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CHALLENGES FACING WOMEN IN LEADERSHIP POSITIONS IN GOVERNMENT INSTITUTIONS: THE CASE STUDY OF THULAMELA MUNICIPALITY, VHEMBE DISTRICT

BY

MUTELE TSHILIDZI CONSTANCE
STUDENT NO. 9423827
INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND YOUTH STUDIES

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SUPERVISOR: DR. T.D THOBEJANE
INSTITUTE FOR GENDER AND YOUTH STUDIES

CO-SUPERVISOR: DR L.E MPHASHA
M.E.R MATHIVHA CENTRE FOR AFRICAN LANGUAGES

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DECLATION

I, Tshilidzi Constance Mutele, hereby declare that the dissertation for the Master's degree in Gender Studies at the University of Venda, hereby submitted by me, has not previously been submitted for a degree at this or any other university, and that it is my own work in design and execution and that all reference material contained therein has been duly acknowledged.

TCMutele 14/03/2014

SIGNATURE DATE

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DEDICATION

This degree is dedicated to my late husband, Mr. Thiambi Donald Mutele, my children Hulisani, Maanda, Thembuluwo and Mashudu Mutele. It is also dedicated to Gundo Mukwevho, Khuliso Mutele and Mashau Mukwevho, my mother Mrs Florence Nemakonde and my father Dr. Rev. Rufus Ndou, my late mother-in-law, Mrs S. Mutele and Mr A. Mutele, my brother Rev. V. Nemakonde.

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ABSTRACT

This study seeks to expose the gaps that are inherent in the implementation of equity laws in as far as employment between men and women in institutions of learning is concerned. This was done through an analysis of the dynamic and changing gender roles in the leadership of high schools by focusing on the experiences of the principals, deputy principals and HODs in Thulamela Municipality. A combination of quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection was used in the research. The study used feminist theories of research as a theoretical framework to analyse the data collected. Data was collected through interviews, focus group discussions, observations and questionnaires. Participants have also realised that there have been some strides in changing gender discrimination and patriarchy in our school and communities.

However, much still needs to be done by way of educating the larger society about the changes in terms of legislations and the wish to see the oppressively systems of the past done away with and to give women the support they need in fulfilling the job expectations. Gender oppression like all other forms of oppression; contribute towards the exploitation of women and children and these cleavages of the past need to be eradicated from society. To date, some people do not take kindly to women who are in leadership positions. In conclusion, it is imperative for women to be confident, to prove themselves, and not wait for some form of valorisation from their male counterparts.

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the background of the study on the challenges facing women in leadership positions in schools, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, research questions and the significance of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

Discriminatory employment practices, whether based on sex or race, are extremely difficult to combat through legal obligations and enforcement procedures. The law can encourage gender equity by setting up acceptable standards at the work place, but legal action to enforce the observance of those standards is problematic. Discriminatory practices along gender lines have become a pernicious issue on a global scale. Many institutions, companies and schools still practice gender discrimination when it comes to promotion and deployment of women into senior management positions (Shrubsall, 1994: 30).

An employer is unlikely to admit that a woman was not taken, or was not promoted or otherwise advanced, because she was female. Employment practices which impede women in career advancement are often indirect and/or the result of stereotyped assumptions. Such discrimination is never easy to establish precisely because it is based on mental attitude. Only the alleged discriminator knows whether or not he/she was motivated by gender discrimination. Proof of someone's mental attitude is extraordinarily difficult to show, even when that proof has to satisfy the less onerous civil standard, i.e. on the balance of probabilities, rather than the criminal standard, beyond reasonable doubt. Normally, in legal actions the person initiating the litigation, the complainant or plaintiff, has to prove the case (Shrubsall, 1994: 30).

A person complaining of gender discrimination will not be able to do so, in the absence of a concession by the defendant, unless legislation permits the drawing of inferences. For example, if there are six candidates for promotion, of which one, apparently the best qualified in terms of formal achievements and experience, is female, legislation will be effective only if it permits the drawing of an inference of gender discrimination should the female candidate not be promoted. The burden then passes to the

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employer to explain why the apparently most suitable candidate was not appointed. Even then, anti-discrimination law is often criticized because, in order to have a winnable complaint, it is said that the woman has to show that she was the equal of the man but that she was so much better than him that any reasonable employer would have appointed/promoted her and therefore there must have been sex discrimination (Shrubsall, 1994: 31).

Similarly, to be effective, anti-discrimination law must deal with unfavourable employment practices. It is no protection to require equal treatment between the sexes if the effect in practice of an apparently equal approach is to disadvantage one sex. For example, employment advancement which is limited to those of a certain age, or which requires mobility, or freedom from domestic commitment, or full-time work, might be applied to all employees equally but the effect in practice is to disadvantage women who are more likely to be unable to meet those requirements. However, it might be that an employer has legitimate reasons for applying the requirements which are not gender-based, e.g. his/her business needs are outweigh the gender discriminatory effects of his/her actions. Indirect gender discrimination can be justified on non-sex grounds by the employer, i.e. the employer has the burden of proving that, though he did discriminate on grounds of gender, he had an acceptable reason for doing so. What then becomes crucial for effective protection is the test adopted for that justification and the measure against which the employer's perceived business needs are judged (Shrubsall, 1994: 31).

Direct gender discrimination which results in unfavourable treatment of women is unlawful. The South African Constitution for example does not allow discrimination in all its forms. Section 9 of the Bill of Rights gives everyone equality before the law. Furthermore every person is accorded dignity and the right to have the dignity respected and protected.

Inferences of gender discrimination can be drawn by evidence of apparently less favourable treatment. Indeed, a complaint is assisted by Questions and Replies procedure which allow questions to be put to the respondent employer on a prescribed form. The employer need not reply. However, provided the applicant has put forward an apparently good case, failure to reply will raise an inference of discriminatory conduct and so will an evasive, unsatisfactory or equivocal reply. Also, national law uses the concept of indirect discrimination and requires the employer to justify an apparently equal employment practice which has the effect of discriminating against women (Shrubsall,1994: 31).Women's careers in the professions must also be understood against the changing pattern of women's careers more generally. Changes in women's employment have been one of the most

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dramatic features of labour market and family change over recent decades. This is true even in Britain, where the mothers' paramount responsibility for children is barely questioned.

There are no public childcare facilities for ordinary working mothers, and general unemployment has been high for decades (Pascall, 1997: 17). Despite these obstacles, women's labour market participation has steadily increased. By the late 1980s approximately two out of three women aged 18 to 59 were in paid employment. In 1971, 51 percent of married women were classified as 'economically inactive, but in 1990 this proportion was down to 29 percent (Pascall, 1997: 18). It has already been argued that gender discrimination is rarely overt or admitted. The efficacy of legal provisions combating gender discrimination depends on the recognition of covert discrimination and the application of gender-based assumptions.

Often people who adopt such practices or make stereotyped assumptions have no intention to discriminate on grounds of gender and they might be surprised to be told that, that is the effect in practice. Nevertheless, if an employer does not promote a married woman because he assumes that married women put domestic concerns above employment commitments, that is unlawful discrimination. Similarly, if an employer does not offer training to women of child-bearing age because of an assumption that she will not be working long enough to repay the investment, this also constitutes unlawful discrimination. Statistics show that the overwhelming majority of part-time workers are women. Such a practice constitutes indirect gender discrimination and would have to be justified (Evens, 199: 37).

Again it is largely as a result of European law that part-time workers have protection under the Act. One national case in the early 1980s acknowledged the discriminatory effect of less favourable treatment of part-timers, but later cases refused to draw such an inference in the absence of clear statistical evidence presented to the court. It was the European Court which put it beyond doubt that less favourable treatment of part-time female employees constitutes indirect gender discrimination. However, the employer can still justify the less favourable treatment, as was done to the satisfaction of the High Court in 1991 when the Equal Opportunities Commission unsuccessfully challenged the restriction of full-time workers for national statutory unfair dismissal and redundancy rights (Events, 1993: 37).

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In one of the part-time cases, the European Court established the test for justification of an indirectly discriminatory employment practice as requiring the employer to show objective economic grounds for his or her action. The European Court ruled that the employer must show that the measures must correspond to a real need on the part of the undertaking, and are appropriate with a view to achieving the objectives pursued and are also necessary to that end (Events, 1993: 37-38).

A number of women have limited access to income, wealth and opportunities to participate in issues of governance and development activities, such as higher schools appointments. Some of these arose out of the discriminatory past the country came from. Even in matters where women have more knowledge and experience than men, they are often excluded from making important decisions or implementing them. Nonetheless, there is a powerful metaphor prevalent among African ethnic groups of South Africa which states that "Musadzi u fara lufhanga nga hu fhiraho". This is a Tshivenda version, which, when translated verbatim, means that women are forced to hold a knife by its sharpest edge. The meaning is derived from the multiple roles women are expected to fulfill. In other words a woman has to face the challenges of life and succeed through thick and thin. This metaphor may serve two purposes. On the one hand, it may be understood as a symbol of struggle, resistance, obduracy, and strength. On the other hand, it may be seen as a symbol of hope, faith, courage and words of wisdom (Phendla, 2004a: 51).

Metaphors are powerful reflections of Black women's enormous challenges while facing the multilayered and multiplied burdens of oppression (Phendla, 2004b: 52). Women are required to be everything positive. Women should be feminine and powerful, assertive and accommodating, caring and competent. While men can be forgiven and maintain the opposite side of the spectrum, women must be able to be flexible. If the only way to escape the duality of the bond is to succumb to it, women are in a dilemma.

These examples of women in other parts of the world such as the UK, Europe and USA simply show that women in different parts of the world experience gender discriminations although from different contexts.

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1.3 Setting

The study was carried out in Thulamela Municipality, in Vhembe District-Limpopo Province. There are 106 high schools in Thulamela Municipality. The study required the participation of the principals. To achieve this, a letter was written to the Department of Education requesting permission to conduct the interview. The researcher got a permission letter from the Department of Education to gain access to the schools under sample. The Collection of data was undertaken for a period of six weeks.

1.4 Statement of the Problem

Women run up against barriers to advancement as a result of prejudices and stereotyping. However, there is little doubt that most workplaces are predominantly masculine domains with masculine norms and habits of interaction. Consequently, women often find themselves disadvantaged in those workplaces. Women in general, have limited access to income, wealth and opportunities to participate in governance, even in matters where their knowledge and experience is more than that of men; they are often excluded from making significant impacts. Therefore, this study examined the competence inherent in high schools leadership in Thulamela Municipality-Vhembe District and investigated the challenges facing female school heads in these institutions of learning to determine the significant difference between male and female principal headship. Further, the study exposed the gaps that are inherent in the implementation of equity laws in as far as employment between men and women in high school headship are concerned.

1.5 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the standard of competent leadership of high schools in Thulamela Municipality-Vhembe District and to assess the challenges facing women in leadership positions in high schools and analyse whether there has been a shift in as far as the negative attitudes given to those women in power is concerned.

1.6 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to:

- Investigate the standard of effective leadership of the high schools in Thulamela Municipality.

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- Assess the nature of leadership skills between male and female principals in Thulamela Municipality.
- Examine whether there are significant differences between male leadership of high schools in Thulamela Municipality to female leadership.
- Identify the challenges facing women in the leadership of high schools in Thulamela Municipality.
- Investigate the nature of gender equity in the appointments of principals of high schools in Thulamela Municipality.
- Recommend strategies that will enhance and promote female leadership of the high schools in Thulamela Municipality.

1.7 Research Questions

The research questions were as follows:

- What is the standard for the effective leadership of high schools in Thulamela Municipality?
- What are the differences in leadership between male principals of high schools in Thulamela Municipality and female principals?
- What are the challenges female principals of high schools come across in Thulamela Municipality?
- Is there any gender equity in the appointment of high school principals in Thulamela Municipality?

1.8 Significance of the Study

It is hoped that this study will provide data on the extent to which high schools around Thulamela Municipality involve women in leadership activities. This study will enhance knowledge to planners of policy regarding empowering women in leadership positions.

1.9 Definitions of key Terminologies

During this study, the following terminologies were used:

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1.9.1 Leadership- is a great asset to an officer; it is an interactive conversation that pulls people toward becoming comfortable with the language of personal responsibility and commitment, Leadership is applicable to all facets of life. It is a competency that you can learn to expand your perspective, set the context of a goal, understand the dynamics of human behavior and take the initiative to get to where you want to be.

1.9.2 Municipality- is an organ of state within the local sphere of government which exercises Legislative and executive authority within an area determined in terms of the local government.

1.9.3 Women in Leadership- Women in leadership is the idea that gives women power over their economic, social and productive choices that will be able to raise their status, promote development.

1.9.4 Masculinity- specifically describes men and boys.

1.9.5 Patriarchy- as a form of social organization in which the father or eldest male is the head of the family. Through this system, descent is reckoned through the male line.

1.9.6 Gender based metaphors- human beings use metaphors to shape their world views. Women also use these metaphors to expose the system of Patriarchy.

1.9.7 Feminist Research- has to do with the valorization of women's voices in the process of doing research.

1.9.8 Gender discrimination- may be characterized as the unequal treatment of a person based solely on that person's sex.

1.8.9 Gender mainstreaming- is bringing the experiences, knowledge and interest of women and men to bear on development agenda.

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1.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided the context of the study by looking at the position of women in different countries. The purpose of this exercise was to provide a universal perspective which women around the globe face similar challenges although differentiated by geography, class, race and ethnicity. Generally women were marginalized and continued to form the lowest strata in society. The focus area was important in providing the context of assessing the position of women leadership positions within the Thulamela municipality. These challenges of women assuming roles previously occupied by men have created stereotypes, stigmas and perception problems. However, some women have taken the opportunities head on with government legislative framework to effect transformation of the society. The next chapter explores relevant literature for the study.

