approach, feel free to give their ideas and impressions.	<i>She sees herself as approachable and open to the ideas and impressions of others.</i>
A8: I think a leader is more someone who is prepared to get in and work with the group, certain members of one's staff have probably better qualifications in certain areas than I would have and there we need to tap on their leadership ability.	<i>She views leadership as best operating in a team where the qualifications and abilities of others are acknowledged and tap on.</i>
A9: I think that one can be too isolated if you simply live your life as a leader of a specific area. If one simply devotes one's energy on school matters one loses touch with reality and you become insulated in a way.	<i>Leadership is diverse and is not focussed on a single area because one loses touch with reality and the leader becomes insulated.</i>
A10: I'd like to think that the leadership style we use in this school is a democratic style and so this will also have its impact on those who work within the school because they must also buy into any decisions that we make and we need to work together if we are	<i>She is convinced that she uses democratic style leadership and perceives its impact on the school as coming from the fact that they have to reach a consensus.</i>

going to have any element of success.	
A11: There must be delegation of duties ... people accepting responsibility for their actions, their decision making.	<i>In leadership there has to be mutual understanding between the leader and the followers so that people can accept responsibility for the actions and the decisions that they make.</i>
A12: usually we introduce things and allow the staff to speak through them and then put their point of view on them ... we can see the value that changes can make so we do not have difficulty finding consensus.	<i>Again a leader needs to allow the staff to reflect on new things and to have a consensus on changes because they see the value in it.</i>
A13: We meet as a school. We have what we call our executive which is a small group of experienced teachers in leadership roles. We have the staff and we have various leadership structures within which each person can make some sort of meaningful contribution.	<i>Leadership is tapping on the leadership roles of the experienced teachers and using the leadership structures so that each person can make a meaningful contribution.</i>
A14: We have executive meetings once a month ... discuss staffing, make sure that we have the correct people on the staff, the correct spread of talents and that everybody has the opportunity to use their talents to the best of their ability.	<i>She believes that leadership involves having the staff discuss matters pertaining to staffing in order to allow every person to function fully in their talents and ability.</i>
A15 ... every little aspect of what happens in the day to day calendar of the school is reviewed under critical evaluation, not just by me but by the staff ... that is professionalism in that they are doing the best job they can ... and they take pride in what they are doing.	<i>Conscientious leadership is being able to critically evaluate with the staff all aspects of the school calendar in order to maintain professionalism and the pride in the job.</i>
A16: So if we have any performance, we always have what we call our post mortem and we take it apart and say, well, next year what could we do to make it a better one, more pleasurable and more of a learning experience. Then the staff will be free to offer their ideas where we could be better prepared or more successful.	<i>She believes that scrutiny or postmortem of school activities fosters constructive criticism and the staff become sharing professionals who strive for a harmonious working relationship.</i>
A17: Every single class we have a meeting, every single teacher involved in the class will discuss every individual's mark. If the child is not up to scratch we look for areas of strength and areas of weakness and how we can help them.	<i>She is involved in the evaluation of academic performance a task that is assessed from both the strengths and weaknesses of the students.</i>
A18: I regard the break times as critical ... for me it is probably one of the most important times just to see each staff member ... to see how they are relating to others in the group ... to interact with the staff. I means making contact with each staff member for a moment.	<i>Leadership means being constant interaction with each member of staff and observing group dynamics on a daily basis.</i>
A19: I have to greet them in the morning just to see that they are well and that they are happy with what	<i>She believes in maintaining camaraderie among staff, initiating goodwill each day by maintaining</i>

they are doing ... and if I can do that each day and as soon as possible in the morning, then at least it sets the tone for the day.	<i>close contact with the staff on a daily basis.</i>
A20: If they [followers] are having a bad day or a bad year, I must be their for them. I must be able to guide them. I must be able to encourage them, give them the advice they need or just be aware of the fact that they are not functioning ...	<i>She must be sensitive and empathetic. She must be discerning and able to detect when staff are not able to function.</i>
A21: I know that they are also supportive of me in the same way I care for them. If I am not well they might say to me 'You are not looking well', I see us functioning as a team. It is not me and them, it is us together for the benefit of the school ... I am not advocating that the leadership role falls away because the buck has got to stop with someone.	<i>Her staff are a cushion of support and are sensitive to her well being. Her vulnerability is open to them and even then she is aware that she alone is answerable to the principalship position.</i>
A22: ... if they need guidance or correction I give them but in a positive way ... there is constructive criticism rather than negative criticism.	<i>Believes that a leader should engage only constructive criticism where correction and guidance is made.</i>
A23: I see myself as being someone to whom parents can come to, I must be able to give them some guidance or assist them in some way by pointing them to the right direction, to support services that is available ... provide them with the knowledge that they require.	<i>Perceives herself as approachable by parents and believes that it is her duty to assist them by showing them the right direction and providing the knowledge that they require.</i>
A24: I also like to feel that I am keeping in touch with the children and that I do not move too far away from the children in assuming these leadership roles.	<i>Believes strongly in maintaining close contact with the children at all times and being wary of leadership roles that remove her from being informed about the children.</i>
A25: The child that we see in the classroom is just part of that child, there are other experiences which must have an effect on them ... the home experience ... experiences in the play ground ... social pressures.	<i>A leader is sensitive and discerning and able to detect various experiences that affect a child.</i>
A26: If possible I like to be in their classroom at least once a cycle so that I can see them functioning within their classroom and how their classroom dynamics are working ...	<i>Believes that it is important for her as a principal to teach in order to experience classroom dynamics and to know the children.</i>
A27: ... if one looks at them in retrospect, the historically older leaders were autocrats through and through and if one then moved to the sort of democratic leaders, there is a difference and that will obviously colour one's view of leadership ... I am an avid reader, so I read right across the board, history, biographies, autobiographies and I am interested in people so I enjoy that sort of reading. Probably that is what lead to sort of influence me.	<i>A leader is influenced as a leader by the various leadership alternatives that there are, and increasingly by emerging democratic styles.</i> <i>Reading is important to her because she is able to interact with the characters and their experiences and as a consequence she is influenced a lot by reading</i>
A28: ... though you meet many people, no single one person is going to be the person that you are going to say, well, I am going to emulate that person entirely ... one builds up from reading books and talking to	<i>She believes that leadership grows progressively and is influenced by characteristics emulated from others, what one builds up from reading books, from talking to people and the experience of working in</i>

people ... then worked in various schools where one can establish the type of leadership style that suits the individual or suits a particular philosophy of education.	<i>various schools.</i> <i>Believes that a style of leadership must suit the individual and also their philosophy of education.</i>
A29: I think that president Mandela is a very good leader ... he is an example of a democratic leader. He is not infallible but he is something that South Africa can be proud of. Winston Churchill had the staying power and the ability to express himself very effectively. Margaret Thatcher had that sort of iron-willed determination of hers. She obviously made an impression on me that women can be fastidious and work for what they believed in. But I would not say that as a leader I hold her in high esteem.	<i>Perceives a good leader as democratic, able to maintain a staying power, able to effectively express oneself, having an iron willed determination and the fastidiousness to maintain what they believe in.</i>
A30: The ones who do not impress me are the ones that are the Hitler's and the Clinton's of this world. I just feel that charismatic leadership is perhaps not the ideal type of leader. Charismatic is fine as long as the person who is the leader is ethically or morally correct as a person, but just to use charisma to sway people to follow one is immoral. To use charm to follow you.	<i>She believes that morally questionable leaders are unacceptable and unimpressive.</i> <i>She feels strongly that charismatic leaders are manipulative because they sway people and therefore are unethical and immoral.</i>
A31: I believe that children need to develop skills ... and that only through the development of skills and self responsibility and maturity can they develop into people who can make meaningful contribution in the years to come.	<i>Leadership is made up of concepts that can be taught and learned as skills by even children.</i>
A32: We take our leader teams for a weekend where we allow them to develop through leadership activities and to practice the concepts themselves and form more of a united group so that when they come back to school, they are working together ... you also have to learn leadership roles.	<i>She believes in the need to invest in children by imparting leadership skills through teaching concepts and developing skills and also by giving them examples that they can emulate.</i>
A33: ... we do take them away together so that they can see us in our role as parents as well. So her [the senior HOD] her husband and my husband join me when we go on camp.	<i>She believes leadership is intertwined with parenting and the family.</i>
A34: I am a school principal firstly because I enjoy children, I love children and I believe in education. I think the sheer joy of seeing children achieve and grow into little people that have self-confidence motivates me as a leader.	<i>She is a leader because she loves children and believes in their education which means building them into self confident people.</i>
A35: I would like to feel that if a child who has been through my care goes and does make a contribution, then that in itself is a motivational factor. If you are a mother or a father you can very easily ascertain with the education that you are offering children ...is this the sort of education that you would want your own children to receive.	<i>To be a leader is to make a contribution to the life of a child through education</i> <i>Parenting and education are bedfellows and the one informs the other and vice versa. The value that a parent attaches to the education of their own child is the same to that one attaches on the education of children put under one's charge.</i>

