

Male and Female Perspectives on Female Principals in South Africa

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Submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Education

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Abstract

In South Africa, women are at a high risk of discrimination and opposition to authority when they obtain leadership positions, especially in education (Gouws & Kotze, 2007). The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principals' effectiveness in two South African schools. Qualitative case study research methodology included interviews, as well as participant observations and semi-structured interviews. These interviews were conducted within two school settings in South Africa. The participants were teachers, department heads, and deputy principals. When the data were analyzed, it was found that all participants wanted a leader who was transformational and there was a strong preference for those who had feminine traits. This research showed the strong desire for transformational leaders as well as how feminine characteristics are not only starting to become more accepted, but also are now becoming preferred.

Acknowledgements

This major research paper would not be possible without the help and support of many different people. My initial work with Dr. Dolana Mogadime and Professor Petro Du Preez and their expertise is greatly appreciated. They provided the opportunity to conduct international research and to learn more about South Africa. I would like to thank Dr. Debra Harwood for her initial feedback and Dr. Denise Armstrong for her insightful comments and questions. I would also like to thank Renee Kuchapski for her feedback and assistance in helping bring this major research paper to fruition. It was a remarkable learning experience working with her and I am grateful for her time and motivation.

This work would not be possible without the generous support of the Canadian International Development Agency, who graciously funded my research experience in South Africa. I would also like to thank SANPAD, North-West University, and Kobus Mentz for welcoming me into their university and aiding me with this project.

I am indebted to my family and friends who have supported and encouraged me throughout this process. I would like to thank my grandfather, Clarke Thomson, who encouraged me to pursue my Masters.

Finally, I would like to thank the strong female leaders in my family who have shown me what can be achieved through hard work and have acted as role models in my life, my mother, Lorraine Giroux, and my grandmother, Phyllis Thomson.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

In South Africa, women are often challenged with gender-based barriers when they attempt to move into leadership positions (Gouws & Kotze, 2007; Kiamba, 2008; Norris & Inglehart, 2001). Furthermore, once they attain such positions, they are more likely than men to experience discrimination, opposition to their authority, criticism, and negative judgments (Eagly & Chin, 2010; Stelter, 2002; Welle & Heilman, 2007). Although, the majority of teachers are women in most countries (Coleman, 2002), women are still in the minority when it comes to being in positions of authority. This tends to reinforce the stereotype that men are best suited for leadership positions and that men are more logical, ambitious, and assertive, and that women are more emotional, sensitive, and submissive (Pounder & Coleman, 2002). The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principals' effectiveness in two South African schools.

This chapter provides a brief overview of female school leadership in South Africa and reviews the specific context in which this study was situated. It then provides a statement of the problem and outlines the research purpose and the research questions. The theoretical framework, as well as the scope and limitations of the study, are highlighted next. Finally, the chapter concludes with an outline of how the remainder of the document is organized.

Background of Female School Leadership in South Africa

In South Africa, women have traditionally been disadvantaged in the workplace, regardless of their race (Mathur-Helm, 2005). Because men have been considered superior to women, they are advantaged with respect to employment opportunities and

promotions, which has allowed them to occupy most leadership positions (Mathur-Helm, 2005). Women are often encouraged to pursue more domestic roles, while men are encouraged to move into leadership positions (Seidman, 1993). Additionally, women who hold jobs are typically underpaid, underappreciated, and placed in positions that do not fully utilize the skills they have to offer (Seidman, 1993).

Currently, South Africa's government is promoting gender equality and aiming to achieve a 50/50 gender split in the labour force (Bathembu, 2010). Many different organizations, such as the Commission on Gender Equality and the Gender Advocacy Program, have as their mandate educating individuals about their human rights. The Commission on Gender Equality has the additional mandate of protecting women who are experiencing discrimination (Shefer et al., 2008). Furthermore, the South African Department of Education is committed to training more women for leadership and management positions to promote gender equality (Mogadime, Mentz, Armstrong, & Holtam, 2010).

Although the number of women in the paid workforce has increased, many women occupy very marginal jobs with limited responsibility or influence (Garson, n.d). This has contributed to a large number of women, particularly Black women, in South Africa, living in poverty. The rate of unemployment for Black women is 41.2% in comparison to the 6.9% for White women (Statistics South Africa, 2012). The percentage of Blacks living in poverty was listed at 61.9% compared to the low 1.2% of Whites (Statistics South Africa, 2012). The World Bank (n.d.) defines poverty as the inability of a person to fulfill his or her basic needs.

There is some indication that women in South Africa are beginning to move beyond stereotypes into more leadership positions. In their research examining traditional gender roles in South Africa, Shefer et al. (2008) interviewed 23 South African women. They found that traditional gender roles were still pervasive and that men were seen as dominant and women as submissive, especially in Black cultures. Through gainful employment and increased economic self-sufficiency, these same 23 women noted they were beginning to receive and be recognized as having an increased level of power in their households. Furthermore, they reported they were beginning to protect themselves and their individual rights by employing various legal services (Shefer et al., 2008).

Shefer et al. (2008) also reported, despite the benefits of having an extra income in the household, not all communities felt comfortable with women who were employed. A large number of participants reported that traditional gender roles continued to influence perceptions of women, especially in small rural communities in the Western Cape. Men frequently dominated leadership roles in both the workplace and the home, even though women were responsible for a large percentage of the work. Although the research indicated that women were increasingly assuming more leadership roles, getting higher paying jobs, and gaining control over their household finances, participants were worried about the effects this would have on men (Shefer et al., 2008). Participants expressed concern that putting women in control of the household would demoralize men and stated these concerns even though most males continued to hold leadership positions within the home and the community (Shefer et al, 2008).

Shafer et al.'s (2008) findings reflect the concerns of women in leadership positions across South Africa where attitudes are rooted in traditional cultural beliefs. For

example, Glick et al. (2000) compared South African culture to culture in 18 other countries. In their study they define two different kinds of sexism; hostile sexism which refers to men thinking that women are inferior and benevolent sexism which refers to the belief that women need to be protected since they are the weaker sex, which restricts them in a way that appears to be 'out of affection' (Glick et al., 2000). Their study of 15,000 men and women revealed that South Africans scored third highest in both hostile and benevolent sexism. Glick et al. found that female participants also received high scores for hostile and benevolent sexism. Women tended to mirror the attitudes of the dominant group and assumed that they were the weaker gender, tending to reject jobs that did not fit traditional gender roles (Glick et al., 2000). Shefer et al. (2008) and Glick et al. (2007) concluded that a sexist, stereotypical view of women predominates in South Africa.

Context of the Problem

Since the World Conference of the International Women's Year, held in Mexico City in 1975, many international organizations have focused their efforts towards increasing global equality (Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d). The Conference initiated the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination Against Women (1979), which was adopted by the United Nations General Assembly. According to this Convention, discrimination against women on the basis of gender violates their human right to equality. Denial of access and opportunity for women to reach their full potential is also a violation, and considered discriminatory. This includes the refusal to accept change towards nontraditional roles for women (Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights, n.d).

The Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) recognizes the importance of promoting equality for women, especially with regards to employment. In addition to offering equal opportunities for both genders, CIDA helps to provide women with the assistance they require to overcome obstacles that may be unique to their gender and roles, such as poverty, access to health care, and education (CIDA, 2011). CIDA specifically claims that simply having more women in educational leadership positions, for example, is not enough to prevent the inequalities women traditionally face, and they state that assistance, in the form of training programs, must be given to help ensure that staff members will treat women in a fair and equal way.

