

# **PRINCIPALSHIP AND GENDER**

**by**

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**Date submitted:                      March 2009**

## **DECLARATION**

I declare that 'Leadership and Gender' is my own work and that all the sources I have used and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of references.

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Signature

(Ms CS Magagula)

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Date

## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my late father, Titus Makhosikhosi Magagula, who was anxious to see me being a doctor, and who sent me to Roman Catholic boarding schools while I was still at primary school. That helped me to gain a better basic education and motivated me to further my education to this point.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

I would like to convey my vote of thanks to:

1. God, who was with me all the time, covering me with His precious blood in the process of this research.
2. My dearest mother, Lena Magagula, for her spiritual support and care.
3. My supervisor, for his guidance and supervision and for making it possible for me to complete this work.
4. The learners' presidents, chairpersons of school governing bodies, educators and female principals of the secondary schools in the uMlazi District who co-operated in filling in the questionnaire and being interviewed.
5. The language editor, Ann Dawson, who was committed and dedicated in editing this work.

## **LETTER FROM THE LANGUAGE EDITOR**

I declare that I have read this version of the thesis ‘Leadership and Gender’ and that to the best of my knowledge it is grammatically correct.

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Signature

(Ms AM Dawson)

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Date

## **ABSTRACT**

The study aims at investigating secondary school principalship with regard to gender. The focal point was to assess the effectiveness of female principals compared with male principals. The following aims were therefore formulated:

- to determine whether women principals in secondary schools are perceived by educators, school governing bodies and learners to be effective as leaders,
- to establish if women are perceived by educators, school governing bodies and learners to be more or less effective than men,
- to assess the educational environment in regard to the movement towards a culture in which female principals are treated equally to male principals in schools,
- to determine, through literature review, what constitutes effective leadership,
- to determine whether there are specific leadership styles associated with male or female principals,
- to identify barriers experienced by women who aspire to leadership positions and
- to determine if the status of being a female or male influences perceptions of female principals.

The study was based on some leadership theories such as trait, behavioural, contingency, transactional and the transformational theories. These theories served as the criteria for evaluating female school principalship versus male school principalship. The study revealed that these theories do apply to schools, that is, they really are relevant to the schools, regardless of gender. In order to address adequately

the problems being investigated, the investigation was undertaken of the perceptions of educators, school governing bodies' chairpersons, learners' presidents and female principals regarding school principalship and gender.

The sample therefore consisted of the four above-mentioned categories. Two instruments were used for data collection: questionnaires were for the first three groups and interviews for the female principals. The study established the following problem areas: lack of school vision, interpersonal skills, conflict management skills, transformational skills and communication skills on the part of some school principals; problems experienced by female school principals which were caused mostly by male school stakeholders; and the inability on the part of female principals to impose discipline.

The data was analysed both quantitatively and qualitatively. In view of the findings of the study, the researcher proffered several recommendations.

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **ORIENTATION TO THE STUDY**

#### **1.1 INTRODUCTION**

Leadership and gender studies have been the focus of attention for various authors, such as Gorton and Snowden (1972), Shakeshaft (1987), van der Westhuizen (1991), Kotecha (1994) and March, Smith and Mukhopadhyay (1999). During the apartheid era in South Africa, equal opportunities for leadership development, not to mention the development of leadership among women, were non-existent. Since 1994, however, the empowerment of both men and women has been encouraged. A fair number of Africans have since assumed leadership positions in the structures of civil society and organs of state. Promotion of females and males to leadership positions has become a common occurrence in schools, community statutory and the workplace. However, there are still observable gender distortions at these institutions, especially in schools where one still finds few women in leadership positions in general and in school principalships in particular. This could be because, as put forward by the poet W.H. Auden and quoted by Du Plessis (1985: 1), 'so much happens so fast that man cannot keep up with the number of changes demanded of him'. Auden also says:

We would rather be ruined than changed,  
We would rather die in our dread  
Than climb the cross of the moment  
And let our illusions die. (Du Plessis, 1985: 1)



The poem expresses how men keep holding on to the old patriarchal belief that women are inferior to men even if the Constitution of South Africa stipulates clearly that there should be no gender discrimination. In other words, they resist change.

Despite the above saying, there have been some changes pertaining to gender and principalship, although there appears to be inadequate attention given to a comparative study of male and female principals and to determine whether males are more effective than women as leaders or vice versa. In this study, the researcher looks at leadership and gender in schools and perceptions of role incumbent on the gender of principals, and examines theories that inform perceptions about principals and gender.

## **1.2 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Sexism is far older and more entrenched than racism, and it is an ideology that is internalised by both victim and perpetrator, despite the new political dispensation which will almost valorise the emancipation of women (Cousins and Maart, 1994: 37). This has shown itself in leadership positions in general, as well as in educational leadership such as principalship in particular. The issues discussed below that are highlighted in literature are of the greatest concern to the researcher.

### **1.2.1 Acts**

Laws are introduced within the context of legislative changes aiming to improve the position of women (Nyman, 1997: 6). The most important provisions have been the Constitution, the Employment Equity Act (1998), Bill of Rights and a white paper on Affirmative Action in the public service (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 33). The

Constitution's equally anti-discriminatory and affirmative action clauses provide the primary backdrop to the improved legal status of women (Nyman, 1997: 6). The Employment Equity Act (1998), on one hand, prohibits unfair discrimination on the basis of sex and race, and on the other, the Constitution, the Bill of Rights and legislation use quotas to improve gender inclusivity (Chisholm and September, 2005: 1). As a result of current legislation which prohibits gender discriminatory practices, women educators, for example, now receive maternity benefits even if they are unmarried; hold permanent posts and receive service benefits equal to their male counterparts. But despite the laws referred to above, the number of male principals and female principals has not yet equalised. This leads one to look at the situation of female principals.

### **1.2.2 Female principals**

Women dominate the profession but not its leadership and management (Napo, 1999 cited by Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 34). When one looks closely at school management one notices the dichotomy. On the one side of this dichotomy women teach and on the other side men manage. Based on the evidence of such a gender-based dichotomy, women aspiring to principalship clearly experience problems. The impact of this dichotomy is seen in the low representation of women in secondary school principalship, which was less than 1% in white education in South Africa in 1993. Low representation of women in administration confirms that women's exclusion from leadership is more entrenched in the field of education. Data gathered in 1990 showed that the representation of women in positions of school principalship and above was extremely low (Gaganakis, 1999: 31). This data consisted only of information surrounding women in white education because, at that stage, there were

no data available for the other population groups. Data on African women administrators, for example, are inadequate. The limited nature of the data reflects the lack of importance placed upon gender issues in educational management in the past (Greyvenstein, 2000: 30-32). Therefore a secondary principal who was female was likely to be white, in her mid forties or older, unmarried, to have taught for fifteen years, to hold a masters' degree, to be enrolled in doctoral program and to be from a more urban background than her male counterpart. The concentration of women at junior levels has perpetuated a stereotype that women are not fit to hold top management positions in the educational system (Gaganakis, 1999: 30).

Once in educational leadership positions, women found still more barriers to overcome (Pigford and Tonnsen, 1993: 6). Despite the obstacles women encountered, they created opportunities to exercise leadership. Therefore, the imbalance of women administrators compared to the number of women in education provokes closer scrutiny (Green and Manera, 1995: 10). There is doubt that men, who are the majority in school principalship, can cope with obstacles such as violence, girls' sexual abuse and HIV/AIDS in running schools effectively. Therefore, the differences between men and women need to be examined in the next section.

### **1.2.3 Differences between men and women**

The volume edited by Powel which focuses on evaluating research into whether and how women are different from men as managers recognises that women's goals and values can be both similar and different to those of men (Rubin, 1995: 216). In some respects, male and female administrators are indeed quite different (Pigford and Tonnsen, 1993: 5). Women and men enter the labour market on a different basis, that is, on a different principle, (Edigheji, 1999: 9). The meritocracy model assumes that

only men have the unique blend of skills and competence needed to succeed in administration (Hanson, 1996: 162). There is an argument that only men should be appointed as principals because they are professional and superior to women (Pigford and Tonnsen, 1993: 5). As a result, women continue to teach, while men manage (Bailey, 1997: 81). However, “women tend to apply only for jobs that require a high level of qualification, whereas men make a considerable interpretation of their skills and apply for many more positions” (Hanson, 1996: 162). But it is claimed that a woman is better qualified for school administration than a man.

In the foregoing discussion of the qualities which differentiate men and women, one finds good qualities in both genders. Despite these findings the statistical data shows far smaller numbers of women than men in secondary principalship. The statistics below validates this point.

#### **1.2.4 Statistical data**

There is limited statistical data available regarding the proportion of males and females in the various management hierarchies in the education system (Greyvenstein, 2000: 31). In principalship at the level of secondary school, it was discovered in 1990 that fewer than 1% of women in education were in principalship positions. (This pertains to whites only, as no data existed for other population groups.) (Greyvenstein, 2000: 31). In 2000, data concerning the Education Department of the Gauteng province indicated that 17% of principalship of secondary schools was held by women (Greyvenstein, 2000: 31). According to the 1995 survey women accounted for far less than a quarter (21.1%) of all managerial, legislative and school management positions in the workplace (Erasmus, 1997: 35). African women accounted for 3.6% of these positions. However, women now constitute almost half the members of

cabinet and 35% of members of parliament and civil society organisations; and the education sector, too, has seen a similar movement as government and civil society organisations towards gender equity. However, at the commencement of this research project, that is, in 2004, EMIS of KwaZulu-Natal indicated that there were 1217 (80.3%) male secondary school principals compared to 299 (19.7%) female secondary school principals. There were 324 (78.1%) secondary school male principals and 91 (21.9%) secondary school female principals in the eThekweni region. In the Umlazi district there were 32 (20.9%) female secondary school principals and 121 (79.1%) male secondary school principals in the 142 public and 11 independent schools of the Department of Education in KwaZulu-Natal.

The statistical data sketched above stimulates one to examine the gender problem in relation to principalship from various perspectives. The statistics indicates that the number of female principals is still small. One also needs to look closely at the improvements made in the management of gender.

#### **1.2.5 Improvement in the management of gender**

The appointment of women to top positions in KwaZulu-Natal suggests a degree of progressive reform (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 34). There is now mobility of women into managerial and professional positions (Suraj-Narayan, 2005: 83). The presence of African women at such upper-management of South Africa's corporate world still remains a wonder (Moahloli, 1997: 30). In 1997 the Minister of Education was and is still a woman. All heads of departments in the researcher's school, for instance, are females, and the principal of the researcher's previous secondary school is a female. Despite the range of proposals for improved gender management, females still experience considerable gender abuse. Looking at the given statistics, these

improvements have done little in increasing the number of women in principalship. The scarcity of females has an effect on social problems such as violence, sexual abuse and HIV / AIDS which are also of great concern for the researcher.

#### **1.2.6 Pressing social problems**

The social problems include violence, sexual abuse and AIDs.

##### **(a) Violence against women**

Gender violence, that is, hurting somebody physically, in schools, is not a new phenomenon (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 6). Girls have been beaten by both educators and male schoolmates. The understanding of violence in schools in recent years has intensified and its definition has widened to include physical, sexual and emotional abuse (Chisholm and Napo 1999: 36). Gender violence was fueled by generalised violence during the apartheid years (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 36). If males could see role models, that is, if they were presented with strong women, they might not do wreak violence on girls. Violence is more likely to be addressed if a woman identifies with these problems, fights against them, and confronts unfair treatment meted out to girls. Female principals are likely to take more decisive actions against violence by men or boys towards females in schools. The sad part of it is that women who are associated with violent or controlling male partners are at an increased risk of HIV infection and sexual abuse (Mitchell, 2005: 96).

**(b) Sexual abuse**

While the prohibition of sexual abuse is encouraging, it is not sufficient (Nyman, 1997: 14). This is proved by the annual police report, which states that a woman is raped every 10 minutes in South Africa, one is beaten up every four minutes and seven women are murdered, on average, every day (Bramded, Geldenhys, Molefe and Huisman,. 2005: 5). Some young girls are abused by their own fathers and beaten by their boyfriends (Mitchell, 2005: 97). Two thirds of all rapes may be unreported because victims often depend on perpetrators for a livelihood (Bramded *et al.* 2005: 5). The police figures also show that rape increased nationally by 4.5% between April 2004 and March 2005. Sixty percent of the victims were adult women and 40% were children. The province with the highest number of reported cases is Gauteng followed by KwaZulu-Natal and the Eastern Cape. There is an increase in the number of rape cases as reflected in crime statistics (Bramded *et al.* 2005: 38). Rape has increased by 4% from 52733 to 55114 cases. This indicates that many of the nation's men are treating their female fellow citizens as sexual prey. Rape robs women of their dignity and there is also evidence that a significant number of its victims have contracted HIV/AIDs and other diseases as a result. No study on HIV/AIDs sexuality and gender amongst youth should come without some recommendations about the need for educators and principals to be addressing school related gender-based violence (SRGBR) (Mitchell, 2005: 101). Female principals would have a powerful effect on their schools, handling sexual abuse which could affect the general sexual abuse against women.

**(c) HIV/AIDS**

Despite a Constitution and laws that guarantee equal rights and non-discrimination, rape and AIDS infection rates in South Africa are among the highest in the world, (Singer, 2005: 1). The rate of violence against young girls is rising (Johannesburg, Date

accessed9/03/05from<http://www.csinomior.com/atcsinomior/special/women/world/world032901.mini>). Older men who have unsafe sex with young women and multiple partners are fuelling the HIV epidemic in South Africa (Keeton, 2005: 13). A study by the Human Sciences Research Council (HSRC) found that, in South Africa, 60% of those surveyed were not using condoms, and two thirds of them did not believe that this would lead to infection (Keeton, 2005: 13). Those most vulnerable categories to HIV infection are women aged 15 to 24 years old. Professor Salim Abdool is quoted having said:

The bigger the age difference the more the epidemic is able to grow. If men and women in the same age group were having sex, it would be burning out. Younger women were biologically more susceptible to HIV and had less bargaining power to use condoms when their partners were older than the women. (Keeton, 2005: 13).

According to report referred to above eight times more women than men were HIV-positive in the 15 – 24 age group. Research also found that 87% of HIV-positive women were of childbearing age (Keeton, 2005: 13). The rate of HIV infection in females was 33%, similar to the antenatal survey of 2004.

The above social problems referred to are increasing in a time when men are the majority in school leadership. It seems as though the current male dominated leadership fails to address the gender issues which beset women in South Africa.



There is a belief that the increase of women in school leadership will eliminate the problems. This is based on the perception that women are more dedicated, caring, sacrificing and sensitive.

This argument is illustrated by the example of Phandimfundo High school and the employment of female educators. In May 2004, seven female educators were employed until the end of the year (Dyantyi, 2005: 15). The educators' contracts were not renewed. But instead of downing tools, these dedicated educators continued to teach the 320 grade 8 learners without reward (Dyantyi: 5). However, it is problematic finding such dedicated women to fill more positions of principalship, as they experience obstacles in educational leadership. Those obstacles need to be examined in the present study. These obstacles will be discussed in the next section.

### **1.2.7 Obstacles in gender equity**

Protests surrounding experiences of gender inequality, more common to women than to men, sometimes fall on deaf ears (Czapanskiy, 1995: 39). Interpretation and implementation of laws, policies and affirmative action that have been raised are difficult to monitor (Greyvenstein, 2000: 33). This is due to the fact that despite these laws, women who aspire to management positions in the education system in South Africa experience numerous, multi-faceted and deeply interwoven obstacles attributable cultural norms and values (Greyvenstein, 2000: 30 and Green and Manera, 1995: 10). These obstacles may take the form of subtle biases, such as discrimination, sexual harassment and being labelled the 'weaker sex and not as capable as men' (Erasmus, 1997: 150). The school then reinforces those identities through a number of processes such as staff selections to school principalship. Such

problems lower women's self-esteem, which in turn causes them to lower their expectations (Green and Manera, 1995: 10).

Women have been denied significant representation in the hierarchies of management in the education system (Gaganakis, 1999: 150). Women experience difficulties finding entry into management (Bailey, 1997: 81). The reason provided for their limited access to decision-making power is that they prioritise family commitments over career advancement (Edigheji, 1999: 39). The double pressures on women in the family and work environments also influence their work choices, performance and the degree of job satisfaction they experience (Erasmus, 1997: 36). Childbearing prevents women from having uninterrupted work records and from being regarded as part of the permanent pool of employees (Nyman, 1997: 11). It could be contended that when African women are promoted, it is largely to the lower echelons of management, such as heads of department, but not to principals. There are serious gender distortions in educational management which place women managers at a significant disadvantage (Greyvenstein, 2000: 30). Women teach and men manage in schools (Greyvenstein and van der Westhuizen, 1992/3: 271).

Management has been conceptualised as a masculine activity (Bailey, 1997: 81). Women are also defined by the male-dominated culture of society (Hanson, 1996: 162). Women are made inferior and relegated to subordinate positions outside the circles of managerial and decision-making and power (Edigheji, 1999: 39). Even in cases where women handle their tasks effectively, particularly in a style that differs from that of men, their style and efforts may not be recognised (Hanson, 1996: 162), even when these women have had training and possess qualifications that put them on a par with their male counterparts (Edigheji, 1999: 39). Therefore successful women

run the risk of becoming tokens in a male establishment (Moahloli, 1997: 30). It is also suggested that women lack necessary qualifications and skills, and hold inappropriate attitudes (Bailey, 1997: 81). A woman becomes good at executing male-decided policies in a male-generated and gendered power system (Maahloli, 1997: 30). Temporary contract employment exists for a category 7 of educators most of which are women (Edigheji, 1999: 41). It can affect a women's self-esteem if she feels that her position in the workplace is temporary (Edigheji, 1999: 42). Other pressures on females as identified by Bailey are related to lack of finance, public speaking, staff shortages and organisation politics (Bailey, 1997: 83). It is even said that women create certain barriers for themselves (Hanson, 1996: 162).

The insufficient improvement in women leadership performance is traceable to the abovementioned obstacles that are encountered by women who aspire to leadership positions. While these obstacles have a negative effect on the overall performance of educational leadership, they surely cripple the chances of would-be female leaders of the future. As a result very few of women have the guts to apply for principalship. This has added to the scarcity of female educators who are adequately equipped, academically and professionally, to aspire to principalship even though their skills are demanded by democratic South African schools. This state of affairs highlights the need for measures of gender equity directed at principalship in South African schools.

### **1.2.8 Gender equity, poverty and management of gender**

#### **(a) Gender equity**

The discourse of gender equity in education is constructed through different kinds of official documents (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 32). The principal focus of many of

these initiatives is on the access of women to public life and institutions and elimination of discrimination against women (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 33. Gender equity has found the pride of place in the new Constitution and other pieces of legislation based thereon. The emphasis in the Constitution is on eliminating discrimination and ensuring equal access and equal rights before the law. However, there is still evidence of continuing gender imbalances at the level of both the state and civil society (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 32). Legislation would be an insufficient step on its own. The limited nature of the data reflects the lack of importance that has been attached to gender issues in educational management in the past (Greyvenstein, 2000: 31). There is consistent acknowledgment of the importance of addressing the ideologies of gender difference that legitimate girls' and women's subordination through confronting the deeply held, largely unconscious beliefs and practices of people of all ages (Wolpe *et al.* 1997: 7 cited by Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 32), but this is not enough. It would therefore be important for both employers and unions to amend the evaluation criteria for placing women in certain positions (Nyman, 1997: 16). A clear and definite need to address gender equity exists in the sphere of educational management. There are calls for both men and women to acknowledge the Constitutional imperatives to address past gender discriminatory practices and to further research gender equity issues in educational management (Greyvenstein, 2000: 30).

It is evident from the foregoing analysis that gender inequity is a complex reality in educational management, and that it would require a multi-faceted action plan for addressing it. Failure to redress gender equity may result in other problems which degrade the status of women.

**(b) Poverty of women**

Any provision or approach to social development that fails to recognise the material conditions of the lives of most African women could short-circuit the development of women's power and capacity to renegotiate their social positions (Cousins and Maart, 1994: 37). Women typically occupy gender-specific jobs and are in the lower-paid ranks (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 34). They also may choose careers which require less investment or training, as compared to their male counterparts (Edigheji, 1999: 39). It has also been observed that women may settle for paid lower wages because of their low education qualifications (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 39). In the RSA permanent posts were given to married men as opposed to married women because the former were considered to be the breadwinners (Chisholm and Napo, 1999: 42). Discrimination against women promotes the situation of poverty as there are women who are worthy home makers as well. Often men leave their homes to work in distant places. Some may disappear, leaving the responsibility of maintaining homes and feeding children to the women. It is common practice for many men to squander their financial resources through the use of drugs and alcohol. As a result, men usually die before women, who in turn have to take sole responsibility for the household. Women often die earlier when they are abandoned in our society or when they are involved in violence.

Therefore, if the number of women in school leadership were to be increased, female principals could set an example for girls, helping to prevent them from falling into the trap of poverty. Female principals would make girls and female staff members more aware of their crucial role in the family.

**(c) Management of gender**

Historically, the ruling class under capitalism has always been gendered (Moahloli, 1997: 30). Until recently, very systematic research has been done to explore the position of women in African education system (Unisa, tutorial letter 105 module OV031-G/105, 1994: 13). A variety of practices has been used to perpetuate male dominance in school administration (Pigford and Tonnsen, 1993: 5). This indicates that there is little recognition at many levels of management of what is meant by a gender equity plan (Wolpe, 2005: 126). The issue on people's minds is that of equality regarding the number of females, in comparison to males, in management positions, which can easily be measured. Also currently of concern is the lack of a definitive plan to ensure that a balance is achieved with regard to management positions from a school level through to higher education, and within different Departments of Education. Current data shows that although women represent more than 50% of the global population, there is no country where women make up close to half the number of corporate managers (Ramagoshi, 2005: 83). Women are structurally excluded from leadership as a group, not as individuals, which is a result of the patriarchal culture in South African society and of the attitudes of the unions, who view women incapable of leadership (Daphne and Horton, 1997: 28). The National Teachers' Organisation, for example, did not admit women until almost ten years after its founding (Pigford and Tonnsen, 1993: 6). Very few women are found at different levels of leadership in COSATU, a male-dominated congress (Daphne and Horton, 1997: 24), yet the COSATU Sexual Harassment Code of Conduct and Procedure provides special procedures for sexual harassment (Nyman, 1997: 14). This is also applicable to secondary school principalship, as a result of the influence of

unions and the appointment process itself. This leads one to look at the procedures for the appointment of principals.

### **1.2.9 Procedures for appointing principals**

According to an HRM circular (no.37 of 2004: 7, 11-12), the appointment procedures are as follows:

- The interview committee is selected according to the South African Schools Act, Act No.85 of 1996, and usually consists mainly of men.
- The interview committee comprises the superintendent of education, the members of the school governing body and one union representative from each union as observer.
- Learner members are precluded from this committee
- The interviewees receive similar treatment during the interviews.
- The applicant is assessed according to the guidelines agreed upon by parties to the procedural chamber in accordance with the KwaZulu-Natal Resolution 11 of 1997.
- The school's governing body submits recommendations to the regional office via the circuit and district in its order of preference, taking into account the provisions of the Employment Equity Act (EEA) No.55 of 1998.
- The regional office compiles a schedule of recommendations and forwards it to the Human Resource Systems and Policies Directorate.
- A comprehensive schedule of promotions is submitted to the chief executive considering agreed-upon procedures and compliance with the Employment of

Educators Act of 1998, South African Schools Act of 1996 and Labour Relations Act of 1995.

- Incorrect promotions are withdrawn.
- Any grievances of the applicant may be lodged on the attached application forms through the union directly to the superintendent of education / Assistant Director Relations in the region in which the post is allocated.
- Any grievances must be lodged within seven days after the announcement of the results of selection.

Although the above procedures seem democratic, some parents are insufficiently informed about occupational rules and selection procedure. The guidelines for personnel selection are somewhat open to manipulation. In this regard certain unions who participate might manage to secure appointment of their preferred candidates. In this regard it might be easy for the number of males selected to exceed the number of females. As indicated above the structures of civil society tend to be male-dominated. In many instances interview panels consist only of males, and, as a consequence, selection takes place according to the criteria of stereotyped gender roles (Greyvenstein, 2000: 32). The interviewers are commonly men (Hanson, 1996: 162). Men make appointment decisions and tend to devalue the management skills of women (Hanson, 1996: 162). In the hiring process, male candidates are often recruited for specific jobs (Hanson, 1996: 162). As a result, temporary contract employment exists for one category of educators, that is, female educators (Edigheji, 1999: 41). It is mostly male principals and the male-dominated education authorities that allocate posts / teaching assignments to contract educators who are mostly women (Edigheji, 1999: 42). The education system has, therefore, not benefited from the joint input of



both men and women at all levels. According to the national Constitution both men and women with different skills, attitudes and cultures can make a contribution to improving the quality of education and improve the way in which people deal with gender issues as previously discussed.

The fore-going observations have encouraged the researcher to investigate how females can be promoted in large numbers to secondary school principalship. They have also led her to want to examine male secondary principals' leadership styles versus female secondary principals' leadership styles. They have indicated that there are a few women who occupy leadership positions, most notably those which were only occupied by men in the past. It is also worth noting that, in the past, not only were men the subjects of most leadership studies, but that the standard against which effective leadership was judged was set by men (Grogan, 1996: 170). There has been no extensive research conducted into whether women are more or less effective as principals than men. In this regard it has been both discriminatory and subjective to measure the leadership of women based on standards set by men. This does not address the question of what constitutes best practice in leadership. A study of female and male principals would enable decision makers to determine what constitutes best practice in leadership for schools. Without such research, leaders are likely to be fixated on biased perceptions of women leaders. Prejudices and stereotypes regarding women and men are bound to inhibit gender equity, and other measures of the transformation of education in South Africa.

### **1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The following are research questions which are pertinent to the study:

- What are the perceptions of educators, school governing bodies and learners regarding the effectiveness of female principals versus male principals?
- Are women perceived as more or less effective than men by educators, school governing bodies and learners?
- Does the education system provide a congenial environment for the movement towards a culture in which female principals are treated equally to male principals in schools?
- Which leadership theories provide a comprehensive framework against which the success of school leadership can be measured?
- What barriers are experienced by women who aspire to leadership positions?
- To what extent does the status of being a male or female, influence one's perceptions of female principals?

### **1.4 THE AIMS OF THE STUDY**

The aims of this research are the following:

- to determine whether women principals in secondary schools are perceived by educators, learners and school governing bodies to be effective as leaders,
- to establish if women are seen by educators, learners and school governing bodies as more or less effective than men as principals,

- to assess the educational environment in regard to the movement towards a culture in which female principals are treated equally to male principals in schools,
- to determine, through a literature review, what constitutes effective leadership
- to determine whether there are specific leadership styles associated with male or female principals,
- to identify barriers experienced by women who aspire to leadership positions and
- to determine if the status of being a female or male influences one's perceptions of female principals.

## 1.5 HYPOTHESIS

There is a significant difference in the perceptions by educators, learners and school governing bodies of leadership between males and females as leaders.

## 1.6 DEMARCATION OF THE STUDY

While it is true that the quality of educational management was a primary motive behind the present study, this investigation concentrates mostly on the area of **principalship**. Although occasional references to other leaders in education occur, the analysis of educational management as a whole falls outside the scope of this study. The prime focus is not on principalship in general but on female principalship. It might be argued that there is not much difference between male and **female** principalship, but it is the researcher's contention that there is a dearth of research on the role and needs of female principals per se. In so far as the study field of female

principalship is vast, the present study had to be further demarcated to focus primarily on female principals of **secondary schools**. The secondary schools have been investigated, firstly, because the researcher is familiar with secondary schools, and secondly because it is in secondary schools that under-representation of female principals is more notable. Female principalship in other educational institutions such as universities, colleges and primary schools are not the object of this thesis. This means then to gain deeper insight into the complex phenomena of gender and principalship, the searchlight in this study falls chiefly on female principals of secondary schools, while other types of principalship merit a bare reference.

Although the most attention in this study is paid to female principals, literature review also includes other types of educational leadership and management. This means that much literature about other related research will also be reviewed. But it must be borne in mind that this research is about **perceptions**, which in many instances are evidenced by facts, figures and statistics. Therefore the research investigates what is perceived to be an **effective principal**. Because of this focus, the study looks at what constitutes principalship, not other aspects of principalship. It also puts emphasis on effective principals, not all principals. Schools need effective principals in order to function smoothly. On the other hand schools need to be managed well, so that their main purpose of effective teaching and learning is achieved. In order for this to occur, capable persons with required leadership and management skills are needed.

Finally the study deals with sample of secondary schools in the **province of KwaZulu Natal** only. Because of its population size the province has been considered to be adequately representative of the national educational territory. To include schools from other provinces would have led to a study which would be too generalised to

investigate a specific situation. However, the area of research was the **Umlazi district** in Durban, which is the most popular area in the province, not the whole of KwaZulu-Natal.

## **1.7 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS**

### **1.7.1 Leadership**

Of the various definitions offered by the literature, the one which seems most relevant to the study is:

Leadership is the art or process of influencing people so that they will strive willingly and enthusiastically toward the achievement of group goals. (Kroontz *et al.*, 1986: 97)

The principal of a school is viewed as the leader of that school. He or she is a pivotal figure in bringing about needed reform and improvement in the school. He or she initiates changes in established structures, policies and procedures. He or she works with and through others to achieve institutional goals. Therefore, influencing peers to pursue organisational goals is an important part of a principal's role.

There is a difference between leadership and management, although the two terms overlap. According to Morrison (1998: 205-206) leadership entails vision, strategy, creating direction and transformation of the organisation, whereas management concerns the effective implementation of the vision. Management is concerned with practical action, whereas leadership is concerned with vision, setting the tone and direction, establishing long-term objectives and generating an appropriate ethos within the organisation. The principal must be both a leader and a manager in order

for the school to function effectively. The concept of leadership is thus used in a broad sense in this study and includes management functions as well.

### **1.7.2 Principal**

Ngcongo (1986: 1) states that principals are people who have been entrusted with the responsibility of directing schools and ensuring that students benefit, mainly educationally, from schooling. According to Ngcongo, they are held accountable for the levels of productivity by parents, the larger community, and the Department of Education under which they serve.

The principal is an initiator of innovation, one who is a bearer of light to the masses or common, conventional people (Nicholls and Allen, 1983: 39). Nicholls and Allen (1983) further say that the principal is someone who has formal authority by virtue of his or her appointment and who is required to exercise leadership.

According to the South African School's Act 84 (RSA, 1996: B-4) and the Government Gazette of the Republic of South Africa (1996: 4), the term principal means an educator appointed or acting as the head of the school. This definition views the principal as the person who is appointed to exercise the highest authority within the school.

In the context of this study the principal is the most important person in the school, who can be viewed as an educator who, by virtue of his or her position, is entrusted with the responsibility of ensuring that educators are guided and motivated in their work, and if they are not, he or she will do anything in his or her power to motivate them. He or she is therefore, in charge of the school, being an officer who is accountable, a counsellor, mentor, motivator, educator and a person who may delegate

duties to his or her subordinate. He or she has the responsibility to foster sound relationships with other stakeholders. Pellicer and Stevenson (1985: 1) emphasise that principalship is more than a job; – it is a noble calling, a stewardship and an inspiration to others to enlarge their areas of responsibility for the benefit of the school.

The researcher also regards principalship as being synonymous with leadership.

### **1.7.3 Gender**

The concept of gender is used by sociologists to describe all the socially ascribed attributes, roles, activities and responsibilities connected to being male or female in a given society (Blount, 2000: 83-85). In this study, ‘gender’ refers to the roles and responsibilities traditionally associated with female and male principals in secondary schools.

### **1.7.4 Secondary school**

Secondary school is an educational institution which provides classes from grades 8 to 12, although some secondary schools extend from grades 8 to 10. This school category includes both junior and senior secondary schools. Senior secondary schools are also referred to as high schools. In this study both types of secondary school will be considered. It caters for the formal education of children who study at a post-primary, pre-tertiary level.

## **1.8 OUTLINE OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Qualitative and quantitative research was conducted in order to answer the research questions. A combination of investigative methods was used: namely, a literature study, interviews and questionnaires. Female principals were interviewed and questionnaires were administered to educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' representative councils within the schools headed by females and males. The study uses descriptive approach into data collection because of its relevance in describing systematically the facts and characteristics of an area of interest. This study used survey. The survey population was drawn from the 153 secondary schools of Umlazi District in eThekweni Region of education. Twenty eight secondary schools (sample schools), 13 headed by male principals and 15 led by female principals, were randomly selected by using systematic sampling. Fifteen female principals in the sampled schools were interviewed. In her sampling the researcher included only interested educators in participating in the research in order to have positive response. As a result a total of 302 respondents participated in the research which was more than 10% of the total population. The whole process was investigator administration. Details about the research method are discussed in chapter 3.

## **1.9 LIMITATIONS OF THE RESEARCH**

Perceptions are not a reliable measure of an external reality. Perceptions of educators, learners or school governing bodies may not accurately and objectively indicate whether female principals are more effective than their male counterparts. Furthermore, a leader's effectiveness is not distinctly a result of being male or female; it may be determined by personality and other factors. It is therefore a challenging



task to assess perceptions of the effectiveness of females as opposed to males. To ensure the validity of the data within a chosen sample, a variety of methods was used.

## **1.10 PLAN OF THE STUDY**

*Chapter 1:* This chapter provides the research problem, aims, an outline of the methodology, and the demarcation of the study.

*Chapter 2:* This chapter presents a review of literature on the theories of and approaches to leadership.

*Chapter 3:* This chapter discusses the methods used in the research.

*Chapter 4:* This chapter includes the analysis and interpretation of data.

*Chapter 5:* Chapter 5 presents conclusions to the study and recommendations.

## **1.11 CONCLUSION**

This chapter opens with the introduction to the study. From here it goes on to give a detailed historical overview of the project. Following this, the problem of the study is stated. Then the chapter explains the aims of the study entitled: principalship and gender. It further describes the area of the study in terms of principalship which forms the focus of this study. Key concepts which have been used in this study are defined to give their meanings in the context of this project. It also outlines the methods which were followed in conducting this study. Furthermore, a summary of the methods that were followed in collecting data is offered. Finally, the overview of the five chapters which constitute this thesis is presented. The next chapter will review the literature on leadership and principalship in relation to gender.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW OF LEADERSHIP THEORIES IN RELATION TO GENDER**

#### **2.1 INTRODUCTION**

In Chapter 1, it was mentioned that the purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions of key constituencies in schools on leadership effectiveness between male and female principals. The objective of this chapter is to give a literature review on selected theories of leadership in relation to principalship and to determine whether there are documented differences and similarities between female and male principals' leadership styles. The chapter further compares research on effective schools in the context of leadership. Finally, it reviews literature on the barriers experienced by women who aspire to leadership positions.

#### **2.2 THEORIES OF LEADERSHIP AND STYLES OF LEADERSHIP**

The study of leadership has been the focus of research for decades. Many theories of leadership have been developed. Attention has been given to both definitions of leadership and leadership styles. Whereas theories of leadership provide frameworks on the field (Bernhard and Walsh, 1995: 56; Bush and West-Burnham, 1994: 34-35; Hoy and Miskel, 1987: 2)), research on styles of leadership define characteristic ways of practice (Bernhard and Walsh, 1995: 55; Blanchard, Zigarmi and Zigarmi, 1986: 30-42), Keith and Girling (1991: 61-62); Everard and Morris, 1996: 13-14; Monahan and Hengst, 1982: 236; and John, 1980: 103-105).

This section reviews literature on selected theories of leadership. As intimated above many theories have been developed to explain leadership. They include The Great Man Theory (Bernhard and Walsh 1995: 56), Trait Theory (Smith and Peterson, 1988: 5; Alfonso, Firth and Neville (1981: 98), Interactional Group Theory (Monahan and Hengst 1982: 229), Behavioural Theory (Hoy and Miskel, 1982; Robbins, 1991), the Managerial Theory (Robbins 1976), the Contingency Theories (Silver, 1983: 53 and Robbins 1991: 391) and Transactional and Transformation Theories (Trim, 1997: 41).

Some of these leadership theories are discussed in this section.

### **2.2.1 The Trait Theory**

According to Stoner and Freeman (1992: 473), the first systematic effort by psychologists and other researchers to understand leadership was to identify the personal characteristics or traits of leaders. Such traits were seen as inborn, and people possessing these characteristics were regarded as leaders (Nolte, 1966: 139; Keith and Girling, 1991: 58). This analysis gave rise to the theory, which argues that leaders are born, not made (Stoner and Freeman, 1992: 473). Hoy and Miskel (1982: 221) point out that the idea that natural leaders exist is deeply ingrained in many people's thinking. According to this view, no amount of learning will make a person a leader unless he or she has the appropriate natural qualities. Keith and Girling (1991: 58) assert that the leader is endowed with special and superior qualities which give rise to a search to identify those traits common to the selection of a few who are the born leaders. These authors have identified the following qualities as associated with effective leadership:

- Supervisory ability, including ability to plan, organise, leading and control the work of others.

- A need for personal responsibility and occupational achievement
- Creative and verbal abilities including, judgment, reasoning and thinking
- Decisiveness in making decisions and solving problems.

The views on leadership traits suggest that leaders, whether men or women, exhibit a range of qualities. Bernhard and Walsh (1995: 57) also argue that the leaders are often head and shoulders above their followers in intelligence, scholarship, and dependability in accepting responsibility, social participation and socio-economic status. They also cite Stogdill (1974: 57), who states that some leaders have all the described characteristics, while others have only one, or none, of them. This view indicates that a leader differs in character depending on the circumstances.

In addition to the foregoing argument Hoy and Miskel (1982: 222) point out that a few traits tend to distinguish leaders from non-leaders. The traits, which show consistent correlation with leadership, are, for instance, intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, energy or activity and task-relevant knowledge. According to Hoy and Miskel, the study of leadership traits should not be neglected, but that the trait approach by itself cannot explain the leadership phenomenon conclusively. They concur with Stogdill (1948 & 1970), who argues that situational factors must also be considered. By situational factors, it is referred to all the conditions such as the characteristics of subordinates and aspects of the work environments within which leadership is exercised.

Smith and Peterson (1988: 5) further support Hoy and Miskel by maintaining that intelligence and other personal qualities do play quite a substantial role in the emergence of leaders, especially in an unstructured setting. In concurrence with

Stogdill, Smith and Peterson list the qualities that are most frequently linked to leadership, namely, activity, intelligence, dominance, self-confidence, achievement, drive and interpersonal skills. However, Bernhard and Walsh (1995: 57) criticise the trait theory, by saying that it does not lead to a comprehensive theory of leadership. According to them, the effects of leader and follower on each other are not considered. They also agree with Hoy and Miskel's view that the situational context is not considered in the trait theory. Bernhard and Walsh quote Stogdill (1974) who notes in his studies that the qualities demanded of a leader are partially determined by the situation.

Bernhard and Walsh highlight a positive aspect of the trait theory, specifically its contribution to defining and differentiating between leaders and followers. Alfonso, Firth, and Neville (1981: 98) agree with Bernhard and Walsh, but further assert that there appears to be a relationship between leadership and variables, such as personal appearance, fluency of speech, intelligence (within limits), specialised knowledge, judgement, initiative and ambition, self-confidence, cooperation, sociability, popularity and prestige.

The foregoing analysis indicates that the trait theory amounts to saying that leadership is inborn. Although this theory is inadequate, it is the view of the researcher that a leader needs to possess certain traits, characteristics or attributes to be effective. One needs not be born with all these attributes, they could be acquired. Both men and women could acquire leadership qualities.

**(a) Relationship of the trait theory to gender: women versus men in leadership**

Trait theories do not seem to be necessarily relevant either to males or females. The characteristics emphasised in these theories are human. They are qualities any human being can possess. There is no innate difference between the ways males and females function (Woodd, 1997: 26). But Shakeshaft (1987: 8-23) argues that women who have entered teaching have always been strongly gifted, whereas the majority of men who have entered the profession were either unable to secure other work, or were in pursuit of another profession. This might be viewed as a controversial proposition.

According to Gelman, Corely, Gelman, Malamud, Foote and Canteros. (1981: 72), men and women experience the world differently, as a result of hormones. These researchers state: "Men and women seem to experience the world differently, not merely because of the ways they were brought up in it, but because they feel it with a different sensitivity of touch; hear it with different aural responses, and puzzle out its problems with different cells in their brains". Gelman *et al.* (1981: 72) believe implicitly that hormones are the basis for such differences, and play a role far greater than simply contributing to external sexual characteristics.

If men are individualistic, women bring in the social dimension, that is, the caring dimension. In a situation of loss (loss of relatives), for instance, when someone needs care, empathy and support, it is likely to be women who are of the greatest help. This idea is endorsed by Mdtutshane (2004: 16) in his research on leadership in a junior secondary school. Mdtutshane (2004) says that female leaders are more concerned with the social and emotional development of learners and are more supportive of new educators and parents. In contrast to that, Mdtutshane (2004) argues that both men and

women tend to see the key characteristics of good managers as likely to be found in men. A leader is seen as the stereotype of a tough, possibly aggressive, man. However, there is a growing body of research producing evidence that shows that the experiences and attitudes of women are different to those of men, and that a single male model of educational leadership is inadequate (Ngcobo, 1999: 47). In support of van der Westhuizen (1991: 522), Ngcobo further states that women possess a number of characteristic qualities that imply good management skills, such as the ability to establish meaningful relations with others, to build a conducive climate and the desire to pursue excellence in education and management. Ngobo's research (1999) on women in educational management revealed that women see themselves in the context of human relations, whereas men consider themselves as individuals. Therefore, women can change management culture all round for the best. Thus there should be a blending of men and women in school principalships in order to have a mixture that enriches the organisation.

The caring character of women is further emphasised by Harris, Day, Hopkins, Hadfield, Hargreaves and Chapman. (2005: 126) when they write about effective leadership. These authors argue that successful leaders are reflective, caring and highly principled people who stress the human dimension of the management enterprise. According to this view, school improvement depends on effective leadership. The importance of the quality of caring is also maintained by Nandraj (2003: 6) in her study on gender imbalances in positions of leadership at schools. Nandraj makes reference to Newman (1994: 193), who describes teaching as a caring profession. Nandraj says that qualities of nurturing and selflessness required of the profession are often thought to be more suited to women.

### **2.2.2 Behavioural Theory**

Hoy and Miskel (1982: 36) argue that in the late 1940s the study of leadership in organisations shifted its emphasis away from the study of the traits of leaders towards their behaviour. According to Hoy and Miskel, leadership style and behaviour are usually treated as synonyms, both pointing to what leaders do. Robbins (1991: 386) and Hoy and Miskel (1982: 39) cite a number of studies that look at behavioural styles. According to Robbins, however, the most significant studies are:

- the Ohio State studies and
- the University of Michigan studies.

#### **(a) The Ohio State Studies**

Halpin (1966: 86), Getzels, Lippman and Campbell (1968: 3) Gorton and Snowden (1972: 69) and Bryman (1986) have all agreed that two dimensions of leadership are identified in the Ohio Studies. They call these two dimensions “initiating structure” and “consideration”. Hoy and Miskel (1982: 40) suggest another two dimensions, namely, “production emphasis” (indicative of motivation) and “sensitivity” (social awareness). Blake and Mouton (1940), to whom Wilkinson and Cave (1987: 158-159) refer, assert that the concepts of concern for people and concern for production are comparable to the areas of leadership suggested by Halpin (1966), Getzels *et al.* (1968); Gorton and Snowden (1972) Hoy and Miskel (1982) and Bryman (1986). West-Burnham, Bush, O’Neil and Glover. (1995: 34) refer to these two dimensions as significant variables which influence the nature of staff relationships. According to this view, the dimensions of initiating structure and consideration refer to clarity of roles and relationships and levels of friendship, trust, respect and warmth.



Robbins (1991: 368) concurs with Southworth and Yeomans on the point that initiating structure refers to the extent to which a leader is likely to define and structure his or her role and those of subordinates in the search for goal attainment. On the other hand, Robbins describes consideration as the extent to which a person is likely to have relationships that are characterised by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas and regard for their feelings. Furthermore, Gorton (1968: 3), and Getzels *et al.* (1968: 3) support Robbins and Southworth and Yeomans by arguing that initiating structure refers to a leader's behaviour in delineating the relationship between the leaders and the members of the work group and his or her endeavours to establish well-defined tasks patterns of organisation, channels of communication and procedures, whereas consideration involves the expression of friendship, mutual trust, respect and warmth in the relationship between the leader and group.

According to Hoy and Miskel (1982: 233), who concurs with Halpin (1966: 84-89), each dimension can be defined as outlined hereunder.

Initiating structure refers to, among other things, the following:

- The leader tries out his new ideas with the staff.
- The leader maintains a definite standard of performance.
- The leader sees to it that the work of staff members is clarified and coordinated.

Consideration refers to, among other things, the following:

- The leader finds time to listen to staff members.
- The leader treats all staff members as his equals.
- The leader is friendly and approachable.

- The leader puts suggestions made by staff into operation.