A36: I would like to give something back as regards what I got of my education as a child and the upbringing I had as a child.	<i>She is motivated by the desire to return something back of what she got as a child.</i>
A38: ... my family is very supportive ... they are interested in the activities of the school. They are the first to say that they feel that the girls have done well. They indirectly motivate me by saying that they are very impressed with what is happening.	<i>She believes that her motivation emanates from her family's interest in her work and the recognition that they make of her efforts when the school does well.</i>
A39: ... one is prepared to go the extra mile not because I will get overtime for this one or I will become famous or because there will be some sort of external reward but because of the reward of actually knowing that you have done your job well.	<i>She believes that motivation also comes from knowing that one has done their job well as a leader and therefore fame and external reward are insignificant in the face of it.</i>
A40: We have an Eastern Cape province association of school principals. The difficulty is that many of the principals of certain schools who belong to another union feel threatened by this ... the union itself does not support this so called elitist group. It is not an elitist group ... it is because we have different concerns. ... as a principal I have built up a network of principals I feel free to phone if I wish to discuss anything ... probably all principals have an internal network where they can discuss and share ideas in a non threatening way and I think that is essential.	<i>She believes that the lack of a unified body among school principals emanates from the fact that the various groups have different leadership concerns. This lack of cohesion among the leaders is unfortunate.</i> <i>She believes in consultation, and she thrives on the ideas that she is able to exchange with other principals. The free atmosphere within which she can consult is for her very important. She feels accepted and integrated in the group, a part of the network.</i>
A41: I think we really do need to get as many principals together to work towards looking at the future of education in this country.	<i>Again, the cohesiveness among school principals is critical for the future of education in South Africa.</i>
A42: ... being an education leader in the country at the moment and in a time of flux we do not know whether we are going to get teachers appointed ... or to get funding ... we do not know if the decisions we make today are going to be the right decisions which will prepare the school for the future.	<i>She believes too that the current uncertainties among education leaders that make decision making difficult are perpetuated by the flux in the education department.</i>
A43: ... there is a lack of communication between the education department and schools and I think that caused a feeling of insecurity because we may well be pulling in different directions.	<i>She attributes improper communication between the department of education and schools as the cause of insecurity and reason for unfocussed direction among principals.</i>
A44: When I am in the class teaching, I wear the hat of the teacher. When I have to make a decision or I am involved in meetings, or when I am representing the school, then I wear the hat of a principal.	<i>She operates dual roles; as a teacher and as a school principal.</i>
A46: I can see that children respond to me in a different way as a class teacher from the way they respond to me as a principal. As a principal, I represent the head of school. As a class teacher I am pretty much close to the children then I am as principal. I feel in many ways that I am the same person.	<i>She experiences her roles differently. As principal, leadership predominates and she is the leader of the school. As teacher she is closer to the children but essentially remains the same person.</i>

A47: I have a role as a head of the school as far as the children are concerned ... I must be there for them, I must be involved with their leadership group ... must keep in contact with them ... with what they are thinking about ... what they are interested in ... what books they read. Where they are at.	<i>Believes that it is important that a leader keeps in touch with the children, maintains contact with them and is in touch with their thinking and interests.</i>
A48: I have the role of being head of the other teachers in the sense that I must care for them, make sure that they have the facilities with which to function effectively as teachers.	<i>She perceives herself as the leader of the teachers but more importantly with the responsibility of caring for them so that they function effectively as teachers.</i>
A49: Financially, I think too we have become managers of schools ... we have to manage school fees, get the best value for money. Make sure we have contingency funds ... we are no longer just school principals and the funds flow from a benevolent society.	<i>She operates as a financial manager and has to handle money matters with keenness and accountability.</i>
A50 ... each school forms a part of a community, so there is a different role, the role of parents. I see myself as someone to whom parents can come to.	<i>She believes that she is approachable and accountable to parents as a leader.</i>
A51: I care about every single teacher knowing that some of them probably have problems at home, some of them worries and they have concerns as well because they are individuals.	<i>She takes interest in, cares and is concerned about the problems of every teacher. She is sensitive to them, their vulnerability and their personal needs.</i>
A52: I married a man who had children and he had custody of the children and so although I had not set out to be an educationalist, I felt that this was an area where I could make a contribution. Because these little children needed a lot of care, more than the normal parental care, by working as a teacher I could be with them during their school holidays and supervise their extra mural activities and help them in those ways.	<i>Believes that being an educationalist has the advantage of allowing one to spend more time with family and especially growing children.</i>
A53: I have a supportive husband ... he is interested in what I am doing. If I have got a special assembly on, my husband will phone and ask how did it go.	<i>She gains motivation from the support that she receives from her husband.</i>
A54: Being a wife makes me more understanding of mothers and the family demands. Being a mother as well I know what probably happens in most families before the child comes to school in the morning ... I am better in tune to understand why a child is late for school or why she might be flustered or upset when she gets to school.	<i>Her status as a wife and as mother enables her to understand the position of a family with school-going children. She is therefore empathetic to the state of the children in her school.</i>
A55: When I was setting out to teach, I was certainly not setting out to become a school principal, that was not my end objective. I have always enjoyed my teaching and I believe that that will always be my primary concern ...	<i>She believes that her objective in education was primarily to teach and not to become a school principal.</i>

A56: It was really forces or circumstances that got me into the leadership position ... I was never keen on climbing the corporate ladder, I wanted to make a contribution where I saw fit.	<i>She believes strongly that her climb to principalship was influenced by circumstances not of her own.</i>
A57: ...many people perceive women to be the weaker sort of sex and perhaps not as capable of making management decisions as men, which I think is probably wrong.	<i>She strongly believes that the commonly held perception that women are a weaker sort of sex and incapable of making management decisions is erroneous.</i>
A58: I certainly would defend woman [sic] because I know how hard we have had to work to get recognition for what we have done.	<i>Believes that women ought to be defended because of the hard work that has been done by her to gain recognition.</i>
A59: I have worked with male colleagues and male bosses and very often, men are not as sensitive as women are to general feelings ... I can remember a principal saying to a staff of about twenty teachers after they had appointed 2 new teachers A We now have 8 men on our staff,@ implying that the 16 women on the staff were not half as important to him as the men were and that it was an issue to be excited about at a staff meeting.	<i>Her experience working among with male colleagues and bosses has led her to believe that male leaders are insensitive to general feelings.</i>
A60: ... that has been one of my experiences and I have been prepared to go to the male bosses and say, well, I do not think you handled that well ... I think their interpersonal skills are lacking. Either because they have disagreed with someone or because they think that to talk people down or to argue is the way to win, whereas women will first be more reasoning and more involved in trying to sort out things logically.	<i>She believes that the only way in which women can be heard is to speak out the issues that concern them and in so doing relate issues in a logical and well reasoned way .</i> <i>Believes that male bosses lack interpersonal skills and resort to aggressive behaviour when confronted, unlike women bosses who will communicate.</i>
A61: I also worked in a boys school where the policy was not to give women permanent teaching status and to employ only men.	<i>Experience has shown her that women are discriminated against where opportunities are concerned.</i>
A62: I think stereotyping is really a problem in South Africa, the apartheid and pre apartheid era colonial era where women was expected to be at home and to bring up the children and to leave the management and leadership of course to the men.	<i>She believes that apartheid is responsible for the stereotyped roles that women have been caught up in.</i>
A63: Certainly there are some cultural norms ... for many of the Afrikaner folk, they find it difficult to perceive a woman who has a family and is married and also has a job, and maybe successful within that job ... some of them feel that the men should be better qualified than the women and to me that is a real problem.	<i>She believes that cultural norms that accept with difficulty the woman career with family roles are obstacles, likewise the mistaken belief that men should be better qualified than women.</i>
A64: I know I have not sat down and tabulated whether I have gained recognition in any one specific way. I was known for the person who always used to make my voice heard for the woman.	<i>She believes that the only way that woman can be empowered to speak out the things that concern them.</i>
A65: Perhaps the fact that they recognised that there	<i>She believes that it is important that people see a</i>