One of CIDA's (2011) projects is the Gender Equality Action Plan. This project's mandate is to create programs specifically designed to reduce disparity between males and females and to ensure that gender equality exists in all government programs and policies (CIDA, 2011). Although people's beliefs about gender are deeply embedded in culture, CIDA is determined to accomplish gender equity. To do this, change has to not only take place in the home, but in the community and the workplace (CIDA, 2011).

According to CIDA (2011), while promoting a developing country's immediate needs are important (i.e., living conditions, access to clean water, providing basic health care), consideration for developing strategic needs is equally essential. Strategic needs include things such as ensuring equal gender representation in different career fields as well as changing expectations about gender through education, policies, and projects (CIDA, 2011). CIDA promotes education for sustaining change and improving quality of life for all citizens and is currently working in South Africa to promote parity through gender awareness campaigns and through equality training. CIDA is implementing South

Africa's Bill of Rights, which is intended to meet the equality needs of all of its citizens (Republic of South Africa, 1996).

In South Africa, many women fail to complete high school, and of those who do, few go on to a higher level of education (Christie, 2010). According to UN Women (2011), having women seen as equals in leadership roles provides benefits that go beyond the obvious and helps to provide strong role models for female students. This has been found to be a significant factor for encouraging girls to continue to go to school as they have a daily reminder of what it is possible to achieve (UN Women, 2011).

Despite occupying the majority of teaching positions, there are currently not enough women principals in South African schools. Men continue to be considered natural leaders while women continue to be redirected into stereotypically feminine career positions (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Strong cultural beliefs create additional barriers women must overcome while attempting to secure and gain acceptance in leadership positions (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). Stereotypes and discrimination have hindered women in their pursuit to become principals (Lumby & Azaola, 2011).

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principal effectiveness in two South African schools.

Three overarching research questions were utilized to guide the study:

1. What do high school teachers perceive to be the benefits and challenges associated with having a female principal?
2. What do high school teachers perceive to be the most desirable leadership qualities of their principal?

3. What role does race and gender (intersectionality) play in the participants' responses to questions #1 and #2?

Rationale

This study contributes to the literature on perceptions of South African female principals. Currently, a large percentage of the research conducted on female leaders has been completed in developed countries, as defined by the International Human Development Indicators (Human Development Reports, 2011). The United States, where most research was carried out, is a country that is quite different from South Africa. It is challenging to make comparisons between the two, as women in each country would have different experiences and barriers to overcome.

According to the United States National Glass Ceiling Commission, while breaking down stereotypes about a person's gender or race takes many years to accomplish, having knowledge of the specific stereotypes people hold can make equality programs more effective (Staff Catalyst, 1993). When men and women vocalize stereotypes and perceived disadvantages of female leaders, it identifies barriers that women in these positions face (Staff Catalyst, 1993). This provides a starting point for creating more effective specialized training and professional development programs (Staff Catalyst, 1993). This study will assist in identifying these stereotypes by outlining the challenges and benefits associated with female principals.

Seeing women in leadership roles, especially when they are receiving the respect of their staff members, also has an impact on young male students. It provides them with an alternate view from either their home life as well as cultural beliefs that women can succeed in leadership roles. It is crucial to include young boys and men into helping

promote gender equality, as they are often part of the problem (UNICEF, 2004). Males who hold views that women do not belong in higher up positions are more likely to make it harder for women to succeed, as well as to resist their attempts at leadership.

Additionally, when males are exposed to female leaders at a young age, they are more likely to be accepting of them when they are older, as they will become used to them (UNICEF, 2004).

Theoretical Framework

This study is situated in the literature of educational leadership and intersectionality. These two theoretical frameworks intertwine together to assist in understanding the different complexities associated with this study.

While there are many leadership styles, previous research has stated that transformational leadership is the most effective for motivating staff members, creating a positive work environment and initiating successful changes in a workplace (Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002; Griffith, 2004; Lewthawaite, 1992). This type of leadership emphasizes the strengths and previous knowledge of staff members and makes an effort to utilize them (Fullan, 2002; Lewthawaite, 1992). Many educational staff members can take on this role, but this study focuses on principals as transformational leaders establishing a good working relationship among educational staff members, helping them work together, and creating a positive atmosphere.

According to Fullan (2002), transformational leaders understand how to go about creating successful change that fuels school improvement. These leaders focus on establishing and maintaining good working relationships, which, in turn, allows them to utilize the strengths of each staff member (Hallinger, 2003). Fullan claimed that these

principals were effective as they put an emphasis on learning as a team and sharing their previous knowledge. Since schools and their various needs are always changing, transformational leaders are able to adapt and plan for it. Helping the staff work as a team and be flexible in their plans will ensure that any change that the principal brings about will be sustainable (Fullan, 2002).

Stemming from feminist sociological theory, intersectionality helps explain how systematic social inequality is impacted by the interaction of multiple and simultaneous levels of various biological, social, and cultural categories including various axes of identity such as gender, race, class, ability, and sexual orientation (Knudsen, 2006). Intersectionality theory states that all the aspects of an individual's background (e.g., gender, race, culture) are intertwined and cannot be examined separately (Veenstra, 2011). These intersections are dependent on one another, form a person's identity, and influence their social experiences (Veenstra, 2011). Therefore, intersectionality describes how an individual's different identities influence his/her personal lives, reactions in social situations, and beliefs about gender (Davis, 2008; Shields, 2008).

Shields argued (2008) that a female of the majority race experiences an easier time in a leadership role than someone from a minority race who will experience additional barriers, like discrimination. Individuals considered to be minorities will not have access to the same privileges as someone from the majority race. The various social and cultural groups intermix to impact perception, attitudes, and beliefs, which explains that women have different experiences, and when comparing the two genders, there is as many within group variances as between group variances (Shields, 2008).

Intersectionality theory is useful for this research as it recognizes that gender cannot be analyzed as one category, since there is no universal experience for all women (Choo & Ferree, 2010). Experience is dependent upon various factors, such as the number of marginalized groups a woman belongs to, therefore occupying a leadership role results in very different experiences for every woman (Choo & Ferree, 2010). Recognizing this, when interviewing each participant, their entire identity, not just their gender, will be kept in mind to help determine the differences in their responses. Additionally, when conducting a literature review, the disparities between the participants in the previous research, outlined in the following chapter, and those in this study will be considered (Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller, 2003; Collard, 2001; Lee, Smith, & Cioci, 1993; Lipinski-Grobelny & Wasiak, 2010; Peters, Kinsey, & Malloy, 2004).

The theory of intersectionality will assist in examining my own role as a researcher as perceptions are shaped by cultural background and various social categories, my observations and insights will be influenced (Miescher, 2008). While I am of the same gender as the principals whom I interviewed, the similarities end there. This theory will help me while analyzing data to remember that I come from a very different identity.

I, therefore, believe that my own background influences what I think I know about females and leadership. Coming from a midsize city in Southern Ontario, Canada, where it is fairly common to find women occupying leadership roles, has influenced me to hold the strong belief that women are as qualified as men to be school leaders. Since women in my area often occupy leadership roles, I believe they are accepted and embraced from the community as a whole. Intersectionality theory helps me to challenge,

revisit, and problematize my study so that new insights can be gained.

Scope and Limitations of the Study

In this investigation, I interviewed three male and two female teachers, three department heads, and two vice-principals in two high schools that varied significantly with regards to location, race, as well as socioeconomic status of the school and students. This study was confined to two schools in one school board in South Africa where data were collected during the months of August and September 2011.