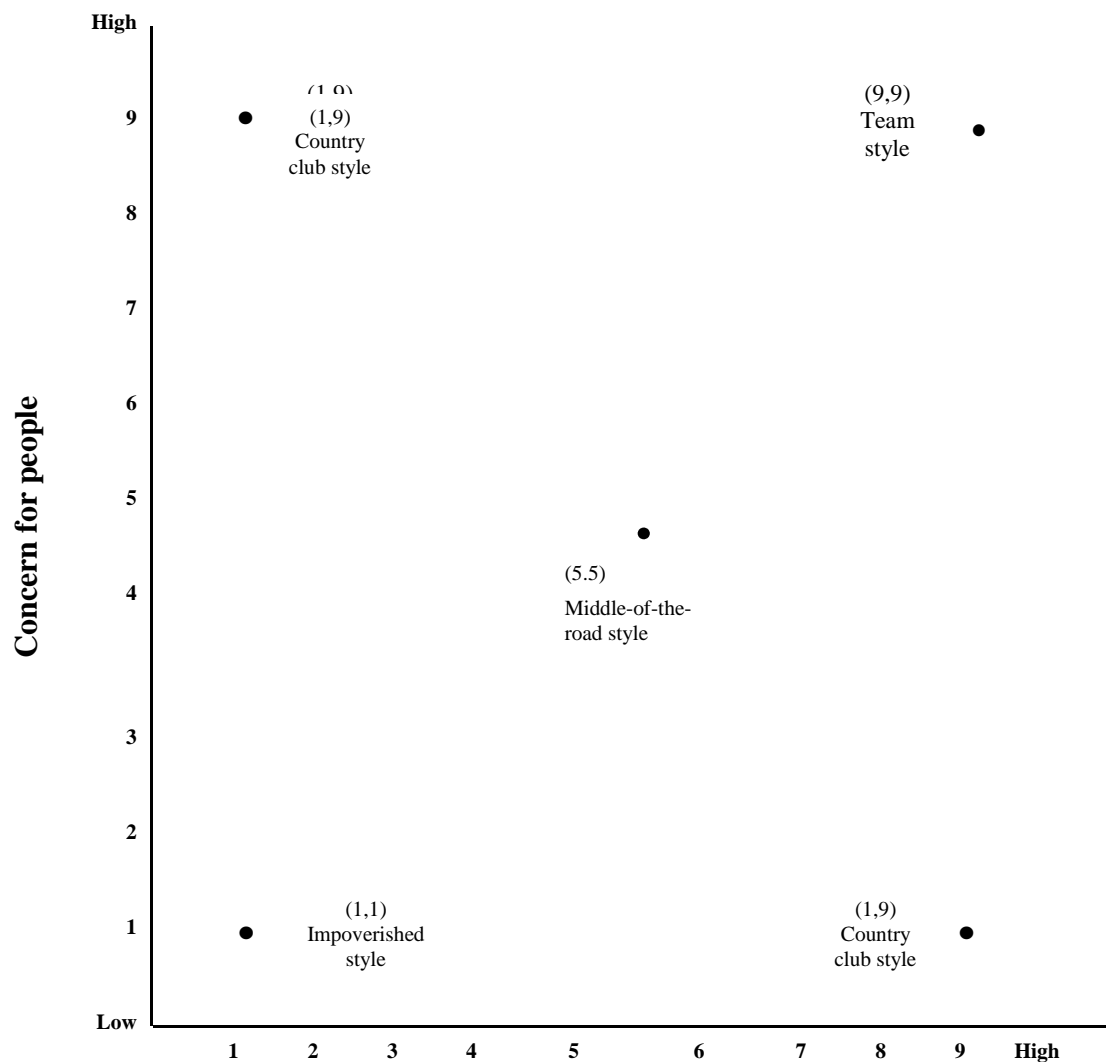
It could be inferred that tasks and relationships are two main areas of focus for leaders. On the other hand it should be understood that the two areas reinforce each other. Effective leadership entails balancing these focus areas.

#### **(b) University of Michigan Studies**

Leadership studies undertaken at the University of Michigan's Survey Research Center had similar research objectives, namely to locate behavioural characteristics of leaders that appear to be related to measures of performance effectiveness (Robbins, 1991: 369). According to Robbins (1991: 312) and Hoy and Miskel (1982: 233), two distinct styles or dimensions of leadership are identified, namely, production-oriented and employee-centred leaders. Wilkinson and Cave (1987: 159) agree with Robbins and Hoy and Miskel by identifying the same dimensions and emphasising that these dimensions are similar to those in the Ohio studies. They further state that employee-oriented leaders can be described as emphasising interpersonal relations. That is to say, that they take a personal interest in the needs of their subordinates and accept individual differences among members. In contrast, the production-oriented leaders, according to them, tend to emphasise the technical or task aspects of the job. Their main concern is to accomplish their group's tasks, and the group members are a means to that end.

The five leadership styles that combine different proportions of concern for production and concern for people can be plotted in the managerial grid model adapted from Hellgriegel, Jackson and Slocum (1999: 507) as follows:

**Figure 2.1: The managerial grid model**



- Point (1,1) in the above diagram indicates the **impoverished style**. This leadership style shows low concern for people and production. The leader keeps a low profile. He or she makes the minimum effort required to get the work done and avoid getting fired or demoted.
- Point (1,9) shows the **country-club style**. The leader possessing this type of leadership style tries to create a secure, comfortable atmosphere and trust, and employees respond accordingly.

- Point (9,1) depicts the **produce/perish style**. Here, the leader uses legitimate and forceful powers to pressure subordinates to meet the desired levels of production. This is a short term solution when profitability falls.
- Point (5,5) indicates the **middle-of-the road style**. In this case the leader seeks a balance between the workers' needs and the organisation's production goals. Adequate performance is obtained by maintaining employee morale at a level sufficient to get the work done.
- The last point, that is point (9,9), shows the **team style**. The leader who has this type of leadership style has high levels of concern for both employees and production. He or she attempts to establish cohesion and feelings of commitment while working for a common goal and building relationships of trust and respect.

### (c) **Implications of behavioural theories for leadership**

Kabacoff and Peters (1998: 2-4, 6) state that any differences in leadership style uncovered in their research were due to gender. According to them, there are differences in leadership behaviour between men and women. They further state that, although in many ways men and women approach the leadership role in similar fashion, women tended to be more task- and results-focused than men. In their research women scored higher on leadership scales measuring an orientation toward setting standards of performance and attainment of results. They further state that women are rated higher on people-oriented skills. According to them, in terms of behaviour women are generally seen as using a more energetic and friendly approach to accomplish objective, whereas men exhibit more strategic behaviour and are more restrained and objective. Woodd (1997: 28), in his research on gender differences in mentoring, makes reference to Drake (1985) who says that the female role is

described as predominantly communal, interpersonal, and expressive, which should facilitate building rapport and relationships, as well as offering a “win/win” negotiative style. Men, on the other hand, are seen as controlling, dominant, hard, mechanistic, logical, competitive, demanding, aggressive, sequential and atomistic, and approach negotiations with a “win/lose” style. Men are also likely to maintain a low-key, understated and quiet interpersonal demeanour through the control of emotional expression. As men and women differ in their use of various influence strategies, men may identify more closely with other men, while women identify with women. A balanced mix of qualities and values could enhance the workplace for both men and women (Woodd, 1997: 30-31). Management styles in schools should be androgynous or homogenous. When these management styles are implemented, aspects of male and female qualities are reflected and valued.

Blackmore (1999: 13, 56, 57) points out that, on average, women principals work longer hours than men do. This implies that they are more task-oriented than men are. Nicholson (1996: 83), whose work resonates with the fantasy of the perfect mother, supports this view when he states that women seem to have an over-developed sense of responsibility in relation to their work. Blackmore, however, suggests that women appear more flexible and sensitive and are often more successful, spend more time with their peers, emphasise cohesiveness and value group activities more highly than men do. Wolmarans (1992: 26) argues that women have a combination of task and people orientation. According to Wolmarans, women tend to expect more of themselves and their employees than men do. Erasmus (1997: 37) stresses that women have a high level of self-esteem and manifest a positive attitude towards their work, which is why their productivity is rated highly. Grace (1995: 181-183) argues that

care for learners and educators and care about social relations among learners and educators is strongly evident in the accounts of women head teachers

According to the arguments sketched above, women are perceived to be highly capable of both initiating structure and consideration, whereas men, as Wolmarans emphasises, find it hard to communicate their feelings and engage people on an emotional level. This is characteristic, attributed to women, is very significant because interpersonal factors may affect team building, coaching and mentoring. The commitment of the school to maintaining positive relationships with the community is a factor which shapes school community relationships (Ngcongo, 1995: 42).

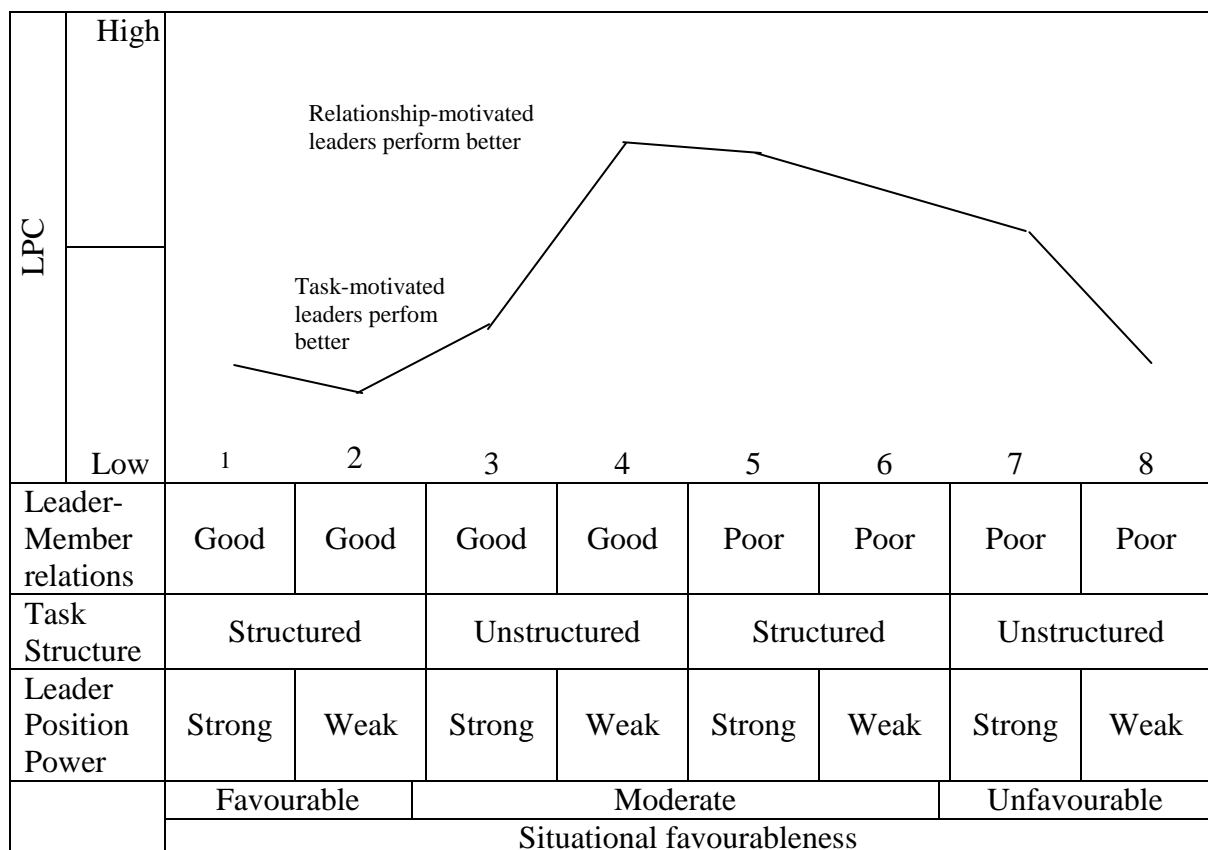
### **2.2.3 Contingency theories of leadership**

Silver (1983: 153) states that the contingency theory of leadership effectiveness maintains that a group's success in accomplishing its tasks depends on the appropriate matching between a leader and a situation. Wilkinson and Cave (1987: 32) point out that according to contingency theories there are no general or certain solutions to management problems. In the opinion of these authors, the manager's task is to identify contingency factors in the situation and devise appropriate structures and processes for effective leadership. This implies that there is no single way to manage that is universally applicable to all organisations or types of organisation, or even to all parts of a single organisation. Therefore, success is more complex than one of isolating a few traits or preferred behaviours. Contingency theories start from the basic assumption that situations are always changing, and that different situations demand different leadership styles, if the leader is going to be effective. In this section, three contingency theories are discussed, namely, Fiedler's, House's Path-Goal, and Hersey and Blanchard's theories.

## Fiedler's Contingency Theory

Lunenberg and Ornstein (1991: 138) state that, according to Fiedler's contingency theory, the effectiveness of a leader in achieving group performance is contingent upon the leader's motivation system and the degree to which the leader controls and influences the situation. This can be presented in the diagram that follows:

**Figure 2.2: Contingency model**



**Source:** Fred E. Fiedler and Martin M. Chemers, *Leadership and Effective Management* (Glenview, 111.: Scott, Foresman 1974), p. 80. Reprinted by permission of Fred E. Fiedler.

The above diagram shows the interrelationship among situational variables, namely, leader-member relations, task structure and the leader's position. If relations are good, if the leader is liked and accepted, it is easier for him or her to lead as subordinates

comply with his or her preferences (Bryman, 1986: 128). If the leader forces structured tasks, the subordinates are likely to have a well understanding of what has to be done in order to accomplish a task. Position refers to the extent to which a leader has ability to administer rewards and punishments to group members and to enforce compliance (Bryman, 1986: 129). If the leader is in a weak position within an organisation, then his ability to lead effectively may be adversely affected by recognition of his subordinates. Ngcongco (1986: 34) in her research on the role of principals in secondary community schools refers to these situational factors. She emphasises that leadership needs leaders who brief members about aims and plans, allocate tasks, support subordinates, clarify tasks, control and evaluate in order to check the outcomes of proposed solutions.

“Fiedler (1967) developed a unique technique called Least Preferred Co-worker (LPC), which contains twenty-four pairs of adjectives, written as a bipolar list, each of which could be used to describe a person” (Lunenberg and Ornstein, 1991: 138). Stoner and Freeman (1992: 486) indicate that a person who describes his or her least preferred co-worker in a relatively favourable manner tends to be permissive, human relations-oriented, and considerate of the feelings of others. A person who describes his or her least preferred co-worker in an unfavourable manner, however, tends to be task controlling and less concerned with the human relations aspects of the job. This idea implies that leadership style is defined by the leader’s need structure or motivation in relation to work, particularly in terms of whether the leader is primarily motivated to seek relationships with others or to accomplish tasks.

The assumption of different need structures derives from Maslow’s hierarchical motivation theory. “Maslow (1970) believes that there are five levels of need that



motivate people, from psychological needs through safety, social, and esteem needs to self-actualisation needs” (John, 1980: 101). According to John, Fiedler’s (1967) relationship-motivated leader, appears to function at Maslow’s social needs level, namely, wanting to belong, following group norms, looking for acceptance by the group and the esteem of co-workers and being motivated by interpersonal relationships. Fiedler’s accomplishment-motivated leader is not motivated by social needs and seems to function at Maslow’s esteem level, namely, wanting to achieve a higher position. Certainly the research by Ngcongo (1995: 23) on educational leadership for schools confirms this need theory. Ngcongo stresses that there are some implications of the needs theory for the role of principals as facilitators of motivation. She asserts that principals must be sensitive to the level of needs experienced by each educator at a particular time. For example, giving educators responsibility or delegation may help to motivate them. However, in her research on the role of principals, Ngcongo (1986: 153) reveals that all the school inspectors that were interviewed said that they did not know of a principal who conducts an induction programme. However, 53.8% said that principals never or seldom allow educators the opportunity to identify needs on which staff development programmes could be based. It emerged from the study that there was not enough interaction with the led, especially educators.

#### **(b) Path-Goal Theory**

The basic idea behind the theory is that a leader can influence the satisfactory motivation and performance of subordinates primarily by:

- providing the subordinates with rewards.

- making the attainment of those rewards contingent upon the accomplishment of performance goals.
- helping subordinates obtain rewards by ‘clarifying the paths to the goal’ (Arnold and Feldman, 1986: 130).

As Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991: 143) and Wilson and Cave (1987) point out, the Path-Goal theory is based on the expectancy theory of motivation which maintains that people are only motivated to perform when they believe they will be suitably rewarded with valued rewards when they can undertake the task successfully. According to Wilson and Cave (1987) path goal theory was offered by House (1971) and emphasises the leader’s effect on subordinates’ goals and the path to achieving those goals. This suggests that the function of the leader is to assist team members by clarifying goals, as well as clearing and reducing barriers and pitfalls on the way. Additionally, Smith and Peterson (1988: 21) identify four major styles or types of leadership or leader behaviour related to the path-goal theory. These are

- directive-oriented leadership,
- supportive-oriented leadership,
- participative-oriented leadership and
- achievement-oriented leadership.

Each of these styles has advantages and disadvantages. Directive leadership, for example, lets followers know what is expected of them. This can be referred to as the autocratic or bureaucratic management style. The advantages of this leadership style are that rules and regulations are set to ensure order (Wilkinson and Cave, 1987: 17).

This prevents friction, each person is accountable to someone else, and there is a clearly defined authority structure (van der Westhuizen, 1991: 122). Such a clear line of authority within the hierarchical structure reduces ambiguity, enhances competition and motivates both followers and learners.

Directive-oriented leadership has a number of limitations since individual contributions are ignored (Bush and West-Burnham, 1994: 36). There is scarcely or no sense of ownership. Such leadership style is static and founded on prescriptions, rather than negotiations (van der Westhuizen, 1991: 123 and Bush and West-Burnham, 1994: 123). As Alfonso *et al.* (1981: 101) have argued, autocratically led groups may produce slightly more work, but are characterised by less motivation, more aggression and discontent, as well as greater dependency among the members.

With regard to effectiveness or otherwise of principalship or leadership, Peters (1976: 111-117) has argued that the authoritarian head is obsolete today. This view is supported by van der Westhuizen (1991), who states that the role of the secondary principal is primarily managerial. According to Peters, the head is the captain of a ship who must take the ship somewhere. The captain must, therefore, know where he or she is, where he or she is going, how he or she is going to get there, and when he or she has arrived. But to reach the destination he or she has to share the inspiration and sense of direction with the crew.

The fore-going analysis implies that bureaucracy in schools leads to enslavement to authority. When personality needs are totally disregarded, it is difficult to achieve the desired organisational goals. Bureaucracy in schools sees everyone apart from the principal as a subordinate, the principal being the only authority figure. Each person's freedom and responsibility is thus negated.

Supportive leadership is concerned with the needs of subordinates. The leader has friendly relations and shows concern for the wellbeing and needs of subordinates (Hanson, 1996: 176). Therefore the leader must be approachable and exhibit trust when he or she possesses this type of leadership style.

Participative leadership or democratic leadership involves sharing the decision making (Bush, 1986: 48). Therefore participation and consultation is essential in this type of style. This participation sometimes involves learners because they are the ones in whose interest all major changes should be planned. As a result, decisions are reached by a process of consensus or compromise. Alfonso, Firth and Neville (1981: 101) stress that members under participating leadership are more motivated, have a high sense of achievement and hold more favourable attitudes towards their leader. This type of subordinated behaviour is caused by the fact that the leader relies upon individuals' knowledge, expertise and judgement (Barry and Tye, 1971: 193). This type of leadership style can lead to job and good performance.

However, participative leadership has limitations such as those stipulated by Bush (1986: 61-66) and Bush and West-Burnham (1994: 34).

- The democratic style of decision making tends to be slow and cumbersome.
- Decisions may be made by people who lack the relevant expertise or experience.
- With participation approaches it may be difficult to sustain the view that principals remain accountable to external groups.

Based on all the discussions, the researcher sees that, in spite of the above limitations, the participative leadership style does the following:

- **Co-operation:** This style enhances co-operation among the educators, as they are all involved in the problem-solving and decision-making processes. This provides a healthy measure of excitement, challenge and a feeling of responsibility.
- **Communication:** This leadership style ensures flexible communication among all the members. If members perceive that their honest communication and their views are fully considered when decisions are made, they have greater commitment to the success of their institution.
- **Empowerment:** This model contributes to the feeling of empowerment among the members, which creates a sense of ownership and motivation to work, which in turn contributes to their development.

Achievement-oriented leadership is the delegation style (Horne, 1998: 24). The emphasis is on the delegation of decisions. Teams are essential in order to make the seemingly impossible manageable. Barry and Tye (1972: 100)) maintain that 'Delegate and forget; is superficially an attractive precept, because it suggests a degree of confidence in a person's colleagues, which they will find heart-warming and develop their growing maturity in the acceptance and exercise of responsibility.

In conclusion, one could state that, in a work situation, a leader cannot satisfy all his or her subordinates' needs. The Path-Goal theory indicates that recognising subordinates' needs for outcomes over which a leader has some control is highly beneficial for leadership. With regard to the functioning of the schools with which the researcher is familiar, it should be clear that recognising the common needs among the staff would enable leaders to devise the means to facilitate the satisfaction of staff needs in the process of staff's pursuit of organisational goals. The path-goal theory emphasises the fact that leadership behaviour can be exhibited in various situations.

Leaders can exhibit more than one, or all four, styles of leadership in varying circumstances. A leader has to adapt to the different styles as situations demand. In a school situation where, for instance, educators have been assigned a task with clearly spelled-out procedures and rules to assist in accomplishing a task, it could be very irritating to them if a directive and achievement-oriented style is used. The style will lead to dissatisfaction. The directive leadership style is more suited to ambiguous tasks. The supportive and participative style would be more appropriate.

### **(c) Hersey and Blanchard's Situational Leadership Theory**

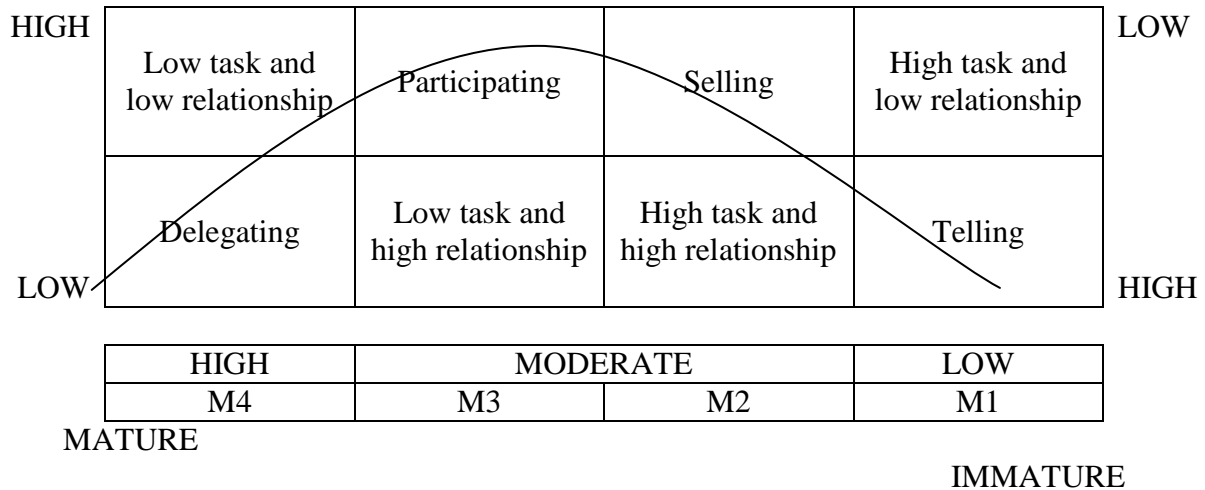
Hersey and Blanchard (1982: 149-162) state that successful leadership is achieved by selecting the right leadership style, which, they argue is contingent upon numerous important situational variables, especially the maturity level of followers. Although it is difficult to determine the subordinate's maturity level, Hersey and Blanchard's theory sets a challenge for every leader to learn to identify the maturity of a subordinate in order to match it with the most appropriate leadership style to enhance effectiveness. This model suggests a need for flexibility in leadership that is in line with the maturity level of followers.

Four maturity levels and major leadership behaviours are identified. These are:

- Telling (S1) (directive): High task – low relationship,
- Selling (S2) (supportive): High task – high relationship,
- Participating (S3): Low task – high relationship and
- Delegating (S4) (achievement-oriented): Low task – low relationship.

Robbins (1991: 378) illustrates graphically how Hersey and Blanchard have integrated the various components in the situational leadership model. The graph is shown below:

**Figure 2.3: Situational leadership model**



- M1 = Low maturity: Unable and unwilling or insecure corresponds with Telling (S1)
- M2 = Low to moderate maturity: Unable but willing or confident corresponds with Selling (S2)
- M3 = Moderate to high maturity: Able but unwilling insecure corresponds with Participating (S3)
- M4 = High maturity: Able/competent and willing /competent corresponds with Delegating (S4)

**Source:** P. Hersey and K.H. Blanchard. *Management of Organizational Behavior: Utilizing Human Resources*, 6<sup>th</sup> ed. Englewood Cliffs. N.I.: Prentice-Hall, 1993. Used by permission from Ronald Campbell, President. Leadership Studies, Escondido, California, 1995.

The graph shows that the two sets of behaviour (relationship behaviour and task behaviour) can occur in various proportions. The leader needs to provide a different mixture of task and relationship behaviour for changes in maturity and for different aspects of subordinates' work. According to Hersey and Blanchard's situational

leadership theory, effective leadership occurs when the follower's maturity level matches the appropriate style.

In the researcher's view, Hersey and Blanchard's situational leadership model is extremely useful in terms of matching behaviour with followers. Most leaders regard delegation of duties as the most acceptable and appropriate style of leadership. Hersey and Blanchard's theory shows quite clearly, however, that this style of leadership provides little direction where followers are unfamiliar with tasks and feel insecure, or are not willing or mature enough to discharge assigned responsibilities. In such instances, selling may be appropriate because it provides both directive and supportive behaviour and is high task - high relationship, which is important for the achievement of the goals of a school. It is evident that effective leadership requires a match between the demands of the situation and the capabilities of the leader. In this respect the behaviour of the leader is but one of the many factors influencing motivation and performance.

**(d) Implications of contingency theories for women versus men in leadership positions**

The leadership theories outlined above emphasise the fact that leadership requires various styles, depending on the situation. However, looking at the variables mentioned in these theories, one finds that there is no mention of men and women necessarily being suitable as leaders by virtue of their gender. The situational theories, therefore, are silent on any distinction between males and females. There is no mention of the difference and ability of males and females to assess the maturity of followers. The theories in question do not state any correlation between gender and level of maturity, for instance.



Shakeshaft (1987: 8-187), however, states that women are more likely to withdraw from conflict or use collaborative strategies, whereas males are more likely to use authoritarian responses. Macbeth (1998: 12-15) also makes reference to Shakeshaft (1989), Hall (1994), Jones (1990) and Eagly *et al.* (1992), who identify the characteristics of female leadership as being more democratic, less hierarchical, better at dealing with conflict, and more supportive of new educators and parents. Thakathi and Lemmer (2002: 193-194) further cite Lemmer (1996: 57-58), who argues that men in authoritative positions tend to use raised voices, displays of anger or swearing to reinforce authority and control the behaviour of subordinates' organisational structures. There does not seem to be relevant research on views like Lemmer's or Shakeshaft's on how women handle conflict as compared to men.

With regard to a democratic leadership style, Nicholson (1996: 85, 87) identifies differences between women's and men's perceptions of good practice in management. He states that a woman combines instinct with wide consultation to give her the confidence in her knowledge that her decisions are well-informed. According to him, a woman believes that management is about ensuring commitment from others. This, for Nicholson, is achieved if there is an emphasis on teamwork, and if the people doing the work are involved in decision making. Erasmus (1997: 37) argues that women use personal power based on charisma and contact, while men use the power of position, reward and punishment. Shakeshaft (1987: 8-187) contends that women involve educators, superiors and outsiders in their work, while men tend to make final decisions and take action without involving others. According to her, women, far more than men, use coalition to reach their desired goals. Macbeth (1998: 12-15) states that effective leaders are more likely to be females. However, these studies have not been corroborated by other independent research.

#### **2.2.4 Transactional and transformational theories of leadership**

In South African education, a lot is being done to address previously disadvantaged areas and to make differences in educational institutions by being committed to the improvement of education standards in the country. Thus, transactional and transformational leadership theories are relevant to the South African situation because they provide different angles of what constitutes leadership. Transactional leaders focus on the present and excel at keeping the organisation running smoothly and efficiently (Mdutshane, 2004: 23). These leaders are good at traditional management functions such as planning and budgeting, and general focus on the impersonal aspect of job performance (Mdutshane, 2004: 23). Transactional leadership involves a commitment to “follow rule” and transactional leaders maintain stability within the organisation rather than promoting change (Draft, 2002: 147 quoted by Mdutshane, 2004). Therefore, transactional skills are important for all leaders. Transformational leadership on the other hand is the process of engaging the commitment of employees in the context of shared values and a shared vision. It involves relationships of mutual trust between the leader and the led (Mdutshane, 2004: 23).

Robbins (1991: 391) claims that the Ohio State Studies, Fiedler’s model and the Path-Goal model involve transactional leadership. According to Robbins, these kinds of leaders guide or motivate their followers in the direction of established goals by clarifying role and task requirements, whereas transformational leaders inspire the followers to transcend their own self-interest. Trim provides a non-graphic illustration of this distinction. On the one hand, Trim (1997: 41) views transactional leadership as:

- *Contingent rewards:* This is where the manager rewards followers for attainment of performance levels that the leader has specified.
- *Management by exception:* This is where managers take action only when there is evidence of something not going according to plan.
- *Laissez-faire:* This is where the manager abdicates responsibility for his or her followers.

Transactional leadership prioritises the maintenance functions of schools and emphasises systems, procedures and tasks to promote their efficient running (Trim, 1997: 41; Webb, 2005: 74).

On the other hand, Trim (1997: 41) perceives transformational leaders as:

- *Challenging the process:* Searching for opportunities and experimenting, even taking sensible risks to improve the situation.
- *Inspiring a shared vision:* Constructing future visions and building support among followers for the vision.
- *Enabling others to act:* Fostering collaboration and supporting followers in their personal development.
- *Modelling the way:* Setting examples and helping followers to focus on step-by-step accomplishment of large-scale goals.
- *Encouraging the heart:* Leaders recognise followers' achievements and find ways of celebrating these achievements.

This perception holds that the transformational leaders need to develop and to practise a number of key skills, such as clarity; focusing the attention of others on key goals; active listening; giving and receiving feedback effectively; establishing trust by means of actions that are consistent both over time and with what they say; expressing and demonstrating respect and concern for people; empowering followers to accept challenges, and sharing power in order to fulfil a vision.

Thurston and Lotto (1990: 10-11) and Owens (2001: 243) maintain that administrators who rely primarily on transformative leadership and only secondarily on transactional leadership are likely to foster creativity and fully engage the followers. In discussing transformational leaders Mthabela (1997) refers to Plant (1987), Biork (1992), Gross and Herriott (1965) and Fullan (1992), who list techniques that can be engaged in order to enhance transformation. Collaborative goal-setting, collaboration and participation, motivation of educators, educator development, learners' involvement, and parent and community involvement are some of the strategies which seem appropriate in empowering followers and allowing them growth.

In her research on leadership at junior secondary schools Mdutshane (2004: 28) supports transformational leadership. She argues that there is a strong link between transformational leadership and school effectiveness and improvement. "The link between transformational leadership and school improvement is seen to be via a collaborative school culture, where there is common understanding of shared aims" (Mdutshane, 2004: 30). Mdutshane (2004) further says that collaboration is necessary for staff development and school improvement. The importance of transformational leadership is also endorsed by research which was conducted at an affluent secondary school with a rich array of extracurricular activities (Eden, 1998: 251). The study

revealed that educators did not identify with their principal leader, because he was less involved in the educators' lives and lacked the ability to interact. He simply exercised and complied with the instructions of his formal authority, that is, his superiors, such as superintendents, while his assistants could walk around among the educators, holding social conversations simultaneously with business matters and were referred to by educators as being charismatic and having the ability to transform.

The idea of transformational leadership is also evident from the case study conducted at Grosvenor high school in Durban. Since 1994, Grosvenor school has been, from a political perspective, some steps ahead of other schools as it has been strongly supportive of education for democracy by encouraging everyone, including learners, to participate in the school management (Harber and Trafford, 1999: 53). The study revealed that there was less trouble in the school, almost no physical or verbal violence between pupils and far fewer discipline problems after 1996. The school embarked on a process of drafting a new document that embodied a statement of shared values and behaviours, a new code of conduct and school rules and a new set of disciplinary procedures in order to democratise the institution, thereby strengthening its position as an effective developing multicultural school (Harber and Trafford, 1999: 53).

**(a) Implications of transformational leadership for women versus men in leadership positions.**

Very little is said about this theory in terms of gender. Most of the leadership styles mentioned in these theories are generalised. The leadership theories do not make reference to women and men being characterised by any specific style that is either participative or directive. Such styles tend to be adopted by any gender regardless of

situations to which they could be in. This implies that both women and men could lead better in certain situations. Hassan and Karunaratne (1995), however, argue that women tend to want to explore ideas; men just want to get on with the job. Erasmus (1997: 37) also stresses that women are more likely than men to use transformational leadership, motivating others by transforming their self-interest into the goals of the organisation. Aburdene and Naisbett (1992: 11) describe future management styles, saying that they “uncannily match those of female leadership”. They hold that the command-and-control mode is learnt for men while for women it just seems to come naturally. It is, however, questionable if these interpretations can be generalised for all men or all women.

In Mdutshane’s empirical study (2004) use was made of interviews conducted with the female principal, the deputy, the HOD and one educator in a junior secondary school’s leadership with the special focus on evidence for the existence of transformational leadership. The study aimed at accessing the principal’s leadership and to determine the extent to which the principal’s leadership style was transformational or otherwise. The findings were as follows:

- The principal perceived her leadership style to be transformational in approach, but the educators on the other hand seemed to disagree with the principal in that they perceived their principal’s leadership style as transactional.
- In the question pertaining to how the principal interacted with her staff, there appeared to be the belief and/or evidence that the principal was not democratic enough and that she did not give equal attention to and respect to the educator. She made decisions alone, did not care for welfare of her staff, and did not motivate and encourage others toward the achievement of goals.

The above-listed findings about educators are in contrast with the literature reviewed where females are regarded as more transformational. This might be due to the fact that research was done in one school only, and thus would make it difficult to generalise the findings. The literature reviewed is supported by Mdutshane's idea (2004: 16, 47) when she reviews literature. She says that empirical work with female principals and other female managers does indicate that they tend to move toward a participative and transformational leadership style. She argues further that women are, as a result, interactive. This idea is further confirmed by Ngcobo (1999: 48) in her research on women in educational management. Ngcobo (1999) says that female principals spend more time in educational programme improvement activities than males. She also says that women are more attuned to curriculum issues, instructional leadership, teacher concerns, parent involvement, staff development, collaborative planning strategies, community building and the like.

### **2.3 OBSTACLES OR BARRIERS EXPERIENCED BY FEMALE LEADERS**

Greyvenstein (2000: 31-32) points out that the intrinsic and extrinsic barriers experienced by women aspiring to management positions in the education systems in South Africa are numerous, multi-faceted, highly complex in nature and deeply interwoven in cultural norms and values. Sinclair (1991: 95) makes reference to an original study by Herner (1972), which found that when asked to write stories on the basis of initial cues, women's stories contained far more obstacles and anticipated more conflict than men's. According to Greyvenstein, the factor that underscores all the barriers is the traditional patriarchal stereotyped view of gender roles and attributes held by both males and females and the conditions created by apartheid.

The extent of these barriers is seen as women ascend to seniority. The women in management positions are viewed by both males and females as being 'deviant from the norms' (Mort and Ross, 1987: 181). Fennel *et al.* (1978), as cited by Mort and Ross (1987: 181), call it a 'legitimate gap' and point out that institutional authorities are often less likely to back up the authority of a female than they would support a male. Mort and Ross also state that a double standard exists. If a woman has achieved a position of power and responsibility she is supposed to be exceptional and must 'prove' her worth, whereas the male is not expected to perform in such an exemplary manner. According to Sinclair (1991: 93, 101, 103), establishing themselves in a leadership role is, for women, an ongoing struggle in which their gender and their difference are often in the foreground of people's response. She further states that women who are subordinates to female bosses expect that women be more understanding, more tolerant, and more sensitive than their male colleagues. Women will sometimes accept authority and direction more readily from men, because they are accustomed to it. They may be more likely to be suspicious of a female leader's credentials, perhaps regarding her as a competitor, and they may regard suspiciously any ways of managing that deviate from the norms (Nicholson, 1996: 83).

The perceptions referred to above have been worsened by the conditions created by apartheid which show that males traditionally dominate educational management positions and this has also been racially skewed with white males in the most senior decision making positions (Greyvenstein, 2000: 31). Grogan (1996: 183) is also of the opinion that, historically, men have dominated the working world of management. Consequently, successful management styles are associated with men who perform well. Kotecha (1994: 24-25) supports the idea that, historically, the conditions for women educators in all departments have disadvantaged women. Thakathi and



Lemmer (2002: 193) support the views that male dominance in education management is a worldwide phenomenon. Mdutshane (2004: 16) makes reference to Thurlow (1993) who states that a review of principals in KwaZulu-Natal in 1993 indicated that 95.4% of school principals were males. This, according to Mdutshane, implies that there are gender stereotypes and distortions associated with leadership.

Because of the under-representation of women in leadership positions for a long period of time, women acquiring power lack role models. Nicholson (1996: 83) also says that there are few same sex role models for women in the profession to learn from, and there are clear problems in trying to emulate men. This is emphasised by Mort and Ross (1987: 178-179) who said that the lack of female role models for women teachers, differential opportunities for males and females to exhibit leadership and male domination on selection committees leads to discrimination in hiring.

Through all the stages of preparation, from encouraging teachers to seek management positions to final selection of management candidates, the chances are that a man will be preferred to a woman. This view is supported by Greyvenstein (2000: 32) when she states that the most common filtering occurs in the hiring process. According to Greyvenstein (2000), interview and selection filtering occurs when interview panels consist of males only and selection takes place according to stereotyped gender role criteria. Rubin (1995: 220) supports the view that women are marginalised as managers, put beyond the boundaries of female management, or kept controlled within the spaces of specialised female roles and lower management ranks.

This lack of role models for women leaders has resulted in the loss of the self for women leaders. This has led to beliefs that women lack self-confidence; they do not want power; they are not assertive, and that they are unwilling to play the game of the

system (Ngcobo, 1999: 28). Nicholson (1996: 79) stresses that, by definition, patriarchal culture oppresses women, particularly through the motherhood role when women experience loss of self and autonomy to an extreme extent. Gender roles spill-over, according to Nicholson, seems inescapable for many women, regardless of their seniority. Firstly, where the skills, expectations and behaviours that women employ in managing their domestic and family lives are also used at work, and secondly, when professional women have to deal with the strain of managing their dual roles. Nicholson further makes reference to Davidson and Cooper (1992) who assert that all managers have home and work roles and responsibility, but women report more stress than men do. They have to cope with not only the conflict between the traditional role of wife and mother and the career role, but also the development of a new definition of self to succeed in the management role (Greyvenstein, 2000: 32). Sinclair (1991: 105) supports Nicholson's view of the loss of the self for women leaders. Sinclair emphasises that women in management instances where there are few women in managerial positions suffer high visibility and consequent loss of themselves. According to her, women suffer from fear of success because they tend to under-value their performance and contribution. As a result they may be slow to see what they do as qualifying as leadership. Gaganakis (1999: 152) gives evidence that girls between the ages of twelve and sixteen lose self-confidence; capitulate more to constrictive norms of feminine behaviour, and become less clear about thoughts and feelings in relationships.

Furthermore, Nicholson makes reference to Flanders (1994: 68) who indicates that many women adopt inappropriate roles that resemble stereotypical female ones, which may be problematic in another context. These include the role of "mother confessor",

in which senior woman offer a shoulder to cry on. This is time-consuming and emotionally tiring and may lead to conflict in carrying out the executive role.

According to Nicholson, some women in management experience sexual harassment and discrimination from men. This view is supported by Sinclair (1991: 99), who states that even if women work hard to model professional ways of working with men in the workplace, circumstances like these are designed, consciously to remind the woman of her status as sexual object and to reduce her power. She is made to feel as an interloper and reducible to her gender, sometimes an inferior representative of her gender or a member of a gender that is contemptible - valued as a body and only briefly as that. Women, according to Sinclair, often lead in a different way and are seen to be different. This introduces extra obstacles. They are, therefore, operating with a lower level of background support than many male colleagues experience. They frequently encounter censure and disapproval. Women leaders, as Sinclair emphasises, are expected to be nurturers, yet few of them receive wholehearted support, even if they work long hours. As these women leaders become older and more senior in the workplace, they become a different kind of threat to some men. Sinclair says “working alongside or in a junior capacity once the man has outgrown working with women as equals disrupts masculine subjectivity”. It is difficult for men to understand women as equal, and they may experience pressure to recognise women as equal or superior. The affirmative action programmes, which may be seen to be making things easier for women, are seen as chaotic and a disturbance in the patriarchal order and create extreme anxiety and envy amongst many men and women. This could be pathological and damaging to health. Greyvenstein (2000: 33) also contends that there is still the embedded problem that women do not hold the necessary management credentials and qualifications.

Tannen (1994: 18-21) further states that women have communication problems. The author goes on to say that women tend to phrase their ideas as questions, take less time when phrasing questions, speak in a lower volume and higher pitch. These patterns do not emulate male styles of communication and thereby put women at a disadvantage in conversation with men. On the other hand, sometimes when women attempt to adjust to a more masculine style, they may be considered more credible but less feminine, a description often used in a less than complimentary manner.

The presence of the above-mentioned problems experienced by women managers is confirmed in the research done by Ngcobo (1999: 56, 80-92), in which he administered questionnaires on women in educational management at senior secondary schools. The aim of the study was to examine why women are under-represented in senior educational management. Forty five (78.9%) males and 12 (21.1%) females featured in the study. The study revealed the following:

- Women have longer teaching experience but less management experience than male counterparts.
- Women and men principals identify the same key factor in explaining under-representation: that it is a result of inherited or traditional inequalities in the education system. Ninety-two percent of the female principals had this response, compared to 84% of the male respondents. According to respondents, the world is only viewed and shaped through the male lenses.

The factors that were identified to explain the under-representation are as follows:

- Female principals pointed out sexual discrimination by the community as responsible for their under-representation.

- Sixty-four percent of the female principals in the sample indicated that they encounter problems with the community as it discriminates against female principals. Adkinson (1981: 314), as cited by Ngcobo (1999), perceived discrimination as originating from three sources such as communities, decision-makers who do not recruit and hire women for management position, and potential colleagues and subordinates who do not want to work with women. She also cites Shay (1996: 93) who reported that, in her study, 63.5% of the respondents identified discriminatory practices in the hiring and promotion of females as a major barrier that they face.
- About 71.1% of male principals identified women's lack of self-confidence as their second factor. Mapaha (1996: 5), as cited by Ngcobo (1999), observes that female principals lack the confidence necessary to be able to perform well. However, the present researcher agrees with Ngcobo (1999) when she argues that the truth of the matter is that female principals lack confidence as a result of distorted perceptions of them. The women questioned were confident about themselves, as they mostly felt that they had been made principals because they were capable and could make very good managers and leaders, if given the chance.
- About 75% of female respondents agreed that responsibility for the family and home exclude them from being managers. Ngcobo (1999) calls this barrier the role conflict that flows from an inner tension.
- Ninety-two percent of female high school principals indicated that they did not experience any problems while trying to secure positions as principals. However, they felt that the female principal is still seen as a person who violates traditional norms by being in a management position.

- Ninety-one percent of men agreed that women could successfully compete with them in educational management, but they pointed that women are not proactive and ambitious enough.

Further support for the assertion that barriers exist for women leaders is found in the research conducted by Nandraj (2003: 135-136) on gender imbalances in positions of leadership in schools. She used both questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. The study revealed the following:

- Although women constitute a larger work corps in the teaching community, they are extremely under-represented in management positions both nationally and globally.
- The barriers experienced by the women members are determined not only by institutional and organisational hegemonies, but also by specific cultural beliefs and values, and socio-economic and political factors.
- As educators women should seize every opportunity to leave behind the gender discrimination that is prevalent in most educational institutions and to develop the culture of learning and teaching in South Africa.

Stereotypes, cultural factors, lack of role models, role definition, dual roles, poor communication, sexual harassment and discrimination can all create obstacles for women who are potential or current leaders.

## **2.4 CONCLUSION**

This chapter set out to review literature on selected theories of leadership, as well as on leadership styles. It discussed barriers experienced by women in or aspiring to positions of leadership. In the literature on leadership that has been reviewed, there are very limited factors that distinguish the leadership of men as opposed to women. Research on leadership presents arguments on factors that constitute effective leaders in general, not necessarily specifically women or men. Literature on leadership styles briefly makes reference to styles, which are, in some cases, associated with males or female. However, there is no conclusive evidence on whether certain styles of leadership are characteristically male or female. Chapter 3 deals with the research methodology and the research design.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **METHOD OF INVESTIGATION**

#### **3.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter gives an outline of the research approach used in this study. The methods for collecting, presenting, analysing and interpreting data are outlined and discussed. The procedures used for sampling the population are also explained.

A descriptive method of research was used in the study in order to collect and analyse data on the perceptions about female principals compared with male principals with regard to leadership. The researcher used the questionnaires and interview schedule to secure data from the selected population.

#### **3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN AND INSTRUMENTATION**

##### **3.2.1 Nature of research design**

The research design for this study was descriptive in nature. Using a descriptive method, the researcher did what is suggested by Leedy (1974: 70). Leedy (1974) states that a researcher should observe with close scrutiny the population of his or her research parameter, making a careful record of what he or she observes so that, having made his or her observation, he or she could come back to that record and could study it carefully in order to discover the meaning of what he or she has observed. The researcher conducted the survey study in which the 'looking' was done by means of a questionnaire and the semi-structured interview. In each instance the observational



stage was coupled with a recording phase, a setting down of the facts, a presentation of data in the form of tables and categorisation. This descriptive type of research was used due to the appropriateness of its design. However, the descriptive survey design makes the following demands upon the researcher that are stipulated by Leedy (1974: 80):

- The descriptive survey method deals with a situation that demands the technique of observation.
- The population for the study must be carefully chosen, clearly defined and specifically delimited.
- Particular attention should be given to safeguarding the data from the influence of bias.
- Data must be organised and presented systematically so that valid and accurate conclusions may be drawn.

With the above-mentioned features in mind, the researcher chose the population with caution and constructed the research instruments.

### **3.2.2 Instrumentation**

The researcher conducted a survey by means of a questionnaire and semi-structured interviews. The questionnaire was given to various samples of educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and presidents of learner representative councils. The questionnaire was partly quantitative and partly qualitative. Semi-structured interviews were administered to female principals of selected secondary schools.

This research project was designed to establish the meanings that the population attaches to the efficiency and effectiveness, or otherwise, of female principals as leaders compared with their male counterparts. For this reason, qualitative research was used. Denzin and Lincoln (1994: 4) stress that *qualitative* implies an emphasis on processes and meanings that are rigorously examined. Qualitative researchers stress the socially constructed nature of reality, the intimate relationship between the researcher and what is studied and the situational factors that shape inquiry. Such researchers emphasise the value-laden nature of inquiry. They seek answers to questions that stress how social experience is created. This view is also supported by Robbins (1998: 11-12), who says that ‘speaking for others’ by constructing meaning is at the very heart of qualitative research.