was value in it and that they were prepared to listen to me was sort of a recognition that was sufficient for me. I felt then that at least I was putting a different point of view to the one that they may have advanced.	<i>different point of view of woman to the one that they have always known. For her, recognition comes from knowing that she has assisted others to view woman differently, that is empowerment.</i>
A66: I would like to think that we have something special to add to management or leadership ... we are cutting ground all the time proving that we have a valuable contribution to make, in whatever field we are in.	<i>She strongly believes that women have something special to offer, to add to management or to leadership. She perceives such as a contribution whatever the field the women are in.</i>

PRINCIPAL B

Natural meaning units (NMUS)	Explication of themes
B1: I think that it probably goes back to my early childhood where my father always told us - we were all girls in our family - that we could do anything.	<i>She thinks that her inspiration to take on leadership began with her father who encouraged and enjoyed her being in areas of leadership irrespective of her gender.</i>
B2: He enjoyed the fact that if I became class captain he would be very pleased about it ... if I became captain of tennis ... he enjoyed me in areas of leadership and so I enjoyed his good feeling about me. I did go into a society and I did take a leadership position there, in a religious society.	<i>She believes that the encouragement and recognition that she received from her father for being a leader was a motivation.</i>
B3: I think I do get on with people generally. I find it difficult to deal with negative people ... even when hard times are upon us I feel that there is still something that you can be hopeful about and work towards and drive towards.	<i>She perceives herself as positive and optimistic even in the face of adversity.</i>
B4: I have always got on very well with fellow teachers and so I guess I thought that it would be worthwhile to give this position a go.	<i>She believes that her ability to get on well with teachers is an asset to her leadership.</i>
B5: Well I think I perceive myself as a busy person, I am fairly driven I think. I do not like my classroom upside down so I like to be organised. I think I had a lot to offer, new ideas ...	<i>She believes that she is a fairly driven person, full of ideas and is a change initiator who likes to be organised.</i>
B6: I feel happy within myself that I am actually doing something for others as well as myself ... to add something to society. To be able to look back on my work and think I have actually made a difference.	<i>She believes that happiness comes from doing something for others and making a difference to society.</i>
B7: I look at where the education department is and how it is in such a state of flux at the moment ... if you keep your own school going well then you are achieving something. There must be some area where the school remains a place of refuge, as it were, for children and teachers.	<i>Her definition of an achievement is an accomplishment made in a situation of difficulty such as keeping her school going when education is in such flux. She feels that the school has got to deliver the right goods even though the environment around it is hostile</i>
B8: I like to be organised ... I would love to be more organised ... have more things on computer, I am not a perfectionist though. I think I mean not being worried by it [being a leader], not being stressed by it and finding it stimulating and challenging and able to be done. It is not something that is an impossible task . It is something that is possible to be done.	<i>Believes in being more organised leader and even improve by making more use of computer technology. PB elects to perceive leadership as challenge that stimulates her and that is not at all impossible even though it may be difficult.</i>

B9: What is familiar to me is managing children and what is new to me now is managing adults and so I think I must be very careful not to manage adults as I do children. ... just to be careful not to speak to adults as one would children ... I have seen the mistake done by others and I really do not want to fall into that one... not to be dictatorial and authoritarian when there is not the need to be doing that.	<i>It is of great importance that she is consciously aware that she must handle teachers differently from the way that she does children.</i> <i>She is so alert to mistakes that she has seen others do and is very alert to the fact that the teachers are colleagues and she must therefore not be dictatorial or authoritarian</i>
B10: I believe very strongly on staff training and right through this year, the teachers have gone for courses and meetings and they must feel that they are up to date with what they are doing ... the teachers must feel happy with their job.	<i>She strongly advocates for staff training which she believes is integral to the teachers' development, subsequently their happiness and satisfaction with the profession.</i>
B11: I went to a principals conference and learnt a huge amount as to where education is going now ... keeping in contact with other school principals ... share ideas because there are times when one feels alone...there is absolutely no way we can be left behind, we must keep going. Particularly in times of hardship that there is at the moment ...	<i>She believes that a principal needs to be knowledgeable and informed about the trends in education and the future of it. It is important too to keep networking with colleague professionals as one easily feels lonely as a leader.</i> <i>She believes that she and the school must move ahead. That is the only way to keep above the difficult times and the turbulence that is consuming education.</i>
B12: I think I could read more...there is lovely book on discipline called 'Discipline with Dignity' that I have read halfway and that I would like to read more of. Then there is Covey, 'Seven Principles of Most Effective People', 'Most Effective Families' There are education journals that are excellent ... and again reflect and take notes.	<i>She believes that reading education related material would develop her and be useful. She is particularly interested in things to do with principalship and discipline and the family- the three form the triangle around which school revolves.</i>
B13: Sometimes I think to myself, 'I wonder if I am the right person for this job?' ... there is always the thought that you are making them wrong decision and that some decision that you have made is going to be proved wrong ... that you are going in the wrong direction and that it will affect a lot of people and affect the school which has had a very good name for a long time, so I think that does bother me. So making a decision is fairly stressful.	<i>The challenge of decision making compounded by the challenge of maintaining the good reputation of the school is stressful and makes her doubtful of her capability as the principal of the school.</i> <i>She is conscious every day, of the fact that she is the head of a school with a good reputation and that that reputation has to be maintained.</i>
B14: I need to make sure that I manage the school well ... that all teachers feel fulfilled in their jobs ... that the children are happy when coming to school.	<i>She perceives achievement in her job as done when the teachers are fulfilled in their job and the children are happy about school.</i>
B15: The school must work well. It works a bit like a business ... we have to have a great deal to do with money, accounts must be paid and fees must be got in, appointments must be kept and stationery must be there ...telephone answered ... queries from parents answered .. maintenance of the school is kept... things like representing the school.	<i>Her work portfolio she is the head of the school and its representative, other duties include dealing with money matters and the general maintenance of the school.</i>

