CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE MANAGERS AT EMONDLO CIRCUIT IN NQUTU DISTRICT

By

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DECLARATION

I, Phumzile Debra Zwane, declare that the dissertation for the degree of Masters in Education at the University of Zululand hereby submitted has not previously been submitted by me for a degree at this or any other University. This is my own work in design and execution and all materials contained herein has been duly acknowledged.

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P D ZWANE (MISS)

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ABSTRACT

Challenges facing female managers at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district

The purpose of this study has been to determine the challenges facing female managers in the schools that they manage in the Emondlo circuit of the Nqutu district. Literature, strategies and models were used to determine empirically how the female managers manage their schools effectively.

Little has been documented about the challenges facing female managers in the new dispensation in South Africa. In addition, little attention is paid to support them in their management roles in schools.

In this study, a self-administered questionnaire method was used to gather data. A 31-item questionnaire was developed to determine the perceptions of respondents regarding the challenges facing female managers at Emondlo circuit.

A random sample of 11 schools managed by females were chosen. In each school, the questionnaire was filled in by the female school manager only.

The empirical investigation conducted revealed that the female managers experienced problems including discipline and absenteeism among both educators and learners. The study also revealed that some of them lacked relevant management skills and knowledge.

The study finally revealed that some female managers have greater barriers to overcome than their male counterparts and that discrimination is a major obstacle to their advancement.

Finally, conclusions were drawn with regard to data gathered from the literature as well as from empirical research findings. In this study, some recommendations are made with regard to research findings. It was found that workshops, staff development programmes and seminars are some of the best strategies in helping the female managers to perform their duties effectively.

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ORIENTATION

1.1 INTRODUCTION

South Africa has emerged from a socio-political order that was characterised by discrimination against, and neglect of females. This state of affairs is evidenced by gender distribution in the education system. Affirmative Action was meant to correct these imbalances by way of providing a legislative basis.

The new constitution has gone a long way towards ending this state of affairs. For example, according to section 9 of the Constitution (Act No. 108 of 1996), all South Africans are equal before the law. Now females and males are regarded as equal. This equal imperative is not readily observable in the management positions at school level. The gender issue is the focus of this investigation.

This chapter gives the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the method of investigation and the definition of terms.

1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

These are extraordinary times where female managers face challenges from males, and even from their own gender. Females may disregard one another due to certain antagonisms or elements of mistrust. This problem serves to work against mutual support that would enable females to redress gender imbalances confronting them.

Although females are managing to ascend the occupational ladder, they are expected to work twice as hard as males to have their management competence recognised in the workplace. The female principals are mainly concentrated in the lower primary schools

and to some extent in higher and combined primary schools, with less audible voice than males in the education system.

The female managers may be associated with an assortment of negative descriptions. These may include assumed lack of leadership qualities, frequent absence from work, physical indisposition or infirmity, lateness for meetings and engagement in idle talk. They lack acceptance as superiors by both males and female subordinates. It would appear that the majority of gender-related experiences which female managers face may entail reluctance of both males and females to accept a female "boss".

In this regard female managers are sometimes faced with isolation, lack of acceptance and in some cases direct or indirect emotional and psychological abuses. According to the patriarchal culture, males are always independent, creative and successful, while the females are dependant, less powerful and likely failures.

Female managers seem to be particularly frustrated by the "glass ceiling", which allows them to see where they might go, but also prevents them from getting there. They are being blocked in their attempts to gain access to higher positions in professional life. They remain clustered in lower positions. Some people think that they are being promoted because they are using sexuality to gain favours from their senior males.

Against this background, the distribution of females in management positions and gender stereotypes associated with this, highlight the significance of the present study.

1.3   PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to investigate the challenges facing female managers with reference to school managers at eMondlo circuit in the Nqutu district.

The main objectives of this study were:

1.3.1   **Objective 1:**   To determine from literary sources the challenges facing female managers in their management of schools.

1.3.2   **Objective 2:**   To investigate empirically challenges facing the female school managers in Nqutu district.

1.3.3   **Objective 3:**   To report on the findings as well as to provide recommendations.

1.4   RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.4.1   Literature Study

This study entails literature review on gender studies and females in educational management.   A thorough study of the relevant literature was used.   Information was gathered amongst female principals as managers of schools.   Gender was therefore central to the study, especially as it is related to female managers.

1.4.2 Empirical Investigation

1.4.2.1Questionnaire

A questionnaire was developed and pre-tested.   It consisted of closed and open-ended questions.   The aim of the questionnaire was to gather information from schools which are managed by females at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district.   This questionnaire focused on the challenges facing the school managers and what is expected from them for effective performance of their duties.

1.4.3 Population and Sampling

At Emondlo circuit in Nquthu there are eleven schools which are managed by females. There are six lower primary schools, one higher primary, two combined primary schools and two senior secondary schools. The Nqutu district is one of the four districts within the Vryheid region in KwaZulu- Natal

This study made use of a random sampling which took into account the proportion of each school's category. The total number of schools headed by female managers were selected for the questionnaire. The total number of schools constituted the sample of study with a breakdown of six lower primary schools, one higher primary school, two combined primary schools and two senior secondary schools.

1.5   DATA ANALYSIS

Data analysis was done by using simple statistical techniques. Where applicable, qualitative analysis was carried out.

1.6   DEFINITION OF TERMS

1.6.1   Challenge

Challenge, in simple terms, means a "difficult task" or something that stands in the way of success. It is the problem which equals one's capacity to tackle. In this study, the term "challenge" includes problems, tasks, perceptions and stereotypes confronting the female managers in managing their schools effectively.

1.6.2 School Manager

"School manager" refers to somebody in charge of the school as the head, director or chief executive officer of the school, and who is employed by the department of education as an educator in the school. The term which is often used is "principal", although literature may also refer to the headmistress. According to the South African Schools' Act (Act 84 of 1996), the principal is defined as someone who receives delegated responsibilities and authority from the head of education in a province, to execute his/ her duties in the school. This is an educator who is appointed or acts as the head of the school.

1.7 SUMMARY

In this introductory chapter, a brief orientation to the study is provided by means of an outline of the problem to be investigated and the objectives of the study. The main aim of the research was to investigate the challenges facing female managers in performing their duties at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district.

1.8 CHAPTER HEADINGS

Chapter 1   Orientation

Chapter 2   Literature Review

Chapter 3   Research Methodology

Chapter 4   Data Analysis and Interpretation

Chapter 5   Summary, Recommendations and Conclusion

CHAPTER TWO

2.1 INTRODUCTION

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

Historically, female managers constitute a diminutive fraction of the management cadre. Those that have secured positions of management have become symbols of change. The inauguration of the new democracy provides an opportunity for women to form a significant part of management and to move through various levels of management in all sectors. It is against this background that the present study has been undertaken.

2.1.1 Characterizing the school as an organisation

An organisation like a school is the content in which teaching and learning take place. This is an institutional framework which is part of the educational system serving the needs of society. School decisions, for example with regard to subject choice, are taken on a triangular basis, involving learners, parents and educators.

The school is a body consisting of persons with a single aim. When school managers manage schools, their leadership is not to be viewed as a matter of status and respect in the organisation but of function (Bennis and Nanus, 1985:13). They need to

demonstrate their responsibilities and commitment to the management of the school in all its dimensions.

When managing schools, they have to do what the job requires. They have to mentor, guide, coach, counsel and educate people in order to increase their job satisfaction. They also have to challenge educators to work to the best of their abilities and have to constantly press them to improve their abilities.

The school as an organisation is classified in terms of involvement and purpose. It has all the characteristics of a formal organisation and realises its objectives through a complex system involving policies and programmes, administrators and teachers, learners and support services, buildings and equipment, and interactions with the community (Musaazi, 1986:4).

There are formal and informal organisations. Organisations come into being because certain people have identified a common purpose, have been able to communicate with each other and have shown willingness to contribute action. The terms "purpose", "communication" and "willingness" are elaborated in order to understand the vital concept of organisation. All organisations have goals or purposes to realise.

To realise the educational goals of a school, we need suitable physical facilities, qualified, trained and experienced teachers, motivated learners who have high aspirations, effective leadership by the principal, and healthy human relations within the school and with the administrative authority and the community at large (Musaazi, 1986:7).

Individuals have to meet and talk to each other in order to understand each other's point of view. In order to translate a purpose into action, communication is needed. This may be achieved by means of language in oral or in a written form or by means of mere

gestures, or both. However, the desire to communicate with one another is conditional upon the general willingness of the people concerned (Musaazi, 1986:9).

According to Musaazi, willingness is the joint effect of personal desires and reluctance. For example, parents with school-age children will be more willing to establish a school than those who have no school-age children and may not have any in the near future.

Schools are characterized by personal, direct, spontaneous and face-to-face relationships. An organisation can either be the central focus of one's life or only an incidental servant. It can be rigid, cold and impersonal, or it can have warm and flexible relationships. Organisation can be clarified according to the emotional involvement of its members. There are primary and secondary organisations.

The primary organisation claims the complete personal and emotional involvement of its members. A member is willing to commit his total efforts, that is, his or her commitment to the organisation is almost hundred per cent. For secondary organisation, relationships are intellectual, rational and contractual. Such relationships often tend to be formal and impersonal with explicitly deferred obligations. A member involves himself or herself only partially. The rest of his or her commitments are to his family and other organisations (Musaazi, 1986:9).

2.2   MANAGING THE SCHOOL AS AN ORGANISATION

The school is an organisation where the principal is in charge. As an organisation, it is not designed to serve the needs of a particular gender in terms of purpose, structure or management. The manager who manages the organisation efficiently is the one with characteristics which are most fitted to the nature of that organisation.

All organisations, including educational ones, should be actively managed against goals. There should be a clear sense of direction in which the organisation is being

steered. It must be easy to assess the progress. The managers must keep the organisation on the move, leading it to a certain direction.

2.2.1 How the school is made up

The schools have stakeholders such as learners and parents, including the local community and the educators. The task of the school manager is to look after the interests of all the stakeholders. The schools are part of the bigger system and are interdependent with the rest of the society in which they serve (Darking, 1991:13).

The school takes in various inputs such as learners, funds and learning materials. It gives out various outputs, such as educated learners and service to the community. The school socialises learners and equips them as future and mature members of society (Darking, 1991:34).

2.2.2 Relationships

In any situation where people work together, certain relationships are formed. Institutions are characterized by two different types of relationships: the bond type of relationship and the situational type of relationship.