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CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to do a comparative analysis of women in leadership positions around the world. It also draws inferences from countries such as the USA, Canada and South Africa in as far as gender discrimination at work place is concerned. The chapter looks at the following: Working wives and Professional careers, women's continued responsibilities in child-care, Legislating for Equal Opportunities and Equal Pay, Gender Discrimination in South Africa, and theoretical framework.

2.2 Gender Equity Discourse

It has long been known and taken for granted that men continue to predominate in senior management positions in educational institutions, despite the numerical dominance of females in education (Hall, 1999: 159; Pounder and Coleman, 2002: 122). The tendency today is for issues of gender inequity in the workplace to be background as more women are promoted into management and leadership positions in schools and universities (Lumby and Coleman, 2007). As a consequence, it is perceived that men and women now have equal opportunity to leadership positions. Many women have succeeded in overcoming obstacles to leadership and 'now have far more access to leadership than at any other period in history' (Eagly, 2007: 9).

In South Africa, for example, the change in the political dispensation after the 1994 general elections brought about legislation against discrimination and promoted equality of opportunity for all regardless of gender, race, colour, creed, age, and religion (Mkhonza, 2004). This has facilitated the advancement of women into senior management positions. However, there are still more men than women in senior leadership positions in some universities, and men seem to enjoy advantage over women with equivalent qualifications and experience in jobs traditionally occupied by men and even those which are gender integrated (Eagly and Carli, 2007: 79). In South Africa, a study conducted by Mkhonza in 2004, confirms that only small numbers of women have been promoted in the universities she studied, and that very little or no support for women advancement exists in some institutions (Mkhonza, 2004: 235). Often, women find it difficult to 'fit in' with the masculine organizational culture which predominates in universities. In her case study of women academic managers in a large Australian

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university, (Kloot, 2004: 481) concluded that academic management continues to be gendered, and that it is 'more intense at higher levels' as women gain power and become more visible. The experiences of the women in management in her study confirm the persistence of the gendered nature of management and leadership at universities, and suggest that policies of equity do not seem to translate well into 'overt action' (Kloot, 2004: 481). Given the number of women now in senior positions of leadership and management, one would be inclined to conclude that gender equality has been achieved. (Eagly, 2007: 9) observes, such signs of advantage are 'manifestations of gender relations that have changed dramatically yet have not arrived at equality between the sexes'. However, more women have managed to transcend traditional barriers to leadership and are now better represented in positions of authority than ever before (Eagly, 2007: 9).

It is precisely due to the increase in the number of women in leadership and management positions, that research on women's ways of leading has become important. As organizations become more and more technologically advanced, globalised, and diverse in terms of workforce (Eagly, 2007: 3), alternative ways of leading and managing may be the solution to organizational change problems. Transformation and change are constantly taking place within organizations, and increasing international competition and globalization (Ramsay, 2000: 1) calls for a shift (Daft, 2005: 15–16) from the rational management approach to a leadership approach that values change, empowerment and relationships. In this sense then women's ways of leading may be more suitable in today's organizations. As leaders, women are more transformational than their male counterparts (Eagly, 2007: 4; Rosener, 1990: 120–121), and they are believed to have stronger values of empathy, nurturing and interpersonal relationships. These values and skills are perceived to have increased relevance in today's 'changing nature of leadership in organizations' (Yukl, 2010: 468). What is the distinction between leadership and management?

By exploring this question, and others posed earlier, this article attempts to surface the experiences of female middle managers in universities and their construction Women leaders' construction of leadership and management of the academic department of leadership and management. It is based on a study of women HOD's in selected universities in the United Kingdom (UK) and South Africa, and investigates how these women perceive their experiences of management and leadership in an area viewed as traditionally male-dominated. Issues of leadership style, skills, roles and responsibilities, leadership demands, job challenges, and strategies to address job challenges are examined in detail.

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The discussion of gender inequity has been included to provide a backdrop for this study and a lens through which to view female constructions of leadership and management within the dominant masculine organizational cultures of universities.

2.3 The Essentials of Leadership

Managing is maintaining efficiently and effectively current organizational arrangements, while managing well often exhibits leadership skills, the overall function is toward maintenance rather than change (Bush, 2008: 273). The leadership and management help to clarify the fact that both are actually necessary for the smooth running of an organization. In other words, they are 'complementary systems of action which are necessary for success in an increasingly volatile business environment' (Kotter, 1993: 26).

Women do not regard themselves as managers but as leaders (Zulu, 2007; Priola, 2004), they do acknowledge the importance of both leadership and management aspects in their work. Leadership style Women leaders are traditionally associated with leadership styles that are transformational, collaborative and participatory. Eagly and Carli, 2007, 119 a style is a leader's characteristic way of behaving that has a consistent meaning or function a leader regarded as having a collaborative style, for example, emphasizes collaborative behaviours (consulting, encouraging, discussing, negotiation) that vary depending on the circumstances. Whereas traditional masculine attributes are perceived as being confident, tough, dominant, analytical, independent, task-oriented, competitive, objective and decisive. Yukl, 2002: 411; Coleman, 2003: 30; Coleman, 2000: 15; Rosener, 1990: 121, qualities associated with the traditional feminine leadership style are empathy, sensitivity, compassion, understanding, warmth, supportiveness, and empowering others (Yukl, 2002; Coleman, 1994; Rosener, 1990: 121).

This is not to say that male leaders do not possess these 'feminine' qualities, nor is it to say that female leaders do not sometimes adopt 'masculine' leadership characteristics. But it is worth noting that leadership styles 'most valued in contemporary organizations and emphasized in feminist writings on good leadership' (Eagly, 2007: 3), are the collaborative and participative styles generally associated with women. Research has found that these styles, which are considered appropriate for effective leadership under contemporary conditions (Eagly, 2007: 5), are more commonly adopted by women leaders (Zulu, 2007; Priola, 2004; Blackmore, 2002; Bush and Coleman, 2000; Ramsay, 2000). Research on women leaders shows that women tend to prefer collaborative and participative leadership

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styles and perceive themselves as having collaborative and people-centered styles of leadership and management (Zulu, 2007; Coleman, 2003; Coleman, 2000; Rosener, 1990). Yukl, 2010: 468 reflects on how proponents of the 'feminine advantage' believe that 'the changing nature of leadership in organizations has increased the relevance of skills and values that are stronger in women than in men'. Some research studies have found, it is women who are more likely than men to possess the values and skills necessary for effective leadership in modern organizations (Yukl, 2010: 467). Regardless of gender, to be a successful leader not only requires appropriate leadership styles, but also good leadership and management skills.

In leadership and management skills generally, an academic leader is expected to have leadership and management skills appropriate to their job. Seagren, Creswell and Wheeler, 1993: 20 assert that successful academic leaders are 'able to articulate a vision for the institution they are able to persuade others to share their vision and to join in the task of translating intention into reality'. These leaders also have professional credibility and display characteristics such as vigour, decisiveness and a willingness to take chances (Seagren et al., 1993: 20). Successful academic HODs have good interpersonal communication skills; are concerned about others; are good listeners; and have high academic credibility (Creswell et al., 1990 cited in Seagren et al., 1993: 21). As the academic HOD occupies a pivotal position in the organization of higher education (Seagren et al., 1993: 1) and most decisions are made at departmental level, it stands to reason that the incumbent needs to develop specific leadership skills. Such skills include negotiation and conflict resolution, evaluation, communication, long range planning, public relations, and political manoeuvring (Seagren et al., 1993: 78). These skills can be learned in various ways through experience or trial and error; through other people whose performance as leader provides a continuous source of ideas, information and examples; through role Women leaders' construction of leadership and management of the academic department 843 models or mentors; or through education and training especially in skills associated with dealing with people, communication, and strategic and lateral thinking (Seagren et al., 1993: 24).

2.4 Gender and Behaviour

2.4.1 Culture

Socio-cultural perceptions and societal values continue to oppress women's attitudes and discourage women from taking risks in business and in leadership positions. The negative cultural aspects in

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patriarchal societies make women more vulnerable, causing them to become victims of crime and gender-based violence. Hendricks, (2003:18) sees culture as a social environment that discourages women to pursue career paths in the field of science, engineering, and technology. In this case, one of the impediments that is used to deny women promotion in the work place, is culture, simply because it consigned women to the home environment. Thus, stumbling blocks such as laws, folkways and mores are the taboos and perpetrators of culture. Consequently, South Africa is still alleged to be a society that has different rules for women and for men. Unfairness still takes place despite the view that —social equality is one feasible organising principle for shaping the quality of life and circumstances of living of individuals and groups in society, as well as for structures of all human relations. In her study, Tsoka states that there are important on going cultural and structural developments in the area of company cultures. She also comments on how they responded to the on-going development regarding social engineering, with its consequences to the work place, plus those issues that a democratic culture has realised in South Africa, so that transformation in the country as a whole is brought about.

With these fundamental changes taking place, an inevitable clash of values emerged, in the sense that most leadership positions were dominated by men, mostly white, who reacted negatively and with fear to these changes, as they perceived them to be real threats to their leadership positions. This proved to be a clear clash between the competing values of equality and inequality of liberty, domination or exploitation or oppression of life affirmation, disregarding for life; and finally of cooperation, competition amongst people of different sexes, and also amongst people of different skin pigmentation. It is also important to realise that socio-cultural perceptions, such as lack of time and lack of political commitment, kept women confined to roles outside of politics. Since changes in society come through the political process, there is a critical need for women to be among those who make policies and take decision at all levels of government, in order for their plight to be adequately addressed (Hendricks, 2003:18).

2.5 Cultural Observation Facing Women Managers

There is no doubt that an increase in women's economic participation is a crucial key to economic growth and wealth creation. Side lining women would be a major sacrifice to growth as well as economic stability of a country. Thus, the repeal of laws and the enactment of equity legislation and affirmative action has led to favourable atmosphere for women in business and in other social spheres of areas of life, be it political sports and education (Moleke, 2005).

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The South African National Policy Framework and gender equality of 2001 was established together with South African Women Entrepreneurship Network (SAWEN) to mainstream gender. This commitment by government to emancipate women is seen as a transition providing a favourable atmosphere in which women are presented with opportunities to freely participate in their talents and in their society and other activities. Their participation is based on their taste which is crucial ingredients of business skills in a free market system that leads to efficiency, equitableness and equilibrium. In a report on Pretoria news a South African newspaper by the South African Reserve governor, Marcus (2011), she articulated that South African women hold 19.3 percent of top senior positions in management as relatively compared to their counterpart in Australia 8 percent, Canada 16.9 percent and US 14.4 percent on gender economic empowerment. One of the contributing factors why South Africa is performing more on gender parities compared to other developed countries relates to the fact that South African government committed itself by introducing gender equality and women emancipation framework in 2001. This was done as a measure to reduce poverty amongst women and to bring women on board in management. While this debate, Webster, (2011) argues that women are still dramatically under-represented despite a marginal increase in 2010 over 2009 figures. It is also stated that Germany has embarked on a quota system for women in order to mainstream gender equality since female executive in top companies are a rarity (Webster, 2011).

There have been a number of reasons why women did not participate equally in business with their male counterparts. The past policies were more gender insensitive and hence, government intervention. Although, the situation has changed via repealed laws and legislation, fundamental social change requires more integration of women in business, politics and in education than has so far happened since the transition to democracy. Marcus, 2011 further argues that women tend to be much more hesitant to use the power that goes with the position. They do not leverage off the position they have to the degree they can. Hence women need to be empowered in the organisation to think outside the traditional white box, in order to apply the ideas and power that goes with the position. It is therefore crucial for the organisation in their quest to sustain the competitive advantage that they both integrate men and women managers in a meaningful way. In order to sustain an innovative culture that encourages all its employees, people through a participative leadership that rewards and recognise their human capital. Women managers have to learn their organisational culture and lead by example to inspire followers, using their gentle approach without sacrificing their feminity. This can be achieved through respect and dignity in order to reap employee‘s commitment that will unleash their potential and attain organisational goals.

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Cultural patterns in a society take long to change. Beliefs, stereotype, values and people's observations take long unless government or politicians change the way things can be conducted (Mathipa, 2000). According to Moloto 2011, the Business Woman Association of South Africa reports every year about women representation in different managerial levels in different economic sectors.

The primary purpose of this paper is to gain an understanding of how culture observations impede the promotion of women in leadership position in South Africa. This paper further reports on the results of a study that was conducted in Gauteng, South Africa. Finally it aims to establish how far private and public sectors have promoted gender equities. The paper also endorses some Gender & Behaviour, suggestion to employers, government and women employees who are ready for promotional careers in management.

2.6 Literature on the Concept of Culture

There are many definitions that are available from literature on the concept of culture. In this paper the concept of culture will not vary from its usage from other sciences, but the emphasis will be more confined to culture in the organization. As defined by Word Web (version 6, 2010), culture is the attitudes and behaviour that are characteristic of a particular social group or organization. Therefore, it is within the culture of human beings to aspire to become better in respect of their manner of existence. The desire to achieve a better way of living is in fact practical evidence to the human mode of living that is grounded upon the view that human beings are homo economic beings who thrive on labour. The urge to work is an inborn one and is propelled by a strong cultural believe that in this world there is nothing for nothing and as such every person must live out of the sweat of his/her brow (Mathipa,2001).

In this context, women as human beings have too, a valid case regarding recognition of their legitimate aspirations because in striving for them, they similar to their male counterpart, also apply the necessary intellectual and physical capacity plus skills commitment and perseverance. Consequently, equal merit based treatment without discrimination should be the first criteria for promotion; and only if it fails to bring about equity can it be tempered with. Hendricks, 2004:18 sees culture from a perspective of a social environment that discourages women to pursue career path in the field of science, technology and engineering. The cultural perspective is also seen as impediments that are deliberately used in the

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work place to deny women promotions, simply because it consigned women to the home environment. Thus, stumbling blocks such as cultural stereotypes are prevalent in South African organizations.