B16: I feel far more that maybe I am the captain of the team and that we are working together for the same ends ... I do feel the support of my staff very much.	<i>Perceives herself as the captain of the team of with whom she works towards the same end. She feels supported by her staff too.</i>
B17: I could never be somebody who worked on her own ... that would not work for me ... but certainly with a team of teachers and everybody else who works at the school, the cleaners, the people who are in the same position in other school, I am finding camaraderie with them as well. I would like to reflect when this year is over because there is still quite a lot that there is to be done ... I think I will sit down and reflect right through the year and see where things could have been done better and where things could have been left out, of people around me who I might not have been aware could have been very helpful. I need a year to reflect and certainly when the year comes about again and I am faced with the same thing, I will have some experience to lean on.	<i>Believes that she cannot work on her own, she is a team worker who enjoys team camaraderie and involving everybody who works in the school.</i> <i>Taking stock of the past year is something that she looks forward to doing. So even though she is aware that there maybe things that arise that are weaknesses she is not threatened by that but rather prefers to use that as a learning experience from which she can plan ahead and forge on.</i>
B18: First and foremost everybody must know what is going on and what you are requiring of them ... it is nice to chat through something. We have just done the school play and we talked about it at length and we decided together what we were going to do. We made sure that everybody had duties. One lady kindly said that she would produce the play ... I took a step back then ... she was in charge of the play. I helped her in every way I could but she was actually in that case, the captain of the team ...every time there was a problem, she would come to with it and together we would work on that one, or I would say, I will sort that one out.	<i>She believes that it is important to explain to people the roles required of them and to chat about them.</i> <i>PB accepts that there are times that she has to take a back seat and let others lead. She appreciates and acknowledges that others have expertise that she does not have and is willing to give them the leadership role and the credit for their work.</i>
B19: We talk the problem through trying to see it from all angles and asking other people for their advice as well.	<i>Believes in consulting others and looking at problems from all perspectives.</i>
B20: I do share this decision making with the governing body of the school ... the questions of decisions I have taken to other people and we have discussed it through and made joint decision about things. We have various other people on the Governing Body who I also lean on and use. My secretary is a good person to bounce ideas off and other teachers particularly the senior teachers.	<i>She believes in using the counsel and advice and ideas of others that she works with and often undertakes decisions in collaboration with those concerned with the matter.</i>
B21: There are times when one might feel alone because you have to make a decision that is not very popular but I do feel that the staff are with me most of the time.	<i>Feels that having to make decisions alone is not easy but at times it has to be done.</i>

B22: I like to be able to help people whenever I can but I do not fool myself in being the one who can solve all problems. I know people who can help who are professionals ... psychologists and speech therapists and occupational therapists and I am quick to give names and numbers of therapists who can help but very often what parents want is just to talk, because while we are talking it through they are working out their own problems. I like to think that my door is open.	<i>Believes that it is important to consult others in problem solving, especially professionals and experts in the matter.</i> <i>She does have many a time parents that have their own psychological problems and she is comfortable letting them talk through their problems. She is in that sense a counsellor or even a therapist of a sort. She believes and leaves the door-which is herself-open to people that need help.</i>
B23: Nothing always ever runs smoothly so there are times when I will disagree with them, then they will disagree with me.	<i>Believes that conflict for a leader is inevitable.</i>
B24: ... until I became principal, I was just minding my own business in the classroom with my little pupils ... that might sound totally unambitious but the fact is I was. I love the thought of being the sort of leader of my little class, my little band of people that I lead as teacher. And so it has been a much bigger load than I have ever done before ... this I found so challenging, that I am here on weekends now ... here on holidays. I am working harder and that is alright ... I am happy with that because I am enjoying it and so I am fine with working hard ... I think I mean not being worried by it and finding it stimulating and challenging and able to be done.	<i>She finds leadership a challenging experience because she had no prior leadership experience.</i> <i>She finds leadership a taxing but stimulating and challenging experience.</i>
B25: ... I also like to have a fulfilling job ... I suppose fulfilling my own feeling about myself ... it is essential that I have a job that I enjoy... I feel happy with myself that I am actually doing something for others as well as for myself.	<i>For her it is important that she derives satisfaction and fulfilment from her job. It is essential that she enjoys what she does.</i>
B26: When parents come to talk a problem through, I realise that I am in a position of great confidence because they tell me things that are closest to their hearts and closest to their families.	<i>Recognises that she as a head is in a position of great confidence. She has had people open up to her and that puts her in a situation where she has to counsel or simply lend a ear.</i>
B27: I want to contribute to education, to the children who are directly with me ... when I look back on the many children whom I have taught before I feel happy about that.	<i>Believes that she derives satisfaction and happiness from the contribution that she makes to education.</i>
B28: Because I am teaching the little ones, I get to know the children and the parents right from the word go! And I know the parents really well by the time they leave, and that is fascinating.	<i>Teaching the little ones involves not only getting to know the children and their parents but for her it is a fascinating experience.</i>
B29: I think what I have found difficult just recently is having these piles of applications for my school and having to pick and choose ... I have not enjoyed saying 'No' to people and saying we are full.	<i>Experiences difficulty in making decisions when she has to say 'No' to parents that want places in her school.</i>

B30: We could have schools for children with special problems but we do not ... So it is a pity having to say Ano@ to children because they have special problems.	<i>It is particularly hard for her to reject children with special needs simply because the school does not have a special needs class, a provision that ought to be there.</i>
B31: Sometimes teachers are not well and I have to do locum teaching, that kind of thing which is difficult. I interact constantly with my teachers I teach my class in the morning and do the administration in the afternoon so that gives me a very full day.	<i>Perceives leadership as being able to take on the difficult and the unplanned and executing it effectively.</i>
B32: I am less active at church ... I simply do not have the time. The same with my personal sport.	<i>Experiences her leadership as a exacting on time as it leaves one with no time for personal activities like sports.</i>
B33: I am very aware of my family, of my children and my husband and my extended family and so if I am going for something, it is with them in mind as well as everything else. I want to do a good job where I am but not to the detriment of everything else. I feel completely backed up by my family which is wonderful. My husband is right behind. He is very good on computers and desktop publishing ..my children came along and sold programmes and showed people where to sit which I appreciated very much ... they help me with hands on practical things. I do not discuss everything with my husband but now and again when I do discuss something with him, he gives another aspect to whatever it is and I enjoy that.	<i>Her family takes precedence over her career.</i> <i>The family is fully behind her efforts and come out to help her in practical ways. She is appreciative of that more than anything else.</i> <i>Her husband is a confidante of sorts and he does give her different perspectives to some of the issues that she allows him into.</i>
B34: I was never really striving to become a principal. It was not something I wanted to do or had a big problem about. Just suddenly the position was there and I thought I would give it a go. I think it is something that was thrust on me. I really thoroughly enjoy this little school, I think it had a lot going for it and I thought I could give it a go.	<i>She believes that she did not have any ambitious plans about becoming principal until the position became vacant and she was made aware of her potential, literally pushing her into leadership.</i> <i>Again, she was motivated to make a decision by the fact that she loved the little school and now began to see the many things that she could do for it.</i>