In the bond type of relationship, people develop positive and constructive attitudes towards one another. This is the type of relationship where one finds people experiencing team spirit and working with one purpose.

The situational type of relationship is marked by people who have the positive and negative attitudes and different characters. They are not compelled to love. They either love or hate.

The situational type of relationship can be influenced by the bond type. The bond also influences the situational type of relationship. The situational or bond type of relationship may also be influenced by gender considerations.

2.2.3 Leadership

Leaders who hold positions of responsibility in the organisation need to demonstrate their commitment to their duties. Leadership qualities may be demonstrated in stepping forward and in holding back. Leadership is the ability to take the initiative and to act decisively. A leader is characterized by risk taking, openness and growth. Leaders show the culture of the school by both what they say and what they do. Leaders need to demonstrate that actions of taking risks and admitting failures are desirable traits.

A leader has to reward people who take chances, even if they make mistakes. Managers who are successful leaders encourage functional conflict which is the key to unlocking real openness at work (Robbins, 1996:736). Effective leaders deemphasize hierarchical authority and control. They treat people with dignity and respect. Problems arising at school are not to be swept under the rug, but have to be openly confronted.

Leadership is a requirement and a role of all managers. They are to show well-developed leadership qualities in an educational environment. As a leader, the manager is expected to influence colleagues with defensive action and to have a clear sense of how decisions can be implemented.

All leaders are expected to be exemplary to the staff and learners and to take a lead in the care and commitment to the duties at school. They are expected to be assertive and decisive with regard to the quality of work and effort they expect from the team. They are also expected to have the ability to structure, to lead and to have a vision for the people who are under their management.

Leaders have to use different leadership styles in different situations in which they find themselves. Leadership styles depend on the people's state of readiness and the nature of work. In some situations, leaders are compelled to dictate.

School managers who are influenced by indices of micropolitics in their schools experience different types of relationships. The staff may have positive or negative attitudes towards one another, including the manager. As indicated earlier, that is the bond type of relationship. In a negative type of relationship, there is conflict between the staff or between the principal and the staff. In the situational type of relationship team work may be encouraged or discouraged, depending on the nature of the bond among the staff.

2.3 THE ROLE OF THE PRINCIPAL AS A MANAGER

Being a manager has nothing to do with being a male or a female. Managers are to respect individuals and human values. Managers are expected to hold management positions and to face challenges, including those of a gender or generic nature.

The school manager must develop a high degree of mutual trust and respect. He or she is expected to confront conflict and to manage constructively. Instead of avoiding conflict altogether, the manager must choose the problems he or she cannot solve completely, such as educator and learner absenteeism and educators not honouring the teaching periods. They are daily problems and a school manager is expected to be a problem solver and a leader with quality leadership skills. He or she should have something to offer in management as he or she looks after the staff as much as the tasks (Mcloughlin, 1992:112).

As a manager, one has to know and to understand the vision of the school one manages. The interests of the learners, educators and parents must be promoted. One should be a

competent decision maker who is able to motivate others. The manager must practise fair management because people under his or her management easily observe what is unfair and unjust (Chodorow, 1978:19).

2.3.1 Managing school activities

Management is regarded as a practical activity. One of the key characteristics of a successful manager is the ability to balance the attention between the task and relationship and the staff. A manager with quality management skills has a major influence on the success of the school and on the satisfaction levels of individual staff members. One of the challenges lies in individual and team commitment to achieve the best results in all school activities (Gray, 1989:43).

2.3.2 Tasks of management

As a school manager, the principal must organise, direct and control all resources. Mentoring other educators is part of management (Luke, 1997:193). The school managers are expected to manage their own performance together with the culture and the micro-politics of the school.

The school manager is a role model to the learners, the staff and the community. He or she has to control his or her own managerial behaviour by being effective in motivating others, taking decisions, participating in meetings and handling conflict. The manager has to play many leadership roles in school activities. Staff members must know exactly what results are expected from them.

As a leader, the school manager must be exemplary and must try his or her best to meet the expectations of the community. In his or her management, she or he must adhere to the principles of equity, democracy, anti-sexism, anti-racism and participation (Luke, 1997:195).

The manager is expected to promote team work and to practise delegation of duties. This may serve to develop the skills of educators and to ensure a division of labour and constructive engagement. A manager needs to be flexible and able to use all leadership styles. Managers sometimes have extraordinary times when they face extraordinary challenges with no given solutions (Cassel and Walsh, 1991:43). They are expected to activate, coach, guide, mentor, educate, assist and support their colleagues so that they focus on a shared vision, strategy and set of intended outcomes (Woods and Morgan, 1993:79).

2.3.2.1 Staff development

The school manager is expected to help and to guide staff members to develop so that the team becomes efficient. For better utilisation of employees' talents, team management and team spirit must be promoted (Robbins, 1996:346). The staff must have workshops to prepare them to successfully face the challenges they encounter at work. It is the manager's responsibility to develop the staff component to its highest possible capacity. Staff development activities involve encouraging people to study further, to establish study groups, hold group discussions, encourage networking with other schools and to get written instruction for reference and guidance.

2.3.2.2 Communication

Communication is the lifeline of an organisation. With effective communication, all sectors are able to know what is happening, how it is happening and the problems that are experienced in an organisation in its functioning. Without regular communication, the organisation may be paralysed. The manager as a leader must be able to communicate with all sectors in an institution.

Multiple means of communication can be employed in schools to ensure that everyone is well informed and understands the basis for decisions and actions. The ability to interact with all members of the community is a way to promote understanding, clarity, mutual recognition and a general sense of purpose. School managers are open to criticism. They should be able to express themselves and be able to gain a good understanding of the nature of what is being discussed and debated through communication.

School managers have to communicate with other role players: the parents, learners and the staff. Information must be easily available to them and there must be regular and open reporting back. As a school manager, the principal must give the staff and the learners all the information they need to have in order to do their tasks well.

The principal has to update those under his or her management in order to keep them in the picture regarding the state of the school and its future developments (Shakeshaft, 1987:102). Communication is a two-way process. It involves talking and listening to people to encourage them to contribute ideas.

Communication may be influenced by the type of behaviour, attitude and character which the individuals have towards the structure in which they are communicating. There is an assumption that females talk too much while males keep on doing things. It is against this background that the manager has to use communication wisely.

2.3.2.3 Conflict management

As schools do not exist in a vacuum, a variety of potential conflicts are possible. Conflict management is the responsibility of everybody who is engaged in management. It is about dealing with the problems of the organisation. The opportunity for conflict exists in and among all the major dimensions of the school. Conflict between staff

members and between the school and the community is likely when organisational and individual expectations are not met (Hoy and Miskel, 1987:69).

In an organisation there are many contradictions that arise. The personality needs of the individual and the norms of the school may not be consistent. For example, a new group member with a strong need to dominate may be heading for conflict with the established informal group leaders.

It is assumed that conflict is sometimes caused by jealousy, mistrust and the spirit of competition. In most schools, newcomers are expected to conform and to respect the established patterns of the school. If the school is traditional while the community is progressive, or if the community is conservative and the educators are liberal, there can also be conflict (Shakeshaft, 1987:89). The role of the manager is crucial in fostering harmony, constructive work and resolution of conflicts.

2.3.2.4 Team building

A team is a body of individuals established to fulfill specific tasks or activities characterized by shared perceptions, common purpose, agreed procedures, commitment, co-operation and resolving disagreements, openness by discussions (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:266).

For the smooth running of the school, the school manager must co-operate with members of the staff and the school governing body. Team spirit must be developed in schools. Team building is the basis for effective organisational functioning. Team work typifies co-operation and progress in schools.

In team work, individuals are to be able to communicate openly and honestly. All team members are to confront individual differences and to resolve conflicts. Teams solve problems more easily than single individuals. With team work, the responsibility is

shared. This is likely to change an organisation from a more hierarchical structure to a more flexible structure.

With team work, the decision to be agreed upon by members help to develop a sense of ownership in all members. Staff members need to be empowered and not to be controlled. Team work utilises highly interactive group activities to increase trust and openness among team members.

With team spirit, the manager easily passes down a line as much responsibility as the staff can take. All people work well with a common sense of purpose. Self-discipline is likely to be well-developed. To ensure that everybody is committed to work there must be transparency (Ozga, 1993:39).

The decision taken where most of the team members do not agree must be communicated in such a way that all members are formally informed why it occurred (Nicholson, 1995:30). Basically all staff members must be turned into team players. They have to know the future prospects regarding job security, development, promotion and everything happening in the institution. The group of staff is to be built into effective working units or teams which must work together effectively in pursuing the oganisation's purposes and goals. But the size of each team must be small enough to be manageable.

2.3.2.5 Parent-school relations

The principal is an integrating factor in parent-school relationships. As a manager, he or she has to recognise the legitimate demands of society as a whole with respect to the development of the curriculum. He or she should be sensible enough to respond to the sensible needs of the learners at different ages and stages.

The school has to meet and discuss with the learners' parents concerning their children's progress and conduct. For the school to prosper, the relationship must be fostered. The challenge facing the school is to provide adequate roles for parents. The school must promote the same objectives as those of the community.

There must be a strong parent-school relationship. The parents must be actively involved in teaching and learning. The school must provide an environment in which educators function in a productive partnership. This means that parent-school partnership must be encouraged (Collinson and Hearn, 1994:103).

The school must recognise and accept individual differences in the environment. It must work together with the community by emphasizing the central importance of good human relations based upon sensitivity, tolerance, goodwill and a sense of humour. For the staff and the community to have a reciprocal responsibility, collaboration and co-operation must be a two-way activity based on mutual regard.

The school must reflect a positive response to the needs of a changing society whilst emphasising established fundamental values and standards. It has to promote the idea that the school is the servant of the community at both local and national levels. Managers must keep in mind that the school is part of a bigger community. It is interdependent with the rest of society which it serves. It must be up to date with what is going on around it.

Successful schools make a point of having a wide circle of contacts and of staying interested in developments outside their immediate sphere. There is therefore a need for school managers to assess the extent of effectiveness of school-community partnership.

2.3.2.6 Discipline

Discipline is an act of charting the path in management. The environment in which people work has to be well-managed and people are required to have self-control. They are to control their emotions and attitudes. The environment with no discipline results in chaos and disorder. The uncontrolled emotional behaviour destroys the general quality of work life.