Culture as a concept is a very complex area to deal with. From an Organisational point of view, it will relate to values, beliefs of how managers —walk the talk‖ and say about things (Oden, 1997: 3). It also relate to enhancing organisational performance through people. Therefore, women managers if fully integrated in the organization are an asset that no one can match or debate to the contrary. Corporate culture calls for values, beliefs that are rooted in people that dictate the way to behave and norms that are universally accepted.

2.7 Women's Leadership Development in the Saudi Arabia

This paper advances the scarce empirical knowledge that exists on women's leadership development in the Saudi Arabia. As a result of the increasing enrolment of women at all levels of education and in various fields of employment and aspects of public life, the past 10 years have witnessed a growing participation of Saudi women in senior management positions and in the decision-making process in public and private sectors. The government of Saudi Arabia has adopted a clear vision for the empowerment of women as reflected in recent development plans that show a clear shift in the orientation of planning efforts towards the development of women's roles instead of focusing on women's right to education and employment. Empowerment of women and enhancement of their involvement in public affairs have been clearly emphasized not only as targets of development plans but also rather as a means to achieve strategic objectives of development. Globalization and economic and social developments in Saudi Arabia indicate the strong conviction among policymakers that comprehensive and sustainable *Email: halahmadi@yahoo.com Human Resource Development International Vol. 14, No. 2, April 2011, 149–166 ISSN 1367-8868 print/ISSN 1469-8374 online 2011 Taylor & Francis. http://www.informaworld.com.

Development could not be reached without activating all social actors of development in the global society (Metcalfe and Rees 2010). It is quite clear that Saudi Arabia is embracing a new strategic direction to recruit qualified women into positions of leadership at the top of the hierarchy in public and private sectors. Saudi women are slowly but definitely assuming high positions that include deputy minister, university president, Shura Council consultants, board members of Chambers of commerce and many other new and exciting positions in both the public and private sectors. The roles and skills

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of women leaders have received increased attention by researchers and practitioners in business and public organizations all over the world (Omair, 2008; Stead and Elliot, 2009).

This growing interest is triggered by the importance of leadership as an essential element to the survival of organizations and as an instrumental factor in their strife for excellence (Stead and Elliot, 2009). This interest is also influenced by the increasing role that women play in organizations and in the economy in general. This paper provides new understandings of women's leadership progress and challenges in Saudi Arabia. The study presents results of a survey of 160 women leaders in various government sectors in Saudi Arabia to identify challenges and suggests human resources solutions to assist women's empowerment. Findings and recommendations should prove useful in raising awareness among policymakers regarding the experiences of women leaders in Saudi Arabia and the challenges they face and in identifying factors that may facilitate their role. The study argues that commitment to women's leadership development is an important aspect of broader social change in Saudi Arabia. Research problem Due to globalization forces, Saudi Arabia has witnessed major changes during the past few decades, with women taking more responsibility in public spheres and occupying higher positions in organizations (Alchoui, 2009).

In the past three decades, there has been a marked shift in the approach to women's issues from welfare to development. The second strategic pillar of the Eighth Development Plan emphasized 'increased attention to women's affairs and development capabilities, and removal of barriers to participation in the development activities, in line with the Islamic values and teachings'. In this context, the plan identified one of its overall objectives as 'the empowerment of women and increasing their participation in different areas, whether within the family or in the workplace, and to provide better opportunities in decision-making and empowerment'. Furthermore, the recommendations of the Third National Dialogue Forum that was held in 2003 on women's rights and responsibilities constituted a foundation for future organized efforts for reform. The recommendations called for the expansion of women's role, their participation in public endeavours and expression of opinions, an examination of the legal system and its role in empowering women, the separation of traditions and customs from law and religion and the creation of new educational endeavours, both academic and vocational and new work opportunities for women. Despite the considerable expansion in the role of women in Saudi society, evidence indicates that women in upper management positions are facing a different reality from their male counterparts due to various structural and cultural factors that impede

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their effectiveness as leaders (Almenkash et al., 2007). These factors have been found to impede women in management in other Gulf countries.

As reported by Al-Lamki,1999, the main obstacles for women managers were limited opportunities to higher education, discriminatory appointment and promotion practices, traditional attitudes of male bosses towards working women, male dominated sectors, male resistance to women in management, absence of policies and legislation to ensure participation of women in management positions, a lack of professional networking, a lack of female role models, a lack of professional management development programmes, a lack of a sufficient number of quality day care centres, dual responsibilities of traditional and professional roles, balancing traditional and professional roles and family obligations as a wife and a mother for childbearing and child rearing. Despite the similarities in the challenges facing women leaders in Arab and Muslim countries, the working environment of Saudi women may differ due to the relatively recent entry of women into the labour market and the gender-based segregation in the workplace and in all aspects of public life. Thus, this study attempts to answer the following questions: (1) What are the challenges facing women leaders in Saudi Arabia? (2) Do these challenges differ according to personal and professional characteristics, including the level of education, specialization, years of working experience and years of experience in administrative work, job title, marital status and age? Women, leadership and development this part of the study reviews the literature on challenges facing women leaders in general and in Saudi Arabia and other Arab countries in particular. There are similarities that women face all around the world but the unique culture in the Gulf region poses a different set of challenges. In western countries, cross-cultural studies on women as managers have found a common rising trend in women's enrolment in leadership positions and found that women managers worldwide share a number of similarities including stereotyping, lack of role models and lack of access to training (Stead and Elliot, 2009).

Research on women in top management positions in three Arab Gulf countries found that the challenges faced by those women included discrimination at work, cultural taboos, negative attitudes towards working women and lack of confidence and trust in women managers (Wilkinson, 1996). Research identified several inhibiting factors for women that include organizational factors, such as personnel systems/traditional career paths, male employee attitudes and women's own attitudes (Cooke, 2007).

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Culture reflected in the set of beliefs and practices associated with the local community, as well as in the work place, can adversely reflect on the effectiveness of women leaders and their ability to exercise a positive leadership role. In her assessment of leadership role of women in the Arab world, Shahine, (1997) argues that despite the growing leadership role of women in society, traditional beliefs and practices on behalf of the community prohibit the career advancement of women. Traditional beliefs are reflected in associating leadership abilities with men and not women, in questioning the effectiveness of the few women who have reached positions of leadership, and in the negative attitudes about women in leadership positions, with a common belief that in order for them to be effective leaders they Human Resource Development International 151 need to adopt characteristics that are not naturally associated with women, such as assertive behaviour, commitment and motivation. The cultures and customs of the tribal community prevailing in the Arabian Peninsula prior to Islam have contributed to the conservative orientation towards women in Islam (Alajmi, 2001).

Effendi, (2003) further argues that because most Arab cultures are patriarchal, a substantial segment of the various Arab societies have, in fact, placed women in a passive role at work and in the family. Therefore, Effendi, (2003) maintains that it is not Islam as such that places women in these roles, but rather the way that patriarchal societies interpret Islam to support their positions regarding what is and what is not an acceptable behaviour for women. Abdulla, (1996) studied attitudes towards women in the Arabian Gulf region and found that women are still locked into restrictive traditional roles. Results indicated the presence of a gender gap, with women having more favourable attitudes towards working women, while men are not willing to share public responsibilities with them. Similarly, Ibrahim, (1997) points out that there is a major contradiction in the views in the Arab world towards women, which reflects a deep rift in the fabric of Arab culture.

Ibrahim, 1997 further asserts that social institutions such as the family, school and the media play a critical role in perpetuating these negative values and attitudes towards women's work and role in society and their contributions to the process of sustainable development. This attitude towards women is not unique to the Arab world; it is a problem in western societies as well. In a review of research on leadership and gender, Shimanoff and Jenkins, 1991 state the following: Research has demonstrated that there are far more similarities than differences in the leadership behaviours of women and men, and that they are equally effective. Still, women are less likely to be preselected as leaders, and the same leadership behaviour is often evaluated more positively when attributed to a male than a female.

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In a review of women in management, Berthoin, Antal, and Izraeli, 1993: 63 states that 'probably the single most important hurdle for women in management in all industrialized countries is the persistent stereotype that associated management with being male'. Structural factors can present an important challenge to women leaders due to managerial and organizational practices, women managers around the world are often found in lower management positions that give them little access to power and few meaningful challenges (Omar and Davidson, 2001). Evidence similarly indicates that women leaders in Saudi Arabia face a number of structural challenges, including limited authority, which is disproportionate to the size of their responsibility (Al-Halawani, 2002; Almenkash et al., 2007; Abdullah, 2008).

A study conducted by Al-Halawani, 2002 concludes that women in many sectors of government are operating under the umbrella of men, which impacts negatively on the performance of women sections, and that the constant intervention by men restricts their freedom to make decisions. The study further concludes that lack of authority and centralization of authority in headquarters run by men limit women's ability to lead effectively and to make decisions, even those that concern their own departments (Al-Halawani, 2002). Research studies suggest that women's sectors in Saudi Arabia face several organizational shortcomings including the lack of clarity in the organizational relationship between women's and men's departments, poor coordination. Al-Ahmadi subordination of women's sections on the organizational chart (and in some cases not including women sections in the organizational chart all together), as well as a lack of control over financial and material resources (Almenkash et al., 2007).

Almenkash et al., 2007 indicates that poor communication and inadequate information system contribute to the widening gap between women sections and top leaders, as well as the isolation of women's sections from the course of events that take place at the corporate headquarters, and the lack of participation in strategic planning and academic decision-making and membership in academic and administrative committees. Lack of empowerment can be another challenge facing women leaders, which is reflected in their inability to influence the decision-making process and achieve organizational goals due to the lack of tools or methods of empowerment (Metcalfe, 2008). Empowerment can be achieved through access to knowledge, the granting of sufficient authority and access to information, as well as through self-development, reward and encouragement, participation in setting goals and policy-making and identifying means and methods (Kubaisi, 2004).

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Thus, any deficiency in any of these aspects will result in a lack of empowerment and, consequently, ineffective leadership. According to Effendi, 2003, empowerment enhances the moral and physical sense of belonging and affiliation with the institution, leaving a positive effect on the psyche of the individual, and enhances feelings of appreciation and importance to the institution. Evidence suggests a number of factors contributing to the lack of empowerment of women leaders. These include lack of administrative efficiency, limited training opportunities, lack of professional exchange opportunities and cooperation with other institutions to gain diverse experiences, the exclusion of women from some policies and regulations and from participating in decision-making (Almenkash et al., 2007) and lack of access to information (Sultan, 1994). Evidence also shows that the amount and quality of leadership training available to women is not adequate to meet the demands of their role as leaders; women often undertake training based on self-initiative, which does not follow a strategic plan for leadership development in the organization (Al-Ahmadi, 2005).

Several factors associated with the personality of women leaders and their social circumstances, may hinder their ability to fully exercise their leadership role effectively. These include lack of self-confidence, fear of responsibility, difficulty of balancing professional responsibilities and family obligations and the sense of isolation in the administrative position, in addition to physical and health factors and psychological pressures. Some scholars assert that women are subjected to socialization, educational and social pressures that may prevent the formation of values and attitudes appropriate to leadership roles, thus limiting the effectiveness of some women in leadership positions (Shahine, 1997). Studies show that working women face role conflict as a result of the difficulty of balancing professional and social or family obligations in the absence of structural support (Al-Halawani, 2002). Ibrahim, 1997 indicates that feelings of frustration and suffering among women increase because of this dual role and the accumulation of the sense of marginalization, inferiority and lack of self-confidence.

In the study by Alajmi, 2001, the highest ranked personal traits identified by respondents as impacting women in leadership positions in Saudi Arabia are energy, self-confidence and independence; they do not rank very highly in initiative, taking risks or relationships. Human Resource Development International based on the review of the literature, it is concluded that women leaders face many challenges that limit their effectiveness and prevent them from achieving their leadership potential. These include organizational structure, culture, policies and practices, as well as individual factors such as personal skills, capabilities, confidence, support, ability to achieve balance and a sense of

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empowerment. This is similar to many western regions, but the Middle East region faces additional concerns relating to greater importance of family ties and the significance of religion in governing all work and social relationships, which both men and women support (Metcalfe 2008). Although several studies have been conducted on this subject, the current study comes at a time that is critical in Saudi Arabia, where important social reforms for women are taking place. The advancement of women in the public sphere is an important goal for the region, given the implementation of the eighth development plan, and the Millennium Development Goals (MDG), that strongly emphasize the need for women empowerment.

2.8 South African Organization Culture

Culture, impacts on the way gendered identity and roles are viewed. Gendered values and perceptions are constructed within a corporate environment with the results that an inclusive, genderless corporate culture will positively impact on women's professional success. South African organizational culture was one that was for many years white male dominated and is still alleged to be a society that has different rules and roles for men and women (Ramagoshi, 2001). Unfairness still takes place regardless of the view that social equality is one that is feasible in organizing principle for shaping equality of life and circumstances of living individuals and groups in society, as well as for structures of all human relations.

Cameron and Quinn (2006:37-45) provide a clear distinction of the types of cultures that can be found in an organization such as follows:

- Clan culture is more family type and focuses on the internal matters that are very flexible. Such cultures are more accommodative of change. Flexibility would suggest that scheduling meetings for woman managers who have children will not be excluded or sacrificed. It is important for management to build a climate of support that is acceptable regardless of whether it applies in any organizations circumstances, irrespective of whether who manages it.
- Adhocracy culture embraces an extremely dynamic and external focus. The environment fosters innovation adaptability and entrepreneurial work place. In this case women managers my see the environment as hostile and not supportive of their nature and management will resist change if the incumbent is seen not conforming to the environment. Subtle sabotage that resist change

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in the form of the institutionalized politics that are weak are prevalent and will not readily promote women in managerial positions.

