

**CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE MANAGERS IN RURAL PRIMARY SCHOOLS: A
CASE STUDY OF DZINDI CIRCUIT**

BY

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**A Research project submitted at the School of Education of the University of Venda in
partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of the Master of Education in
Educational Management**

Signature

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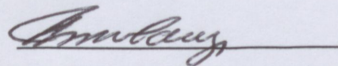


DECLARATION

I Israel Creleanor Mulaudzi student number 9711289 hereby declare that the dissertation submitted for the degree of Master of Education in Educational Management at The University of Venda is my own original work and is submitted by me and has never been submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references. The thoughts are designed through the guidance of the supervisor.

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Signature :



Date 2014-07-31

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

DEDICATION

During the preparation of this study, a lot of people were of great assistance and encouragement otherwise the writing and completion of this dissertation would not have been possible.

I would like to dedicate this dissertation to the following people:

My husband Dr. N. J. Mulaudzi for the job well done. He encouraged me to further my studies and gave me love and support. He again impressed me with integrity, honesty, kindness, faithfulness and undiluted love.

My sons Ohula, Arilwelaho, Udivhazwothe and Endanae: they make me a proud mother. They sacrificed a lot by allowing me to leave them at home busy with my studies and they understood my busy schedule.

My mother Pastor Elisa Chauke you are a true mother, showing me true love and taking care of my sons when I was busy with my studies. My mother-in-law Mrs. Joyce Mulaudzi and my father-in-law Mr. Paul Mulaudzi who showed me love over all these years.

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I would like to thank my God without whom I am nothing. I can surely do all things through Christ who strengthens me.

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I would like to thank all educators who participated in the study. Without your contribution this study would not have been a success.

ABSTRACT CONTENTS

Management in education has always been a masculine domain to a large extent and female managers are under great pressure to perform. However, it cannot be assumed that female managers find it easy to manage schools just like their male counterparts. Women in various sectors of society have always come out second best to men due to a number of challenges that they face due to their femininity. The purpose of the study is to identify challenges facing female managers. The findings of the study showed that most males undermine females as their managers at school. Some of the males see the females as a threat and they feel humiliated. The investigation also revealed that most schools do not perform better under the leadership of women as female managers experience more stress at work. Awareness campaigns to try and change the wrong perceptions and stereotypes pertaining to female managers and how they manage can go a long way in building self confidence amongst female managers. The results suggest that by taking an in-depth look at the challenges faced by female managers, the Department of Education, governing councils and managers may be better prepared to implement training and mentoring programmes for female managers. The study concludes that through these training and mentoring programmes, the female manager becomes better equipped to function more effectively in her position.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

1.1. INTRODUCTION

Women have been grossly marginalised internationally with regard to positions of authority. However, according to Dekker and Lemmer (1993:23), by 1998 the proportion of women in the workforce had increased from 23% to 36,3%. They further indicate that teaching in South Africa is dominated numerically by women. The *Pretoria News* (2005:1) also indicates that women make up 52% of the adult population. The Department of Education produced policies to address gender equity in the workplace. Amongst others, the Employment Equity Act (No 55 of 1998) was passed by the department of labour establishing gender representatively in the workplace.

In 1997, the National Gender Equity Task Team released a report on gender equity in the then Northern Province, now Limpopo. The purpose of the report was to ensure that the previously disadvantaged groups, women included, are considered in promotional appointments. Having been promoted, women managers face challenges in schools.

The challenges women managers face as school principals originate from a multiplicity of factors: cultural, religious, psychological and domestic factors. Challenges women managers face may differ from one school to another. Women managers are not only perceived as incompetent and unable by male colleagues only, but also by fellow female staff members.

One of the challenges faced by women managers is inferiority complex. They feel inferior to males when managing male teachers because culturally men are heads of families and women receive instructions from them without question. From a religious perspective, wives are to be submissive to their husbands and that patriarchal mentality negatively affects most women leaders. As a result, they men should always head departments. Women are treated as objects by men; they do not do as they wish though conditions are better now since the introduction of gender equity. Kotecha in Lessing

(1994:85) points out that erroneous beliefs about women managers are very common and deep-seated.

One would expect female colleagues to support women managers because they share a common feature which is the feminine gender, and a common history: oppression. However it is usually not the case, but it is usually not like that. Research by (Cole, 2006) demonstrates that women managers continue to face the perceptions of those who identify men as more suited for management positions than women.

Women managers usually have to double their efforts in order to get approval and recognition from their male colleagues. Staff members (both male and female) contribute negatively towards the ineffective management of women managers. These members of staff hold values which perceive women as inferior for leadership and management positions.

Changes related to education came so fast when most schools were not ready. Changes that were made through various legislations and policies placed huge pressure on school principals as school managers. Those school principals who did not comply were targeted by the Department. Educational transformation remains a challenge to most schools and principals in particular. All the preceding challenges have a negative impact on women managers in Dzindi Circuit.

1.2. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

School by its nature, and in its own right, is a business or an educational enterprise. Its main aim of existence is the production of high quality learners. This can be achieved through ensuring that educators, including the principal as the manager, perform to the best of their abilities.

The most important aspect of school management should be the realisation of quality education for all the learners. The principal's role as a leader is at the centre of school management.

It cannot be assumed that female managers find it easy to manage schools, just like their male counterparts. Numerous studies which will be referred to in this study show that women in various sectors of society have always come out second best to men due to a number of challenges that they face due to their femininity. This study focused on these challenges and how they affect female managers in the primary schools in Dzindi circuit.

Women are now afforded more opportunities to occupy management positions than ever before in the public service. According to the policy, Affirmative Action in the Public Service (Republic of South Africa, Government Gazette No.18800) (1998:4), the goal of affirmative action in the public service is to speed up the creation of a representative and equitable public service and to build an environment that supports and enables those who have been historically disadvantaged by unfair discrimination to fulfill their maximum potential within it so that the public service may derive the maximum benefit of their diverse skills and talents to improve service delivery. The dynamic nature of the education system presents challenges to managers of schools. The researcher assumed that women as managers encounter challenges.

Dzindi Circuit is an area with both rural schools and township public schools. In this area both rural and township public schools experience problems of different kinds. Some learners who stay on farms far away from school arrive late for school. At the researcher's workplace, some of the problems faced by school principals are: overcrowding; curriculum change, teachers' late coming and absenteeism. Because schools are unique and are managed by different managers, some of the challenges differ from one school to another. The researcher tried to find out how women as managers deal with challenges facing schools.

There is poor representation of women at senior levels in education and training which is in contrast with the Employment Equity Act 55 of 1998. Women who have been appointed as school managers experience challenges in their management responsibilities. The study focused on the

different challenges facing women as school managers in Dzindi Circuit of Vhembe District.

The head's personality could also be a determining factor in these challenges. Wolman and Frank cited in Marshall (1985:67), identified isolation, frustration and ineffectiveness as potential sources, not only of administrative ineptitude but also stress. On promotion, some women are invariably detached and uprooted from their families and this may impact on their administrative skills as well. Affirmative action policies, while being hailed as a milestone towards women's emancipation, have brought with them some problems.

The dynamic nature of the education system presents challenges to managers of schools. An equally puzzling issue is what has been referred to as multiple expectations. Various interest groups such as teachers, learner support groups, the community, parents and school governing body (SGB) are bound to have their expectations when a new principal especially one who happens to be a female, takes over the position. Her predecessor who in all probabilities could have been a male is most likely going to be used as a yardstick to measure her performance.

1.3. RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

1.3.1. Research aims

The aim of the study is to identify challenges facing female managers in primary schools in Dzindi circuit; establish their effect on such managers and propose possible ways to address such challenges to help the female manager to perform to the best of her ability.

1.3.2. Research Objectives

Following are the objectives of this study

- To establish the challenges facing female managers in their line of duty.

- To empower female managers to be able to handle the challenges they face in the workplace.

School manager refers to somebody in charge of the school as the supreme

1.4. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Executive Officer of the school, and who is employed by the department of education as an educator in the school.

This study was guided by the following research questions

• Principal

- What are the challenging experiences of the female managers at schools?
- What are the effects of the challenges experienced by female managers?
- How do female managers handle the challenges they face?

school. This is an educator who is appointed or acts as the head of the

1.5. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

It is hoped that this study will inform all the stakeholders in education of the gender specific challenges that female managers face. Management in education has always been a masculine domain to a large extent and female managers are under great pressure to perform. By taking an in-depth look at the challenges facing female managers the Department of Education (DBE), governing councils and managers will be better prepared to implement training and mentoring programmes for female managers. Through these training and mentoring programmes the female manager will become better equipped to function more effectively in her position.

Ahornft, Bigger and Coates (1998:19) state that "discrimination is making a

1.6. DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

order to consciously select them for unfavourable treatment.

The study confined itself to distributing questionnaires to 80 respondents from the Dzindi circuit. The 72 respondents represent all female managers of primary schools within Dzindi circuit.

Gender as defined by Gidgan (1996:39) has more than one connotation. It has both descriptive and signifying qualities. On the one hand it describes an

1.7. DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

described as feminine is only so in contrast to what is masculine.

For the purpose of this study, the following terms are defined:

- **School manager**

School manager refers to somebody in charge of the school as the supreme authority, Director or Chief Executive Officer of the school, and who is employed by the department of education as an educator in the school.

- **Principal**

As stated in the South African Schools' Act (Act 84 of 1996), the principal is defined as someone who receives delegated responsibilities and authority from the head of education in a province, to execute his or her duties in the school. This is an educator who is appointed or acts as the head of the school.

- **Empowerment**

Bolin (1989) as cited in Hall (1996:143) defines empowerment as investing in educators the right to participate in the determination of school goals, policies and the right to exercise professional judgment about the content of the curriculum and means of instruction.

- **Discrimination**

Ashcroft, Bigger and Coates (1996:19) state that "discrimination is making a distinction between groups of people in order to, consciously, select them for unfavourable treatment.

- **Gender**

Gender as defined by Grogan (1996:30) has more than one connotation. "It has both descriptive and signifying qualities. On the one hand it describes an oppositional relationship. What is described as feminine is only so in contrast to what is masculine.

• Gender equity

Wolpe, Quinlan, and Martinez, L. (1997:40) see gender equity as the promotion of equal opportunities and fair treatment for men and women in the personal, social, cultural, political and economic spheres.

• Disadvantaged schools

Lee-Ann 2007 cited that the term that is currently used for disadvantaged schools in South Africa is quintile. The quintile system allocated all government schools into one of five categories, with quintile 1 schools designating the poorest institutions while quintile 5 denoted the least poor public schools. The quintile to which a school was assigned was based on the rates of income, unemployment and illiteracy within the school's catchment area.