If school managers are to maintain discipline at school, they need to be assertive when giving instructions. They are to avoid favouritism and to make fair, just and honest decisions regarding everybody. They have to make firm decisions and have to stay true always. They are to set clear standards and to stick to them. They are to fulfil all the promises made to the staff and to the learners.

The manager needs to have clear, fair standards of work and discipline at schools they manage. If discipline is fair and consistent, the corrective actions must be without prejudice. If discipline is the same with everyone, the manager gains a reputation of using fair labour practice.   ·

2.4.1 Vision

All school managers in their senior positions of responsibilities need to be inspired by a vision. They are expected to look forward to the future of the schools they manage. They are to have a sense of direction. Without a clear vision, there can be no progress accomplished.

The managers with vision, are able to foresee things before they happen. They are purposeful and able to make a difference in leadership. If one does not know where one is going, everything is correct. The manager has to determine what tasks are to be

done, who is to do them, how to group the tasks, who reports to whom and where decisions are to be made.

2.4.2 Tolerance

School managers are expected to work with people of different levels of tolerance. Tolerance is a mark of leadership and it is a challenge to all people in authority. All people are to tolerate the weaknesses of one another regardless of gender, race or class.

2.4.3 Management skills

Successful management depends on vision, strategy, goals, teams and tools for daily management. Management is a practical activity as the managers have to make decisions and have to evaluate effectiveness. All this involves action. If the actions are repeated, they are thought to lead to managerial excellence (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:33).

There are three dimensions of management skills. The technical skills, the human skills and the conceptual skills. Technical skills have to do with technical procedures and problem solving strategies to do certain things. Human skills include the ability to work with people of different behaviours. The manager has to provide an environment where people can work together in harmony.

The managers should be equipped with management skills to prepare them for better management positions. Special workshops are required to ground managers in unique management skills so that they are able to foresee problems before they occur and are able to guess the possible results. These skills help them to think and to solve problems (Bleier, 1984:190).

2.5   MANAGEMENT AND GENDER

The managers should be able to work with people of both genders and should display the ability to successfully manage them. They should be challenged by attitudes that are observed in the work environment (Coleman, 1994:180).

People have different expectations about female managers. Such expectations include the stereotypical roles that males and females adopt in management. Such organisational barriers do not only operate against females, but positively favour males. Females are often expected to stay at home instead of taking up roles previously dominated by males, such as school management.

At each step of administrative preparation, job seeking and selection, there are organisational processes that clearly indicate a preference for males. Some of the males act as barriers to the progression of females. They are the "gate keepers". There is a patriarchal male culture of dominance and many schools tend to be saturated with masculine values (Bush and West-Burnahm, 1994:13).

There is recognition in education of both the importance of equal opportunities and the strengths that females bring to management. However, females are under-represented in the management of schools, colleges and universities (Coleman, 1994:177). The management role in schools is usually perceived by both genders as fundamentally a male role. Females are unlikely to be seen as adequately fitting or meeting the role requirements (Nicholson, 1995:30). This results in schools having organisational barriers which are in favour of males. In top management, the majority are most often males. The domination of males leads to discrimination against females (Shakeshaft, 1992:148). Some males do not like females to be in higher positions than they are.

Females often find themselves at a disadvantage in mixed groups as the general rules are those of males. The existence of males in management is identified as a critical

organisational factor limiting the existence of females in senior positions. Recently, females have been included in selection committees and that has raised the likelihood of females being appointed in senior positions (Schumuck, 1986:179).

In most organisations, the interests of females are subordinated to those of males. The gender equity struggle creates opportunities for females to redress gender equality in the workplace. Some males assume that certain gender roles are natural and normal, while females are subjected to a patriarchal culture, where most of the responsibilities belong to males (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:13).

Females have largely been excluded from the work of producing forms of thought and images (Weighman, 1989:119). There is evidence of females who have dominance and control in lower primary schools. As the learners grow up and are in an adolescent stage, they are expected to be taught and managed by males. In school management, there are more males than females in leadership positions in many departments and in most senior positions (Thompson, 1992:206).

What is observed currently is that in the make-up of the staff at schools, females exceed in numbers, while in senior positions, females are very few. The large number of females in the education profession shows a history of domination and exploitation based on essentialist notions of womanhood rather than of encouraging the clear development of women (Department of Education, 1997:197).

Hendrik Verwoerd introduced the Bantu Education Act of 1953. He demonstrated the sexist and racist ideology behind the historical positioning of women in the teaching profession: As a woman is by nature so much better fitted for handling young children, and as the great majority of Bantu children were to be found in the lower classes of primary school, it followed that there should be far more females than male educators. The department would therefore, declare the assistant posts in primary schools to be female teachers' posts (Trustcott, 1977:22).

Females have been awarded very few promotion posts compared to males. The figures regarding the rank of educators demonstrate that males hold a disproportionate share of management positions (Shindler, 1996:12). Males and females from different cultures tend to form relationships with one another as males only and females only.

In the workplace, this tendency might be shown by males or females who tend to congregate as females while males congregate as males. This becomes a problem of affliction to them (Adler et al, 1993:62). Such tendencies might influence working relationships where people prefer homogenous gender groups or express attitudes in respect of gender. Both bond and attitudinal situations of relationship have a role to play in influencing the behaviour of people and their attitudes towards one another in the workplace (Ozga, 1993:3).

One of the characteristics of female managers is that they struggle to preserve intimacy and to avoid isolation (Nicholson, 1995:3). There is a possibility of females working closely together with other females. Sometimes some females associate more with males than they do with females in the workplace.

There are, however, females who keep to the traditional tendency where masculine values are strictly followed. Others feel that it is in their best interest to live with males. The existence of males as "gatekeepers" has been identified as a crucial organisational factor limiting the entrance of females to educational management (Schmuck, 1986:179).

Female managers are visible. They perform in front of many people and critics. As they are under-represented in senior and middle management, in government positions and institutions, female behaviours are not yet valued. We live in societies where leadership styles tend to be gendered. Females have the responsibility to redress the imbalances of inequality (Chodorow, 1988:7).

Managers face discriminatory practices which are very common at schools. They suffer ups and downs in their management. Sometimes they fail to meet the high standards set by people. The potential of the females is usually underestimated. Despite females advancement in management, stereotypes and barriers do exist.

Some of the females do not get the back-up of authority that would normally be accorded to male managers. Sometimes they struggle to gain acceptance or recognition as capable managers. They lose their independence when they seek help from males, although they are expected to turn to males for assistance. They may also be expected to be exceptional in their performance and to "prove their work" whereas males may not be expected to perform in that manner (Schmuck, 1986:192).

Female managers face challenges to develop effective teamwork where the group members feel positive towards each other. They are challenged to develop group cohesion where all the stakeholders feel free to express their attitudes and feelings towards all members (Flanagan and Finger, 1993:189).

Females have less chances of promotion than males with comparable education experience. This is a factor which holds them back as they try to break through the "glass ceiling". Both male and female leaders are disadvantaged in their leadership by resistance and lack of training. They need to have necessary skills which are relevant to their management positions. But females have additional disadvantages of being female. Although they are expected to make a vital difference in management, they lack mentors. It is assumed that some of the males, if managed by a female, usually make poor subordinates. Females are confronted by stereotypes and barriers which cast doubts on their competence (Shakeshaft, 1987:144). Although females may be willing to share their leadership skills with males, there are indications that some of the males are individualistic and want to keep their leadership skills to themselves. Females are indisputably a significant part of school managers, but are still in the middle ranks.

They do not only respond to the demands of their work, but are also expected to pull their gender type to a level of significance.

It should, therefore, be clear that the issue of gender is one of the challenges which face all school managers. The managers should be able to work with people of both genders and they should be able to display the ability to successfully manage them. School managers are challenged by the attitudes that are observed in the work environment (Coleman, 1994:180).

As a leader, a manager must get things done through other people. They are, therefore, expected to train, motivate and discipline both learners and educators. Some managers face a double battle that entails a battle with the same gender as well as with the other gender. In some schools, there is no co-operation because of rivalry. For better management, there must be a greater commitment on the part of parents, learners and education (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994:177).

There are people who look at female managers with a lot of doubt regarding their ability. Others do not see them as competent and effective managers. Some see them as managing in contradiction to the rules that have been set by the patriarchal culture. Others humiliate them. They see females as taking male positions. This means that there is still a lot of resistance to gender equity.

Sometimes the job of managing a school does not become easier, even for experienced managers. Problems that may pose severe challenges for school managers include teenage rebellion, disciplinary problems among staff members, union activities as well as learners' conduct and safety, among others. The constant changes in the curriculum and the ever-present demand to meet more and more deadlines are a challenge.

Some of the managers recognise resistance as a structural organisational issue rather than a personally directed problem. In their leadership, managers often use the trial

and error method (Cassel and Walsh, 1991:43). Different management tasks are a further great challenge to female managers in particular.

Female managers' leadership skills are really put to test in times of crisis when there is a need for both cool and decisive action. Such managers face conflict and pressures by virtue of their formal position and because they occupy several roles in the social systems. The roles of being a parent, a principal and a wife are examples of the major challenges that face female school managers.

All school managers with the responsibility of management need to be inspired by a vision. People have to work towards a vision. The staff and learners should have a clear vision of what is expected from them as they have the potential to be leaders too.

2.6   GENDER STEREOTYPES

Research suggests that there are widely-held beliefs about the ways in which males and females behave. Such stereotypes can be dangerous because they sometimes seal people in behaviours which are linked with their own gender. Females are believed to be incapable of providing a firm and directive framework of leadership (Davidson and Cooper, 1992:165).

2.6.1 Theories of inequality

These theories are identified as follows:

2.6.1.1 Discrimination

Females are associated with such humble tasks as the making of tea and the supervision of cleaning, which requires no masculine intervention. An assertive female is seen as being aggressive or "over the top". This is seemingly not applicable to males who

exhibit the same behaviour (Cassel and Walsh, 1991:4). There are many female professionals but a greater proportion of males who are managers. Males and females differ considerably in leadership styles and this can have an effect on the "culture" of the organisation.

In South Africa, the Employment Equity Act (Act No) legitimizes the female equity struggle and creates the space for females to redress gender equality in the education profession. However, females still rate discrimination and prejudice as the greatest deterrent to career progression.

Being a member of the female gender is a disadvantage when it comes to job promotion (Davidson and Cooper, 1992:119). Females are important in management but there is still evidence of a negative attitude expressed by males. It humiliates them to have a woman in any position of authority (Khalifa, 1992:101).