Qualitative research is also multi-methodical in focus, involving an interpretive, naturalistic approach to its subject matter (Denzin and Lincoln, 1994). This definition informed the researcher’s choice of approach, because she used a combination of close and open-ended questionnaire items and an interview. She had in mind that both interviews and questionnaires create a heavy reliance upon the validity of verbal data (Kidder, 1981: 148). In the questionnaire, the researcher obtained information limited to the written responses of subjects to prearranged questions. Because the interviewer and the person interviewed were both present as the questions were asked and answered, there was an opportunity for greater care in communicating questions and in eliciting information. Furthermore, the interviewer had the opportunity to observe both the subject and the total situation in which responses were given. In spite of its subjectivity, the researcher included use of qualitative research because of its flexibility and because it enabled her to interact and connect with the researched. To overcome the limitations of this approach, the researcher used it in combination with

the quantitative paradigm. The researcher considered the view of Casssell and Symon (1994: 16), who state: “Where a quantitative study has been carried out, qualitative data are required to validate particular measures or to clarify and illustrate the meaning of the findings”. The combination of the quantitative and qualitative data results in a ‘triangulation effect’, which enables fuller exploration of the complexity and richness of the phenomenon under scrutiny (Nandraj, 2003: 70, citing Burns, 1995: 273).

The researcher also piloted the questionnaire to one school in order to pre-test it. She further used a randomly selected, representative sample, that is, 28 out of 153 secondary schools, in order to get accurate measurement, which is a method used by Mitchell and Jolleys. (2004: 149).

#### **(a) Questionnaires**

According to Johnson (1994: 37-39), the essence of a questionnaire is that it is in the hands of the respondent, is completed by him or her and, therefore, empowers him or her. However, there were respondents who were not serious about filling in the questionnaires. In selecting the questionnaire as her tool, the researcher kept in mind Johnson’s suggestions:

- Ensure that the questionnaire is clear and comprehensible to the respondents.
- Administer the questionnaire to the appropriate respondents.
- Motivate the respondent to complete and return the questionnaire.
- Make effective administrative arrangements for the return of questionnaires.
- Use simple language for the questionnaire.

There were two types of questions in the questionnaire: open-ended and closed or restricted questions. Bailey (1987: 123-129) says that a distinction is generally made between open-ended questions (where the response categories are not specified) and closed or fixed-alternative questions (where the respondent selects one of more of the specific categories provided by the researcher). The researcher chose to use both types of questions so as to make use of the benefits of both. The benefits of closed questionnaires are that the answers are standard and the respondents' answers can easily be compared. They are also easier to code and analyse.

The Likert scale was used in structuring closed-ended questionnaires. According to Bailey (1987: 365), the essence of the Likert technique is to increase the variation in the possible scores by coding from 'strongly agree' to 'strongly disagree' instead of merely 'agree' or 'disagree'. The researcher coded the responses on closed-ended questions according to this principle. To positive items, responses of 'strongly agree' received a value of 5, the 'agree' response a value of 4, the neutral response a value of 3 and the 'strongly disagree' response a value of 1. To ensure that each person's opinions were coded in a logically consistent manner, the numerical values assigned to responses to negative items were reversed. The 'strongly disagree' response to negative items received a value of 5, while the 'strongly agree' option received a value of 1. Grimm and Wozniak (1990: 181) state that the person who favours the issue should strongly agree with the positive statements about it.

The researcher used the Likert scale, having taken into account some of the following considerations indicated by Schnetler, Stoker, Dixon, Herbst and Genlidenhys. (1989: 69):

- Statements should be in the singular form, contain one idea only and no double negatives.
- Each statement should elicit a response at both the positive and negative extremes.
- The scale should consist of both positive and negative items because variation between positive and negative items forces the respondent to consider each item carefully, rather than respond automatically in the same way to each item.
- Statements should be relevant to the attitude construct that is being measured.
- The list of items from which the final scale is compiled should be representative of the attitude construct being investigated.

As far as open-ended questions are concerned, they allow the respondent to clarify and qualify his or her answer. Furthermore, they enhance self-expression on the part of the respondent.

#### **(b) The qualitative research interview**

The purpose of the qualitative research interview is to gather descriptions of the life-world of the interviewee with respect to interpretation of the meaning of the described phenomena (Cassell and Symon 1994: 14-15). The goal of any qualitative research interview is, therefore, to see the research topic from the perspective of the interviewee and to understand how and why he or she comes to have this particular perspective. In applying this type of interview, the researcher thus had scope to introduce into the discussion new questions that had not been thought of beforehand but that arose during the course of the interview. The aim of using semi-structured interviews was to provide for a greater and freer flow of information between the

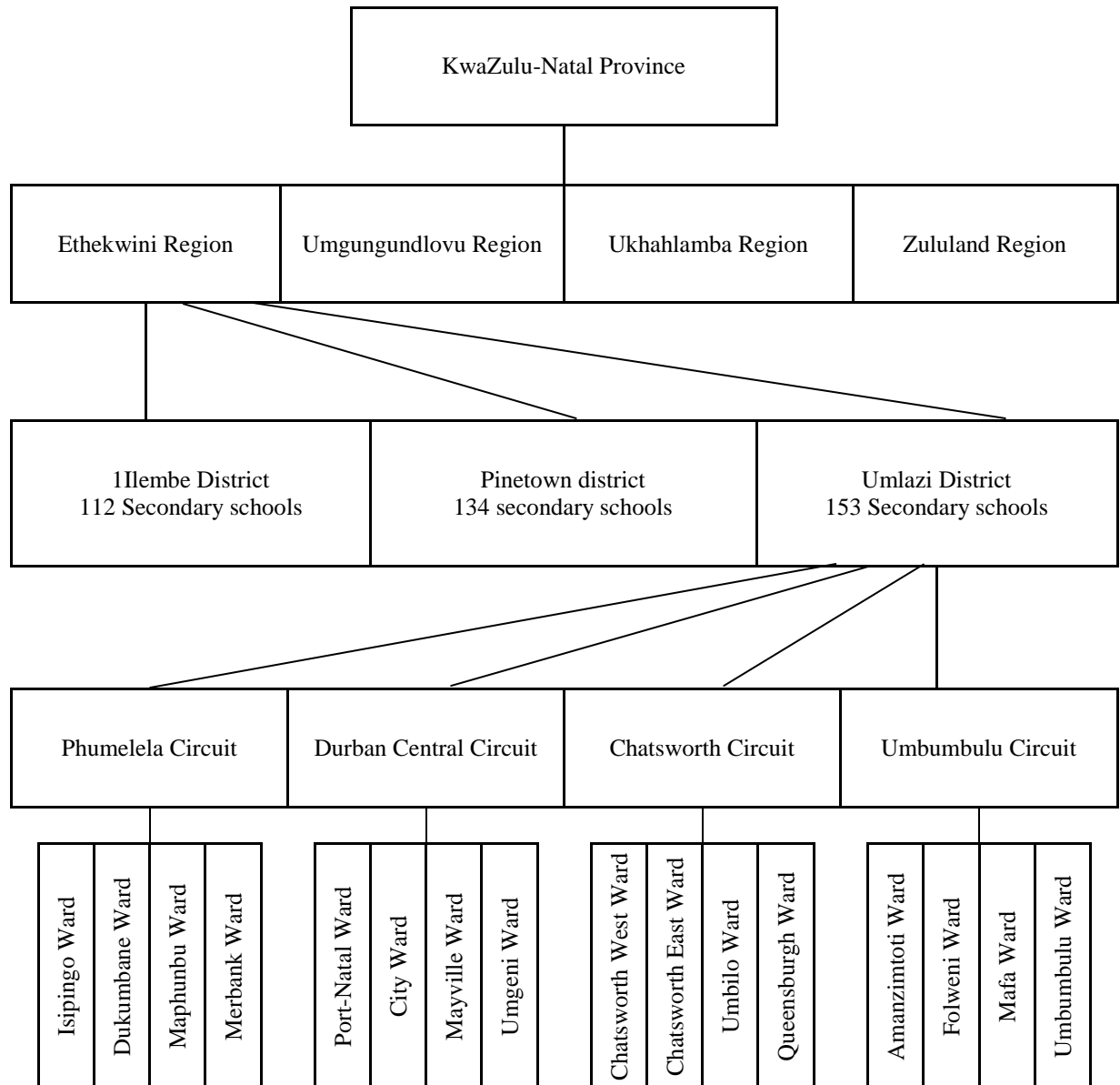
researcher and the subject. During semi-structured interviews the interviewer is free to ask what and how she wants to, and the respondent is free to answer howsoever he or she pleases (Mitchell and Jolley, 2004: 197). The researcher had considered beforehand the nature of the encounter and the general areas she wished to explore, but she let the interviewees ‘travel’ wherever they attached meaning in relation to the subject of study. The entire researcher-respondent exchange was tape-recorded with the consent of the respondent. The researcher also wrote notes alongside the interviewee’s responses.

### **3.3 POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

*Sampling* refers to the process of selecting participants for a research project (Dane 1990: 289). Bryman and Cramer (1990: 98) point out that sampling does not necessarily refer only to the sampling of people. Bryman and Cramer (1990) argue that other units of analysis, such as organisations, schools and local authorities, could be sampled. They further point out that when sampling is done, units or elements of analysis are selected from a clearly defined population. According to Dane (1990), all possible units or elements that could be included make up the population. Some populations may be very large, and it is unlikely that all units within a population can be included, as the time and cost that such an exercise would entail is considerable.

Bearing the above-mentioned observations in mind, the researcher selected KwaZulu-Natal secondary schools as her population. The structure of the population used was as follows:

**Figure 3.1: Target population selected from KwaZulu-Natal province**



KwaZulu-Natal is one of the largest provinces in South Africa. At the time of this research there were four regions in this province, as Figure 3.1 indicates. The researcher chose the eThekweni region, which was the biggest region and comprised three districts illustrated above. Since this region had the highest number of secondary schools, the data obtained was highly generalisable.

In the Umlazi district there were 153 secondary schools: 142 public schools, that is, those schools supported by public funds, and 11 independent schools, that is, those schools that are not supported by public funds. The research aimed for an outcome that would represent schools in the region. From the list of 153 secondary schools, the researcher selected 28 schools. The sample came from different circuits and different wards as they appear in the diagram. The 28 schools were selected using two types of probability sampling methods: stratified sampling and systematic sampling. The researcher used probability sampling methods because they increase the generalisability of the findings to the larger population (Keppel and Zedeck 1989: 16).

### **3.3.1 Stratified sampling**

The researcher first stratified 153 Umlazi District secondary schools. Thirty two of those schools were headed by female principals and the rest were headed by male principals. The schools were first divided into two groups or strata on the criterion of the gender of the principal; that is, schools led by female principals comprised one stratum and those managed by male principals comprised another. Each school in each stratum was assigned a number starting with 1. Each list was arranged alphabetically so that systematic sampling would be applied. The researcher chose 10% of the schools that were led by male principals and 47% of those led by females.



The researcher chose more schools that were supervised by females, as females have been under-represented in management positions in secondary schools. There are also fewer schools led by women. The researcher used stratification because she wanted to compare the female leadership with male leadership. She therefore adopted the view of Royer (1979: 97), which states that stratification may be useful when comparisons between the strata are an object of study. Bryman and Cramer (1990: 101) argue that stratification offers the possibility of greater accuracy, ensuring that the groups that are created by a stratifying criterion are represented in the same proportions as they are in the population.

### 3.3.2 Systematic sampling

Having compiled the strata, the researcher used systematic sampling to choose from each stratum. The researcher used systematic sampling because it can save a great deal of time and effort and it is more efficient in some situations than simple random sampling (Mugisha, 1993: 11). In this study, the researcher wanted a systematic sample of 13 schools led by male principals from a list of 121 and 15 schools led by female principals from a list of 32.

The interval selection (K) was calculated as follows:

$$\begin{array}{lcl}
 \text{Stratum 1} & K & = \frac{\text{Population size}}{\text{Sample size}} = \frac{121}{13} = 9.1 \\
 \\
 \text{Stratum 2} & K & = \frac{\text{Population size}}{\text{Sample size}} = \frac{32}{15} = 2.1
 \end{array}$$

Because of the above formula to sample 13 schools systematically from a population listing of 121 and 15 from a population listing of 32, the researcher made a random selection from the first 9<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> respectively on the lists of schools led by males and by females, and then proceeded to select every 9th and every 2nd case respectively

after that, until the end of the list was reached and 13 and 15 were selected. These schools were determined before the researcher started the fieldwork.

In terms of the sample, careful consideration was given to:

- the number of schools chosen per circuit and per ward,
- the number of educators chosen per circuit and per ward and
- ensuring that the schools were chosen from the whole district.

Figure 3.2 below reflects the erstwhile Umlazi District: the four circuits and wards in the district, the number of schools, the school governing bodies and the learners' presidents selected.

**Figure 3.2: Statistical reflection of circuits and wards, number of schools and number of respondents for the empirical investigation**

CIRCUITS	WARDS	NO OF SCHOOLS PER WARD	SCHOOLS SELECTED		NO OF EDUCATORS		NO OF RESPONDENTS		SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES CHAIRPERSONS		LEARNERS PRESIDENTS			
			LED BY		MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	MALE	FEMALE	TOTAL	SELECTED	TOTAL	SELECTED
			MALE	FEMALE										
Pumelela	Isipingo	13	-	02	22	31	07	12	13	02	13	02		
	Dukumbane	08	02	-	26	33	04	04	08	02	08	02		
	Maphunbu	12	02	01	38	54	20	11	12	03	12	03		
	Merebank	07	01	01	23	44	18	28	07	02	07	02		
Durban Central	Port Natal	10	01	01	14	16	03	02	09	02	09	02		
	City	07	-	02	18	26	07	16	07	02	07	02		
	Mayville	09	01	-	02	12	01	02	09	01	09	01		
	Umgeni North	11	-	01	-	13	00	00	11	00	11	00		
Chatsworth	Chatsworth West	12	01	01	33	35	04	12	12	02	12	02		
	Chatswort East	05	-	01	13	12	01	02	05	01	05	01		
	Umbilo	07	-	01	15	25	02	03	07	01	07	01		
	Queensburgh	11	-	02	02	89	01	32	11	02	11	02		
Umbumbulu	Amanzimtoti	09	-	01	08	20	03	11	09	01	09	01		
	Folweni	14	02	01	17	35	06	07	14	03	14	03		
	Mafa	06	02	01	40	65	12	13	06	03	06	03		
	Umbumbulu Central	12	01	-	01	08	01	03	12	01	12	01		
TOTAL		153	13	15	272	518	90	158		27		27		
PERCENTAGE			11	47			33	31		10		10		

The researcher was able to administer 248 questionnaires to educators, 27 (10%) to learners' presidents and 27 (10%) to chairpersons of school governing bodies. That number (302) represents more than 10% of the total population. Chetty (1998: 129) makes reference to Grinnell and Williams (1990: 127), who argue that, in most cases, a 10% sample should be enough for the sample size.

While it is easier to select chairpersons of school governing bodies and presidents of RCLs, it is quite complex to select educators. However, questionnaires were given only to the willing educators in order to make up the 10% and for the sake of the researcher's convenience.

### **3.4 ADMINISTRATION OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE AND THE INTERVIEW**

#### **3.4.1 Permission to conduct the study**

Permission to administer questionnaires and to conduct interviews in selected schools in the Umlazi District was requested from the director of the Research, Strategy Development and Education and Culture Management Information System KwaZulu-Natal (ECMIS KZN) Department of Education and Culture (cf. Appendix C) and from the principals of the schools (cf. Appendix E). Permission was given by the KZN Department of Education and Culture (cf. Appendix D) after the full title of the research, concise description of the research project and the copy of the questionnaire requisitioned by the Department had been provided. The list of the selected schools was also submitted so that the Department could inform those schools.

Permission to visit the schools was requested from the principals telephonically, by fax (as requested by some principals) and by personal visits. Where phones were not available, the Department contacted the schools. The letters from the district manager and the Department of Education and Culture granting the researcher permission to administer the questionnaire was provided to all schools.

### **3.4.2 THE PILOT STUDY**

The researcher tested the validity of the questionnaire and unstructured interviews in two schools that were part of the population but not part of the final sample. Sibaya (2002: 77) claims that no matter how astute the researcher has been in wording his or her questions and designing his or her questionnaire, he or she needs to try out the questionnaires with respondents before launching into the final study sample. The pilot work helps to refine points of detail (Hoinville and Jowell, 1978: 51). After the pilot study, some important adjustments were made to the questionnaires, such as increasing the space provided for answering open-ended questions.

### **3.4.3 Distribution of questionnaires**

Questionnaires for the field work had a preamble which stated the purpose of the study and motivated respondents to fill it in. The preamble also allayed the respondents' fears, so that they would respond freely. It was also clearly indicated that the respondents would be anonymous. According to Bailey (1987: 145), the introductory statement is important, because it justifies the study to the respondent and determines whether or not he or she will co-operate. It is essentially a selling or public relations exercise.

The principals of the targeted schools were telephoned a week in advance of a planned appointment to administer the questionnaire and to conduct interviews. On her arrival at each visited school, the researcher introduced herself and explained the purpose of the visit. The researcher administered the questionnaires to the respondents personally to eliminate non-responses, but in order to maintain confidentiality, a box was provided for completed questionnaires. The problems the researcher encountered were that investigator administration was costly and needed time. She had to visit some schools several times before this aspect of her study could be completed. Some of the reasons were as follows:

- It was not easy to find many of the chairpersons of the school governing bodies.
- Some principals simply forgot the appointment, and the researcher was not expected when she arrived at the school.
- Some schools asked the researcher to leave the questionnaires behind and to come and collect them a few days later. Some of these schools misplaced the questionnaires and others failed to have the questionnaires ready for collection at the appointed time.
- Most educators would not respond to open-ended questions, and the researcher had to go back to them to ask them to respond to these.

In schools where order is maintained, it was easy to administer questionnaires because educators would gather in a room and fill in the questionnaires in the researcher's presence.

#### **3.4.4 Returns**

It is rarely possible to obtain a response from all those selected for the sample (Hoinville and Jowell, 1978: 71). A non-response cannot be ignored because this sector may differ substantially from that portion which replied (Ngcobo, 1999: 68). However, out of 302 questionnaires, 302 were returned. Only questions C1 and C3 on relationships, one respondent each, were not responded to. That good return was due to investigator administration which the researcher employed. The two respondents who did not answer questions 1 and 3 in section C might have lacked interest in those questions.

### **3.5 DATA ANALYSIS**

#### **3.5.1 Interviews**

The researcher used two modes of data analysis. The first was the ongoing analysis that the researcher made in the field during data collection. By having ongoing discussions with the female principals, the researcher constantly reflected on what was happening and why, and thereafter drafted her evaluation. A fair amount of time was spent on reading and re-reading interviews. A record of the interview was kept by both written transcript and tape recording in order to gain an appreciation of tone, pitch, intonation, pauses, silences and emphases. The researcher needed to make notes and comments in the margins regarding particular utterances or responses. She needed to identify, extract and comment on those general units of meaning. The broad themes and issues which featured frequently in the interview were considered. She worked out themes and meanings attached.

Comparisons of data secured from semi-structured interviews and questionnaires were made.

### 3.5.2 Questionnaires

With regard to closed questions, tables and percentages were used. The researcher described the extent of occurrence of the phenomenon and studied its correlates. Non-responses were coded 99. The chief advantage of including non-responses as part of the analysis is that the base number stays constant from one analysis to the next (Bailey 1987: 393).

Data from respondents were analysed and interpreted per theme. The themes within which questionnaires were structured as follows:

- *Section B Theme 1:* Administration vision, goals and tasks from item 1 to 10.
- *Section C Theme 2:* Relationships, communication and team building from item 1 to 10
- *Section D Theme 3:* Change management, empowerment (staff development) and motivation from item 1 to 10.
- *Section E Theme 4:* Conflict management from item 1 to 5.
- *Section F Theme 5:* Effectiveness in leadership item 1.
- *Section F Theme 6:* Barriers experienced by female principals item 2.

Data to closed questions which were administered to learners, school governing bodies and educators were presented and interpreted first. Responses from female principals



on each theme were then presented. An integrated discussion of data on both closed-ended questions and open-ended questions was made on each theme.

### **3.5.3 Chi-square (X squared)**

This study also used the chi-square in order to help the researcher in delineating conclusions from her survey. Chi-square is the most commonly used test of significance for independence for tables containing nominal and ordinal variables (Bailey, 1987: 404-405). The chi-square test is concerned with comparing distances in the actual (or observed) frequencies in respect of a certain attribute for the sample under investigation to determine whether the differences (except for sampling error) are typical of the population from which the sample was drawn.

X squared =  $\sum \frac{(O - E)^2}{E}$  all cells (O – E) squared divided by E where O indicates the observed value and E the expected value. The larger the summed difference between observed and expected values as a ratio of expected values, the larger the value of chi-square and the greater the likelihood that the relationship is statistically different from zero.

### **3.5.4 ANOVA**

ANOVA (short for Analysis of Variance) is a technique where the total variation in the dependent variable (in this case difference between the percentage neutral answers for females and males) is partitioned according to different factors (in this case direction, question category and these factors combined). The larger the variation (value of the mean square in the table) that can be attributed to a particular factor, the more the factor contributes towards explaining the variation in the dependent variable. The significance of the contribution of this variation is reflected in the value of the F-statistic (the larger

the F-statistic, the more significant the contribution). Such a contribution is regarded as significantly large if the p-value (sig. under the last column in the ANOVA table 4.49) is sufficiently small (usually you start taking note of values below 0.10). If an interaction (two factors together) effect is significant (in this case direction and category together), you focus only on that effect and not on the separate effects. The ANOVA table presented is in standard form and is taken directly from the SPSS output.

### **3.6 ETHICAL APPROACH**

Bailey (1987: 428) points out that it is unethical for researchers to harm anyone in the course of research. The researcher told the respondents the true purpose of the study and she asked for the permission from them to answer the questionnaires and to be interviewed. A good relationship was maintained between the researcher and the researched. The researcher respected the dignity of the participants by making sure that their privacy was protected. She put herself across as a peer. Agreement was established before interaction occurred. Consequently, ethical issues of perspective, moral responsibility and the stance taken towards the participants was an ongoing concern for this study. Help needed by the respondents was offered without objection.

### **3.7 CONCLUSION**

In this chapter, the researcher has presented the methodological approach used in the research project. Qualitative and quantitative paradigms were employed to increase the rate of the validity of the research. Qualitative research helped the researcher to develop relationships because she was engaged with the minds of others. She was connected with various people of various ranks, and those connections were essential for the

understanding of leadership issues investigated. In the next chapter, the data collected for this study were edited, coded, analysed and interpreted.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA**

#### **4.1 INTRODUCTION**

This chapter analyses and interprets data that was collected from a sample of educators, school governing bodies, learners' representative councils and female principals. As far as possible, the chapter also relates the research results to the theoretical study given in Chapter Two and to other references the researcher has read on the topic.

The questionnaire was divided into six sections. Section One covers the biological data, and sections Two to Six cover the questions on each theme. These themes are:

- assessment of administration, vision, goals and tasks,
- evaluation of relationships, communication and team building,
- evaluation of change management, empowerment (staff development) and motivation,
- assessment of conflict management and
- evaluation of effectiveness in leadership.

In this chapter, therefore, the research results are correlated with the above leadership themes (used as criteria), drawn from the objectives of the study.

Also added to the presentation of data are the responses secured from interviews on almost the same themes as mentioned above. As stated in the methodology chapter, the interviews targeted female principals in secondary schools.

Responses to both the closed and open-ended parts of the sections are analysed and interpreted. In closed or restricted questions there were five categories:

- **Strongly Agree (SA)**
- **Agree (A)**
- **Neither agree nor disagree/neutral (N)**
- **Disagree (D)**
- **Strongly Disagree (SD).**

The data were analysed through the use of these categories in abbreviated form. The abbreviations, F (Females) and M (Males) have also been used for the closed parts of the open-ended questions.

Finally, the researcher determined whether the assumption in Chapter One and this chapter could be accepted or rejected on the basis of responses given by educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies, learners' presidents and female principals, with respect to the theme on effective leadership.

The analysis and interpretation of data appears below.

## 4.2 DATA COLLECTED FROM EDUCATORS, GOVERNING BODIES AND LEARNERS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCILS

### 4.2.1 Section A Biological and general analysis

This section presents biological data of respondents. Tables 4.1 to 4.3 indicate gender of respondents and respondents' principals, and the locality of the respondents' schools.

#### (a) Sex of the respondents

**Table 4.1: Frequency distribution according to gender of the respondents**

Items 1 and 2	Female	Male	Total
Educators	158	090	248
Learners' presidents	010	017	027
School governing bodies' chairpersons	007	020	027
Total	175	127	302
Percentages	58%	42%	100%

Table 4.1 above shows that of the 302 respondents, 175(58%) were females and 127 (42%) were males. The total number of females (175) was made up of 158 female educators, 10 female learners' presidents and 7 female chairpersons of school governing bodies. It seems that there was a large number of female educators, indicated by a greater percentage (47%) of females compared with 11% of males. Females dominate most schools. This is further supported by Table 3.2 in Chapter Three, which indicates that female educators dominate most schools in eThekweni regions. Out of 27 learners' presidents, 10 (37%) were females. This indicates that few females are now also sharing the power of leadership. However, of the 27 chairpersons of school governing bodies, 7 (25%) were females, something which was not evident previously, as chairpersons of school governing bodies used to be males only.

**(b) Gender of the respondent school principals**

**Table 4.2: Frequency distribution according to gender of respondent school principals**

Item 3	Female Principals			Male Principals			Total
Educators	Females	Males	Total	Females	Males	Total	
	098	035	133	060	055	115	248
Learners' presidents	008	006	014	002	011	013	027
School governing bodies' chairpersons	006	008	014	001	012	013	027
Total	112	049	161	063	078	141	302
Percentages	37%	16%	53%	21%	26%	47%	100%

The table above shows figures which represent respondents in schools led by female and male principals. The table indicates that of 302 respondents, there were 112 (37%) females led by female principals and 49 (16%) males led by female principals, which made up the total of 161 (53%) of the total respondents. It seems that there were more or less the same number of respondents from schools led by both females and males. On this basis, the perceptions made are fairly comparable. However, it appears that there were more female learners' presidents led by female principals than male learners' presidents led by female principals. It also indicates that there were more male chairpersons of school governing bodies in schools led by female principals than female led school governing bodies.

The tables above indicate that there are women who are now aspiring to leadership positions even though men are still dominating those positions. Shakeshaft (1987) confirms this when she says that the participation of women has been richer in some areas than others although the imbalance of leadership in education has remained consistent.

**(c) Locality of the respondent's school**

**Table 4.3 Frequency distribution according to locality of the respondent's school**

<b>Item 4</b>	<b>Rural</b>	<b>Urban</b>	<b>Semi-urban</b>	<b>Total</b>
Schools	04	23	01	028
Total	04	23	01	002
Percentages	14%	82%	4%	100%

It is not surprising that 23 schools (82%) in uMlazi district are in urban areas because the uMlazi district consists of schools around the city of Durban. This is further indicated by the least number of schools, that is, 4 (14%) out of 28 in rural areas. There was only 1 (4%) school in a semi-urban area. Therefore, conclusions are likely to reflect the views of the respondents in urban areas since most come from there.

**4.2.2 Section B: Assessment of administration, vision, goals and tasks**

This section analyses and interprets data from educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents in response to the questionnaire items assessing effectiveness between male and female principals on school administration, vision and goals.



**(a) Responses to closed-ended questions**

Table 4.4 consists of questions 1 to 9, which required the respondents to state their perceptions on school administration, vision, goals and tasks. The responses of this section are summarised in Table 4.4 below.

**Table 4.4: School respondents' views on administration, vision, goals and tasks**

ITEMS	RESPONDENTS	GENDER	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
Male principals are better administrators than female principals	Educators	Females	09 (6%)	13 (8%)	59 (37%)	34 (22%)	43 (27%)	158 (100%)
		Males	23 (25.6%)	13 (14.4%)	28 (31.1)	16 (17.8))	10 (11.1)	0 90 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	06 (60%)	03 (30%)	01 (10%)	010 (10%)
		Males	08 (47%)	02 (11.8%)	04 (23.5)	02 (11.8)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	03 (15%)	07 (35%)	05 (25%)	05 (25%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
	Total		43	36	105	63	55	302
	Percentages		14%	12%	35%	21%	18%	100%
Male principals are less efficient than female principals are.	Educators	Females	00 (0%)	16 (14%)	84 (53%)	41 (26%)	17 (11%)	158 (100%)
		Males	02 (2.2%)	07 (7.8%)	32 (35.6)	22 (24.4)	27 (30%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	01 (10%)	010 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	09 (53%)	06 (35%)	02 (12%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14.3%)	01 (14.3)	04 (57%)	01 (14.3)	007 (100%)
		Males	03 (03)	07 (07)	06 (06)	04 (04)	00 (00)	020 (020)

			(15%)	(35%)	(30%)	(20%)	(0%)	(100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>05</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>137</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>2%</b>	<b>11%</b>	<b>45%</b>	<b>26%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Male principals have better visions than female principals about the direction which schools ought to take.</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>07</b> (4%)	<b>10</b> (6%)	<b>67</b> (42%)	<b>43</b> (27%)	<b>31</b> (20%)	<b>158</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>07</b> (7.8%)	<b>18</b> (20%)	<b>37</b> (41.1)	<b>20</b> (22.2)	<b>08</b> (8.9%)	<b>090</b> (100%)
		<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>03</b> (30%)	<b>04</b> (40%)	<b>03</b> (30%)	<b>010</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (18%)	<b>06</b> (35%)	<b>07</b> (41%)	<b>01</b> (6%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>Learners' presidents</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>02</b> (28.6%)	<b>01</b> (14.3)	<b>4</b> (57%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>04</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>02</b> (28.6%)	<b>01</b> (14.3)	<b>4</b> (57%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>04</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>02</b> (28.6%)	<b>01</b> (14.3)	<b>4</b> (57%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>04</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>02</b> (28.6%)	<b>01</b> (14.3)	<b>4</b> (57%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>04</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>20</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>7%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>40%</b>	<b>25%</b>	<b>14%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Male principals set visions more collaboratively with relevant stakeholders in schools than female principals do.</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>06</b> (4%)	<b>06</b> (4%)	<b>71</b> (45%)	<b>50</b> (32%)	<b>25</b> (16%)	<b>158</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>10</b> (11%)	<b>21</b> (23%)	<b>33</b> (36%)	<b>18</b> (20%)	<b>09</b> (10%)	<b>090</b> (100%)
		<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>04</b> (40%)	<b>03</b> (30%)	<b>03</b> (30%)	<b>010</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (37%)	<b>04</b> (24%)	<b>02</b> (12%)	<b>05</b> (29%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>Learners' presidents</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>07</b> (35%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>07</b> (35%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>07</b> (35%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>07</b> (35%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>03</b> (43%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>07</b> (35%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>28</b>	<b>39</b>	<b>116</b>	<b>81</b>	<b>38</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>9%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>38%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>03</b> (2%)	<b>18</b> (11%)	<b>67</b> (42%)	<b>43</b> (27%)	<b>27</b> (17%)	<b>158</b> (100%)

than female principals assign.	Learners' presidents	Males	06 (6.7%)	12 (13.3%)	24 (26.7)	31 (34.4)	17 (18.9)	090 (100%)
		Females	00 (0%)	02 (20%)	06 (60%)	02 (20%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	01 (6%)	03 (18%)	06 (35%)	05 (29%)	02 (12%)	017 (100%)
		Females	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	01 (14%)	007 (100%)
	School governing bodies	Males	00 (0%)	05 (25%)	08 (40%)	03 (15%)	04 (20%)	020 (100%)
Total			10	40	114	87	51	302
Percentages			3%	13%	38%	29%	17%	100%
Male principals define their roles and those of educators more clearly than females principals	Educators	Females	5 (3%)	21 (13%)	59 (37%)	48 (30%)	25 (16%)	158 (100%)
		Males	12 (13.3%)	26 (28.9%)	26 (28.9)	18 (20%)	08 (8.9%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	02 (20%)	04 (40%)	02 (20%)	02 (20%)	010 (100%)
		Males	05 (29%)	08 (47%)	02 (12%)	02 (12%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	01 (5%)	10 (50%)	05 (25%)	03 (15%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			23	68	99	76	36	302
Percentages			8%	22%	33%	25%	12%	100%
Male principals plan, organize and co-ordinate school activities more efficiently than female principals.	Educators	Females	06 (4%)	08 (5%)	65 (41%)	48 (30%)	31 (20%)	158 (100%)
		Males	13 (14.4%)	21 (23.3%)	32 (35.6)	17 (18.9)	07 (7.8%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	03 (30%)	03 (30%)	03 (30%)	010 (100%)

		<b>Males</b>	<b>06</b> (35%)	<b>07</b> (41%)	<b>03</b> (18%)	<b>01</b> (6%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14.3%)	<b>02</b> (28.6)	<b>02</b> (28.6)	<b>02</b> (28.6)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>04</b> (20%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>09</b> (45%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>29</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>74</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>9.6%</b>	<b>13.6%</b>	<b>37.7%</b>	<b>24.5%</b>	<b>14.6%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals are.</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>07</b> (4%)	<b>24</b> (15%)	<b>67</b> (42.4)	<b>40</b> (25.3)	<b>20</b> (13%)	<b>158</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>09</b> (10%)	<b>10</b> (11.1%)	<b>31</b> (34.4)	<b>31</b> (34.4)	<b>09</b> (10%)	<b>090</b> (100%)
	<b>Learners' presidents</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>01</b> (10%)	<b>05</b> (50%)	<b>02</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (10%)	<b>01</b> (10%)	<b>010</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>03</b> (17.6%)	<b>01</b> (5.9%)	<b>05</b> (29.4)	<b>05</b> (29.4)	<b>03</b> (17.6)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>03</b> (42.8%)	<b>02</b> (28.6)	<b>02</b> (28.6)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>08</b> (40%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>03</b> (15%)	<b>020</b> (100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>20</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>113</b>	<b>82</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>7%</b>	<b>17%</b>	<b>37%</b>	<b>27%</b>	<b>12%</b>	<b>100%</b>
<b>Male principals are more effective in terms of achieving school goals than female principals.</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>06</b> (4%)	<b>12</b> (7%)	<b>57</b> (36%)	<b>50</b> (32%)	<b>33</b> (21%)	<b>158</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>15</b> (16.6%)	<b>22</b> (24.4%)	<b>28</b> (31.1)	<b>20</b> (22.2)	<b>05</b> (5.6%)	<b>090</b> (100%)
	<b>Learners' presidents</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>04</b> (40%)	<b>05</b> (50%)	<b>01</b> (10%)	<b>010</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>04</b> (23.5%)	<b>04</b> (23.5%)	<b>03</b> (17.6)	<b>06</b> (35.3)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies' chairperson</b>	<b>Females</b>	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14%)	<b>03</b> (42.8)	<b>03</b> (42.8)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>Males</b>	<b>00</b>	<b>09</b>	<b>08</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>020</b>

			(0%)	(45%)	(40%)	(10%)	(5%)	(100%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>25</b>	<b>48</b>	<b>103</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>Percentages</b>			<b>8%</b>	<b>16%</b>	<b>34%</b>	<b>29%</b>	<b>13%</b>	<b>100%</b>

The majority of educators, learners' presidents and chairpersons of the school governing bodies were in disagreement with items in Table 4.4 regarding administration, vision, goals and tasks. This supports the argument of Shakeshaft (1987), who maintains that women lead differently. The statement is shown by overview of responses to this section, that is, section B:

#### **Item 1: Male principals are better administrators than female principals**

The majority of respondents (118, or 39%) disagreed with this item, whereas 79 (26%) agreed. However, 10 learners' presidents (37%) were neutral, a number which is equal to those who agreed. Eleven (41%) chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed with the item. This suggests that according to the overall respondents, male principals in some schools are not better administrators than female principals, whereas according to learners' presidents, female and male principals are the same in school administration, and according to governing bodies, there are some principals who are better administrators than female principals. This implies that whilst many educators suggest that some male principals are not better administrators, for learners and chairpersons of school governing bodies some male principals administer schools better than female principals. It seems that there are clearly differing perceptions between and among the groups sampled as to whether males as a category administer schools better than females.

Pellicer and Stevenson (1985: 3) state that inherent in the word 'administration' is the word 'minister', a word which connotes counselling, motivating, listening and

criticising constructively. To the researcher's knowledge, there is no research which indicates that men or women as a group administer better than the other group. Therefore, as the school leader, the principal, regardless of gender, is recognised publicly as the head of his or her school, with considerable authority to administer the educational programme in it (Barth, 1980: 200).

Most of male educators (36, or 39.6%) agreed with the item. However, most of female educators (55.1%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. Macbeth (1998: 15), who makes reference to Lee (1995) endorses this idea of educators. Lee says that the men typically hold fatherlike or coaching positions in school administration. It is interesting to note that most female learners (60%) selected the neutral stand whereas 58.5% male learners agreed with the item. This indicates that according to female learners in administration male principals have the same style as female principals. Therefore agreement response equals neutral response. Most of the female chairpersons of school governing bodies' (100%) led by male principals agreed with the item. Fifty percent of males agreed. The idea of half of the males supporting the item is just what was expected because of the societal perception that men are better administrators than women are.

Judging from the data in Table 4.4 one gets an impression that gender affected the response because there were more males who agreed that males are better administrators, and most of those males were led by male principals. Only a few female educators agreed with the item, and no female learners' presidents agreed with the item. Only 1 female chairperson of school governing body agreed with the item. This shows that according to female learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies, male principals do not excel in leadership when compared with female

principals. Yet some females and males led by both male and female principals experienced the male principals as better administrators. Perhaps those respondents who were led by female principals and yet supported the statement experienced poor administration from the female principals under whom they served. It appears that the male parents were satisfied with the way the male principals were leading the schools.

**Item 2: Male principals are less efficient than female principals are**

In consideration of this item, the figures in the table above indicate that overall 137 (45%) respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the item. However, 11 (40.6%) chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed compared with 7 (25%) of those who were neutral. This neutral stance of the overall response indicates that both female and male principals do not underscore efficiency in schools, whereas school governing bodies see male principals to be less efficient than female principals. It is the responsibility of principals, either males or females, to ensure that the activities which occur in schools are carried out effectively, because effectiveness and efficiency should be inseparable. In effective leadership the two, that is, effectiveness and efficiency, are two of the three criteria according to which performance in the school is assessed or evaluated.

Most female educators (58.3%) led by male principals neither agreed nor disagreed with the item. It is most striking to see females supporting both sexes. There was a balance in the numbers of learners led by male and female principals who were neutral. Equally striking was to note that almost an equal number of female and male learners were neutral, which applied also to educators. Such a response confirms the truthfulness and reliability of the data. It is remarkable that more male chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed than females (only 1 female who agreed).

**Item 3: Male principals have better visions than female principals about the direction which schools ought to take**

One hundred and twenty-one (40%) of the respondents were neutral to, and only 62 (21%) respondents agreed with the statement that male principals have better vision than female principals in terms of the direction which the school ought to take. Although the overall number of respondents showed neutral, 11 (40.7%) chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed, compared with 7 (25.9%) who were neutral. The data obtained implies that school leaders, either females or males, should have a vision regarding the school. Trim (1997: 41) confirms this view by saying that transformational leaders must construct future visions and build support for the vision.

An almost equal number of female to male educators was neutral to the item referred to above. This indicates honesty and fairness in the response. This also applies to learners. Almost the same number of females and males were neutral, yet the rest of the female learners disagreed that female principals have better visions than female principals. This probably shows support for female principals. More male than female chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed. This is not surprising because of the societal perception that men are better directors than females, or that women are always inferior to men, or because some male principals in certain schools may be perceived to have better vision than female principals.



**Item 4: Male principals set visions more collaboratively with relevant stakeholders in schools than female principals do**

One hundred and nineteen (40%) of the total respondents were in disagreement with the statement that male principals set visions more collaboratively with relevant stakeholders. Almost the same number, namely 116 (38%) of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, whereas a significant number, such as 67 (22%) of the respondents opted for the agreement value. Regardless of the big number of overall respondents in disagreement, 104 (42%) educators were neutral when compared with 101 (41%) overall number of respondents who disagreed, which was almost the same, and 14 (51.8%) chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed compared with 8 (25.9%) school governing bodies who disagreed.

Looking at the overall view, one finds that male principals are perceived to set vision less collaboratively with relevant stakeholders than female principals. This perception should be seen in relation to Mthabela's view (1997). Mthabela (1997) states that one of the techniques that can be used in order to enhance transformation is collaborative goal-setting. Among the stakeholders to be involved are educators, learners and parents. It is important to include these stakeholders because consultation includes procedures whereby school members agree on the values which underpin the vision and mission of every school and the performance of individuals in them, as well as policies and procedures within which schools are able to work effectively. This consultation is useful in building capacity to achieve improvements in the quality of education. Both male and female principals should be aware that if they do not set visions with stakeholders it becomes impossible for visions to be achieved. Such visions are achieved only through the school activities performed by members of the school

organisation. If the stakeholders do not know the principals' ideas and visions, those ideas and visions cannot be achieved. The development of the vision and mission of the school should clearly be the responsibility of the various stakeholders who will be involved in its establishment. Bush (1986: 55) further supports the practice of collaborative vision-setting with educators. He argues that the participation of teaching staff is usually important because they have the responsibility of implementing changes in policy. Bush further says the principal is typified as the facilitator of an essentially participative internal process.

More female educators than male educators were neutral or disagreed. The male neutral stand was almost the same as the agreement stand. It seems strange that a male would opt for either both or a male. Most males usually opt for a male only. Most female learners disagreed, compared with a very small percentage of male learners who disagreed. This indicates that according to female learners male principals in some schools do not involve learners in setting their goals as compared with female principals.

If one keeps learners' presidents' responses in mind, it seems that male principals do not share visions with learners, while they do with chairpersons of school governing bodies. This view contradicts Mthabela (1997), who argues that transformational leaders share visions with learners as well. This sharing of vision with learners, according to Mthabela (1997), empowers learners and allows them growth. Therefore, learners need to be afforded the opportunity to participate in the planning of school activities. It seems that chairpersons of school governing bodies were satisfied with the way male principals involved them in setting their visions, compared with a significantly small percentage (14.2%) of female governing bodies who agreed.

**Item 5: Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals are**

It has been observed that 138 respondents (46%) disagreed that male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals. The overwhelming minority (50, or 16%) agreed with the item. However, the greater number (12) learners' presidents (44%) was neutral, when compared with 9 (33.1%) who disagreed, whereas 11 (40.7%) chairpersons of school governing bodies who were neutral was exactly the same as those who disagreed. The 46% of the overall responses suggests that there are male principals who are perceived to be more efficient than female principals in certain schools, whereas learners and chairpersons of school governing bodies notice no difference between female and male principals, as far as efficiency in the assignment of tasks is concerned. According to the data above, most of the respondents were satisfied with the way male principals assign tasks. The importance of this task for principals, irrespective of gender, is endorsed by Piek (1991: 131). Piek (1991) states that no school manager, especially the school principal, can effectively perform all administrative functions and tasks within a school. Therefore, some duties must be delegated to the staff so that educators can gain experience and develop team spirit. However, Piek argues that the responsibility is not assigned to a person, but rather to a position. Thus the principal should strive constantly to encourage others to enlarge their areas of responsibility by asking them to do more (Pellicer and Stevenson, 1985: 4). However, a principal must however, bear it in mind that although he delegates some tasks to subordinates, he or she nevertheless remains accountable for everything. This participative leadership style is also supported by Horne (1998: 24), who argues that decisions should be delegated. According to Horne (1998), in so far as schools cannot

be run as one-man bands, delegation is the key, and yet it is probably one of the most difficult things to do.

Twenty-one (60%) male educators led by female principals disagreed with the item. This is the response which is likely to come from a male led by a female, as males under female leadership tend to resist female authority. Most female learners' presidents were neutral. The same situation applied to learners. But more male than female learners opted for male principals. Let it be noted that tasks were not assigned to learners, but rather to staff. Perhaps learners were unsure about the way tasks are assigned. Most female school governing bodies led by male principals disagreed. The opposite of the educators' and learners' situations above occurred in this response, as more female than male chairpersons of school governing bodies disagreed, which seems to be the reality, as the overall response endorses this idea.

**Item 6: Male principals have more clarity in the definition of roles**

Table 4.4 indicates that 112 respondents (37%) disagreed with item 6, while 91 respondents (30%) agreed and 99 (33%) were neutral. Most chairpersons of school governing bodies (12, or 44.4%) agreed with the item when compared with only 25.9% who disagreed. Fifteen (55.5%) learners agreed compared with 22.2% who disagreed. Judging from the overall percentage, one can conclude that male principals define their roles and those of educators less clearly than female principals do. The agreement responses of school governing bodies shows that some male principals define roles to learners and school governing bodies more clearly than female principals do. This may have occurred because parents do not play many roles in schools, and educators disagreed probably because they participate in most activities in schools and they are the ones who work with the principals all the time. As a result of this, they experience

less clearly defined roles. This data showing a majority of respondents is contrary to the view of Trim (1997: 41), who emphasises that the transformational leader must have a number of skills, one of which must be clarity. It appears that male principals do not possess the same level of clarity as female principals do.

More female educators led by female principals disagreed with the item than males, most of whom chose agreement response. It would appear that they talked from experience, as they were experiencing female leadership and perhaps because they were themselves females and supporting other females. More male than female learners agreed with the item. Gender characteristics might have affected the response. More male chairpersons of school governing bodies agreed with the item than females did. This could be attributed to the perception of the community members who do not want to be ruled by females and also do not want to listen to them. It may be difficult for community members to listen to female principals when defining roles.

**Item 7: Male principals plan, organise and coordinate school activities more efficiently than female principals do**

The overall figure in Table 4.4 indicates that the majority of respondents (118, or 39%) were in disagreement with the item, This response was almost the same as for 114 respondents (37.7%) who were neutral. However, most learners' presidents (14, or 51.8%) were in agreement with the item, and most chairpersons of school governing bodies (11, or 40.7%) were neutral. With regard to the total score, it seems that a reasonable number of male principals do not plan, organise and coordinate more efficiently than female principals, whereas the chairpersons of school governing bodies thought that the leader, irrespective of gender, is able to plan and organise school activities efficiently. But when this response was scrutinised it was discovered that

when respondents selected neutral they meant both, and their reason was that leadership depends on the personality of the individual. There were respondents who wrote their reasons next to the statement on the side of the closed questions.