Learners in 1, 2 and 3 got a much bigger subsidy from the government (of 1010 this year) compared with learners in quintile 4 schools who got on average half of that (R505 this year) and learners in quintile 5 who got roughly only 10% of that (R174 this year). Quintile 4 and 5 schools were expected to supplement their state allocation through the charging of school fees and fund-raising

According to Mothata (2000:46), a disadvantaged school is a school that was or is suffering from severe economic and social disadvantage, often as a result of the previous discriminatory laws in education. These schools are characterized by buildings that are either poorly constructed or dilapidated, lack of facilities and equipment that facilitate education, a high incidence of dropouts and absenteeism, and low morale of learners, staff and the parents of learners.

1.8. ORGANISATION OF THE STUDY

This study is divided into five chapters.

CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 consists of an overview of the study and clarification of terms. The research question, research design, data collection and analysis of the data are also explained.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter 2 comprises of the literature review that focused on challenges facing female managers in education, their perceptions of the challenges and the effects of the challenges on the individual and the organisation.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Chapter 3 presents the research methodology of the study. A qualitative research approach was used to collect data. A literature study related to the particular paradigm was provided. The research design, strategies for data collection and data analysis were the focus of this chapter.

CHAPTER 4: DATA PRESENTATION, INTERPRETATION AND ANALYSIS

In Chapter 4 the focus was on data collection and data analysis. The data that was obtained from questionnaires were analysed and categorised.

CHAPTER 5: FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND ANALYSIS

Chapter 5 contains the findings and conclusion, as well as recommendations for further research.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

This chapter presents a literature review on theories and issues pertaining to gender and management. The chapter also looks at examples of challenges concerning gender and mechanisms which have been brought about as agents of change in education. It provides a perspective on the contradictory multi-layered experiences of the women who have been challenged to make a difference by way of commitment and performance.

In South Africa female educators make up 76% of all primary school staff (DoE, 2002:24). However managerial positions are occupied by relatively very few females compared to the male counterparts; as Figures from the DoE (2005) have reflected that women form only 30% of school managers, yet they constitute 70% of the teaching population. This supported by Chisholm & September (2005:146). The relatively low number of females in managerial positions obviously leads to an insufficient number of female mentors. Greyvenstein (2000:32) says that a lack of women in mentor and role model positions is a major barrier to women aspiring to management positions and that it leads to feelings of isolation and lack of acceptance. This feeling of isolation comes from not having enough relevant people to discuss work related problems with. This is a major obstacle for females aspiring to occupy management positions and those in managerial positions. Women who are currently in managerial positions find that men are reluctant to mentor them due to issues such as sexual attraction and inability to understand some of the challenges that are uniquely experienced by female managers.

As cited in the *Issues on gender in schools* (2002:24) the DoE estimates that there are 142 534 female primary school educators and 45 149 male educators. Systems were put in place to try and address the imbalance; such systems included appointing a task team in 1996 to investigate ways of achieving gender equity in the education system.

Bolin (1989) as cited in Hall (1996:143) defines empowerment as investing in educators the right to participate in the determination of school goals, policies and the right to exercise professional judgment about the content of the curriculum and means of instruction.

Ready and Ball (2000:147) state that women in leadership positions have to develop more masculine ways of interacting in order to be seen as authentic leaders, especially by males. This is also supported by Blackmore (2002: 60) who states that "If women are to succeed in the world of work, they have to overcome their conditioning as women and develop male aggressiveness, assertiveness and independence." This simply means that women should prove that they are "man enough" to lead.

According to The Gender Equity Task Team Report (1997:198) discrimination has kept women from entering managerial positions due to the apartheid system that was in operation, but now there is a constitutional commitment to ensure that discriminatory practices are ended and a political imperative to promote equity in general and gender equity in particular is in place. The Gender Equity Task Team reports that although there have been reports to address the gender imbalances in education administration; many discriminatory practices that need to be identified, challenged and transformed still continue. In her article "Gender representation patterns in higher education management in South Africa", Zulu (2003:99) states that the "old boy network" ensures that women are left out of these critical information networks where important decisions are sometimes made, often in places frequented mostly by men.

According to Lephala and Mabunda, as cited in Malherbe, Kleijwegt and Koen (2000:121), parents are the main transmitters of culture in any society. Children are socialised at a young age to learn that power and prestige are awarded on a gender basis." In most cultures it is acceptable when a girl cries, but when a boy cries, he is usually told that he should not be weak like a girl. This instills in the minds of girls the perception that they are weaklings and are to depend on males (the 'stronger' species) for survival. Mothers are

traditionally mentors to girls and the best they can offer these young girls is what they themselves were offered as they were still growing: the conviction that a male person should be nearby to provide leadership. The low self-esteem that most females have comes as no surprise as it gets instilled over a number of years while still in their youth.

Fagenson (1993:229) states that family role responsibilities of men and women form another set of factors that subtly discriminate against women managers. In fact, they may as well be the single biggest barrier to the attainment of a discrimination-free environment for women managers as well as other working women. This is supported by what most religions stand for, which is the fact that a man is superior to a woman and should lead a woman.

According to Hall (1996:55), mentors for women aspiring to occupy higher positions can serve two purposes: firstly they can act as guides to an unfamiliar male-dominated organisational culture; and secondly they can provide sponsorship and legitimate access to power.

Despite the vast amount of literature on females in management positions, few studies have been carried out on the challenges female managers experience in the education environment. The purpose of the chapter is to determine the specific challenges female managers experience in Dzindi Circuit. This chapter on literature review identifies commonalities in the challenges experienced by the female managers.

The challenges are numerous. One of these challenges is leading the change process in education. Lunenburg and Irby (2006:238) state that the role of the principal is both intense and diverse and that the only constant in the principal's domain of ever-increasing responsibilities is that of change. According to Senge (1996:45) "we are coming to believe that leaders are those people who 'walk ahead', people who are genuinely committed to deep change in themselves and in their organisations." The constant change taking place encourages managers to be more accountable towards all stakeholders involved in the running of the school.

A transformational leader will raise the level of commitment of their staff

According to Thurlow, Bush and Coleman (2003:150), accountability refers to a process of providing information to others in order for them to judge to which extent their needs are met. Wagner and Kegan (2006:135) state that accountability denotes a set of mutual understandings that define what people in schools and districts are held accountable for, and to whom. Governing bodies play such an important role in the governance of the school that they can be seen as the first in line for stakeholder accountability.

transformational approach leads to more participation from all stakeholders involved. DuBois

Sayed and Carrim (1997:95) stress the importance of community participation in school governance in the new South Africa. According to Section B of the South African Schools Act (SASA 84/1996), the function of the governing body is to promote the best interest of the school and to strive to ensure its development through the provision of quality education for all learners at the school.

Leadership and management

Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:68) state that “management is not simply a matter of systems, but is first and foremost a matter of people and relationships focused on clear organisational aims and tasks that should be performed to realize the stated aims.” Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:65) state that “educational management is an interactive, inter-related process used by educational leaders who manage learning and teaching in schools.” Management has to do with carrying out plans, getting things done and working effectively with people. Sterling and Davidoff (2000:13) see it differently in that they state that management and leadership support each other and that there are overlapping areas that are both leadership and management functions. According to these authors leadership and management cannot be divided. They are inter-related. Management is a demanding vocation and our education should be managed effectively in order to provide a service that strives towards excellence in education. Authors use various terms to differentiate an authoritarian or autocratic style of management from any other style. What follows is a discussion of the possibilities that exist.

A transformational leader will raise the level of commitment of their staff motivating them to work towards a common goal. Sherman (2000:133) states that successful leadership should broaden to include alternative management styles that allow for the incorporation of the perspectives and experiences of women.

Transformational leaders in contrast to transactional leadership motivate their subordinates to do more than originally expected of them. A transformational approach leads to more participation from all stakeholders involved. DuBrin (2004:82) says that transformational leaders have seven attributes:

- They are charismatic;
- They create a vision;
- They encourage personal development of their staff;
- They give positive feedback;
- Empower staff;
- Lead by example; and
- They are innovative thinkers

According to Daft (2005:154) transformational leadership differs from transactional leadership in four significant ways:

- A transformational leader produces leaders from followers;
- In transformational leadership the concerns of followers escalate from lower-level physical needs to higher level psychological needs;
- Transformational leaders inspire followers to move their focus from “what is in it for me” to “what is in it for the organization”; and
- Transformational leadership paints a vision of a desired future, state and builds the passion in the followers to reach it no matter the amount of effort might be that should be put in order to reach there.

According to Section B of the SASA (No.84 of 1996) a governing body must take all reasonable measures within its means to supplement the resources supplied by the State in order to improve the quality of education provided by

the school to all learners at the school. The SGB thus has an important contribution to make in the smooth running of the school. The SGB's main function is to ensure that the school runs smoothly. But what is happening in reality? The participation of SGB's in the governance of schools is quite new in our schools. Community members who form part of the SGB's have never been actively involved in the running of the school within their communities, therefore they have to be trained to serve on these bodies. (Section B of the SASA No.84 of 1996) This occurs predominantly in disadvantaged communities. Training for all stakeholders represented on the governing bodies might be the answer for these SGB's to function more effectively.

Report as cited in Chikobvu and Petafane (2005) make recommendations

Mouton (1996:161) points out that the term analysis basically means the resolution of a complex whole into the parts. It involves reducing to manageable proportions the wealth of data that one has collected or has available. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (1990:47), data analysis is the process of simplifying data in order to make it comprehensible. Earlandson, Harris, Skipper and Allen (1993:111) define data analysis as the process of bringing order, structure and meaning to a mass of collected data. Miles and Huberman (1994:50) state that data analysis is the process of systematically searching and arranging the interview transcription, field notes and other materials that are accumulated to increase the researcher's own understanding of them and to enable one to present what one has discovered. Lephalala and Mabunda, as cited in Malherbe *et al* (2000:120), state that it is assumed that women are born with 'natural roles' and should be reared to fulfill these roles. Such an assumption puts a lot of pressure on women in leadership positions because they are expected to effectively and efficiently perform their dual responsibilities: those assumed to be natural roles and those expected from someone in a position of leadership.

building on strengths and weaknesses. This holistic approach has implications

Diversity should be welcomed in the workplace. According to the DoE as stated in *Issues on gender in schools: an introduction for educators* (2002:24): "Educators are not homogeneous. They come from diverse cultural backgrounds and all that this implies. They differ on the basis of race." Daft (2005:433) states that there is a need for organisations to reflect the new

workforce composition in order to add value and to add to the organisations' competitive advantage. A diverse workforce may also be beneficial when dealing with a diverse school community. A diverse workforce also brings with it the challenges of addressing the issue of gender inequality.