In South Africa, male role models dominate the corporate culture. Women's biggest problem is patriarchal and male domination. They were brought up to fear their fathers or males and this culture is inculcated in their so upbringing. In the absent of role models in the managerial levels, those who occupy positions of power in the corporate, tend to apply the prevailing male norms and values to themselves, in the principle of role concept. Due to this practice, they view men as role models and mentor because, of the relatively low percentage of women in those career groups. They quickly learn masculinel to manage in their orientation which enforces the male manager stereotype and confirms the negative female stereotype. The South African organizational culture therefore embraces the concept of a culture that is more male orientation, highly subservient, supportive and of submissive quality. Culture that depends on the man at the helm because they dominate the corporate in which men are supposed to be assertive, tough and focused on material success while women are supposed to be more modest, tender, and concerned with quality of life is biased and out dated (Hofsted,1998:6-7). The masculine characteristics of management such as aggression, competitiveness that are expressed in the language and ideas of management are worrying and a challenge to women managers. The democratic South African society stands for a culture in which both men and women are supposed to be tender, modest, and concerned with quality of life. A strong culture that is supportive by participative leadership from both men and women with the ability to inspire and empower people and drive the company through product and process innovation to increase organizational effectiveness and exceed organizational goals is embraced. There is a need for women managers to promote their traditional cultural values such as support, empathy and open communication in order to remain successfully integrated in the corporate culture.

2.9 Women in Apartheid South Africa

South African women live in a society split by the vestiges of apartheid. The system divides the people of South Africa into separate groups, and from the enforced divisions arise differences in the position of women. It is necessary, therefore, to differentiate in describing their conditions and their lives (Bernstein, 1985: 7).

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Whites are a powerful and privileged minority. In spite of a considerable linguistic and cultural variety amongst them, under apartheid they formed a single group in contrast to the black majority which is divided into several groups in order to facilitate the maintenance of the apartheid system and white domination (Bernstein, 1985: 7).

Life roles are laid down at birth, in first place by skin colour, in the second place by sex and economic class. To the overwhelming extent a child's whole life, her education, her possibility of achievement, jobs and status as well as everything affecting her personal relations, is predetermined by these three factors. The stratification of South African society has it basis in colonial conquest. The consolidation of domination by the white minority and the perpetuation of racial laws and ways of thinking has been basic to the policies of successive governments (Bernstein, 1985: 7-8).

The outstanding feature of South Africa's industrialization was the utilization of migrant labour, originally almost entirely male, controlled by the pass law system. The vast majority of African women were left outside the industrial labour market, while male migrants served a period of contract labour away from their homes for most of the year, with women, children, old and disabled people subsisting on small pieces of land in the Bantustans. The results have been an extreme form of exploitation of both migrants and their families (Bernstein, 1985: 8-9).

Black women in South Africa suffer from a three-fold oppression: as blacks; as women; and as workers who largely form a reserve army of labour. The three strands are interlaced. Black women cannot change the immediate conditions of their lives without fighting against the restrictions on, for example, free movement or access to education, both of which are controlled by apartheid laws (Bernstein, 1985: 11).

2.9.1 Lack of Jobs

Not only are there few jobs for women living in the Bantustans, but there are barriers to obtain work. Restrictions are imposed on their mobility, both by law and by traditional cultural expectations. Many of the women, having been denied access to education, are not only illiterate but frequently unable to speak either English or Afrikaans, an obstacle to all but most unskilled physical labour (Bernstein, 1985: 32).

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In recent years 'border industry' jobs have been created on the fringes of some of the Bantustans. These jobs, usually in small-scale craft or textile production, are done by women at the lowest end of the wage scale (Bernstein, 1985: 32).

The increase restrictions since 1952 on the movement of women administered by means of a system of labour bureau and the influx control regulations make it extremely difficult for them to leave the country areas. But despite the prohibitions on moment starvation and their desperate conditions drive women to seek work, often illegally (Bernstein, 1985: 32).

The Bantustans are both reserves and reservoirs. They are reservoirs from which the apartheid regime can draw its supplies of labour at will, and they are reserves that must accept the unemployed, the old and disabled, all those women who have no function within the operation of apartheid; all those, in fact, two are not needed by the white-run economy (Bernstein, 1985: 32).

2.9.2 Customary Union

Men who had come into ownership of cattle or children were not inclined to part with them merely because a woman wanted her freedom, and the only alternative left to the woman in the absence of cattle refund from her father, was to give up her children. Even today, an African man may repudiate his marriage unilaterally simply by forfeiting his lobola rights, but an African woman has no equivalent right. Lobola was thus one of the means whereby women were under the dominion of men in traditional society. An African woman married by customary union is in most cases considered a minor under the tutelage of her husband. She cannot own property in he own right, except for their clothing and a few personal possessions; and if she earns money or in any way acquires property this becomes the property of her husband. She is unable to make a valid contract without her guardian's consent; or to sue or be sued. Her husband can do this on her behalf (Bernstein, 1985: 36)

2.9.3 Common Law

To be married under community of property means that the husband acquires guardianship of the wife, who is considered a minor. He holds 'marital power', which means that a wife cannot enter into a binding contract or open a credit account without the prior permission of her husband. Until 1953 the husband could even take his wife's earnings, but the Matrimonial Affairs Act of that year alleviated the

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legal disabilities of married women. The wife's earnings are protected, although her husband may still take possession of anything she has bought with those earnings unless she obtains a court interdict against him. An ante-nuptial contract excludes the husband's marital power and leaves his wife in full legal capacity in most matters (Bernstein, 1985: 37).

2.9.4 The Family

In town and country today, South Africa teaches potent lessons in the meaning of the family, of patriarchy, of the exploitation of women. The illusion persists that the individual family is the basic economic unit of society. The conventional morality relating to the family, piously upheld by the state by its propaganda, by its religious institutions by its laws and its codes of ethics is unrelated to reality. The establishment of Bantustans, restrictions on women entering the towns, mass population removals, harsh laws relating to movement and work, and most of all the spread of migrant labour, all these have had a devastating effect upon human relationships as expressed in terms of marriage and the family (Bernstein, 1985: 38).

In 1968 the separation of migrant workers from their families was made more absolute by the introduction of a new system of contract labour. Prior to 1968 a migrant worker whose family had some access to with his family and working on his land before entering the labour market one more. The new 1968 system made it obligatory for migrants who wished to re-register in their jobs to return within 28 days. By law, a migrant must return to his home area to review his contract, but may have little more than two weeks each year to live with his family (Bernstein, 1985: 37).

2.9.5 Independence

The enormous gap between the idealized theory of the family and the brutal reality under apartheid has resulted in the emergence of the independent woman. In both town and countryside African women often find themselves heads of households and particularly in urban conditions this has had spreading effects on social relations. Still totally dependent in terms of law and of patriarchal customs, they find themselves in actuality forced into a bitter independence, forced to become the responsible ones, the decision-makers. The results of this situation have changed their status and will make an important impact on relationship in the future (Bernstein, 1985: 43-44).

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The truth is that to survive, black women have had to develop a high degree of independence and to exert great strength of character. Sociologists have commented on the emergence of the single, independent, black woman. Speaking on the 'changing status of Africa women' Professor Monica Wilson of the University of Cape Town said that women's rights were destroyed more by the fact that they were part of a disenfranchised community than that they were women. The most pressing disability of African women is the restriction on the rights of movement and residence which prohibits their joining their husbands who are working in the towns (Bernstein, 1985: 44).

2.9.6 At Work

The picture of women in work in South Africa is a changing one. Women constituted 33 percent of the total workforce by 1980, as compared with 23 percent in 1960 according to official figures for employment. But while the proportion of women in the workforce is increasing, and while there are shifts in the main sectors in which they work, the effects of the apartheid system are always present. The main sectors in which women work are agriculture and manufacturing. A high proportion of those employed in occupations other than agriculture and domestic service are in jobs connected with the world of domestic needs, in food processing or canning works, in garment manufacturing and laundry, and among professional workers, in nursing and teaching. Service categories such as office and shop cleaning, laundry work, cooking, waitressing, tea and kitchen work as well as messenger are described as important for women (Bernstein, 1985: 58).

2.9.7 Manufacturing Industry

The restrictive laws and practices of apartheid have inhibited movement of black women into industry. The development of secondary industry coincided with the decline in rural output and these growing industries were increasingly absorbing female labour. In the 1930s and 1940s, however, it was young white women from poor rural Afrikaans homes who came to the towns to service these growing industries, and until 1936 the female workforce in these industries was predominantly white, but the situation was transformed between 1939 and 1946. The argument that women are paid less than men because they are not the heads of families, and are simply supplementing the family income, does not stand up to scrutiny. African women are paid dismally low wages. In a study carried out by the University of Port Elizabeth in 1982 the average weekly wage of women employed in manufacturing

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industry was found to be R38, less than half of the absolute minimum required by an average family (Bernstein, 1985: 68).

Minimum wage differentiation on the grounds of sex has technically been outlawed but women are generally employed in less well-paid jobs than men. Both the 1956 Industrial Conciliation Act and the 1957 Wage Act endorsed discrimination along sex lines. The Industrial Relations Act of 1982, which is seen as abolishing wage discrimination along sex lines, has done very little to change the situation for African women. The act merely regulates the minimum wage paid to workers, but does not abolish sexual discrimination in practice. Women perform different jobs to men and therefore it can be claimed that they are deserving of different pay (Bernstein, 1985: 68).

2.9.8 Professions

The position of women in the ranks of professional workers reflects the status of women in South Africa, across the whole spectrum of colour. Statistics can be misleading. According to the official figures, in 1980 97 300 African women were classified as 'professionals' and on 79 880 men. In fact the African professional men are mainly teaches, and the overwhelming number of black women in the professions are teachers or nurses (Bernstein, 1985: 73).

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2.10 Commission on Gender Equality Bill, 1996.

The South African government realised that they must draft a Bill which will provide for the composition, powers, functions and functioning of the Commission on Gender Equality; and to provide for matters connected therewith.

2.10.1 Staff of Commission

1. The Commission shall at its first meeting or as soon as practicable thereafter:-

(a) In consultation with the Public Service Commission and Minister of Finance, appoint a suitably qualified and experienced person or a person seconded in terms of subsection (4) as Chief Executive Officer of the Commission for the purpose of assisting the Commission in the performance of its financial, administrative and clerical functions; and

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(b) Be assisted by such staff, seconded in terms of subsection (4) or appointed by the Commission in consultation with the Public Service Commission and the Minister of Finance, as may be necessary to enable the Commission to perform its functions.

2. The persons appointed by the Commission in terms of subsection (1) shall receive such remuneration, allowances and other employment benefits and shall be appointed on such terms and conditions and for such periods, as the Commission may, in consultation with Public Service Commission and the Minister of Finance determine.

The Commission may in the performance of its functions contemplated in subsection (1)(a), at its request after consultation with the Public Service Commission be assisted by offices of the public service seconded to the service of the Commission in terms of any law regulating such secondment.

3. The Commission may in consultation with the Public Service Commission , in the exercise of its powers or the performance of its functions by or under this Act or any other law, for specific projects, enter into contracts for the services of persons having technical or specialized knowledge of any matter relating to the work of the Commission, and with the concurrence of the Minister of Finance, determine the remuneration, including reimbursement for travelling, subsistence and other expenses, of such persons.

2.10.2 Remuneration and Allowances of Members of Commission

(1) The remuneration, allowances and other terms and conditions of office and service Benefits of the full-time and part-time members of the Commission shall be determined by the President.

(2) The remuneration of the members of the Commission shall not be reduced during their term of office.

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(3) A part-time member of the Commission may, for any period during which that member, with the approval of the Commission, performs additional duties and functions, be paid such additional remuneration as may get ermined by the President.

2.10.3 Independence and Impartiality

(1) A member of the Commission and a member of the staff of the Commission shall serve impartially and independently and perform his or her functions in good faith and without fear, favour, bias or prejudice.

(2) No organs of state and no member or employee of an organ of state nor any other person shall interfere with, hinder or obstruct the Commission, any member thereof or a person appointed under section 6(1) 0r 7(1) or (5) in the performance of its, his or her functions

(3) All organs of state, including any statutory body or functionary, shall afford the Commission such assistance as may reasonably be required for the protection of the independence, impartiality and dignity of the Commission.

(4) No person shall conduct an investigation or render assistance with regard thereto in respect of a matter in which he or she has any pecuniary or any other interest which might preclude him or her from exercising or performing his or her powers and functions in a fair, unbiased and proper manner.

(5) If any person fails to disclose an interest contemplated in subsection (4) and conducts or renders assistance with regard to an investigation while having an interest so contemplated in the matter being investigated, the Commission may take such steps as it deems necessary to ensure a fair, unbiased and proper investigation.

2.10.4 Powers and Functions of Commission

(1) In order to achieve its object referred to in section 119(3) of the Constitution the Commission:-

(a) shall monitor and review policies and practices of:-

(i) organs of state at any level;

(ii) statutory bodies or functionaries;

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(iii) public bodies and authorities ; and

(iv) private businesses and institutions, in order to promote gender equality and may make any recommendations that the Commission deems necessary.

(b) shall develop and conduct:-

(i) information programmes; and

(ii) education programmes

to foster public understanding of matters pertaining to the promotion of gender equality and the role and activities of the Commission.

2.11 Working Wives and Professional Careers

Most women's 'careers' involve unpaid work and paid work, commitment to family as well as to paid work, downward mobility as well as upward mobility. To understand women's working lives, we must examine unpaid work, paid employment and their interactions in the context of the USA, Canada, Britain and South Africa.

Women's careers in the professions should be understood against the changing patterns of women's work in the modern world. Women's labour market participation has steadily increased over the years. In 1971, 51 percent of married women were classified as 'economically inactive, but in 1990 this proportion was down to 29 percent (OPCS, 1992: 71). By the late 1980s approximately two out of three women aged 16 to 59 were in paid employment (OPCS, 1991: 48). This means that women were now entering the job market in large numbers as shown by the statistics.