More subtle forms of discrimination are still a factor in the career progression of female educators. They have, to a great extent, been excluded from top management. In most senior positions, they are under-represented and the males dominate. Some females devalue themselves. Females are biologically different to males. Despite the fact that discrimination is illegal, there is evidence that is still rampant.

There are mainly two forms of discrimination that are experienced in the place of employment, namely, covert and overt discrimination. Overt discrimination occurs when it is assumed that the male candidate is automatically more suited to a senior post. In covert discrimination, people are treated unfavourably without this being made obvious. For example, discrimination takes place but it is never openly admitted. In this type of discrimination, all conditions of the post clearly indicate a preference for males (Adler et. al, 1993:25).

The discrimination of females' potential at work is affected by factors such as marital status, age, physical appearance and others. Covert discrimination is hidden type of discrimination. Such discrimination occurs when people create conditions which are against females. For example, requirements favouring males are recommended if the job requires someone to be away from home for a month because females are associated with staying at home. The rules may seem to be fair but are disadvantageous to females. Covert discrimination is indirect, subtle or hidden.

Overt discrimination is the direct form of discrimination. It is easily observed. Some conditions of employment disqualify females. This happens when females' potential at work is affected by factors such as marital status.

2.6.1.2 Organisational constraints

At every level of an educational organisation, there appears to be barriers to the advancement of school managers. Some organisational barriers may be operated by males against females but also in favour of males.

Females tend to be self-critical in weighing up their chances of successfully obtaining promotion. Some females are scrupulous in self-evaluation and more critical and selective about career moves than male educators (Khalifa, 1992:96).

There are more males who hold positions of responsibility than females. In this respect they tend to set the standards of what is expected from a manager. It has been suggested that women are more likely to be lacking in self-confidence than their male colleagues. Unlike males, they tend to apply only for jobs for which they are fully qualified (Shakeshift, 1993:51).

Females are not criticized openly, and, therefore do not have the chance to improve or develop ways of dealing with negative comments. When they become aware of criticism, they take it extremely seriously.

Management is seen as "technical" and logical. Female school managers are expected to have the "male" qualities of leadership. To some of the female educators, teaching and not management is "real work" (Thompson, 1992:206). When females become managers, they often have to adopt a definition of management which excludes their experience and understanding (Ozga, 1993:3).

The tendency towards critical self-evaluation often displayed by women may be linked to a lack of career planning that has been recognised as typical even among successful women in education. Females are unfairly penalised for taking career breaks such as maternity leave, study leave and transfers (Davidson and Cooper, 1992:129). Males are given extra responsibilities such as membership of committees and are therefore given more opportunities to exhibit those very qualities that will recommend them for further responsibility.

Women managers are sometimes denied the back-up that a male colleague would receive, in terms of informal advice and suggestions from colleagues. When females approach management posts, they are often expected to face difficulties which males are not exposed to. The present and future work environment is expected to be male dominated and the people they supervise anticipate male leadership (Al Khalifa, 1992:100).

Formal training and development have often excluded women, hence reducing their opportunities, visibility and skill levels (Davidson and Cooper, 1992:98). Some women are successful in education as in other areas of management. Some may find that expectations of their behaviour differ from those held about the equivalent male manager. Some males still find it hard to cope with working with women as equals.

They are burdened with the conditional stereotypes of women being mothers, wives or, at the "very most", secretaries (Davidson and Cooper, 1992:106).

2.6.1.3 Patriarchal culture of dominance

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

Gender issues are integral to all aspects of managing the education system. Men and women divide labour on the basis of gender and male tasks are more valued than female tasks. By physical characteristics, an individual may have a very clear identity as a male or female.

People identify the feminine paradigm with the accepted ethos of junior primary schools while the masculine paradigm is broadly aquated with an ideal type of secondary school. Females are expected to manage in a conventional "male" way. Traditional theories emphasise male cultural domination and the organisational constraints make it difficult for women to achieve equality in the workplace.

The existence of male "gatekeepers" has been identified as a crucial organisational factor limiting the entrance of women to educational management (Schumuck, 1986:179). Equal opportunities to both males and females need to be promoted. The real measure of success will be seen in an increase in the number of women in administration and in allowing those women to function as females, not as an imitation of men.

2.7 CONCLUSION

This chapter gives a literature review. It has been observed that females are firmly established in senior positions such as school managers. Despite the growing proportion of females in management positions, inequality is still there. There are many organisational barriers with gender-based practices. Strategies for change are needed to promote equal opportunities through professional development and appraisal.

Females do perform as leaders in the management of efficient schools despite the male cultural domination of traditional theories of management. Attempts are to be made to redress the balance of inequality between males and females. What females offer in educational management is important and must be valued.

The next chapter focuses on empirical investigation by giving descriptions of the research design, method of limitations, the target population and the research protocol.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1   INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this chapter is to outline the method of research that was used to collect valid and reliable information about the variables under investigation.   The empirical investigation, which was designed in the form of questionnaires, determined the challenges faced by female managers at Mondlo circuit in Nqutu District.

3.2   INSTRUMENTATION

An instrument for collecting data was constructed by the researcher.   Questionnaires are vital instruments used in the collection of data in research.   This instrument helped the researcher to gather data from the targeted population.

3.2.1   Questionnaires as a research tool

According to Schnetler (1989:44), a questionnaire is a device which enables subjects to answer questions.   It is a data-collecting instrument which is mostly used in surveys. With an aid of a questionnaire, the researcher is able to elicit information regarding a person's likes, opinions and so on.

Ary (1985:344) indicates that, due to the confidential nature of a questionnaire, respondents will give more truthful responses.   It can be used to discover what experiences (biography) have taken place and what is occurring at the present (Tuckman: 1994).

3.2.2 Advantages of questionnaires

The following are the advantages of a questionnaire as a method of investigation.

- Anonymity of respondents is guaranteed because their names are not given.
- It saves time for it is easy to reach the respondents.
- It seeks the information which cannot be obtained from other sources, such as school reports, or census data.
- It is less time - consuming than personal interviews.
- It can be completed at a convenient time.
- It is easy to interpret.
- The questions are objective, with no leading suggestions.
- Questions are relevant, clear and complete.

3.2.3 Disadvantages of the questionnaire

There are criticisms against the use of questionnaires

The following are some of them:

- Some respondents could have a negative attitude towards them.
- The rate of return of the questionnaire is normally very poor.
- Printing, travelling and postage become very expensive.
- The questionnaire may not convey the same meaning to all respondents.
- Some questionnaires have open-ended questions which may result in irrelevant responses.
- It limits the questions that can be asked and the kind of answers that can be obtained.

- Questionnaires are very shallow and not geared to cover the outcomes in depth to gain a clear picture.

- The researcher opted for the use of this instrument, with due consideration for the caveats referred to above.

3.3   QUESTIONNAIRE CONSTRUCTION

The information required plays an important role in questionnaire construction. The most important questions are those of opinion and attitude. The two basic types mainly used are the open ended questions and closed questions. The questionnaire was constructed in such a way that female managers would not develop negative attitudes towards the investigator.

3.3.1   The process involved in questionnaire construction

The researcher must be able to explain in details why she is asking the question and how the responses will be analysed. Questions must be framed in a language that the respondents will understand. *

The researcher must be very careful when constructing a questionnaire. She must bear in mind the objectives of the research and the problem under investigation. The questionnaire is the best instrument for the researcher to collect the required information.

The following are the rules for constructing questionnaire items:

- Biased question are to be avoided.
- Negative items should be avoided.
- Short, easier items are preferred to long items.
- Ambiguous questions are to be avoided.

- Questions are to be clear.

- "Double – barreled" items with two separate ideas with a single answer are to be avoided.

3.3.2 Development of questionnaire items

The literature review helped the researcher to find out more about challenges faced by female managers. With such information, the questionnaire was developed to find out what the views of the female managers at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu District were.

3.4 OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

Open questions allow the respondents to express their feelings freely. These types of questions are used to obtain resources for a particular behaviour or attitude adopted by the respondents (Singleton, 1993:282).

3.4.1 Advantages of open-ended questions

Open-ended questions provide a clear idea of the respondent's perceptions. They are preferable in situations where respondents have not yet crystallised their opinions. They provide opportunities for the researcher to ascertain information on the part of the respondents.

3.4.2 Disadvantages of open-ended questions

Many respondents may be reluctant to reveal detailed information required. This type of question involves more work on the part of the respondent. Some are inclined to write more words than required.

3.5 CLOSED-ENDED QUESTIONS

The closed-ended question requires the respondent to make a choice that covers a whole range of possible responses. The respondent has to select one category that best suits her response.

3.5.1 Advantages of closed–ended questions

- Less time consuming.
- Easy to administer.
- Are an appropriate format for sensitive information.

3.5.2 Disadvantages of closed–ended questions

The questionnaire may be unnecessarily long and, thus, discourage the respondents resulting in unreliable results. They give instructions to the respondents whose options are not accommodated.

3.6 FORMAT AND CONTENT OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

In this study a questionnaire was developed for female managers. It consisted of sections, namely Section A, B, C, D and E. Section A required biographic information concerning the challenges facing female managers. Respondents were required to indicate how serious a challenge has been for them as school managers.

Borg and Gall (1989:431) indicate that the following rules of questionnaire format and content which have been developed from experience and research should be considered carefully.

- The questionnaire must be made attractive.

- Clear instructions must be printed in bold type.

- It must be easy to complete.

- It must be organised in logical sequence.

- Threatening or difficult questions must be put near the end of the questions.

3.7 PRE-TESTING THE QUESTIONNAIRE

According to Tuckman (1994) it is usually highly desirable for the researchers to try out the questionnaire on a few friends. Some of the questions are ambiguous.

What may seem perfectly clear to one person may be confusing to another person who does not have the frame of reference that you have gained.

It is a good idea to pre-test or pilot the instrument with a small group of $\pm$ 15 people similar to those who will be used in the study. Space should be provided for the respondents to make comments. There is need to find out whether some of the questions seem ambiguous or misleading to them. The researcher is also offered an opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of the survey instrument prior to its general distribution.

In this research a pre-test was done with a small group of fifteen educators including deputy principals and H.O.Ds. The respondents were given five days to return the questionnaire. They clearly understood the questionnaire. Thirteen responded positively.

The main aim of pre-testing was to discover some defects that can be corrected before the final form was printed and sent to respondents.