According to Wolpe et al. (1997) as stated in the *Gender Equity Conference Proceedings* (2005:122) "equity did not mean affirmative action that favoured women it meant more than the provision of equal access to educational facilities, and it meant more than simply having women participate in equal numbers to men in all walks of life." The Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) Report as cited in Chisholm and September (2005) made recommendations regarding gender equity and in response the DoE adopted principles to overcome the legacy of gender inequity in education. The discussion in this chapter identified challenges female managers experience in education.

2.2. MANAGEMENT STYLES

2.2.1. Authoritarian versus Participatory Management Style

Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008:221) state that South African education has moved towards a site-based management where participation from all the stakeholders at school is encouraged. The management system has thus been decentralized at school level by implementing training programmes and providing manuals for School Governing Bodies (SGB), School Management Teams (SMT) and Learner's Representative Councils (LRC). The DoE is attempting to phase out the old rigid bureaucracy of a top-down and attempting to implement a more holistic approach to management. Through a holistic approach all aspects of management and leadership are developed, building on strengths and weaknesses. This holistic approach has implications for the female manager in that it will be expected of her to involve all stakeholders in the running of the school. Running the school thus ceases to be one man's show and all role players get a feeling that they are part of the solution to challenges faced by the school.

The DoE acknowledged these serious managerial challenges managers faced and appointed a national Task Team on Educational Management Development at the end of 1996. The function of the Task Team was to make strategic recommendations for a new approach to management development which was widely supported by all key educational stakeholder groups in South Africa. Although a holistic approach and self management is encouraged by the Task Team report, Thurlow, Bush and Coleman (2003:37) says that self-management of schools is no guarantee that change will take place effectively. Real transformation will only take place if internal management is implemented effectively with all role players actively involved. The authoritarian management style, which overlooks the potential contribution of ideas by other role players, is more likely to be a contributory source of challenges for the female principal.

According to Thurlow *et al.* (2003:5), many managers are experiencing difficulties in moving from an authoritarian hierarchical structure to one that invites participation from educators, SGB's and student bodies. The challenges might at first seem difficult especially for a new principal who lacks the skills to cope with this challenging new situation. The Task Team submitted recommendations for a new approach to management development. Thurlow *et al.* (2003:6) state that the Task Team suggested that schools will increasingly come to manage themselves. This means that the school manager will have to rely on her management skills to manage the school. The effectiveness of this self management will largely depend on the efficiency and effectiveness of the principal. A school principal with a strong backbone of support from relevant role players will most likely do better in her endeavour to run the school smoothly than the one who lacks that backbone.

2.2.2. Autocratic versus Democratic Management Styles

According to Harris and Lambert (2003:26), in schools where the leadership is autocratic, the flow of information is in a one way direction from the head to the educators, and there is a large amount of delegation and blaming by both parties. If an autocratic leadership style is used Harris and Lambert (2003:27)

state that the relationships are co-dependent and the principal depends on the teacher to validate and reinforce his or her autocratic style. A democratic approach implies that the manager or leader of the school involves all stakeholders in the decision making process. Daft (2005:55) states that a democratic leader can be seen as someone who delegates authority to others, encourages participation, relies on subordinates' knowledge for completion of tasks, and depends on subordinates' respect for influence. Such a leader obviously acknowledges the fact that some of the subordinates know better in some issues and gives them the latitude to put their knowledge into practice in those issues for the benefit of the school. According to Robbins (1996:346) the school manager is expected to help and to guide staff members to develop so that the team becomes efficient. For better utilisation of employees' talents, team management and team spirit must be promoted. According to Fullan as cited in Harris and Lambert (2003:11), good leaders foster good leadership at other levels. The manager is thus expected to empower the subordinates, making them feel that they are part of the system and are valuable in bringing solutions to the school.

Empowerment allows the educators to play a significant role in decision making and in controlling their teaching practice. It allows the school manager to encourage teamwork amongst staff in order to create a suitable environment where effective teaching and learning can occur. A democratic management style might benefit the female manager, especially when still new in a managerial position; in that it might create a positive perception that she is involving the staff in the running of the school instead of adopting an autocratic management style which is most likely to meet negative attitude of the staff. It is difficult to separate a participatory management style from a democratic one. With a participatory style the ultimate decision-making lies with the manager, while using a democratic style will ensure that the decision of the majority is adhered to.

2.3. TRANSACTIONAL VERSUS TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP

2.3.1. Transactional Leadership

According to Bass (1985, 1997) as cited in Lunenburg and Irby (2006:193) "Transactional leaders determine what subordinates need to do to achieve their own and organisational objectives and reward them according to their accomplishments." Leithwood (1992:28) states that this type of leadership does little to bring about change in the organisation and alternative approaches, for example transformational leadership had to be explored.

2.3.2. Transformational Leadership

Sherman (2000:133) states that successful leadership should broaden to include alternative management styles that allow for the incorporation of the perspectives and experiences of women. This shows that some of the experiences that women went through are gender-specific and unique and cannot be ignored.

2.4. THE ROLE OF THE SCHOOL MANAGER

Lunenburg and Irby (2006:238) state that the change includes changes in the physical environment, change in the curriculum and change in the staff. According to Sugrue (2005:5), the role of the principal becomes more complex, embracing more responsibilities, as it becomes more problematic for role incumbents to determine priorities. Many school managers find it difficult to move from the old mindset of doing to a new way of managing and leading the school. Lumby (2003) as cited in Thurlow *et al* (2003:101) states that managing change is a complex and elusive process even more so in the ever changing educational environment of South Africa.

In South Africa change has not taken place incrementally (emerging or developing over time), but it happened quickly. In a survey done by the government of South Africa, *The School Register of Needs Survey*

(Department of Education 1997) as cited in Thurlow et al. (2003:101) it was noted by managers that they spend almost all of their time addressing basic problems caused by the lack of resources in the lives of the school and in the lives of the learners. This has a profound effect on the way the principal prioritises his or her role as manager and ultimately leader of the school.

2.5. CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE MANAGERS

Although teaching has been the domain of women for decades, few are found in managerial positions within the education system of South Africa. Women are not only under-represented they have to deal with organisational challenges which might impact on the effective executing of their duties. Some of the challenges that female managers experience are discussed in this section. Women in South Africa have a long history in struggling to free themselves from laws and conditions that have and still hold them back. (DoE, 2002:2).

2.5.1. Cultural factors

Culture and tradition have a noticeable impact on women managers. Gillard (2001:162) defines culture as the habits, traditions and beliefs of a country, society or a group of people. The school is an extended organ of the community. Cultural beliefs also manifest themselves in the school situation. Educators are part of society and they carry with them their cultural beliefs at their places of employment. When educators enter schools, they do not leave behind their cultural belief systems at home. Some cultural beliefs believe that women are inferior to men and thus cannot be managers over men. Because of their femaleness, they are thus considered to be weak and not fit for management positions.

Lessing (1994:85) points out that, men have greater credibility as authority figures, whereas women tend to be recognised for stereotypical qualities such as sympathy, creativity, openness and patience and are viewed as less suited for leadership positions. The Department of Education (Republic of South

Africa) (2004:17), argues that men and women who hold the values that consider women managers to be inferior to men, are more likely to create difficulties for women.

2.5.2. Attitudes of staff members towards women managers

Women managers are not only perceived as incompetent and unable by male colleagues only, but also by female staff members. One would expect the female colleagues to support women managers because they share the same common feature which is their femaleness, and a common history of discrimination. However it is not like that. According to Weeks (1989:14), research demonstrated that women managers continue to face the perceptions of others which recognized men as more suited for management positions than women. Ogunsanya in Seleti (2004:147) believes that if men understood the challenges facing women managers, they'd be more likely to get involved in signing protocols and lobbying government to embrace the laws and statutes that protect women. Conradie and Taylor (1997:82) point out that women's low status is often perceived by both men and women as historically predetermined and fixed.

Even though educators are professionally trained, they continue to view women managers negatively. They do not believe that women managers are capable of delivering. Women managers need to prove themselves to be approved as managers at schools. Women managers are made to redouble their efforts to deliver for them to get approval from their male colleagues. Wyatt (1992:2) stresses that just being a woman, is not enough to make a good female manager.

Reynolds in Weeks (1989:16) believes that it is distressing but true that male resistance to women's advancement persists as the single most difficult challenge for women of the late twentieth century. Women managers cannot effectively assert themselves as managers, because of various reasons. The Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:16) identifies the following reasons as barriers to women manager's assertiveness.

- Fellow female employees may not accept the women manager's authority.
- Male employees may not accept the female manager's authority.
- Female managers may be seen as friends and not as managers by other employees.

Staff members (both male and female) contribute tremendously towards the ineffective management of women managers. These members of the staff hold values which perceive women as inferior to leadership and management positions. The Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:17) observed that men and women who hold values that consider women to be inferior to men are more likely to create difficulties for women managers. The Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:17) further states that such circumstances could result in men resisting the authority of a women manager and perceiving attempts by her to assert herself in ensuring that strategic objectives are met as a desire to humiliate them.

In a study commissioned by SADTU, Chisholm (1999:3) observed that as a minority, women in leadership positions are often highly visible and are subjected to pressures from both men and women, to which men are not subjected. Chisholm further points out that woman in leadership positions are labeled and insulted by both men and women.

2.5.3. Domestic factors

Domestic issues are challenges that originate from home. They manifest themselves from within the family (home) situation. Apart from being school managers, women are part of a family. They play a central role in their family development. Both men and women contribute in the family, but women play a key role in the running of the family. Women, on entering the workforce are faced with challenges related to family issues. Bratton, Grint and Nelson (2005:187) point out that during the 1960's; women entered the workforce in

increased numbers. Once there, many encountered conflict between their domestic and career situations.

Lifanda (2005:22) concurs with the view by stating that more women than men are faced with the challenges of choosing between family and their career. Bush and Middlewood (1997:132) believe that the twin demands of career and family affect both men and women, but it is women who most often carry the major responsibilities within the home. Lifanda (2005:23) supports the view that women suffer most by stating that women's responsibilities within the family also limit their job opportunities and career possibilities. Women also function as homemakers. Mabandla cited in Conradie and Taylor (1997:14) indicate that the attitudes in our society, namely that women are essentially nurturers, homemakers and nothing more, have crept into past policies, but also in the field of employment, a glass ceiling exists for women. Women have to prove that they are capable before they are permitted beyond a certain point.

Van der Westhuizen (1997:533) believes that giving birth is a challenge to women because it interrupts women service and gives men an unfair advantage. Coleman et al. (1998:5) agree with Van der Westhuizen by stating that the childbearing role of the women disadvantages them more than men. From both assertions made by Van der Westhuizen and Coleman, women by their nature of being female, impact on their career as compared to men. Coleman et al. (1998:5) further indicate that the dual role that women play will affect them irrespective of their potential and quality.