Higher rates of economic activity in these respective countries, especially in full-time work, are associated with higher educational qualifications. Young women with career prospects are the ones most likely to keep paid employment when they have children (OPCS, 1991: 53).

The rewards women bring home from paid employment show more resistance to change. Evidence from the New Earnings Survey shows women's hourly earnings at 76% while that of men is 190%, with little change over the previous decade. Since women work a shorter week, their gross weekly earnings are lower, at 68 percent (OPCS, 1991: 57). Women in non-manual jobs earned 63.5 percent of

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their male counterparts' salaries per hour (manual figure 72.0 percent) and 60.7 percent per week (IRS, 2001, 3). It seems that women manual workers have pushed up their hourly earnings, but weekly earnings remain low compared with men who do longer hours, especially more overtime. Non-manual workers earn a low proportion per hour, compared to men, but have earnings less sensitive to the length of the working week. These figures seem to reflect career patterns, with women having a flat career path contrasting with male career gradients (Harrison, 1999: 17).

Career mobility is another critical feature of employment. The traditional expectation is of a ladder going only up. Women's withdrawal from the labour market to have children is often followed by a chequered pattern of part-time work, reduction in status and earnings, combining paid and unpaid work roles. Women in careers may be more able to accrue the advantages attaching to a more 'male' working life: in particular resources to pay for childcare with the ability to sustain continuity. But their career pattern shares feature with those of less advantaged women. In some ways they meet special hurdles. If careered occupations are organized as a continuous, upwardly mobile, single-minded path-way, their structures put women at a peculiar disadvantage (Harrison, 1999: 18).

The segregation of women at work has been with us for a long time. Women work in a limited range of occupations and are more likely to be at the bottom of hierarchies. Segregation applies also to careered work, with historical patterns in medicine and nursing a long way from obliteration, and some nearly exclusive male areas, such as engineering. The Hansard Society's report on Women at the top found that: 'In any given occupation' and in any given public office, the higher the rank, prestige or influence, the smaller the proportion of women' (Hansard Society, 1990: 2).

Women's paid employment does not therefore have the same meaning as men's – does not bring the same status, capacity for independence, has lower pay, lower status in hierarchies and segregation of many women into 'women's professions, some of which are collectively answerable to 'men's professions. These raise the question about the nature of professionalism for women. Family obligation and position in hierarchies likewise change the meaning of a career. These are serious reservations to set against genuinely radical changes in the pattern of women's working lives (Brannen, 1991: 251-252).

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2.12 Women's Continued Responsibility for Childcare

Most women continue to leave the labour market to care for young children, leading to downward mobility in terms of job status and income on return. Here women's careers come most sharply into conflict with the traditional idea of career. The very highly structured career paths of professions such as medicine, which require intense career building in the early stages, present a special barrier to women with children. But even traditional women's occupations, such as nursing, have failed to offer a 'career' that can comfortably be combined with childcare (Mackay, 1989: 49).

2.13 Legislating for Equal Opportunities and Equal Pay

Despite the theoretical possibilities inherent in our Bill of Rights, and the practical evidence of European countries pertaining to female employment, Western equality laws have had little impact on women's position at work, and less on women's careers. Use of the law to enhance women's position is controversial. Male dominance of legal institutions may make law an inappropriate vehicle (Smart 1989): The existence of 'Equal pay' legislation may disguise continuing inequalities and hinder change at other institutional levels. The alternative argument is that we should acknowledge the power and limitations of law, and seek to use it (Morris and Nott, 1991: 11).

Scandinavian experience suggests that legal reform may make differences, though here equal opportunities legislation has been part of wider reforms. The British legislative environment has hindered the realization of equal opportunities. The criticisms are well known: interpretation of the law has often been restrictive. Many women and men who are workers have been put in unequal battles with employers who can command far more resources to stifle their chances of ever lodging a successful complaint against them. The complexity of cases – especially equal value cases – and consequent expense is a deterrent without legal aid. Also the industrial tribunals which hear cases are not specialized in equal opportunities; and finally, women who win cases may receive little compensation, and may be victimized at work. The legislation has not been widely used, thus reducing incentives for employers to improve practices, or even to comply with the law. British equal opportunities legislation dates from the 1970s with the Equal Pay Act, the Sex Discrimination Act and the Employment Protection Act.

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The British political context has not favoured major developments towards addressing gender inequalities at workplaces. Conservative governments, mostly in office since equality legislation was enacted, have had some place of Equal Opportunities. Malcolm Wicks quotes Margaret Thatcher as arguing that if women wish to be lawyers, doctors, engineers, scientists; 'we' should have the same opportunities as men (Wicks, 1991: 15). But that place is limited. It is limited theoretically to equal rights. Women wishing to be lawyers should be treated equally. All these are limited in practice by a preoccupation with protecting and enhancing women's caring roles in the family. However, progressive forces from Europe are working towards extending social rights, with a wider interpretation of equality for women at work. The European Court has also enforced such changes on the national government (Wicks, 1991: 16).

The Equal Pay Act, enacted in 1970 and implemented in 1975, provided an opportunity for women engaged in the same labour as men, to receive the same pay. Female speech therapists, for instance, sought equal pay with male pharmacists and clinical psychologists whose salary exceeded theirs by about 60 percent. Women with access to the same pay scales as male counterparts – academics and school teachers, for example – may still find themselves in more marginal positions, in part-time and/or less secure employment. The Equal Pay Act allows employers to pay different amounts to different employees – even for doing similar work – if there is a material difference not based on gender.

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The legislation thus legitimates a male model of career with high levels of reward for those who climb the ladder and lower levels for those who simply do the work; it does not challenge the steepness of the ladder's incline. The Gender Discrimination Act may be expected to deal with a range of working practices detrimental to women: age limits, conditions for geographical mobility, discriminatory recruitment and promotion procedures; to help women acquire qualifications through access to training; and to plan career, through access to working conditions compatible with childcare.

Nearly twenty years of operation have brought some successful cases. Women have won cases over age limits, interview questions about marital status, and denial of part-time work to a single parent. All of these cases touch on family responsibilities and are thus relevant to women's careers. But for all the above cases, there are others where the law has been interpreted more narrowly. The 1980s and early 1990s, then, have seen some widening of equality legislation in directions which could offer protection to women developing careers, and which acknowledge the different meaning and experience of career for women. This has been supported by the European Community, while going largely against the

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grain of British government policy. However, the implementation of legislation has remained cumbersome and ineffective, to the extent that people use it at their peril. It is based on the above that we now critique the South African socio-political landscape.

2.14 Gender Discrimination in South Africa

According to the South African Constitution, Act 108 of 1996, the Bill of Rights indicates that everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection and benefit of the law. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms.

The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. No person may unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds. National legislation must be enacted to prevent or prohibit unfair discrimination (South African Constitution, 1996).

The Constitution indicates that South African law is vehemently opposed to gender discrimination, and that if the Constitution is thoroughly enforced, our society will move away from practices that are discriminatory, to say the least. In this vein, many women in South Africa have been at the forefront of fighting gender discrimination in the form of dance, protest and songs in order to show or spell out their yearnings and frustrations.

2.15 Theoretical Framework

This research was guided by feminist theories which argue that gender discrimination has its roots in differentiations according to gender and patriarchy. It also draws from the three mainstreams of feminist epistemologies such as Radical Feminism, Liberal Feminism and Marxist Feminism, to mention but a few. Also, Black Feminism, which is not necessarily different from other strands of feminist ideologies, but mainly deals with the divide along racial lines, encouraged this researcher to look at issues that are pertinent to Black women, especially within the context of Africa.

The radical feminists have encouraged radical thoughts and revolutionary trends in diverse areas of science and scholarship (Goldberger, 1998: 132). It has brought a critical analysis to the question of

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women's issues and suggested a total overhaul of patriarchy as it was/is seen to be the root cause of women's oppression all over the world, whereas the Marxist standpoint is that the position of women around the world cannot be divorced from the economic conditions which result from the capitalist mode of production (Green, 1999: 39). What is uppermost to the oppression of women is the emergence of the notion of "property". This means that women have been pushed to the margins and relegated to reproductive labour, or merely as the property of men in the process of maximizing profit.

This argument is relevant when one looks at the conditions of women in the Thulamela municipality where this study is conducted. Almost 80% of them still live under harsh conditions. Though the Constitution of the country protects them, they are still affected by the patriarchal rule that relegates suggests their position as inferior to that of men. On the other hand, the liberal feminists are keen on changing the position of women by way of participating in the government and other institutions and associations that espouse women's emancipation from patriarchy. Actually, liberal feminism goes further to refute Marxist feminists by saying that it is not enough to argue that patriarchy and capitalism are twin evils. In their own words; to consider patriarchy an avatar or a consequence of capitalism alone is to refuse to see the specificity of this gender based system (Alternative, 2005).

Their participation in government is to change the status-quo so that it can favour women, especially in light of the fact that there are more men than women in organizations and government. Therefore, women should invest more in politics so that they can change their condition from within. It is based on this background that a clear feminist approach to investigating gender inequities in the Thulamela municipality and particularly in schools was the point of focus.

2.16 Principles of Feminist Research

Feminist research is contextual, inclusive, experiential, involved, socially relevant, complete but not necessarily replicable, open to the environment and inclusive of emotions and events as experienced (Nielsen, 1990: 6, Reinharz, 1983: 28). It involves an ongoing criticism of non-feminist scholarship, is guided by feminist theory, may be trans disciplinary, aims to create social change, strives to represent human diversity, includes the researcher as a person, frequently attempts to develop special relationships with the people studied and, finally, frequently defines a special relationship with the reader (Reinharz,1992: 33). Putting gender in the center of social inquiry, making women visible and representing women's perspectives are a major part of feminist critical research (Harvey, 1990: 154).

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It places emphasis on women's experiences, which are considered a significant indicator of reality (Harding, 1987: 41) and offer more validity than does method; in a wider context feminist research involves primarily the development of women's history, for example by recasting history to take account of women's roles and by reconstructing it in terms of women's rather than men's concerns, or by writing the history of women's realms of experience (Harvey, 1990: 154). Feminist research method includes observation, participation, archival analysis, and interviewing, thus combining the assets and weaknesses of each method.

2.17 Nature of Feminist Research

The foundations of feminist research are those of critical theory. Hence this research model was critical and emancipatory, and perceived reality, science and research within the context of the standpoint of feminist theory (what is often referred to as standpoint theory). Briefly, feminist research studies the social conditions of women in a sexist, male stream and patriarchal society (Stanley and Wise, 1993: 12), and enlightens people about taken for granted sexist practices and the gender blindness of government and community practices (including publication) that displaced, ignored and silenced women, led to an unequal and discriminating social order, and held them captive for amillennia of years. Hence, there is a focus of research that binds together all branches of feminist in order to change the assumption that the world is socially constructed, displays a relative aversion to empirical positivistic methodology, and rejects the value free nature of research (Haig, 1997: 57, Punch, 2000: 61). Feminist researchers employ a qualitative and quantitative methodology, although they adjust the latter to meet the requirements of the feminist paradigm.

2.18 Prospects of women in the leadership positions

The down of democracy in South Africa has brought many prospects and challenges for women. Previously women were not considered for leadership positions in the community and in the family, hence the adage which says "Khuhu ya phambo a i imbi mutsho" loosely translated, it means women have no chance or space in the initiation of a discussion in the family (Mutele, 2012: 226).

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2.19 Prospects of women folks

Women as people are acceptable to all people of all stages of society. Many youth elderly people and middle aged people accept them when they raise issues. It is because they understand the conditions of youth, middle aged and elderly people well (Mutele, 2012: 226).

2.20 Performing Circumcision duties

Before democracy, men and boys were taken to the bushes to be circumcised during the winter months. Since the dawn of democracy many women took up medical professions in hospitals. This means many women qualify to hold medical posts which include the responsibility to do circumcision for men and boys. Women are also used to circumcise boys and men in the hospitals. In other words, boys no longer need to be sent to the bushes for circumcision. They can be sent to the hospitals to be circumcised by doctors either male or female who are qualified to do so (Mutele, 2012: 227.

This is contrary to how it was done prior to 1994, when this process was done by men and women were not allowed near initiation schools. This health function leads to a situation where some women nurses open private clinics where they render services such as circumcision on you boys (Mutele, 2012: 227)

2.21 Conclusion

A study of this nature relies on ideas from other scholars in advancing theoretical input in terms of women's position in society. The perspectives on women in Western Europe, and UK provided useful basis for the study on South Africa. In particular, feminist thought which developed earlier in these countries was found useful for this study. The study also looked at specifics within the South African context in which colonialism and apartheid contributed to the position of women occupying lower ranks in the South African social strata. Government policies however, are making effects in the transformation of the society. Legislation is available to advance women through empowerment initiatives but some of the challenges involve implementation and attitudinal problems especially when women assume responsibilities associated with men. The next chapter looks at how data was collected to make this study possible.

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CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter seeks to describe the research methodology that the researcher embarked upon. It also gives an overview of the approaches that were used to reach the objectives of the study, and specifies the data that was collected and the method that was used to collect the data, followed by the description of the study area, the population sample and the ethical issues encountered in the process of the study.

3.2 Research Design

Research design structures, the research provides a kind of roadmap to the logic inherent in one's approach to a research problem. The design serves as a guide to the systematic collection of data (Schalleger, 1996: 95). Bless, Higson and Smith (1995: 65) further defines a research design as the planning of scientific research from the beginning to the end. Research design is the plan and the structure of investigation conceived to obtain answers to the research questions (Cooper and Schindler, 2001: 134). Mouton (2004: 49) refers to a research design as the type of study to be undertaken, in order to provide acceptable answers to the research problem or questions. The following is the presentation of the data that accrued from the questionnaires that were disseminated in most of the schools that were mentioned earlier.