B35: I was asked by the previous principal if I would take the position, nobody on the staff was keen to do it, they all had other things to do ... my family is no longer a young family so I could accept that and try it ... so my job as an active mother who is doing things for her children has come to an end now. I do not think I'd have taken a job like this, without knowing that there was a hard working staff who were prepared to work in the afternoons ... and with the new teacher we were taking on, in our advert we wrote that this teacher must be prepared to take on extra mural activities. So I feel the support of my staff very much. The previous principal had been here for a long time and there were things that needed to be changed and others that needed to be kept and so I thought that I had things to offer.	<i>She believes that her decision to take up principalship was determined by conducive family circumstances and also by an appeal made by her predecessor.</i> <i>She began to see that there was another phase that she could begin in her life.</i> <i>Other than the above personal factors, she was motivated by the highly motivated and supportive team of teachers that the school had.</i> <i>She felt that she had things to offer to make changes in the school especially because the previous head had been in the school for such a long time.</i>
B36: ... well the extra money does help in pressing times ... that was not the motivating feature ...	<i>She believes that money, it is not a motivating factor for principalship even though it does help.</i>
B37: I think that particularly in South Africa ... women have been trodden down for a long time.	<i>She believes, generally speaking, that South African women are down trodden and have been for a long time.</i>
B38: I do not think I am a feminist as such although I do believe in female issues. That they should be addressed. I feel women should be able to take their place in society and do whichever job they want to.	<i>She firmly believes that women issues ought to be addressed and that women should be able to take their place in the society.</i>
B39: I like to think that women are coming forward and are being treated well just like everybody else.	<i>Believes that women are making progress in their advancement and enjoying equal status treatment with everybody else.</i>
B40: I do not have a problem with either male or female or the maleness or the femaleness of people. I do not see them as male or female. I see people as being hard workers or not being hard workers be they male or female.	<i>She believes that people are either diligent workers or not and that their gender has little to do with their performance.</i>
B41: teachers have their own families and their own children and this is very important to them. Like for instance on Monday, there are two teachers who have asked special time because their children are becoming prefects at school where they are going ... I did not hesitate to let them go.	<i>She believes that it is important not to ignore the things that are significant and important to the teachers because that motivates them and tells them that their affairs also matter.</i>
B42: I think I do get on well with people generally. Obviously there are some that I find more difficult. I find it difficult to deal with negative people, I find that a real trial and even when the hard times are upon us I feel that there is still something that you can be hopeful about and work towards and drive towards.	<i>She perceives herself as a friendly person to all people and generally finds it difficult to get along with people that are negative.</i> <i>She believes that no matter how grave the circumstances might be, that there is always something to hope for, believe in and strive towards.</i>

PRINCIPAL C

Natural meaning units (NMUS)	Explication of themes
C1: I went to high school, I was a prefect from standard six right through to matric, I was the head girl. Right from primary school already we were made aware of the importance of setting an example ... in my home, because I was the eldest, it was expected of me to set the tone as it were.	<i>Thinks her leadership role began from childhood where she was expected to set an example both at school and a home.</i>
C2: While at school, I was a Sunday school teacher, I was the youth leader so that definitely played a significant role. I was elected the chairperson of the youth organisation and there readily found myself in leadership positions, where people considered me a hero, quite suitable.	<i>Believes that teaching Sunday School and being a youth leader played a significant role in developing her leadership.</i>
C3: My parents were community leaders ... both of them were involved in the freedom struggle ... they were involved in organisations like the Teachers League of South Africa. I know about leadership from my parents.	<i>Believes her parents were instrumental in inducting her into leadership where she learnt from what she heard and what she saw.</i>
C4: I know about leadership from my parents and then from my teachers too. In high school especially I remember my science teacher as a very exemplary person whom I respected ... and even when I was in school I used to say to myself, Alf I become a teacher that is the kind of teacher that I would like to be. Well morally, in the community, he was a person people looked up to. He was involved in community activities and was respected in his community and his church generally ... a respectable person and not troublesome. If he had a problem with somebody he is the type of person who would go to the person and actually sort out the matter ...	<i>Believes that leadership is being exemplary, respectful and moral.</i> <i>Leadership encompasses the ability to stand out above the rest. It means being able to resolve conflict and to uphold ones dignity.</i>
C5: I felt very differently about myself after being in that teachers class. He managed to just get the best out of us.	<i>Perceives one who is able to get the best out of others as a good leader, irrespective of the formalization of the position.</i>
C6: I am a committed Christian and I feel in that sense that I owe it to my Master to do the right thing, to be there for people and to be supportive ... and because I have leadership characteristics our children are in need of strong role models and that sort of motivates me to strive towards actually setting that example and being that role model ...	<i>Believes that a leader needs to be moral, an exemplary role model and respectful.</i> <i>She is aware that her calling to service is to God and so she must execute it to man in servitude.</i>
C7: The most important thing to me is the whole question of service and being able to do something about the circumstance around me.	<i>Perceives leadership as doing service to others and being able to do something about the circumstances around one.</i>

C8: I feel I know and understand people and because of that I will be sensitive to the needs of the children and that I would be able to respond compassionately to any situation.	<i>Believes strongly that she is sensitive to people and is able to understand their need. Believes she is able to respond with compassion to any situation.</i>
C9: I am very considerate, patient and I tend to be almost sacrificial to the extent that I sometimes do it to the expense of my health ... I was actually quite happy to make a sacrifice to actually go and teach full time ... it made very heavy demands on me but in any case, I did not hesitate to do it, even though in the course of the term I thought I was going to collapse.	<i>Even as leadership duties are demanding and even taxing on her health she believes that it is important that she makes personal sacrifices.</i>
C10: I think I am generally not difficult to get along with. I am a very tolerant person. I can accept the situation and make the best of a situation even if I disagree with it. I can adapt and live with a situation. I think that is what makes the difference.	<i>Believes that she is not difficult to get along with, is tolerant and adaptable, both of which she believes make a difference to leadership.</i>
C11: I am a school principal because I have always felt that I could contribute significantly to the education of our children.	<i>Perceives herself as having the ability to make a significant contribution to the education of children.</i>
C12: Our children are in need of strong role models and that sort of motivates me to strive towards actually setting that example and being that role model.	<i>Believes she is the badly needed role model that children need.</i>
C13: I have always been painfully aware of the need for strong leadership and for some positive influence ... I felt that I had the potential to actually fulfil that role.	<i>She strongly believes that she has the potential to provide strong leadership and a positive influence.</i>
C14: I see myself as the principal of the school for the time that I am around in the school.	<i>Her leadership responsibility is for the duration of her tenure as principal.</i>
C15: I see myself as a guide in that I have some vision of sorts and because as a leader, I think, the people around you look up to you and they expect you to give them some direction.	<i>She perceives that the leader is the vision bearer and the guide who gives direction and the one to whom people can look up to.</i>
C16: I see myself as a colleague, as a friend. I do not see myself as being way above everybody else.	<i>She perceives herself as an approachable leader who is not only a colleague but also a friend.</i>
C17: Well, all of them respect me, I do not get the impression that they feel I am domineering and that I want to bulldoze everybody.	<i>Believes that she is respected by her followers and that she is not domineering and intimidating.</i>
C18: As a leader, I wonder whether I am not too fussy, whether I am being too negative about things in that I am rubbing people the wrong way ... I am just aware of the fact that I should not push myself too hard, or I become a slave driver.	<i>Sometimes she perceives herself as a little fussy but she does believe in the importance of not being antagonistic or pushy as a leader.</i>
C19: I need to look ahead, plan ahead but share with my colleagues. To me leadership means faithful, being trustworthy. Being a role model, setting an example and being honest.	<i>Perceives leadership as a commitment executed in trust and honesty. Leadership is done by setting an example that is worthy of modelling and by sharing with colleagues.</i>

C20: One of my main concerns is that I should always consider the human aspect and just let people follow what they are and be thankful for what they do and always to try and see that people are trying their best.	<i>Leadership means being positive, accepting people and believing in them and their efforts.</i> <i>She believes that it is important to consider the human aspect in people, their vulnerability.</i>
C21: Having a friendly relationship but not an intimate relationship ... we can feel free to share things with each other if we have a problem ... to feel free to confide in a person and to talk your feelings.	<i>Perceives leadership as a friendly relation ship with followers where there is the freedom to share, to confide and to talk.</i>
C22: I realize one has to motivate people intrinsically ... it makes people feel good about themselves and also makes them more productive more spontaneous and more successful.	<i>She believes a leader ought to motivate people intrinsically, to appreciate them in order to facilitate more production, more spontaneity for their satisfaction and success in what they are doing.</i>
C23: My leadership has had positive effects in some ways, in other ways it has led to a bit of friction because my predecessor did not have much of a disciplined way of running the school in that people were allowed to do then whatever they wished ... so when I came here I was very much the principal.	<i>Believes that conflict is inevitable but it can be resolved by ensuring that a school is run in a disciplined and a regulated way. Believes that running a school requires rules and regulations to ensure order in how things are run.</i>
C24: Then also the question of definite work ethic, it has been difficult for me to actually say things in so many words but I felt that by setting the example, that it would rub off. When we have meetings I just drop little suggestions and try not to be antagonistic about things that people do wrong ... things like that, by subtly just making people aware.	<i>Believes that a leader should set an example through her standard of work ethic that can be emulated. She does not believe in being confrontational.</i>
C25: We have had very heavy arguments and so already, we have clashed and we have had to sort out our differences ... there are those times when we agree and others when we will disagree, those I have taken in my stride. I have tried not to order them but to have a good relationship with them.	<i>Believes that conflict resolution is important as it maintains a working atmosphere that is friendly and open to communication.</i>
C26: They have had the freedom to come and tell me where they were not supported, I was able to explain.	<i>Believes that the followers should have the freedom to express their ideas and to criticize her where they feel unsupported.</i>
C27: I have not had serious problems with males ... I have always felt respected in the circles where I have worked.	<i>Males in her experience are respectful working colleagues.</i>
C28: I feel accepted besides this case where I think there is a power struggle with a male teacher and for, really what are personal problems, I think and one which cannot be easily resolved because of the deep psychological aspect of it.	<i>Believes that power struggles or leadership contest are likely experiences and it is important to understand the reason for it.</i>