Coleman et al. (1998:7) report that women have a lot of housework to do. Women in a family always have more responsibility, so they have less time to spend on work than men. Some of the responsibilities include taking care of children, cooking and cleaning (when there is no helper). These household chores disturb women managers who wish to take their school work home. Men can take their school work home because they have minimal disturbances as compared to women.

Coleman et al. (1998:7) conducted a study where they interviewed three principals who were women. The interviews were about the challenges these principals face. They found that the most common challenges the female principals face come from their homes. Coleman et al. (1998:7) observed that the female principals have achieved a senior role, but were still subjected to the difficulties associated with their domestic situation. Chisholm (1999:5) argues that the motherly and feminine qualities that are seen as good things in teaching are seen as a weakness in managers and leaders.

2.5.4. Psychological factors

Psychological factors are factors which reside within the person. These are factors related to how women managers perceive themselves. Coetzer (2004:3) believes that all management behaviour starts from within the individual's deepest self. The way the person behaves is also influenced by the way that person views himself or herself. Coetzer (2004:3) further points out that the motive that determines the individual's specific behaviour stems from a very specific frame of reference which is embedded in the subconscious of each person.

Van der Westhuizen (1997:545) believes that intrinsic, internal or personal barriers that influence the life of women are generally regarded as the inadequacies, which are within the women because of their femaleness. The manner in which women managers view themselves is of paramount importance. Their self perception determines their professional destiny. The manager's self-identity, self-concept, self-image and self-esteem is of critical importance. Chaplin cited in Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:3) defines these concepts this way:

- Self: the individual as conscious being representing a dynamic combination of thinking, feelings, emotions and volition.
- Self-identity: the sense of who you are, focusing on those elements that are relatively stable.

- Self-concept: it represents the individuals' approval or evaluation by themselves.
- Self-esteem: it refers to whether one feels worthy or unworthy as a person.

The Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:13) points out that the women manager may be managers' worst enemy. The feeling of inferiority makes women managers let everyone walk over them instead of taking charge. When a woman does not approve herself, she must not expect others to value her. Low self-esteem affects one's performance at work. Coetzer (2004:4) states that if managers can't live with themselves, they will not be able to get along with others as well. It is of paramount importance for a manager to first accept himself or herself. According to Coetzer (2004:3) many individuals in senior positions are also experiencing major problems with inferiority complexes, constantly trying to prove themselves at all cost.

2.5.5. The Manager Leading the Change Process

Managing change in education within South Africa is not an easy process. Not only are most of our schools under-resourced, but the implementation of the change process is also not fully understood by those that have the task to implement the change. The reality of the situation is summarised by the words of a principal in Limpopo province taken from a survey of 20 managers/acting managers (DoE 1997). "There is a lack of funds from the community and governing body and parents to repair the old buildings of the school... therefore during rainy days my educators and learners suffer very much as the corrugated iron has big holes and rust. Hooligans, thieves, robbers have stolen doors, tables, chairs, desk and burnt valuable school books.

Managers need the support of their staff to be effective or to make changes in the school" (Sharp and Walter, 2003:77). Before change can even take place at any school a sense of teamwork must first be established. Stott and Walker as cited in Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008:221) argue that the importance of teamwork has been under-valued given the coverage it receives in recent

done in order to survive. Anstey (1999:301) agrees with Yukl by stating that recent decades have seen a demand for fundamental changes in organizations in the public and private sectors. Schools are also public sector organizations which are undergoing vigorous change processes.

This process of change should be guided by the principal as the head of the institution. When the new government took over, it decided to transform the entire previous traditional education system. Lemmer (2000:118) reflects the governments' intentions to transformation by stating that, in March 1997, the government announced plans for the introduction of curriculum 2005 based on the outcomes-based education. Change affects women because they are in most cases away from the school. The women stay away from work because they are given maternity leave of four months.

Van der Westhuizen (1997:533) indicates that giving birth is a challenge to women, because it interrupts women's service and gives men an unfair advantage. Women managers miss a lot during their absence, due to pregnancy. The department conducts workshops to train its employees to implement change. As the headmaster of the school, Theron cited by Van der Westhuizen (1997:152) indicates that as a change agent, the headmaster is expected to initiate change, facilitate it and implement it. Change related to education came so fast when most schools were not ready. Changes that were made through various legislation and policies placed huge pressure on school principals as school managers. Those school principals who did not comply were targeted by the department. Educational transformation remains a challenge to most school and principals in particular.

2.5.7. Engaging School Governing Bodies

The South African Schools Act 84/1996 as cited in the Policy Handbook for Educators (2003 B2-24) states that all stakeholders in education must accept responsibility for the organisation of schools. Section B of the SASA 84/1996 points out that parents and members of local communities are often in the best position to know what a school really needs and what the problems are.

The reason why governing bodies were established according to Bush as stated in Thurlow *et al.* (2003:79) “is to provide a representative forum for stakeholders with legitimate interest in the school.” Section B of The South African School Act (SASA) allowed for all stakeholders including parents, educators, students and the school community to participate as the school governing body (SGB). According to Van Deventer and Kruger (2003:262) government states that education can only succeed if all stakeholders are involved in the running of the school by being actively involved and accepting their responsibilities.

2.5.8. Supporting Gender Equity

Gender inequity is still very much part of the South African education system. Greyvenstein (2000:75) asserts that “the traditional inequity between men and women may be traced throughout history, where it has been cloaked in the androcentric (male-centred) philosophies.” Although the South African education system is undergoing a transformation process, both men’s and women’s abilities need to be used in managerial positions in order for the transformation to take place effectively. Yet women’s under representation in managerial positions is not always acknowledged and given the necessary attention in organisations. Professor Bhengu, the then Minister of Education appointed a Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) in 1996 to amongst others, identify means to correct gender imbalances, propose affirmative action strategies for increasing the representation of women in professional leadership and management positions and for increasing the influence and authority of women leaders. (Chisholm and September 2005). The current Minister of Education, Naledi Pandor stated in a speech she gave on 29 September 1999 at the Gender Equity Conference Proceedings that “There are clear indications that South African educators and policy-makers hold the view that there are no longer gender equity challenges confronting girls and women in the education sector.”

Although the GETT report (1996) made the recommendations to ensure that equality in education takes place, unequal distribution of men and women in

leadership positions in education is still a reality in South Africa.(Chisholm and September, 2005).

2.5.9. Time management: A challenge to women managers

Time management is one of the most fundamental aspect of management on which every organization depend upon. Without proper time management, the organization will fail in its endeavour to achieve its objectives. Not only will the school fail to achieve its objectives, but the manager will lose respect. According to the Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:17), time management is one of the most important aspects of management that women managers struggle with because of their dual responsibilities as professionals and as parents. The Department of Education (Republic of South Africa) (2004:17) further believes that in order to attend to all the responsibilities effectively, women managers need to be methodical in their approach to managing their time. Coleman et al. (1998:6) indicate that women have a lot of housework to do, in a family women always have more responsibilities, so they have less time to spend on work than men. Women managers are confronted by double pressure.

2.6. CONCLUSION

The above discussion highlights the fact that women in managerial positions experience numerous challenges. In South Africa and the Dzindi Circuit for that matter women have the opportunity to climb the promotional ladder, yet they are still under represented in managerial positions especially in education.

According to Moorosi (2007:507) "Structural barriers to women's advancement in organizations have their roots in the fact that most organisations have been created by and for men" Moorosi (2007) further states that the historical division of labour that had the workplace as the men's domain and the family as the women's domain still holds, even when women are as active as men in the working environment. In South Africa the

government has attempted to ensure equal treatment of everybody by law. Yet looking at the challenges women experience it seems that they face a constant battle of proving themselves worthy of the positions they are occupying. This chapter describes the context for this study through the literature review. In the following chapter the research methodology is discussed.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1. INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter, a study of literature was done. This chapter focused on the research methodology followed in conducting the research. According to Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:89) research methodology describes the way the study is going to be carried out. This chapter focused on the following elements of research methodology.

3.2. THE STUDY AREA

The study was in the form of an exploratory, descriptive cross-sectional survey, which was conducted on female managers working for the public schools of Dzindi Circuit of Vhembe District.

3.3. DESIGN OF THE STUDY

In this study the researcher used both quantitative and qualitative approaches, although, qualitative methodology was dominant. The use of different methodologies according to Babbie (2007:113) to test the same findings is called triangulation.

According to Leedy (2004), quantitative approach is based on positivism; in which scientific explanation is adopted. Quantitative data collection methods are based on measurements using verification instruments in order to objectify phenomena under study. Measuring instruments involve the assignment of numbers, in terms of fixed rules, to reflect differences between them in some of their characteristics.

According to Struwig and Stead (2001:12), qualitative researchers are interested in understanding the issues being researched from the perspective of the research participants. In other words they are trying to see through the eyes of the participants. Struwig and Stead (2001:17) further enforce the

above statement by stating that the researcher and the participant are both involved in the research process in qualitative research with the researcher trying to understand and interpret the participant's perspective. McMillan and Schumacher (1993:14) strengthen the above statement by stating that qualitative research is more concerned with understanding the social phenomenon from the participant's perspectives.

In this study a qualitative approach was used as it provided the researcher the opportunity to determine and experience firsthand the challenges, perceptions and experiences of the research participants in their natural settings. Burns (2000:11) states that qualitative forms of investigation tend to be based on recognition of the importance of the subjective, experiential life world of human beings. The researcher will attempt to report the findings as truthfully and as unbiased as possible taking into account not to lose the value and importance of the information gathered from the participants. Burns (2000:388) states that: The qualitative researcher is not concerned with objective truth, but rather with the truth as the informant perceives it. The qualitative researcher thus tries to understand the meanings individuals give to the world in which they live.

3.4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Huysamen (1995:163) research methodology is the creation and development of techniques and strategies to collect data, the development of methods to investigate and improve the psychometric properties such as reliability and validity of the data obtained by means of these techniques and the analysis of such data. In this study, research methodology involves a selection of appropriate research approaches, research methods, sampling procedures, respondents and instruments for collecting and analyzing data.

3.5. POPULATION OF THE STUDY

Before the researcher conducts the study empirically, the researcher should identify and describe the group of people who have the characteristics

relevant to the problem under investigation. Imenda and Muyangwa (2000:116) describe the target population as the group of subjects to whom the findings of a given study will be generalized. Fraenkel and Wallen (2003:103) view population as the group of people the researcher would use to generalize the results of the study. The objective of this investigation is to investigate the challenges facing female managers in Dzindi Circuit of Vhembe District. The target population is women managers and educators of the primary schools in Dzindi Circuit managed by both males and females.