The following errors (faults) were discovered

- Incorrect spelling.
- Wrong tense.
- Poor wording and instructions.
- Omission of certain important facts.

The questionnaire was revised and corrected based on the results of testing and the recommendations from the respondents.

3.7.1 Final questionnaire

The researcher distributed eleven (11) questionnaires to female managers after pre-testing them in Lower Primary Schools, Higher Primary Schools, Junior Secondary Schools and the Senior Secondary Schools in Nqutu District with female managers.

3.7.2 Covering letter (Letter of transmittal)

The transmittal letter (covering letter) is a tool employed to introduce the questionnaire to the respondents with the main purpose of getting them to respond to the questionnaire. According to Legotlo (1994:168), it is the source of information which the subject will refer to in deciding whether or not to complete a questionnaire.

It explains the aim of the study, assuring anonymity to all individual respondents. The letter must be brief, yet convey specific information and impressions to the subjects for the researchers to obtain a satisfactory percentage of responses. A brief assurance of confidentiality should be included in such a way as to make the subjects feel that the study is significant and important.

If possible, the researcher can include a small reward such as a ball-point pen with the letter of transmittal. This reward should be given as a token of appreciation rather than as a payment for the respondent's time (Borg & Gall, 1989:436-440).

3.7.3 The administration of the questionnaire (Data collection)

In this study the questionnaire was self-administered by the researcher in order to explain the purpose of the study. The covering letter was also left as a reminder. It also helped those managers whom she could not find to explain the questionnaire to them. This method has an advantage in that it is fast.

The researcher distributed the questionnaire to all schools managed by females. She moved from one school to the next. The questionnaires were collected in the same way, five days after their distribution. The return rate was 100%, that is 11 questionnaires. No questionnaire was mailed. A token (pen) was given to all of the respondents to motivate them to fill in the questionnaires.

Self-administration of the questionnaires makes direct contact with the respondents possible. It is very expensive but it pays good dividends. It solves the postage problem. Although the response in returning the questionnaires was good; there were some respondents who did not respond. Follow-up procedures had to be employed in retrieving such questionnaires.

3.7.4 Follow-ups

In this study, the female managers were contacted personally and telephonically to check on the progress of the questionnaires. Later the response was very good and a general response rate of 100% was experienced. The overall response rate amounted to 11 questionnaires.

3.8   POPULATION AND SAMPLING

Nqutu district has 160 schools with 13 high schools that have female managers. 27 Senior primary schools have female managers and all Junior Primary Schools are managed by females.

The eleven schools with female managers at Mondlo circuit were all selected. The only criterion was that the school should be managed by a female. This was done to obtain a general picture of the views of female managers and the challenges that they faced at all levels.

Since the anonymity of both subjects and schools have been guaranteed, the names of schools need not be revealed. Therefore, to distinguish between the eleven schools, they are labeled from A to K.

School	Principal	Response	Percentage
A	1	1	100
B	1	1	100
C	1	1	100
D	1	1	100
E	1	1	100
F	1	1	100
G	1	1	100
H	1	1	100
I	1	1	100
J	1	1	100
K	1	1	100
TOTAL	11	11	100

Table 3.1 shows that out of a sample population of 11 schools, 100% returned the questionnaires. This response rate may be due to direct contact: contacting persons at school level and follow-up strategy.

3.8.1 Limitations

The generalization in this study is possibly tentative because the selected schools do not cover a large part of the population. However, the researcher hopes that, since the eleven schools were selected from all three types of school levels, the findings are real indicators of "the challenges faced by female managers at eMondlo circuit".

3.9 SUMMARY OF THE CHAPTER

In summary, the self-administered questionnaires were employed as a main instrument in the collection of data because of the advantages mentioned in 3.8.3. The challenges faced by female managers at Mondlo circuit were investigated.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter reports on the results of the empirical investigation conducted to determine the challenges facing female managers at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district. The quantitative and qualitative data collected through the investigation are summarized and discussed. A total number of eleven schools managed by females were identified as subjects of this investigation. All eleven school managers returned usable questionnaires.

4.2 BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION ON RESPONDENTS

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

4.2.1 Experience as manager

Table 4.2.1: Respondents' experience as managers

Experience in years	Number	Percentage
1.1 0-5	05	45
1.2 6-10	03	27.5
1.3 11-15	03	27.5
1.4 16-20	-	-
1.5 21 and above	-	-
Total	11	100

There were five categories provided for the respondents to indicate their years of experience under which they fall. From Table 4.2.1, it is noted that five (45%) respondents had from zero to five years of experience in their work. There were three (27.5%) respondents whose experience ranged between six and ten years, and three (27.5%) respondents who had between eleven and fifteen years of experience. Six respondents had above six years of experience.

This implies that female managers are not experienced enough in managing secondary schools because the maximum years of experience ranges from zero to five. From the analysis, it is clear that in the previous years females were not appointed as school managers in junior and senior secondary schools. They were only thought to be capable of managing the lower primary schools.

From this analysis, it was noted that the female managers with the maximum experience are those in lower primary schools. Those whose experience ranges from eleven to fifteen years are six in number (55%). In senior secondary schools, they range from zero to five years. There are only two female managers (18%) out of eleven at

Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district. It is still an issue to be redressed. More females need to be appointed as managers in senior secondary schools.

Table 4.2.2: Highest academic qualifications of respondents

Respondents Academic Qualifications	Number	Percentage
2.1 M+3	01	09
2.2 M+4	06	55
2.3 M+5	04	36
2.4 M+6	-	-
2.5 M+7	-	-
Total	11	100

According to Table 4.2.2 it is clear that the managers with M+3 which is a three-year diploma in education, are seven (64%). Those with M+4 are six. Some of them hold a junior degree in Education. Others have the basic diploma plus a further diploma in education.

There are four (36%) female educators with the postgraduate degree or a junior degree as well as a further diploma in Education.

Table 4.2.3: Type of school

Type of school	Number	Percentage
3.1 Rural	11	100
3.2 Urban	-	-
Total	11	100

4.2.2 Respondents' - type of school

Table 4.2.2 shows that all eleven schools (100%) at Emondlo, which is situated in a rural area, are managed by females. The significance of the fact that the schools are situated in such an area is they lack enough educational facilities such as laboratories, libraries and computers.

Apart from the eleven schools mentioned above, there are five schools which are wituated within Emondlo location. There are three at the Emadresini area and two in the Enhlahleni area. There is only one female manager at the school at Qhib`khowe, which is Unit C.

Because they are all situated in a rural area, Emondlo schools only have basic facilities such as water and electricity. They only differ in that those which are within Emondlo location get water from taps while those in the neighbouring areas have water pumps which are shared by the community. They also use the pit type of toilets.

Table 4.2.4: Number of educators in schools

Number of educators	Number of schools	Percentage
4.1 1-5	-	-
4.2 6-10	01	09
4.3 11-15	03	27.5
4.4 16-20	04	36
4.5 21 and above	03	27.5
Total	11	100

In Table 4.2.4, it is indicated that three (27,5%) schools had more than twenty one educators. There are four schools (36%) that have between sixteen and twenty six

educators. There are three schools (27,5%) that have from eleven to fifteen educators, while only one school (09%) has six to ten.

Females enjoy numerical dominance in junior primary schools, while males are almost predominantly appointed to senior primary and high schools. Discrimination is seemingly practised in that females are almost exclusively appointed to junior primary schools where they are expected to confirm their roles as mothers. They are supposed to care for younger children instead of being mature managers of institutions of education. On the other hand males are earmarked for appointment (also as managers) in senior primary and high schools.

Table 4.2.5: Presence of male educators

Male educators	Number of schools	Percentage
5.1 nil	7	64
5.2 1-5	2	18
5.3 6-10	2	18
5.4 11-15	-	-
5.5 16-20	-	-
Total	11	100

Table 4.2.5 indicates that of the total number of respondents in eleven schools, there are seven (64%) schools with no male educators. This implies that in all lower primary schools, there are no male educators. According to the researcher's view, this is due to the patriarchal beliefs of gender discrimination.

There are some people who still treat females as mothers and wives even in the work place. Even the Department of Education used that criterion when they were mainly appointed as principals of the junior primary schools, where the learners are still very

young and still need parental care. This is an example of leadership skills that are devalued.

It is shown that there are two schools (18%) with male educators ranging from one to five which is the minimum number. The maximum number of the females range from six to ten. There is no school which is managed by a female at Emondlo which has ten to twenty male educators.

Even those female managers with male educators on their staff have very few of them. This analysis clearly shows that the males do not want to be dominated by females. The statistics only prove a low ratio of males at such schools. It clearly shows that there is a lot of discrimination in Emondlo circuit schools.

The significance of the analysis is that most female-managed schools have more females working where they manage with no or very few male educators in their schools.

Table 4.2.6: Category of schools

Category of school	Number of schools	Percentage
6.1 Lower primary	06	55
6.2 Combined primary	02	18
6.3 Higher primary	01	09
6.4 Junior secondary	-	-
6.5 Senior secondary	02	18
Total	11	100

According to Table 4.2.6, there are six (55%) targeted schools which are lower primary schools. There are two (18%) combined primary schools and two (18%)

schools which are senior secondary schools. This implies that previously females were not appointed in junior secondary and senior secondary schools. Males are dominating as managers of schools and females as managers in lower primary schools only.

There are very few females in Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district who manage combined primary schools. In some of the schools there are very few male educators. In other higher primary schools there are no male educators at all. The majority of the secondary schools are managed by males.

Table 4.2.7: Enrolment

Enrolment	Number of learners	Percentage
7.1 Below 300	-	-
7.2 300-500	1	09
7.3 501-700	04	36
7.4 701 and above	06	55
Total	11	100

Table 4.2.7 indicates that from the total number of respondents, there are six schools (55%) with more than seven hundred learners. There are four (36%) respondents who indicated that there are learners who range between five hundred and seven hundred in number. There is only one school with an enrolment ranging between three hundred and five hundred.

This implies that there are sizable enrolment figures at Emondlo. In such instances, it is imperative to have effective governance and management structures in place to ensure discipline, effective teaching and learning in schools.

Of the eleven schools targeted, there is only one school with less than five hundred enrolment. The majority of the schools have an enrolment ranging from seven-hundred-and-one and above. This implies that the females are capable of managing the schools, while on the other hand, it can be said that they are the only gender which manages the junior primary schools. For this reason, the community has no alternative but to send their children to female-managed schools. There is evidence that in secondary schools, which are managed by females, there is a lower enrolment than when compared with those managed by males.