Planning is the prime responsibility of the principal, either male or female, as a leader of a school. This opinion is confirmed by Keith and Girling (1991: 58), who assert that some of the natural traits associated with effective leadership are supervisory ability including planning, organising, leading and controlling the work of others. Planning plays an important role in any organisation. Good planning would enable the school to achieve its objectives (Russ, 1995: 5). Planning assists principals to work out what people are needed in what positions, doing what kind of work and when. It involves understanding members and the best skills profiles of people needed by the school. It entails working out the ways of obtaining them when they are needed. Planning also enables managers to identify the impact of change on people in order to develop strategies for restructuring an organisation on a continuous basis. Badenhorst *et al.* (1987: 19, 61) state that co-ordination of division of work is important in order to ensure that in an organisation comprising various divisions, these divisions do not differ completely and fail to be directed at the same overall objective. According to Badenhorst *et al.* (1987) a balance should always be maintained between division and co-ordination. It is therefore the task of the principal, irrespective of gender, to co-ordinate aspects of the school life such as subject instruction, administration and extramural activities in such a way that each assumes its rightful place and makes its particular contribution towards the achievement of the overall objective, which is effective teaching and learning. Piek (1991: 137) and Gorton (1984: 75), also cited by Piek, further endorse the idea of co-ordination. Piek (1991) says that it is important to relate tasks, resources and time schedules in such a way that they are supplementary

and complementary. Gorton (1984), as cited by Piek (1991) points out that a potential need for co-ordination exists whenever two or more people, activities, resources and time schedules either operate in conjunction with each other, or should operate in conjunction with each other.

Most male school governing bodies which work with female principals were neutral. It may be because with the female principals they have experienced the same planning and organisation skills as they had from males. Most female educators led by female principals disagreed with the item. This response could be affected by gender or it could be that female educators experienced more efficiency in planning under female leadership. All male learners' presidents (100%) led by female principals agreed with the item. It would seem that they experienced poor planning and organising skills in the female principals with whom they served. More male than female school governing bodies were neutral.

**Item 8: Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals**

According to data obtained the overall score indicates that 118 respondents (39%) disagreed with the item. This figure was almost the same as the 113 respondents (37%) who were neutral. However, 11 chairpersons of school governing bodies (40.7%) agreed with the item, and 9 learners' presidents (37%) who disagreed equals the number of presidents (9, or 37%) who agreed. Judging from the data indicated in Table 4.4, it appears that parents were not satisfied with the way male principals involved them, whereas educators and learners' presidents seem to be satisfied. A greater involvement in leadership on the part of male principals compared with female principals, as the overall response suggests, is contrary to the idea of Shakeshaft (1987:

8-18, 7) in Chapter 2. Shakeshaft (1987) states that women are more likely to use collaborative strategies, whereas males are more likely to use authoritarian responses. Collaboration and participation in leadership is very important. That is why it is important for a principal, either male or female, to decide and to set and plan goals collaboratively. A collaborative approach involves all staff and relevant stakeholders. Decisions related to learners' learning, resource management and staff management and development must be derived from premises founded on common, agreed principles. As a result, schools cannot 'go it alone'. Working together and sharing information and expertise is consistent with an open, democratic school service. Furthermore, real and systemic school change is costly and requires the collaboration of administrators, educators, learners and their parents. Alfonso *et al.* (1981: 101) confirm this view of the essentiality of collaboration. Alfonso *et al.* (1981) argue that members under participating leadership are more motivated, they have a higher sense of achievement and generally they hold more favourable attitudes towards their director. Therefore, when parents are not involved efficiently they will lack motivation and consequently will not support the formal (school) education of their children. Principals must bear in mind that formal education is the extension of informal (home) education. If their formal education is not based on their informal education, learners will not perform well.

Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (50%) led by female principals agreed with the item. It is probably because they were experiencing the female leadership and it was easy for them to compare that leadership with male leadership. Almost the same number of males and females agreed. Most female educators led by male principals disagreed with the item. This could be because of the male leadership they were experiencing. But it is acceptable that more male educators (44.4%)



disagreed compared with 38% females who disagreed. It appears that gender played a part in this response. Most male learners' presidents (66.7%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. The same situation as with the educators above applies here. This means that gender did play a part.

**Item 9: Male principals are more effective in terms of achieving school goals than female principals**

126 respondents (42%) disagreed with the item, whereas only 73 respondents (24%) agreed. However, 11 chairpersons of school governing bodies (40.7%) were neutral when compared with 6 respondents (22.2%) of those who disagreed. It would appear that the educators and learners who are always in schools did not see the male principals' better effectiveness in achieving the school goals compared with female principals. The perception of the chairpersons of school governing bodies shows that parents regard male and female principals to be equally effective in terms of achieving school goals. Parents who see things from a distance seem to see both female and male principals having the same performance as far as school goals are concerned. This response is surprising because of the community's view that men are more successful than women are. With regard to the total response, it is evident that a significant number of male principals are not more effective in terms of achieving school goals than female principals. It should be borne in mind that the school without achievements is doomed and it loses its reputation and image. This idea contradicts the view of the majority, as reflected in the responses to item 8 above, which depict male principals as more collaborative than female principals. If the principal is collaborative, it is unlikely for the school goals not to be achieved. However, the view supports the overall view in item 4 where it was felt that male principals do not set goals more collaboratively with

relevant stakeholders. It is, therefore, the role of the school principal to ensure that the group's set goals are achieved. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991: 143) confirm this task of the principal. These authors refer to the path goal theory, which is based on the expectancy theory of motivation. Motivation theory states that the leader has an effect on subordinates' goals and paths to achieving those goals.

Most female educators (55.1%) led by female principals disagreed with the item compared with male educators, most of whom seem to have agreed with the item. The same situation regarding gender applies here as in item 8 above, where gender did affect the response. Most female presidents (62.5%) led by female principals disagreed with the item compared with male presidents. It may be that they were talking from experience, as they were observing the female leadership under whom they were serving, or it might be a gender perception problem. Most male and female chairpersons of school governing bodies (50%) working with female principals were neutral. The balance between male and female parents indicates equal treatment and fairness. It could be due to their experience under female leadership that they noticed equal achievement of goals.

**Item 10: Who do you think is more visionary between a male and a female principal? Give reasons for your answer.**

Table 4.5 below reflects the summary of the first part of Item 10, where respondents, namely, educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents, were asked to choose the sex they think is more visionary in secondary school principalship.

**Table 4.5: School respondents' views about being visionary**

ITEM	RESPONDENTS	SEX	FEMALE	MALE	BOTH	NEITHER	UNSURE	TOTAL
<b>Who do you think is more visionary between a male and a female principal? Give reasons for your answer.</b>	<b>Educators</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>55</b> (34.8%)	<b>29</b> (18.4%)	<b>52</b> (32.9%)	<b>01</b> (0.6%)	<b>21</b> (13.3%)	<b>158</b> (100%)
		<b>M</b>	<b>11</b> (12.2%)	<b>40</b> (44.4%)	<b>27</b> (30%)	<b>01</b> (1.1%)	<b>11</b> (12.2%)	<b>090</b> (100%)
	<b>Learners' presidents</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>07</b> (70%)	<b>02</b> (20%)	<b>01</b> (10%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>010</b> (100%)
		<b>M</b>	<b>06</b> (35.3%)	<b>08</b> (8.9%)	<b>02</b> (2.2%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (5.9%)	<b>017</b> (100%)
	<b>School governing bodies</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>05</b> (71.4%)	<b>01</b> (14.3%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (14.3%)	<b>007</b> (100%)
		<b>M</b>	<b>08</b> (40%)	<b>05</b> (25%)	<b>06</b> (30%)	<b>00</b> (0%)	<b>01</b> (5%)	<b>20</b> (100%)
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>92</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>88</b>	<b>02</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>302</b>
<b>PERCENTAGES</b>			<b>30</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>01</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>100</b>

Table 4.5 indicates that 90 respondents (30%) regarded female principal to be more visionary than male principals. This was almost the same as 88 respondents (29%) who indicated that both male principals and female principals are visionary. Although the overall score favoured female principals, almost the same number of educators (79 respondents, or 31.9 %) selected both male and female principals when compared with 66 respondents (26.6%) who chose female principals. It should be evident from the overall response that some female principals are regarded as being more visionary than male principals. This concurs with the idea obtained from the majority respondents in response to closed or restricted items, who seem to regard male principals not to be better in administration, vision, goals and tasks.

Being visionary contributes a lot to effective leadership. The importance of being visionary is also emphasised by Day *et al.* (2000: 41-42), who stress that leadership is about being visionary – the direction in which one is going and sharing with others (but not dictating it to them). According to Day *et al* (2000), vision is about how one's

beliefs can be translated into actions. They further say that leadership is about communicating one's vision and indicating how things need to be done. So it is about personal qualities, communication vision and keeping on course, keeping overview, keeping the big picture. It is, therefore, important for a head, either female or male, to have vision, to see the whole game as female principals do. One has to be ahead of the rest and see the overall picture, otherwise one will not be able to manage effectively. Van der Westhuizen (1996: 147) also supports the importance of the skill of being more visionary by quoting Kahn (1982: 242). Kahn (1982) regards vision as of a critical component of planning change. Kahn (1982) argues that the school principal needs to be able to visualise the ultimate objective of change and have to convey the vision to the staff.

Most of female educators (34.7%) led by female principals opted for both. Most female learners' presidents (75%) led by female principals decided that female principals were more visionary. Most chairpersons of school governing bodies (100%) working with male principals considered that female principals were more visionary.

#### ***Responses to open-ended part of item 10 above***

In the open-ended part of item 10, respondents were asked to give reasons for the gender they selected as more visionary in principalship. This part of the item generated numerous responses from 302 respondents. All similar responses were grouped together to form one theme. The first five reasons for each group of respondents are listed in tables below.

The learners' presidents' reasons for regarding female principals as more visionary are summarised in Table 4.6 below only according to rank order of importance and highest score or percentage. It must be remembered that the respondents were asked to rank

them according to their importance, and the majority of learners opted for female principals.

**Table 4.6: Rank order of importance of learners' presidents' first five reasons for regarding female principals to be more visionary than male principals**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			Percentages
		F	M	Total	
Being more considerate in their visions because of their caring and loving nature.	1	4	5	9	33.3%
Ability to 'mother' the school because of being mothers.	2	2	2	4	14.8%
Being intellectually inclined and having more vivid imagination and a broader picture of things	3	4	0	4	14.8%
Ability to devote themselves and stick to the required task to achieve visions.	4	0	4	4	14.8%
Ability to consider learners in their visions and making it easy for learners to share with female principals.	5	0	3	3	7%

Table 4.6 above suggests that a woman's character of being more considerate was ranked number 1, and 9 learners' presidents (33.3%) responded in that way. This was followed by: women's ability to 'mother' the school, being intellectually inclined, and women's ability to devote themselves and to stick to the required task. These reasons were ranked numbers 2, 3 and 4 respectively and they scored 14.8%, 14.8% and 7%. Finally, the reason which was ranked number 5 was that women have the ability to consider learners' ideas in their visions and making it easy to share with them. That reason scored 7%. The principal who is considerate is friendly and it is easy for him or her to be approached by learners in order to share ideas. That sharing with learners is useful in the improvement of the school. Badernhorst *et al.* (1987: 19 and 61) endorse this view by quoting Lipham and Hoeh (1974: 295). Lipham and Hoeh (1974) argue that mutual understanding and education management should entail more and better interaction between the education leader and the learner. According to Lipham and Hoeh (1974) learners' leaders make an extremely important contribution to the

maintenance of order and discipline. The principal who lacks caring and loving will probably not be able to inculcate a sense of purpose or vision and an atmosphere of mutual and caring as required. Pellicer and Stevenson (1985: 3) also say that more than any other quality, schools need leaders who care for each other and who love the kids and appreciate the educators.

Furthermore, it is in schools that the culture of teaching and learning must be created. If the principal is not task-oriented this is unlikely to occur. From the researcher's teaching experience learners like a person who is dedicated to his or her work, yet responsible. This leads to learners' commitment and respect of the educator concerned.

Because of the qualities of the female principals as indicated above, it is evident that it becomes easy for the learners to share with them and learners' needs be considered where females are in a leadership position.

Only the first five reasons given by the chairpersons of school governing bodies regarding female principals (on which the majority school governing bodies responded) as more visionary appear in the table below. Those reasons are ranked according to their order of importance, as Table 4.7 below reflects.

**Table 4.7: Rank order and scores of reasons for school governing bodies for regarding female principals as more visionary than male principals.**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			Percentages
		F	M	Total	
Being more considerate in their visions	1	3	1	4	15%
Being tolerant and patient.	2				
Ability to put more effort on work to attain their goals.	3	0	4	4	15%
Being more able to envision things because of women's belief that success depends on having a vision	4	0	3	3	11.1%
Possession of better leadership ability.	5	0	3	3	11.1%

Table 4.7 indicates a significant number of learners, that is, 4, or 15%, put women's character of being more considerate and more able to put more effort on attainment of goals as numbers 1 and 2. These reasons tally with two reasons suggested by learners above. The rank orders of these reasons are similar in the two groups. Rank numbers 2, 3 4 and 5 followed. The reasons given for those numbers were women's ability to envision things, possession of better leadership ability and their being more capable of sharing views. The fifth reason is similar to the learners'. Therefore, this reason endorsed learners' view about female qualities, showing her to be more visionary. Most of the reasons mentioned here were well covered in the interpretation of learners' view and some of the items among items 1 to 9 of this section. If the principal is good in her leadership, it means that she will be able to influence her followers, that is, the school members. If the learners are allowed to voice their concern, the school will be able to produce free, assertive and critical thinking learners who will fit easily into their society. That is, a society which is full of developmental needs.

The summary of the first five educators' reasons for regarding both female and male principals as equally visionary is reflected in the rank order Table 4.8 below. It must be

remembered that the majority of educators regarded both genders to be equally visionary, and their number of reasons were listed above in this section.

**Table 4.8: Rank order of educators' reasons for perceiving both female and male principals to be equally visionary**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Having better visions because God created women like that and their tendency to have forward and wider imaginations.	1	12	2	14	5.6%
Being more considerate	2	09	4	13	5.2%
Being better natural leaders, administrators and managers as they manage their homes effectively.	3	12	0	12	4.8%
Being better initiators, innovators and planners.	4	09	2	11	4.4%
More capability and ability of foreseeing problematic areas and having better sense of preparation for the future.	5	10	1	11	4.4%

Regarding items in the rank order Table 4.8 above, 14 educators (5.6%) regarded the natural quality of female principals to have better vision to be the most important reason. This reason appeared first in the rank order. The character of women as being more considerate scored 5.2% and was ranked number 2. These two reasons given by educators tie up with the reasons mentioned by both learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies above. This leads to the strengthening of the opinion, and the data becomes more truthful and more acceptable. These reasons were adequately dealt with in items above, especially in the first part of item 10 and in the learners' section of this part.

The three reasons finally mentioned were that female principals are natural better leaders; better initiators, innovators and planners; that they were capable and able to foresee problematic areas, and have better sense of preparation for the future. These reasons were ranked numbers 3, 4 and 5 respectively. With regard to reason number four, Fullan (1991: 62) strongly supports this quality of a female principal. Fullan (1991) is of the view that a combination of strong advocacy need, active initiative and a



clear mode for proceeding characterised the more successful start-ups. It is essential for principals to introduce new programmes in their schools, but others should stimulate the ability to initiate. This involvement in taking initiative has the potential to raise morale and enthusiasm, opening the door to experimentation and increasing a sense of efficacy.

The essentiality of the skill of anticipation ranked number 5 is confirmed by van der Westhuizen (1996: 147). Van der Westhuizen (1996) maintains that the principal must be able to anticipate reactions and behaviour of those members of the school community who will be affected by the changes. Therefore, the principal who senses a problem before it occurs will be able to prevent it or plan the strategies of dealing with it in advance.

#### **4.2.3 Section C: Evaluation of relationship, communication and team-building**

This section analyses and interprets information collected from educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents, in response to the questionnaire items on relationships, communication and team building.

##### **(a) Responses to closed-ended questions**

Table 4.4 consists of questions 1 to 9, which required the respondents, that is, educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents, to choose their options in the structures with regard to relationships, communication and team building. The table also presents the summary of the responses to these questions on the second theme, as indicated above.

**Table 4.9: School respondents' views about relationships, communication and team building**

ITEM	RESPONDENTS	GENDER	SA	A	N	D	SD	NR	TOTAL
Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.	Educators	Females	20 (13%)	51 (32%)	46 (29%)	20 (13%)	20 (13%)	01 (1%)	158 (100%)
		Males	06 (6.7%)	18 (20%)	37 (41.1)	23 (25.6)	06 (6.7%)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	06 (35%)	05 (29%)	04 (24%)	00 (0%)	02 (12%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	02 (29%)	04 (57%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	02 (10%)	08 (40%)	06 (30%)	04 (20%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			37	91	97	48	28	01	302
Percentages			12%	30%	32%	16%	9%	0.3%	100%
Female principals facilitate interpersonal relationships better than male principals	Educators	Females	21 (13%)	52 (33%)	52 (33%)	22 (14%)	11 (7%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	21 (23.3)	32 (35.6)	26 (28.9)	07 (7.8%)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	02 (20%)	02 (20%)	03 (30%)	03 (30%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	02 (11.8)	09 (52.9)	02 (11.8)	03 (17.6)	01 (5.9%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	02 (29%)	04 (57%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	03 (15%)	10 (50%)	03 (15%)	04 (20%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			34	98	93	58	19	00	302
Percentages			11%	33%	31%	19%	6%	0%	100%
Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals do.	Educators	Females	03 (2%)	04 (3%)	59 (37%)	54 (34%)	38 (24%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	16 (17.8)	29 (32.2)	26 (28.9)	14 (15.6)	01 (1.1)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	03 (30%)	06 (60%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	01 (6%)	01 (6%)	06 (35%)	05 (29%)	04 (24%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	02 (14.3)	01 (14.3)	03 (42.8)	01 (14.3)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	03 (15%)	07 (35%)	09 (45%)	01 (5%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)

Total			08	26	103	100	64	01	302
Percentages			3%	9%	34%	33%	21%	0.3%	100%
There seems to be more friendly atmosphere among educators who serve under female principals than among those supervised by male principal	Educators	Females	15 (9.4%)	39 (24.6)	61 (38.6)	26 (16.4)	17 (11%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	03 (3.3%)	10 (11.1)	41 (45.6)	28 (31.1)	08 (8.9%)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	04 (40%)	04 (40%)	01 (10%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	04 (23.5)	04 (23.5)	05 (29.4)	02 (11.8)	02 (11.8)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies	Females	01 (14%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	04 (20%)	09 (45%)	04 (20%)	03 (15%)	00 (5%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			27	69	118	60	28	00	302
Percentages			9%	23%	39%	20%	9%	0%	100%
The people supervised by female principals show more teamwork compared with those supervised by male principals.	Educators	Females	13 (8.2%)	38 (24%)	67 (42.4)	25 (16%)	15 (9.4%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	03 (3.3%)	09 (10%)	37 (41.1)	34 (37.8)	07 (7.8%)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	04 (40%)	03 (30%)	02 (20%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	05 (29%)	03 (18%)	06 (35%)	01 (6%)	02 (12%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	03 (43%)	04 (57%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	01 (5%)	06 (30%)	09 (45%)	04 (20%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			22	63	126	66	25	00	302
Percentages			7%	21%	42%	22%	8%	0%	100%
Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals do.	Educators	Females	04 (3%)	06 (4%)	67 (42%)	51 (32%)	30 (19%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	28 (31.1)	26 (28.9)	22 (24.4)	10 (11.1)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	4 (40%)	02 (20%)	03 (30%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	02 (11.8)	04 (23.5)	06 (35.2)	04 (23.5)	01 (5.9%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	02 (14.3)	01 (14.3)	03 (42.8)	01 (14.3)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	02 (10%)	07 (35%)	04 (20%)	07 (35%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			12	48	108	89	45	00	302

Percentages			4%	16%	36%	29%	15%	0%	100%
Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals	Educators	Females	15 (9.4%)	25 (15.8)	79 (50%)	28 (17.7)	11 (6.9%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	10 (11.1)	39 (43.3)	28 (31.1)	09 (10%)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	05 (29%)	07 (41%)	03 (18%)	01 (6%)	01 (6%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	06 (85.7)	01 (14.3)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	03 (15%)	09 (45%0	06 (30%)	02 (10%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			28	56	136	61	21	00	302
Percentages			9%	19%	45%	20%	7%	0%	100%
Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals	Educators	Females	04 (2.5%)	11 (6.9%)	64 (40.5)	45 (28.4)	34 (21.5)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	02 (2.2%)	14 (15.6)	39 (43.3)	25 (27.8)	10 (11.1)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	04 (40%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	02 (11.8)	07 (41.2)	04 (23.5)	04 (23.5)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14.3)	01 (14.3)	04 (57%)	01 (14.3)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	0 (0%)	07 (35%)	07 (35%)	06 (30%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	20 (100%)
Total			06	35	119	89	53	00	302
Percentages			2%	12%	39%	29%	18%	0%	100%
Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals do.	Educators	Females	14 (8.8%)	38 (24%)	65 (41.1)	27 (17%)	14 (8.9%)	00 (0%)	158 (100%)
		Males	03 (3.3%)	12 (13.3)	38 (42.2)	27 (30%)	10 (11.1)	00 (0%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	03 (30%)	04 (40%)	02 (20%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	03 (18%)	05 (29%)	04 (23%)	02 (12%)	03 (18%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies	Females	01 (14%)	02 (29%)	04 (57%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	02 (10%)	07 (35%)	08 (40%)	03 (15%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
Total			23	65	122	63	29	00	302
Percentages			8%	21%	40%	21%	10%	0%	100%

Responses in Table 4.9 in this section indicate that the majority of the respondents were in agreement that female principals are better than male principals in the facilitation of relationships, communication and team-building. The overview of responses to section C follows below:

**Item 1: Female principals maintain an open and warm relationship with staff than male principals**

The majority of the respondents (128, or 42%) agreed with the item. Only 76 (25%) disagreed with the item. All the three groups, namely, learners, school governing bodies and educators had the same perception. This data of the majority suggests that there are female principals in secondary schools who maintain an open and warm relationship with staff better than male principals.

Maintenance of warm relationships with staff is one of the principal's important roles. Van der Westhuizen (1996: 118) maintains that the more open the climate in the school, the greater the work satisfaction experienced. He also emphasises this function on the part of the personnel. According to van der Westhuizen (1996), this relationship is so strong that the organisational climate can be seen as a causal factor in work satisfaction. Therefore, female principals are playing a pivotal role when they are able to enhance and maintain open relationships, especially with the staff. It is healthy and stress free to work where there is warmth, openness and friendliness. In order to ensure that colleagues will indeed approve a proposal, extensive consultation known as 'nemawash' may be needed (Smith and Peterson, 1988: 149). The leader should be able to inculcate a sense of group cohesiveness, pride in the group and an individual's membership of it and mutual help (Brymann, 1986: 6-7). Barth (1980: 71) also confirms the idea of maintenance of good relationships. Barth says that the supervisory

process mars the desire to maintain a relationship that combines social comfort with growth. Furthermore, Barth (1980) claims that supervisors spend a great deal of time together and that they want that time to be pleasant and free of conflict.

Most female educators (45%) led by male principals agreed with the item, yet most male educators were neutral. This implies that gender did not have an impact on these responses because of the neutral stand of most males' supporting neither women nor men. This response also does not disqualify the agreement response. Most male learners' presidents (81.9%) led by male principals agreed that more female principals maintain an open and warm relationship with staff than male principals. It is encouraging to note that there is almost a balance between male and female learners who agreed with the item. It seems as though gender did not play a part. Most female school governing bodies (100%) led by male principals agreed with the item. Despite the fact that more female school governing agreed with the item, 50% of male school governing bodies agreed. This is just a satisfactory number for the endorsement of the agreement response.

**Item 2: Female principals facilitate interpersonal relationships better than male principals do.**

Table 4.9 above shows that 132 respondents (44%) agreed with the item, which is the majority of the overall respondents. Only 77 (25%) disagreed with the item. This data shows that some female principals in certain secondary schools are better facilitators of interpersonal relationships than male principals and that learners and parents were also better satisfied with the way female principals facilitate interpersonal relationships than male principals.

Leadership effectiveness is also shown by the ability to facilitate interpersonal relationships. The effective performance of this function by some female principals is appreciated. The importance of facilitation of interpersonal relationships is indicated by van der Westhuizen (1996: 235) when he argues that the school principal should seek a balance between good interpersonal relationships with staff, learners and the parent community on one hand and getting things done on the other. He or she should encourage the whole school community (educators, learners and parents) to participate in the management of the school. Van der Westhuizen (1996) emphasises that for the principal to be successful in his or her facilitation of interpersonal relationships, he or she should encourage teamwork among educators so that they take part in the day-to-day decisions made in their work-related problems and facilitate opportunities for staff training and professional development. Thus facilitation of relationships is an indication that female principals have developed appropriate competencies.

More female educators agreed with the item than male educators. Most male educators were neutral and disagreed with the item. One cannot really say the answer was influenced by gender because of the near balance in the neutral and disagreement response. Most male learners' presidents (72.7%) led by male principals agreed with the item. It is amazing to realise that more male learners than female learners agreed with the item. It almost seems that male learners regard female principals as mothers to whom they can cry for help. As a result it makes it easy for male learners to interact with female principals. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (100%) led by male principals agreed with the statement. Although more females than male school governing bodies responded positively, 65% of males also agreed with the item.

**Item 3: Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals**

Judging by the information in Table 4.9, it is evident that the majority of respondents (164, or 54%) disagreed with the item compared with the very small number, that is, 34, or 11.3% who agreed. There seems to be no difference in the perceptions among educators, school governing bodies' chairpersons and learners' presidents. This implies that educators, learners and school governing bodies did not accept that female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals do. This leads one to conclude that female principals have more respect for educators' ideas than male principals do.

Leaders must know that educators want to be heard and have their ideas considered in management. Both female and male principals must bear that in mind. This point is supported by Sayles (1987: 159), who states that participation needs to be viewed not as a technique for improving feelings, but as a legitimate means of uncovering new information and problems. According to Sayles (1987), subordinates are the closest to the work situation. Managers can see, first-hand and close up, elements that even experienced managers may ignore or not be aware of. Bush (1986: 55) further supports the idea of staff participation in leadership. Bush (1986) states that the participation of teaching staff is important because they usually have the responsibility of implementing changes in policy. All leaders must therefore acquire or develop the skill of consideration, because Robbins (1991: 368) describes consideration as the extent to which a person is likely to have job relationships that are characterised by mutual trust, respect for subordinates' ideas and regard for their feelings.



Most female educators (61.3%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. Despite the fact that more females than male educators disagreed with the item, the majority of male educators opted for the neutral option; only a few agreed. The results therefore reflect disagreement. Most female school governing bodies (66.7%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. Almost the same number of male and female school governing bodies disagreed, however. Almost all female learners disagreed with the item. This represented a greater proportion than males. More than 50% of males also disagreed, however, which indicated honesty, fairness and confirmation of the disagreement response, especially as there were only two males who agreed. The rest opted for a neutral response.

**Item 4: There seems to be a more friendly atmosphere among educators who serve with female principals than among those supervised by male principals**

Judging by the data in table 4.9 it would seem that most respondents (118, or 39%) opted for neutral, whereas 96, or 31.8%, agreed and 88, or 29.1%, disagreed with the suggestion that there seems to be a friendlier atmosphere among educators who serve with female principals than among those supervised by male principals. According to the data, the majority of respondents saw no difference between a female principal and a male principal as far as maintaining a friendly atmosphere among educators is concerned. However, most learners' presidents (12, or 44.4%) agreed with the item, compared with 9 (33.3%) who were neutral, and most chairpersons of school governing bodies (17, or 63%) agreed, compared with 25.9% who were neutral. This data regarding learners and school governing bodies indicates that in some schools learners and school governing bodies see female principals as more capable of creating a

friendly atmosphere among educators than male principals. The response of the educators is more relevant, however, because the question concerns them.

It is the duty of a principal, either male or female, to create a friendly atmosphere among educators in schools. A friendly atmosphere represents an environment which is conducive to effective teaching and learning. It also enhances cooperation and team spirit. Furthermore, it reduces the stress that educators face in their teaching, because of the support educators get from one another. Educators are more likely to feel at home and comfortable in their working environment.

Most male educators (47.3%) led by male principals were neutral. It is interesting to note that more males than female principals opted for neutral: one would expect males to support male principals. These results suggest fairness. Most male learners' presidents (50%) led by female principals agreed with the item, which was the same as female learners' presidents (50%) led by male principals. It is interesting that there is a balance in the agreement response between males and females. One can deduce from that that the response is not affected by gender bias, especially as most male learners led by females and most female learners led by males agreed. They responded according to what they were experiencing from their leaders. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (100%) led by male principals agreed with the item, yet more male school governing bodies than females agreed with the item. This would be surprising to those who believe that parents perceive males to be better leaders than females, due to societal stereotypes.

**Item 5: The people supervised by female principals show more teamwork  
compared with those supervised by male principals**

Table 4.9 indicates that the majority of respondents (126, or 42%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the item, while 85 (28%), agreed. Most of learners' presidents (12, or 44.4%) agreed with the item and 33.3% were neutral, however. It appears that learners' presidents enjoy more teamwork in schools managed by female principals than in those managed by male principals do, whereas parents and educators feel that there is a balance, that is, people supervised by both male and female principals experience teamwork.

Teamwork is very important in schools because it helps to improve school performance. All school leaders, irrespective of gender, should have the capacity to build teams. This data is supported by Dunn and Dunn (1983: 187), who argue that a cohesive team approach at the building level is necessary if the high school is to be evaluated fairly. Pellicer and Nemeth (1985: 33) also confirm the data, suggesting that team management is an effective method for administering today's complex educational institutions. It is accepted that a school is a complex organisation, and a principal working alone could not cope with all the complexities of a school. Working as part of a team lightens the principal's load and decreases stress.

Most male educators (41/ 45.6%) disagreed with the item. There is almost an even split between male and female educators who were neutral, which supports the results, and indicates that gender is not a factor. Most learners' presidents (50%) led by female principals agreed with the item, which is the same as 50% of female learners' presidents led by male principals who agreed. The opinions of those learners' presidents who agreed may be based on what they experience in their individual

schools. Interestingly enough, more males than females agreed with the item, indicating truthfulness and fairness. Most female school governing bodies (66.7%) led by female principals were neutral. Despite the fact that more females than males were neutral, most of the rest of males agreed with the statement. This is also interesting and unexpected from parents. Thus this further endorses the response above.

**Item 6: Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals do**

The data in table 4.9 indicates that the majority of the respondents (134, or 44%) disagreed with the item, while only 60 (20%), agreed that female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals do. The learners' disagreement response (37%) was the same as the neutral response, and the school governing bodies disagreement response (40.7%) was the same as the agreement response. Looking at the school governing bodies' response, it seems the number of female principals who are more accountable is equal to those who are less accountable. The overall response suggests that female principals demonstrate more accountability than male principals do. This overall data reveals that female principals observe one of the functions of the leader: to be accountable for whatever occurs in the school. This quality of accountability is focussed on by Piek (1991: 137), who stresses that though school managers can delegate authority and responsibility, they cannot delegate their own accountability. According to Piek (1991), school managers are accountable for everything that occurs under supervision. This means that if something goes wrong in the school, people both within and outside of the school will look to the principal in terms of accountability. The principal must therefore produce positive and satisfactory results; if not, school members will lose trust and confidence in him or her.

Most female educators (60.2%) disagreed with the item. This might be due to their female leadership experience. Although more female than male educators disagreed with the statement in this item, the number of males who disagreed is the same as the number of males who agreed. This does not disqualify the disagreement response, therefore. More females than male learners disagreed with the item. However, the disagreement response is not affected, because the equal figure of neutral and agreement is shown in the rest of the males' responses. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (66.7%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. It could also be due to their experience of female leadership. This response seems to disqualify the response of the majority of the male school governing bodies, who showed agreement with the item. These males' responses could be due either to their lack of female principal leadership or to the society-based male perception of women leaders.

**Item 7: Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals do**

In Table 4.9 the overall figure indicates that the majority of the respondents (136, or 45%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the item, whereas 84 (27.8%), agreed. However, the majority of learners' presidents (66.6%) agreed with the item compared with 6 (22.2%) who were neutral, and chairpersons of school governing bodies' neutral response (12, or 44.4%) was equal to the agreement response (12, or 44.4%). According to the learners, female principals have better communications skills than male principals do. The responses of the majority of the overall respondents (that is, learners, school governing bodies and educators) imply that both male and female principals communicate ideas effectively. Being able to communicate ideas should to

all relevant stakeholders be a characteristic of a principal. This ability prevents conflicts, which can flourish because of poorly communicated ideas.

Principals must bear in mind that organisations rely on communication, without which a school cannot flourish and prosper. For communication to be effective it must clear. It is easy for members of the school community to implement the principals' ideas if they are clearly communicated and comprehensible. If principals lack this skill as indicated by learners, they must work on it because without this skill educators can lack direction. Green and Manera (1995: 13) support this argument, stressing that open communication is necessary when working with others. Badenhorst *et al.* (1987: 43) further confirm this idea of effective communication of ideas. Badenhorst *et al.* (1987) state that without the ability to communicate, modern society, and any other society for that matter, as well as any organisation that forms part of it, would not be possible, because communication enables an organisation to work towards its goals. According to Badenhorst *et al.* communication plays an important part in a school. It is therefore important for a principal to master various means of communicating his or her ideas to school members and learns to listen well.

Most female educators (63.3%) led by female principals were neutral. Almost the same number of males and females were neutral, which further qualifies the overall neutral response. It is impressive that more males than females agreed with the item. This shows truthfulness and honesty and that the response was not gender determined. Most male learners' presidents (72.8%) led by male principals agreed with the item. This shows fairness and honesty in the males' responses. All female chairpersons of school governing bodies (100%) led by female principals were neutral. Although more female school governing bodies were neutral than male governing bodies were, most male

school governing bodies agreed with the item. This response does not affect the overall neutral response, therefore. However, this response can be surprising to people of the 'old school' of thought who still believe that parents, especially males, do not listen to females' ideas, which seems not to be the case in this response.

**Item 8: Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals do.**

One hundred and forty two, or 47%, of the total respondents disagreed with the item. Only 41 (14%) agreed with the item. The majority of educators, learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies seem to have the same opinion. The responses imply that female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities more efficiently than male principals do. This item was adequately dealt with in item 7 in section B above, where the importance of co-ordination is underscored.

Most female educators led by female principals disagreed with the item. Although more females than males disagreed, most of the rest of males were neutral. This further endorses the overall disagreement response. One hundred percent of female learners' presidents led by male principals disagreed with the item. The same situation as applied to educators above applies here, that is, that most of the rest of the males were neutral. Most school governing bodies (83.3%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. Although more females than male school governing bodies disagreed with the item, the neutral response of the rest of the males was exactly the same as the agreement response. This does not disqualify the overall disagreement value.

**Item 9: Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals do**

One hundred and twenty two (44%) of the total respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the item compared with 31% who disagreed and 29% who agreed. The majority of learners' presidents (11, or 40.7%) disagreed with the item, however, compared with 7, or 26%, who were neutral. The neutral response (12, or 44.4%) of chairpersons of school governing bodies was similar to the agreement response. Overall, the responses suggest that both male and female principals share decision-making authority effectively, whereas the learners' response shows that female principals do not share decision-making authority with learners better than male principals do. According to the school governing bodies' response, it would seem that there are those female principals who are better at sharing decisions, while there are those who share decision authority with them equally as effectively as male principals do. This indicates that parents seemed to have no problem with the way female principals share decisions with them.

Those principals who do not share decision-making must be aware that the effective leader, that is, male or female, is the one who is able to share decision making with all stakeholders, including parents. This idea of the sharing of decision-making is emphasised by Alfonso *et al.* (1981: 01) who say that members under participating leadership are more motivated, they have a higher sense of achievement and generally hold more favourable attitudes towards their director. Barry and Tye (1972 : 93-94) also support the idea of effective sharing of decision-making. Barry and Tye (1972) argue that in addition to staff consultation, it might sometimes be appropriate to consult the learners in whose ultimate interest all major changes should be planned.



Most male educators (43.6%) led by male principals were neutral. Almost the same number of female and male educators were neutral, which indicates that the neutral response is acceptable by both genders. Most female learners' presidents (62.5%) led by female principals disagreed, while most male learners' presidents (8, or 47%) agreed with the item. It is amazing that more females than males disagreed, while most male learners agreed. Either gender did not play a part here, or most of the female learners who disagreed are led by females. It is possible that those female principals with whom they serve do not involve them, and therefore they were talking from experience. The disagreement response of learners can be true because in most schools that the researcher is familiar with learners are not yet involved in the school's decisions. Only parents' meetings and staff meetings are organised in most schools, to which learners are usually not invited. This is observable in schools led by both males and females, however. One hundred percent of female chairpersons of school governing bodies led by male principals were neutral.

**Item 10: Who do you think promotes and establishes positive working relationships with school members, including the community in which the school exists, between female principals and male principals?**  
**Explain.**

In this item respondents were asked to select between male and female principals who they thought promoted positive relationships with school members, including the community in which the school exists. Respondents had to give an explanation of their responses as well. Table 4.10 gives the summary of the first part of the question.

**Table 4.10 School respondents views about relationships**

ITEM	RESPONDENTS	SEX	FEMALE	MALE	BOTH	NEITHER	UNSURE	TOTAL
Who do you think promotes and establishes positive working relationships with school members, including the community in which the school exists, between female principal and male principal? Explain.	Educators	F	51 (32.3%)	18 (11.4%)	63 (39.9%)	02 (1.3%)	24 (15.2%)	158 (100%)
		M	05 (5.6%)	26 (28.9%)	31 (34.4%)	02 (2.2%)	26 (28.9%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	F	07 (70%)	00 (0%)	03 (30%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		M	06 (35.3%)	10 (58.8%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	F	02 (28.6%)	00 (0%)	04 (57.1%)	00 (0%)	01 (14.3%)	007 (100%)
		M	08 (40%0	03 (15%)	09 (45%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
TOTAL			79	57	110	52	04	302
PERCENTAGES			26.2	18.9	36.4	17.2	1.3	100

Table 4.10 indicates that the majority of the total respondents (110, or 36.4%) were of the opinion that both male and female principals promote productive working relationships with school members, including the community in which the school exists. Most learners' presidents (13, or 48.1%) selected the female principals, however. This implies that some female principals in some schools do promote and establish positive working relationships with learners compared with male principals. The perception of learners' presidents is supported by Kabacoff and Peters (1998: 2-4, 6) in Chapter 2 of this study, who state that women are generally seen as using a more friendly approach to accomplish objectives, whereas men exhibit more strategic behaviours and are more restrained and objective. The learners' view was also endorsed by the responses on closed-ended items 1-9 in this section, where most of the responses were for a female principal's leadership.

With regard to the establishment of interpersonal relationships, the responses of the majority suggest that some of both male and female principals promote and establish

positive working relationships with school members. This idea of relationships is very important in the school situation. When there is a positive working relationship between the school members it is easy for them to build teams. Working in unity lightens the workload and enhances the development of common goals and common interests, which is useful if the goals are to be achievable and satisfies everyone in the institution. Both males and females should develop this relationship, which goes together with team-building skills, which might then help to develop competencies. Building positive and practical links among members of the school community is an important step in promoting change. Barth (1980: 176) endorses this argument with regard to the importance of promoting relationships by principals. Barth (1980) maintains that to fulfil responsibilities and to maintain the quality of education successfully a principal must establish and maintain close personal relationships with learners, parents, educators and the central office. According to Barth (1980), while a principal must establish and maintain close human relationships to gain the authority and respect necessary to fulfil responsibilities harmoniously, important institutional conditions required for the formation of those close relationships must be present. If leaders, either male or female, as the data shows, are able to do that, schools will be able to develop and improve their performance.

The above response is further confirmed by Immegart and Pilecki (1973: 67), who emphasise that the administrator must maximise the school's relationship with its environment in order to obtain the necessary resources for change and the dynamic evolution of the school as a functional system. This opinion is supported by van der Westhuizen (1996: 25), who says that the school has to contribute to the intellectual development of the child within the community in which teaching takes place. In this way the school contributes towards equipping the child for his or her career. According

to van der Westhuizen (1996), the task of the principal as a bearer of authority is to regulate the mode of living together within the school by means of specific rules and regulations (for example, school policy and subject policy). Accordingly, van der Westhuizen (1996) claims that the school has its own structurally communal binding and authority structure. According to van der Westhuizen (1996), the school is a societal relationship. The quality of the working life is therefore determined by how an organisation's managers fulfil certain minimum conditions necessary for pleasant working. School principals, males or females, must bear it in mind that the school climate is a component that determines the quality of working life in education. In the light of this, it must be stated that if educators have a negative experience of an organisational climate they might also question the quality of their working life.

Most female educators (40%) led by male principals were neutral, probably based on their current experiences. They saw no difference between the male principals who were leading and the female principals as far as the promotion of a productive working relationship is concerned. The reasons they gave in the next section clarify why they chose a neutral stance. Most female learners' presidents (6, or 75%) led by female principals selected females. It might be because they were female and they enjoy the atmosphere which exists under female principals. The next section clarifies why female principals were chosen. Most male and female chairpersons of school governing bodies (66.7%) led by female principals and male principals selected both.

#### ***Responses to open-ended part of item 10 above***

In this part the respondents were required to give an explanation of their choice of the gender that they felt promotes a positive working relationship with school members. This item generated 302 responses. The responses of each group of respondents were synthesised into themes. These responses did not correspond with the number of

respondents because each respondent had to give as many reasons as he or she could. The first five reasons that emerged from each group are listed in rank order according to their importance in the tables below.

**Table 4.11: Rank order of learners' presidents' explanations for perceiving female principals as better in establishing positive working relationships than male principals.**

Explanation	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Female principals adopt the attitude of being mothers at homes and are involved in learners' life, which includes community members and other school members.	1	2	1	3	11%
Males are cold and keep to themselves compared with females who are open and approachable. Besides being fearless to learners, it is easy for a female to connect with community counsellors and encourage parents to form school-governing bodies because of their friendship and friendship is promoted among all stakeholders.	2	1	2	3	11%
Better communication skills and the humbleness which makes easy for female principals to work with all type of people.	3	1	1	2	07%
Female principals' tender heartedness and sympathy with learners, especially orphans.	4	1	0	1	3.7%
Female principals are easily heard and understood by the community in the discussion of school matters because of her soft, low voice and being violence free.	5	1	0	1	3.7%

Table 4.11 shows that the most important reasons for selecting female principals as the ones who are better than male principals in the establishment of relationship are the explanations ranked numbers 1 and 2, that is:

- Female principals adopt the attitude of being mothers at home and are involved in learners' life, which includes the community and other school members.
- Females are more open and approachable than males. As a result female principals can even be easily approached by community counsellors.

The explanations ranked 3, 4 and 5 indicate that females

- have better communication skills.

- are more tender hearted and sympathetic.
- have softer voices than males.

That means that females can be heard and understood easily. 7%, 3.7% and 3.7% of learners gave these explanations. All the above items were dealt with adequately in item 10 of section B and item 7 of this section in this chapter, where the skills of consideration and communication are emphasised and discussed.

The responses from school governing bodies in relation to both females and males in terms of their ability to promote positive working relationships are summarised in Table 4.12 below.

**Table 4.12: Rank order of school governing bodies' chairpersons' explanation for perceiving both male and female principals to be able to promote and establish positive working relationships.**

Explanation	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
Connection with people is not easy for both, but it depends on one's character, outlook, interpersonal skills, capacity building.	1	1	6	7	25.9%
Some male and female principals have positive attitudes towards people while others have negative attitudes. This leads to a failure to cope with working relationship.	2	0	2	2	07%
Trust, respect and comradeship need to be in place for both female and male principals.	3	1	0	1	3.7%
The principals, females or males have ability to delegate and communication skills.	4	0	1	1	3.7%
One has to look at both genders objectively. A decision can be made from a holistic point of view after careful examination of both genders.	5	1	0	1	3.7%

It would seem that for school governing bodies, connection with people is not easy for both male and female principals, and it was ranked as number 1. 25.9% of school governing bodies responded in this way. The response that ranked next indicates that some female and male principals have positive relationships with people while others fail; both have to engender trust, respect and comradeship; both have to have the ability to communicate and delegate; and both gender must be seen objectively. These

explanations were ranked 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively, and they scored 7%, 3.7%, 3.7% and 3.7% respectively. All these items were dealt with in detail in sections B and in this section above. In these sections the importance of communication, delegation and relationship skills were emphasised.

The summary of educators' explanations with regard to their perceptions that both female and male principals are equally effective in establishing positive relationships is reflected in rank order in Table 4.13 below. It should be remembered that the majority of educators perceived both female and male principals to be equally effective. Only the first five explanations appear in the table below.

**Table 4.13: Rank order of educators' explanation for selecting both female and male principals to be equally effective in promoting positive relationships**

Explanation	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Establishment of positive working relationships is not gender based but it depends on the person's personality or character.	1	40	11	51	20.6%
Interpersonal skills enable principals, females or males, to have cooperative relationships.	2	02	04	06	2.4%
The educators' experience shows that both can have excellent relationships within and outside the school.	3	00	05	05	2%
Promotion of positive working relationships depends on the principals' management, psychological capability and brains and does not depend on gender.	4	02	00	02	0.8%
Establishment of positive relationships depends on one's approach towards staff and the community.	5	00	01	01	0.4%

The explanations in the above table indicate, in rank order, that establishment of positive relationships depends on:

- the principal's person's character,
- the principal's interpersonal skills,
- the subordinates' experience of both genders' leadership,
- the principal's management capability and

- the principal's approach towards staff and the community.

Most explanations given above were dealt with in section B, Item 10, and in this section in Item 2 (interpersonal skills). They will also be dealt with in section F below.

#### **4.2.4 Section D: Evaluation of change management, empowerment (staff development) and motivation**

Analysis and interpretation of data gathered from educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents appear in this section in response to the questionnaire items which evaluated male principals' effectiveness on the management of change, staff development and motivation in comparison with female principals.

##### **(a) Responses to closed questions**

Responses to a number of closed questions (that is, questions 1 to 9) in this section are summarised in Table 4.14 below.