3.6. SAMPLING PROCEDURES

Qualitative researchers must carefully consider why they have selected a particular sample and not another. This needs to be justified in terms of getting the required information from the participants in order to make decisions and drawing conclusions. Denzin and Lincoln (2000:370) point out that "qualitative researchers seek out individuals, groups and settings where the specific processes being studied are most likely to occur.

Purposeful sampling was used in this study. The following considerations were used in the selection of the schools: The participants involved in the study were chosen from primary schools within that are managed by female managers.

According to Wimmer and Domminick (1988:68), determining an adequate sample size is one of the most controversial aspects of sampling. How large a sample should be in order to be representative of the population has no simple answer. The two authors believe there is no simple answer regarding what constitutes a representative sample. Best and Kahn (1993:19) stated that there is no fixed number or percentage of subjects that determine the size of an adequate sample. It may depend upon the nature and the population of interest or data gathered and analyzed.

3.7. QUESTIONNAIRES SURVEY

For many good reasons, the questionnaire is the most widely used technique for obtaining information from subjects (McMillan and Schumacher 2001: 257). Furthermore, McMillan and Schumacher (2001: 257) note that a questionnaire is relatively economical, has the same questions for all subjects and can ensure anonymity.

A self-administered and self-contained structured questionnaire was designed by the researcher and was used to collect relevant standardised data from all subjects in the sample. McNamara (1997:105) describes the structured or close ended item as the mainstay of survey researches. The questionnaire technique was chosen because it has several advantages. Close-ended items are amenable to statistical data analysis with minimal manipulation of raw data. MacNamara (1997:105), states that questionnaires can access a large sample which place minimal demands on personnel, and can be totally anonymous. The reasons for using questionnaires in this study was that as a data gathering instrument it was cost effective, easy to complete and timeliness of responses.

The instrument's items, format and procedures was taken from Noveno (2003); however, some modifications were made by the researcher to fit to the current study. The questionnaire consisted of 10 items. The first part of the instrument contained a statement of purpose and directions, and was designed to collect biographical or personal data that include gender, age, and civil status, educational attainment and years of work experience.

The second part of the questionnaire consisted directions and 16 five point Likert-scale items for rating personnel's perceptions of challenges facing female managers in Dzindi Circuit. The items asked participants to rate the extent to which they agreed or disagreed with certain aspects of their stay at the School. The rating scale had the following designations: 5=a very serious challenge; 4=a serious challenge; 3=a challenge; 2=a minor challenge; 1=not a challenge. The Likert type scale was employed because it provided greater

flexibility since the scale descriptions varied to fit into the nature of the question (McMillan and Schumacher, 1993:245).

3.8. DATA ANALYSIS

As both qualitative and quantitative methods were used, different techniques were required for processing and analysing the data. Regarding the qualitative data, a simple qualitative data analysis method was used. Henning (2004:104) describes a tool for reduced, condensed and grouped data. Steps on how to process and analyse qualitative data are documented by several authors who wrote on research methods, including Henning (2004:67) as well as Rubin and Rubin (2005:21). Firstly all the data must be transcribed. It must be read and re-read for the researcher to become familiar with the data, and notes must be made to capture recurring concepts, common themes, events and other patterns in the data. These are then labeled and referred to as open coding. Next the coded data must be sorted and categorised. Then the analysed categories are ready to be written up in a report, or as in this case, a minor dissertation.

A computer loaded with Statistical Package for Social sciences (SPSS) was used to analyze the questionnaires. Quantitative studies emphasise the use of numerical measures to arrive at specific findings. Data from questionnaires was analyzed by means of using tables and figures.

3.9. ETHICAL CONSIDERATION

Paul and Jeanne (2010:101) state that most ethical issues in research fall into one of four categories. The researcher considered all four of these while conducting this research as follows:

3.9.1. Protection from harm

Researcher should not expose research participants to unnecessary physical or psychological harm. Participants should not risk losing life or limb, nor



should they be subjected to unusual stress, embarrassment, or loss of self-esteem. In cases where the nature of study involves creating a small amount of psychological discomfort, participants should know this ahead of time, and any necessary debriefing or counselling should follow immediately after the participation. The researcher did not expose the participants to any harm in this study.

3.9.2. Informed consent

According to Paul and Jeanne (2010:101) when people are intentionally recruited for participation in a research study, they should be told the nature of the study to be conducted and given the choice of either participating or not participating. Furthermore, they should be told that, if they agree to participate, they should have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. Any participation in a study should be strictly voluntary. All the participants volunteered to participate in this study.

3.9.3. Right to privacy

Paul and Jeanne (2010:102) further say that any research study involving human beings should respect the participants' right to privacy. Under no circumstances should a researcher's report, either oral or written, be presented in such a way that others become aware of how a particular participant has responded or behaved. In general, a researcher must keep the nature and quality of participants' performance strictly confidential. In this study the researcher made sure participants remained anonymous.

3.9.4. Honesty with professional colleagues

Researchers must report their findings in a complete and honest fashion, without misrepresenting what they have done or intentionally misleading others about the nature of their findings. And under no circumstances should a researcher fabricate data to support a particular conclusion, no matter how seemingly "noble" that conclusion may be.

In this study, respondents were assured of anonymity and the information provided by the participants will be regarded as confidential unless agreed upon by the participant and the researcher.

3.10. CONCLUSION

In this chapter the research methodology has been discussed for this study. The researcher concluded that the population and sampling procedures as well as research instruments, data collection techniques and data analysis were more appropriate in the methodology. Population and sampling procedures indicated all respondents involved in the research and how they were selected to form a sample. Questionnaires were used as data collection instrument to guarantee the success of this research. In Chapter four, the research focuses on research findings, analysis and interpretation.

Male	21	29.2
Female	51	70.8
Total	72	100.0

As indicated in Table A.1.1 above, the majority of the respondents (70.8%) were females, compared to only 29.2% who were males. This might be indicative of the fact that the topic is of interest to females as it focuses on the challenges they face as managers.

Table 4.1.2. Age of the population

Age	Frequency	Percent
21-25 years	4	5.6
26-30 years	4	5.6
31-35 years	7	9.7
36-40 years	20	27.8
41-45 years	36	50.0
46-50 years	1	1.4
Total	72	100.0



This chapter reports on the results of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the challenges facing female managers in primary schools in Dzindi Circuit.

4.1. BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

The first part completed by the respondents provides biographical information of the respondents. Each variable is discussed separately. Such information helps to give a clear picture of the profiles on the respondents.

Table 4.1.1. Gender representation of the population

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Female	51	70.8
Male	21	29.2
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.1. above, the majority of the respondents (70.8%) were females, compared to only 29.2% who were males. This might be indicative of the fact that the topic is of interest to females as it focuses on the challenges they face as managers.

Table 4. 1.2. Age of the population

Age	Frequency	Percent
25-30 years	4	5.6
31-35 years	4	5.6
36-40 years	7	9.7
41-45 years	20	27.8
46 years and older	36	50.0
15	1	1.4
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.2. above reflects that half the respondents (50%) fell within the 46 years and older category while 27.8% of respondents were in the 41 to 45 years old group. About 9.7% of respondents were in the 36 to 40 years group while those in the 31 to 35 years and 25-30 years groups contributed 5.6% each.

Table 4.1.3 . Your highest academic qualifications

Your highest academic qualifications	Frequency	Percent
Standard 10 (Grade 12)	8	11.1
First degree	13	18.1
B.Ed or Honours' Degree	38	52.8
Masters Degree	8	11.1
Doctoral degree	5	6.9
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.3. above, more than half of the respondents (52.8%) held honours degree, while 11.1% and 6.9% had qualifications at masters' degree and doctoral degree levels respectively. This implies that a substantial number (70.8%) of respondents had a post-graduate qualification. Only 18.1% of respondents had a first degree qualification while 11.1% had only a grade 12 certificate. This implies that the majority of respondents had high qualifications, which make them suitable for managerial positions.

Table 4.1.4. Your experience in years as an educator excluding years as a manager

Your experience in years as an educator excluding years as a manager	Frequency	Percent
0-5 years	13	18.1
6-10 years	8	11.1
11-15 years	7	9.7
16-20 years	17	23.6
21 years and older	27	37.5
Total	72	100.0

The majority of the respondents have a lot of experience as educators. This is reflected in table 4.1.4. above, which shows that 37.5% of respondents had a teaching experience of over 20 years, while 23.6 % had an experience of between 16 and 20 years. This means that 61.1% of respondents had a teaching experience of not less than 16 years. Only 18.1% of respondents had a teaching experience of 5 or less years.

This shows that a significant number of respondents have substantial experience as educators and can be expected to have observed most of the challenges faced by female managers throughout their careers as educators.

Table 4.1.5. Your experience in years as a manager

Your experience in years as a manager	Frequency	Percent
1 -5 years	28	38.9
6-10 years	8	11.1
11-15 years	5	6.9
16-20 years	14	19.4
21 years and above	17	23.6
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.5. above shows that 43% of respondents had not less than 16 years' experience as managers, while 38.9% had 5 or less years' experience as managers. Those with 6-10 years and 11-15 years experience as managers constituted 11.1% and 6.9% respectively. This implies that there is considerable evidence that in primary schools the young learners are in safe hands under the watchful eye of a female manager. This can be attributed to the cultural belief that females are better carers than men and is supported by Gillard (2001:162) who defines culture as the habits, traditions and beliefs of a country, society or a group of people. The school is an extended organ of the community; hence cultural beliefs also manifest themselves in the school situation. It therefore does not mean that the managerial capacity of a female manager is acknowledged, but the cultural role of a mother is realised as supported by Mabandla cited in Conradie and Taylor (1997:14) who indicate that women are essentially nurturers.

Table 4.1.6. Number of male educators

Number of male educators	Frequency	Percent
1-5	29	40.3
6-10	18	25.0
11-15	10	13.9
16-20	5	6.9
21 and above	10	13.9
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.6. above shows that most of the respondents come from schools with a limited number of male educators. About 40.3% of the respondents had 5 or less male educators in their schools, while a further 25% had between 6 and 10 male educators, giving a significant 65.3% of respondents having 10 or less male educators. Half the number of respondents indicated a learner enrolment of above 700 in their schools. It can thus be inferred that the majority of educators in these schools are females. These findings are supported by Trustcott (1977:22) who states that a woman is by nature so much better fitted for handling young children, hence there should be far more female than male educators in junior primary schools. Only 13.9% of respondents had more than 20 male educators in their schools. Most of the male educators appear to be reluctant to have female managers dominating them; thus they avoid even applying for employment in schools managed by females. This is supported by Khalifa (1992:101) who states that females are important in management though there is still evidence of a negative attitude expressed by males who feel humiliated to have a woman in any position of authority.