While in South Africa, I felt that participants were not being completely forthright with me, or were choosing to withhold some information. Speaking English and having a strong accent as well as being from a different race than some participants immediately labeled me as an outsider, which ultimately affected the types of answers I received. Furthermore, had I spent more time in the schools I may have had greater opportunity to gain more trust and higher levels of disclosure about participants' guarded views. This is a limitation that I must be transparent about. Nonetheless, despite this limitation, the research data provide insight (advanced in Chapters Three and Four) into answering the research questions.

I acknowledge that my research, with these limitations, can only reveal a "slice of life" (Guba & Lincoln, 1985, as cited in Cope, 2005). All information received during interviews and observations represent a specific point in a participant's life that could be changed in an instant. According to Cope, people interpret events differently based on their experiences and situational contexts, so an individual's perceptions are highly susceptible to change. Recognizing that this is only exposing a snapshot of a participant's perceptions and experiences, the complexity and interdependent aspects of

these individuals were not fully captured.

An additional limitation of this study was the short period of time I was able to spend in each school. I spent 3 weeks with the participants in the first school and 1 week with the instructional staff at the second school. It was noticed that the longer I was there, the more teachers began to open up to me about what was actually happening in the schools. I believe if I had more time to spend in each institute, I would have begun to develop a deeper relationship with the teachers, and would have continued to learn.

Outline of the Remainder of the Document

Chapter Two provides a literature review on different theories of gender and leadership, including stereotypes and differing perceptions. This chapter examines transformational leadership, intersectionality, and the differences between male and female leaders and how they relate to this study.

Chapter Three outlines the methodology of this study, while Chapter Four presents and analyses the findings of this study. The last section of this paper, Chapter Five, is dedicated to summarizing and discussing the main findings and making recommendations for practice. It also discusses the limitations that were experienced while carrying out this research.

List of Acronyms and Abbreviations

CIDA	Canadian International Development Agency
COSATU	Congress of South African Trades Unions
DP	Deputy Principal
HOD	Head of Department
SADTU	South African Democratic Teachers' Union
SANPAD	South Africa Netherlands research Programme on Alternatives in Development
SES	Socioeconomic Status
T	Teacher
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to review relevant literature related to this study. The chapter is divided into five sections. It begins by reviewing literature that contrasts transformational and transactional leadership. Next, it outlines the differences between male and female leadership styles and then it examines how male and female's perceptions of leadership may vary. The chapter then reviews the research on intersectionality. Finally, it highlights research that was conducted on females, leaders, and principals within South Africa.

Transformational Leadership

According to Eagly (2007), two types of leadership dominate in the workplace, transactional and transformational leadership. Eagly refers to Bass to define transactional leadership as a traditional leadership style centered on managing staff. Transactional leaders outline clear expectations for their staff and use rewards when a job is done properly as well as punishments for failing to do what is expected (Hamstra, Van Yperen, Wisse, & Sassenberg, 2011). Principals who are transactional leaders primarily focus on the status quo and therefore on the existing needs of the school and staff members (Eagly, 2007).

Despite the positive aspects of transactional leadership, transformational leaders are considered to be more effective as principals (Eagly, 2007). Transformational leaders are described as forward looking and focus on planning for the future. Principals who are transformational leaders develop plans for school improvement, that incorporate ideas and opinions from their staff, instilling within them a sense of empowerment (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Eagly, 2007). Eagly describes transformational leadership as being

centered around gaining the trust and respect of staff members while acting as their mentor (Eagly, 2007).

Transformational leaders are described as having four main qualities: (a) idealized influence, (b) inspirational motivation, (c) intellectual stimulation, and (d) individualized consideration (Hall, Johnson, Wysocki, & Kepner, 2002; Judge & Piccolo, 2004).

Idealized influence refers to the quality of being a role model to others, a leader who is willing to take risks while still following high ethical and moral standards (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders deemed to be successful at inspirational motivation are usually charismatic and enthusiastic about their work. Their personalities and behaviour encourage staff members to meet their individual and organizational work goals (Hall et al., 2002). Intellectual stimulation refers to the ability of transformational leaders to prompt staff members to move beyond traditional approaches to problem solving and to critically examine the assumptions upon which they make their decisions (Bass & Riggio, 2006). Leaders who demonstrate intellectual stimulation promote creativity in the workplace particularly with respect to problem solving (Hall et al., 2002). Finally, individualized consideration refers to the ability of leaders to recognize the unique needs and contribution of staff members. Consequently, they are described as leaders who personalize feedback and support for each member of the organization (Bass & Riggio, 2006).

According to Fullan (2002), principals who are transformational leaders apply the above four qualities to initiate the change required for school improvement. Such leaders focus on establishing and maintaining good working relationships within the school, which allows them to utilize the strengths of each staff member (Hallinger, 2003). In his

description on transformational principals, Fullan notes that they were effective because they encouraged all members of the school to work as a team and share their knowledge with each other. Transformational principals recognized the constantly changing needs of the schools, and were able to adapt and plan accordingly. This adaptability and flexibility in their plans ensured that any school changes were sustainable (Fullan, 2002). Some literature suggests (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003; Sczesny, Bosak, Neff, & Schyns, 2004) women are more likely than men to be transformational leaders.

Differences Between Male and Female Leadership Styles

Understanding the disparity between men and women's leadership styles is essential when comparing how women in leadership positions are perceived (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Oplatka, 2006; Stelter, 2002). Until recently, most researchers tended to agree that leadership styles differed on the basis of gender (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Oplatka, 2006; Stelter, 2002). The majority of earlier studies undertaken in a variety of countries reported there were certain characteristics that male and female leaders had, characteristics that were unique to their gender. For example, men were described as being more highly regulated and women were described as being more caring (Coleman, 2003).

Historical Views of Female Leaders

Lee et al. (1993) observed that historical research on female leaders described them as being more focused on their staff members than men. Women put a stronger emphasis on working together as a group, and were more open to taking suggestions from teachers (Collard, 2001). Since staff of women leaders were observed to be more highly involved in the decision making process, women were considered to be more democratic

leaders and men were more likely to give directions and expect compliance (Collard, 2001; Lee et al., 1993).

In her survey on stereotypically feminine and masculine leadership traits, Coleman (2003) found that even though both genders held high expectations of their staff members, historically, female leaders were considered more tolerant than men when mistakes were made. Furthermore, Coleman claimed that women were seen as gentle with a tendency to prefer teamwork and collaboration over the independent actions men were seen as being inclined to. Appelbaum et al. (2003) expanded on these ideas of female leaders declaring that their emphasis on teamwork and collaboration, and their dedication to motivating their staff members, made females more effective as principals.

Literature on female leadership styles suggest that females make more effective principals (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Oplatka, 2006; Stelter, 2002), and that female principals are more involved in the personal lives of their staff, students, and parents (Oplatka, 2006). In her research on the leadership style of female principals, Oplatka found that women maintained a more open style of communicating and had a more welcoming attitude than men. Similarly, in Lee et al.'s (1993) review of the literature found that employees who had women leaders were more likely to feel supported and understood when they were experiencing problems, from a bad day to a serious illness (Lee et al., 1993). More specifically, Coleman (2003) found that female principals were more likely to accommodate staff or students who were experiencing problems, which resulted in female leaders being described as more caring than men (Coleman, 2003).

In one circumstance, males were considered to be more effective leaders. When female principals worked in very large schools, Collard (2001) found that they became

less effective. The more students in the school, the more a female's confidence in her own abilities dropped which was something that was not found with males (Collard, 2001). When Eckman (2002) interviewed 164 female principals in Illinois, Minnesota, and Wisconsin, she found that job satisfaction was also affected by the size of the school. Female principals reported a greater sense of accomplishment in smaller schools and felt that they were better able to get to know their staff and students. Female principals reported big schools required a much larger time commitment (Eckman, 2002). However, this researcher did not study males, which makes it difficult to make a comparison between genders.