C29: ... I felt that they had come out of allegiance to me because they could see where this thing was going to and that he was out to put me in a bad light. And by just saying to me 'We have decided to be there,' they really came in support of me ... just their presence made such a great difference and also that told me exactly where I stood ... things like that indicate to me that I am accepted.	<i>The allegiance shown by her followers in a time of crisis is an indication of their acceptance of her.</i>
C30: ... the situation of the husband and wife where he is an abuser, I am particularly aware of the situation which I find myself not having to choose sides with any one of them, not being partisan. Realising that there are two sides to a story. It is not pleasant, it haunts me everyday. It was really very bad and I do not know what I would do in that situation, if perhaps there was some way of preventing it from happening, you know, I am constantly thinking about it...as I sit here I do not know which way I would move if the crisis came back. So it is a very worrying, nagging situation.	<i>Believes that a leader ought to brace herself for conflict in a mature and non partisan manner. Conflict has the potential to reach highly sensitive and traumatizing levels that could wreck the personality of a leader.</i> <i>The thought that the crisis could return haunts her making her feel totally helpless.</i>
C31: I am very aware of the kinds of problems that children experience at school and at home too, where the home situation can become tense and so on and can impact on performance at school ... I am very aware of the stress the children can experience at school and they can bring that baggage to school.	<i>She is sensitive to children's experiences and is especially aware of the impact of such experiences on their performance.</i>
C32: ... with regards to learning disabilities, I am very aware of that because my son has a deaf ear and he experiences learning problems ... it makes me very sensitive to that situation.	<i>She is keen and alert to conditions that might cause learning problems, this sensitivity is built out of her own experience as a parent.</i>
C33: I was in music posts and because we had been moving around, you know obviously you cannot expect a school to promote you when you have been there for only a year or two years ... at the end of 1985 we moved so since then we sort of settled down, I was able to study a little bit more and because I had left the inspectorate, the Subject Advisory Service, they demoted me right back to year one, like I was starting from the beginning ... so I actually had to work my way up again. I had to be satisfied with what was available ... and just fall in line with what subjects were passed my way.	<i>Believes that her climb to leadership was long and frustrating because of the job shifts she had to make out of family obligations, and lack of qualifications both of which were not conducive to the promotion structures than.</i> <i>With no choices available to her, she had to teach anything just to ensure that she had a job close to where her family was.</i>
C34: Principals were always male and whenever the subject was broached, the response would always be 'No, women will not be able to do it, they will not be able to encounter stress, they do not think they will be able to do that kind of thing.'	<i>She believes that principalship has been a male domain and therefore that this aspect has been a stumbling block to the progress of women.</i>

C35: Gradually things started changing, there were indications that women were going to get some recognition. And I was bent you know, should the opportunity for women come to get into those positions, then I would go for it because I felt that I was quite capable, equally capable of doing it.	<i>She has always believed that she is a leader because of her leadership capabilities even when women got little recognition for leadership jobs.</i>
C36: When I was already in my seventh or eighth year of teaching there were promotion posts going at the school ... I said to my principal, ALook, I am going to apply, and he said, Ayou know you women do not stand a chance!	<i>She believes that the education system has been basically sexist and that is why she has experienced discrimination.</i>
C37: People kept making comments ... you know women are the ones who should have the babies, be in the kitchen, be at home. If they are on these promotion posts when they have to go off on leave, it would interfere with their professional life and prevent them from performing on par with the men as it were.	<i>Believes that the society is responsible for the discrimination of women and their deprivation from leadership positions because of the way that it maintains that women are incapable of being effective in dual roles of career and parenting.</i>
C38: I was never perturbed by it [denial of promotion], I was always convinced that I would have an opportunity at some point.	<i>She believes in herself and her abilities even in the face of gender discrimination.</i>
C39: I see myself first of all equipping myself and then being instrumental in the ensuring that the rest of our staff is empowered as well.	<i>She believes that empowerment means being able to equip oneself firstly and others.</i>
C40: My studies at the moment are influencing my immediate situation in that I am gaining tremendous insights and that we are grappling with this whole question of transformation which is really a painful process but one that I have looked forward to.	<i>She believes that knowledge informs and it enables one to work better and with an impact as it opens one up perspectives.</i>
C41: ... grappling with those issues [transformation] in the BEd course is helping me with the work load. It definitely is impacting on my work at the school. I am seeing many things from a very different perspective.	<i>Believes that knowledge not only informs but brings awareness and illuminates the means through which one can be a change facilitator.</i>
C42: I found that going into the BEd has helped me a lot ... one sees the ways and means in which you can promote change ... to be facilitators of that process.	<i>Perceives her leadership situation as dynamic, and that changes she is making are facilitated by knowledge gained out of her current studies.</i>
C43: By what I do and what I say and the way that I conduct myself as a leader, that I would contribute to empowering children, colleagues and people around me in general ... that I make a contribution to growth, development.	<i>She perceives leadership as an opportunity to empower children and those around her and in so doing promote their growth and development as well as that of the institution.</i>
C44: there is so much administrative work, if I had a secretary I would not have had to spend so much time ... but forever something is coming in between my paperwork and my other responsibilities. I just do not ever stay on top of my work.	<i>Her experience of leadership is that it is and strenuous, often involving office duties and clerical work that have little to do with leadership practice.</i>

C45: And there are other things I need to do for the school, you know. I have to see to it that the worker comes in and does the gardening ... do the financial management ... see that bills get paid ... extra work that other principals do not have to do.	<i>Perceives her job as the principal as encompassing all areas within the school. She has to be knowledgeable in other areas besides school principalship.</i>
C46: It is very hard to cope but I enjoy teaching even though the situation demands that I spend more time in my office. The ideal situation could be if I could spend the whole day doing administration ... on the other hand I think I would miss the contact with the children because I also get to know them and I think it will be a sad day for me if they should move through the school system without my having got to know them.	<i>Believes that dual roles as teacher and principal disadvantage her because administrative demands overwhelm classroom teaching and for her it is of vital importance that she does not break contact with the children as their teacher.</i>
C47: I see myself as a mother and as a wife with great responsibilities towards my husband and my children first and foremost.	<i>Perceives her self as a family woman the family takes precedence over other responsibilities.</i>
C48: A person in the community. I have always been involved in some community activities too so as to be in touch with the people.	<i>Believes in being involved with the community, knowing the people and being touch with them.</i>
C49: I am involved with the Sunday school and in the women's work. I have a good working relationship with older women as well as younger women and we are able to bring the two together from time to time ... I have gradually become in charge of the senior choir and much of the playing. Ya, I guess I am a church leader.	<i>She perceives herself as a leader within the church and is involved in the activities there, including bringing people together in working harmony.</i>