In this study, the researcher used a sample of school principals and their deputies and heads of departments of specific subjects. The reasons for this was that this group of people serve the education department in various was but important provide leadership to the various schools in the district. This sample also shows the composition of men and women and it is from such a sample that the researcher analyzed the relationship between men and women.

The second aspect that the researcher used was a questionnaire as an instrument of data collection. The purpose of the questionnaire was to have a set of questions related to the study and distributed to respondents who would respond to the questions in their own time without interference. Added to that, a focus group interview was also conducted to close gaps that were identified in the process of data collection.

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3.3 Research Methodology

The method used in this research was a combination of both qualitative and quantitative research methodology. According to Schalleger (1996: 109) Quantitative methods are important for the insight they provide into subjective workings of the women in leadership and the process by which meaning is accorded to human experience. De Vos (2001: 241) maintains that qualitative approach is an approach that aims to understand social life and the meaning that people attach to everyday life.

This research was a descriptive study that sought to identify the challenges confronted by female principals in Thulamela Municipality. The aim of this study was to investigate the challenges faced by women in their leadership positions in high schools. The study looked at the interaction between female principals and their subordinates and that of male principals as well as their views regarding leadership. Both primary and secondary data was collected. Secondary data was collected in the form of an extensive literature review and primary data was collected using both qualitative and quantitative methods. The Quantitative method of data analysis was used to collect the demographic data from respondents. Qualitative method was used to collect data from respondents which were largely from high schools. The study also used feminist theory as described in the literature review, which is a theoretical framework for interpretation and discussion of the findings of the research. The key informants for this study were the principals of the high schools.

Noak and Wincup, (2004: 11) indicates that it is important to employ a qualitative approach on the challenges facing women in leadership and their argument is based on the fact that it leads to an appreciation of the social and day to day life in the world from the point of view of women in leadership positions. They further maintain that qualitative research can complement quantitative research by designing of the research instruments for the collection of quantitative data. The latter means that the researcher will study the previous incident of the woman in leadership, conduct interviews using questionnaires for the Principal, Vice principal, and Heads of Department, both men and women has to complete.

Qualitative approach helped to inform the development or amendment of the policies about challenges facing women in leadership within the Thulamela Municipality. The qualitative approach provided the researcher with an in-depth knowledge of the challenges facing women in leadership positions, and also offered a breakthrough for the participants to talk about their experiences vis-à-vis the problems

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are facing at workplace. For quantitative research, numerical data was collected by the researcher and examined in an unbiased manner.

3.4 Population and Sampling

3.4.1 Population

White (2005: 113) describes a population as all possible elements that can be included in the research whereas Wegner (1989: 4) defines a population as a collection of all the observations of a random variable under study, and about which one is trying to draw conclusions in practice.

3.4.2 Sampling Procedure

According to De Vos (1998: 191) a sample comprises the elements of the population considered for actual inclusion in the study, while Spector (1981: 2) refers to a sample as a subgroup of the total population, specifically those individuals chosen from the population that was involved in an experiment or are to be respondents in a survey. He also identifies six steps in the sampling process which are as follows: Definition of the population, specifying the sampling unit, the sampling method, determination of the sample size, specifying the sample plan, and selecting the sample.

Huysamen (1989: 82) identifies some important sampling principles and maintains that the selection sample must represent the population in its totality, the characteristics of the population in question must be present in a similar ration, the finest details of the problem at hand must be included in sampling and sampling must indicate results which are stable.

3.4.3 Sample Size

The researcher endeavored to obtain completed questionnaires for 20 people which are principals, vice principal and heads of department. The self-administered questionnaires were given to men and women in leadership in the schools in Thulamela municipality.

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3.5 Data Collection

Data may be gathered by a variety of data collection methods and it is imperative that data collection process be accurately documented for the following reasons (Mouton, 2001: 104): as a historical record for yourself and other possible researchers, and as a form of quality assurance.

Without data and information, it is not possible to conduct a research, draw conclusions from the research findings or put forward recommendations. There are two main data sources, example, primary data and secondary data. Welman (2002: 71) differentiate between primary data and secondary data by explaining that "secondary data consists of information that already exists somewhere, having been collected for another purpose. Welman and Kruger further indicate that "primary data consists of original information gathered for the specific purpose".

3.5.1 Primary Data Source

Primary data is data which was captured at a point where it was generated (Wegner, 1993: 13). In this study, the researcher used a questionnaire which was distributed to 20 participants.

3.5.2 Secondary Data

Secondary data is retrieved mainly from existing information. Secondary data source is data collected and processed by others for a purpose other than the problem at hand (Wegner, 1993: 13). Secondary data is an existing data that can be used in solving the problem in question. Wegner (1993) further indicates that secondary data is useful in spheres like formulating the decision making problem, suggesting methods and types of data for meeting information needs, interpreting and evaluating primary data, making final decisions, and when research activities should be kept confidential. The researcher used books, journal articles, internet and various act as sources of secondary data. The researcher also used questionnaires and interviews during the research process.

3.5.2.1 Questionnaires

According to Clapper (2004: 3) the advantage of using a questionnaire is that it is inexpensive to administer, and can be completed anonymously by respondents, it is easy to compare and analyze, and

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lots of data can be gathered whereas Leedy (2001: 198) believes that the advantage of questionnaires are that participants respond to them with confidence and there is an assurance that their responses remain anonymous. The disadvantage of a questionnaire is that once distributed, it is not possible to change the items (Mason, 1997: 310).

The contents of the questionnaire were formulated to accommodate different respondents such as the principals, the vice principals and heads of department.

The following types of questions were asked by the researcher: yes/no questions (close-ended questions), statement questions on a scale those respondents had to respond to: fully agree, agree to a certain extent, disagree to a certain extent, and fully disagree.

3.5.2.2 Interviews

An interview is a face to face engagement with the participant. Interview are useful in the circumstances (Webb, 1992: 122) like when the issue under investigation is embarrassing, stressful, or confidential, when a detailed analysis of rather complex situations such as attitudes, beliefs and feelings have to be conducted, when peer pressure may cause some respondents to conform to social norms, whereas in reality they would not, when the interviewer needs a progressive set of images, and in complex situations where the aim is to explore rather than measure.

Webb (1992: 124) lists the following advantages of interview: It provides a richness and depth of data that cannot be matched by most of the other forms of data collection. It also provides an opportunity to ascribe a response to a single individual. It allows the interviewer to develop close rapport and a high degree of trust with the respondent, which may encourage a freer flow of conversation and more valid results. The researcher ensured that the results of the study were accurately and confidently interpreted. The researcher also ensured that the results which are obtained from the participants are also applicable, or generalizable to the Thulamela Municipality.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis generally involves the use of mathematical techniques intended to uncover correlations between variables, and to assess the likelihood that research findings can be generalized to other

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settings (Schmalleger, 1996: 106). Graphic representation was also used because it made data easy to be interpretable and analysable. The data was interpreted using simple frequencies to analyze the demographic characteristics of the respondents. For the qualitative data that was collected through interviews, matrices were created according to the themes and the responses were grouped in accordance to their relevance to the themes.

3.7 Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

3.7.1 Reliability

Makomane (2005: 33) refers to reliability as the degree of dependability, consistency or scale of stability whereas De Vos (2001: 85) defines reliability as the accuracy or precision of an instrument. Babbie and Mountain (2004: 121) propose that the best method of reliability is to use measurement techniques that have been designed by other social researchers.

3.7.2 Validity

Webb (1992: 126) defines validity as the degree to which an empirical test adequately reflects the real measure of the concept under consideration. The researcher also ensured that the results which are obtained from the participants were applicable or generalizable to a larger population of the Thulamela Municipality.

3.8. Ethical Requirements

Ethics deal with the development of moral standards that can be applied to situations in which there can be actual or potential harm to an individual, a group or an organization. As part of ethical considerations, the researcher should respect and protect the rights of participants. The right to privacy and voluntary participation, confidentiality, and anonymity were respected. The following should also be taken into consideration by the researcher and should form part of the study: Respondent's time to be considered. The researcher should not lead the respondent to a desired outcome.

The researcher should not force any respondents to complete the questionnaire, and the benefits of the study should be explained by the researcher to the respondent. The researcher issued an informed

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consent form to the respondents and also sought verbal consent. Those who agreed to participate were classified as respondents. The interviews were conducted at their venue of choice, and for principals, the exercise was conducted at their various schools. The issues that emerged from the respondents were documented and analyzed. The identities of the respondents remained anonymous for the sake of confidentiality and fear of victimization within the work place.

Sudman (1998: 644) identified the following as the researcher's obligations to participants: Participants should not be harmed. On physical level this means that the participants should not be burned, shocked, prodded nauseated or generally subjected to discomfort whereas on emotional level not to harm participants means they should not be embarrassed, ridiculed, belittled or generally subjected to mental distress .The researcher should maximize the respondent's convenience and minimize the potential discomfort. Participants should not be deceived. Deceiving participants about the length of the interview, or omitting to inform them of very long interviews, can be regarded as unethical. Participants should be willing and informed. Data should be held in confidence. The researcher's obligation is to hold data in confidence. Research participants have a right to confidentiality unless they specifically waive this right.

Mouton (2001, 240) suggests the following professional ethics: Objectivity and integrity in research. Scientists are obliged to always report their findings fully and not to misrepresent their results in any manner. Researchers should also disclose details of their theories, methods and research designs that might be relevant to interpretations of research findings. A researcher is not allowed to create untruthful data. Falsification of data is regarded as one of the most serious transgressions of the scientific code of ethics. After they have completed their own analysis, scientists should cooperate in efforts to make raw data and pertinent documentation, collected and prepared at public expense, available to other scientists except in the case of confidentiality. Ethical publishing practices. Plagiarism should be avoided at all costs.

The researcher complied with all ethical considerations for conducting a research on human subjects. All participants filled out an informed consent form in which they were told about the purpose of the study, voluntary participation, and freedom to withdraw their participation at any time without penalty or interrogation. Their answers were treated with strict anonymity to protect their identities and no unauthorized access was allowed to the completed questionnaires.

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3.9 Conclusion

The section on methodology is very important for the study. This dealt strategies and how data was collected and analysed. The study used both qualitative and quantitative research methodologies. The main reason for using both methods was the fact that each method on its own could not provide solutions to address the specific needs of this study. As the study was exploring perceptions and attitudes towards female leaders within the education department in Thulamela municipality qualitative method had to be used. As numbers were of importance in the study, quantitative method had to be used as well. The next chapter deals with the findings of the study.

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CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

4.1 Introduction

This chapter focuses on the presentation, analysis and interpretation of the findings of the study. The chapter analyses the data that was collected through the usage of a questionnaire by way of interpreting frequencies, demographics, the level of education of the participants, as well as their gender. The chapter also records the voices of those participants who took part in the focus group, and also gives some concluding remarks pertaining to the findings of the study.

4.2 Frequencies

This section deals with the frequencies, and percentages of the respondents on each question that was asked on the questionnaire.

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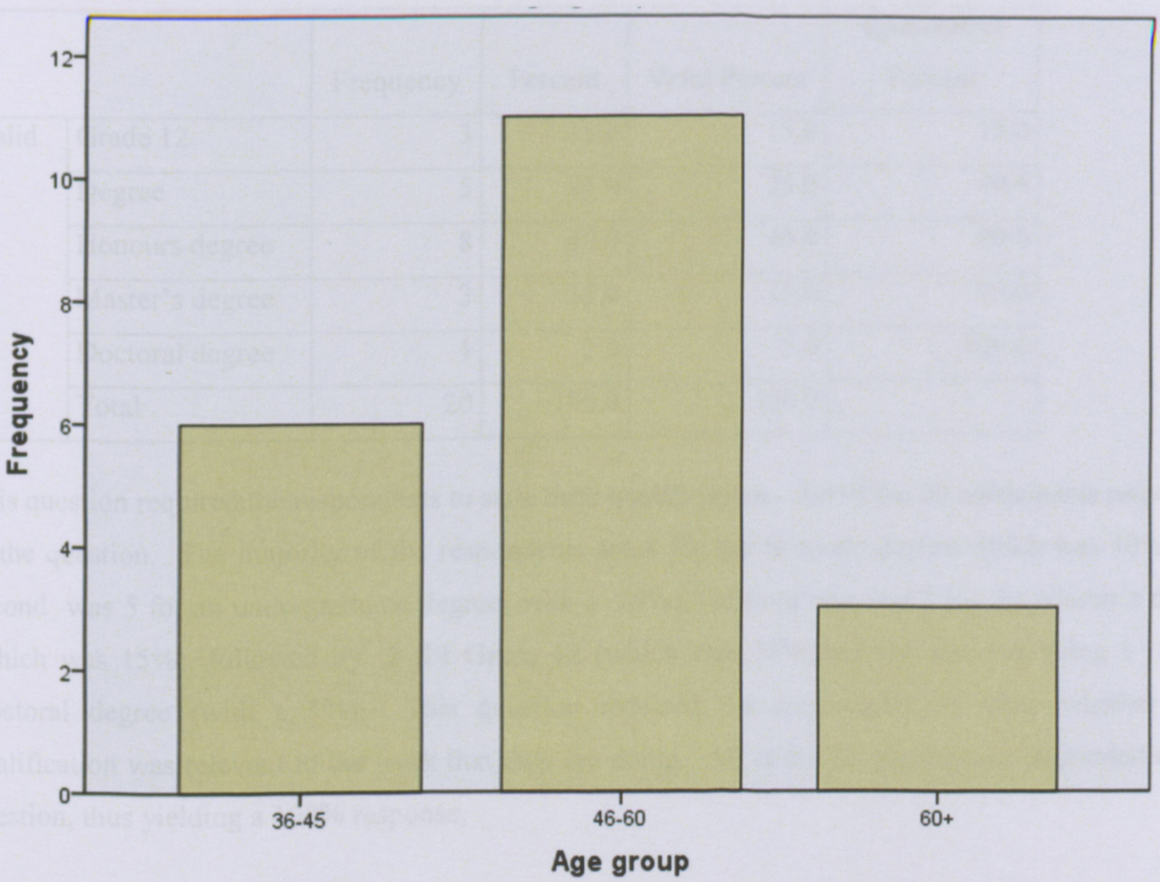
Graph no. 1: This graph below indicates that most of the respondents were women.