Contemporary Views on Female Leaders

After recognizing some of the benefits that female leaders bring to the workplace, some males began to change their leadership style, taking on more feminine or transformational qualities (Sczesny et al., 2004). In UK schools, when male and female principals were asked to rate the stereotypically female and male traits that each principal exhibited, the results showed that both genders had more stereotypically feminine traits (Coleman, 2003). These stereotypically female traits included a greater focus on teamwork and collaboration. Coleman also noted a tendency for males to move away from the transactional leadership style of handing out rewards and punishments based on the follower's actions, and focused more on working as a team (Coleman, 2003).

In the past decade, researchers have begun to recognize that people do not always lead in ways that are consistent with gender specific qualities. This has initiated more studies on individuals with an androgynous leadership styles, displaying neither stereotypically male nor female traits (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Coleman, 2003; Stelter,

2002). While an androgynous leadership style came naturally to some people, others consciously had to make an effort to change the way in which they led.

Depending on the profession, men and women have started to adopt each other's traits to better fit various needs of their job. In some businesses, women downplay their feminine qualities (e.g., being seen as docile) or adopted more masculine traits (e.g., being task orientated) to feel more accepted in the workplace (Appelbaum et al., 2003). These women altered their leadership style to better align with what they believed was wanted in the workplace and society (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Stelter, 2002).

To examine the shift towards an androgynous leadership style, Coleman (2003) analyzed two past surveys of 412 male and 470 female principals in the United Kingdom (Coleman, 2000; Coleman, 2001). In this survey, she administered a large-scale questionnaire asking participants to choose adjectives from a list of stereotypically feminine and masculine traits that they felt best described their leadership style. Coleman's (2003) found that men and women tended to view themselves as collaborative or people-oriented, both traits typically associated with women. Overall, men and women perceived they had more feminine than masculine leadership traits, indicating little difference in how each gender viewed their leadership style (Coleman, 2003). Coleman (2003) hypothesized that principals were developing more androgynous styles of leadership, adapting characteristics that were considered favorable regardless of gender. Coleman (2003) referred to this as "characteristic adoption" and hypothesized that it was in response to the strong preferences teachers had for transformational leaders. Although women scored higher in feminine traits and men scored higher in masculine traits, the differences between the genders was insignificant.

According to Madsen (2006), an androgynous style of leadership may be beneficial because combining masculine and feminine qualities allows a leader to work effectively with a wider range of people. Madsen argues that both genders, not just women, should adopt an androgynous leadership style. She observes that leaders in top organizations tend to be androgynous, enabling them to adapt their leadership style to meet a more diverse range of situations (Madsen, 2006).

Appelbaum et al. (2003) conducted an extensive review of the literature on male and female leaders to provide information about the differences between each gender's leadership style as well as which was considered to be more effective. Appelbaum et al. discovered that although feminine leadership styles showed to be more helpful to staff, the unfavourable perceptions and stereotypes surrounding their feminine traits negatively affected how they were viewed. However, when women exhibited an androgynous leadership style, high in masculine and feminine traits, their peers rated them as more successful (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Shum & Cheng, 1996; Suyemoto, & Ballou, 2007).

To better understand how gender role orientation related to job satisfaction, Lipinska-Grobelny and Wasiak's (2010) studied 122 Polish women (61 managers and 62 administrative workers). Similar to Appelbaum et al.'s (2003) study, Lipinska-Grobelny and Wasiak found that women in leadership positions were more likely to have an androgynous (48.3%) or a masculine type (20%) personality. Lipinska-Grobelny and Wasiak reported that gender identity affected the emotional aspect of their job, with women displaying masculine traits as having the highest positive affect

In contrast, a literature review conducted by Heilman (2001) on gender biases in leadership evaluations and the resulting consequences of them drew different

conclusions. When a female attempted to diverge from feminine traits and lead in a masculine way, Heilman found that staff members reported that they were less satisfied with their abilities as a leader. This was especially true when the female leaders who exhibited non-stereotypical traits achieved a level of success. Heilman found that women who thrived in a stereotypically masculine job (e.g., military or doctors) were viewed as violating gender stereotypes, which tended to result in greater disapproval from peers.

In her chapter on gender roles, O'Brian (2003) argued that it was impossible to claim that schools had certain preferences for a specific type of leader or for a masculine, feminine, or androgynous personality. She noted that a universal preference for leadership style or gender characteristics fails to consider the particular context of the school (O'Brian, 2003).

Difference in Perception of Females and Males

Previous studies indicate that the gender of a leader plays a critical role in determining subordinates' perceptions of efficacy (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995; Lee et al., 1993; Peters et al., 2004). Yet, as Milner, Katz, Fisher, and Notrica (2007) point out a gap in research addressing the importance of the subordinate's gender exists.

However, in the research by Eagly (2007), male participants demonstrated a preference for male leaders, despite substantial research illustrating the positive qualities of female leaders. Males consistently stated that they perceive males to be more effective leaders (Eagly et al., 1995; Peters et al., 2004; Stelter, 2002). Gardiner and Trigemann found that since males consider themselves to be best suited for leadership roles, they reacted more negatively to women who assumed such roles (as cited in Stelter, 2002). This in turn led to discrimination, social and organizational isolation, as well as a

decrease in a woman's physical and mental health, especially when the work environment was male dominated (Stelter, 2002).

To better understand male stereotypes, Peters et al. (2004) studied 48 university students (24 females and 24 males) in which participants had to complete a task as a group and then rate their peers on items such as leadership, quality of ideas, and intelligence. They found that women did not notice a significant difference between men and women and, as a result, had no preference of which gender they worked for (Peters et al., 2004). They found more consensus by all participants in the judgment about male leaders rather than female leaders, and that overall, men rated women as the lowest with leadership qualities.

Peters et al. (2004) tried to rationalize the inconsistency in participant's answers by using the schemas and stereotypes that people created. Schemas are a framework that a person developed over time from observing interactions between individuals, whereas a stereotype is the beliefs a person holds about someone, based on the schemas they have developed (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Peters et al., 2004). Stereotypes are very culturally dependent, as they developed from social influences and consensus from the local community about what is thought to be true (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003).

Peters et al. (2004) explained that male leaders fit the stereotypes people hold about men belonging in a position of authority. When participants had to make judgments about them, they were able to activate their schemas and apply it to the men. Since the male leaders matched the schemas held by most participants, there was less variance among the answers. Female leaders, however, did not match the schemas most people had, since their positions in power have not always been a common occurrence.

Therefore, when a female was in a leadership position displaying feminine traits, some males found them to be less effective leaders (Eagly & Karau, 2002).

Additionally, Hilton and von Hippel (1996) completed a literature review of 230 articles on the formation and application of stereotypes and schemas as well as how people can maintain or change them. From this review, it was evident that stereotypes about characteristics a person was born with (i.e., race or gender) were more likely to be accepted as true (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). These stereotypes make it easier for individuals to process information about others as it requires less effort subconsciously to rely on when creating a perception of another person (Biernat & Dovidio, 2003; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). When a person held stereotypes about a certain gender, he/she would look for factors that would quickly affirm his/her previously constructed beliefs. For example, if a person believes that all males are aggressive, that person would look for any actions that confirm that stereotype. Conversely, to dispel preconceived stereotypic notions individuals upheld, much more evidence was required. For example, it would take a significant number of instances of men acting in a passive way or helping others for a person to neutralize the stereotype of being aggressive (Hilton & von Hippel, 1996). When people used stereotypes that were based on schemas, they tended to apply the stereotypes more abstractly. People would not think that women were only feminine in certain circumstances (i.e., while taking care of their children), but that this stereotype would carry over to all situations (i.e., women would act feminine in all aspects of their life; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996).