It is assumed that the parents do not trust their leadership. As a result, the schools managed by females are experiencing a decrease in enrolment.

4.3: APPOINTMENT AS A FEMALE SCHOOL MANAGER

This section is the description of how the females are appointed as school managers at eMondlo circuit in Nqutu district.

Table 4.2.8: Responses on appointment as female manager

1.1 Being appointed as a female manager	A		B		C		D	
	NC		MC		AC		SC	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	-	-	-	-	6	55	6	55
1.2 Gender as a factor in the contest for appointment	1	9	2	18	4	36	4	36
1.3 Educator's attitude towards the appointment of female managers	-	-	1	9	5	45	5	45
1.4 The local community's perception of school female managers	1	9	-	-	5	45	5	45

Key: A   NC   Not a Challenge

B	MC	Minor Challenge
C	AC	A Challenge
D	SC	Serious Challenge

Item 1.1: Being appointed as a female manager

Table 4.2.8 revealed that five (45%) of the respondents felt that the appointment of females as managers is a serious challenge, while six (55%) experienced it as a challenge. The significance of the responses is that all respondents might have the feeling that the administration and maintenance of a school entails most of the professional duties which females cannot easily handle.

Item 1.2: Gender as a factor in the contest for appointment

Table 4.2.7 reveals that eight (73%) of the respondents indicated that gender in the contest for appointment is a challenge or a serious challenge. The respondents seemed to have felt that they are still being discriminated against, which makes them feel uncomfortable. Only three (27%) of the respondents felt that it is not a challenge or that it is a minor challenge. This means that female managers want to be treated fairly as equals with their male counterparts.

Item 1.3: Educators' attitudes towards the appointment of female managers

According to Table 4.2, 10 (91%) of the respondents indicated that educators' attitudes towards the appointment of female managers constitute a challenge or a serious challenge. Only one (09%) of the respondents felt that it is not a challenge or a minor challenge. The significance of the responses is that workshops might be important for female managers, as it uplifts the standard of knowledge of the management skills they

have as managers. Such workshops could also be organised to change the attitudes of educators.

Item 1.4:   The local community's perception of a school female manager

From Table 4.2, it was observed that 10 (91%) of the respondents indicated that the community's attitude constitutes a challenge or a serious challenge. Only one (09%) of the respondents felt that it is not a challenge. The significance of the responses is that female managers perceive the community as disapproving their appointment. A lot of problems could result from such an attitude.

Females may fall victim to lack of discipline, particularly in senior secondary schools. This is due to the fact that parents want effective teaching and learning for their children. The community only knows males as managers. They might lack confidence in females and instead prefer males as leaders.

4.4: DISCHARGING DUTIES AS A MANAGER

This section gives a list of discharging duties and responsibilities of female managers. The respondents were expected to indicate the intensity of the challenges facing the female managers.

Table 4.2.9: Responses on discharging duties as manager

2.1` Dealing with school discipline	1		2		3		4	
	NC		MC		AC		SC	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
	-	-	-	-	8	73	3	27
2.2 Attending to staff development matters	-	-	2	18	7	64	2	18
2.3 Delegating duties to the staff	-	-	2	18	6	55	3	27
2.4 Choice of the appropriate management style	-	-	-	-	7	64	4	36
2.5 Guiding the staff in their duties	-	-	-	-	7	64	4	36
2.6 Dealing with the problem of educator/learner absenteeism	-	-	2	18	4	36	5	45
2.7 providing welfare for learners	1	9	-	-	8	73	2	18
2.8 Engaging in the process of team building	1	9	1	9	6	55	3	27
2.9 Attending to conflict management	-	-	1	9	2	18	8	73

Key: 1. N C   Not a Challenge

2. M C   Minor Challenge

3. A C   A Challenge

4. S C   Serious Challenge

Item 2.1: Dealing with school discipline

It was revealed in Table 4.3 that eight (73%) respondents believe that dealing with school discipline is a challenge. The implications of such responses are that managers feel that they have a daunting task to maintain discipline. Dealing with discipline is not easy, more especially in senior secondary schools. This is discipline pertaining to learners and educators, coupled with the attitudes of the community sector.

Item 2.2: Attending to staff development matters

Table 4.2 revealed that nine (82%) of the respondents regarded attending to staff development matters was a challenge or a serious challenge. Only two (18%) of the respondents felt that it was either not a challenge or a minor challenge. This implies that there is a need for managers to pay attention to staff development matters to assist educators with their work, as well as to create a healthy environments for their management. This would also be the task of the education department to develop managers to become staff developers.

Item 2.3: Delegating duties to the staff

According to Table 4.3, nine (83%) of the respondents indicated that careful attention to delegation of duties to the staff is a serious challenge or a challenge. Only two (18%) of respondents felt that it is a minor challenge. This response is supported by Webb et al (1994) who state that staff assignments require that careful attention be given to the load of the educators and that without such consideration, inequities in the workload are certain to persist. Personnel who are most qualified to carry out an effective educational programme in the school are often so over-burdened that their efforts are forced to a level of mediocrity. This indicates that the female managers, in the delegation of duties should encourage the teacher's initiative to be effective and efficient.

Item 2.4: Choice of the appropriate management style

Table 4.3, shows that 11(100%) of the respondents indicated that the choice of the appropriate managing style was a challenge or a serious challenge. It appears that most of the female managers were not trained as managers and leaders, as a result they find it a difficult challenge to be a leader in a democratic environment, which needs leadership skills and ability to work with other people.

Item 2.5: Guiding the staff in their duties

According to Table 4.3, 11 (100%) respondents considered guiding staff members in their duties as a serious challenge or a challenge. The implication of such responses is that many female managers feel that they need skills to perform instructional leadership. Because of the rapid changes in education, they must be up to date with everything.

Item 2.6: Dealing with the problem of educator/learner absenteeism

What emerged from Table 4.3 is that nine (82%) of the respondents viewed dealing with educator/learner absenteeism as a challenge or a serious challenge for them. Two (18%) respondents felt that it is a minor challenge for them. This implies that absenteeism among learners and educators provides a severe challenge to school managers. They have to control this default. It is a difficult task because as school managers, they are burdened by management duties. Only two (18%) experienced the issue as a minor challenge.

Item 2.7: Providing welfare (care) for learners

According to Table 4.3 one (9%) respondent indicated that providing welfare for learners was a minor challenge or not a challenge, while ten (91%) of the respondents experienced it as a serious challenge or a challenge. The responses on the item could be attributed to the fact that the respondents are familiar with what is stipulated in the South African Schools Act (1996). The educators act as surrogate parents of learners during the school hours. They work together with parents and inform them of all the activities taking place at school.

2.8   Engaging in the process of team building

Table 4.3 shows that nine (82%) of the respondents experience the process of team building as a serious challenge or a challenge. Only two (18%) respondents felt that it was not a challenge or only a minor challenge. This implies that it is not easy to influence all educators to work together as a team with one goal to be achieved. In many schools educators work as individuals. It is a serious task of the manager of the school to recognize and know the individual staff differences so that she can utilize such individuals correctly, as well as organise individuals into functional teams.

Item 2.9: Attending to conflict management

The overwhelming majority of the respondents 10 (91%) regarded attending to conflict management as a serious challenge or a challenge. Only one (9%) respondent experienced it as a minor challenge. This implies that managers need to be trained in conflict management. It appears that the majority of the female managers are experiencing problems with this aspect of management. They lack expertise concerning how to manage conflicts in schools. Both male and female managers may feel that they are not respected by certain male and female educators and that some even undermine them.

4.5: PERCEPTIONS OR STEREOTYPES OF FEMALE MANAGERS

The following is the description of perceptions or stereotypes of female managers at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district.

Table 4.2.10: Responses on perceptions on stereotypes on females

	1		2		3		4	
	SA		AG		DA		SD	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
4.6.1 Female managers are required to imitate their male counterparts	1	9	3	27.5	3	27.5	4	36
4.6.2 Female managers are generally regarded as lacking management skills as compared to males	2	18	4	36	2	18	3	27
4.6.3 Female managers are to be more educationally qualified then males to compete favourably with males	1	09	1	9	2	18	7	64
4.6.4 female managers tend to lead by emotions	2	18	5	45	3	27	2	18
4.6.5 female managers are more prone to stress than males	2	18	4	36	3	27	2	18
4.6.6 Female managers are regarded as lacking assertiveness and confidence	1	9	5	45	2	18	3	27

KEY:

1.   S A   STRONGLY AGREE

2.   A G   AGREE

3.   D A   DISAGREE

4.   S D   STRONGLY DISAGREE

Item 4.5.1: Female managers are required to imitate their male counterparts

Table 4.4 indicates that four (36%) of the respondents felt that female managers should imitate their male counterparts. Seven (64%) of the respondents had a negative idea towards this statement. These respondents seemed to suggest that the females should manage in their own way, because they are unique and have to contribute different leadership styles while remain being themselves. An assenting view on imitation could have been influenced by attitudes towards female managers.

Item 4.5.2: Female managers are generally regarded as lacking management skills as compared to males

From table 4.4, it is revealed that a total of six (55%) of the respondents felt that female managers are generally regarded as lacking in management skills as compared to males. Five (45%) of the respondents had a negative opinion on the statement. The significance of this responses is that respondents perceive males as being regarded to be better managers than females. This could be ascribed to the fact that in many schools, females are not delegated to do management duties. As a result they may not have enough opportunity to prove their worth. This is a serious issue which needs to be addressed.

Item 4.5.3: Female managers are to be more educationally qualified than males in order to compete favourably with males

Table 4.4 revealed that nine (82%) respondents had a strong feeling that female managers should be more educationally qualified than males. Only two (18%) had the view that educational qualifications should be the same for both genders. This implies that most respondents have observed male manages to be ranked above females, even if the former are less qualified. This could be due to the stereotypes about males being the only people who can manage effectively.

Item 4.5.4: Female managers tend to lead by emotions

Table 4.4 shows that seven (64%) of the respondents agree with the idea that female managers tend to lead by emotions. The significance of these responses is that females are more emotional and lens rational than males. They are easily reflected when challenging arise regarding their duties as managers. They need the necessary skills to deal with all the challenges facing them in the job situation. This including challenges to manage themselves is an important indication which needs to be addressed.