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Graph no. 2: The graph below indicates that respondents were between the ages of 40 and 60 years.



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Table no. 1: Most of the respondents had an honours degree as indicated by the table below.

Qualifications					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Grade 12	3	15.0	15.0	15.0
	Degree	5	25.0	25.0	40.0
	Honours degree	8	40.0	40.0	80.0
	Master's degree	3	15.0	15.0	95.0
	Doctoral degree	1	5.0	5.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

This question required the respondents to state their qualifications. All of the 20 participants responded to the question. The majority of the respondents are 8 for the Honours degree which was 40% , the second was 5 for an undergraduate degree(with a 25%), the third one was 3 for the Master's degree (which was 15%), followed by 3 for Grade 12 (which was 15%),and the last one being 1 for the Doctoral degree (with a 5%). This question required the respondents to show whether their qualification was relevant to the work that they are doing. All of the 20 participants responded to this question, thus yielding a 100% response.

Table no. 2

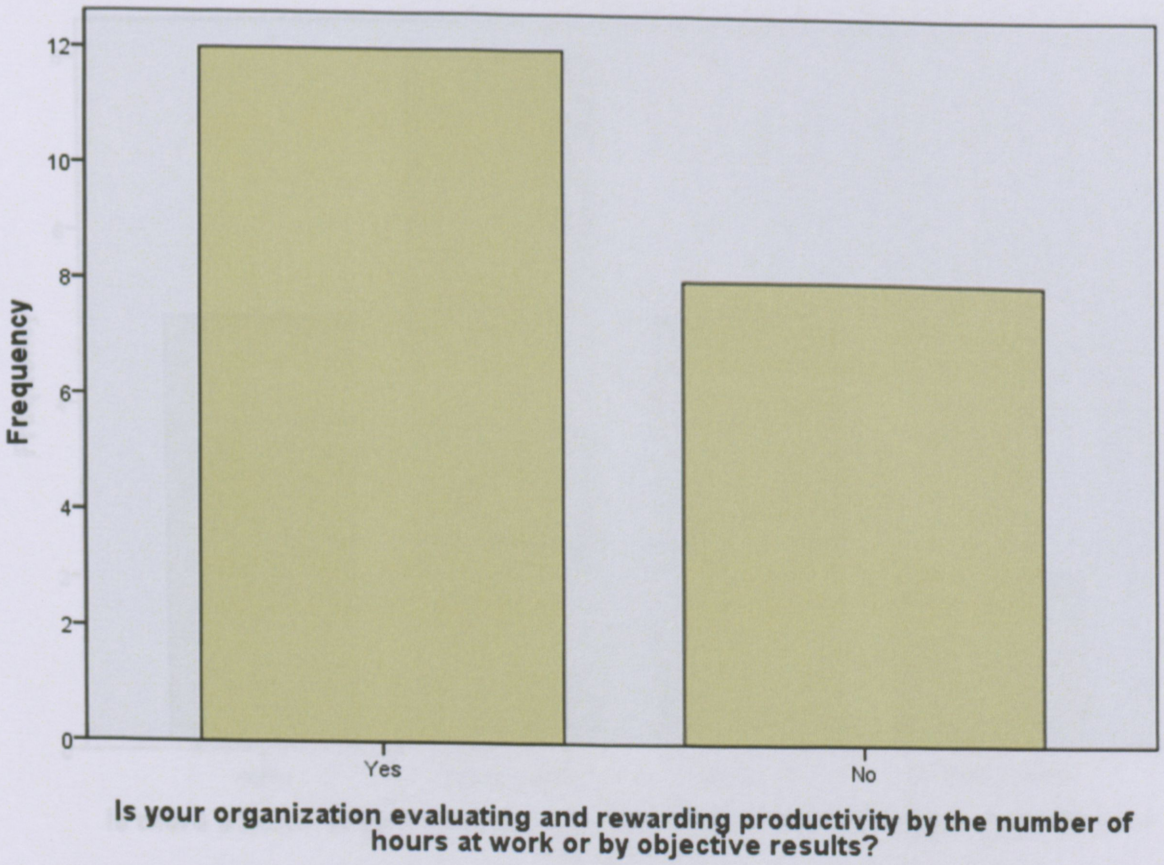
Recognition of women's cognitive abilities and leadership skills by men					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	18	90.0	90.0	90.0
	No	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

This question required the respondents to show if women's cognitive abilities and leadership skills are recognized by men. All of the 20 participants responded to this question. The majority of the respondents were 18 (90%).Only 2 respondents said no.

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Graph no. 3

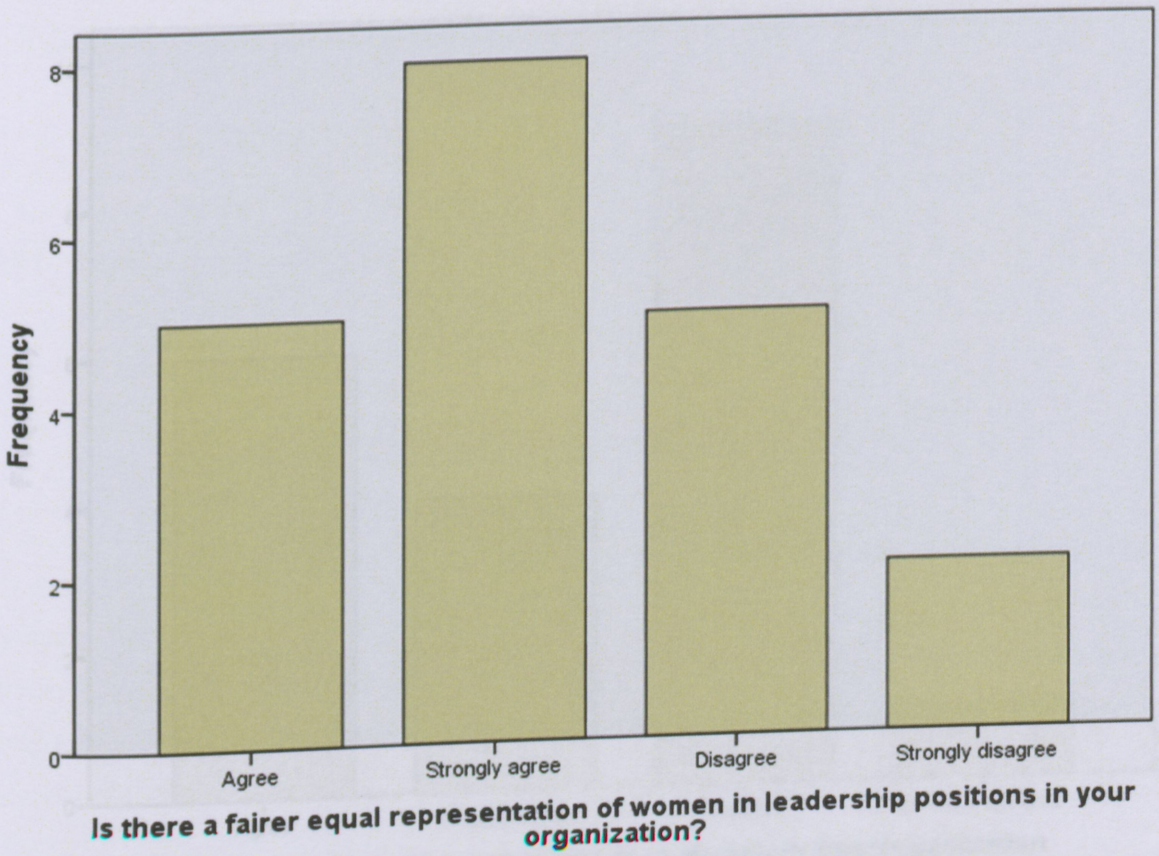


This question required the respondents to show their organization evaluating and rewarding productivity by the number of hours at work or by objective results. 20 respondents answered the question. The majority of the respondents were 12 (with a 60% response), and 8 respondents who said no (about 40%).

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Graph no. 4

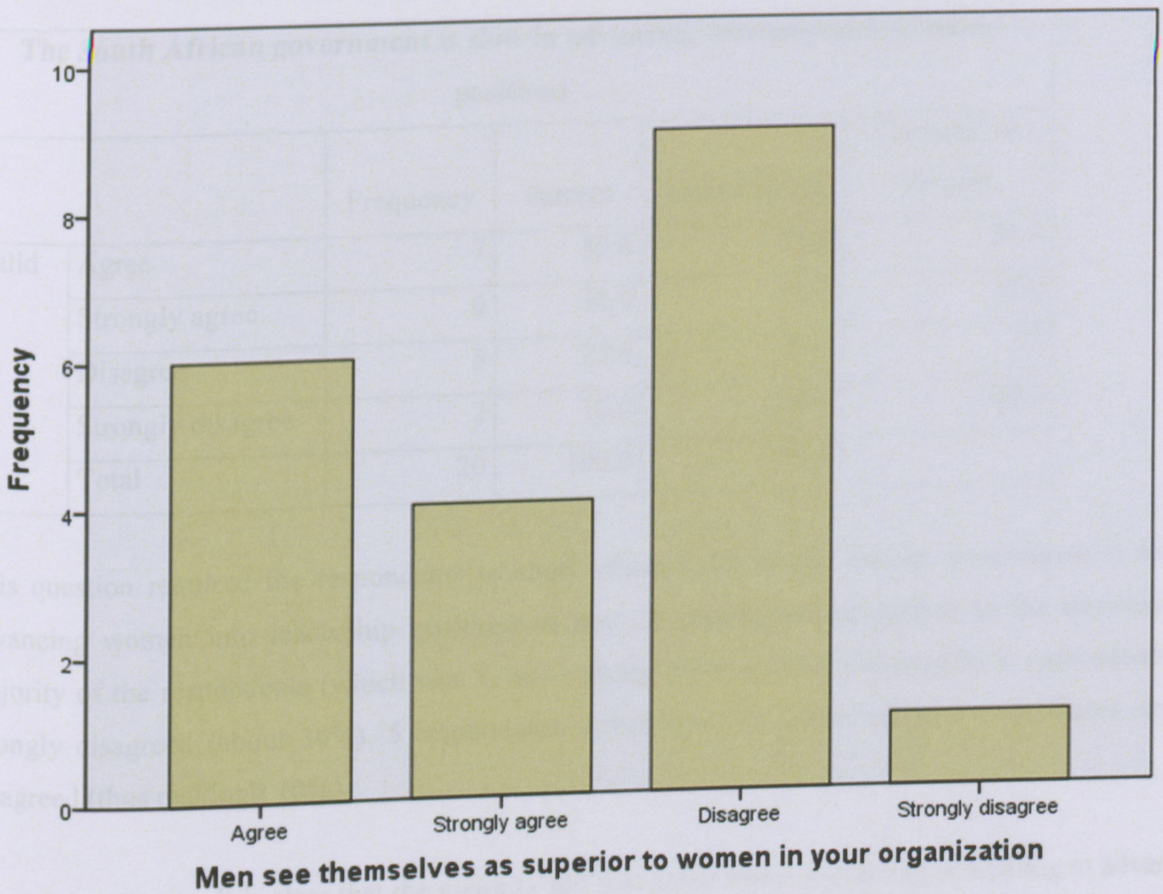


This question required the respondents to show the fairer equal representation of women in leadership positions in their organization. All 20 participants responded to this question. The majority of the respondents (8) strongly agreed (with a 40% response), 5 respondents was for agree which was 25% responded, 2 respondents was for disagree which was 10% responded, and 5 respondents was for strongly disagree (about25%). This indicates that there was a split (or a tie) in as far as the response was concerned.

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Graph no. 5



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This question required the respondents to show whether men see themselves as superior to women in their organization. 20 participants responded to this question. The majority of the respondents disagreed (about 9 in number, almost 45%). 6 respondents agreed (about 30%), while 4 respondents strongly agreed (about 20%,) . 5 respondents strongly disagreed(with a percentage of 5).This means that most of the respondents disagreed with the notion, followed by the 6% that agreed.

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Table no. 3

The South African government is slow in advancing women into leadership positions					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	7	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Strongly agree	6	30.0	30.0	55.0
	Disagree	5	25.0	25.0	25
	Strongly disagree	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

This question required the respondents to show whether the South African government is slow in advancing women into leadership positions or not. 20 participants responded to the question. The majority of the respondents (which was 7, and making 35%) agreed, followed by 6 respondents who strongly disagreed (about 30%). 5 respondents agreed (making 25%), while 2 respondents strongly disagreed (thus makingit 10%).

From the responses, it is clear that the majority felt that government was doing something to advance the position of women. For example, the Bill of Rights mentions equality between men and women.

The government has also designed an affirmative action policy to make direct intervention in terms of employment matters are concerned. Some companies even go to the extent of balancing gender equity in their employment statistics. This is the case in the department of education although the process is slow. However, there are those respondents who felt that that was not enough.

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Table no. 4

Are there support programs in your organization that are specifically designed to protect and advance women in leadership positions?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	8	40.0	40.0	40.0
	Strongly agree	3	15.0	15.0	55.0
	Disagree	5	25.0	25.0	80.0
	Strongly disagree	2	10.0	10.0	90.0
	Don't know	2	10.0	10.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

This question required the respondents to show the support programs in their organizations that are specifically designed to protect and advance women in leadership positions. 20 respondents answered the question. The majority of the respondents (which is 8 in number) agreed that there were support programs (about 40%). 5 respondents disagreed (about 25%), while 3 respondents(which 15%). 2 respondents strongly disagreed (about 8%), and 2 respondents were undecided.