Lack of exposure to women in leadership roles may leave men unable or unwilling to recognize the benefits of female leaders (Lee et al., 1993). Stelter (2002)

claimed that people rated females as less effective when they acted in a way that did not match gender stereotypes of how they should perform. Therefore, in Peters et al.'s (2004) study when there were few available stereotypes for participants could rely on with regards to how female leaders act, participants had to rely on other sources of information to rate women leaders. This caused the wide range in ratings.

Differences in perceptions of women in leadership roles depend in part on the specific career (Eagly et al., 1995). For example, Peters et al.'s (2004) study found that people rely on stereotypes and previous knowledge of certain types of employment to make judgments about whether male or female leaders would be most suited for the position. Eagly et al. (1995) found that in some jobs that were considered masculine, women leaders have a constant uphill struggle to gain acceptance from their staff. Other stereotypically feminine jobs like nursing and teaching, are perceived to require a leader who excels at interpersonal communication and nurturing skills. In these fields, female leaders were somewhat more preferred since feminine qualities were considered essential (Eagly et al., 1995).

Although research has claimed that female leaders in educational institutions experienced more acceptance by colleagues than some more masculine professions, Lee et al. (1993) found differences in the perceptions of female principals. Lee et al. surveyed 8894 teachers (44% women) and 377 principals (10% female) in public, private, and Catholic schools across the United States using the Administrator and Teacher Survey. They wanted to understand how teachers' perception of their principal's effectiveness influenced their perceptions of their own power within the school (organizationally, individually, and interpersonally). Lee et al. found that when males worked under a

female principal, they often viewed their leader as less effective and saw them as providing less support for themselves and other staff members. They claimed that female principals had little control over what they did in the classroom. Males found females' group-focused leadership approach to be too intrusive and did not welcome their attempts to try and be involved in their classroom or lessons (Lee et al., 1993).

In contrast, female teachers at the same schools reported the female principal as very effective and supportive of their needs. When the principals made classroom visits or offered instructional help, female teachers welcomed it and saw it as very useful (Lee et al., 1993). These gender differences in perceptions of effectiveness were only true when working with a female principal. When there was a male in charge of the school, both sexes responded similarly, often reporting that a male principal was effective (Lee et al., 1993).

Despite this small degree of general acceptance, male principals still significantly outnumber female principals around the world (Reynolds, White, Brayman, & Moore, 2005; Shum & Cheng, 1996). In South Africa, males hold 70% of the principal positions, despite the concentrated numbers of female teachers dominating the field (67.2%; Department of Labour South Africa, 2008). This percentage is even higher at the secondary school level (Mogadime et al., 2010).

Intersectionality within Research

Intersectionality theory states that different categories of an individual are not mutually exclusive as they all interact together to create different experiences (Crenshaw, 1989). Instead of examining differences between men and women, intersectionality theory considers factors such as ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, and race

(Knudsen, 2006; Zheng, 1996). Crenshaw argues that the more categories a person is disadvantaged in, the more burdened and discriminated against he/she would become in society. Shields (2008) argued that not all women share the same experience, so research cannot simply compare genders. When an aspect of a person's identity placed them into a less powerful, minority group, that person would have to work harder to overcome additional barriers (Reynolds et al., 2005). For example, in Canada, a White female principal would experience fewer barriers than a Native, Asian, or Black female principal, who had to battle additional stereotypes about her ethnic background in addition to her gender.

However, before Apartheid in South Africa, people who were White had an easier obtaining leadership positions even though they were the minority race, as they belonged to the group that held a large percentage of the power in the country (MacDonald, 2006). This differs from Shields' (2008) work, since in many countries; the White majority race has more control. Inferences from Shields' theory can still be made with regards to South Africa while explaining why people who are White, or those who traditionally have experienced power and privilege, would be at an advantage to achieving these leadership positions. These people with a higher socioeconomic status would have had more opportunities available to them than someone who comes from a lower one.

Collard (2001) cautions against making judgments about female principals based on stereotypes alone, as they are often not reliable or valid. Doing so could produce negative results and feelings about the principal. Heilman (2001) found teachers holding expectations that males make better leaders would view a female principal as not a good

fit for the job and hypothesize that a female principal would not be successful (Heilman, 2001). According to Heilman, a female principal who achieved success would still receive disapproval from those that held a firm belief that males should be leaders due to her deviation from stereotypically feminine roles. Therefore there is a strong tendency by those who judge others based on stereotypes to disapprove of female leaders (Heilman, 2001).

Intersectionality theory suggests that several factors need to be considered when examining research comparing females and males. It also suggests that researchers need to look at more than just a person's gender, since people are complex beings. For example, Stelter (2002) argues that a person's background, social history, and the characteristics of his/her culture play a role. Men and women have different experiences with gender growing up, which is partly related to their culture and which continues on into adulthood (Oplatka, 2006). Additionally, every individual has an idea of what a leader should or should not do which is largely influenced by the social identity that was constructed (Gentry et al., 2010).

Currently, a large percentage of studies on gender and leadership are situated within Western countries, like the United States, Australia, or Canada (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Coleman, 2003; Eagly, 2007; Heilman, 2001; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Lipinska-Grobelny & Wasiak, 2010; Peters et al., 2004; Shields, 2008; Stelter, 2002). Littrell and Nkomo (2005) pointed out that women in Western countries (e.g., the United States) were stereotyped less as their society had become more accustomed to the steadily increasing number of women in managerial positions. This was due to the Women's Movement as well as the Modern Civil Rights Movement, both in response to individual

and institutional discrimination (Hancock, 2007). These occurred many decades ago in response to the heterogeneity of the citizens in the United States. While the US still has a long way to go in terms of creating policies in response to those disadvantaged in multiple ways, equality is starting to transpire in certain social categories (i.e., women or different minorities; Hancock, 2007). This is in comparison to countries where equality movements have happened fairly recently, and citizens are still adjusting to seeing a wider range of individuals in leadership positions.

Furthermore, using Western countries definition of a good leader is problematic as not every country is in agreement about the ideal type of leadership (Li, 2001). According to Li, culture has a large impact on how people view leadership and leadership effectiveness. Stelter (2002) notes that some countries value the stereotypically feminine traits while others stereotypically masculine traits. Since each country has a different definition of what they consider to be a good leader, it is problematic to take the results of one study and apply it to a country with a completely different outlook. Furthermore, as Stelter (2002) indicates, there can be many different cultures within a country, each with their own set of beliefs and priorities related to gender roles and leadership.

According to Collard (2001), the attention of research on understanding the gender differences between men and women in regards to leadership is limiting and one-sided and that, “Recent researchers have complained about the lack of empirical evidence to support popular stereotypes about male and female principals” (p. 343). The idea that the majority of women are nurturing, and that most males are competitive, fails to consider their unique and individual backgrounds. Each principal brings his/her own different experiences to the position, which, in turn, influences the type of leader that

he/she becomes (Collard, 2011).

Collard (2001) acknowledges that there are differences between male and female principals; however he empathizes, other factors, such as SES, could also be used to rationalize these differences. Zheng (1996) found that the biggest disparities were related to the type of environment that males or females worked in, especially with regards to the socioeconomic factor of the students within the school. Zheng found that in schools located in poor areas, the teachers rated the principals as less effective. These ratings also differed based on the geographical region, grade range, and whether they worked at an independent, Catholic, or government-funded school (Zheng, 1996).