PRINCIPAL D

Natural meaning units (NMUS)	Explication of themes
D1: I was one of the bright students because I started being a prefect in standard eight ... that is where I could see that I have leadership qualities.	<i>She believes her leadership potential was nurtured as early as childhood when she realized she had leadership qualities.</i>
D2: I was disciplined ... managed my time very well. I always did my work, homework was up to date, cleanliness was up to date.	<i>She believes that discipline, time management and cleanliness are helpful qualities to develop as a leader.</i>
D3:[relating what shaped her leadership]. Working with other people ..share ideas, teamwork helped me and above all discipline. Conflict at times, punctuality and communication.	<i>Perceives teamwork, sharing, discipline, communication and even conflict and punctuality as vital ingredients to leadership.</i>
D4: my male boss was a very kind person. He was the kind of person who would like to advice all of us. He once said to me, 'You know what, the only mistake with you is that you are a little bit short tempered.' Since then I have taught myself that I must listen first and keep quiet until the other person has finished their story.	<i>Believes that it is important to learn from the advice of others more especially from unsolicited comments. She believes that a leader needs to nurture a listening ear.</i>
D5: I perceive myself as a very ambitious woman. I really hate failure, whenever I am involved in any type of work I want it to be a success.	<i>She is ambitious and driven by a strong desire to succeed in all her undertakings.</i>
D6: I think I am a Samaritan, I like to help people.	<i>She considers herself a philanthropist and enjoys helping others too.</i>
D7: I am not a difficult person to approach and I think maybe my openness or maybe the way I talk to them helps me a lot ... if there is anything, they come to the office and advise me.	<i>Perceives herself as approachable and open, a characteristic that helps her leadership because people willingly consult her and to seek her advice.</i>
D8: I believe that I can never do anything alone. You must consult, you must involve the people who are working with you, the administrative staff ... also the maintenance staff.	<i>She believes in teamwork and consultation, whereby she involves the entire school staff.</i>
D9: Respect others because there is the tendency that if you are a principal, you see things the way you want to see it and do as you want.	<i>She believes in maintaining respect between herself and her followers, avoiding egocentric behaviour by seeing things from other perspectives.</i>
D10: I do feel accepted as principal ... I think the respect I deserve, they do show it and I am also trying that there should always be peace amongst us.	<i>Believes that she is accepted and awarded the respect that she deserves as a principal.</i>
D11: They [followers] see me as a strict person ... they know what I like, they know what I hate ... I think they like the fact that there is openness ... nobody is afraid to approach me.	<i>Perceives herself as strict but is open and approachable.</i>

D12: I hate gossip ... if one is afraid to come to one I believe that down there, little note, small Anyana@ you write ASo and so ... I hate what you have said, why have you said it?@ I think in any school positive communication plays an important role.	<i>Believes that communication in all its forms is important in the running of a school but more importantly that it needs to be positive.</i>
D14: ... if somebody comes to this office and tells me a secret it is not easy for me to tell another person that she has said this and that.	<i>Believes that she is a confidante for others.</i>
D15: I do not place my status as principal or teacher ... I am a very flexible person, very sociable. I am open to everybody ... my home is the home of the poor you find that whenever one have a problem he or she goes to me.	<i>Perceives herself as a down-to-earth, and approachable. She therefore believes in maintaining an open house both at home and at work.</i>
D16: there are people who do not know what is meant by authority. They want to do things their own way ... as far as I am concerned this is not acceptable.	<i>Believes that people need to understand what authority encompasses and to respect it.</i>
D17:By authority I mean that in any institution in any sector, there are people who are responsible for that area.	<i>Perceives authority as the responsibility one has when put in charge of a particular sector.</i>
D18: My role is to manage the school ... to control everything. Drafting letters to parents, organising parents meetings, giving guidance to teachers to pupils. Control over buildings, furniture, book requisitions, reports, pupils work, teachers work, control meetings ... everything that is happening in the school. I have got to have a feel of it.	<i>Perceives her role as that of a controller who must have a feel of everything that is happening in the school.</i>
D19: ... having a say I mean that when we have a meeting and there is something that needs the special attention of the principal, I give advice. Not that I am dictating but if I am invited to any meeting and I see that I can have an input there, I just advise.	<i>Having a say means being able to offer advice and to make inputs at meetings.</i>
D20: Maybe sometimes I attend meetings and other times I do not even attend those meetings. In fact, I look at the agenda, if it needs a principal I send one of the HODs or the deputy.	<i>She believes that it is important to delegate leadership duties when there is no need for her presence.</i>
D22: There is a lot involved in conflict, for example a teacher who is not doing his work. Being a principal I talk to that teacher ... but if it is something that is sensitive or something that I cannot handle, I refer the matter to the governing body.	<i>She believes that conflict ought to be handled cautiously, likewise sensitive matters that the principal cannot handle are referred to the Governing Body.</i>
D23 I think the openness that is taking place in our schools helps us because we - I am not saying the principal, we sit around and discuss things.	<i>Perceives openness as a vital ingredient to meaningful and fruitful discussions.</i>
D24: I believe that parents should take a major role at the school ... no decisions can be made without parents ...	<i>She believes that parents are important players in decision making and that they cannot be ignored.</i>

D25: ... we have meetings, the school governing body meets, we have parents meetings, we have Parents Day, ... I think that has helped us because they foresee things.	<i>Believes in engaging meetings at different forums in order to open up as many perspectives as is possible.</i>
D26: You will find that there are parents who are illiterate and we have got to show them and they have got to be satisfied how we teach the pupils ... I encourage parents to come to the school now and again.	<i>She believes that as a leader she must satisfy the needs of all parents more especially the illiterate ones who must be convinced that the school is running well.</i>
D27: My role is to advise the representatives of learners or prefects, to involve them because today the students want to do everything that is taking place in our schools. I believe that if you bring them close to us, it is not easy for them to take the wrong way because they can see they are allowed, they are respected and their opinion is accepted by the school.	<i>She believes in taking an advisory role and involving prefects in school activities by listening to them respecting and accepting their opinion.</i>
D28: ... introduction of the Tea Club was my initiation ... everybody appreciates it ... there is a lot of openness, communication ... lots of laughter, happy times.	<i>She encourages informal gatherings to break tensions and open up free communication between people. She believes that they bring in an important ingredient joy and laughter.</i>
D29: I always involve myself ... I have a committee that deals with exams but I am always with them. I believe that if you instruct people, they will do the work ... do their work effectively because they can see I am there. Not that I am supervising them or running after them. No, just helping each other.	<i>She believes that leadership by instruction followed by example produces effective work output among followers, rather than supervising and running after them.</i>
D30: I do not preach and then not practise it. Even today I am the first to arrive at school and I am the last to leave. I follow instructions, I am exemplary. If I say that people must sign the register everyday, that is what I do. If we say that meetings will start at 11:00am then I am there at 11:00 am waiting for these people. I am a good example on punctuality.	<i>She perceives that leadership is best executed by example. Punctuality is an important aspect of her leadership.</i>
D31: I am a school principal because when I arrived here as a post level teacher I attended management courses ... was made head of department (HOD) ... after that deputy principal ... transformation as far as education is concerned . I like to stay in one place, I never applied for a senior post .. category wise I was not qualified ... point number two is the availability of posts.	<i>Believes that she rose the ranks of leadership because of her management skills and her rise through the school ranks.</i> <i>Believes that one hindrance a quick rise was the lack of suitable qualifications, unavailability of posts and her preference to remain in one place.</i>
D33: Some thing that bothers me as a leader. When it comes to politics ah ... ah ... ah when it comes to politics I feel so unmotivated.	<i>She believes strongly that politics is an demotivating factor for a school leader.</i>