Item 4.5.5: Female managers are more prone to stress or ill-health than males

According to Table 4.4, six (55%) respondents supported the statement on females proneness to stress of ill-health. Five (45%) of the respondents did the statement. This means that a majority of respondents acknowledged relative strength and resilience of males. Females tend to be over-burdened with additional responsibility. They encounter problems and responsibilities both at work and at home. Problems of this nature do not affect their skills, but may impact negatively on their health.

Item 4.5.6: Female managers are regarded as lacking in assertiveness and confidence

According to the responses recorded in Table 4.4, six (55%) of the respondents support the idea that female managers are regarded as lacking in assertiveness or confidence. Five (45%) respondents negated this statement. The significance of these responses is that many respondents felt that females cannot boldly say that they are assertive or feel confident. This attitude could be ascribed to feelings that their efforts are not appreciated in the male-dominated world. This is a serious issue, especially in a democratic country, where everyone is free to rise to the level dictated by his or her capacity.

4.6 FIVE (5) MAJOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY MANAGERS

The respondents mentioned many different challenges facing them as female managers. Some of the common problems mentioned by most of them are mentioned below:

❖ The weaknesses are always attributed to gender in their management, even though the male managers may make the same or even worse mistakes. Gender equity is only an illusion and not a practical reality. Discrimination seems to be a standard practice.

❖ Some educators want female managers to manage only members of their own gender. They are very reluctant to perform duties as instructed by a female manager.

❖ Female managers are undermined by the educators, learners and the community as lacking in relevant skills and have no workshops to improve themselves

❖ Some educators do not want to be delegated by females to perform certain duties because they undermine the authority and intelligence of females.

❖ Females are perceived to lack assertiveness in their duties. They are assumed to have inferiority complexes and lack management and leadership skills.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1   INTRODUCTION

The main aim of the study was to identify the challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district.   An effort was made to identify and to describe the challenges facing female managers in the circuit.   In order for the study to achieve its aims, it was necessary for the investigator to review literature on challenges facing the female managers.   A literature review provided the conceptual framework for investigating the challenges faced by the schools in question.

A questionnaire was used to collect empirical data for this study.   Data analysis and interpretation provided the basis for the presentation of findings and recommendations. This chapter gives a summary of findings, conclusions and recommendations with regard to the investigation.

5.2   FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

This chapter concludes with the discussion of some theoretical findings and conclusions of the study.   Empirical findings and conclusions are also covered.   An   analysis of various sets of responses throws light on the nature and extent of the challenges facing the female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu District.

5.2.1 Theoretical findings and conclusions

In chapter one, it was observed that educational leaders, namely the female managers, face challenges in their management of the schools in question.   The Employment Equity Act (55 of 1998), promotes implementation of affirmative action to redress past

discrimination practices that resulted in female managers lacking acceptance and facing isolation as managers. The literature review in chapter two revealed the need for female managers to face their challenges. They have moved beyond the struggle of their gender and are now positioning themselves as agents of change in education. But theories of inequality suggest that there are still challenges faced by females in educational management and in the community.

The following is the major of this study:

5.2.1.1Gender is not a requirement for people in management

Females do not have the same opportunities in management as the males. There are customary and other practices which are based on the idea of the inferiority of females which need to be eradicated. Some of the female managers do not enjoy do not enjoy all the educational opportunities they should have. They are given less respect than men.

To be a female manager means a fundamental challenge to their very being. The traditional image of gender, where people prefer males to be managers must be thrown to the flames. Female's role is now being increasingly recognized all over the world.

5.2.1.2Gender stereotypes and discrimination

Most people has less favourable treatment for a manager who is a female. Some of the professional practices are discriminatory to female managers. From females, people select some behaviours and attitudes for approval. Discrimination has three aspects that are in practice to females: overt discrimination; covert discrimination and self discrimination.

Overt discrimination: is found in rules and codes of their profession. They are the academic practices. Even the community and the staff managed, have this type of discrimination.

Covert discrimination: is the discrimination that is indirect. Time and the way that job to be done can be against a female who is a manager and a wife.

Self discrimination: this type of discrimination covers both covert and overt discrimination. The female manager herself is often the major source of gatekeeping activity. She must see herself being unaccepted. This discrimination can be demonstrated indirectly, it can be by actions.

5.2.1.3 Female under-represented

In management, females constitute only a very small minority. They are very scarce in senior secondary schools and in tertiary. They are only well represented in lower primary schools. The attempts to equalize opportunities within education is just more verbally than practical. *

Females are still under-represented. They continue to be oppressed, subordinated and discriminated in their management. Female status is improving very slowly. In some instances women's position is not improving but deteriorating. There are very few females in top positions of management where they are to make decision. This is reflected at all educational levels.

5.2.2 Empirical findings and conclusions

The study has established that there are many challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district. There is some indication that female competence in these schools has not been fully recognised. The study has also established that female

managers need to have a clear vision and the potential to break through the glass ceiling and to be mentors for others to follow them. They need to work hard to be successful.

In chapter four a detailed presentation was made on the challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district. This part of the study is a comprehensive summary of the findings and conclusions. It should be pointed out that such research findings help the reader to have a general overview of the challenges facing female managers in general and in Nquthu in particular.

5.2.3 Focus on the challenges facing the female managers

This study established that there are female managers who are faced by challenges at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district. Various responses to the questionnaire revealed that managing the schools while being a female is a major challenge. The responses also pointed to discriminatory practices which are very common in many schools and in the community at large. Such practices have a restrictive effect on female managers It is, therefore, clear that the performance standards they are to meet, are exacting. They do not receive the back-up of authority that would normally be accorded to males who are school managers.

5.2.3.1Gender

The study revealed that all the Lower Primary schools in eMondlo circuit are managed by females only. Ninety five of the Junior and the Senior Secondary schools are managed by males. This shows that there is an imbalance when it comes to promotion to school leadership. Various factors that lead to a shortage of females in management positions were discussed in chapter two of this study.

5.2.3.2 Experience in years as female managers

With regard to experience in years as female managers, the study revealed that most of the females learn by experience. This indicates that teaching experience is valued as a criterion for promotion, without regard to management experience or skills. The level of experience that the female managers had may have an effect on how they manage in the workplace. This clearly indicates that they are not given any management training or support of any description. Female management seems to be just a game that females have been invited to play with no rules given. The study also found that females face extra-ordinary challenges in their tasks as managers without the benefit of suggested solutions.

5.2.3.3 Qualifications

The study found that all female managers at eMondlo circuit are qualified educators. Some of them had degree qualifications. It is, therefore, understandable that the knowledge and skills that the female managers posses could assist them when they are facing challenges in their work as managers.

5.2.3.4 Type of school

The study established that all the schools at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district are rural schools. This is a clear indication of the character of the community that is being served. The culture trap is still one of the limitations. The female managers are in charge of senior positions which were traditionally male dominated. As they find themselves in a patriarchal rural area, they experience resistance from most people to accept them as managers in senior secondary schools. This makes it difficult and uncomfortable for females to enter a "world of men" as it used to be called.

5.2.3.5 Staffing at school

It was revealed in the study that the Lower Primary schools are all managed by females, and the staff is exclusively female. The higher and combined primary schools with female managers had very few male educators, while the majority were female staff members. This means that despite the advances of females in management, stereotypes and barriers still exist. It is clear that some males do not accept females as their "bosses". Some of the males see the females as a threat and they feel humiliated by being led by them.

5.2.3.6 Management activities

The investigation revealed that successful female managers are likely to possess traits necessary for management. They provide professional leadership within schools. They serve as mentors and integrating factors. It should be clear that some management and leadership training, for instance workshops, leadership courses and seminars are needed for female managers to improve their management. The lack of management knowledge is regarded as a major factor influencing and causing the challenges that females are facing in their management positions.

5.2.3.7 Female managers as mentees

The study established that female managers are put to the test in times of crisis in their schools. They are often treated as insignificant. There is a need for mentoring programmes aimed at assisting female managers to reach the higher levels of administration and academic ranks. It is necessary for them to have a mentoring system in place. This is currently lacking. The few females who make it to the top do not have the support that they need. It is also necessary to foster independence in females if they are to be role models. With a lack of mentors, other females believe that they do not have the natural attributes required to be managers and, therefore, do not see

themselves as being suitable for promotion posts when they arise. The foregoing observation underlines the need for successful female mentors.

5.2.3.8 Provision of staff development to enable females to face the challenges effectively

The study revealed that many female managers need to be equipped with management skills in order to be prepared for management positions and the challenges that they are to face in their management positions which were traditionally male dominated. The study also established that females had been largely excluded from work where thought is expressed and ordered. It should, therefore, be clear that the ambitious and capable females precipitate anxiety, guilt and envy in their male counterparts. The staff needs to be developed to promote equal employment opportunities with no discrimination. Affirmative action is to be implemented among all staff members, both males and females.

5.2.3.9 The additional views on the challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district

The findings were derived from the questionnaire items relating to the ranking of the challenges and further comments on challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district.

5.2.3.10 Ranking of areas where they are facing challenges

With regard to the ranking of challenges, the investigation established that there appears to be barriers in the advancement of females as managers. The organisational barriers do not operate only against females but positively in favour of males. The study further revealed that at eMondlo circuit the female managers experience triple oppression: gender, race and class. These are all forms of discrimination. Female managers face

discrimination in their workplaces. The investigation was carried out among the rural schools. It showed that people are scarcely aware of human rights and women's rights. The new dispensation has not substantially penetrated the ordinary lives of females in rural communities. Females have "dual roles" at work and at home. Their potential is underestimated by other people, while some even doubt their competence.

5.2.3.11 Ranking of factors which challenges female managers in contemporary times

With regard to the ranking of factors which challenge females, it has been clear that the "glass ceiling" inhibits the upward mobility of females. Due to discrimination, females are kept out of the middle management positions so that they obviously cannot gain experience that will qualify them for management positions. They are clustered as principals in lower primary schools, while males in their significant numbers are managing the junior and senior primary schools. The competence of the females is thus undermined. Female managers are subject to a patriarchal culture where decision-making responsibilities belong to males. This implies that the cultural barriers need to be eradicated. People expect female managers to imitate the male managers. Due to mistrust, some people are resist acceptance of females as their superiors. However, the study also revealed that leadership is based on a male-dominated world. Some of the people judge the female managers by male values of leadership, which is unfair and unjust.