4.1.7. Type of school

Type of school	Frequency	Percent
Junior primary	19	26.4
Combined primary	37	51.4
Higher primary	14	19.4
4	2	2.8
Total	72	100.0

According to Table 4.1.7. above more than half the respondents (51.4%) are from combined primary schools while 26.4% and 19.4% are from junior primary and higher primary schools respectively. Combined primary schools showed the highest numbers of learner enrolment, hence the number of teachers in such schools was found to be higher than in the other types of schools.

Table 4.1.8. Learner enrolment

Learner enrolment	Frequency	Percent
Below 300	5	6.9
300-500	13	18.1
501-700	17	23.6
701 and above	36	50.0
5	1	1.4
Total	72	100.0

According to Table 4.1.8. above, half the respondents (50%) are from schools with more than 700 learners, while 23.6% are from schools with 501 to 700 learners. This gives a significant 73.6% of respondents from schools with more than 500 learners. Only 6.9% of respondents are from schools with less than 300 learners.

This implies that there are high enrolment figures in primary schools in Dzindi Circuit. In such instances, it is a more difficult task to render effective governance and put up relevant management structures in place to ensure discipline, effective teaching and learning in schools. It is of course the female manager who has to nurse these high volumes of learners who flock to her school to get a mother's touch during the early years of schooling.

Table 4.1.9. Educators' attitude towards the appointment of female managers



Educators' attitude towards the appointment of female managers	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	20	27.8
A minor challenge	17	23.6
A challenge	9	12.5
A serious challenge	8	11.1
A very serious challenge	18	25.0
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.9. above, 27.8% of respondents did not consider appointment of a female into a manager's post as a challenge, and 23.6% considered it to be a minor challenge. The remaining 48.6 % view it as a challenge, with 36.1% viewing it as either a serious or a very serious challenge.

The simplest explanation for this is that though gender equity is firmly entrenched in our democratic government, it will take some doing to uproot the deep – seated beliefs that men are superior to women in management and leadership. This is supported by Conradie and Taylor (1997:82) who point out that women's low status is often perceived by both men and women as historically predetermined and fixed.

The significance of the responses is that workshops might be important for female managers, as they uplift the standard of knowledge and the management skills they have as managers. Awareness campaigns on gender issues could also be organised to change the attitude of all educators.

Table 4.1.10, clearly illustrates that only 8.3% of respondents believe that female managers have no challenge when it comes to addressing ill-discipline, while 93% view it as a challenge ranging in degree from a

Table 4.1.10. The SGB's perception of a female school manager



The SGB's perception of a female school manager	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	18	25.0
A minor challenge	16	22.2
A challenge	11	15.3
A serious challenge	9	12.5
A very serious challenge	18	25.0
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.10. above 25% of respondents indicated that SGB members do not have any problem with having a female as a manager, while 22.2% indicated a minor challenge. The remaining 52.8% see it as a challenge, with 37.5% falling in the 'serious challenge' and 'very serious challenge' groups. With the SGB having the greater portion of authority when it comes to appointments, such prejudice about females as managers is more likely going to work in the disadvantage of female potential managers who will end up not getting a recommendation from the SGB to be appointed in such managerial posts.

Table 4.1.11. Addressing ill-discipline

Addressing ill-discipline	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	6	8.3
A minor challenge	17	23.6
A challenge	18	25.0
A serious challenge	14	19.4
A very serious challenge	17	23.6
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.11. clearly illustrates that only 8.3% of respondents believe that female managers have no challenge when it comes to addressing ill-discipline, while 68% view it as a challenge ranging in degree from 'a

challenge' to 'a very serious challenge'. About 23.6% of respondents view it as a minor challenge.



The implications of such responses are that it is not easy for female managers to maintain discipline. Such discipline pertains to learners and educators, coupled with the attitudes of the community sector.

Table 4.1.12. Attending to staff development matters

Attending to staff development matters	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	15	20.8
A minor challenge	15	20.8
A challenge	15	20.8
A serious challenge	10	13.9
A very serious challenge	17	23.6
Total	72	100.0

According to Table 4.1.12. above there were 15 respondents each (20.8%) who felt that the way female managers attend to staff development matters is 'not a challenge', 'a minor challenge' or 'a challenge'. 23.6% view the issue of attending to staff development matters as a very serious challenge for female managers, while 13.9% view it as a serious challenge. This implies that there is a need for managers to support staff development matters more to capacitate educators to be more competent in their work. The education department should empower managers to be able to develop their staff.

Table 4.1.13. Delegating duties to male teachers

Delegating duties to male teachers	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	14	19.4
A minor challenge	16	22.2
A challenge	5	6.9
A serious challenge	12	16.7
A very serious challenge	25	34.7
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.13. above more than half (51.4%) of the respondents find it as either a serious or a very serious challenge to delegate duties to male teachers, while 6.9% find it to be a challenge. About 19.4% do not find it to be a challenge while 22.2% find it to be a minor challenge. Delegating duties involves giving instructions to a subordinate. This becomes a difficult task for a female manager who has low self esteem; who was most likely trained in an education system wherein males dominate in managerial posts and give instructions to mainly females who are in the majority in teaching posts.

The female managers are viewed as 'misplaced' by most of the male educators and are subconsciously not recognised as leaders. This is supported by Lessing (1994:85) who points out that, men have greater credibility as authority figures, whereas women tend to be recognised for stereotypical qualities such as sympathy, creativity, openness and patience and are viewed as less suited for leadership positions.

Table 4.1.14. Delegating duties to female teachers

Delegating duties to female teachers	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	26	36.1
A minor challenge	23	31.9
A challenge	9	12.5
A serious challenge	9	12.5
A very serious challenge	5	6.9
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.14. above only 19.4% of respondents find it as either a serious or a very serious challenge to delegate duties to female teachers, while 12.5% find it to be a challenge. About 36.1% do not find it to be a challenge while 31.9% find it to be a minor challenge. This means that 68% of either do not view delegating duties to female teachers as a challenge or view it as a minor challenge.

Most of the reasons why female managers find it difficult to delegate duties to male teachers mentioned above do not apply when they have to delegate to female teachers, hence it is not as challenging to delegate to female teachers as compared to their male counterparts.

Table 4.1.15. Appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females

Appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	23	31.9
A minor challenge	18	25.0
A challenge	12	16.7
A serious challenge	11	15.3
A very serious challenge	8	11.1
Total	72	100.0

According to Table 4.1.15. above, only 26.4% of respondents find it as either a serious or a very serious challenge to choose an appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females, while 16.7% find it to be a challenge. About 31.9% do not find it to be a challenge while 25% find it to be a minor challenge. As indicated under delegating of duties to female teachers, female managers do not struggle to choose an appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females. This shows that females find it easier to manage fellow females.

Table 4.1.16. Choice of the appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by males

Choice of the appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by males	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	10	13.9
A minor challenge	19	26.4
A challenge	9	12.5
A serious challenge	14	19.4
A very serious challenge	20	27.8
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.16. the greater portion (47.2%) of respondents find it as either a serious or a very serious challenge to choose an appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by males, while 12.5% find it to be a challenge. About 13.9% do not find it to be a challenge while 26.4% find it to be a minor challenge. This finding further supports the difficulty experienced by female managers in their effort to manage male teachers.

Table 4.1.17. Supervision of male staff

Supervision of male staff	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	10	13.9
A minor challenge	18	25.0
A challenge	8	11.1
A serious challenge	13	18.1
A very serious challenge	23	31.9
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.17. illustrates that half of the respondents (50%) reflected either a serious or a very serious challenge when it comes to supervision of male staff by female managers. Only 13.9% of respondents said that there is no challenge while 25% reflected that it is a minor challenge. Such figures can be attributed to the resistance that female managers face when they supervise male staff, which is due to the stereotypes that most men have towards being dominated by females coupled to the low self-esteem experienced by female managers when they have to give orders to male staff. Most female managers do not supervise their husbands at home for obvious cultural or religious reasons and such managers find it hard to start doing it in the work situation. This is supported by Bratton, Grint and Nelson (2005:187) who point out that many women encounter conflict between their domestic and career situations.

Table 4.1.18. Supervision of female staff

Supervision of female staff	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	20	27.8
A minor challenge	22	30.6
A challenge	5	6.9
A serious challenge	12	16.7
A very serious challenge	13	18.1
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in table 4.1.18. above only 34.8% of respondents reflected either a serious or a very serious challenge when it comes to supervision of female staff by female managers. About 27.8% of respondents reflected that there is no challenge while 30.6% reflected that it is a minor challenge. This means that 58.4% of respondents either find such supervision as not being a challenge or as a minor challenge. This further supports the relative ease with which female managers manage female teachers as opposed to male ones.

Table 4.1.19. Dealing with teacher misconduct

Dealing with teacher misconduct	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	9	12.5
A minor challenge	8	11.1
A challenge	17	23.6
A serious challenge	14	19.4
A very serious challenge	24	33.3
Total	72	100.0

According to table 4.1.19. above a significant 52.7% of respondents find dealing with teacher misconduct by female managers as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge. Only 12.5 % and 11.1% of respondents feel it is not a challenge or is a minor challenge respectively. 23.6% of respondents however feel that it is a challenge.

Female managers find it much easier to deal with learner misconduct rather than with teacher misconduct. This is because as a 'mother figure' a female

spends most of her time taking care of children compared to a male. Such children misbehave time and again and she gets trained on cultural practices of dealing with such unbecoming behaviour. Lack of training on how to deal with teacher misconduct contributed to this challenge.

Table 4.1.20. Providing welfare (care) to learners

Providing welfare (care) to learners	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	23	31.9
A minor challenge	28	38.9
A challenge	3	4.2
A serious challenge	7	9.7
A very serious challenge	11	15.3
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in table 4.1.20. above only 25% of respondents find the provision of care to learners by female managers as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge while 70.8% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all.

The responses on the item could be attributed to the fact that the respondents are familiar with what is stipulated in the South African Schools Act (1996). The educators act as surrogate parents of learners during the school hours. They work together with parents and inform them of all the activities taking place at school. For female managers such an assignment becomes even easier as they culturally take care of the young ones.

Table 4.1.21. Encouraging teamwork

Encouraging teamwork	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	21	29.2
A minor challenge	9	12.5
A challenge	8	11.1
A serious challenge	13	18.1
A very serious challenge	21	29.2
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.21. illustrates that 47.3% of respondents find the encouragement of teamwork by female managers as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge while 41.7% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all. Most staff members hold on to their stereotypes about female managers thereby failing to give them the necessary support. This is supported by Sharp and Walter (2003:77) who state that managers need the support of their staff to be effective or to make changes in the school. Before change can even take place at any school a sense of teamwork must first be established. Stott and Walker as cited in Van der Mescht and Tyala (2008:221) argue that the importance of teamwork has been under-valued given the coverage it receives in recent education literature.