Connell (1995, as cited in Collard, 2001) claimed that within each gender, there were many different types of masculinities and femininities. A female could have an emphasized femininity personality, where she feels the need to conform to female stereotypes, or a radical femininity, where she resists male power (Collard, 2001). The type of masculinity or femininity that a leader adopted was based on the interaction between a person's gender with his/her culture and past history, including different experiences he/she has had (Lipa & Tan, 2001). A person's family also played a strong role in determining the type of masculinity or femininity a person displayed. Within the home environment, the amount that a person's parents followed and endorsed stereotypical traits largely influenced those behaviours in their children (Lipa & Tan, 2001).

Based on individual's circumstances, a female could become a soft and nurturing leader, that fits many people's stereotypes, or she could become a radical that fights against males having power (Connell, 1995, as cited in Collard, 2001). According to

Lipinska-Grobelny and Wasiak (2010), masculinity and femininity are not characteristics that are at opposite ends of the spectrum; they are two separate traits completely. This allows people to have different levels of each at the same time, creating varying intensities of masculinity and femininity within each person.

South Africa

South Africa is a unique country made up of many diverse cultures, which historically has experienced racial categorization and separation (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). In the past, a person's race has traditionally influenced his/her education level as well as the type of job held. For example, a Black male was more likely to hold a blue-collar job while a White male would hold a managerial position (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). South Africa is considered to be an emerging economy rather than an industrialized or developing nation. A nation that is considered to be an emerging economy is one that is currently experiencing rapid growth in a limited or partially industrialized way (The Center for Knowledge Societies, 2008). Since a great deal of the research done on female principals has taken place in Western countries, not much is known about non-Westernized nations, including South Africa (Oplatka, 2006).

According to Mogadime et al. (2010) female leaders using an Ubuntu style of leadership support group solidarity and interdependence within the community, especially in areas of high poverty and those living in difficult or dangerous conditions. Ncube (2010) defines Ubuntu as an Afrocentric style of leadership that promotes non-Western traditions. Ubuntu is closely associated with being a transformational leader, with both leadership styles working towards helping individuals reach their full potential (Booyesen & van Wyk, 2008). Though not as highly researched as transformational or

transactional styles, it is still an effective way to guide staff members, especially within a school (Mogadime et al., 2010; Msila, 2008; Nussbaum, 2003).

Gender Roles

In their research on how culture influences gender-related personality traits, Lipa and Tan (2001) found that family, friends, culture, and the media influenced participants' personality traits as well as their opinion on gender. They found that some cultures strongly reinforced gender stereotypes, especially with regards to employment (Lipa & Tan, 2001). In South Africa, since there are many different cultures, there are multiple definitions of masculinity and femininity based upon what a particular community or culture valued and practiced in their everyday lives (Wood, 1994).

Since South Africa was traditionally a patriarchal society, men held the managerial jobs. Women in South Africa held different types of employment, when they were able to work. White women held jobs that were stereotypically female, like nursing and teaching, while those who were Black did domestic work, due to racial restrictions (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Some cultures within South Africa believed that leadership roles belonged to males, and that it was a female's job to stay at home to be a wife and mother. These stereotypes are deep-rooted in South Africa's culture, making them difficult to change (Moorosi, 2010).

Contemporary South Africa

Currently, in South Africa, women still hold fewer management positions than men (Ang, 2011; Mathur-Helm, 2004). When comparing White and Black women, those who are White hold more managerial positions than those who are Black (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Mathur-Helm, 2004). Black women are prevented from moving into

leadership positions since their past history of employment typically forces them to be subordinate to those who are White (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). They also do not receive the same educational opportunities as White women putting them at a disadvantage.

In their survey conducted in Pretoria, South Africa, Littrell and Nkomo (2005) compared leadership preference across gender and race. Of the surveys distributed, 221 participants of varying age, race, and gender responded, describing their ideal leader. Littrell and Nkomo found that both race and gender had a significant impact on preference. Black men and women wanted a leader who applied pressure to workers to produce results. Both Black and White males indicated they preferred a leader who recognized the contribution and status of followers and was concerned about follower well-being. Both Black and White males, and White women, wanted a leader who reduces disorder to the system as well as one who is able to decrease conflicting demands in the workplace (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). Finally, Littrell and Nkomo's study was unable to find a consensus on preferred leadership style.

Principals

In South Africa, the principal has the added responsibility of securing funds for the operation of schools (Oplatka, 2004). In accordance with the South African Schools Act of 1996, a principal's role may include asking for donations from the parents and community members, fundraising, and asking for sponsorship from different corporations (Department: Basic Education Republic of South Africa, 2011).

Lumby and Azaola (2011) conducted a case study of seven female principals in small schools throughout the North West and Gauteng provinces. They found some principals felt that male teachers had difficulty accepting women who occupied

leadership roles in the school. They reported that males in Black cultures frequently believed that a women's place should be in the home (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). These principals claimed that people still held the stereotype that women were overly nurturing and were too concerned about their family at home, meaning they would leave school earlier each day and not invest as much time (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). This is as opposed to the male principal who was believed to stay at school longer and dedicate more hours to his profession (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). Some female principals argued against this stereotype and said that being nurturing was a positive aspect to bring to the school (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). Still, some male staff members would go against the authority of a female principal, and listen to what the male deputy principal said instead, considering them to be the authority figure (Moorosi, 2010).

Lumby and Azaola (2011) found that White female principals were discriminated against on the basis of race or gender, except when working in small farm schools with only Black children. In contrast, Black female principals indicated either their race and/or gender were a barrier to their ability to complete their duties. They attributed staff members' unwillingness to cooperate and parents' disagreement with decisions, to their race and/or gender. Lumby and Azaola (2011) noted that all principals were aware of gender as being a barrier to their career in some way, whether with regard to their income, level of acceptance by those around them, or applying for other jobs (Lumby & Azaola, 2011).

Lumby and Azaola's (2011) study found that some South African principals have attempted to "unsettle" gender as a coping strategy. This refers to using stereotypes, such as being too emotional and too maternal, and used them to their benefit (Lumby &

Azaola, 2011). For example, female principals used their maternal qualities to establish a positive school environment, including being sensitive towards the needs of staff members (Lumby & Azaola, 2011). Additionally, they made people feel welcome and accepted at school as a reminder that the principal cared about them (Lumby & Azaola, 2011).

When race was considered along with gender, Moorosi (2010) found that the stereotypes the Black culture had about women created an even bigger difference in how they were perceived. People had race expectations in addition to gender expectations and many assumed that leaders who were Black had different values than those who were White (Reed & Evans, 2008). Black women were also viewed more with reference to being a caregiver, as opposed to someone who had the capability to administrate a school.

Summary

Maintaining the perspective that transformational leadership is the most effective within a school, this section stated the benefits associated with this leadership style. Next, it defined and contrasted different leadership styles before describing the four characteristics of a transformational leader. (Dvir, Eden, Avolio, & Shamir, 2002; Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002; Griffith, 2004; Lewthawaite, 1992; Marks & Printy, 2003).

Next, this chapter examined actual differences between how men and women lead, referencing literature that addressed whether there were certain leadership characteristics associated with each gender, especially within school settings. Acknowledging the shift towards androgynous leaders, this section concluded by concentrating on the impact this has had on they way in which some individuals lead (Coleman, 2003).

Afterwards, studies that focused on the intersectionality of the participants were included as they provided information on how perceptions of female leaders are formed (Eagly, 2007). These researchers demonstrated difficulties in making comparisons between studies due to the different social categories of participants (Knudsen, 2006; Shields, 2008). The literature on intersectionality served as a reminder that when making comparison between genders, a person's entire identity (e.g. background, culture, socioeconomic status) had a significant role in their perceptions of female leaders (Knudsen, 2006; Shields, 2008).