**Table 4.14: School respondents view about change management, empowerment and motivation**

ITEMS	RESPONDENTS	GENDER	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
Male principals initiate fewer implementable ideas than female principals.	Educators	Female	04 (2.5%)	22 (13.9)	78 (49.3)	38 (24%)	16 (10.1)	158 (100%)
		Male	03 (3.3%)	11 (12.2)	36 (40%)	28 (31.1)	12 (13.3)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	03 (30%)	02 (20%)	03 (30%)	02 (20%)	010 (100%)
		Male	01 (5.9%)	02 (11.8)	04 (23.5)	07 (41.2)	03 (17.6)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	02 (29%)	04 (57%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	00	05	12	02	01	020
Total			08	45	136	79	34	302
Percentages			3%	15%	45%	26%	11%	100%



Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than female principals.	Educators	Female	03 (1.8%)	19 (12%)	73 (46.2)	43 (27.2)	20 (12.6)	158 (100%)
		Male	08 (8.9%)	20 (22.2)	40 (44.4)	15 (16.7)	07 (7.8%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	07 (70%)	02 (20%)	010 (100%)
		Male	01 (6%)	08 (47%)	07 (41%)	01 (6%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	01 (14%)	04 (57%)	02 (29%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	01 (5%)	08 (40%)	09 (45%)	01 (5%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			13	56	134	69	30	302
Percentages			4%	19%	44%	23%	10%	100%
Male principals involve parents and the community during strategic planning of the school more often than female principals	Educators	Female	02 (1.2%)	14 (8.8%)	75 (47.4)	51 (32.2)	16 (10.1)	158 (100%)
		Male	08 (8.9%)	17 (18.9)	37 (41.1)	23 (25.6)	05 (5.6%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	02 (20%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	010 (100%)
		Male	02 (11.8)	07 (41.2)	05 (29.4)	03 (17.6)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	01 (14%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	01 (5%)	09 (45%)	07 (35%)	02 (10%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			13	48	129	87	25	302
Percentages			4%	16%	43%	29%	8%	100%
There seems to be a friendlier atmosphere among educators who serve under female principals than among those supervised by male principals.	Educators	Female	02 (1.2%)	12 (7.5%)	74 (46.8)	50 (31.6)	20 (12.6)	158 (100%)
		Male	07 (7.8%)	15 (16.7)	37 (41.1)	24 (26.7)	07 (7.8)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	03 (30%)	3 (30%)	04 (40%)	010 (100%)
		Male	03 (17.6)	04 (23.5)	06 (35.2)	04 (23.5)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	01 (14.3)	05 (71.4)	01 (14.3)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	00 (0%)	06 (30%)	07 (35%)	06 (30%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			12	38	132	88	32	302

Percentages			4.0%	12.6%	43.7%	29.1%	10.6%	100%
Male principals are less efficient in influencing change in schools than female principals.	Educators	Female	03 (1.8%)	16 (10.1)	82 (51.8)	38 (24%)	19 (12%)	158 (100%)
		Male	03 (3.3%)	10 (11.1)	36 (40%)	31 (34%)	10 (11.1)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	03 (30%)	02 (20%)	04 (40%)	01 (10%)	010 (100%)
		Male	01 (5.9%)	00 (0%)	09 (52.9)	04 (23.5)	03 (17.6)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	04 (57%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	02 (10%)	06 (30%)	04 (20%)	06 (30%)	02 (10%)	020 (100%)
Total			09	35	137	86	35	302
Percentages			3%	12%	45%	28%	12%	100%
Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals	Educators	Female	04 (2.5%)	10 (6.3%)	72 (48.5)	55 (34.8)	17 (10.7)	158 (100%)
		Male	09 (10%)	23 (25.6)	35 (38.9)	16 (17.8)	07 (7.8%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	03 (30%)	02 (20%)	05 (50%)	010 (100%)
		Male	02 (11.8)	01 (5.9)	10 (58.8)	03 (17.6)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	04 (57%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	01 (5%)	05 (25%)	09 (45%)	04 (20%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			16	39	133	83	31	302
Percentages			5%	13%	44%	28%	10%	100%
Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than female principals	Educators	Female	05 (3.1%)	14 (8.8%)	81 (51.2)	42 (26.5)	16 (10.1)	158 (100%)
		Male	05 (5.6%)	19 (21.1)	32 (35.6)	27 (30%)	07 (7.8%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	04 (40%)	05 (50%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Male	02 (12%)	02 (12%)	05 (29%)	07 (41%)	01 (6%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	05 (71%)	02 (29%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	00 (0%)	05 (25%)	07 (35%)	07 (35%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			12	41	134	90	25	302

Percentages			4%	14%	44%	30%	8%	100%
Male principals use less innovative techniques to accomplish the group's goals than female principals	Educators	Female	05 (3.1%)	19 (12%)	81 (51%)	41 (25.9)	13 (8.2%)	158 (100%)
		Male	03 (3.3%)	11 (12.2)	40 (44.4)	28 (36.1)	08 (8.9%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	06 (60%)	02 (20%)	02 (20%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Male	01 (5.9%)	03 (17.6)	06 (35.2)	03 (17.6)	04 (23.5)	017
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	02 (28.6)	03 (42.8)	02 (28.6)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	00 (0%)	05 (25%)	10 (50%)	04 (20%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			09	46	141	80	26	302
Percentages			3%	15%	47%	26%	9%	100%
Male principals use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or needs, more appropriately than female principals.	Educators	Female	06 (3.7%)	18 (11.3)	72 (45.5)	48 (30.3)	14 (8.8%)	158 (100%)
		Male	09 (10%)	21 (23%)	35 (38.9)	19 (21.1)	06 (6.7%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Female	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	010 (100%)
		Male	05 (29%)	00 (0%)	05 (29%)	04 (24%)	03 (17.6)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Female	00 (0%)	01 (14%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Male	01 (5%)	08 (40%)	06 (30%)	02 (10%)	03 (15%)	020 (100%)
Total			21	49	122	81	29	302
Percentages			7%	16%	40%	27%	10%	100%

Table 4.14 indicates that in all the items in this section the majority were neither agreed nor disagreed that male principals are better than female principals in change management, empowerment and motivation. The following is the overview of responses to items in section D above.

**Item 1: Male principals initiate fewer implementable ideas than female principals do**

One hundred and thirty six respondents (45%) neither agreed nor disagreed. Only 53 (18%), agreed and 113 (37%), disagreed. However most learners' presidents (15, or 55.5%) disagreed compared with 6 (22.2%), who were neutral. From the overall response who agreed, (that is, 37%), one can deduce that some male principals initiate fewer implementable ideas than female principals do, whereas half of the learners' responses indicate that learners are of the opinion that there are male principals who initiate more implementable ideas than female principals do. These responses are in line with Fullan's (1991: 62) argument. Fullan (1991) argues that a combination of strong advocacy needs active initiation and a clear model for proceeding, which characterise more successful start-ups.

Most female educators (56.7%) led by male principals were neutral. Most school principals (males or females) ideas are impracticable. However there was an equal number of female and male educators who were neutral, thus one is inclined to accept the response. Most of male learners' presidents (66.7%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. This might be because they are under a female principals' leadership and they can see how impractical their ideas are when compared with male principals. However, half of both male and female learners agreed with the statement, which makes the learners' response acceptable. Most male school governing bodies (66.7%) led by male principals were neutral. The total number of female school governing bodies who were neutral is almost the same as those of the total number of male school governing bodies. This data apparently endorses the neutral response.

**Item 2: Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than female principals are**

Where this item is concerned, the majority of respondents (134, or 44%) were neutral compared with only 69 (23%), who agreed. However, most learners' presidents (10, or 37%) disagreed compared with 29.6% who were neutral. The responses of the majority imply that both male and female principals foster development among staff, while according to 37% of learners there are male principals who do not foster development among staff.

Schools must accept the prime responsibility for developing the capacity of staff. This responsibility rests heavily on principals, males or females, because individuals who are working in a school environment, which is constantly changing, require support. Developing staff skills therefore ensures continuous improvement in the quality of their work, positive change for everyone in the school and the development of excellence in the school. This argument tallies with what Cawood and Gibbon (1981: 2) and Russ (1995: 5) contend. Cawood and Gibbon (1981) state that the competent educator is a growing educator. According to Cawood and Gibbon (1981), staff development is one of the most effective ways in which educators' continued professional growth could be enhanced, so that they may teach more effectively and be exposed to and respond to educational change and innovation. Russ (1995) points out that collaborative staff development is an important means of introducing innovation and sustaining curriculum development. According to Russ (1995), staff development is viewed as having a whole school focus and collaborative purpose.

Although most educators (60%) led by male principals were neutral, the same number of both female and male educators were neutral. That similarity in number confirms the

neutral response. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (75.1%) led by female principals were neutral. More female than male chairpersons of school governing bodies were neutral. However, this does not disqualify the neutral stand because the neutral response is the same as the agreement response of the chairpersons of school governing bodies. Most female learners' presidents (90%) led by male principals disagreed with the statement. More female than male learners disagreed, because most male learners agreed with the statement in the item. This may be due either to gender or to what female learners are experiencing under male leadership.

**Item 3: Male principals more often involve parents and the community in the school's strategic planning than female principals do**

Evident from Table 4.14 is the fact that the majority of respondents (129, or 43%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the item, compared with 85 (28%) who agreed. But most learners (11, or 41%) disagreed with the statement in the item when compared with 25.9% who were neutral, especially female learners' presidents, not one of whom agreed with the statement. Most chairpersons of school governing bodies (11, or 40.7%) agreed. Among those school governing bodies who agreed, there were 50% of male chairpersons of school governing bodies. The overall response suggests that some of both male and female principals often involve parents and the community in the school's strategic planning. Learners seem not to notice their parents being involved in their schools' strategic planning; the parents, on the other hand, acknowledge their involvement in schools' strategic planning. The response of the parents might be valid because the item was about parents. Therefore chairpersons of school governing bodies would be aware of parental involvement because they are the parents' representatives responsible for school governance.

The views of the majority above support the idea of Dunn and Dunn (1983: 215), who emphasise that parents and the community should be involved in curriculum decision-making. According to them, home support is essential if children are to learn effectively in schools. Horne (1998: 109) says that parents, caregivers and the community already play a significant part in supporting school education, and stresses that the involvement is essential in order to further boost achievement. John (1980: 15) also states that headmasters or headmistresses normally keep the governors informed of problems and the areas of policy that are being considered. The principals contact the community and parents through school governing bodies. Thus the school governing bodies must be aware of the parameters within which changes may be decided upon and give approval in advance for the head to consult parents and the community. This parental and community involvement is important, firstly because school education is the extension of the home education, and secondly because school education must be based on societal needs in order to produce learners who will be able to fit into that community or society.

Most female educators (47.5%) led by female principals were neutral. However, the female educators' neutral figure is almost the same as the male neutral figure. This allows one to accept the neutral response. Most female learners' presidents (80%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. This is probably because female principals with whom female learners served are better at involving parents and the community during the strategic planning of the school. That is why the small number of males who disagreed cannot affect the response of the learners and the overall neutral response. One hundred percent of female chairpersons of school governing bodies led by a male principal agreed with the statement in the item. More males than females

(only 1 female) agreed with the item. This leads one to think that her opinion was gender based.

**Item 4: Male principals make use of learners' ideas more often than female principals do**

Implicit in Table 4.14 is that 132 (43.7%) of the total respondents were neutral. Most learners' presidents (11, or 40.7%) disagreed, compared with 9 (33.3%), who were neutral, most of whom were female learners' presidents (7 out of 10). It is not surprising that no female learners' presidents agreed with the item because one would say females understand each other. Female principals are able to listen to female learners' views and take cognisance of them. Judging from the available overall data one could say while the majority seem to perceive both male and female principals as using learners' ideas, learners deny that male principals consider their views more than female principals do. This learners' response may be true, since the item concerned them, and they would know whether they were involved or not. It should be remembered that the need for learners to feel a sense of importance in their learning was emphasised in Section B, Item 4 of this chapter.

Most male educators (41.8%) led by male principals were neutral. Almost the same number of male and female educators was neutral, however. This provides evidences of the validity of the data. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (83.3%) led by female principals were neutral. More females than males were neutral. This does not affect the overall neutral response because the males' agreement response is similar to their disagreement response. Most male learners' presidents (7, or 41.1%) agreed with the item. Most female learners' presidents (77.5%) led by female principals disagreed, however. It would seem that either gender influenced the response or the



female learners' presidents were being honest because the highest figure is for those who were led by female principals. Thus they were probably talking from experience.

**Item 5: Male principals are less efficient in influencing change in schools than female principals are.**

Table 4.14 seems to indicate that the overall majority of respondents (137, or 45%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the item and 121 (40%), disagreed. However, most chairpersons of school governing bodies (40.7%) disagreed with the item compared with 8 (29.6%), who were neutral. The majority of learners (that is, 12, or 44%) disagreed, which is almost the same as 11 (41%), of those who were neutral. According to the data of the majority, it seems as though both male and female principals are less efficient in influencing change in schools, whereas the governing bodies and learners view male principals to be more efficient in influencing change in schools. Both male and female principals seem to neglect schools' change.

Despite the data reflecting the opinions of the majority above, principals must be aware that the learning organisation must develop the capacity to learn, to reflect and to innovate. Without innovation the school might underperform and lose its reputation.

Most female educators (44.9%) led by female principals were neutral. More females than males were neutral. Gender might have influenced the response. Most male learners' presidents (54.5%) led by male principals were neutral. This neutral response seems to be true because most males were talking from what they were experiencing under male leadership compared with female leadership they had once experienced. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (41.7%) led by male principals disagreed with the item. However, the female disagreement response is almost the same

as the male disagreement response, which shows truthfulness on the part of the school governing bodies. Their response might not be preferred to that of learners and educators, however, because parents usually see things from a distance, while educators and learners are always in the schools.

**Item 6: Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals**

Table 4.10 shows that most respondents (133, or 44%) neither agreed nor disagreed with the item. A figure of 55 (18%), agreed. It is evident from the data that both male and female principals can be skilled change agents. It is extremely important for principals, regardless of gender, to possess skills for change. This could occur through learning or experience.

Sixty three percent of female educators led by male principals were neutral and most male learners' presidents (72.8%) led by male principals were neutral, which confirms the neutral data, as those male learners were talking from experience. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies led by male principals and female chairpersons of school governing bodies led by female principals (50%) were neutral. More females than males were neutral. This does not disqualify the neutral response because the male disagreement response is the same as the male agreement response.

**Item 7: Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than male principals do**

One hundred and thirty four, or 44%, of the total respondents were neutral. Only 53 (18%), agreed and 5 (19%), agreed that male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than male principals do. However, most learners' presidents (48.1%) disagreed with the item. The overall response implies that both male and female principals are equally capable as far as reinforcement of good practice is concerned, whereas according to learners some male principals reinforce good practice more well than male principals do. It is hard to accept the learners' response, however, because the question concerns educators who seem to be neutral.

The importance of good practice is emphasised by NicholSEN (1996: 85, 87) in his argument in Chapter 2. With regard to democratic leadership style, NicholSEN (1996) identifies differences between women and men's perception of good practice in management. He argues that a woman combines instinct with wide consultation to give her the confidence of knowing that her decisions are well informed. According to NicholSEN (1996), this is achieved if there is an emphasis on teamwork, and if the people doing the work are involved in decision making.

Most female educators (65%) led by male principals were neutral. More female educators than males were neutral because most educators disagreed. This might be due to gender character. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (83.3%) led by female principals were neutral. The same situation as with educators applies here. More females than males were neutral, which might be caused by gender character. Most males agreed with the item. Most female learners' presidents (100%) led by male principals disagreed with the item. Almost the same number of males as females

disagreed, which seems to confirm the lack of knowledge on the part of both genders as far as practice among staff is concerned.

**Item 8: Male principals use less innovative techniques to accomplish the group's goals than female principals do.**

One hundred and forty one, or 47%, of the total respondents were neutral. 55 (18%), agreed, and 106 (35%), disagreed that male principals use less innovative techniques to accomplish group goals. Most learners (10, or 37%) agreed, and 8 (29.6%) were neutral, especially female learners' presidents (6, or 60%). It is clear from the responses of the educators and the chairpersons of school governing bodies that they did not see any difference between male and female principals pertaining to innovative techniques.

The data of the majority of the total respondents is confirmed by Sayles (1987: 61), who argues that the additional management pressures, regardless of sex, are to master new techniques to make the new system work quickly and efficiently. According to Sayles (1987), this demands more openness.

There are many new programmes in schools, some of which are:

- the staff Development Appraisal System (DAS),
- the Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) and
- Outcomes Based Education (OBE).

All these programmes need one to have acquired new methods, strategies and approaches. Without these new techniques it will not be feasible to implement the changes.

Most female educators (46.9%) led by female principals were neutral. There is little difference in the number of responses between female responses and male responses. That endorses the neutral response. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (58.3%) led by male principals were neutral. The same situation as with educators above applies here. Most female learners' presidents (62.5%) led by female principals agreed with the statement in the item, yet most male presidents were neutral, which further confirms the overall neutral response.

**Item 9: Male principals use different leadership styles with different educators, depending on their maturity level or needs, more appropriately than female principals do.**

One hundred and twenty two, or 40%, of the total respondents were neutral. Only 70 (23.2%), agreed with the above item. However, most chairpersons of school governing bodies (10, or 37%) agreed compared with 9 (33.3, who were neutral. Male chairpersons of school governing bodies) and most learners' presidents (15, or 55.5%) disagreed, compared with 6 (22.2%) learners' presidents who were neutral. According to the response of the total respondents, both male and female principals can appropriately use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or need. The school governing bodies acknowledged that males use a different leadership style with different educators more appropriately than female principals do, whereas learners' presidents did not perceive male principals as doing so in accordance with maturity levels and needs. The responses of school governing bodies and learners might seem invalid because the item concerns educators.

School leaders, either male or female, must be aware that subordinates have different needs and are on different maturity levels. This concurs with the responses of the

majority of respondents. It is therefore important for school principals to deal with subordinates accordingly. Hersey and Blanchard (1982: 149-162) emphasise this in Chapter Two of this study when they say that successful leadership is achieved by selecting the right leadership style, which is contingent upon numerous important situational variables, especially the maturity level of followers. Hersey and Blanchard (1982) set a challenge for every leader to enhance effectiveness by learning to identify the maturity level of a subordinate in order to match it with the most appropriate leadership style.

Most female educators (56.7%) led by male principals were neutral. The rest of male responses are almost equally distributed between disagreement and agreement responses, however. Thus, it does not affect the neutral response. Most female learners' presidents (77.5%) led by male principals disagreed with the statement contained in the item. This might be as a response to the situational leadership style they experience under female leadership or because they are females and they are supporting another female. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (62.5%) led by female principals agreed with the statement in the item. The neutral figure of the female school governing bodies was the same as the agreement figure. That further endorses the overall neutral response.

**Item 10: Do you perceive male principals to be more transformational than female principals? Substantiate your statement.**

*Responses to closed ended part*

**Table 4.15: School respondents views about transformational leadership**

ITEM	RESPONDENTS	SEX	YES	N0	UNSURE	TOTAL
Do you perceive the male principal to be more transformational than the female principal? Substantiate your statement.	Educators	F	21 (13.3%)	113 (71.5%)	24 (15.2%)	158 (100%)
		M	21 (23.3%)	041 (45.6%)	28 (31.1%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	F	00 (0%)	010 (100%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		M	05 (29.4%)	011 (64.7%)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	F	01 (14.3%)	05 (71.4%)	01 (14.3%)	007 (100%)
		M	04 (20%)	16 (80%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
	TOTAL		52	196	54	302
	PERCENTAGES		17	65	18	100

The total score indicates that the majority (196, or 65%) did not perceive male principals to be more transformational. Only 52 (27%), perceived male principals to be more transformational. This implies that male principals are not more transformational than female principals are.

The data above indicates that it is still hard for male principals to accept change. Male principals must be aware that schools must undergo transition in order to suit the demands of the changing country. Therefore principals, males or females, must be able to make a difference in schools and to handle those differences. This is what Fullan (1991: 58) argues when he says change is a process that needs to be managed. According to Fullan (1991), to a great extent the school principal, as the key figure around which much of the school's activities revolve, determines the school's successes

and failures when change is implemented. Fullan (1991) emphasises that an educational leader must lead the change, not merely be subject of it. Fullan (1991) also makes reference to Knoop (1987: 16), De Villiers (1989: 10), Ornstein and Hunkins (1988: 14-15), Walker and Vogt (1987: 44) and Virgilio and Virgilio (1984: 348), who agree that no change in a school could be successful without the positive and active support of the teaching body. These authors say that even when the teaching body gives its support for the change process, there still have to be opportunities for staff development measures. According to Ornstein and Hunkins (1988), in addition to provision for staff development, the professional identity of the educator needs to be acknowledged.

Most female educators (78.3%) led by male principals did not agree with the statement. That confirms the disagreement response because it is what they were experiencing, despite the smaller male disagreement response.

One hundred percent of female learners' presidents led by both male and female principals did not agree with the item. Quite a large number of both female and male learners did not agree. That shows truthfulness and fairness of the response.

The same situation as with learners applies here (that is, a large number of both males and females did not agree with the item).

An explanation of the above responses follows in the next part.

### ***Responses to open-ended part***

On closer examination of item 10 above, it is clear that the 65% of respondents, that is, educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents, who disagreed regarding the perception of male principals as more transformational revealed that the reasons for the disagreement of each group fell into two main categories:



- Those who felt that both male and female principals are equally transformational
- Those who felt that women are more transformational than men

The first five reasons for each group appear in tables below.

The majority of learners' presidents gave multiple reasons for regarding male principals as more transformational, as indicated above. Only the first five of the 'no' reasons are ranked according to their importance and highest score. The rank order appears in Table 4.16 below.

**Table 4.16: Rank order of learners' reasons for perceiving male principals as more transformational**

Reasons	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
That is female principals who are more transformational because they can transform schools better because they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• are more accommodative when it comes to change.</li> <li>• do not use corporal punishment more often in their schools.</li> <li>• share power better and communicate more effective with all stakeholders.</li> <li>• free to adopt new things, the deed by which male principals are anxious that they will lose power.</li> <li>• are willing to improve and develop themselves educationally.</li> <li>• more honest pertaining to school finances using them profitable to improve the school.</li> <li>• intuitive and proactive.</li> </ul>	1	3	5	8	29.6%
Both male and female principals can be transformational depending on the nature of the person; experience; ability to influence subordinates; effective problem solving; and that both have adopted things associated with change. They have, for instance, stopped using corporal punishment.	2	5	0	5	19%
Male principals do not involve other stakeholders especially parents and the community which is noticed during parents' meetings. This hinders school development.	3	1	1	2	7%
Male principals are not more democratic as they do not give freedom to learners with hair	4	0	1	1	3.7%

Most learners' presidents (29.6%) seem to consider reason number 1 as that that is female principals who are more transformational than male principals because of being more innovative, intuitive, proactive, honest in school finances and more accepting the

idea of abolishing corporal punishment than male principals. Being proactive and intuitive is an important skill for a female principal. It means that she is able to make decisions in anticipation of an external change or other conditions and senses trouble. Stoner and Freeman (1992: 137) contend that managers who utilise a systematic, proactive approach could prevent problems with the quality of products or services from developing. On contrary the reason which was ranked number 2 is that both male and female principals are transformational depending on the nature of the person; experience, ability to influence subordinates; and effective problem solving. This scored 19%. Van Niekerk (1988: 3) stresses that management is seen as a process of controlling of the efforts of others in order that specific set of goals may be achieved. Van Niekerk (1888) further argues that management is also a problem-solving process whereby organisational goals could be achieved effectively by the efficient use of scarce resources in a continuously changing environment. Therefore it is important for the principals to be aware of what management entails in order to manage change effectively. Reasons ranked 3 and 4 are that male principals are not more democratic especially with learners. 2 (7%) and 1 (3.7%) gave these reasons. The necessity for being democratic and collaborative in leadership was adequately dealt with in section B item 4 of this chapter.

Only the maximum of the first five important reasons is ranked according to their importance and highest scores. But according to the above list school-governing bodies gave only two reasons. Their rank order appears in Table 4.17 below.

**Table 4.17: Rank order of school governing bodies' chairpersons' reasons for perceiving male principals to be not transformational**

Reason	Rank order		Number of respondents		%
		F	M	Total	
Being transformational is not gender-based. It depends on <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ personality or character</li> <li>▪ means of communication</li> <li>▪ the nature of understanding and acceptance of transformation by a particular person</li> <li>▪ leadership qualifications</li> <li>▪ leadership and interpersonal skills</li> <li>▪ the age of the leader..</li> </ul>	1	3	5	8	29.6%
Female principals are more transformational than male principals because female principals are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ open to change</li> <li>▪ known to take the lead in bringing about change because at home the woman tends to initiate things and be more innovative</li> <li>▪ more polite and tactful, thereby promoting a kind atmosphere</li> <li>▪ more talkative, which leads to better interaction with people</li> <li>▪ able to give others a chance as well, even though males feel that woman are not good enough</li> <li>▪ not afraid to try new ideas and involve all the stakeholders, as opposed to male principals, who tend to stay within the boundaries.</li> </ul>	2	0	6	0	22.2%

Table 4.17 shows that the chairpersons of school governing bodies gave the same reasons as the learners' presidents did. The only difference is that ranked number 1 is that both male and female principals are equally transformational, and ranked number 2 is that female principals are more transformational. The ability of female principals to interact with people is one of the reasons stated for selecting female principals as more transformational. The importance of the skill to deal with relationships was dealt with in Section C of this chapter.

The reasons educators gave with regard to the 'no' response, the response with highest overall score, are reflected in Table 4.18 in their order of importance and highest score.

**Table 4.18: Rank order of educators' reasons for regarding male principals as not more transformational than female principals.**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	T	
<p>Both male and female principals are equally transformational because being transformational is not gender based but depends a lot on an individual's</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ personality</li> <li>▪ capacity</li> <li>▪ desire and acceptance to enhance change</li> <li>▪ intelligence</li> <li>▪ type of approach</li> <li>▪ way of viewing things</li> <li>▪ leadership style</li> <li>▪ educational qualifications</li> <li>▪ focus</li> <li>▪ responsibility</li> <li>▪ culture</li> <li>▪ flexibility</li> <li>▪ vision</li> <li>▪ leadership and management skills</li> <li>▪ amount of knowledge regarding curriculum</li> <li>▪ progressive thinking.</li> </ul>	1	67	23	90	36%
<p>It is female principals who are more transformational because female principals:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ follow rules and documents more strictly</li> <li>▪ see improvement as a whole, not only in the school system</li> <li>▪ are more open to transformation because they are challenging the norm</li> <li>▪ are more likely to share power</li> <li>▪ are better listeners and are very systematic</li> <li>▪ require less support from those around them to implement transformation</li> <li>▪ have made much transformation in schools they lead, whereas there has not been much transformation in schools led by male principals</li> <li>▪ have more vision and drive.</li> <li>▪ are more able to initiate transformation and implement plans that will ensure effective transformation</li> <li>▪ are always aware of what is going on around their schools.</li> <li>▪ attend meetings regularly</li> <li>▪ check whether goals are better in fostering development among staff</li> <li>▪ are more efficient in influencing change in schools</li> <li>▪ are sensitive to a need for change</li> <li>▪ are often more aware that change is an ongoing process, that it must be made for the right reasons, that all stakeholders must be informed about it and that communication is vital for change to be effective.</li> <li>▪ are not threatened by gender equality, while male principals are more often 'play it safe'</li> <li>▪ are more able to take risk of what is needed in management</li> <li>▪ do not fear change, whereas males always fear change and think that it will take away their leadership power.</li> </ul>	2	31	0	31	12.5 %
School members' beliefs and expectations will determine how transformational male principals are; not their gender.	3	0	1	1	0.4%
There is still a tendency to discriminate against women	4	0	1	1	0.4%
Dogmatic and inflexible characteristics are demonstrated by both male and female principals.	5	0	1	1	0.4%

The first two reasons given by educators tally with those given by the school governing bodies. The rank order also tallies. That is, 36% and 12.5% of educators ranked 1 and 2 as the reasons that both male and female principals are equally transformational and that female principals are more transformational. The leadership skills given under these responses, which seem to qualify both males and females as transformational, as well as those which qualify women as more transformational, were dealt with in Sections B and C in the analysis of the reasons given by learners in this section.

#### **4.2.5 Section E: Conflict management and decision-making**

This section contains the analysis and interpretation of data collected from educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents in response to the items that assessed the female principals' effectiveness in conflict management and decision-making.

##### **(a) Responses to closed questions**

Table 4.19 below presents the respondents' view on the way female principals handle conflict management and decision-making. This theme consisted of five questions, listed in Table 4.19 below.

**Table 4.19: School respondents' views about conflict management and decision making**

ITEMS	RESPONDENTS	GENDER	SA	A	N	D	SD	TOTAL
Female principals use more effective decision-making processes than male principals.	Educators	Females	05 (3.1%)	24 (15.1)	87 (55%)	32 (20.2)	10 (6.3%)	158 (100%)
		Males	01 (1.1%)	10 (11.1)	44 (48.9)	28 (31.1)	07 (7.8%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	04 (40%)	04 (40%)	01 (10%)	01 (10%)	010 (100%)
		Males	02 (11.8)	04 (23.5)	06 (35.2)	04 (23.5)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14.3)	06 (85.7)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	02 (10%)	08 (40%)	08 (40%)	01 (5%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
	Total		10	51	155	66	20	302
	Percentages		3%	17%	51%	22%	7%	100%
Female principals facilitate groups in decision-making processes more efficiently than male principals.	Educators	Females	04 (2.5%)	32 (20.2)	77 (48.7)	34 (21.5)	11 (6.9%)	158 (100%)
		Males	02 (2.2%)	11 (12.2)	39 (43.3)	30 (33.3)	08 (8.9%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	01 (10%)	04 (40%)	04 (40%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	04 (23.5)	08 (47%)	03 (17.6)	02 (11.8)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	02 (10%)	07 (35%)	08 (40%)	02 (10%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
	Total		13	65	134	70	20	302
	Percentages		4%	22%	44%	23%	7%	100%
Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals do.	Educators	Females	05 (3.1%)	12 (7.5%)	85 (53.7)	46 (29.1)	10 (6.3%)	158 (100%)
		Males	03 (33%)	15 (16.7)	43 (47.8)	27 (30%)	02 (2.2%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	02 (20%)	04 (40%)	03 (30%)	010 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	03 (18%)	07 (41%)	07 (41%)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	03 (43%)	03 (43%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	04 (20%)	08 (40%)	07 (35%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
	Total							
	Percentages							

Total			09	37	148	92	16	302
Percentages			3%	12%	49%	31%	5%	100%
Female principals are less creative problem solvers in schools than male principals.	Educators	Females	03 (1.8%)	13 (8.2%)	71 (44.7)	53 (33.5)	18 (11.3)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	16 (17%)	36 (40%)	28 (31.1)	06 (6.7%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	00 (0%)	01 (10%)	02 (20%)	03 (30%)	04 (40%)	010 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	08 (47%)	04 (23.5)	05 (29.4)	00 (0%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	01 (14.3)	01 (14.3)	04 (57.1)	01 (14.3)	007 (100%)
		Males	03 (15%)	07 (35%)	03 (15%)	05 (25%)	02 (10%)	020 (100%)
Total			10	46	117	98	31	302
Percentages			3%	15%	39%	33%	10%	100%
Female principals resolve conflict between others and themselves more effectively than male principals.	Educators	Females	08 (5%)	27 (17%)	72 (45.5)	38 (24%)	13 (8.2%)	158 (100%)
		Males	04 (4.4%)	05 (5.6%)	41 (45.6)	32 (35.6)	08 (8.9%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	Females	01 (10%)	05 (50%)	03 (30%)	01 (10%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		Males	02 (11.8)	03 (17.6)	07 (41.2)	02 (11.8)	03 (17.6)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	Females	00 (0%)	02 (29%)	04 (57%)	01 (14%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		Males	00 (0%)	07 (35%)	09 (45%)	03 (15%)	01 (5%)	020 (100%)
Total			15	49	136	77	25	302
Percentages			5%	16%	45%	26%	8%	100%

Table 4.19 shows that the majority of the overall respondents in this section neither agreed nor disagreed with the items dealing with whether female principals have a better capacity to manage and make decisions or not. The overview of responses to section E is as follows:

**Item 1: Female principals use more effective decision-making processes than male principals do**

One hundred and fifty five respondents (51%) were neutral. It is encouraging to note that that was about half of the respondents. Only 61 (20%), agreed. However the number of learners' presidents, that is, 10, (37%), who were neutral is equal to the number of those who agreed. This neutral response of the majority of respondents indicates that both male and female principals are able to use effective decision-making processes. It is one of the functions of school leaders, either males or females, to make use of effective decision-making processes when making decisions. This view is confirmed by Griffiths (1959: 73-75, 91), who argues that the specific function of administration is to develop and regulate the decision-making process in the most effective manner possible. Griffiths (1959) is of the opinion that all other functions of administration can best be interpreted in terms of decision-making processes. Decision-making is thus at the heart of organisation and the process of administration. Hoy and Miskel (1982: 264-265, 287) further endorse the idea by saying that decision-making is a major responsibility of all administrators, and that those with responsibility must go through five sequential steps, namely,

- recognising and defining the problem or issue,
- analysing the difficulties in the existing situation,
- establishing criteria for resolving difficulties,
- developing a plan of action or strategy, including the specification of possible alternatives, and predicting probable consequences for each alternative, deliberation and the selection of an action alternative and
- initiating a plan of action.



According to Hoy and Miskel (1982), an understanding of the decision-making process is vital to successful administration.

Most female educators (57%) led by male principals were neutral. However, almost the same number of females and males were neutral, which qualifies the neutral response. Most female learners' presidents (50%) led by female principals were neutral. More females than males were neutral. This does not disqualify the neutral response, however, because the neutral response figure is equal to the agreement figure. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (10, or 50%) agreed with the item. One hundred percent of male chairpersons of school governing bodies led by male principals were neutral. More female than male school governing bodies were neutral. More male school governing bodies (50% of males) agreed with the item. It is surprising that male parents chose female principals because of the traditional societal belief that women must receive orders from men. This is possibly because they have observed female leadership that involved decision-making processes.

**Item 2: Female principals involve groups in decision-making processes more efficiently than male principals do**

One hundred and thirty four (44%) of the total respondents were neutral, while 78 (26%), agreed and 90 (30%), disagreed. However, most chairpersons of school governing bodies (12, or 44.4%) agreed with the item compared with 11 (40.7%), who were neutral. Most learners (17, or 62.9%) also agreed with the item compared with 7 (25.9%) who were neutral. According to chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents, female principals involve groups in decision-making processes more efficiently than male principals do. If this is the case, female principals are

performing an important function, because most principals do not involve parents and learners in decision-making.

Both male and female principals must play the important role of efficient involvement of groups in decision-making, as the overall response suggests. Griffiths (1959: 1) states that in administration the administrator works with groups or with individuals with a group referent, not with individuals as such. Hoy and Miskel (1982: 280, 287) further maintain that the opportunity to share in formulating policies is an important factor in the morale of educators and in their enthusiasm for school organisation. According to Hoy and Miskel (1982) it is therefore important for administrators to determine under what conditions subordinates should be involved in the decision-making process, because it is not always beneficial for administrators to involve subordinates in decision-making. Parents and the community are involved through school governing bodies (SGBs), and learners through the learners' representative council (LRC). Day *et al.* (2000: 15, 18) discuss the formation of SGBs and LRCs and their participation in decision-making on behalf of parents and learners, pointing out that the governing body is responsible for the making of policies or the laying down of broad guidelines for planning and decision-making in the school. On the other hand, Day *et al.* point out that learners in the eighth grade or higher serve as elected members (elected by representative council of learners) of a governing body to represent the interests of the learners of a school.

Most female educators (58.3%) led by male principals were neutral. Almost the same number of female and male educators was neutral, which indicates confirmation of the neutral data on educators' side. It is surprising that most male learners' presidents (72.8%) led by male principals agreed with the item. One would expect them to

disagree with the item because they are males. Fifty percent of female and male chairpersons of school governing bodies led by female principals agreed with the item. This could be because they have experienced female leadership. It seems that they were satisfied with the way female principals took decisions. Almost the same total number of male and female school governing bodies agreed with the item.

**Item 3: Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals do**

One hundred and forty eight, or 49%, of the overall respondents were neutral, whereas 46, or 15%, agreed and 108, or 36%, disagreed. 128 educators (51.6%) were neutral and only 35, or 14.1%, agreed. On one hand 11 chairpersons of school governing bodies (41%) were neutral. On the other hand only 7, or 26%, agreed. Most learners' presidents (14, or 51.7%) disagreed with the item when compared with 11, or 40.7%, who were neutral. According to the overall response both male and female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision, whereas learners believed that female principals do evaluate the effectiveness of a decision.

The overall data above contradicts the argument of Keith and Girling (1991: 58), who argue that one of the qualities associated with effective leadership irrespective of gender is decisiveness in making decisions and solving problems. Before a decision is made, feasible alternatives are developed and relevant stakeholders consider the possible consequences of each alternative. It is the responsibility of the principal to ensure that alternatives developed are evaluated and compared, guided by previously established goals and objectives. The evaluation is done in order to select the alternative that will produce the most favourable outcomes and the least unfavourable outcomes. Gibson, Ivancevich and Donnely (1994) emphasise that the decision-maker

must be aware of three possible conditions on which the alternative outcome is based, namely:

- *Certainty*. The decision maker has complete knowledge of the probability of the outcome of each alternative.
- *Uncertainty*. The decision-maker has absolutely no knowledge of the probability of the outcome of each alternative.
- *Risk*. The decision-maker has some probabilistic estimate of the outcomes of each alternative.

Most female educators (60%) led by male principals were neutral. More females than males were neutral. Most of the rest of the males agreed, however. Gender therefore did not influence the response. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (50%) led by female principals were neutral. Almost the same number of females and males were neutral, which confirms the fairness and truthfulness in the neutral response. Most female learners' presidents (75%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. More females than males disagreed. Gender did not influence the response because most of the rest of males (7) were neutral, which further supports the neutral response.

**Item 4: Female principals are less creative in solving problems than male principals are**

One hundred and twenty nine, or 43%, of the total respondents disagreed with the item. Most educators (107, or 43.1%) were neutral, however, which is close to 105 (42.4%), who disagreed. This data implies that female principals are more creative in solving problems than male principals are. Creativity in problem-solving is one of the important

skills required in the management of schools. This is because problems in schools are multi-faceted and numerous. School principals (males or females) are expected to develop an ability to solve problems by using creativity. They require problem-solving skills in order to diagnose problems with subordinates and to be creative in thinking of solutions. This view is confirmed by Sayles (1987: 161), who claims that managers are doers and decision-makers; they make things happen, which means that they solve problems. Pellicer and Stevenson (1985: 7) further endorse the idea, saying that the principalship requires stamina, knowledge, desire and creativity and further supporting this. Such traits, according to Pellicer and Stevenson (1985), cannot be maintained without periods of rest and renewal.

Most of female educators (51.7%) led by male principals were neutral. Almost same number of females as males disagreed. That endorses the disagreement response, showing fairness. Most male learners' presidents (8, or 47.1%) agreed with the item. (More of those led by male principals agreed, that is 6, or 54.6%, led by male principals and 2, or 33.3%, led by female principals). Most female learners' presidents (75%) led by female principals disagreed with the item, however. This could be the result of their experience of female principal leadership. More females than males disagreed. Most of the rest of the males agreed. Gender could have influenced the response. Most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (10, or 50%) agreed with the item. (Ten, or 50%, were led by female principals and 6, or 50%, were led by male principals.) Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (83.3%) led by female principals disagreed with the item. The same situation as applies to learners above applies here. More females than males agreed, and most of the rest of the males disagreed.

**Item 5: Female principals resolve conflict between others and themselves more effectively than male principals do**

One hundred and thirty six, or 45%, of the overall respondents were neutral and 64, or 21%, agreed. Of the educators, 113, or 45%, were neutral and 13, or 48%, of school governing bodies were neutral, whereas 64, or 21%, agreed. However, most learners' presidents (11, or 40.6%) agreed with the item compared with 10, or 37%, who were neutral. The neutral data implies that both female and male principals may be effective in resolving conflict. On the other hand, learners' responses suggest that some female principals are more effective than male principals in resolving conflicts. The learners' presidents' perception is confirmed by Macbeth (1998: 12-15) in Chapter 2 of this study in quoting Shakeshaft (1989), Hall (1994), Jones (1990) and Eagly *et al.* (1992). Shakeshaft *et al.* suggest that females are better at dealing with conflict. There are different types of people at schools, coming from different cultural backgrounds. As a result, those people have different needs and interests, which may cause conflict. The principal therefore, either male or female, must be acquainted with all types of conflict. Ngcongo (1995: 41) stresses the importance of this skill in schools by mentioning types and approaches to conflict management, especially negotiation skills. Ngcongo (1995) suggests that it is absolutely essential for principals to establish what mandate learners and other parties with whom they are negotiating have. According to Ngcongo (1995), this helps to determine which parties have a problem and to ensure that they are represented.

Most female educators (56.7%) led by male principals were neutral. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (66.7%) led by female principals were neutral. Most male learners' presidents (7, or 41.2%) were neutral. One, or 16.7%, was led by a

female principal and 6, or 54.5%, were led by male principals. Most female learners' (62.5%) led by female principals agreed, however.

#### 4.2.6 Section F: School leadership and main obstacles experienced by women school leaders

This section analyses and interprets the data collected from educators, learners and chairpersons of school governing bodies in response to the questionnaire item on effective school leadership and the main obstacles facing women school leaders.

##### Item 1: Between men and women, who in your experience leads schools better?

###### *Responses to closed part*

Table 4.20 constitutes a summary of responses with regard to the gender perceived as more effective in schools.

**Table 4.20: School respondents' views about the one who leads schools better**

ITEM	RESPONDENTS	SEX	WOMEN	MEN	BOTH	NEITHER	UNSURE	TOTAL
1. Between men and women, who in your experience, leads schools better?	Educators	F	46 (29.1%)	28 (17.7%)	66 (41.8%)	01 (0.6%)	17 (10.8%)	158 (100%)
		M	09 (10%)	45 (50%)	26 (28.9%)	04 (4.4%)	06 (6.7%)	090 (100%)
	Learners' presidents	F	07 (70%)	03 (30%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	010 (100%)
		M	07 (41.2%)	08 (47.1%)	01 (5.9%)	00 (0%)	01 (5.9%)	017 (100%)
	School governing bodies' chairpersons	F	01 (14.3)	02 (28.6%)	03 (42.9%)	01 (14.3%)	00 (0%)	007 (100%)
		M	08 (40%)	06 (30%)	06 (30%)	00 (0%)	00 (0%)	020 (100%)
	TOTAL		78	92	102	05	25	302
	PERCENTAGES		26	30	34	02	08	100

Table 4.20 indicates that the majority of the overall respondents (102, or 34%) had the perception that both male and female principals lead schools well. However, the number of chairpersons of school governing bodies (9, or 33.3%) who chose both is exactly the same (9, or 33.3%) as those who selected women. Most learners' presidents (14, or 51.9%) selected women, especially female learners' presidents, compared with 1 (3.7%) who opted for both. As can be seen from the review of the literature in Chapter 2 on leadership theories, Macbeth (1998: 12-15) supported the view of learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies. Macbeth (1998) says that effective leaders are more likely to be females. This view tallies with Powell's (1988: 151) assertion. Powell (1988) contends that women can be successful as managers and compete on an equal footing with men if they develop the skills they have not developed in earlier years.

More females than males selected both male and female principals. This occurred because most males selected male principals and few females selected males. It seems that gender character played a part here. It is surprising that most male chairpersons of school governing bodies (8, or 40%) opted for women. Four, or 50%, were led by female principals and 4, or 33.3%, were led by male principals. Most female chairpersons of school governing bodies (3 or 50%) led by female principals opted for both. One would expect males to go for men because of the traditional societal perception that only men must lead. Most female learners' presidents (7 or 87.5%) led by female principals selected women principals as better school leaders. This might be due to their experience of female leadership. The number of male learners who selected women is almost the same as those who selected men. The response was therefore not affected by gender.



### *Responses to open-ended part*

#### **Item 1.2: Support your response by giving five reasons in order of importance**

The variety of reasons given in each group follows. Only the first five appear in the tables above.

From the variety of reasons, only the first five reasons given by learners who seemed to favour female principals in school leadership appear in Table 21 below. Those reasons are ranked according to their importance and highest score. It can be recalled that in this item, respondents were required to give five reasons in their order of importance.

**Table 4.21: Rank order of importance of learners' presidents' reasons for regarding women to be better school leaders than male principals**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Better communication skills: communicating effectively, not providing unsolicited information and being better listeners to everyone, including fellow learners.	1	2	5	7	26%
Being more friendly, approachable, accessible and having better prioritization skills than male principals.	2	2	3	5	19%
Having a better ability than men to consider learners as far as practical work is concerned Women instil discipline, but still have a caring nature with regard to learners because they are motherly.	3	1	4	5	19%
Being more compassionate and sympathetic, which leads to having concern for the people they work with.	4	2	2	4	15%
Being more assertive than men, women can stick to what is right and beneficial for the school.	5	1	1	2	7%

The reasons ranked 1 and 2 as shown Table 4.21 are that women have better communication skills and that they are more friendly and approachable. These leadership skills are dealt with in Section C. Reasons which followed are that women are more able to consider learners as far as practical work is concerned, they are more compassionate and sympathetic, which leads to having concern for the people that principals work with, and they are more assertive than men. These reasons were ranked

3, 4 and 5 respectively. They scored 19%, 15% and 7%. These leadership styles were also dealt with in Section C of this chapter.

Chairpersons of school governing bodies mentioned a multiple reasons for Item 1.2: the gender they favoured to be the more effective leader. Only the first five given by the majority of learners in favour of both male and female principals as effective school leaders appear in the table below. These reasons are ranked in their order of importance, starting with the highest score.

**Table 4.22: Rank order of importance of the school governing bodies' reasons that were of the idea that both male and female principals can lead schools effectively**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Both can lead schools equally effectively depending on the character or personality of a person because being an effective leader is not gender based.	1	1	4	5	18.5%
Being effective depends on one's experience in the position. Thus both can do the job.	2	0	1	1	3.7%
Both can develop the culture of discipline in the schools.	3	0	1	1	3.7%
Being an effective leader depends on the nature of the school.	4	1	0	1	3.7%
Effective leadership depends on the ability to manage school finances.	5	1	0	1	3.7%

Chairpersons of school governing bodies felt that effectiveness depends on character, not gender. This is ranked number 1 and scored 18.5%. This supports Smith and Peterson's (1988: 5) argument, which was quoted in Chapter 2 of the literature review. Smith and Peterson (1988) argue that personal qualities such as intelligence, self-confidence and interpersonal skills play quite a substantial role in the emergence of leaders. This idea conflicts with the idea of Corely *et al.* (1981: 72), referred to in Chapter 2. Corely *et al.* state that men and women experience the world differently, based upon their inherent biological gender differences.

The same situation as with learners and school governing bodies applies here. A variety of reasons was given for each choice, as indicated above. Only the first five reasons

given by educators for perceiving both male and female principals as effective secondary school leaders are listed in the table below. Table 4.23 below reflects those reasons in order of their importance, starting with the highest score.