Table no. 5

What is the extent and impact of women's leadership in Thulamela Municipality and institutions of learning since 1994?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Positive	5	25.0	25.0	25.0
	Hihly effective	3	15.0	15.0	40.0
	Negative	4	20.0	20.0	60.0
	Don't know	8	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

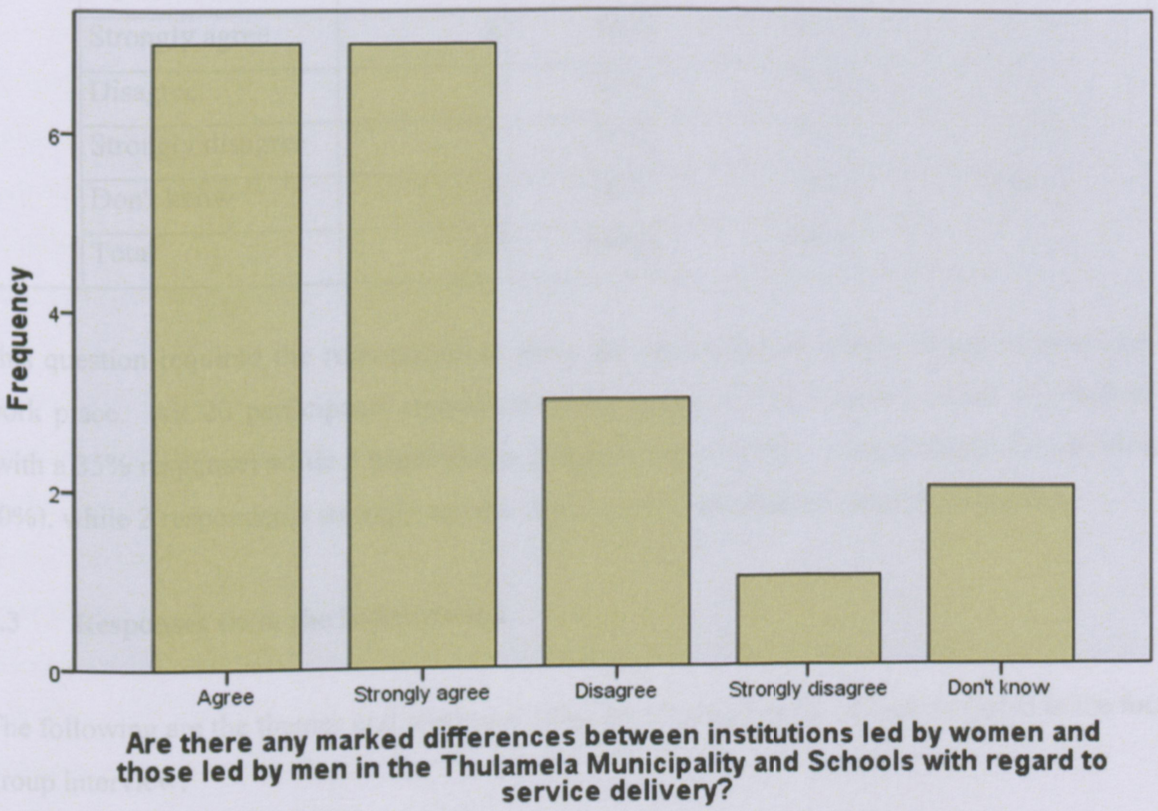
This question required the respondents to show the extent and impact of women's leadership in Thulamela Municipality and institutions of learning since 1994. All the 20 respondents answered the

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question. The majority of the respondents (8 in number) were not sure and also did not know (about 40%), 5 respondents agreed (with a25% response), while 4 respondents disagreed (a 20% response). 3 respondents strongly agreed (amounting to 15%).

Graph no. 6



This question required the respondents to show any marked differences between institutions led by women and those led by men in the Thulamela Municipality and Schools with regard to service delivery. All 20 respondents responded to the question. The majority of the respondents (almost7) agreed (which was 35%). 7 respondents (35%) agreed, while 3 respondents disagreed (about 15%). 2 respondents did not know, while 1 respondent strongly disagreed.

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Table no. 6

Are there psychological effects of gender discrimination at work place?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Agree	7	35.0	35.0	35.0
	Strongly agree	2	10.0	10.0	45.0
	Disagree	5	25.0	25.0	70.0
	Strongly disagree	2	10.0	10.0	80.0
	Don't know	4	20.0	20.0	100.0
	Total	20	100.0	100.0	

This question required the respondents to show the psychological effects of gender discrimination at work place. All 20 participants responded to this question. The majority of the respondents agreed (with a 35% response) while 5 respondents disagreed (about 25%). 4 respondents did not know (about 20%), while 2 respondents strongly agreed. Again, only 2respondents strongly disagreed.

4.3 Responses from the Interviewees

The following are the themes and responses from the 10 respondents who participated in the focus group interview:

4.3.1 Equal Representation in Leadership Positions between Men and Women

The **first participant** indicated that her opinions are not highly considered due to the fact that she is a woman. The government is still discriminating women when it comes to strategic positions, and the management of bigger projects. There is a difference between institutions led by women and those led by men, especially in primary schools because women are hard workers and are always fighting for excellence regarding service delivery in schools.

The **second participant** reiterated the point that most men still do not recognize the leadership of women. Men feel that they are undermined by the leadership of women. She further stated that women

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in leadership are striving towards perfection. They are doing their level best to produce good results even under adverse circumstances, and indicated that in each post, mention should be made that gender parity will be considered in the process of employment. There is no difference between institutions led by men and those led by women. Women are doing exceptionally well in their institutions and their results are exceptionally well. If the institution is governed by men, all the views brought by women are mostly ignored. This has to be challenged.

Participant 3 mentioned that in the past, women were viewed as inferior to men. This has led to women carrying an inferior complex in various sectors of life in general and in leadership positions in particular. Women were even legally discriminated in managerial and political positions. Traditional attitudes need to change with regard to women in leadership. The new political dispensation enhanced a positive view of women as leaders. The challenge is that some men are still racist and patriarchal.

Participant 4 mentioned that some women also still carry the inferiority complex while in leadership position. However, she added that equal representation should be based on competency and good quality leadership.

Participant 5 argued that traditionally women were regarded as the weaker gender. Due to changes in the government sphere, women are considered now for positions in various departments. This notion has fallen into discussion due to the fact that women have capability in leadership positions like men but have to remove the inferior complexes some are suffering from. However, in certain circles some men seem to be resisting talking instructions as communicated by women.

Participant 6 indicated that as a man, he has been reluctant to honour instructions that were given by a woman. A lot of men, according to him, disrespect the mandate assigned to them by women. However, he was comforted by the fact that women councillors these days are being sworn in in every municipality. "This means that we are moving away from gender discrimination", he said.

Participant 7 added by saying that equality in all institutions of the government, private sectors and the communal activities is of paramount importance for democracy to be practiced and enjoyed. Leadership qualities are not only endowed in men, but women too have passion of executing their duties if given a chance.

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Participant 8 reiterated that in schools, the position of a chairperson is, in many instances, bestowed on the shoulders of men. This gesture is due to a fallacious belief that women are of weaker species that cannot perform duties requiring innovation and dedication. Even in government offices, women that are found in decision making are very few. Many of them report to men who are their seniors.

Participant 9 agreed that it is imperative to note that there is an urgent need to upgrade women to be at par with men in the corridors of power.

Participant 10 strongly argued that there is no equal representation in leadership positions between men and women. When it comes to the school governance, it is realised that many of the leadership positions are occupied by men, women are being looked down by SGBS (School Governing Bodies). Most Management posts like Principalship and Deputy Principalship positions are occupied by men. It is only in Primary School leadership posts where femalesoccupy higher positions.

She added that sometimes women look down upon themselves in a manner that they even do not apply for leadership position in large number, yet they are qualified enough.

4.3.2 The role of the Government on Gender Mainstreaming

Participant 1 noted that the democratic government ushered in a new era where the plight of women has become the burning issue. He also indicated that the fight against discrimination of women in leadership positions is still raging. He further hinted that certain leadership positions should be reserved for women so that there should be equal representation. In many municipalities, women are in Mayoral positions, e.g. in Thulamela. This should be commended.

Participant 2 and participant 3 shared the sentiments that the government has the responsibility of teaching the public that women are eligible for leadership in the different departments in government institutions. They said that the mass media such as television has not adequately addressed the plight of women in South Africa. The media has to be at the centre of fighting on behalf of all groups that are marginalized and discriminated against. This includes women to have problems dealing with the inferiority of women in leadership positions.

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The government is playing a major role in gender mainstreaming.

Participant 4 and 8 Suggested that there should be an intense form of conscientisation at grassroots level as to the importance of involving the government on issues of mainstreaming.

Participant 5,7, and 9 said that the government must ensure that there is gender equity from the shortlisting from those who are applying for government jobs in order to bridge the gap unless if there is no female candidate from the applicants. The government should make it a point that the top management considers gender equity because in many institutions there are more males than females. The government should interfere if a male applicant is recommended where there is a female applicant interviewed.

Participant 9 indicated that in the department of education, there are some sectors which are responsible for the enforcement of equity act. The equity committees have also been established from circuit level to highest authority in the department. The government is trying to bring balance in disadvantaged people e.g. women who had no say before in institutions etc. They are trying to encourage different sectors also to consider the disabled people also to play role in the leadership equality is being enforced in all sectors e.g. schools, NGO's etc. She further said that the Government is trying to reach the balance but this equilibrium is not yet reached. Again, the government has a programme of Affirmative action, but it is not doing what it is meant for. Most primary school principals are females and males are mostly based in secondary schools. The government is streaming its employees by preferring to employ males in management positions and vice versa on females in primary schools. Women are well qualified and competent but are not given the opportunity because of gender stereotyping.

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4.3.3 Support Programs for Women in Schools

The research established in some schools, some women have progress in terms advancing to deputy, HOD and principal positions. Some have also shown effective management in their respective schools. However, many participants indicated that women should stand together and protect their hard won gains especially in institutions of higher learning.

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Participant 2 and 9 were of the view that the government is giving support for women in schools to capacitate them. There is this program called WIIM (Women In and In Management) wherein women are given some training regarding management. This is seen as a good forum that empowers women to be in leadership positions. In some circuits, they celebrate Women's Day wherein they encourage women to apply for managerial posts and motivate those who are already in those posts.

Participant 3 and 5 further said that workshops and seminars should be used to empower women. In cases where women managers are lacking, there has to be a deliberate move to include them. These women should also be promoted not as a token, but because they have the skills and are able to perform.

Participant 1 and 6 emphasised that there should be a budget that has been put into place in order to enable women to have access to information for purposes of empowerment. There should be an information centre in every district which will be used to train women in skills development.

Participant 7 and 8 is of the view that the department of education is not making efforts of coming up with support programs for women in schools. An inferiority complex is still a problematic issue to most of the women. Therefore it is very much important that the Department should come up with the Strategies of training them about the historical and cultural effects of patriarchy.

4.3.4 The Impact of Women's Leadership in Thulamela Municipality

Participant 1 and 3 said the following regarding the above theme: "*In our municipality, more women are ascending the ladder of leadership. The mayor of this municipality is a woman. Most Councillors are women. Women in leadership are more progressive. We find them in Civic organisations making things happen, because they are hard workers. Most primary schools are led by women principals and the schools are better organised.*"

Participant 5 and 7 added by saying that women are capable of taking decisions and sticking to their resolutions. Participant 8 and 10 stated that women were denied opportunities to be leaders or managers just because of their gender. They were regarded as weaker beings even at workplaces. Participant 2 and 4 have realized that gender equity is practiced on a higher note in the Thulamela municipality because most of the high ranking positions in this municipality are occupied by women.

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4.3.5 Gender Discrimination

All the participants are in agreement that the Apartheid system was highly patriarchal, and that women were regarded as second class citizens in spite of the fact that they too participated in the struggle for liberation. Participant 5 emphasized this point by saying that the apartheid political policy went to an extent of discriminating against women in leadership positions. It was very rare to find a woman who occupied any managerial position. Women were highly discriminated through legislation. Participant 7 added by saying that the male mind set is not yet completely changed. Some still view a woman as inferior, who cannot lead successfully. Participants also urged the departments of education to implement the Schools Act policy so that women could be elected to high posts of responsible leadership. The same should apply in the process of nomination and elections of the RCL. Girls must be groomed to be future leaders at schools and in their communities.

4.4 Conclusion and Recommendations

Judging from the responses above, we can deduce that women are still being marginalized from leadership positions. For this marginalization to be eradicated there has to be gender equality in socio economic and political spheres of our lives so that our democracy can be vibrant and our national aspiration for progress can be realised. Women are discriminated from the process of appointments inmany positions of leadership. The data has established that even if they are shortlisted, it is very rare for them to be hired or employed into these positions. Most of the school governing boards in the Vhembe district have been left wanting in as far as the employment of female teachers into higher positions, is concerned. Another disturbing finding is that when a woman is to be appointed to a higher position, she faces a tough and steep rejection from her colleagues, thus giving an impression that women are also participants in the process of their subjugation.

Data has also indicated that learners, on the other hand, look down upon female leaders or managers. The Department itself is afraid of the SGB's decisions. This then brings to the fore the idea of introducing gender modules in the syllabus so that there can be gender awareness classes in our schools. Participants have also realized that there have been some strides in challenging gender discrimination and patriarchy in our school and communities. However, much still has to be done by way of conscientisizing about people so that we can have zero tolerance on gender discrimination.

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To date, most people do not take kindly to women who are in leadership positions. In conclusion, it is imperative for women to be confident, to prove themselves, and not wait for some form of valorisation from their male counterparts.

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