Since most of the literature reviewed in this chapter was not written in South Africa (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Coleman, 2003; Eagly, 2007; Heilman, 2001; Hilton & von Hippel, 1996; Lipinska-Grobelny & Wasiak, 2010; Peters et al., 2004; Shields, 2008; Stelter, 2002), this chapter concluded with a focus on South African research (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Lumby & Azaola, 2011; Moorosi, 2010; Reed & Evans, 2008) which examined male and female perceptions of female leaders over time. This chapter concluded with a specific focus on the role of the principal in South Africa.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY AND RESEARCH DESIGN

The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principals' effectiveness in two South African schools. To do this, a qualitative case study research design was followed, using grounded theory for analysis. This chapter outlines why a case study approach was chosen, and then describes in detail the schools and participants involved in this study. Next, the procedures used to collect data are discussed as well as the how the data were analyzed. This chapter concludes by addressing the limitations, discussing how credibility was ensured within this study, as well as the measures to ensure that all ethical standards were met.

Case Study Approach

A case study approach was used to obtain information related to the overarching research questions that were utilized to guide this study. Case studies can use different methods of data collection to explain human behaviour (Jackson, 2003; Marshall & Rossman, 2011). They are used to develop a deeper understanding of a phenomenon and to provide new information of a situation or theory by using a small number of samples that represent a real world context (Yin, 2011). This type of research attempts to explain, describe, illustrate, and enlighten the intended audience by providing a more in-depth look into a social phenomenon (Yin, 2009). During this research, the case study approach was used to shed light on how males and females perceived female principals' leadership abilities. By looking deeply into the data collected, the case study approach also provided insights into how a person's identity influenced his/her perceptions.

Throughout this research process, I was mindful of the role of race, gender, social class, ethnicity and the potential intersection of these constructs in how they impact one's

perception of school leadership. This study included an examination of the effect that race and gender had on perceptions of female leadership (See Appendix B).

A case study also provides an opportunity to add to the knowledge about people and groups that already exists (Yin, 2009). In an attempt to learn more about the mediating and contextual factors impacting perceptions of female leadership, this study focused on 2 schools in South Africa.

Like most case studies, this investigation was carried out in the natural setting of the school (Yin, 2009). Data were collected through participant observation, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. Data collected included information about the gender and background of the participants, as well as descriptive details about the schools.

A collective case study approach allowed the researcher to examine the phenomenon of leadership in two contexts; schools that differed greatly from each other but were still commonly found in South Africa (Van der Berg, 2008). To increase the level of representation, teachers, heads of departments, and deputy principals (all had a teaching role at the time) were used as participants to increase the level of representation (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). Having a large variety of participants who provided their own unique responses, created a greater depth of understanding (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994).

Three overarching questions guided the research inquiry:

1. What do high school teachers perceive to be the benefits and challenges associated with having a female principal?
2. What do high school teachers perceive to be the most desirable leadership qualities of their principal?

3. What role does race and gender (intersectionality) play in the participants' responses to questions #1 and #2?

This chapter outlines how participants and sites were chosen, how the data were collected and analyzed, limitations of this study, and ethical considerations.

Selection of Sites

Two schools were purposefully selected in Masawana (Luwanada Province). The principals in these schools were recognized for the work and dedication they put in to create the best learning environment possible for their students. Both principals were female and were considered to be effective by other members in the community, as well as by researchers from the South Africa Netherlands research Programme on Alternatives in Development (SANPAD) who had previously worked in those schools. SANPAD promotes research focusing on development in South Africa, particularly in disadvantaged communities, and had conducted research on different topics in both schools. Selecting schools with leaders that had already been labeled as effective was intended to ensure that data focused on the participants' identities and their perceptions, rather than on the effectiveness of the leaders. Both principals had put a lot of hard work into the school and had attained success as demonstrated through increased student achievement and increased (or maintained) pass rates.

In order to ensure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used for the province, city, schools, and participants of this study (See Table 1). To assist in differentiating between the pseudonyms, each participant at Kisumu was given a traditional Tswana name to be respectful of his/her background as well as the dominant culture within the school. Additionally, their position in the school was included with each name; deputy principal

(DP), head of department (HOD), and teacher (T) (See Appendix C). The schools were located in different geographical areas, and they differed greatly in terms of staff gender ratios, predominant culture, and learning environment. At each school, five individuals who represented three different job levels at the school were invited to participate.

Additionally, both schools had previously agreed to take part in the SANPAD project and were part of the larger research study already underway. The female principals at both schools were willing to provide full access to the schools as well as allow interviews with their teachers. Each school was also selected because of its location and composition of staff members was representative of schools in South Africa. Although the composition of the schools was similar, they differed in regards to (a) teaching styles, (b) race and gender of staff and students, (c) socioeconomic status, and (d) access to resources.

The first school, Kisumu, was composed of mostly Black staff and located in a poor socioeconomic area. Teachers typically participated in professional development programs when offered by the school, but few had qualifications past their teaching degree. As an underprivileged school located in a township, the teachers lacked adequate curriculum resources. The second school, Amoni, was comprised of mainly White staff and enrolment in the school was limited to the children of families who could afford the high school fees. This school paid for staff members to attend various workshops and professional development training that was held both nationally and internationally. Several participants in the study also held an honors BA or a Master's degree.

Table 1*Participants' Pseudonyms*

	Participants' Pseudonyms	Gender	Race	Position
Kisumu	Tau	Male	Black	Deputy Principal
	Tebogo	Male	Black	History Head of Department
	Mpho	Female	Black	Economics Head of Department
	Moswen	Male	Black	English Teacher
	Kabo	Female	Black	Life Orientation Teacher
Amoni	Deanne	Female	White	Deputy Principal
	Danielle	Female	White	Math Head of Department
	Daniel	Male	White	English Teacher
	Darcy	Female	White	Math Teacher
	David	Male	White	Math Teacher

Within the scope of this study, while it was recognized that there were many differences within each race, it was not possible to examine each person's ethnic identity and group affiliation. Therefore, the use of the terms Black or White were used strictly in reference to an individual's skin pigmentation.

Data Collection Techniques

Three types of data collection were used in this study: observation, unstructured interviews, and semi-structured interviews. Multiple tools for data collection provide the researcher with the opportunity to ensure credibility of a study (Golafshani, 2003; Maxwell, 1997). Using three data techniques, referred to as triangulation, allows a researcher to explore discrepancies within the data that are collected (Golafshani, 2003; Maxwell, 1997). Triangulation compares the data gathered across the three sources to find consistency in the information the participants supplied. More often than not, it will also find differences between the information as a starting point for understanding inconsistencies (Golafshani, 2003; Maxwell, 1997). Additionally, having multiple data sources allows for a thick description of the results, with the researcher both describing and interpreting the participants' behaviour (Ponterotto, 2006). According to Ponterotto, the researcher describes the participants' thoughts and feelings while giving purpose to their actions. Providing thick description also helps readers to visualize and understand the participants and to locate the study as well as the research process.

Despite having three sources of information, data primarily came from the semi-structured interviews. This was due to a short observational time within the schools and unrecorded unstructured interviews. It was thought that if a tape recorder was used for these unstructured conversations, it might inhibit people in the school from sharing

information. For this reason, the observations and unstructured interviews were only used to contextualize the school and provide alternative insights into the research, either confirming or contradicting the data.