D34: Another thing that bothers me is when there is a crisis at school, where we have to waste time discussing cheap politics. Politics should not be mingled with education.	<i>She perceives political interference in schools as a hindrance to the autonomous governance of a school.</i>
D35: I am not a politician but being a leader, you need to know something concerning politics (protracted laughter) ... I am not a politician but having people who are political minded, they do help me.	<i>She believes that a leader needs some political awareness in order to be able to operate in a volatile political world or else affiliate themselves with the politically minded.</i>
D36: ... transformation as far as education is concerned ... things have changed because long ago or years back, you were supposed to have a certain category or degree to get a post ... things are made easier for people so that people can reach for the skies.	<i>She believes that the current structures in the education department are favourable to promotion.</i>
D37: I also served as a member of the ASECA and ABET doing the same work of adult education ... also as a member of the Makansakop Creche ... in church I do not have any status, I am just a AManyano mama@.	<i>Besides principalship, she is a community leader with a number of community education related portfolios.</i>
D38: I play a major role in our committees. Where I am staying I have managed to build a club for our street. This club helps during bereavement, when there is a wedding.	<i>She believes that she is an instrumental figure in the community where she initiated and runs a community welfare club that serves the needs of the community.</i>
D39: I behave like a social worker, because whenever they have problems, they will first go to me and I will advise them where to go. I do write letters to them of sometimes I even phone so that things would be quicker for them.	<i>Perceives herself as a social worker, a problem solver and advisor to the community</i>
D40: And I do visit them just to say AHi, how are your children doing at school?@ AWhy don't you children come to me, I have a pencil, I have got a pen if this one is the problem..@ I know there home circumstances.	<i>Believes that it is her duty to get involved and assist children in her community, especially those from an underprivileged background.</i>
D41: As a mother, motherly love helps me. Because I also have children at home, so the way I treat those people at home helps me even at work because I know where there is love there is a way. The way I talk to people ... the way I advise them as I always advice people at home.	<i>She believes that the motherly love she extends from home to her work place assists her in her job.</i>
D42: Since they are department problems, I only just send letters through the correct channels begging them to help us.	<i>She has to endure the frustration of begging the department of education to do a job that is theirs.</i>
D43: I hate gossip, why I am saying this is because I prefer a person to come and tell me that this is what someone has done or, can't we approach this like that?	<i>She believes that gossip is an evil that stifles proper communication.</i>

D44: At home I am a mother ... there is an impact on my leadership but sometimes you do not understand it. You realize later on ... sometimes you are disturbed at school and when you go back home you still have got that feeling. As a result at home, you do not show the usual love you usually show them. But having an understanding husband and child, when they see that there is something that has disturbed you they just wait until you tell them.	<i>She is well taken care of by her family who support her emotionally especially when there is something that weighs her down from school.</i>
D45: .. If you are not happy at home then obviously even at work you cannot be happy.	<i>She believes that the happiness that one exudes at school emanates from the experiences at home. It is also her belief that if one has not got this happiness they cannot function happily at school.</i>
D47: I do not have a secretary so I have to answer even the phone.	<i>The lack of a secretary in the office is a major setback for her, perhaps even on how well she functions because she has to do all the clerical and general office duties such as answering telephone.</i>
D48: Whenever I am involved in anything, I want it to be a success. If I am not exemplary as the leader of the school, what do I expect other teachers will do?	<i>PD believes that she as a leader must initiate an example that can be emulated by others. That to her is very important after her desire to succeed in everything that she does.</i>

APPENDIX B

JOURNAL ENTRIES

I started the day feeling tired, as I have been feeling since the beginning of the term. We are feeling the effects of overcrowding and the financial constraints of the Education department. The prayer of thanks giving at the beginning of the day was inspirational and I felt that we were one day closer to a solution of our problems.

(PC-Thursday 13th August)

Yesterday was one of those days I like a replay of for a while. There seemed to be so many fires to put out. Duty teachers upset with matrons, general assistants angry with their supervisor and vice versa. The net-ball tour organizers had failed to budget correctly and there will be a huge deficit, according to calculations, if no alternative arrangement is made.

However, there were positives as well. Much of the above was amicably resolved and there has been a learning curve for all concerned.

The plans to improve the appearance of the classrooms are going ahead- and that is exciting for the children. They are always positive, cheerful and friendly. It is such a pleasure going the extra mile for them.

(PA-Friday 14th August)

My colleague who is under stress was very quiet. I hardly heard her

teaching at all today. During the break colleagues told me that she was dreading the weekend. I felt helpless, as all previous efforts to be of assistance had failed. After school she came to me in the office and cried bitterly ... I held her tightly in my arms and reassured her of my support. I also said a prayer for her. It was the best I could do.

I had a tough teaching day and I am about to collapse. I will take two vitamin tablets instead of one when I get home.

(PC-Friday 14th August)

It was good to relax and do very little yesterday. The news on education was rather depressing. What struck me as a poor reflection on the state of education was the report that in order to improve education, pupils should report their Alazy teachers@ to their governing bodies and that one plan to improve standard 10 results would be to only allow the pupils who did well in the trail exam to sit the final exam. That seems like manipulation of statistics to me!

The net-ball team arrived in the evening to collect the key for the holiday home. They were all full of energy - despite the miserable weather, the journey and the match they played. Even the teachers did not look too jaded.

(PA-Sunday 16th August)

We attended an OBE workshop ... we have been inundated with workshops and I was not particularly interested in going. The very dramatic presentation

of what OBE entails was good. The message came across very well. Even though it is being implemented in Grade ! Only this year, we have began doing it in all the grades. Our learners definitely benefit from the new approach. Despite the shortage of resources, we try to overcome the problems by using recycled material.

(PC-Tuesday 18th August)

Yet another accident involving a school A pupil yesterday. Are motorists becoming more important?

(PA-Tuesday 18th August)

The inter-house hockey was well supported and the girls thoroughly enjoyed their matches.

(PA- Wednesday 19th August)

I feel more organized today, having some assistance yesterday to tidy my office. Being able to find my way through the papers on my desk is a relief.

(PC-Saturday 26th August)

APPENDIX C

**THE CONTENTS OF THIS FORM ARE ABSOLUTELY CONFIDENTIAL.
INFORMATION IDENTIFYING THE RESPONDENT WILL NOT BE DISCLOSED
UNDER ANY CIRCUMSTANCES.**

SCHOOL HISTORY

1. When was your school founded and by whom ?
2. What is the category of your school ? (TICK ONE)

Former model "C"

Former DET

Farm school

Home school

Independent school

3. What is the composition of the school governing body ?

4. Other than yourself, how many principals have there been at your school ?

male

female

5. Indicate the numbers you have of the following categories.

Deputy principal(s)	male
	female
Head of department	male
	female
Teachers	male
	female
Administrative staff	male
	female
Support staff	male
	female
Prefects	male
	female
Students	male
	Female

**TO HELP ME CLASSIFY YOUR ANSWERS AND TO MAKE COMPARISONS,
WOULD YOU MIND TELLING ME THE FOLLOWING DETAILS.**

6. Name in full

7. Are you (TICK ONE)

Married

Divorced or separated

Single

Widowed

8. Are you (TICK ONE)

Under 30 years of age

Between 31-35

36-40

41-45

46-50

50-55

Over 55

9. How many children do you have and what are their ages ?

10. Are you (TICK ONE)

Christian

Moslem

Hindu

other (PLEASE INDICATE)

11. What professional qualification do you hold ? (PLEASE INDICATE)

Teaching certificate

Diploma in Education

Bachelor of Education

Master of Education

Other (PLEASE INDICATE)

12. For how many years have you been a teacher ?

a. been a teacher

b. been a deputy principal

c. been a principal in your current school

13. If you have been a principal elsewhere please indicate the school(s) and year(s).

14. Explain your reasons for taking up the principalship.

15. What do you enjoy and /or dislike about leadership ?

16. From what or from whom do you draw your inspiration ?

17. What are your strengths and your weaknesses as a leader ?

18. If you were to interview a person for the post of principal, what would you look for ?

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