5.2.3.12 Further comments

There is a need to redress the challenges facing the female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district. This implies that the systematic implementation of affirmative action, based on the Employment Equity Act (Act 55 of 1998), is a crucial element in the redress of unfair discrimination.

5.3   RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations are derived from the theoretical and empirical findings of the study, and from the conclusions of the study.

5.3.1   Females have something unique to offer in management

There is no need for female managers to imitate the males in their management. They are now firmly established as managers in the workplace. For female managers to respond positively to all management demands, they need to be creative in their management.   It is important to recognise and to value what females offer to educational management. Females need to establish study groups or quality circles in which they discuss constructive ways of using their skills. They have a role to play in bringing a feminine and nurturing element into their job role.   They also need to understand the nature of discrimination and how to deal with it.

They have to make a difference by challenging discriminatory and unjust practices aimed at female managers. This clearly indicates that they need special management skills.   For this to be carried out properly, there is a need for regional and district officers to play a role in training female managers to enable them to manage their schools effectively.

5.3.2   There is a need for gender equity to be promoted

There is a need for special efforts to be made to increase representation of females in senior positions such as school managers with quality management. Gender imbalances need to be redressed. Specific training needs to be introduced to the benefit of all people who promote gender equity. This will inform all females of their rights in the workplace. This means that there must be at least fifty percent males and fifty percent females in school management. The right sizing should go hand in hand with actions

directed at reducing the oppression of females. It is, therefore, recommended that expressions or behaviour that reinforce negative stereotypes of females at work should be put to a stop. All people must be aware of women's rights. There is an assumption that the educators and leaders of the community are adults. There is, therefore, no need to inform them about the competence of females as capable leaders. Males and females are to be treated equally. All people need to be aware that females are as competent and assertive as males are. The only difference is gender. Gender equity must be practical and not be merely verbal. Females are to be recognised and treated as capable school managers.

5.3.3 Suggested strategies for female managers to be provided with job descriptions

The lack of job description in schools affect the way in which female managers perform their duties. In some cases female managers have to carry out their duties without a clear understanding of their role expectations. It is recommended that the employing department provide all female managers with clear job descriptions which indicate their duties in the schools that they are managing. They have to know which duties can be delegated to other staff members and those that are to be done by themselves. They are to be assisted to work with other educators as a team.

This study established that some female managers at eMondlo circuit are functioning in isolation, in the sense that they are hardly visited by the education officers. It is, therefore recommended that there be clear communication channels between the education officers and the female managers. Workshops and seminars on management skills need to be conducted and encouraged. This will help the female educators to do their duties to the best of their abilities.

5.3.4 Parent-school relationships to be encouraged and maintained

With regard to the parent-school link, this study established that masculinity is a serious issue in management. Parents prefer males to be the only managers in junior and senior secondary schools. This clearly shows that the contemporary secondary schools with female managers are devalued. The patriarchal parents value the male managers only, while the females are valued as being responsible for Lower primary schools with young learners and absence of male educators under their leadership. Most parents seem to hold a belief that males are to hold senior positions of responsibility, not females. They cling to the stereotype that males make better leaders than females. Gender equity has not established firm roots in the community under investigation.

It is therefore recommended that the community and the educators be assisted with workshops on gender equity, so that their knowledge about female managers can be improved. Parents need conferences, workshops and seminars to redress their negative attitudes towards the females who are school managers. Parents should develop confidence and trust in female leadership. They have to accept female roles of management as being the same or equal or sometimes better than the male. School-community partnership must be encouraged. The community must support the female-managed school in the same way they accept those that are managed by males. The community needs to be influenced to re-think its male-bias with regard to the junior secondary, senior secondary and tertiary institutions. If there is no parent-school link in those schools managed by females, poor performance on the part of the female managers can be the order of the day.

This means that clear and friendly communication channels between the female school managers, the educators and the parents need to be encouraged or developed so that the female managers can do their jobs effectively and with greater success.

5.3.5 The cultural barriers should be eradicated

Many females have been blocked by cultural barriers to gain access to the higher positions of professional life. In patriarchal societies, females are not supposed to manage institutions where there is a mixture of genders. The patriarchal culture tends to overlook the strengths that female managers bring to schools and to the professional life as whole. The culture trap is about the "limitations" of females attitudes and behaviour in a patriarchal context. The patriarchal culture oppresses females, particularly through the motherhood role as well as relegation to positions of assistants to males.

However, the males are beginning to witness increased numbers of females entering the professional world. An unfairness is that most of the females who manage schools are clustered in positions where they fail to make full use of their qualifications and abilities. The evidence of this is that only females manage the pre-schools and lower primary schools. They are managing schools in which there are no male educators or those where the majority of the staff are females and very few males. This clearly shows that with the success of females as managers, the males develop extreme anxiety and envy with regard to females.

It is recommended that females should be given opportunities to manage secondary and tertiary institutions because they bring different sets of experiences to their work. The female managers' role and achievements must continue to take place in the transforming context, which now already shows evidence of female success. Females must have more role models. The implementation of the affirmative action programmes must make things easier for female managers to break through and to achieve senior positions which are now male dominated.

It is therefore recommended that there be a change in the culture of schools and in promotion rules. Females must be accepted and allowed to do things in a different

way. Well-structured training programmes should be designed by the department in order to update the female managers about the changes in education. They must always be up-to-date about the way in which to manage effectively. Female managers must break through the glass ceiling which allows them to see where they might go, but stops them from getting there. Gender must be considered in promotion because in any given position, the higher the rank or power, the smaller the proportion of females. All these imbalances need to be redressed. The females must be allowed to rise within the organisational hierarchy. When females are successful in their management, they will face all the challenges with success.

5.4 CONCLUSION

The investigation has made an effort to indicate findings, conclusions and recommendations regarding the challenges facing female managers at eMondlo circuit in Nquthu district. The study showed that females experience some problems in managing their schools effectively.

Gender equity programmes need to be encouraged so that female managers will be given the opportunity to make full use of their abilities. It is also clear from the study that females have been the most disadvantaged group as far as school management is concerned. Affirmative Action must be promoted.

The findings, conclusions and recommendations made in this study point to the need for gender equity campaign to assist women to participate in educational management and other social services. For quality female management, accelerated training and development need to be implemented. For effective management, females must be exposed to induction programmes (workshops) as part of their training. Thus, they will become aware of what is expected from them for effective performance of their management duties. In order for each female school manager to manage her school

with greater success, it is necessary for her to acquire skills to deal with whatever challenges she faces.

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Sekethwayo High School
P O Box 1202
EMONDLO
3105

13 May 2002

The Principal

_____

_____

_____

REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH

You are hereby kindly requested to allow P.D. Zwane (Miss) to conduct research in the school under your jurisdiction.

The topic is"Challenges facing female managers at Emondlo circuit in Nqutu district."

The findings of this research will be made available to you at your request. Furthermore all data collected from schools will be kept confidential, and no identification of a specific school will be given when the report is completed.

Thanking you in anticipation.

Yours sincerely

P.D. ZWANE (MISS)

APPENDIX B

THE QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMALE MANAGERS

TOPIC: *'CHALLENGES FACING FEMALE SCHOOL MANAGERS AT EMONDLO CIRCUIT IN NQUTU DISTRICT'*

Instructions to respondents:

1. The information will be treated in strict confidence.
2. Do not write your name.
3. Please, answer all questions by making a cross (X) in the appropriate block. Comment/suggest spaces provided following your choice.

SECTION A

BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

1.1 Your experience as a manager in years

0-5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21 and above

1.2 Your highest academic qualifications

M+3	M+4	M+5	M+6	M+7

1.3 Settlement type of school

Rural	Urban

1.4 Number of educators in your school

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

1.5 Number of males

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

1.6 Type of school

LP	CP	HP	JS	SS

1.7 Enrollment

Below 300	300-500	501-700	701 and above

SECTION B

APPOINTMENT AS A FEMALE SCHOOL MANAGER

Please make a cross (X) to each statement showing your response to what you think is most appropriate.

KEY:

A	:	Not a challenge	(NC)
B	:	Minor challenge	(MC)
C	:	A challenge	(AC)
D	:	Serious challenge	(SC)

2.1   Being appointed as a female school manager

A	B	C	D

2.2   Gender as a factor in the contest for appointment

A	B	C	D

2.3   Educators' attitude towards the appointment of female managers

A	B	C	D

2.4   The local community's perception of a school female manager

A	B	C	D

SECTION C

DISCHARGING DUTIES AS A MANAGER

Below are some of the duties and the responsibilities of the manager. How intense are the following challenges to you. Make a cross (X) in the appropriate number.

KEY :

1	:	Not a challenge
2	:	Minor challenge
3	:	A challenge
4	:	A serious challenge

3.1   Dealing with school discipline

1	2	3	4

3.2   Attending to staff development matters

1	2	3	4

3.3   Delegating duties to staff

1	2	3	4

3.4   Choice of the appropriate managing style

1	2	3	4

3.5   Guiding the staff in their duties

1	2	3	4

3.6   Dealing with the problem of educator/learner absenteeism

1	2	3	4

3.7   Providing welfare (care) to learners

1	2	3	4

3.8   Engaging in process of team building

1	2	3	4

3.9   Attending to conflict management
       (Instruction and key to be used)

1	2	3	4

SECTION 6

PERCEPTIONS OR STEREOTYPES ON FEMALE MANAGERS

Please indicate if the following perceptions are held about you by the observers as a female manager. Make a cross (X) in the appropriate number.

KEY   :
1   :   Strongly Agree   (SA)
2   :   Agree   (AG)
3   :   Disagree   (DA)
4   :   Strongly disagree   (SD)

4.1   Female managers are required to imitate their male counterparts

1	2	3	4

4.2   Female managers are generally regarded as lacking in management skills as compared to males

1	2	3	4

4.3   Female managers are to be more educationally qualified than males in order to compete favourable with males

1	2	3	4

4.4   Female managers tend to lead by emotions

1	2	3	4

4.5   Female managers are more prone to stress or ill-health than males

1	2	3	4

4.6   Female managers are regarded as lacking in assertiveness or confidence

1	2	3	4

SECTION E

FIVE (5) MAJOR PROBLEMS IDENTIFIED BY MANAGERS

Please identify any five (5) problems which you experience or had experienced as a female manager:

5.1 _____

5.2 _____

5.3 _____

5.4 _____

5.5 _____

5.6 _____

5.7 _____

5.8 _____

5.9 _____

5.10 _____