Table 4.1.22. Resolving conflicts among staff members

Resolving conflicts among staff members	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	21	29.2
A minor challenge	10	13.9
A challenge	8	11.1
A serious challenge	10	13.9
A very serious challenge	23	31.9
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.22. illustrates that 45.8% of respondents find resolving conflicts among staff members as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge, while 43.1% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all.

This is about dealing with the challenges in the organisation. The opportunity for conflict exists in and among all the major dimensions of the school. According to Hoy and Miskel (1987:69) conflict between staff members and between the school and the community is likely when organisational and individual expectations are not met. When educators are prejudiced about the potential of a female manager to resolve their conflicts, some of such expectations she is supposed to do something extraordinary to convince them, hence the high rate of dissatisfaction among respondents on the item.

Table 4.1.23. Female managers' stress levels

Female managers' stress levels	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	8	11.1
A minor challenge	13	18.1
A challenge	13	18.1
A serious challenge	16	22.2
A very serious challenge	22	30.6
Total	72	100.0

As reflected in Table 4.1.23. above a significant number (52.8%) of respondents report that female managers' stress levels are either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge, while 29.2% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all.

This findings are supported by Lifanda (2005:22) who states that more women than men are faced with the challenges of choosing between family and their career. Bush and Middlewood (1997:132) believe that the twin demands of career and family affect both men and women, but it is women who most often carry the major responsibilities within the home. This dual responsibility for female managers obviously adds up to their stress levels.

Coleman et al. (1998:5) further indicate that the dual role that women play will affect them irrespective of their potential and quality. In a study commissioned by South African Democratic Teachers Union (SADTU), Chisholm (1999:3) observed that as a minority, women in leadership positions are often highly visible and are subjected to pressures from both men and women, to which men are not subjected. All the stated references support the findings in this study that female managers have higher stress levels than their male counterparts.

Table 4.1.24. Managing self-esteem by female managers

Managing self-esteem by female managers	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	18	25.0
A minor challenge	10	13.9
A challenge	9	12.5
A serious challenge	8	11.1
A very serious challenge	27	37.5
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.24. shows that 48.6% of respondents find the way female managers manage their self-esteem to be either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge. A further 12.5% find it as a challenge while 38.9% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all. This is supported by Coetzer (2004:3) who believes that all management behaviour starts from within the individual's deepest self. The way the person behaves is also influenced by the way that person views himself or herself. Coetzer (2004:3) further points out that the motive that determines the individual's specific behaviour stems from a very specific frame of reference which is embedded in the subconscious of each person. Such frame of reference is of course implanted in the subconscious of female managers through stereotypes and value that other people normally attach to female managers.

Table 4.1.25. Highest qualifications for female managers

High qualifications for female managers	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	25	34.7
A minor challenge	15	20.8
A challenge	8	11.1
A serious challenge	7	9.7
A very serious challenge	17	23.6
Total	72	100.0

According to Table 4.1.25. above 38.9% of respondents find the high qualifications for female managers to be either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge, while 55.5% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all.

Acquiring high qualifications for female managers is not a challenge in the majority of cases because females are generally regarded as inferior partners to males. Acquiring a higher qualification will only assist a female manager to gain some recognition by males, which means that such a qualification does not really make a female manager to start feeling much elevated above the staff members, but rather pulls her up a little bit to be at least on par with her male counterparts who might even be less educated. This is supported by Wyatt (1992:2) who stresses that just being a woman is not enough to make a good female manager.

Table 4.1.26. Female managers' decision- making strategies

Female managers' decision making strategies	Frequency	Percent
Not a challenge	13	18.1
A minor challenge	15	20.8
A challenge	11	15.3
A serious challenge	15	20.8
A very serious challenge	18	25.0
Total	72	100.0

Table 4.1.26. shows that 45.8% of respondents find female managers' decision- making strategies to be either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge, while 38.9% find it as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all.

Chodorow (1988:7) states that we live in societies where leadership styles tend to be gendered. Female managers who make decisions far from expectations will obviously be interpreted as failures, hence these findings on

this item. These findings are also supported by Bush and West-Burnahm (1994:13) in stating that schools tend to be saturated with masculine values.

5.1. INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to identify the challenges facing female managers in primary schools in Dzindzi Circuit. An effort was made to identify and to describe the challenges facing female managers in the circuit. It was imperative for the researcher to review literature on challenges facing the female managers in order to reach the aim of the study. A literature review provided the theoretical reference for investigating the challenges facing female managers in schools.

A questionnaire was the research tool used to collect empirical data for this study. Data analysis and interpretation paved the way for the presentation of findings and recommendations.

This chapter therefore gives a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations pertaining to the investigation.

5.2. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Below are findings from the study conducted on challenges facing female managers in primary schools in Dzindzi Circuit.

5.2.1. Gender

All the female participants in the study returned their completed questionnaires, while eight of the male participants failed to do so. This shows that this topic is of more interest for female participants than for male participants.

Most males take with them the patriarchal culture that was inherited a long time ago in the education system which discriminates against women as

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

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Most males take with them the patriarchal culture that was inherited a long time ago in the education system which discriminates against women as

normal practice. Though there is talk about gender equity, affirmative action and women empowerment, they have not yet embraced it does not seem to ring a bell in their minds. There should be attempts to try and stir the interest in male educators and managers on the topic, because without that, male colleagues will continue to be a thorn in the flesh of female managers.

5.2.2. Academic qualifications and experience

The majority of our respondents had high qualifications which make them more suitable for managerial positions. Coupled with the high qualifications for most of our respondents, were the extensive experiences that they possessed either as educators or as managers. Most of the female educators do their best to develop themselves academically because they are aware of the competition that is out there pertaining to the filling of posts, especially for managerial positions. The greatest rivals for potential female managers in such competitions are men. If females apply for such positions without having something special, like a high qualification, they are bound to come out second best to men. This shows that a significant number of respondents have a long history as educators and can be expected to have observed most of the challenges faced by female managers throughout their careers as educators.

5.2.3. Experience in years as a manager

A significant proportion of respondents had been in managerial positions for more than 10 years. These are primary schools where children's characters are given shape, and it is generally accepted that women do much better than men in this field. In other words it can be said that there is considerable trust that in primary school the young learners are in safe hands under the watchful eye of a female manager. This can be attributed to the cultural belief that females are better carers than men. It does not however mean that the managerial capacity of a female manager is acknowledged; rather, that the cultural role of a mother is realised in these female managers.

5.2.4. Number of male educators



Findings in this study show that most of the respondents come from schools with a limited number of male educators. However, half the number of respondents indicated a learner enrolment of above 700 in their schools and it can thus be inferred that the majority of educators in these schools are females. It appears that apart from the kitchen, a primary school class is another place which is suitable for a female educator. When a female educator teaches in a primary school class, things appear to go so well that everybody seems to forget that she has her own career path to climb up the ladder like everybody else.

Most of the male educators appear to be reluctant to have female managers dominating them; thus they avoid even applying for employment in schools managed by females.

5.2.5. Type of school

Combined primary schools showed the highest numbers of learner enrolment, Parents tend to prefer the combined primary schools more than the separate junior and senior primary schools because there appears to be continuity in the child's learning under the same environment and organisational culture. This obviously puts a lot of pressure on the female manager who has to deal with high volumes of learners which go with a relatively higher number of educators. Running such a school is a challenge to a female manager.

5.2.6. Learner enrolment

The findings revealed that there are high learner enrolment figures in primary schools managed by females in Dzindi Circuit. In such instances, it is a more difficult task to render effective governance and put up relevant management structures in place to ensure discipline, effective teaching and learning in schools. It is of course the female manager who has to nurse these high volumes of learners who flock to her school to get a mother's touch during the

early years of schooling. Just as much as the majority of people would prefer to take their children to a crèche that is managed by females, this mentality appears to be there in the minds of most people when they take their children to primary school, hence the high enrolment figures come as no surprise.

5.2.7. Educators' attitude towards the appointment of female managers

A significant proportion of respondents agree that educators have a negative attitude towards the appointment of female managers. The simplest explanation for this is that though gender equity has been entrenched in our democratic government, it will take some doing to uproot the deep – seated perception that men are superior to women in management and leadership. The significance of the responses is that workshops might be important for female managers, as they uplift the standard of knowledge and the management skills they have as managers. Awareness campaigns on gender issues could also be organised to change the attitude of educators towards female managers.

5.2.8. The SGB's perception of female school managers

The majority of respondents indicated that the SGB has a negative perception of a female school manager. The SGB have a significant level of influence as a governing structure and has the greater portion of authority when it comes to appointments. Such prejudice about females as managers is more likely going to work to the disadvantage of female potential managers who will end up not getting the recommendation from the SGB for appointment into such managerial posts. Some of the managerial posts that end up being disputed by female applicants might be a result of foul play by the SGB that sometimes has a negative perception of female school managers.

5.2.9. Addressing ill-discipline or teacher misconduct

The majority of respondents indicated that female managers have a challenge when it comes to either maintaining discipline or dealing with teacher

misconduct. A female manager is normally put in as the captain of the ship without having an idea of how to deal with the waves. When the waves hit against the ship and everybody else starts screaming, she joins them. When it is one person coming late amongst her staff, because of lack of skill or confidence, she will make a general remark in the presence of everybody saying: "Some of you come late to school, let's respect time", for fear of confrontation. It is agreeably a difficult task for a female manager to either address ill discipline or teacher misconduct. There is a need for female managers to be empowered in this regard.

5.2.10. Attending to staff development matters

According to Table 4.1.12 above there were 15 respondents each (20.8%) who felt that the way female managers attend to staff development matters is 'not a challenge', 'a minor challenge' or 'a challenge'. 23.6% view the issue of attending to staff development matters as a very serious challenge for female managers, while 13.9% view it as a serious challenge.

This implies that there is a need for managers to support staff development matters more to capacitate educators to be more competent in their work. The education department should empower managers to be able to develop their staff.

Most female managers developed themselves on their own without leaning on any developmental program of the department. They did this obviously with the aim in mind of being able to compete for higher positions. This becomes the normal way of doing things to them, and once they climb that ladder to a managerial position, they forget to be proactive in ensuring that their staff gets empowered through departmental developmental programs. Managers should be able to plan for their staff development.