**Table 4.23: Rank order of the first five educators' reasons for their perception that both female and male principals are effective leaders**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	T	
Effective leadership relies on an individual's personality or character and is not dictated by gender. A strong-willed woman can achieve the same level of respect and compliance; and men can be just as effective communicators and caregivers as women are.	1	30	8	38	15.3 %
Being an effective leader depends on democratic leadership and management skills, personal qualities, qualifications and experience. A schools' high pass rate depends on its leader's excellent history based on these criteria.	2	6	2	8	3.2%
Educators have experienced good and bad in both males and females; and both weak and strong males and females.	3	2	0	2	0.8%
Both can be effective if they have equal job opportunities, that is, a secondary school principalship.	4	0	1	1	0.4%
Both women and men are human beings and governed by the same law.	5	0	1	1	0.4%

Table 4.23 shows that the reason ranked number 1 was that effective leadership lies with an individual. This was chosen by 15.3%. This reason and rank order tie up with the reasons and rank order given by the chairpersons of school governing bodies above. This link endorses the response. The reasons which followed are that being an effective leader depends on democratic leadership skills and required qualifications; educators have experienced both good and bad males and females, and both weak and strong males and females; both can be effective if they have equal job opportunities and both women and men are human beings and governed by the same law. These reasons were ranked numbers 2, 3, 4 and 5 respectively. They scored 3.2%, 0.8%, 0.4% and 0.4%.

**Item 2: Main obstacles experienced by women as secondary school leaders, and the evidence thereof**

The questionnaire in this item wanted respondents to highlight some of the main problems that were encountered by secondary female principals. A big number of responses came out. The researcher grouped similar problems together. The number of responses does not correspond with the number of respondents, because each respondent was to give as many problems as he or she could. The five problems ranked most highly from each group follow in tables below.

Learners' presidents suggest that there are a number of obstacles that female principals face as leaders. Only the first five in their order of importance and scores are shown in the rank order Table 4.24 below.

**Table 4.24: Rank order of the first five main obstacles perceived by learners' presidents to be faced by female principals**

Obstacle	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	T	
They have problems with male school members. Some male school members resist their leadership, they have no respect, they are not accepting, they create conflict and they have negative attitude towards the female leadership authority because men have the belief that males have to rule or be bosses all the time. Females are regarded as naturally weak, lacking in dignity and not able to fight.	1	5	9	14	52%
Gender inequality. Females have been disadvantaged as far as secondary school leadership is concerned. There is still a gender problem in South Africa and people tend to respect male leaders more than female leaders. It is thus difficult for the female's voice to be heard and her ideas implemented.	2	5	3	8	29.6%
Disrespect from secondary learners because of females' powerlessness. As a result they resist punishment and instructions and do not regard her as having the authority that a male principal has. Some criminal learners may attack her verbally or physically.	3	1	5	6	22%
Problems with conflict resolution. Women cannot handle pressure situations such as boycotts.	4	0	3	3	11%
Having poor communication skills. Females fail to liaise with staff and impose decisions on the staff, because of bad communication skills. As a result they become outcasts.	5	0	2	2	7%

A table 4.24 show that the main problem which 52% of learners think is faced by female principals is the problem caused by school members who resist female

leadership authority. This is because of the traditional belief that men have to rule and have dominating leadership positions. This problem was ranked number 1. The problems caused by male members are raised by Sinclair (1991: 99); Pigford and Tonnsen (1993: 12), Kotecha (1994: 24-25), Grogan (1996: 8), Greyvenstein (2000: 3) and Thakatha and Lemmer (2002: 93) in Chapter 2. Greyvenstein(2000), Grogan (1996)), Kotecha (1994) and Thakatha and Lemmer (2002) maintain that administration is male dominated. According to Sinclair (1991) it is difficult for men to accept women as equals or as superiors. Sinclair (1991) further argues that even affirmative action programmes are seen as creating chaos and disturbance to the patriarchal order and creates extreme anxiety and envy in men, and indeed some women. Sinclair's view is supported by Pigford and Tonnsen (1993), who say that, in addition to fearing the rejection of males who often view women leaders as threats, women who deviate from typical career paths sometimes fear being rejected by females who have been socialised to accept men, not women, as authority figures. Macbeth (1998: 12) refers to Lee (1995), who states that in schools with women heads, men educators tend to rate them less positively than female colleagues. This attitude on the part of male school members is disconcerting, especially as inclusion of women in management is one of a number of immediate imperatives of transformation. It needs to be instilled in male educators that any form of discrimination and abuse is unacceptable and undemocratic. It is sad that some educators who should know better also need to learn this. It should also be said that this practice is not confined to schools; it is also evident in certain departmental institutions.

Besides male school members being troublesome to female principals, gender problems mentioned by learners' presidents are that people respect male leaders more than female leaders; and that secondary learners show disrespect to female leaders. These were

reflected in 29.6% and 22% of responses, and were ranked numbers 2 and 3 respectively. This view is in agreement with Sinclair (1991: 95) and Greyvenstein (2000: 31-32) in Chapter 2. Greyvenstein (2000) argues that the factor which underscores all the barriers faced by women is the traditional patriarchal stereotyped view of gender roles and attitudes held by both males and females, and conditions created by apartheid. Sinclair (1991) claims that establishing themselves in a leadership role is an ongoing struggle for women, and their gender differences are often in the forefront of any difficulties they encounter. According to Sinclair (1991), women who are subordinates to female bosses expect women to be more understanding and more sensitive than men, and women colleagues could accept authority and direction more readily from men, because they are accustomed to it. Female subordinates are also more likely to be suspicious of a female leader's credentials, perhaps regarding her as a competitor.

From the researcher's experience, most learners object to punishment from female educators. To illustrate this argument, one of the learners slapped a female educator when she was trying to punish him.

Finally, learners indicated their opinion that women lack conflict resolution skills and have poor communication skills. These problems were ranked numbers 4 and 5, and were reflected in 11% and 7% of responses. These themes were dealt with in sections B and C of this chapter.

The chairpersons of school governing bodies suggested a number of problems faced by female principals in schools they lead, as indicated above. The first five, which are ranked in order of importance in Table 4.25 underneath, will be dealt with.

**Table 4.25: Rank order of the first five main obstacles that school governing bodies' chairpersons perceived to be experienced by female principals in their schools**

Obstacle	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Problems with male school members. It is tough for female principals to handle males in schools and in the wider community and to gain their respect, especially in terms of discipline. This is due to the fact that males have the perception that a female is not worthy of their respect in terms of leadership.	1	3	3	6	22.2%
Women lack the ability to discipline. As a result they let learners loiter around and stay in the toilets during teaching hours.	2	1	4	5	19%
Intimidation, lack of trust and support from the school stakeholders especially school governing bodies, school management team and educators.	3	0	5	5	19%
The parents' and community's view on females in leadership. Parents and the community members are not satisfied and free with female principals to deal with adult and delinquent learners, because in the past it was only males who were leaders and females were regarded as weak.	4	1	3	4	14.8%
Problems with family commitments, which affect their schoolwork. They have the challenge of balancing the needs of their careers with the needs of their families and homes.	5	0	3	3	11%

It is observed from rank order Table 4.25 above that 22.2% of chairpersons of school governing bodies saw the main problem faced by female principals to be male school members. This problem was ranked number 1. It is disconcerting that this problem is the same as the problem given by learners' presidents, who also ranked it number 1. This response implies that this is a common problem for female principals, and the truthfulness and fairness of the response is endorsed. This problem was dealt with in learners' presidents' section of main obstacles.

Secondly, 19% of chairpersons of school governing bodies ranked the problem that women principals lack the ability to discipline as number 2. This lack of ability to discipline can result in ineffective teaching and learning in schools run by females. Mthabela (1997: 32) quotes Ngcongo (1986), who asserts that success is dependent on discipline, as it is a prerequisite for effective schooling. It implies that effective principals are those who initiate and sustain discipline.

Further, 19%, 14.18% and 11% of school governing bodies mentioned the problems that female principals experience intimidation, they don't have the trust and support of the school stakeholders, they experience problems with adult and delinquent learners, and they have family commitments. These problems were ranked numbers 3, 4 and 5 respectively. It is discouraging to note that some of the stakeholders do not support female principals. Human support is very important because it is people who make education work. The quality of the schools and education service depends on the support of staff, educators, principals and school governing bodies. Those people have to deal with not only change on a daily basis; they have to make change possible. Furthermore, real and systemic educational change is worthwhile, and requires the collaboration of, most importantly, educators, learners and their parents. This supports the theory raised by John (1980: 101) in Chapter 2, Barth (1986: 55) and Potgieter *et al.* (1997: 19). John (1980) claims that Fiedler's (1967) relationship-motivated leader appears to function at Maslow's social needs level – wanting to belong, following group norms, and looking for acceptance of the group and the esteem of co-workers. Barth (1986) states that with all the ambiguities of the modern organisational world – the opportunity to discriminate, sabotage, or undercut – a subordinate needs to know that his or her boss is a trustworthy person who is fair and well balanced. Potgieter *et al.* (1997) maintain that the need for co-operation at the school level is reflected in the partnership principle set out in the preamble of the Schools Act of 1996. According to Potgieter *et al.* (1997), not only must the school and the education authorities work together, parents, learners, educators and non-educator members of staff must all accept and share the responsibility for the governance of the school. The principles of co-operative school governance mentioned by Potgieter *et al.* (1997) include co-operation



with one another by establishing a mutual trust and by helping and supporting one another.

Nicholsen (1996: 79) also discusses the problem of family commitments. Nicholsen (1996) says that sex-role spillover seems inescapable for many women, regardless of their seniority, when professional women have to deal with the strain of managing a family and their professional roles. This multi-tasking can lead female principals to suffer from stress. As a result they become confused and ineffective in their leadership.

Learners also mentioned the problem of other learners and ranked it number 3. This was dealt with in that part. This problem would seem to be serious, since it is even endorsed by parents.

Educators also like learners gave a number of obstacles women principals face as leaders. But only the first five are dealt with below. Summarised in Table 4.26 below is the rank order of importance of the five obstacles.

**Table 4.26: Rank order of five main obstacles perceived by educators to be encountered by female secondary principals**

Obstacle	Rank order	Number of respondents			%
		F	M	Total	
Resistance by female principals' macho male counterparts, male learners and men outside the school, because they do not trust female leadership.	1	28	7	35	14.1%
Parents, community and staff lack confidence, respect and trust in women principals' ability to lead, because of stigmatising patriarchal society and mindsets.	2	24	8	32	12.9%
Gender problem because of not being taken seriously by staff and those under them.	3	8	5	13	5.2%
Being more emotional, that is, governed by emotions and being short tempered. This leads to female principals' making emotional decisions.	4	8	5	13	5.2%
Opposition, lack of co-operation and support from other female staff.	5	8	0	8	3.2%

It can be seen in Table 4.26 that 12.9% of educators mention that parents, community and staff lack confidence, respect and trust in women principals, due to the stigmatising

patriarchal society and mindset. Educators ranked that problem as number 1. The same problem was mentioned by chairpersons of school governing bodies. However, school-governing bodies ranked it as number 1. The problem was sufficiently dealt with under main obstacles mentioned by school governing bodies.

Male school members and gender problems followed and were ranked numbers 2 and 3 respectively. 14.1% and 5.2% of educators responded to these problems. Problem number 2 is similar to that of learners and school governing bodies mentioned above. The rank order is also similar. This indicates the truthfulness of the response. Problem number 3 is similar to that identified by learners above, but learners ranked it as number 2. Problems 2 and 3 were sufficiently dealt with under the learners' and school governing bodies sections.

It should also be noted that females are more emotional and that they experience opposition and a lack of co-operation and support from other female staff. The problem that female principals are more emotional is contrary to the assertion of Kabacoff and Peters (1998: 5). Kabacoff and Peters (1998) emphasise that women deal with issues in less emotional ways than men. However, in the researcher's experience, when school members do not comply with orders, anger and frustration do cause female principals to be emotional. This can lead to an environment that is not conducive to teaching and learning.

### **4.3 DATA COLLECTED FROM FEMALE PRINCIPALS**

This section analyses and interprets the responses of female principals with regard to their interviews. It must be remembered that a total of 15 female principals from 15 schools were interviewed. They were interviewed in each school individually, as indicated in Chapter Three.

#### **4.3.1 Responses to closed questions**

The responses to the closed part are reflected in Table 4.27 below. The questions were on:

- Vision,
- team building,
- relationships,
- decision making and
- effective leadership.

**Table 4.27: Female principal' views about being visionary, capable of team building, relationships, decision making and effective leadership**

ITEMS	FEMALE	MALE	BOTH	UNSURE	TOTAL	%
1. With regard to developing and fulfilling a vision for a school, who, between female principals and male principals, are more effective? Why do you think it is so?	04	00	11	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	27%	0%	73%	0	100%	100%
2.1 Who are better facilitators of teamwork among educators between male and female principals? Will you please support your response?	11	01	03	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	73	07	20	00	100	100
2.2 Who are better facilitators of relationships among educators between male and female principals? Give reasons for your answer.	11	01	03	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	73%	7%	20%	0%	100%	100%
2.3 Who better promote the process of achieving tasks by educators, between male and female principals? Give reasons for your answer.	03	01	11	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	20%	7%	73%	0%	100%	100%
3. Between female and male principals, who in your experience better promote collaboration among staff? Substantiate your response.	06	00	08	01	15	100
PERCENTAGES	40%	0%	53%	7%	100%	100%
4. Who are more efficient decision-makers in schools: male principals or female principals?	07	01	07	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	47%	7%	47%	0%	100%	100%
5. In your experience, who leads schools better: men or women? Support your response by giving five reasons in order of importance.	12	00	03	00	15	100%
PERCENTAGES	80%	0%	20%	0%	100%	100%

**Item 1: The gender more effective in developing and fulfilling a vision for a school between female and male principals**

Table 4.27 shows that the majority of female principals (11, or 73%) regard both male and female principals as equally visionary, compared with only 4, or 27%, who perceive male principals to be more visionary and 0, or 0%, of selected male principals to be more visionary. It can be seen that this high percentage of female principals believes that both female and male principals are developing. This perception is contrary to the response given by the majority of the total respondents (30%) in section B in Table 4.5, who regard female principals as more visionary than male principals. It must be remembered that it was clear that most female educators (55, or 50% led by female principals and 24, or 40%, led by male principal) opted for women principals and most male educators (40, or 44.4%, 16 led by females and 24 led by males) opted for male principals. However, this idea was supported by the majority of educators, that is, 79, or 31.9%, who also perceived both male and female principals to be equally visionary. The female principals' choice suggests that female principals believe that both male and female principals are equal in developing visions, while the majority of respondents do not agree, but rather see female principals to be more visionary than male principals. This item is, thus, adequately dealt with in section B of this chapter.

**Item 2.1: The gender better in the facilitation of teamwork among educators between male and female principals**

The majority of female principals (11, or 73%) selected women as better facilitators of teamwork among educators. This means that in many schools female principals facilitate teamwork among educators better than male principals do. This idea is supported by the opinion of most learners' presidents in item 5 in Table 4.9.

**Item 2.2: The gender better in the facilitation of relationships among educators,  
between male and female principals**

Eleven female principals (73%) chose female principals to be better facilitators of relationships among educators. This argument confirmed the argument of the overall respondents, namely educators, learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies in Item 1 in Table 4.9. This item was therefore adequately dealt with in Section C.

**Item 2.3: The gender better in the promotion of the process of achieving tasks by  
educators, between male and female principals**

Most female principals (11, or 73%) regarded both male and female principals to be equally effective in the promotion of the process of achieving tasks, compared with only 1, or 7%, who perceived male principals to be better, and 3, or 20%, viewed female principals as being better than male principals. The responses of the majority correlate with the responses of the majority responses of the school governing bodies, educators and learners in Section B (4.2.2), Item 5 in Table 4.4. This item was therefore dealt with adequately in Section B.

**Item 3: The gender better in the promotion of collaboration among staff,  
between male and female principals**

The data in Table 4.27 indicates that the majority of female principals (8, or 53%) believed that both male and female principals are equally capable of promoting collaboration among staff. This corresponds with the idea given above in Tables 4.15 and 4.16, Items 1 to 10, based on change management, empowerment and motivation. That aspect was thus adequately discussed in Section D.

**Item 4: The gender more efficient in decision-making in schools, between male  
and female principals**

The majority of female principals, 7, or 47%, opted for both female and male principals, which is exactly the same as those (47%) who selected female principals as being more efficient decision-makers. The idea of both confirmed the idea of educators, learners' presidents and school governing bodies in Item 1 in Table 4.19. Therefore that theme was adequately dealt with in the learners' section.

**Item 5: The gender that represents better school leaders**

The information in Table 4.27 shows that the majority of female principals (12, or 80%) selected female principals to be better than male principals in leading schools. This perception supported the perception of the majority of learners' presidents and chairpersons of school governing bodies in Item 1 in Table 4.20.

### **4.3.2 Responses to open-ended questions**

A number of reasons were given in this part. Reasons for the same theme were grouped together. Responses do not correspond with the number of principals because each principal gave as many reasons as she could. The reasons given by female principals for the first part of the questions in Table 4.27 are listed below.

#### **Item 1: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be more effective in developing and fulfilling a vision for a school**

Female principals who were of the opinion that both male and female principals can be visionary gave the following reasons:

- Ten (66.7%) female principals state that being visionary depends on an individual personality and not on gender. According to the principals female and male principals are equally committed, dedicated, can have sense of direction depending on:
  - the ability to involve all stakeholders in order to help achieve the desired goal.
  - the knowledge of what they want to achieve.
  - the effectiveness of the person per se.
  - hard work and knowledge of how to carry forward the school vision, not the principal's vision.

Two of the principals emphasised that they still lack enough secondary female leadership experience. As a result it becomes difficult to give a fair comparison. One principal says that males seem to be more successful, since they occupy the principal's post in most secondary schools.



One, (6.7%), of female principals says that old male or female principals are prepared to work and share visions, but not young male or female principals, since they are polluted by politics. They want to take positions by force without having any direction, that is, they do not know where to take the school. According to this principal, young men are only power hungry.

One (6.7%) female principal stated that each principal has a different leadership style. She argued that females are more motherly and males are more domineering.

Female principals who selected female principals as being more visionary gave reasons as follows:

- It was felt that women are more determined, more enthusiastic and usually have a stronger drive than men.
- One (6.7%) female principal maintains that female principals are quicker to react and more creative than male principals.
- One (6.7%) of the female principals said that female principals are more proactive.
- One (6.7%) of the female principals claims that female principals are more focused.
- One (6.7%) of the female principals argues that both can be developed, but females come to the forefront. According to this principal, females can give a clearer picture than males because the school is like a family for which a female always develops a vision.
- One (6.7%) of the female principals points out that female principals are more patient and have better prioritisation skills. This principal stresses that male principals want things to be done immediately, that is, they do not wait for finances.

On the other hand, female principals never give up. They are steady, even in marriage. They have the ability to prioritise.

**Item 2.1: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be better in the facilitation of teamwork among educators**

Female principals who chose female principals as better facilitators of teamwork among educators than male principals gave the reasons as listed below:

- Six (40%) female principals argue that females have the ability to build effective teams. The principals state that members in most schools led by females work as teams, and female principals demonstrate more care for each other in teams. The principals also say that females are better in teamwork. Therefore, according to the principals, female principals co-ordinate very well. One of the principals says: ‘When I came here to be the principal the staff was divided, but I used my 20 years of deputy principal experience to put the members of the staff together as one team. That was my first and foremost priority to ensure that the staff works as a team. School activities are now coordinated. Everybody gets things going’. She further says: ‘There are six males, yet there are strong teams and the school is highly organised, as you can see it’. Female principals also argue that female principals are able to build a unified staff, particularly if they are family people. According to these principals, the principles females apply in the family are those that they apply at school. This is only observable when the school is free of politics. Finally, the female principals emphasise that male principals rely more on outsiders in order to build effective teams, whereas female principals do it themselves.
- Four (26.7%) female principals say that female principals

- have a more sensitive approach than male principals because females.
- have more sensitivity with regard to the needs of the people around them.
- use the strength of the staff.
- possess a more sensitive way of approaching people, since by knowing the people they can build deep teamwork.
- Male principals force staff into place because they do not have the right approach.
- Two (13.3%) female principals maintained that female principals have more ability to influence others. According to these principals, female principals have a better ability to persuade people and to get confidence and inspire them. The principals pointed out that the above point is proved by the fact that males end up adopting female principals' leadership styles in order for their voice to be heard.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that female principals recognise individuality within the teams better than male principals do.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that headmistresses are compassionate and show no favouritism compared with headmasters. According to this principal, females naturally possess a greater ability to promote good relationships than males do.
- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that female principals have better communication skills than male principals. The principals emphasised that females are always willing to give and receive positive feedback from their subordinates. As a result women can improve co-operation better by men.

Female principals who were of the opinion that both male and female principals can be effective facilitators of teamwork gave the reasons below:

- Two (13.3%) female principals stated that male and female principals have the capacity to build teams in a school. She also says that in most schools led by both female and male principals teamwork is the key factor. Problems are therefore shared, and every school member is part of the team.
- One (6.7%) female principals asserted that being an effective teamwork facilitator relies on personality and not gender. She says, ‘There are, for instance, few males (6) and 21 female educators in my school. When the job is to be done most of the men are involved in sports and most of them are in management position. Deputy principals are also grade co-ordinators. One of the males is a head of department’.

**Item 2.2: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be better in the facilitation of relationships among educators**

Female principals who felt that female principals were better facilitators of relationships among educators than male principals stated their reasons as follows:

- Six (40%) female principals claimed that female principals have better communication skills than male principals do. According to these principals, female principals are better communicators with both female and male staff. The principals stressed that females are soft and tend to listen better than men to all the members of the school. They tend to be at the centre of everything with regard to both female and male staff. As a result, it is easy for them to build friends or to be sociable, whereas males are reserved and hold things in, and as a result it becomes hard to understand their feelings. One of the principals states: ‘I have got eight members of staff, of whom three are females and five are males and I know how to connect with all of them’.

- Three (20%) female principals maintain that female principals are more considerate because they are more approachable, more sympathetic, more caring and more understanding than male principals. She argues that women involve themselves much in school members' issues than men. As a result, the staff members open up better to female principals than to male principals.
- One (6.7%) female principal claimed that female principals possess better interpersonal skills than male principals do. According to this principal, female principals deal better with close relationships with learners, parents and educators, and they take time to listen to them.
- One (6.7%) female principal stressed that female principals have a greater capacity to build teams. This principal argues that if there is teamwork, there are good relationships. The principal was concerned that if there is politics in the school the staff members do not do what the principal expects. She further says that female principals are always willing to put divided people together.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that female principals have better motivation skills. She points out that certificates are even given by some of female principals to all educators who perform well, in order to boost their morale and to promote good and positive relationships.

Female principals who said that both male and female principals can be effective facilitators of relationships gave the following reasons:

- Two (13.3%) principals maintained that being a facilitator of relationships is not about males and females, it is about people.

- One (6.7%) female principal stated that being assertive makes it easy for both male and female principals to achieve the skill of being an effective facilitator of relationships.

Female principals stated their reasons as follows:

- One (6.7%) female principal said that male principals are easily regarded as father figures, while females are sometimes not taken seriously.

**Item 2.3: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be better in the promotion of the process of achieving tasks by educators**

Female principals who were of the opinion that both male and female principals can encourage their educators to achieve tasks gave the following reasons for their responses:

- Nine (60%) female principals argued that encouraging the achievement of tasks depends on the person, not on gender. According to these principals it is not who the leader is, but rather how capable a leader is in instilling a sense of responsibility in people and enhancing co-operation among them. The principals argued that their experience (approximately 20 years) shows that there are weak males and weak females as well, and that there are schools headed by either males or females which have a high pass rate. They further say that very effective teaching and learning is taking place in most of the schools led by either females or males. One says: ‘The pass rate, for instance, has been 100% for the past four years, and last year my school obtained 92%’. According to the principals, it all depends on:
  - how seriously principals take their job, and how task driven they are.

- the principals' sense of responsibility.
- the degree of cooperation shown when doing tasks.
- the principals' ability to do perform close monitoring (which is possible by both males and females if they move out of their offices to ensure that teaching is taking place).
- the principals' willingness to be task oriented.

According to these principals, male principals tend to harass educators and are sometimes very harsh but vague in terms of defining roles. According to the principals if the principals want things to be done, they must let staff know what they want.

- One (6.7%) female principal stated that both are good communicators if there is a teaching and learning problem.

Female principals who stated that female principals were better than male principals at promoting the process of achieving tasks by educators gave the following reasons:

- One (6.7%) female principal said that female principals have consistency, that is, they are more consistent in whatever they do than male principals are.
- One (6.7%) female principal emphasised that women focus more on the instructional curriculum than male principals do. According to this principal, women tend to be more focused on classroom activities, whereas men spend more time on extra-curricular activities.

### **Item 3: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be better in the promotion of collaboration among staff**

Females who said both male and female principals do promote collaboration among staff substantiated this in the following way:

- Five (33.3%) female principals said that promotion of collaboration among staff is not gender determined and depends on:
  - one's personality.
  - principals' understanding of the gender ethics of their staff. the way leadership aims to achieve effective goals.
- One of the principals stated that old principals promote collaboration among staff better than young ones. According to the principals this is because young principals are politically minded. They say that it is rare that old principals are involved in politics. The principal is concerned that it becomes difficult to share things in schools full of politics, and it is hard to aim at desired goals.
- Three (20%) female principals said that both male and female principals:
  - can act effectively depending on the leadership skills they possess.
  - have the capability to promote the image of the school equally well.
  - have the ability to remain accountable for all duties even when these are carried out collaboratively.

Female principals who selected female principals to be better than male principals in promoting collaboration among staff substantiated their argument as follows:

- Three (20%) female principals pointed out that female principals are more collaborative and democratic. According to the principals, women are generally collaborative goal-setters. One of the principals illustrated the point by saying that associated women in the church situation, for instance, can meet and talk about the shared vision and carry out an activity such as craft work, which they do together and sell.



- Two (13.3%) female principals stated that female principals are more considerate. The female principals argued that it is female principals' innate nature to see everyone happy and performing at his or her best, because they are more caring and understanding, while at the same time firm.
- One (6.7%) female principal says that female principals have better communication skills than male principals (that is, they possess the ability to communicate well in terms of the needs, strengths and weaknesses of the school and to work on them as well).

The female principal who was unsure how to respond gave the following reason:

- One (6.7%) female principal stated that she lacked the experience of a female role model leader because she had imitated most of the skills displayed by her father, who had also been a principal.

**Item 4: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to be more efficient in decision-making in schools**

The female principals who were of the view that both female and male principals are efficient decision-makers in schools gave responses as follows:

- Six (40%) female principals said that all principals, either male or female have to make efficient decisions. According to the principals, good decision-makers are found among males as well as among females, and there are schools led by either females or males where decisions are shared with all stakeholders. The principals said that both parties can sit with the group and take decisions depending on:

- the fundamental support one gets,
- the sense of accountability and
- individual character.
- The principals argued that men tend to take more risks than women do.
- They also said that men do not listen as well as women do.

Female principals who chose female principals to be more efficient decision-makers than male principals supported their views thus:

- Two (13.3%) female principals maintained that female principals are more effective and more creative problem solvers and decision-makers. Female principals said that female principals even find solutions from learners. These principals further argued that females also have the ability to weigh up a situation, whereas males tend to think that since they are males their decision is final, without considering others.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that female principals have fear of failure compared with male principals, that is, they do not want to be associated with failure.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that more male principals are more patient than male principals are.
- One (6.7%) female principal claimed that female principals are more capable of building teams than male principals are.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that female principals possess better communication skills, that is, they are better listeners and find themselves being listened to; whereas males make decisions before consulting the staff.

- One (6.7%) female principal stressed that female principals are more proactive than male principals are. The principal argued that even in the home females are more proactive. Mothers foresee things and react, and this is applicable to schools as well. According to the principal it is the female principal who senses problems.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that female principals are more supportive and directive. The principal pointed out that females are more supportive of staff and that they are capable of driving and giving guidelines, rules and regulations to school members.

Female principals who felt that male principals were more efficient decision-makers than female principals gave the following reason:

- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that males are more confident about sharing their decisions because the world is dominated by them. Females do make good decisions, but they are scared to express them and to implement them.
- **Item 5: The reasons for perceiving the particular gender to represent better school leaders**

Female principals who chose female principals to be better school leaders than male principal gave the following reasons:

- Six (40%) female principals stated that female principals are more task-oriented and responsible. The principals said that women are more committed to their work, more responsible in the positions they hold, more prepared to work hard and more capable of working extra time because many of females regard principalship as a calling compared with men, who want money. In other words, according to these

principals, women put work before money. As a result, they become better promoters of effective teaching and create better learning situations than men do.

- Three (20%) female principals maintained that women have better communication skills than men do. The principals stressed that women are better listeners because they are mothers.
- Three (20%) female principals stated that woman principals are more considerate. According to these principals, women are more loving than male principals because they give more and receive less; they have also concern for learners, parents and educators.
- Three (20%) female principals stressed that women perform better and have a better sense of cleanliness. According to these principals, women are more capable of keeping the school clean and in good condition; and women also strive for success more than men do. This argument, according to these principals, is proved by the fact that the schools led by females are the best schools in the district with regard to performance and cleanliness.
- Two (13.3%) female principals were of the opinion that women have better leadership skills than men do. According to these principals the women's leadership styles are not recognised because it hard for women to get leadership positions in secondary schools. The principals say that their point can be proved by the action of the president of South Africa of promoting 46% women to leadership positions, that is, cabinet ministerial positions. One of the principals says: 'I was a Head of Department (HOD) for fifteen years. My department was prosperous and I have been a principal for five years. My school has never stop being successful. Women

are asked to do their job. Only in the past women were not given chance and it seemed as if they were incapable.’

- Two (13.3%) female principals argued that women are more visionary than men are.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that women have better organisational and motivational skills.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that women are more proactive.
- One (6.7%) female principal claimed that women are more logical in their ideas, that is, they are more capable of structuring their ideas.
- One (6.7%) female principal maintained that female principals have better delegation skills than male principals do, that is, they are more clear in delegating tasks and they know who to ask and who not to.
- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that women are more transformational than men are, that is, they are more open to change than men are.
- One (3.7%) female principal pointed out that women have more capacity to build teams. According to these principal, women are better team players.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that women are more capable of managing stress than men are.
- One (6.7%) female principal maintained that both males and females more readily accepted women than men.
- 1 (3.7%) female principal claimed that women define roles more clearly than men do. According to this principal, women are more likely to say what is expected of everybody under their control.

- One (3.7%) female principal stated that woman principals are more able to handle finances profitably, because most of them are trustworthy and used to doing budgets in their own homes.

Female principals who perceived both male and female principals to be equally effective as school leaders gave the following reasons:

- One (6.7%) female principal said that being an effective leader does not depend on gender. Both have a sense of accountability for all school activities, are capable of leading by example, are efficient decision-makers and are level-headed even under stressful conditions.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that both can be effective leaders, but said that males are more accepted by society than females, who are not accepted even if they are efficient and effective. According to this principal many of the school staff have the perception that males are better than females. As a result they respect males more than females, and schools led by males are more disciplined because it is the male staff who lack discipline in schools led by females.

Table 4.28 below is a summary of the first five reasons female principals consider female principals to be more effective school leaders than male principals. It should be remembered that the majority of female principals supported this response.

**Table 4.28: Rank order of the first five female principals' reasons for perceiving female principals to be more effective school leaders than male principals**

Reason	Rank order	Number of respondents	Percentage
They are more task-oriented and responsible, which results in effective teaching and learning.	1	6	40%
They have better communication skills by virtue of being women. Females are better listeners.	2	3	20%

They are more considerate due to their loving character. As a result they are more sensitive to both educators' and learners' problems.	3	3	20%
They have a better sense of cleanliness and perform better. Schools led by females are the best schools in the district with regard to cleanliness and performance.	4	3	20%
Possession of better leadership skills than men. This argument is proved by the President of South Africa's promoting 46% women to leadership positions (cabinet ministerial positions) in 2004.	5	2	13.35

Table 4.28 shows that the reason ranked as number 1 by 40% of female principals was that female principals are more task-oriented and responsible, which leads to effective teaching and learning. Blackmore (1999: 13) states that women manifest a positive attitude towards their work, which confirms this assertion. The assertion that female principals have better communication was ranked number 2 by 20% principals, compared with 40%, which was a reduction by half. This idea is similar to the learners' idea, but it was ranked differently. Learners ranked it number 1. This idea was adequately dealt with in Section C.

The opinions that women are more considerate and that they have better sense of cleanliness were ranked 3 and 4 respectively by 20% and 13.3% of female principals. The reason ranked as number 3 tallies with the learners' idea, but the learners ranked it as number 2. This was also covered adequately in Sections B and C.

Finally, the assertion that female principals possess better leadership skills was ranked fifth by 13.3% of female principals. This was adequately dealt with in Sections B, C and D.

#### **Item 6: Main obstacles woman principals face as leaders**

Female principals stated that they experience the following obstacles in the schools they lead:

- Five (33.3%) female principals say that women face the problem of being resisted and conflicting with males. According to these principals, some males are prejudiced against women, that is, they belong to the old school of thought that men are superior to women, and they do not trust females because of gender stereotypes. As a result, some males do not want to take instructions from women. They do not see females as equal to them, and they end up not complying with female orders. The principals argue that females experience conflicts with males of the school governing bodies because males in the governing bodies have no training and have not been brought up knowing that women need to be recognised. In one of schools led by females the school governing body was female dominated and there were no problems with the parents.
- Five (33.3%) female principals claim that female principals experience a lack of support and acceptance from fathers and other school members in the community when dealing with learners who misbehave. According to these principals, this occurs because females are not accepted in the community due to the stereotypical perceptions, socialisation and cultural background, especially that of African men. Community members do not trust females because they are still regarded as inferior, as unable to lead and as having a lower standing than men. As a result, a woman's word is not taken seriously, and it is easy for the enemy to influence the community to turn against the principal. This causes the principal to be left with few supportive community members, which makes it difficult to run the school smoothly. These principals say further that the school members often question women's authority because women are regarded as having naturally weak characters.



- Four (26.7%) female principals stated that some learners do not respect the authority of female principals because of the stereotypical perception that females are always weak.
- Four (26.7%) female principals maintained that female principals lack departmental support, especially the support of the Department of Education and circuit managers. This lack of support, according to female principals, is due to the fact that males dominate leadership positions in the department. As a result, they listen only to males. The principals are concerned that departmental officials also do not show the same respect for females as they do for males. The principals further said that the department is also an obstacle because of their unrealistic expectations: female principals are constantly blamed for failing to achieve these.
- Three (20%) female principals pointed out that some educators do not want to comply with female principals' orders, and this makes it difficult to work. According to these principals the resistance is caused by the fact that educators have the perception that a female is weak and they take advantage by not carrying out their work adequately.
- One (6.7%) female principal stressed that most of the time a female principal tries to impress people instead of employing appropriate leadership skills in a school. One (6.7%) female principal said that most female principals suffer from stress because principalship is not an easy job. That is, it is time consuming and stressful.
- One (6.7%) female principal maintained that the policy-makers are also an obstacle to women principals. According to these female principals, there are no female representatives on departmental decision- and policy-making.

- One (6.7%) female principal argued that female principals lack family support. According to the female principals, men in some families do not support women. The principal emphasised that women's success depends on the support they get from their husbands. The principal states that there are husbands who, because of the South African culture, have a problem with their wives' coming home late from work. This culture is problematic for any woman's progress because she is not free from the kitchen. The male mindset needs to change. If the acceptance of both partners in the relationship is improved, both will automatically be socially accepted.
- Female principals who said that female principals are not experiencing problems in their leadership gave the following reasons:
- One (6.7%) female principal said that there is no opposition from male counterparts. According to her, it all depends on approach and leadership style and that one has to possess the ability to draw people close, even in the community.
- One (6.7%) female principals stated: 'Ten years being the principal I personally have not suffered too many obstacles because of being in position of working in girls' school only. My gender was a benefit. Working with the educational department I felt the respect of male colleagues as I work hard. I have not really found myself in the position not taken seriously as a woman'.

The five obstacles faced by women as school leaders and ranked most highly are listed in Table 4.29 below.

**Table 4.29: Rank order of main obstacles which female principals see as faced by female school leaders**

Obstacle	Rank order	Number of respondents	Percentage
Being resisted and drawn into conflict by males. Some males are prejudiced against women and do not want to comply with female principals' instructions because of the males belonging to the old school of thought that says that men are superior to women.	1	10	66.7%
Learners may be problematic to female principals because they do not respect the authority of females, due to the stereotypical perception that females are weak.	2	4	26.7%
Lack of Departmental support, especially the support of the Department of Education and circuit managers, caused by the fact that leadership positions in the departments are dominated by males. As a result departmental members listen only to males.	3	4	26.7%
Having a gender problem. Because females are regarded as having weak characters, school members often question women's authority. As a result, school staff, especially educators, take advantage and do not perform their work.	4	3	20%
Female principals suffer from stress because principalship is not an easy job. That is, it is time consuming and stressful.	5	1	6.7%

Table 4.29 shows that 66.7% of female principals are of the opinion that female principals are faced with problems caused by some male school members. According to female principals, males resist them and come into conflict with them; males are also prejudiced against them. Female principals ranked this problem as number 1. Learners' presidents, school governing bodies and educators also mentioned the same problem. It is discouraging to notice that this problem has been ranked number 1 by all respondents. This means that there is adequate proof of the existence of this problem. This problem was dealt with in the section dealing with learners above. The problems female principals face with regard to learners followed as number 2.

Learners and school governing bodies support this idea. Learners and school governing bodies also mentioned the same problem, but ranked it 3 and 4. This means that the validity of this problem is sufficiently confirmed. It was dealt with in the section dealing with learners.

Lack of departmental support and gender problems were ranked 3 and 4. The gender problem was also included in the rank order of learners and educators above. It was ranked 2 by learners and 3 by educators, however. This was dealt with in the section dealing with learners. Mort and Ross (1957: 81) confirm the female principals' assertion that the lack of departmental support was an obstacle. Fennel *et al.* calls the obstacle a 'legitimate gap' and points out that institutional authorities are less likely to back up the authority of females than that of males. The assistance and continued support which schools require should come from provincial, regional and district education departments. These departments have a major responsibility to help schools adopt the new approach to management by providing support. Therefore, because female principals are not getting that support, it is difficult for them to perform as effectively as they are expected to.

**Item 7: Highlights of the experience of female principals as female leaders in secondary schools**

This question generated many responses from female principals. The researcher grouped similar themes and then rank-ordered them according to their scores. Those that scored most highly came first. The number of responses does not tally with the number of respondents due to the fact that each respondent was free to give as much as she could. Only three will be dealt with, however. Respondents were also asked to give positive and negative experiences. In responding to this item, both successes and failures were identified.

Female principals highlighted their successes as follows:

- Seven (46.7%) female principals stated that they have developed a culture of discipline among educators and learners in their schools. The principals said that they have improved the behaviour of troublesome learners who were loitering around in the absence of an educator. But now, according to the principals, learners remain in classrooms even in the absence of educators. The principals also say that they have decreased the number of learner and educator late-comers. They further stated that they have promoted loyalty among staff. One of the principals says: 'There is an improvement in discipline. I do act as the principal but I do not want to apply for the post and be permanent because there are still some learners who are naughty.' Finally, the principals pointed out that there was a problem of drug abuse among learners in many of their schools, but that has been improved. It is nonetheless difficult because parents do not want their children to be suspended.
- Seven (46.7%) female principals pointed out that they have improved Matriculation results. In one school Grade 12 results have improved from 35% - 80%, with distinctions in some subjects such as Accounting and Mathematics. In the second school, Matriculation results have improved from 73% in 2002 to 85% in 2003 the year in which the interviewed female principal started acting as the principal. In the third school Matriculation results have improved from 72% - 96%. As a result, people who left the school want to come back. In the fourth school the results improved to 90%. In the fifth school there was a 48% pass rate in 2003, but it was the first Grade 12 in the school and that was the year in which the interviewed principal started acting as the principal. In the sixth school, Matriculation results have improved to 72% and above, and in the last school the Matriculation pass rate has been improved from 72% - 85% and above since the interviewed principal has taken over.

- Four (26.7%) female principals maintained that they have been able to maintain and keep Matriculation results consistent. One school's results were an over 90% pass rate in the years that the interviewed principal has been the principal; she has been the principal for eight years and she has 18 years' experience in management. In the second school, the school has an 80% - 85% pass rate. The principal of that school even said that some of the learners she teaches always come and greet her because they feel she has given them something. The third school has maintained a 100% pass rate in Matriculation since the post was taken by the interviewed female. The fourth principal interviewed says that the school she runs has achieved a good academic record. Two of the learners in her school were among the top ten in the province of KwaZulu-Natal. As a result, one of the schools was awarded the trophy in 2003 for pass rate and exemption.
- Two (13.3%) female principals said that they have succeeded in developing a very good teaching staff and learners. As a result the staff members know what is expected of them and they are committed. The principals say that a lot of counselling members have been organised, and that many of the girls are involved in many extra-mural activities. Consequently, in 1998, twenty girls doing Arts and History at one of the schools were taken overseas. One of the two interviewed principals says that she enjoys the respect of the community because she was also a learner of the same school and she originates from the same community. That enables her to work well with the girls. She further says that she even receives compliments from black fathers, who say that she has spirit of *ubuntu*, that is, she is loving and understanding. Finally, the principals said that school morale has been boosted since they were promoted, which is noticed even by other educators.

- One (6.7%) female principal stated that she has been able to build relationships with schools in Sweden and India. She also says she has been able to build a sound infrastructure.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that was able to upgrade the school from Grade 10 to Grade 12; to buy office equipment such as computers and some furniture. She has renovated some of the classrooms and the process is still going on. She finds that she is gaining acceptance from the community.
- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that she has had useful interaction with other principals during meetings. She has also gained respect from the school members, and some even bow when she walks past.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that she introduced a Matriculation dance in 2003 and this has been successful.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that she devised a uniform for the school and succeeded in promoting the playing of soccer and netball despite the lack of sports fields.
- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that in 2003 the school was awarded the national teacher award for leadership, school enrolment has increased from 900 to 1300 children representing all cultural groups. In 2004 a girl from the school represented South Africa in the English Olympiad essay competition, and she has developed a Speech and Drama centre, which receives a great deal of support from the school governing body.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that the school is new, yet there is a photocopier, fax machine, TV and video. They are also waiting for administration

computers, and she was also able to organise enough learning material and extra lessons for learners. All this contributes to the improvement of the school results.

- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that she has succeeded in school maintenance such as the upgrading of the school, the library has been restored to a usable state, and the tennis court has been renovated.

It can be seen from the list that 7, or 46.7%, female principals are of the opinion that they have succeeded in developing a culture of discipline in their schools. It would seem that some female principals have developed a culture of discipline in their schools. The school governing bodies' chairpersons refuted this idea (Item F2 above). The chairpersons of school governing bodies maintained that female principals lack discipline. This implies that what the principals think they are doing in school discipline is not noticed by parents. Parents probably have this idea because from a distance they perceive there to be disorder in schools led by female principals.

Ten principals (66.7%) pointed out that they had improved, maintained and kept high Matriculation results. This means that in many schools headed by female principals grade 12 learners are performing well. Blackmore (1999: 13) endorses the fact of these female principals' success (2.2.2). Blackmore (1999) claims that women are often more flexible, more sensitive and thus more successful. According to Blackmore (1999), their success is due to the fact that women spend more time with their peers, and value cohesiveness and value group activities more highly than men do. Matriculation results are important indicators as to whether the school is effective or ineffective in teaching and learning.



Finally, 2 principals (13%) maintained that they had succeeded in motivating staff and learners. This indicates that there are female principals who motivate educators and learners. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991: 138) support the idea of motivating staff. Lunenburg and Ornstein (1991) contend that the effectiveness of a leader in achieving group performance is contingent upon the leader's motivation and the degree to which the leader controls the situation. Stoner and Freeman (1992: 426) further confirmed the idea of motivation. Stoner and Freeman (1992) state that leadership style is defined by the leaders' need for structure or motivation. Therefore, female principals are performing essential tasks. Without motivation, educators' morale drops. As a result, educators' morale needs to be boosted now and again through motivation.

Conversely, the respondents cited the following issues that hinder effective leadership:

- Seven (46.7%) female principals argued that principalship is not an easy task, and that they experience financial difficulties in the schools. The principals said that they do not have adequate finances because school fees do not meet their needs. They indicated that some parents do not pay the school fees. They are unable to carry out school improvements, and as a result it is difficult to improve the appearance of the school and to build the classrooms they need. One principal said that a sponsor had been found who built about six classrooms. Another principal said that she wants to establish an orchestra but she cannot get it off the ground because of financial and time constraints. One principal said that it is hard even to buy chalk.
- One (6.7%) female principal said that in her experience principals are always perceived to be weak physically and emotionally. As a result, whatever decisions they make are scrutinised before they are accepted.

- One (6.7%) female principal stated that she has a problem in running feeding schemes, organising clothing and employing social workers.
- One (6.7%) female principal has the concern that learners often miss out on teaching and learning time. According to the principal, learners miss lessons because of principals' workshops, which take place from time to time.
- One (6.7%) female principal pointed out that their school has had no failures so far, but that the school governing body is often discouraged and are always anticipating poor Matriculation results. The principal also showed concern that she has many displaced educators, who are difficult to work with. The principal says that out of twenty-eight educators, ten educators are displaced. Among them is the deputy principal.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that there is lack of strong parental support because most parents are single. As a result, they have to work hard and have time only for that. There are no bursary and scholarship programmes in the school, and it is hard to obtain sponsorship, as the school is still regarded as being advantaged, which is something of the past, since there are about 360 black and Indian learners in the school. The school is one of the few representing all the race groups. Charity day must be held every week, and the school has not succeeded in doing that.
- One (6.7%) female principal stated that she is willing to allow learners to do seven subjects, but has failed to make this possible because of the shortage of staff. The reasons for the shortage include:
  - The Department of Education does not pay for volunteer staff.
  - There are staff members who lack a work ethic because of the bad influence of certain management staff whom they support.

- There is a lack of unity amongst the staff, despite the fact that mediation has been sought from the circuit manager because of the presence of strong and bad influential management group in the school.
- The principal further says that despite her seven years' experience as a principal, two years as head of department and twenty five years as an educator (six years' primary teaching experience), she fails in her efforts to organise the staff due to the above-mentioned factors.
- One 6.7%) female principal says that previously there were non-cooperative staff at her school, but they left the school and some of them have been boarded.

It would seem that the majority of female principals (that is, 7, or 46.7%) said that they lacked finances. That is, they battle financially, which leads to difficulties in terms of school development and improvement. Money is the lifeblood of the institution. Without money institutions could not function effectively. Most female principals expressed a need to be provided with finances. However, it was clear that many of the female principals' schools were successful in many activities despite financial hardship. The evidence of this claim has been shown in the successes mentioned above.