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5.2.11. Supervision of staff

A significant proportion of respondents indicated that for female managers it is a serious challenge to supervise male staff, to delegate duties to male staff and to choose an appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by male staff. It was noted from the findings that the opposite was the case in case of female staff; that means a significant proportion of respondents indicated that it is not a serious challenge to supervise female staff, to delegate duties to them or to choose an appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females. These findings can be attributed to the resistance that female managers face when they supervise male staff, which is due to the stereotypes that most men have towards being dominated by females coupled to the low self-esteem experienced by female managers when they have to give orders to male staff. Obviously the female manager interprets this resistance as insubordination and goes out to try and prove to this male educator who the “boss” is. Any dog that realizes that it does not have the capacity to bite, uses barking as a weapon with the hope of getting respect from its enemies. This is what most female managers do when confronted with resistant male educators, but screaming and shouting becomes a wrong choice of strategy, which is common where male staff dominate.

Most female managers do not supervise their husbands at home for obvious cultural or religious reasons and such managers find it hard to start doing it on this male figure in their work situation. Female staff members on the other hand had been exposed in their career to some form of treatment that they easily associated with the fact that they are female. It thus becomes relatively easy for them to know how their fellow female managers would feel if they were to react with disrespect towards them. It thus becomes relatively easier for them to be respectful to the female manager, making it easier for the female manager to delegate duties to them and also not to struggle to come up with a suitable managing style.

5.2.12. Providing welfare (care) to learners

The majority of respondents indicated providing care to learners as either a minor challenge or not a challenge at all. Such responses on the item could be attributed to the fact that educators act as surrogate parents of learners during school hours. They work together with parents and inform them of all the activities taking place at school. For female managers such an assignment becomes even easier as they culturally take care of children at home.

5.2.13. Encouraging teamwork

The majority of respondents find the encouragement of teamwork by female managers as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge. Most staff members hold on to their stereotypes about female managers thereby failing to give them the necessary support. Before change can even take place at any school a sense of teamwork must first be established.

5.2.14. Resolving conflicts among staff members

A significant proportion of respondents find resolving conflicts among staff members as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge.

This is about dealing with the challenges in the organisation. The opportunity for conflict exists in and among all the major dimensions of the school. Conflict between staff members and between the school and the community is likely when organisational and individual expectations are not met. When educators are prejudiced about the potential of a female manager to resolve their conflicts, she is supposed to do something extraordinary to convince them, hence the high rate of dissatisfaction among respondents on the item.

5.2.15. Female managers' stress levels

The greater proportion of respondents indicated that female managers' stress levels as either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge.

The dual responsibilities that female managers have to carry which are family and career obviously put a lot of stress on them. It is questionable whether the children and the spouse of the female manager understand the kind of support that their mother or wife actually needs everyday when she goes to or comes back from work. That kind of support would act as a cushion to absorb whatever challenges she would have to face on that day or cure the ones that she has already faced.

A female manager should at times opt to go out with the school's sports team for competitions or with the traditional dancers' club or athletics team rather than always hanging around in the office whose memories are mostly those of stressful encounters. Such outings are refreshing to the mind.

5.2.16 Management of self-esteem by female managers

It came as no surprise to learn that the majority of respondents find the way female managers manage their self-esteem to be either a serious challenge or a very serious challenge. This is because we are given shape by what people say about us, especially when it is said repeatedly over time. That is why a husband cannot make an impact by telling his wife a thousand times in one day that he loves her which can be compared to the one he can make if he tells her just once a day for a year. When a female manager hears it over and over again over the years that females make bad managers, are incapable and ignorant, it surely sinks in and starts to bear fruit in her behaviour.

This is what brings about the low self-esteem in female managers. The department of education should liaise with the department of health to get their managers counselled on a regular basis. This would be helpful to most of the female managers who either have low self-esteem or very high stress levels.

5.2.17 Highest qualifications for female managers

The majority of respondents indicated the high qualifications for female managers not to be a challenge. This is because females are generally regarded as inferior partners to males. Acquiring a higher qualification will only assist a female manager to gain some recognition by males, which means that such a qualification does not really make a female manager to start feeling much elevated above other staff members, but it rather pulls her up a little bit to be at least on a par with her male counterparts who might be even less educated. The department of education does not seem to recognise the importance of acquiring higher qualifications, because there are no sustained monetary benefits for one who acquires a further qualification and there are no posts whose requirements include a specific high qualification. For example; it can be stated that for one to qualify for a principal's post a masters degree should be in place, for a deputy principal's post an honours' degree and so on. This would help the panel to compare apples with apples because an educator with a teacher's diploma ends up contesting with someone with a doctoral qualification. This would go a long way in assisting many of the female potential managers who have high qualifications but are struggling to get higher posts.

5.2.18 Female managers' decision making strategies

A significant proportion of respondents found female managers' decision making strategies to be a challenge. This can be attributed to the fact that female managers find themselves in a catch-22 situation. There are always expectations of what should be done in any given situation. Such expectations are like standards which have been laid mainly by male leaders who have gone that route before. Female managers have to decide whether to make decisions far from expectations which will obviously be interpreted as failure, or follow the trend of decision making which was set by the predecessors to gain acceptance, though she does not expect to get any positive results from it. Most cultures that are dominant in schools, including the one for decision

making, have been passed from one generation to another and have a patriarchal origin.

5.3 CONCLUSION

The following conclusion could be reached from the findings of the study:

- Most of the female managers have acquired high qualifications to be able to compete against their male counterparts as there appears to be bias in favour of males in the workplace.
- Female managers experience gender discrimination in the workplace and have to go an extra mile to prove themselves capable.
- Though most of the female managers have long been in management, they suffer in isolation as they lack appropriate mentors or role models as there is no networking amongst the different female managers.
- Male educators appear to be reluctant to work under the supervision of female managers, making it hard for female managers to supervise them; and female managers lack the boldness to delegate duties to male educators with ease and to choose the appropriate managing style to manage them.
- Learner enrolment figures in primary schools of Dzindi Circuit which are managed by female managers are high, indicating the confidence that parents have in the “mother figure” in the person of the female manager, though such high figures add to the challenging situation that the female manager has to face.
- Appointment of a female manager is viewed as a challenge by educators.

- The SGBs have a negative perception of female managers, compounding the challenges faced by female managers.
- Female managers find it difficult to address ill-discipline or to deal with teacher misconduct.
- Female managers have no problem providing care to learners.
- Female managers find it difficult to encourage teamwork in the workplace.
- It is a challenge for a female manager to resolve conflict among staff members.
- Staff development is a challenge to female managers.
- Female managers' stress levels are higher than those of males.
- Female managers have a low self-esteem.
- The high qualifications for female managers are not a challenge.

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made to address the challenges alluded to above:

- Most of the female managers have acquired high qualifications to be able to compete against their male counterparts as there appears to be bias in favour of males in the workplace.
- There should be an ombudsman appointed by the department of education, where all cases of discrimination may be reported by aggrieved educators or managers.

- A forum for female managers should be created where female managers can discuss all their challenges and assist each other to deal with the challenges.
- Awareness campaigns for male educators should be held where they can be given a platform to voice their challenges pertaining to submitting to female managers and also to be guided on the authority vested upon a female manager by virtue of her position.
- General awareness campaigns for all educators should be conducted to deal with stereotypes that educators have about female managers.
- There should be a forum for all SGBs in the district where they discuss issues pertaining to their roles in schools and where they receive reports of any disputes that have been brought to the attention of the ombudsman. This would help reduce and ultimately eradicate all acts of corruption by the SGBs.
- Seminars and workshops should be organised for female managers to empower them on the management of misconduct in the workplace.
- Female managers should be exposed to team-building initiatives, and be taken for benchmarking to some organisations (businesses) with extensive teamwork that are run by women.
- Female managers should be trained on conflict resolution strategies.
- Female managers should be expected to keep a training schedule for their educators ensuring that no educator is disadvantaged in the process.
- Female managers should be given workshops on how to deal with stress, and the Department of Education should liaise with the

Department of Health for them to get free counselling by clinical psychologists and even psychiatrists where necessary.

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2. Age of the population

20-30 years

31-35 years

36-40 years

41-45 years

46 years and older

3. Your highest academic qualifications

None (1-12 grade 12)

First degree

B.A. or B.Com. Degree

Master's degree

Doctoral degree

4. Your experience in years as an educator excluding years as a manager

0-5 years

6-10 years

11-15 years

16-20 years

21 years and older

APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE ON FEMALE MANAGERS

The purpose of this study is to investigate challenges faced by female managers in primary schools of Dzindi Circuit. Please, answer all questions by making a cross (X) in the appropriate numbered block.

1. Gender representative of the population

Female	1
Male	2

2. Age of the population

25-30 years	1
31-35 years	2
36-40 years	3
41-45 years	4
46 years and older	5

3. Your highest academic qualifications

Standard 10 (Grade 12)	1
First degree	2
B.Ed or Honours' Degree	3
Masters Degree	4
Doctoral Degree	5

4. Your experience in years as an educator excluding years as a manager

0-5 years	1
6-10 years	2
11-15 years	3
16-20 years	4
21 years and older	5

5. Your experience in years as a manager

0-5 years	1
6-10 years	2
11-15 years	3
16-20 years	4
21 years and older	5

6. Number of male educators

1-5	1
6-10	2
11-15	3
16-20	4
21 and above	5

7. Type of school

Junior Primary	1
Combined Primary	2
Higher Primary	3

8. Learner enrolment

Below 300	1
300-500	2
501-700	3
701 and above	4

Please make a cross (X) adjacent to each statement showing your response to what you think is most appropriate about a female manager:

	Not a challenge	A minor challenge	A challenge	A serious challenge	A very serious challenge
9. Educators' attitude towards the appointment of female managers	1	2	3	4	5
10. The SGB's perception of female school managers	1	2	3	4	5
11. Addressing ill-discipline	1	2	3	4	5
Below are some of the duties and the responsibilities of a manager. How intense are the following challenges to female managers. Make a cross (X) in the appropriate numbered block.					
12. Attending to staff development matters	1	2	3	4	5
13. Delegating duties to male teachers	1	2	3	4	5
14. Delegating duties to female teachers	1	2	3	4	5
15. Choice of the appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by females	1	2	3	4	5
16. Choice of the appropriate managing style in a staff dominated by males	1	2	3	4	5
17. Supervision of male staff	1	2	3	4	5
18. Supervision of female staff	1	2	3	4	5
19. Dealing with teacher misconduct	1	2	3	4	5
20. Providing welfare (care) to learners	1	2	3	4	5
21. Encouraging teamwork	1	2	3	4	5
22. Resolving conflicts among staff members	1	2	3	4	5
23. Female managers' stress levels	1	2	3	4	5
24. Management of self-esteem by female managers.	1	2	3	4	5
25. High qualifications for female managers	1	2	3	4	5
26. Female managers decision making strategies	1	2	3	4	5