## **4.4 DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS**

### **4.4.1 Restatement of the assumption and testing it against the themes**

The assumption stated in Chapter One is: There is significant difference in the perceptions of leadership between males and females as leaders.

The assumption is tested against the themes stated in 4.1 of this chapter in order to find out whether the assumption is disproved or confirmed.

#### **Theme 1: Assessment of administration, vision, goals and tasks.**

There were three negative items out of 9 items. The majority of the overall respondents disagreed with only two of these. The negative items were:

- Item 2: Male principals are less efficient than female principals.
- Item 5: Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals.
- Item 8: Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals are.

This means that the majority of the respondents did not consider male principals to be better than female principals in terms of school administration, being visionary and setting school goals. The idea that male principals are not better at administration than female principals was endorsed by the response of the open-ended question in this theme, since the overall majority perceived female principals to be more visionary than male principals. Although that response was contrary to the female principals' view, 10, or 66.7%, of female principals opted for both. This is probably because female

principals perceive female and male principals to be equally visionary. Their vision is appreciated and recognised by the school members, especially school governing bodies and learners. (cf. 4.2.3 item 10 of this chapter) It is common that one can do good things and that these things could not be noticed by the leader himself or herself, but rather noticed by others who are observing him or her and benefiting from his or her actions. On the basis of this data the assumption is therefore endorsed.

**(b) Theme 2: Evaluation of relationship, communication and team building**

In this theme the agreement point is 5 out of 9 and the rest are neutral points. The results show that female principals are better than male principals at establishing relationships, engaging in communication and in building teams as well. Despite the neutral response of the overall respondents in the open-ended question of this theme, female principals and learners supported the response. Eleven female principals (73%) and 13 learners (48%) perceived female principals to be better at team-building, communication and in promoting positive working relationships with school members than men do. The assumption restated in this section is therefore confirmed.

**(c) Theme 3: Evaluation of change management, empowerment  
(staff development) and motivation.**

It should be recalled that this theme consisted of nine closed-ended questions and one open-ended one. The nine closed questions consisted of four negative items. Those negative questions were as follows:

- *Item 1:* Male principals initiate fewer implementable ideas than female principals do.

- *Item 5:* Male principals are less efficient in influencing change in schools than female principals are.
- *Item 7:* Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than female principals do.
- *Item 8:* Male principals use less innovative techniques to accomplish the group's goals than female principals do.

The positive items were as follows:

- *Item 1* Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than female principals are.
- *Item 3* Male principals involve parents and the community during strategic planning of the school more often than female principals do.
- *Item 4:* Male principals make use of learners' ideas more often than female principals do.
- *Item 6:* Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals are.
- *Item 9:* Male principals use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or needs more appropriately than female principals do.

All the total responses were neutral on all the above items. Those responses indicate that both male and female principals are perceived to be the same in the management of change, empowering subordinates and motivating school members. However, the majority of learners disagreed with the negative items and with the three positive items, that is, items 2, 3 and 9. On one hand, according to most learners male principals:

- initiate more implementable ideas.
- are more efficient in influencing change in schools.
- reinforce good practice among staff much better.
- use more innovative techniques to accomplish the group's goals

than female principals do.

On the other hand, learners believe that male principals:

- are not better in fostering development among staff.
- do not more often involve parents and the community during strategic planning of the school.
- do not use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or needs more appropriately than female principals do.

Ten school governing bodies (37%) agreed with the positive item 9, and 11 (40.7%) disagreed with the negative item 5. That means that according to the school governing bodies, male principals use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or needs more appropriately (negating learners' view), and that male principals are more efficient in influencing change in schools than female principals (confirming learners' idea). However, those agreement and disagreement responses did not affect the results, which were the neutral stance in the overall score, which implies that both female and male principals are equally effective in school change management, empowerment and motivation. This perception was confirmed by the data obtained from the open-ended question, where the majority (196,

or 65%) of the total respondents regarded both male and female principals to be equally transformational. It was also endorsed by the responses of the majority (8, or 53%) of female principals who viewed both male and female principals to be equally transformational. The female principals' characteristics, that is, that they were females, did not influence their response. The assumption restated in this section is thus negated.

**(d) Theme 4: Assessment of conflict management**

This theme was made up of only five closed items. Two items, that is 3 and 4, were negative. The negative items were as follows:

- *Item 3:* Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals do.
- *Item 4:* Female principals are less creative problem solvers in schools than male principals are.
- The positive items were as follows:
  - *Item 1:* Female principals use more effective decision- making processes than male principals do.
  - *Item 2:* Female principals facilitate group in decision-making processes more efficiently than male principals do.
  - *Item 5:* Female principals resolve conflict between others and themselves more effectively than male principals do.

The overall score indicated that the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed (were neutral) with the items. That means that according to the majority of the respondents,



both female and male principals are equally effective in conflict management and decision making. There was only one disagreement for the overall scores of all the groups, that is, item 4, where they negate the fact that female principals are less creative problem solvers in schools than male principals are. It means that according to them, female principals are more creative in solving school problems.

However, 14 and 12 learners (51% and 44.4%) disagreed with the two negative items. According to learners, female principals evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better and are more creative problem solvers in schools than male principals are (endorsing the school governing bodies' response). However, that learners' response did not affect the outcomes, that is, the neutral stands. This neutral response is further endorsed by 7 female principals (47%), who also regarded both female and male principals to be equally efficient decision makers in schools. The assumption restated above is negated.

**(e) Theme 5: Assessment of effective leadership**

The overall score of the closed-ended part of this item shows that both male and female principals are effective leaders. Although 12 female principals (80%) supported by 14 learners (51.9%) said that female principals are better leaders than male principals are, it did not affect the neutral outcome of the data. This is due to the lowest percentage (8%) of the overall respondents obtained when the number of female principals was added to the number of learners, that is, 14, compared with 31.9% of the score of 92 educators and 9 school governing bodies chairpersons. It appears that female principals selected females as better leaders because they are themselves females. It can therefore be accepted that the data indicated that both female and male principals are effective leaders, depending on the individual personality and leadership skills they possess. The assumption in this section is negated.

Regarding obstacles, it would seem that the obstacle which the overall respondents ranked as number one is that male school members resist female principals' leadership. Female principals themselves endorsed this problem during their interviews. Female principals also ranked it number 1. This problem seems to be a serious problem, and there were no solutions suggested. The problem females faced with secondary learners related to this problem. Learners' presidents supported by school governing bodies showed concern about this problem. Female principals confirmed this view when they also mentioned it as one of the problems faced by female principals. The third problem listed by both educators and learners' presidents was the gender problem. Female principals also mentioned this during their interviews.

Problems also mentioned were:

- female principals' lack of imposing discipline (mentioned by school governing bodies)
- female principals' lack of departmental support (mentioned by female principals themselves)
- female principals' tendency to be emotional (mentioned by educators)
- the lack of parental and communal support, trust, respect and confidence experienced by female principals' (mentioned by learners and school governing bodies)
- female staff's opposition to female principals and a lack of cooperation and support from these staff members
- female principals' commitment to their families (mentioned by school governing bodies)

- female principals' lack of conflict-resolution skills and their poor communication (mentioned by learners).

The reactions of the respondents to this item suggest that serious problems exist which need attention. Most of the evidence they gave was that all the problems are due to the traditional patriarchal belief that men are superior to women. Further evidence was that secondary schools' leadership is still dominated by males. This is evident from the number of schools (32) led by female principals in Umlazi district compared with big number of schools (121) secondary schools led by males. Most of the females, especially blacks, were acting principals. This is also evident from the detailed statement of the problem stated in Chapter 1 of this study.

The issue of greatest concern is that the available literature provides no guidelines as to how female principals can resolve the problems they face in secondary schools.

Pertaining to the highlights of the successes of female principals mentioned above, most female principals, that is, 10, or 66.7%, appeared to have succeeded in improving the grade 12 pass rate and maintaining the high rate despite the failure to secure finances. Seven female principals (46.7%) expressed their concern in this regard.

## **4.5 STATISTICAL ANALYSIS**

### **4.5.1 Data analysis for comparing views on male and female principals**

#### **(a) Data layout**

Questionnaires were sent to 302 respondents. The respondents' characteristics of interest are:

- gender
- group (educator, member of school governing bodies [SGB] or member of learner representative councils [LRC])
- location of school (urban, semi-urban or rural).

In all the other sections the respondents were asked to answer questions that compare the performances of male and female school principals. The responses were grouped according to perception (9 questions), comparison (10 questions) and leadership style (13 questions). Each question is in the form of a statement. The respondents had to indicate the extent to which they agreed (strongly agree, agree, neutral, disagree, strongly disagree) with a statement.

The following abbreviations are used in the discussions:

- SA – strongly agree
- A – agree
- N – neutral
- D – disagree
- SD – strongly disagree

The coding of the responses is done in the following way:

- For questions with positive statements SA = 5, A = 4, N = 3, D = 2 and SD = 1.
- For questions with negative statements SA = 1, A = 2, N = 3, D = 4 and SD = 5.

Therefore a high code (agreement with a positive statement or disagreement with a negative statement) would indicate a positive rating and a low code (disagreement with a positive statement or disagreement with a negative statement) a negative rating.

#### 4.5.2 Perception

The responses to the perception questions are summarised in the table below.

**Table 4.30 Responses to perception questions**

Question	1	2	3	4	5	Mean	Rank	% low	% high
B1(+)	55	61	105	36	45	2.851	6	38.41	26.82
B3(+)	45	75	112	43	27	2.775	7	39.74	23.18
B5(-)	12	42	113	83	52	3.400	2	17.88	44.70
B7(+)	46	78	109	39	30	2.765	8	41.06	22.85
C1(+)	22	48	104	91	37	3.242	4	23.18	42.38
C6(-)	11	40	112	94	45	3.404	1	16.89	46.03
D2(+)	30	69	127	64	12	2.864	5	32.78	25.17
D6(+)	35	79	131	41	16	2.748	9	37.75	18.87
E4(-)	10	48	117	96	31	3.298	3	19.21	42.05

(+) Question with a positive statement.

(-) Question with a negative statement.

Rank 1 question with largest mean, rank 2 – question with second largest mean etc.

% low Sum of answers coded 1 or 2 as a percentage of the total.

% high Sum of answers coded 4 or 5 as a percentage of the total.

B1 Male principals are better administrators than female principals.

B3 Male principals have better visions than female principals.

B5 Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals.

- B7 Male principals organize school activities more efficiently than female principals.
- C1 Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.
- C6 Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals.
- D2 Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than male principals.
- D6 Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals.
- E4 Female principals are less creative problem solvers than male principals.

#### *Comments*

- For all the questions there is a considerable percentage of respondents that are neutral (lowest 34.4% for C1, highest 43.4% for D6).
- Due to the high percentage of neutral answers, the overall mean response is not too high on the 1 to 5 scale (lowest 2.748, highest 3.404).
- The mean responses to C6, B5, E4 and C1 are significantly higher than 3 (positive) and the mean responses to D2, B1, B3, B7 and D6 are significantly lower than 3 (negative).

**Table 4.31: Positive and negative responses to perception questions**

Positive	Negative
Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals (disagree).	Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than male principals (disagree).
Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals (disagree).	Male principals are better administrators than female principals (disagree).
Female principals are less creative problem solvers than male principals (disagree)	Male principals have better visions than female principals (disagree).
Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals (agree).	Male principals organize school activities more efficiently than female principals (disagree).

	Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals (disagree).
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- The considerable neutral percentage together with the results summarized in table 4.3.1 indicates that there is little difference in the way male and female principals are perceived. The only difference is on the issue of a more open and warm relationship with staff (female principals perceived as better than male ones).

### 4.5.3 Comparison

**Table 4.32: Responses to comparison questions**

Question	1	2	3	4	5	mean	rank	% low	% high
B2(-)	9	28	137	82	46	3.424	1	12.25	42.38
B4(+)	39	79	112	43	29	2.815	9	39.07	23.84
B6(+)	37	74	99	68	24	2.894	7	36.76	30.46
B9(+)	42	81	103	47	29	2.801	10	40.73	25.17
C2(+)	22	56	99	90	35	3.199	5	25.83	41.39
C4(+)	30	61	115	69	27	3.007	6	30.13	31.79
D1(-)	7	44	138	78	35	3.298	3	16.89	37.42
D5(-)	9	36	133	87	37	3.354	2	14.90	41.06
D7(-)	13	42	137	86	24	3.219	4	18.21	36.42
E5(+)	24	80	134	49	15	2.838	8	34.44	21.19

- B2      Male principals are less efficient than female principals.
- B4      Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals.
- B6      Male principals define roles more clearly than female principals.
- B9      Male principals are more effective in achieving goals than female principals.
- C2      Female principals facilitate relationships better than male principals.

- C4        There is a more friendly atmosphere under female principals than under male principals.
- D1        Male principals initiate fewer ideas that can be implemented than female principals.
- D5        Male principals are less efficient in influencing change than female principals.
- D7        Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than female principals.
- E5        Female principals resolve conflict more effectively than male principals.

#### *Comments*

- For all the questions there is a considerable percentage of respondents that are neutral (lowest 32.8% for C2 and B6, highest 43.4% for D1).
- Due to the high percentage of neutral answers, the overall mean response is not too high on the 1 to 5 scale (lowest 2.801, highest 3.424).
- The mean responses to B2, D5, D1, D7 and C2 are significantly higher than 3 (positive), the mean responses to E5, B4 and B9 are significantly lower than 3 (negative) and those to C4 and B6 equal to 3 (neutral).

**Table 4.33: Positive and negative responses to comparison questions**

Positive	Negative
Male principals are less efficient than female principals (disagree).	Female principals resolve conflict more effectively than male principals (disagree).
Male principals are less efficient in influencing change than female principals (disagree).	Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals (disagree).



Male principals initiate fewer ideas that can be implemented than female principals (disagree).	Male principals are more effective in achieving goals than female principals (disagree).
Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than female principals (disagree).	
Female principals facilitate relationships better than male principals (agree).	

The considerable neutral percentage together with the results summarized in table 4 indicates that there is little difference when comparing male and female principals. The only difference is on the issue of facilitating relationships (female principals perceived as better than male ones).

#### 4.5.4 Leadership style

**Table 4.34: Responses to difference in leadership style**

Question	1	2	3	4	5	mean	rank	% low	% high
B8(-)	19	49	119	79	36	3.212	5	22.52	38.08
C3(-)	8	27	108	98	61	3.586	1	11.59	52.65
C5(+)	25	65	129	63	20	2.960	7	29.80	27.48
C7(+)	23	62	133	58	26	3.007	6	28.15	27.81
C8(-)	6	36	120	89	51	3.474	2	13.91	46.36
C9(+)	29	65	120	65	23	2.960	7	31.13	29.14
D3(+)	23	89	128	51	11	2.795	12	37.09	20.53
D4(+)	32	88	132	38	12	2.702	13	39.74	16.56
D8(-)	8	47	140	82	25	3.228	3	18.21	35.43
D9(+)	27	78	125	52	20	2.868	11	34.77	23.84
E1(+)	21	64	158	50	9	2.874	10	28.15	19.54
E2(+)	21	70	133	66	12	2.927	9	30.13	25.83
E3(-)	9	37	149	92	15	3.222	4	15.23	35.43

B8 Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals are.

C3 Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.

C5 Female principals foster better teamwork than male principals do.

C7 Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals do.

- C8 Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals do.
- C9 Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals do.
- D3 Male principals involve stakeholders in planning more often than female principals do.
- D4 Male principals make use of learners' ideas more often than female principals do.
- D8 Male principals use less innovative techniques than female principals do.
- D9 Male principals use different leadership styles more appropriately than female principals do.
- E1 Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals do.
- E2 Female principals facilitate groups in decision making processes more efficiently than male principals do.
- E3 Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals do.

#### *Comments*

- For all the questions there is a considerable percentage of respondents that are neutral (lowest 35.8% for C3, highest 52.3% for E1).
- Due to the high percentage of neutral answers, the overall mean response is not too high on the 1 to 5 scale (lowest 2.702, highest 3.586).

- The mean responses to C3, C8, D8, E3 and B8 are significantly higher than 3 (positive), the mean responses to E1, D9, D3 and D4 are significantly lower than 3 (negative) and those to C7, C5, C9 and E2 equal to 3 (neutral).

**Table 4.35: Positive and negative responses to leadership style questions**

Positive	Negative
Female principals have less respect for educator's ideas than male principals (disagree).	Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals (disagree).
Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals (disagree).	Male principals use different leadership styles more appropriately than female principals (disagree).
Male principals use less innovative techniques than female principals (disagree).	Male principals involve stakeholders in planning more often than female principals (disagree).
Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals (disagree).	Male principals make use of learners ideas more often than female principals (disagree).
Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals (disagree).	

- In the questions where an opinion other than neutral is expressed, respondents disagree with both negative and positive statements. This indicates that the respondents are of the opinion that there is little difference between the leadership styles of male and female principals.

#### 4.5.5 Effect of gender of respondent on perception, comparison and leadership style

##### (a) Perception

The table below shows a summary of the responses of males and females (using the LSD test) to perception questions.

**Table 4.36a: Effect of gender of respondent on perception**

Question	Mean	Difference	Comment
B1 Female	2.429	1.004	mean male > mean female
Male	3.433		
B3 Female	2.417	0.851	mean male > mean female
Male	3.268		
B5 Female	3.354	0.111	means same
Male	3.465		
B7 Female	2.326	1.044	mean male > mean female
Male	3.37		
C1 Female	3.314	-0.172	means same
Male	3.142		
C6 Female	3.669	-0.630	mean female > mean male
Male	3.039		
D2 Female	2.56	0.723	mean male > mean female
Male	3.283		
D6 Female	2.486	0.624	mean male > mean female
Male	3.11		
E4 Female	3.503	-0.487	mean female > mean male
Male	3.016		

On all the statements where the mean of the group as a whole was significantly higher than 3 (positive), either females were more positive than males (C6 and E4) or the two groups were equally positive (B5 and C1). On the statements D2, B1, B3, B7 and D6, where the mean of the group as a whole was significantly lower than 3 (negative), males were significantly higher than 3 (positive) and females significantly lower than 3 (negative). A summary of these results is shown in the table below.

**Table 4.36b: Summary of effect of gender on perception**

Males positive, females negative	females more positive than males	Equally positive
Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than female principals.	Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals.	Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals.
Male principals are better administrators than female principals.	Female principals are less creative problem solvers than male principals	Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.
Male principals have better visions than female principals.		
Male principals organize school activities more efficiently than female principals.		
Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals.		

#### *Comments*

- Male and female respondents disagree on the perception of male principals. Male respondents are of the opinion that male principals are better at staff development,

administration, organisation, have better visions and are more skilled change agents.

Female respondents disagree with these.

- Female respondents disagree more than male respondents about some negative statements concerning female principals (less accountability, less creative).
- Both genders are equally positive (disagree) about the negative statement concerning male principals (less efficient in assigning tasks).
- Both genders are equally positive (agree) about female principals maintaining a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.

**(b) Comparison**

The table below shows a summary of the responses of males and females (using the LSD test) to comparison questions.

**Table 4.37a: Effect of gender of respondent on comparison**

Question	Mean	Difference	Comment
B2 Female	3.337143	0.20616	mean male > mean female
Male	3.543307		
B4 Female	2.44	0.89071	mean male > mean female
Male	3.330709		
B6 Female	2.542857	0.8351	mean male > mean female
Male	3.377953		
B9 Female	2.388571	0.98151	mean male > mean female
Male	3.370079		
C2 Female	3.285714	-0.206974	means same
Male	3.07874		
C4 Female	3.068571	-0.147312	means same
Male	2.92126		
D1 Female	3.222857	0.17872	means same
Male	3.401575		
D5 Female	3.342857	0.02722	means same
Male	3.370079		
D7 Female	3.28	-0.146142	means same
Male	3.133858		
E5 Female	2.948571	-0.263532	mean female > mean male
Male	2.685039		

From the above table it can be seen that the means for males and females are the same for questions C2, C4, D1, D5 and D7. Therefore these answers will be interpreted as



explained in the comments following Table 3 (that is, for C2, D1, D5 and D7 both genders have means significantly higher than 3 (positive) and for C4 both genders have means equal to 3 (neutral)). A summary of the statements where the answers differ is shown in the table below.

**Table 4.37b: Summary of effect of gender on comparison**

<b>Males positive, females negative</b>	<b>Males more positive</b>	<b>Females neutral, males negative</b>
Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals.	Male principals are less efficient than female principals (males disagree more)	Female principals resolve conflict more effectively than male principals (males disagree more).
Male principals define roles more clearly than female principals.		
Male principals are more effective in achieving goals than female principals.		

- Males and females disagree on some of the positive statements on male principals. Males are of the opinion that male principals set visions more collaboratively, define roles more clearly and are more effective in achieving goals. Females disagree with these.
- Males disagree more than females with the statement that male principals are less efficient than female ones (negative statement about males) and with the statement that female principals resolve conflict more effectively than males (positive statement about females).

**(a) Leadership style**

The table below shows a summary of the responses of males and females to leadership style questions (using the LSD test).

**Table 4.38a: Effect of gender of respondent on leadership style**

Question	Mean	Difference	Comment
B8 FeMale	3.16	0.12346	Means same
Male	3.283465		
C3 FeMale	3.76	-0.413543	Mean female > meanmale
Male	3.346457		
C5 FeMale	3.051429	-0.216783	Mean female > meanmale
Male	2.834646		
C7 FeMale	3.045714	-0.092958	Means same
Male	2.952756		
C8 FeMale	3.634286	-0.382317	Mean female > meanmale
Male	3.251969		
C9 FeMale	3.034286	-0.176018	Means same
Male	2.858268		
D3 FeMale	2.537143	0.61246	Meanmale > mean female
Male	3.149606		
D4 FeMale	2.468571	0.55505	Meanmale > mean female
Male	3.023622		
D8 FeMale	3.177143	0.12207	Means same
Male	3.299213		
D9 FeMale	2.662857	0.48675	Meanmale > mean female
Male	3.149606		
E1 FeMale	2.897143	-0.054623	Means same
Male	2.84252		
E2 Female	2.948571	-0.050934	Means same

Male	2.897638		
E3 Female	3.302857	-0.192621	Mean female > mean male
Male	3.110236		

From the above table it can be seen that the means for males and females are the same for questions B8, C7, C9, D8, E1 and E2. These answers will therefore be interpreted as explained in the comments following Table 5 (that is, for B8 and D8 both genders have means significantly higher than 3 (positive), for C7, C9 and E2 both genders have means equal to 3 (neutral) and for E1 both genders have means significantly lower than 3 (negative)). A summary of the statements where the answers differ appears in the table below.

**Table 4.38b: Summary of effect of gender on leadership style**

<b>Females more positive than males</b>	<b>Males more positive than females</b>	<b>Females neutral, males negative</b>	<b>Males neutral, females negative</b>
<b>Female principals have less respect for educator's ideas than male principals (disagree more).</b>	<b>Male principals involve stakeholders in planning more often than female principals (agree more).</b>	<b>Female principals foster better teamwork than male principals do.</b>	<b>Male principals make use of learner's ideas more often than female principals.</b>
<b>Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals (disagree more).</b>	<b>Male principals use different leadership styles more appropriately than female principals (agree more).</b>		
<b>Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals (disagree more).</b>			

The summary in the above table shows that

- Females disagree more than males on the following negative statements about female principals: respect for educator's ideas, co-ordination of ideas, evaluation of the effectiveness of a decision.
- Males agree more than females on the following positive statements about male principals: involvement of stakeholders, using different leadership styles.
- Females are neutral and males disagree on the following positive statement about female principals: fostering better teamwork.

- Males are neutral and females disagree on the following positive statement on male principals: using learner's ideas more often.

#### 4.5.6 Effect of group of respondent on perception, comparison and leadership style

##### (a) Composition of groups

**Table 4.39: Classification of group versus gender**

Gender		Group			Total
		LRC	SGB	Educator	
Female		10 (37%)	7(26%)	158(64%)	175
Male	17(63%)	20(74%)	90(36%)	127	
Total		27	27	248	302

It should be noted that the LRC and SGB groups have a considerably larger percentage of males, while the educator group has a considerably larger percentage of females. This unequal composition of gender might influence the opinions of the groups.

##### (b) Perception

The table below shows the questions where significant differences between groups were found (using the least significant differences (LSD) test ).

**Table 4.40a: Significant effects of group of respondent on perception**

Question	Group	Mean	Difference	Comment
B1	LRC	3.333333	0.575269	LRC > educator
	educator	2.758065		
	SGB	3.222222	0.464158	SGB > educator
	educator	2.758065		
B3	SGB	3.148148	0.446535	SGB > educator
	educator	2.701613		
B7	LRC	3.296296	0.618877	LRC > educator
	educator	2.677419		
C1	LRC	3.703704	0.550478	LRC > educator
	educator	3.153226		
	SGB	3.592593	0.439367	SGB > educator
	educator	3.153226		
C6	SGB	2.962963	-0.512843	educator > SGB
	educator	3.475806		
D2	SGB	3.222222	0.407706	SGB > educator
	educator	2.814516		
E4	SGB	3	-0.334677	educator > SGB
	educator	3.334677		

In none of the questions significant differences between the LRC and SGB groups were found.

**Table 4.40b: Summary effects of group of respondent on perception**

<b>LRC positive, educator negative</b>	Male principals are better administrators than female principals.	Male principals organize school activities more efficiently than female principals.	
<b>SGB positive, educator negative</b>	Male principals are better administrators than female principals.	Male principals have better visions than female principals.	Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than male principals.
<b>LRC more positive than educator</b>	Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.		
<b>SGB more positive than educator</b>	Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.		
<b>educator positive, SGB neutral</b>	Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals.	Female principals are less creative problem solvers than male principals.	

The LRC and SGB groups are more positive than educators on some positive statements regarding male principals (administrators, organisers, visionaries, fostering staff development) and on the staff relationship of female principals with staff. The educators disagree more than the SGB group on some negative statements regarding female principals (less accountability, less creative).

**(c) Comparison**

The table below shows the questions where significant differences between groups were found (using the least significant differences (LSD) tests).

**Table 4.41a: Significant effects of group of respondent on comparison**

Question	Group	Mean	Difference	Comment
<b>B2</b>	<b>LRC</b>	<b>3.407407</b>	<b>0.555556</b>	<b>LRC &gt; SGB</b>
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>2.851852</b>		
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>2.851852</b>	<b>-0.63605</b>	<b>educator &gt; SGB</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>3.487903</b>		
<b>B4</b>	<b>SGB</b>	<b>3.37037</b>	<b>0.644564</b>	<b>SGB &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.725806</b>		
<b>B6</b>	<b>LRC</b>	<b>3.407407</b>	<b>0.600956</b>	<b>LRC &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.806452</b>		
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>3.185185</b>	<b>0.378734</b>	<b>SGB &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.806452</b>		
<b>C2</b>	<b>SGB</b>	<b>3.740741</b>	<b>0.619773</b>	<b>SGB &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>3.120968</b>		
<b>C4</b>	<b>SGB</b>	<b>3.703704</b>	<b>0.800478</b>	<b>SGB &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.903226</b>		
<b>D1</b>	<b>LRC</b>	<b>3.481481</b>	<b>0.555556</b>	<b>LRC &gt; SGB</b>
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>2.925926</b>		
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>2.925926</b>	<b>-0.39262</b>	<b>educator &gt; SGB</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>3.318548</b>		
<b>E5</b>	<b>LRC</b>	<b>3.185185</b>	<b>0.415024</b>	<b>LRC &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.770161</b>		
	<b>SGB</b>	<b>3.111111</b>	<b>0.34095</b>	<b>SGB &gt; educator</b>
	<b>educator</b>	<b>2.770161</b>		



**Table 4.41b: Summary effects of group of respondent on perception**

<b>LRC positive, SGB negative</b>	<b>Male principals are less efficient than female principals.</b>	
<b>educator positive, SGB negative</b>	<b>Male principals are less efficient than female principals.</b>	
<b>SGB positive, educator negative</b>	<b>Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals.</b>	<b>Male principals define roles more clearly than female principals.</b>
<b>LRC positive, educator negative</b>	<b>Male principals define roles more clearly than female principals.</b>	<b>Female principals resolve conflict more effectively than male principals.</b>
<b>SGB more positive than educator</b>	<b>Female principals facilitate relationships better than male principals.</b>	
<b>SGB positive, educator neutral</b>	<b>There is a more friendly atmosphere under female principals than under male principals.</b>	
<b>LRC positive, SGB neutral</b>	<b>Male principals initiate fewer ideas that can be implemented than female principals.</b>	
<b>educator positive, SGB neutral</b>	<b>Male principals initiate fewer ideas that can be implemented than female principals.</b>	

**(d) Leadership style**

**Table 4.42a: Significant effects of group of respondent on leadership style**

Question	Group	Mean	Difference	Comment
C3	LRC	3.925926	0.518519	LRC > SGB
	SGB	3.407407		
	LRC	3.925926	0.357378	LRC > educator
	educator	3.568548		
C5	SGB	3.259259	0.360066	SGB > educator
	educator	2.899194		
C7	LRC	3.740741	0.861708	LRC > educator
	educator	2.879032		
	SGB	3.444444	0.565412	SGB > educator
	educator	2.879032		
C8	LRC	3.851852	0.703704	LRC > SGB
	SGB	3.148148		
	LRC	3.851852	0.38411	LRC > educator
	educator	3.467742		
C9	LRC	2.851852	-0.55556	SGB > LRC
	SGB	3.407407		
	SGB	3.407407	0.48402	SGB > educator
	educator	2.923387		
D3	SGB	3.185185	0.44325	SGB > educator
	educator	2.741935		
E1	LRC	3.111111	0.316756	LRC > educator

	educator	2.794355		
	SGB	3.37037	0.576016	SGB > educator
	educator	2.794355		
E2	LRC	3.703704	0.905317	LRC > educator
	educator	2.798387		
	SGB	3.333333	0.534946	SGB > educator
	educator	2.798387		

**Table 4.42b: Summary effects of group of respondent on leadership style**

<b>LRC more positive than SGB</b>	Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.	Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male	
<b>LRC more positive than educator</b>	Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.	Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male	
<b>SGB positive, educator negative</b>	Female principals foster better teamwork than male principals do.	Male principals involve stakeholders in planning more often than female principals do.	Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals do.
	Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals do.	Female principals facilitate groups in decision making processes more efficiently than male principals do.	
<b>LRC positive, educator negative</b>	Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals do.	Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals do.	Female principals facilitate groups in decision making processes more efficiently than male principals do.
<b>SGB positive, LRC negative</b>	Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals do.		
<b>SGB positive , educator neutral</b>	Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals do.		

The LRC group disagrees more than the other two groups on some negative statements about female principals (respect for educator's ideas, co-ordination of ideas and activities).

The SGB group is more positive than the other groups about some of the positive statement about female principals (teamwork, communication, decision making) and the involvement of stakeholders by male principals.

#### 4.5.7 Effect of locality of respondent on perception, comparison and leadership style

##### (a) Composition of groups

**Table 4.43: Classification of locality versus gender**

Gender		Locality			Total
		Rural	Urban	Semi urban	
	Female	6 (33%)	153 (60%)	16 (52%)	175
Male	12 (67%)	100 (40%)	15 (48%)	127	
Total		18	253	31	302

The rural locality is two thirds male, while the urban one is 60% female. For the semi-urban locality the split is close to 50/50. This unequal composition of gender for the rural and urban localities might influence the opinions of the groups.

##### (b) Perception

The table below shows the questions where significant differences between localities were found (using the least significant differences (LSD) tests).

**Table 4.44a: Significant effects of locality of respondent on perception**

Question	Locality	Mean	Difference	Comment
B1	Rural	3.444444	0.626263	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.818182		
	Rural	3.444444	0.670251	Rural > semi-urban
	Semi-urban	2.774194		
B7	Rural	3.277778	0.546552	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.731225		
C1	Urban	3.189723	-0.35866	Semi-urban > urban
	Semi-urban	3.548387		
C6	Urban	3.462451	0.430193	Urban > semi-urban
	Semi-urban	3.032258		
D6	Rural	2.444444	-0.55556	Semi-urban > rural
	Semi-urban	3		

**Table 4.44b: Summary effects of locality of respondent on perception**

<b>Rural positive, urban negative</b>	Male principals are better administrators than female principals	Male principals organize school activities more efficiently than female principals.
<b>Rural positive, semi-urban negative</b>	Male principals are better administrators than female principals	
<b>Semi-urban more positive than urban</b>	Female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.	
<b>Urban positive, semi-urban neutral</b>	Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals.	
<b>Semi-urban neutral, rural negative</b>	Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals.	

- Rural respondents agree more than urban and semi-urban ones on some positive statements concerning male principals (better administrators, better organizers).
- Semi-urban respondents agree more than urban ones that female principals maintain a more open and warm relationship with staff than male principals do.
- Semi-urban respondents agree more than rural ones that male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals are.
- Urban respondents disagree more than semi-urban ones that female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals do.

(c) **Comparison**

The table below shows the questions where significant differences between groups were found (using the least significant differences (LSD) tests).

**Table 4.45a: Significant effects of locality of respondent on comparison**

Question	Locality	Mean	Difference	Comment
<b>B2</b>	Rural	3.055556	-0.426658	Urban > rural
	Urban	3.482213		
	Urban	3.482213	0.3209231	Urban > semi-urban
	Semi-urban	3.16129		
<b>B4</b>	Rural	3.333333	0.5507246	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.782609		
	Rural	3.333333	0.5591398	Rural > semi-urban
	Semi-urban	2.774194		
<b>B9</b>	Urban	2.731225	-0.430065	Semi-urban > urban
	Semi-urban	3.16129		
<b>E5</b>	Urban	2.810277	-0.318756	Semi-urban > urban
	Semi-urban	3.129032		



**Table 4.45b: Summary of effects of locality of respondent on comparison**

<b>Urban positive, rural neutral</b>	Male principals are less efficient than female principals.	
<b>Urban more positive than semi-urban</b>	Male principals are less efficient than female principals.	
<b>Rural positive, urban negative</b>	Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals.	
<b>Rural positive, semi-urban negative</b>	Male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals.	
<b>Semi-urban positive, urban negative</b>	Male principals are more effective in achieving goals than female principals.	Female principals resolve conflict more effectively than male principals.

- Urban respondents disagree more than respondents from the other locations on male principals' being less efficient than female principals are.
- Rural respondents agree more than respondents from the other locations that male principals set visions more collaboratively than female principals do.
- Semi-urban respondents agree more urban respondents on male principals being more effective in achieving goals and female principals resolve conflict more effectively.

**(d) Leadership style**

The table below shows the questions where significant differences between localities were found (using the least significant differences (LSD) tests).

**Table 4.46a: Significant effects of location of respondent on leadership style**

Question	Group	Mean	Difference	Comment
C3	Rural	3.0555556	-0.55709	Urban > rural
	Urban	3.6126482		
	Rural	3.0555556	-0.62186	Semi-urban > rural
	Semi-urban	3.6774194		
C7	Rural	3.3888889	0.428415	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.9604743		
C8	Urban	3.5217391	0.424965	Urban > semi-urban
	Semi-urban	3.0967742		
E1	Rural	3.2777778	0.459596	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.8181818		
	Urban	2.8181818	-0.27859	Semi-urban > urban
	Semi-urban	3.0967742		
E2	Rural	3.3333333	0.463768	Rural > urban
	Urban	2.8695652		

**Table 4.46b: Summary effects of location of respondent on leadership style**

<b>Urban positive, rural neutral</b>	Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.	
<b>Semi-urban positive, rural neutral</b>	Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.	
<b>Rural positive, urban neutral</b>	Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals do.	
<b>Urban more positive than semi-urban</b>	Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals do.	
<b>Rural positive, urban negative</b>	Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals do.	Female principals facilitate groups in decision making processes more efficiently than male principals do.
<b>Semi-urban positive, urban negative</b>	Female principals use more effective decision making processes than male principals do.	

- Urban and semi-urban respondents disagree more than rural respondents that female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals have.
- Rural respondents agree more than urban respondents on the following positive statements about female principals: communication of ideas and decision making.
- Urban respondents disagree more than semi-urban ones that Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals do.

- Semi-urban respondents are more positive than urban ones that female principals use more effective decision-making processes than male principals do.

#### 4.5.8 Neutral answers

The table below shows the percentage of neutral answers for each gender classified according to question categories (perception, comparison, leadership style) and direction of statement (positive, negative).

**Table 4.47: Percentage neutral answers for each gender**

Question	Question category	Direction	Female	Male	Difference
B1	1	1	38.28571	29.92126	8.36445
B2	2	2	51.42857	37.00787	14.4207
B3	1	1	42.28571	29.92126	12.36445
B4	2	1	43.42857	28.34646	15.08211
B5	1	2	44.57143	27.55906	17.01237
B6	2	1	39.42857	23.62205	15.80652
B7	1	1	38.28571	33.07087	5.21484
B8	3	2	42.28571	35.43307	6.85264
B9	2	1	38.85714	27.55906	11.29808
C1	1	1	32.57143	37.00787	-4.43644
C2	2	1	32.57143	33.07087	-0.49944
C3	3	2	35.42857	36.22047	-0.7919
C4	2	1	38.85714	37.00787	1.84927
C5	3	1	42.28571	43.30709	-1.02138
C6	1	2	40	33.07087	6.92913
C7	3	1	49.71429	36.22047	13.49382

C8	3	2	38.28571	41.73228	-3.44657
C9	3	1	40.57143	38.58268	1.98875
D1	2	2	49.14286	40.94488	8.19798
D2	1	1	45.14286	37.79528	7.34758
D3	3	1	45.71429	37.79528	7.91901
D4	3	1	46.28571	40.15748	6.12823
D5	2	2	49.14286	37.00787	12.13499
D6	1	1	43.42857	43.30709	0.12148
D7	2	2	52.57143	35.43307	17.13836
D8	3	2	49.14286	42.51969	6.62317
D9	3	1	45.71429	35.43307	10.28122
E1	3	1	55.42857	48.0315	7.39707
E2	3	1	47.42857	39.37008	8.05849
E3	3	2	51.42857	46.45669	4.97188
E4	1	2	42.28571	33.85827	8.42744
E5	2	1	45.71429	42.51969	3.1946

Question category: 1 – Perception, 2 – Comparison, 3 – Leadership style

Direction: 1 – Positive statement, 2 – Negative statement

Difference = female – male

The results in the table below show that the percentage of neutral answers in each of the three question categories is significantly higher for females.

**Table 4.48: Means for genders for question categories**

Category	Female	Male	Difference	Total
Perception	40.7619	33.94576	6.816144	3.264***
Comparison	44.11429	34.25197	9.862317	4.915***
Leadership	45.36264	40.09691	5.265725	3.928***

\*\*\* significant at the 1% level of significance

The table below shows the results of an analysis of variance with difference as dependent variable and question category and direction as factors.

**Table 4.49: Results of analysis of variance**

Source	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected model	304.016(a)	5	60.803	2.044	.105
Intercept	1704.388	1	1704.388	57.300	.000
Direction	41.819	1	41.819	1.406	.246
Category	169.119	2	84.559	2.843	.076
Direction * category	163.245	2	81.622	2.744	.083
Error	773.369	26	29.745		
Total	2707.917	32			
Corrected total	1077.385	31			

a R Squared = .282 (Adjusted R Squared = .144)

The entries of table 4.49 can be explained as follows:

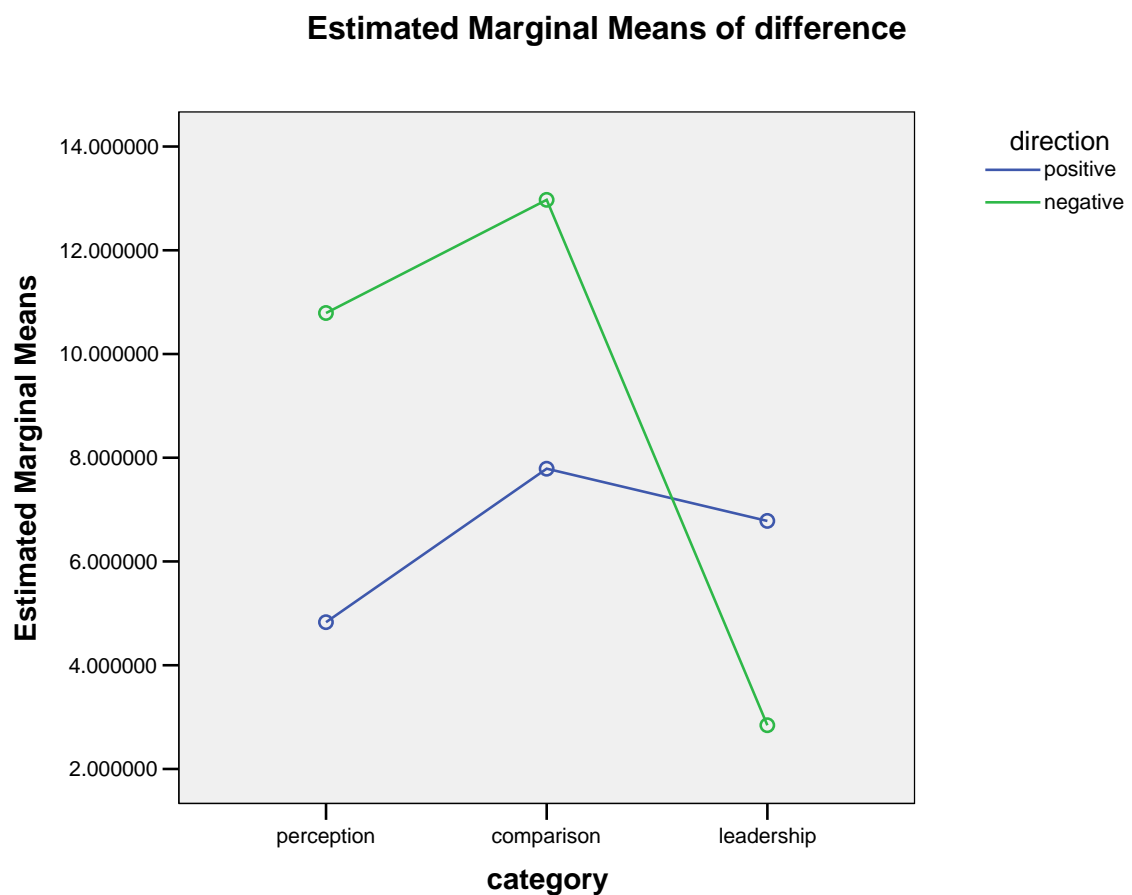
Source: What the variation can be attributed to. In this case direction, category and direction\*category interaction are the sources of interest.

Sum of squares: Amount of variation associated with each source. These are calculated according to mathematical formulae.

Degrees of freedom: Number of terms (in appropriate formula) than can vary freely. These are calculated according to mathematical formulae.

Mean square:	Sum of squares divided by corresponding degrees of freedom.
F	Mean square for source divided by error mean square.
Sig	p-value which is the probability of getting a value greater than the F observed. These are obtained by using the statistical F-tables.

**Figure 4.1: Profile plots of mean differences**



- For the perception and comparison questions the mean difference between the percentage neutral for females and males is higher for questions with negative statements than for questions with positive statements. For the leadership questions the opposite applies.

- There is some evidence to suggest that the mean difference between the percentage neutral for females and males is higher for comparison questions than for leadership questions (p-value = 0.067).

#### 4.5.9 Qualitative items

##### (a) Gender and visionary

**Table 4.50: Gender opinions on visionary**

Gender respondent/preference	Female	Male	Both
Female	67	32	53
Male	25	53	35

Chi-square = 22.798, with p-value = 0.000.

Nearly 30% of respondents chose the ‘both’ option. A higher proportion of female respondents (than male ones) chose this option. Of those who chose a particular gender, female respondents consider female principals to be more visionary, while male respondents consider male principals to be more visionary. This is also the case within the three groups.

##### (b) Gender and promoting working relationships

**Table 4.51: Gender opinions on working relationships**

Gender respondent/preference	Female	Male	Both
Female	60	18	70
Male	19	39	40

Chi-square = 28.200, with p-value = 0.000.



Values of p: These do not refer to level of confidence, but to the probability (calculated to 3 decimal places) of getting a value greater than the chi-square value given. For table 4.550, chi-square = 22.798. The p-value is probability of  $\chi^2 > 22.798 = 0.000011206$ . To 3 decimal places this value is 0.000, which is different from 0. Similarly for table 4.51, chi-square = 28.2 with p-value = probability of  $\chi^2 > 28.2 = 0.000000753$ . To 3 decimal places this is 0.000.

Over 36% of respondents chose the ‘both’ option. A higher proportion of female respondents than male ones chose this option. Of those who chose a particular gender, female respondents consider female principals to be more visionary, while male respondents consider male principals to be more visionary. This is also the case inside the educators and learners’ presidents groups. For the SGB group there is evidence that chairpersons of both genders consider female principals to be more visionary.

### (c) Gender and transformation

A summary of the replies to the question whether male principals are perceived to be more transformational than female ones is shown in the table below.

**Table 4.52: Gender opinions on transformation ability**

Gender respondent/answer	Yes	No
Female	22	128
Male	30	68

Chi-square = 9.095, with p-value = 0.003.

Nearly 20% of the respondents answered ‘unsure’. Female respondents disagree more than male ones. This is also the case for the educators and learners’ presidents groups. For the SGB group males and females disagree equally.

#### (d) Gender and leader preference

**Table 4.53: Gender and leader preference**

Gender respondent/preference	Female	Male	Both
Female	54	33	69
Male	24	59	33

Chi-square = 26.278, with p-value = 0.000.

More than a third of respondents chose the ‘both’ option. A higher proportion of female respondents than male ones chose this option. Of those who chose a particular gender, female respondents consider female principals to be better school leaders, while male respondents consider male principals to be better school leaders. This is also the case for the educator group. For the learners’ presidents group, female respondents consider female principals to be better school leaders, while male respondents are evenly divided on who they prefer. For the SGB group there is no clear preference among male and female respondents.

## 4.6 CONCLUSION

This chapter tried to present and discuss the findings of the study. The chapter was organised into four sections, as follows:

- The first introduced the chapter.

- The second section analysed and interpreted the data collected from the three groups, namely educators, chairpersons of school governing bodies and learners' presidents.
- The third section was on the analysis and interpretation of data collected from the female principals.
- The fourth section was on the discussion of the findings. The chapter showed that both male and female principals can lead schools effectively, depending on the personality of the principal and the required skills he or she possesses.

In the next chapter the researcher will draw the conclusions that emanated from the study and make recommendations accordingly.

## **CHAPTER 5**

### **SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 INTRODUCTION**

This study sought to address six specific problems related to leadership and gender in secondary schools. In Chapter One the six research questions were formulated as follows:

- What are the perceptions of educators, school governing bodies and learners regarding the effectiveness of female principals versus male principals?
- Are women perceived to be more or less effective than men by educators, school governing bodies and learners?
- Does the education system provide a congenial environment for the movement towards a culture in which female principals are treated equally to male principals in schools?
- Which leadership theories provide a comprehensive framework against which successful school leadership can be measured?
- What are the barriers experienced by women who aspire to leadership positions?
- To what extent does the status of being a male or female, influence one's perceptions of female principals?

This chapter contains the summary of the findings and the conclusions which provide answers to the above questions, as well as recommendations based on the findings of this study and opportunities for future research.

## **5.2 SUMMARY OF THE FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

This study has been an attempt to achieve the above-mentioned aims regarding principalship and gender. In order to achieve the foregoing objectives, literature on leadership theories and gender was reviewed in order to formulate a conceptual framework. Field work was also undertaken in order to give a sound base to the theoretical framework. Written questionnaires were then administered and answered by respondents. Interviews with female principals were conducted in order to verify the questionnaire responses.

This section, therefore, gives a summary of findings and conclusions. It covers some of both the theoretical and empirical findings. These two types of findings throw light on the female leadership versus male leadership in general and particularly in secondary schools.

### **5.2.1 Theoretical findings**

#### **(a) Men versus women leadership**

In the literature review in Chapter Two it was established that possession of inborn leadership qualities such as supervisory ability, decision making and creativity skills are required in both men and women for effective leadership. There are no innate differences in managing style between males and females. However, women possess a

social and nurturing dimension, whereas men are individualistic. One must bear in mind that women tend to establish women's group such as stokvels and church committees. A person's leadership style depends on her or his behaviour. If the leader is considerate and task orientated, she or he influences the nature of staff relationships. The adoption of these two dimensions, namely initiating structure and consideration, can lead to clarity and coordination of roles, relationships, involvement and definite standard performance. There will also be friendship, trust, respect and warmth which result in the achievement of group desired goals.

An examination of leadership theories and literature on gender also demonstrated that women and men behave differently. Women are more task, result and people focused, whereas men tend to control, dominate and are aggressive. However, men and women approach leadership in the similar way. Therefore, an equal balance of all of these qualities can enhance the workplace for both men and women. Leadership effectiveness is situational. It is, therefore pivotal to identify contingency factors such as acceptance, structure (such as need structure derived from Maslow's hierarchical motivation theory) and position. Subordinates' performance and motivation is contingent upon the attainment of performance goals, the clarification of the paths to the goals and the determination of subordinates' maturity levels. A match between the demands of the situation and the abilities of a leader is underscored. There is no mention of women and men being more suitable as leaders merely by virtue of their sex. However, women tend to use a collaborative style but tend to withdraw from conflict, whereas men are likely to be authoritative.

A review of literature further revealed that on the one hand, efficiency depends on the commitment to the compliance with rules and on the other hand being in possession of

innovative skills such as clarity, active listening and giving and receiving feedback effectively, being consistent and sharing power. Transformation can be enhanced by engaging techniques such as collaborative goal-setting, collaboration and participation, motivation of educators, educator development, learners' involvement and parent and community involvement in order for the schools to improve. There is no reference to women or men being characterized by being participative or directive. Men and women are better in certain situations. Effectiveness results from the appropriate matching of the basic leadership style to the particular situation (Hoy and Miskel, 1982: 254). Leadership effectiveness depends upon the leader's behaviour and upon how the behaviour affects what is perceived by the subordinates and others with whom the leader works (Piek, 1991: 10). Therefore, effective principals are leaders who focus on essential decisions that have impact on the larger aspects. Principals include people from both inside and outside the schools as part of the team (Lunenberg and Ornstein, 1991: 119). Principals are capable of exerting influence on learners and subordinates in order to guide learners in proper conduct and action and in giving training to subordinates for proper and orderly action. Effective principals display a thought process which is carried out consciously to direct the achievement of goals. They consciously forecast and prepare for the future. However, women tend to be more innovative than men. It is difficult to generalise this argument to all men or all women. There is an argument that the principal, whether male or female, must be both a leader and a manager in order for the school to function effectively. Principals must direct schools in such a way that learners benefit, mainly educationally from schooling, ensuring that time is used efficiently in order to attain the goals of the school.

## **(b) Obstacles experienced by women in leadership positions**

In addition to the arguments in section (a) above, the literature review in Chapter Two pointed out that women leaders encounter many complex obstacles in the area of management (cf. 2.3). They experience obstacles such as:

- patriarchal gender roles,
- the perception that women deviate from norms,
- domination of men in management positions,
- a lack of role models,
- common filtering in the hiring process,
- the loss of the self for women leaders,
- women's dual roles,
- women's adoption of inappropriate roles,
- some women's experience of sexual harassment,
- women's communication problems and
- anxiety and envy.

In Chapter One it was argued that females are fluid with the number of gender abuse. It has also been asserted that the number of female and male principals has not been equalised although there are legislative changes in place to improve positions of women. Even as recently as 1999 African women were under-represented at the level of school principalship and above (Gaganakis, 1999: 31). Men represent the majority in secondary school principalship. This argument is proved by the fact that 17% of



secondary principals in 2000 were females and 21.9% of secondary schools principals in eThekweni region in 2004 were females. This poses problems to women aspiring to leadership positions because they lack role models. In addition to that, they often have to carry the burden alone of bearing, caring and providing for their own children. This dual role hinders their performance in management. This is worsened by the fact that they work in a male-dominated culture where they are only considered good enough to execute male-decided policies. When they handle their tasks effectively in a style and effort that is different from men they are not recognised (Hanson, 1996: 162). According to Wolpe (2005: 126) there is little recognition of the need for a gender equity plan in many levels of management. Men tend to devalue the management skills of women during the hiring process where men are usually the majority in the hiring panel.

### **5.2.2 Empirical findings**

#### **(a) Being visionary**

There are arguments that female principals are considered to be more visionary (cf 4.2.2 ) than their counterparts. This is due to the fact that women are regarded as:

- being mothers and therefore being considerate in their vision.
- putting more effort into their work, that is, working very hard.
- being clear in defining roles: both their own and others.

## **(b) Establishment of interpersonal relationships**

Female principals are perceived to be more capable of establishing positive relationships (cf. 4.2.3). Reasons for this are as follows:

- Females are involved in the lives of the community at large as a result of being mothers at home.
- Women are friendly towards everyone and friendship is promoted among all stakeholders.
- Female principals possess communication skills and humbleness which promotes a sense of commitment and responsibility among all school stakeholders.

## **(c) Transformational leadership**

Both females and males can be equally transformational depending on their vision, leadership skills, qualifications in change management and flexibility. Their adoption of the provincial and national education Acts, their ability to share power, their possession of good listening skills, being able to give and receive feedback are also positive qualities. A knowledge of the curriculum, ability to involve all stakeholders in the change process through communication (cf. 4.2.4) are further positive traits which transformational leaders possess. The leader must also possess strategic planning skills and be an initiator of change. In addition, the leader must be able to empower staff through development. She or he must even take risks if necessary and establish a non-sex discriminatory environment.

**(d) Possession of conflict management skills**

The study revealed that both male and female principals are capable to resolving conflict in their schools (cf. 4.2.5). Leaders must utilize effective decision-making processes in order for their schools to run smoothly. Leaders also work with groups of people with different needs and who come from different cultures and backgrounds. Their opinions can clash and need to be managed effectively. The manager (principal) must be able to decide which stakeholders to involve in particular decision-making processes. Therefore, principals need renewable knowledge and creativity skills in the areas of decision-making and conflict management.

**(e) Effective management is not gender-based (cf. 4.2.6)**

It was found that effective leadership lies with an individual's personality (cf. Table 4.23). Effectiveness depends on one's possession of management qualification skills or qualities and experience, not necessarily on one's gender.

**(f) Obstacles experienced by female principals**

With regard to the main obstacles faced by female principals, the study revealed that a number of women encounter complex obstacles in secondary school principalship. Some of the most obstacles are that female principals:

- experience problems caused by male staff school members.
- experience gender-based discrimination problems.
- lack parental, communal and staff support.
- lack departmental support.
- lack the ability to impose discipline.

- face problems due to family commitments.
- have poor communication skills.
- experience difficulty in dealing with conflict resolution.
- are opposed by and not given cooperation by female staff.

**(g) Successes of female principals**

In highlighting female principals' experiences as leaders, the study showed that while female principals have succeeded in various school activities, two of which are:

- They are able to improve and maintain Matriculation results.
- They are able to motivate the staff.

On the other hand, female principals have failed to secure finances for developing and improving their schools.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

From the above findings it can be concluded that:

- Educators, learners and school governing bodies perceive female and male principals to be equally effective.
- A culture of equal treatment for both female and male principals does not exist in schools because women still experience numerous problems such as those mentioned in (f) above.
- Theories such as traits (cf. 2.2.1), behavioural (cf. 2.2.2), contingency (cf. 2.2.4, transactional and transformational (cf. 2.2.5) theories can be applied to the school situation. The data obtained from the 28 schools confirmed this. It was found that

principals, regardless of gender, varied in style depending on their personal qualities and situations. The above-mentioned theories therefore provide only a framework for education to further involve the school principals, irrespective of gender, in the improvement of education for learners. It was also revealed that no one theory holds true for the schools.

## **5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the above findings, the following recommendations are made:

### **5.4.1 Recommendation 1: Directed to principals**

It was established that some male principals are weaker in the areas of school administration, vision, goals and tasks than female principals. Taking that into consideration, the researcher makes the following recommendations for principals:

- Principals need to create a vision for both themselves and the schools they are in charge of.
- To have functional organisational visions, principals need to help staff to set personal goals or to identify a purpose in their careers. Both organisational and individual vision is essential to promote the growth of the school, as these feed into each other. Building a vision as well as a mission entrenches a sense of belonging and richness of diversity. It also promotes individual talents. In setting and executing visions, it is important that the process of strategic planning be clearly pursued. Strategic management is worth discussing in this regard.

Strategic management is a series of mechanisms as well as processes through which an institution designs a core law informed by a vision, series of plans, mission,

accompanied values and policy resulting in a series of sub-strategies leading to action directed by comprehensive objectives. It is long term planning (from 3 years – 5 years) but it informs the medium term and short term plans (6 months, one year) Strategic management has various advantages and they are:-

- It helps to give direction (that is, where the organisation is going – forecasting on outcomes.
- It serves to formulate the basis for policy and procedures.
- It ensures consistency.
- It sets the uniqueness and identity of an organisation.
- It establishes distinct culture of an organisation.

Strategic management involves the top management which in turn engage the services of the middle management and all the staff members to develop functional strategies and a developmental plan. Although it is the primary responsibility of senior management to do strategic planning, the process requires two-way communication at all stages. In managing South African schools, strategic management plays a pivotal role. The process of strategic management involves a series of steps that can be used to plan for the future of the organisation. It involves the analysis of present conditions and links these with future anticipated scenarios. It is geared towards the correction of the present and focuses on achievement of organisational goals. It forms the hub of management activities in that it is very difficult to think of any planning within an organisation without having a clear vision of what that organisation hopes to achieve in the future. As such it becomes clear that each institution should have a clear vision of what it wants to be before there can be any talk of planning. This has been emphasised by Gorton and Snowden (1972: 80) when they argue that the leader must have the

organisational vision necessary to direct the organisation into its future, and the ability to articulate this vision. West-Burnham *et al.* (1995) stress this point of vision further when they make reference to Murgatroyd and Morgan (1993: 81) who argue that an effective vision statement has the following characteristics:

- Challenging – always in sight but not out of reach.
- Clear– not open to conflicting interpretations.
- Memorable – no longer than 20 – 25 words.
- Involving – a statement that enables and empowers.
- Value driven – a strong tie to the values of the school.
- Visual – represented visually.
- Mobilising –demanding a response from all.
- A guideline – to measure reactions against.
- Linked to the needs of learners.

There is no doubt that vision is a characteristic of many effective organisations. However, according to West-Burnham *et al.* (1995: 58), many schools have found that the vision statement needs to be extended from ‘what has to be done’ into ‘how it should be done’:

- An indication of the core purpose.
- A clear statement of the relationship with clients.
- Specifications of the services to be provided.
- A commitment to quality.
- A concern for employees.

Strategic management sets and identifies the uniqueness of an institution. The values that underpin the mission statement (statement of intention) bind the human resources together and help them to have a common vision (the target). Strategic management, therefore, involves the leader himself or herself, senior management of the institution and the community as well as other interested stakeholders. When the leader involves other people, this shows that he/she wants to have a forum in which his/her vision can be shared and have collaborative ideas about the plan or strategy. People involved gain a sense of ownership and they become positive about the plan. The vision is then translated into action.

Strategic management has a potential use for management because the leader as the head knows what his role is. He gives direction of the tasks to be performed and supports his followers. Role clarity makes the implementation of the strategic management viable. The power of authority (which is the legitimate power) contributes towards strategic management having potential utility. Over and above this, the leader needs to check and look for strengths and limitations of the organisation by appraising resources, (both human and physical), and be aware of current strategies and recent outcomes, the opportunities and threats that are outside the organisation that have influence on the achievement of goals by the organisation. The principal should, therefore, form appraisal teams within the school and organise workshops for staff development and also for empowering the governing body members in order to ensure the success of strategic management. Opportunities are explored and relations with the environment solicited to offer a support base to school activities. Threats in the environment help the institutions to engage into adaptive strategies that will enhance a match and balance between internal and external situations. From there, an alternative plan may be thought of by all members and stakeholders involved. Policies will come



out that will guide planning for the implementation of policies. Strategic management therefore, serves as a base for policy-formulation. If policy has been soundly established, activities tend to attain the desired outcome and the human resource deployed understand easily what is to be done, how it should be done and when it should be done.

Strategic management is also based on an extended time frame. The extended time frame gives the implementers time to work on the modifications if it is needed. The time frame for strategic management is between 3 and 5 years. Before the expiry of this period, the developmental and strategic planning processes are established and certain projects can take their course. These processes use the basic principles of objective settings that are specific, measurable, attainable, realistic and time bound. One example from the educational setting is classrooms construction. In the development plan during first year, the principal must indicate how many classrooms need to be built by whom and when are they going to be finished. The development plan then gives rise to budgeting. In most, but not all South African schools, budgeting is one of the management activities. After budgeting, the implementation of the policy will take its course. The principal and the senior management will control and supervise the implementation. Evaluation and review give the process potential utility because during evaluation one is able to pick up the shortfalls and make improvements. Consistency is a characteristic utility of strategic plans. Corporate strategy based on collaboration enhances the function of sub-units strategies which in the final analysis, ensures achievement of the goals of the institution. In the experience of the researcher, visualising the achieved results and seeing oneself taking the necessary action is motivational in itself. These techniques of fostering strong intrinsic motivation to facilitate the achievement of visions are crucial for all leaders.

### **5.4.2 Recommendation 2**

In the study it was discovered that some female principals are better than male principals in communication, team building and in promoting positive working relationships. As discussed in Chapter 4, interaction and relationships are emphasised. For those female principals and male principals who lack this skill, the researcher recommends the following:

- Principals should promote positive working relationships. This is characterised by a tendency to :
  - consult ,
  - defer to superiors ,
  - follow leads from outsiders and
  - act promptly rather than postpone or delay.

This places the emphasis on getting along with others and doing the right things to keep the organisation running smoothly. The principal therefore requires the skill to overcome barriers to communication and should practise:

- repetition,
- empathy,
- understanding,
- feedback and
- listening.

Principals can acquire these skills through attending workshops, seminars, academic improvement, making use of media and other relevant resources.

- Principals also have to acquire adequate public relations skills as part of their leadership behaviour because good public relations with parents, pupils and educators will result in an overall commitment to the school. These skills can be acquired by using the same sources as acquired used when acquiring communication skills.
- Male principals should form partnerships with female principals who have better interpersonal skills, as this will have an impact on teams and team building, coaching, mentoring and building relationships.

All the above strategies influence organisation development (OD). OD is the modern approach to the management of change and the development of human resources. Employees today expect more of their work and want to be more involved in the management and decision-making aspects of the organisation. It is of vital importance to ensure that the quality of working life for educators and the development of the organisation are such that educative teaching does take place. The essence of OD is that it aims to maximise the rewards for both individuals and the organisation, requires full support at the top of the organisations, deals with conflicts and is flexible. OD exists to improve effectiveness by increasing objectivity in schools. The school is viewed in totality. OD is based on an objective analysis of cause and effect and is also concerned with systematic diagnosis, generation of solutions and implementation of appropriate strategies.

The principal must take cognisance of the following areas of organisation development when designing developmental programmes:

- Personal growth. All people need to develop in mind and spirit because being human means that we have a need for lifelong learning. Individual growth cannot take place unless the school is engaged in continuous review and development.
- Counselling, coaching and consulting. Counselling helps people to gain insight into how they function in their work environments and it enhances sound interpersonal relationships among the colleagues. Coaching helps individuals to understand their jobs and the various relationships associated with their jobs. Consulting is when the head works together with subordinates and uses their separate resources collectively in order to solve problems.
- Team work. By developing teams, people learn about themselves and about other people in the team and that builds sound team spirit. Team work is based on people's understanding of who is good in the particular activity and developing an understanding of the roles which can be played by different people. Sensitivity of people is understood as well as the way to treat that person and that will enhance the development of individuals' role capacity and it will promote sound interpersonal relationships.
- Problem-solving. OD seems to be a very effective way of solving problems because of its personal value system.
- Outdoor activities. Unfamiliar activities, away from preferred and comfortable surroundings will enable people to see themselves in a different light and in a context where values, other than their own, are respected.

In combination with the above strategies, the following OD processes can contribute towards the success of the organisational processes:

- Participative management. Educators, learners, parents and citizens in the community structure may participate in decision-making either as individuals or as a group depending on their skills as identified by the principal. Participation management allows for the best utilisation of human resources and demonstrates trust in the abilities of the educators. It also gives the principal the opportunity to elicit new ideas from colleagues and to test their feelings on certain topics.
- Quality circles. A selected group meets on a regular basis to identify and discuss problems related to the work and to find solutions to these problems. These solutions are then recommended to a higher level of management.
- Strategic management as discussed under recommendation one above.
- Job restructuring, job enrichment and job enlargement. The improvement of the quality of working life is determined by aspects such as motivation and work satisfaction. Work restructuring changes work behaviour and it provides opportunities to initiate other changes in the organisation. Implementing job enrichment initiatives in schools helps to improve the quality of the educators' working lives. However, it is necessary for the principal to allow educators to work independently and to give sufficient feedback while the job is being done.
- Assessment centres. This is a specific technique which may be used to identify or select a manager at an early stage of his/her career using multiple-techniques such as role-play, group discussions and more than one trained observer.
- Mentoring which will be discussed in more detail under induction (recommendation 5) below.
- Total quality management in schools. This ensures sustainable, steep-slope improvement in quality performance.

- The psychological contract. The human being in the organisation is the psychological contract. An innate quality of humans is their ability to set personal goals and they have certain expectations when entering the labour market. The upholding of the psychological contract results in motivated employees who are essential for the success of any organisation.

It becomes evident from the above that OD results from certain qualities within an organisation which include good supervision, pleasant working conditions, adequate salaries and benefits, as well as challenging and interesting work.

### **5.4.3 Recommendation 3**

The findings revealed that a certain percentage of male and female principals are equally effective in change management, empowerment and motivation. Because there are both male and female principals who do not possess these skills, however, the researcher suggests the following:

- Principals must be aware that nothing is permanent in this world except change. In recent years South Africa has undergone a number of changes, with transformation taking place in every facet of life, and one can easily become redundant. Principals must therefore be agents of change, but also be aware that change is often met with resistance. Resistance might be caused by the following:
- Habit. It is easier to do the job the same way every day.
- Security. Some employees like the comfort and security of doing things the same way.
- Economic factors. Employees might fear that change may make their jobs obsolete.

- Fear of the unknown. Any disruption of familiar pattern may create fear. Some people fear any thing unfamiliar.
- Lack of awareness. A person may not recognize a change in a working environment.
- Social factors. People may resist change for fear of what others may think.

Principals must therefore develop suitable methods and approaches to accommodate change and reduce resistance. Principals might adopt Kurt Lewin's concept of force-field analysis in order to better understand resistance to change. Kurt Lewin believes that we should think about any change in a situation in terms of driving forces or factors acting to change the current condition and resisting forces or factors acting to inhibit change. These factors may be internal or external to the organisation. The principals can think of the current conditions in organisation as an equilibrium that is the result of driving forces and resisting forces working against each other. They must assess the change potential as well as the resistance and attempt to change the balance of forces by increasing the driving forces, reducing the resisting forces or considering new driving forces. As the driving forces are increased, new ways are found to reduce inhibiting forces to reduce tension. The principals can also make use of the following three steps as suggested by Kurt Lewin to deal with driving and inhibiting forces for the successful implementation of change:

- *Unfreezing*. Reducing the forces which keep the organization in its current condition is important. New information, for instance, can be introduced by means of a survey to detect inadequacies in the current state or to decrease the strength of current values, attitudes and behaviours. Faults of the current system can be pointed

out and it can be criticised. The principal must be intuitive (anticipate change). He must be aware of what change will take place, how will it be done, how it will affect, what are advantages and how will it benefits the school.

- *Change.* Once the situation has been unfrozen, the school is ready to begin to change. This step involves development of new values, attitudes, behaviours or change in structures. In the male-dominated schools, for instance, the principal might promote acceptance and respect of one another, irrespective of gender. The principal must be in control. Change can be very emotional. He must know how to manage situations that become emotional. He must be calm and relaxed, and must reaffirm, reassure and assist educators. Educators might express fears about the changes. The principal must allay the fears of educators by providing counseling and be able to see the change process through.
- *Refreezing.* This stage involves stabilizing the change at a new quasi-stationary equilibrium. The principal has to ascertain whether the change has achieved the desired results. The skills learnt must be reinforced, and whenever shortcomings were experienced, must be able to be supplemented. Change is not an event, it is a process. Each of the stages is the process within the process.

The principals can also use the following methods to reduce resistance:

- Vision-building can provide the direction and driving power for change.
- The participation and involvement of stakeholders and those to be affected by the changes in planning, designing and implementation of change is important. The principals in successful schools do support and stimulate initiative-taking and empowerment by others.



- Communication with educators on the nature and need for change, as well as its effects will lessen employees' fear of the unknown, is essential.
- Support can be provided by creating forums and occasions and by organizing department officials to come and listen to the educational needs and concerns of educators. Educators can be trained en masse and be taught how to establish procedures to implement change. Staff development and resource assistance are important themes during the implementation of change.
- Reward. The school or educator that has implemented change successfully must be recognised. That school or educator can also be used as a model school or educator.
- Planning. Planning well in advance can lead to prospective changes. Change builds anxiety based on the fear of the unknown. Learner and educator performance levels must be given attention. The use of evolutionary planning, that is blending top-down initiative and bottom-up participation is often a characteristic of successful reforms.
- Coercion can be used as a last resort to reduce resistance to change.

With the relevant information in their possession, principals will be able to develop and motivate their staff by conducting workshops themselves. However, in developing staff, the Department of Education first needs to implement a developmental staff appraisal system (DAS) in order to identify problem areas. For the appraisal method to be effective, the staff need to be given feedback. Furthermore, in order to assess the staff performance, principals need to implement an Integrated Quality Management System (IQMS) effectively and efficiently. The appropriate methods for implementing these two strategies need to be learnt otherwise they will not be effective. Professionals in

change management should be invited to teach principals about the system and to guide them.

Networking and consultation is essential as a means of providing professional advice and establishing involvement on the part of all staff members. The quality of secondary education would be improved if the staff who were promoted to school principalship, worked with and through people, more particularly if staff and community consultation was courageous enough to aim at unfiltered discussion, not concealing differences. The presence or absence of mechanisms to address the ongoing problems when people try out ideas is crucial for success.

#### **5.4.4 Recommendation 4**

In this study it was found that male principals and female principals on the whole are equally able to manage conflict in their schools. However, there are some principals who still find it difficult to manage conflict and make decisions. It is therefore essential for the researcher to give some recommendations on conflict management and decision-making.

The principal must be aware of the causes and types of conflicts in order to be able to deal with conflicts effectively. Some of the causes of conflicts are the following:

- ambiguous roles,
- conflicting interests,
- communication barriers,
- dependence of one party,
- differentiation of organization and

- need for consensus.

Some of the types of conflicts are the following:

- Parties want different things but must settle on one solution. This type of conflict can be resolved by finding an alternative outcome in order to satisfy the needs of all concerned.
- Parties want the same thing, but only one can have it. This conflict gets out of control with an escalation in violent actions and reactions. It leads to confrontation involving self-interests and the use of brute power to gain the desired solution.

For effective conflict management, the principal should gather information and assess the types and causes of conflicts and issues involved. Then he or she can use the relevant approach to resolve the conflict. There are many approaches to conflict management. Two of these are positional and needs-based approaches. The principal who adopts the positional approach enables one party to win as much as the other party can, whereas the need-based approach (problem-solving, compromising) takes time but people work through and recognise what pushed the parties to adopt their positions. This approach is characterised by a mutually agreeable solution which is fair to all. The principal must, therefore, be able to use his or her sources of power in order to manage conflicts effectively. His or her sources of power are the ability to make the right decision and the ability to persuade others.

In order to make the right decisions, the principal must have knowledge of the two types of decisions, namely programmed decisions (for repetitive and routine problems a definite procedure has been developed for handling them) and non-programmed decisions (some problems are complex and infrequent and special treatment is needed

for them). For a rational decision model, the following steps could be followed for effective joint decision making:

- Define and diagnose the problem. Identifying and monitoring numerous external and internal environmental forces and deciding which ones are contributing to the problem are crucial. The principal must assess the forces at play and determine which are the causes of the real problem. He must then relate those interpretations to the current or desired goals of the school.
- Set goals. Specific goals which spell out the desired results are set to eliminate or correct the problem. Alternative goals should be identified as well and the best among them should be chosen.
- Search for alternative solutions. Teams or individuals look for alternative ways to achieve a goal.
- Compare and evaluate the alternative solutions.
- Choose between the alternative solutions.
- Implement the solution selected.
- Follow-up and control. The principal then evaluates the results. If implementation is not producing satisfactory results, corrective action will be needed. Follow-up and control may indicate a need to redefine the problem or review the original goal.

In addition to the power of making decisions, the principal must also have the power to persuade. The principal needs to be able to change people's minds about an issue in order to reach a settlement. The most effective principal is an efficient persuader who can get people to change.

The researcher would like to encourage principals to adopt deliberation strategies in decision-making and problem-solving in their schools. Deliberation strategies allow principals to sit down with educators, learners, parents, community members and other people who have an interest in the school, such as individuals in the private sector. The objective during a brainstorming session is to decide on matters pertaining to the running of the school within a specified time frame.

Principals must be prepared for varying solutions because people have different opinions, all of which must be evaluated. The principals must anticipate all the potential outcomes of their actions, because ultimately they are accountable. It is important, therefore, for the principals to do some research before they engage in deliberation.

Consideration of means, ends and values is also of importance in the deliberation process. The values of both the school and the community must be taken into account. It is important for deliberation to take place during weekends so that teaching and learning are not be disturbed and so that as many people as possible will be able to attend. This deliberation is important, because when resolutions are adopted from these deliberations, everybody within and outside the schools feels a sense of ownership of the changes.

Preferential interests (people's own interests) as well as normative interests (the policies that are school or departmental requirements) will always guide people in the deliberation process. Principals must therefore be aware that interests go hand-in-hand with conflict. If interest is the fuel, then conflict is the engine. Deliberations cannot take place if there are no conflicting views. Conflict in deliberation is positive because it has the potential to make antagonists come to one understanding, and ultimately leads to consensus.

Furthermore, principals must be able to deal with the conflicts which arise during deliberations and in the schools generally. It is therefore essential for school principals to attend workshops on conflict management and to acquaint themselves with the following legislation of education framework:

- The South African Schools Act, Act 84 of 1996 [SASA] which provides laws on how schools should be governed
- The Constitution of the Republic of South Africa, Act 108 of 1996 that contains the Bill of Rights that schools should promote
- The Employment Equity Act, Act 55 of 1998
- The National Education Policy Act, Act 27 of 1997
- the Labour Relations Act, Act 66 of 1995 which provides an understanding between employer and employee.
- Employment of Educators Act, Act 76 of 1998 which stipulates the conditions of employment of educators and other issues related to educator employment. It should be used in conjunction with the Labour Relations Act.
- Proclamation 138 of 1994
- The Provincial Education Act and its regulations.

The principals need to acquaint themselves with those acts by attending relevant seminars at a provincial, regional, district and school level and through reading departmental circulars, guides and hand-outs. This information is needed in order to consider people's rights when dealing with various school-related matters.

Furthermore, consultants and knowledgeable people who have experience in conflict management could be invited to conduct seminars with school staff and other stakeholders.

#### **5.4.5 Recommendation 5**

This study showed that male principals and female principals may be equally effective school leaders, depending on the personality and leadership skills they possess. Some suggestions should therefore be given to both the principals and the Department of Education about effective leadership. The researcher's suggestions to the principals and the Department of Education are discussed here under.

##### **(a) Induction programme**

The researcher recommends that the Department of Education makes use of induction programmes for newly promoted principals. The induction process should begin when the new principals are employed and should have clarity for the specific job requirement. These programmes should be conducted at regional level. This activity is essential to enhance organisation development. A mentor (experienced principal) must be appointed by the Department of Education. The mentor provides the newly appointed principal with opportunities to develop. The relationship between the two parties must be of a two-way, interactive nature in a risk-free environment. They should encourage each other to share their inner problems and feelings concerning their professional roles. The mentoring system should be based on the principle of practice-oriented learning experiences. The participants must observe one another's

management behaviour and actions and discuss these observations with one another.

The steps for the implementation of the mentoring programme are as follows:

- Declaration of intent. Tertiary institutions are determinants in any mentoring programme with regard to the provision of a basis of knowledge, a theoretical foundation and the latest research findings.
- Composition of a planning committee. Experts in tertiary institutions, in collaboration with the relevant Department of Education assume responsibility for designing a mentoring programme for beginner school principals in a specific region.
- Determining the role-players. The suitable mentor must be selected and be trained for his or her task. The beginner principal should identify his or her developmental needs and the provision of training for his or her role within the mentoring programme. The role of the tertiary institution is seen as the contribution that it can make with regard to the provision of a scientific basis of knowledge and a theoretical foundation for the mentorship and making research findings on mentorship available.

A coordinator is appointed by the education authority or by the tertiary institutions to train the mentors. The mentor and the beginner principal decide together on the developmental programme. Emphasis should be on the induction of the beginner school principal into the new school environment and his or her continued professional developmental activities that link up with her or her developmental needs.

- Implementation of the programme. Continuous organisational, technical and interpersonal support for the participants is essential for the success. The planning



committee can make a valuable contribution in terms of continuous evaluation. It is important to hold many contact sessions during which the beginner principal's management skills can be assessed as well as his or her professional development. The mentor's duties include aspects such as advisory, communication, consultative, guidance, role model, protection and development of management skills.

- Evaluation of the mentoring programme. Evaluation is important in order for amendments and improvements to be made.

#### **(b) Training of principals**

All principals should attend in-service training in management and leadership. This training should begin with the identification by principals, not training agencies, of areas in which principals need help. The training backs up the principals' guidelines which spell out skills and competencies required by principals. It also establishes the basis for competence which principals would achieve.

Principals must be trained in:

- leadership programmes,
- management skills,
- informational skills,
- interpersonal skills,
- decision-making skills,
- evaluation skills,

- their relationships with the staff and learners,
- their relationships with the parents and community and
- the efficient operation of the school in terms of procedures, budget and resources.

**(c) Support from outside the Department of Education**

Principals must establish partnerships with people outside education so that their effectiveness can be influenced. Non-government organisations exist which focus on developing effective leadership and which are dedicated to the development of general leadership and organisational change. These people may be within the province, within the country or overseas. This learning requires various support systems: within the school, from other principals, from the regional or district office, and from outside the system. Each is considered in turn below.

**(d) A core-group for programme planning**

Group members should be able to discuss ideas, problems and solutions with their core-group. Support from the staff will carry with it the support of the parents, learners and the regional or district office. There should also be co-ordinators and committees fostering relationships that legitimise the discussion of many kinds of problem. Therefore, sharing responsibilities can help move a school from being a closed system to being an open system.

**(e) Principals' association**

Principals are able to help one another because they occupy the same positions, deal with similar problems, face similar pressures and develop various solutions. Furthermore, a fellow principal is available there at almost any time of any day. Therefore, a principals' group can be formed. The group must select a chairperson on an annual basis under whose leadership they meet twice a month. In Umlazi district, for instance, 50 principals could be assigned to three committees that meet periodically to consider relevant issues. The officers of the group and chairperson of the subcommittees must constitute the executive committee, which meets twice a month to plan the agenda for the principals' meetings. Principals share the same interests and they learn from one another for the promotion of their work.

**5.4.6 Recommendation 6**

In the study it was established that female principals face many obstacles in school leadership. These problems include the lack of role models and support as a result of being underrepresented in management (this gives them a sense of inadequacy) and their leadership being resisted by the school stakeholders, especially male staff members. No matter how dedicated female principals might be, they are unable to enforce order when they are confronted by resistance on the part of school stakeholders, and by disrespect and a lack of support. There seems to be no fair means of dealing with this. As a result, the researcher suggests the following to the Department of Education:

- A fair adequate representation of female principals, especially Africans, must be promoted to secondary principalships to address the present imbalances.

- Equity programmes must be organised for staff, parents, community, union and within the schools. These programmes must focus on developing anti-discriminatory practices with regard to gender, and related matters, including issues of abuse and violence.
- Insight from gender studies must be provided for principals. After having attained secondary principalship positions, female principals should work at redefining leadership to include a ‘feminine’ perspective so that the process of resocialisation becomes unnecessary for them. Advice and assistance from a mentor in an administrative position would also be of help to female principals, who must:
  - focus not only on what they want but also on why they want it.
  - assess their skills by identifying their strengths and weaknesses.
  - assess how much effort they would put towards the effective management of the school; that is, whether they would be willing to take risks for the benefit of the school.
  - develop competence in principalship.
  - obtain credentials by enrolling in degree programmes in school administration.
  - gain confidence.
  - Assertiveness training should be organised for principals.
- Principals must be taught to use opportunities. Female must try to attain secondary principalship by applying for vacant posts advertised in departmental bulletins, journals and newspapers such as *Ilanga*, *Sunday Times* and *City Press*.

- Principals , especially female principals, must be trained in how to foster discipline.

With regard to school discipline, female principals must realise that managers cannot expect to be loved. Involvement in regular workshops or seminars focusing on disciplinary measures where they can be participants, facilitators or presenters is also helpful. It is also important that female principals adequately acquaint themselves with all the legislation mentioned in Recommendation 4 in order to be able to instil discipline in their schools while taking people's rights into account. They can even take university or college courses on school discipline.

#### **5.4.7 Recommendation 7**

The study revealed that many female schools have achieved marked success. Women principals' successes need to be made known to the public. Female principals might use marketing tools to market their schools to the community and to business sectors in order to get sponsors. The management team will draw up and develop the marketing plan. The marketing management team will sell the curriculum of the school to the target market by offering the services that meet the needs of the target market.

### **5.5 OPPORTUNITIES FOR FUTURE RESEARCH**

Female often face challenges in schools caused mainly by male school staff and community members, as discussed in Chapter 4. In South Africa, which is undergoing transformation, discrimination of any kind is outlined. Therefore the researcher sees the need for further research on the management of conflict which is gender-related on the school site.

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## APPENDIX A

### QUESTIONNAIRE TO EDUCATORS, SCHOOL GOVERNING BODIES AND LEARNERS' REPRESENTATIVE COUNCIL (LRC)

I am doing research for a Doctoral thesis on Leadership and gender at the University of Zululand. My population is made up of women and men in leadership positions in secondary schools. Please assist me by responding to the scheduled questionnaire, as openly and as honestly as you can. The data I collect will be used purely for research purposes. Do not write your name on the questionnaire. There are no right or wrong answers.

#### SECTION A

Kindly make a cross (X) in the appropriate space.

1. Are you

A member of Learners' Representative Council (LRC)	
A member of the School Governing Body (SGB)	
An educator	

2. Sex of the respondent

Female	
Male	

3. Sex of the respondent's principal

Female	
Male	

4. Locality of the respondent's school

Rural	
Urban	
Semi-urban	

**GENERAL INSTRUCTION: Kindly indicate your answer, in all closed items, by placing a cross in the box next to your choice.**

Explanation of symbols: **SA = Strongly agree**

**A = Agree**

**N = Neither agree nor disagree**

**D = Disagree**

**SD = Strongly disagree**

## SECTION B

1. Male principals are better administrators than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals are less efficient than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals have better visions than female principals about the direction which schools ought to take.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals set visions more collaboratively with relevant stakeholders in schools than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals are less efficient in assigning tasks to staff than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals define their roles and those of educators more clearly than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals plan, organize and co-ordinate school activities more efficiently than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals are not more collaborative as leaders than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
Male principals are more effective in terms of achieving school goals than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD

Assuming you are to compare a male principal and a female principal .

Who do you think is more visionary? Male                      Female

Please make a cross for your choice. Give five reasons for your answer. Arrange in order of importance the five reasons for your choice, starting with the most important one.

1. \_\_\_\_\_
2. \_\_\_\_\_
3. \_\_\_\_\_
4. \_\_\_\_\_
5. \_\_\_\_\_

### SECTION C

1. Female principals maintain an open and warm relationship with staff than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. Female principals facilitate interpersonal relationships better than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. Female principals have less respect for educators' ideas than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. There seems to be a more friendly atmosphere among educators who serve under female principals than among those supervised by male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. The people supervised by female principals show more teamwork compared to those supervised by male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. Female principals demonstrate less accountability than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
7. Female principals communicate ideas more effectively than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. Female principals co-ordinate ideas and activities less efficiently than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. Female principals share decision-making authority better than male principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD

10. Who do you think promotes and establishes positive and productive working relationships with school members, including the community in which the school exists, between female principal and male principal? Explain.

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## SECTION D

1. Male principals initiate fewer implementable ideas than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
2. Male principals are better in fostering development among staff than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
3. Male principals involve parents and the community during strategic planning of the school more often than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
4. Male principals make use of learners' ideas more often than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
5. Male principals are less efficient in influencing change in schools than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
6. Male principals are more skilled change agents than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD

7. Male principals reinforce good practice among staff less well than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
8. Male principals use less innovative techniques to accomplish the group's goals than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD
9. Male principals use different leadership styles with different educators depending on their maturity level or needs, more appropriately than female principals.	SA	A	N	D	SD

10. Do you perceive the male principal to be more transformational than the female principal? Substantiate your statement.

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## SECTION E

Female principals use more effective decision-making processes than male principals.	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Female principals facilitate groups in decision-making processes more efficiently than male principals.	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Female principals do not evaluate the effectiveness of a decision better than male principals.	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Female principals are less creative problem solvers in schools than male principals.	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>
Female principals resolve conflict between others and themselves more effectively than male principals.	<b>SA</b>	<b>A</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>D</b>	<b>SD</b>

## SECTION F

1. Between men and women, who in your experience, leads schools better?

1.1 Answer: \_\_\_\_\_

1.2 Support your response by giving five reasons in order of their importance:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

4. \_\_\_\_\_

5. \_\_\_\_\_

2. State main obstacles, if any, which women principals face, as leaders. If you have supporting evidence for your response, please supply it.

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**Thank you indeed for filling in the questionnaire.**

## APPENDIX B

### SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS GUIDING QUESTIONS (DIRECTED TO FEMALE PRINCIPAL)

1. With regard to developing and fulfilling a vision for a school, who, between female principals and male principal, are more effective? Why do you think it is so?

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2.

- 2.1 Who are better facilitators of teamwork among educators between male and female principals? Will you please support your response.

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- 2.2 Who are better facilitators of relationships among educators between male and female principals? Give reasons for your answer.

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2.3 Who better promote the process of achieving tasks by educators, between male and female principals? Give reasons for your answer.

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3. Between female and male principals, who in your experience better promote collaboration among staff? Substantiate your response.

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4. Who are more efficient decision-makers in schools: male principals or female principals? Will you please give reasons for your answer.

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5. In your experience, who leads schools better: men or women? Support your response by giving five reasons in order of importance.

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**Thank you for answering the questions.**

## **APPENDIX C**

BB655 Umlazi  
P.O. Umlazi  
UMLAZI  
30 June 2004

The Director : Research Strategy Development and ECMS  
KZN Department of Education and Culture  
Private Bag X05  
ROSSBURGH  
4072

Dear Sir


### **Request for Permission to Conduct Research**

I am a doctoral student at the University of Zululand doing research on Leadership and Gender. My supervisor is Prof. R.P. Ngcongo. The research requires the administration of a questionnaire to educators, governing bodies and learners' representatives in secondary schools within Umlazi District. Information gathered during the process of this research will be confidential and anonymous. I, therefore, hereby ask for permission to conduct such research in schools within Umlazi District.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully  
(Miss) C.S. Magagula

## APPENDIX D: Letters of approval from the research committee

 PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL ISIFUNDAZWE SAKWAZULU-NATAL PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL		 DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE UMNYANQO WENFUNDO NAMASHYO DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTOER	
ADDRESS: IKHULI: ADRES:	EX-URBAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION CNR. NICHOLSON ROAD AND QUEEN MARY AVENUE UMBILO	PRIVATE BAG: ISIKHWAMA: SEPOSI: PRIVAATSAK:	X05 ROSSBURGH 4072
		TELEPHONE: UCINGO: TELEFOON: FAX:	031 2744921 031 2744922
ENQUIRIES: IMIBUZO: NAVRAE:	P.T. ZUNGU	REFERENCE: INKOMBA: VERWYSING:	Permission Research DATE: USUKU: DATUM:
			30 July 2004

TO: **Ms C. S. Magagula**  
**BB 655 Umlazi**  
**Umlazi**  
**4031**

RE: **PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH**

Please be informed that you have been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, you must present a copy of the written approval from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution bearing in mind that the institution is not obliged to participate if the research is not a departmental project.
- Research should not be conducted during official contact time, as education programmes should not be interrupted, except in exceptional cases with special approval of the KZNDEC.
- The research is not to be conducted during the fourth school term, except in cases where the KZNDEC deem it necessary to undertake research at schools during that period.
- Should you wish to extend the period of research after approval has been granted, an application for extension must be directed to the Director: Research, Strategy Development and ECMIS.
- The research will be limited to the schools or institutions for which approval has been granted.
- A copy of the completed report, dissertation or thesis must be provided to the: RSDE Directorate
- Lastly, you must sign the attached declaration that, you are aware of the procedures and will abide by the same.

*B. H. Mthabela*

**B. H. MTHABELA**  
**RESEARCH, STRATEGY, POLICY DEVELOPMENT AND ECMIS**



PROVINCE OF KWAZULU-NATAL  
ISIPHELAZIYE SAKWAZULU-NATAL  
PROVINSIE KWAZULU-NATAL



DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND CULTURE  
UMNYARHODI WEZIFUNDO NA-ESIKHO  
DEPARTEMENT VAN ONDERWYS EN KULTUUR

ADDRESS: EX-DURBAN COLLEGE OF EDUCATION  
IKHELI: CNR. NICHOLSON ROAD AND QUEEN  
ADRES: MARY AVENUE  
UMBULO

PRIVATE BAG:  
ISIKHWAMA  
SEPOSI:  
PRIVAATSAK.

X03  
ROSSBURGH  
4072

TELEPHONE: 031 2744921  
UCINGO:  
TELEFOON:  
FAX: 031 2744922

ENQUIRIES  
IMIBUZO:  
NAVRAE: P.T. ZUNGU

REFERENCE:  
INKOMBA:  
VERWYSING: Permission: Research

DATE:  
USOKU:  
DATUM: 30 July 2004

# RE: APPROVAL TO CONDUCT RESEARCH


## TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This is to serve as a notice that Ms C. S. Magagula has been granted permission to conduct research with the following terms and conditions:

- That as a researcher, she/he must present a copy of the written approval from the Department to the Head of the Institution concerned before any research may be undertaken at a departmental institution.
- Attached is the list of schools she/he has been granted permission to conduct research in, however, It must be noted that the schools are not obligated to participate in the research if it is not a KZNDEC project.
- Ms C. S. Magagula has been granted special permission to conduct her/his research during official contact times, as it is believed that her/his presence would not interrupt education programmes. Should education programmes be interrupted, she/he must, therefore, conduct his/her research during nonofficial contact times.
- No school is expected to participate in the research during the fourth school term, as this is the critical period for schools to focus on their exams.

Comments: \_\_\_\_\_

  
Mhandiwe Zungu  
Deputy Director: Research, Strategy and Policy Development  
Comments: \_\_\_\_\_



B H Mthabela  
Director: Research, Strategy Development and ECMIS

## APPENDIX E

BB655 Umlazi  
P.O. Umlazi  
4031  
5 August 2004

The Principal

*Dear Madam / Sir*

### **Appointment to Come and Conduct Research**

I hereby wish to make an appointment to come in August and September and do research. I am doing research for a Doctoral thesis on **Leadership and gender** at University of Zululand. My population is made up of women and men in leadership positions in secondary schools.

The Department of Education has granted me permission to undertake research in schools within Umlazi District. Kindly receive the copy of the approval letter from the Department. I will administer questionnaires to educators, chairpersons of the school governing bodies and learners' presidents. Female principals will also be interviewed.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully

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MS C. S. MAGAGULA ( SAMKE)

CONTACT NUMBERS: 031 9093664 / 0826442091  
FAX NUMBER: 031 9073011



## APPENDIX F

BB655 Umlazi  
P.O. Umlazi  
4031

8 August 2005

The Research Committee  
Ex-Durban College of Education  
Private Bag X05  
Rossburg  
4031

Dear Madam / Sir

### **Request for statistics**

I am doing research for a Doctoral thesis on **Principalship and gender** at the University of Zululand. I did obtain permission from the Research Committee to conduct the fieldwork. I now request the following statistics:

- Number of secondary male principals and female principals in KwaZulu-Natal.
- Number of secondary male principals and female principals in eThekwinini region
- Number of secondary male principals and female principals in Umlazi District.

Will you please e-mail the above information to: [steveatcoastalkzn.co.za](mailto:steveatcoastalkzn.co.za) as soon as you can.

Thanks.

Yours faithfully  
(Miss) C.S. Magagula

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MS C.S. MAGAGULA (SAMKE)  
CONTACT NUMBERS: 0319093664 / 0826442091 / 0319051375 (W)