Observations

The data collection began with observations because they provided a chance to write down everything that could be related to the research topic before forming categories of things to look for (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). These observations were also helpful in formulating clarification questions that would need to be asked later on in the unstructured interviews. According to Charmaz (2002), observations are important to any research study as they help to contextualize the information that is provided in the interview. For this study, Agar's methodology was employed where participant observation serves as a starting point for developing what questions to ask, and for supplying details about the school and the staff members (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011). For Agar, the interview is still considered the most important piece of data collection, with observations being used to provide supporting details (DeWalt & DeWalt, 2011).

During the first three days at Kisumu and the first two days at Amoni, observations took place, with the principal assigning me to classes. Here, I watched lessons and recorded notes on what I saw happening in the classroom, as well as any information that I thought would relate to this research study. I was always given a desk in the back of a classroom where I was able to clearly watch the teachers instruct. In every class, my presence was acknowledged, and some teachers took advantage of the opportunity of having an international visitor and asked me to participate within discussions or activities. However, for most classes, I tried to remain as out of the way as

possible. Observations continued every day that I collected data in the schools, with the only divergence from them being when I conducted interviews.

Partial participant observation allowed me to partake in some activities within the classroom, yet still have time to sit and observe the students and teachers (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Remaining flexible between a detached observer stance and participant-observer was important as being involved in the same teaching situation with a participant allowed me to develop a better understanding of their actions. Additionally, by also remaining detached and able to observe, I was afforded greater opportunities to record what was happening and to reflect on them (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Moreover, reflexivity in the research process also allowed me to make observations based on my own experiences in the attempt to better understand the context of the school culture. I chose to become partially involved in the observations, following Hammersley and Atkinson (1983) suggestion that it is impossible to study a social situation or context without being a part of it (as cited in Atkinson & Hammersley, 1994).

Observations were included in this study as they allowed me to witness certain behaviours of the participants, some of which they might not even be conscious they were doing (Richards & Morse, 2007). Since there was not always a strong link between what people say and what they do, observations provided me with a chance to observe this discrepancy (Richards & Morse, 2007). At the end of each day, the observations that were recorded were reflected on, and would be later used in the data analysis.

Unstructured Interviews

The unstructured interviews that were used were modeled after Malinowski's approach (Fontana & Prokos, 2007), where conversations were set around topics that the

researcher wanted to know more about in order to understand the participant's behaviour. At each school, the unstructured interviews began taking place on the second day. After a full day of observations, questions became apparent about the environment and different school practices. Initially, these simple inquiries (e.g., inquiring about procedures during staff meetings, asking about the roles of vice principals and deputy principals within the school) formed the basis of the conversations. However, as I began to develop a rapport with the participants, more in-depth conversations took place. Thus the unstructured interviews varied in length from a few minutes to an hour. And although some conversations were short in nature, the causal remarks made by a participant often provided significant information informing this study (e.g., mentioning how some staff members undermined authority). Following all unstructured interviews, anecdotal notes were recorded based on the conversation and resulted in 50 additional pages for analysis.

One of the benefits of unstructured interviews was the ability to receive clarification on things that were observed (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2007). Since these interviews were impromptu and flexible, they often emerged from events that had been observed. Thus, the participants' responses were more natural and relevant to actual events observed. Once open lines of communication were established, it became easy to engage in discussion about the context of the school. Since many different people participated in the unstructured interviews, it was possible to get different perspectives on many topics, as well as having different staff members confirm what their colleagues had said. Unstructured interviews provided me with an alternate perspective that I could later compare to what I had learned during the interviews (Richards & Morse, 2007)

Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews use specific questions centered around a topic, but allows participants the freedom to answer in a way that permits them to expand upon what they feel is important (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006). Semi-structured interviewing provides a more natural conversation as it lets the discussion go off in different directions that may be unexpected, providing new and valid information (Hesse-Biber & Leavy, 2006).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen because they provided more ways to look at the data. I was able to analyze the pauses a person took, the ways in which a participant said something, as well as their nonverbal responses (Cohen et al., 2007). Semi-structured interviews allow a researcher to probe further into a question, trying to get responses that go deeper into the topic (Cohen et al., 2007). When a participant made a comment that needed clarification, the flexibility of the interview format allowed me to ask further questions and develop a better understanding of what the participant was trying to convey.

The semi-structured interview questions were adapted from the questions I was provided with by my co-supervisor, Professor Du Preez. They were based on questions that she was using in her own research, that were in line with the SANPAD research themes. The questions were changed to help me gain access to the information that would help me to answer my research questions, and were phrased in a way intended to disguise the true purpose of this study. This was to prevent the social desirability bias from influencing the participants' answers.

Data were collected through semi-structured interviews that were digitally

recorded. Each interview lasted between 30 and 45 minutes and where conducted in a private room at the schools.

Data Analysis

After the data were collected, the digitally recorded semi-structured interviews were sent to a transcription company in South Africa, because I was unable to decipher the different accents of the participants. Once the transcriptions were returned, I solely coded them using Nvivo. Glaser's grounded theory approach was used as the basis for the coding procedures (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The process of coding was divided into three stages, open coding, selective coding, and theoretical coding (Walker & Myrick, 2006). During the first stage (open coding), each line of all the interviews was read and coded into different, naturally emerging categories, (labeled as nodes within the Nvivo program). Accompanying the process of open coding, notes were made that related to the potential connection between the different themes that were emerging. Additionally, a list of different theories that might explain the responses from the participants was created (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Data were constantly compared to the research outlined in chapter two, and diagrams were created to link studies, themes, and information collected (Appendix A & Appendix D).

During the second step (selective coding), nodes were collapsed into bigger categories as themes began to emerge that were related to the research questions (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Coded data were linked across related categories and became metathemes (Tesch, 1987).

In the final stage, theoretical coding was used to link the data of this study to previous research and to theories that naturally emerged. Data recorded during the

participant observations and unstructured interviews were then referred to to contradict or confirm the information collected in the semi-structured interviews (which was then also compared to existing research literature; Walker & Myrick, 2006).

Limitations

According to Yin (2011), case studies are sometimes criticized as the same researcher completes both the data collection and coding. To overcome this limitation, I acknowledged my role as a researcher in this study, indicating that my own background has given me a unique perspective that may bias how I am to examine the research. Additionally, I have tried to examine three sets of data from the participants to ensure my analysis is well supported by the data.

At Kisumu, I had trouble with interviewing teachers in Math and English only. The teachers I was assigned to were often not present, therefore, I frequently had to move to new classrooms. This resulted in an inability to interview enough participants from the subjects that I wanted. Some of the teachers I interviewed at Kisumu School were selected based on two new qualities. I selected teachers I had developed a good rapport with, in the hopes of getting more honest answers, and teachers who were physically present enough to be interviewed. Since there were many occasions I had scheduled interviews with participants who did not show up, I ended up selecting those who were available.

I experienced a dilemma as researcher in that asking the questions from my location as a young, White outsider/researcher produced another limitation in this study. Some participants would be at risk for succumbing to the social desirability bias, making it hard to provide me with honest answers as they would want to respond to questions in a

manner that show them in the best light possible. I had expected that this limitation would be overcome by the use of observations and unstructured interviews, where the participants' actions and comments would reveal things about their true beliefs.

However, my role in collecting the data is a large limitation in the study. Often when conducting interviews, researchers will think they know what they are looking for in terms of research data. By focusing on specific questions they fail to probe for details on other relevant topics (Guthri, 2010). Researchers may not focus on certain aspects of the data, things that they think are routine, and therefore, are unimportant (Guthri, 2010). To avoid this, while conducting observations, I tried to write down almost everything that I saw around me, including things I thought were an ordinary part of the school day. Since I am not from the country where I conducted the research, many things were new to me, and I felt that I recorded them more. With the interviews, I let the participants talk a lot about things that I did not classify as relevant to my research in the hope that while coding my data, I might find something that added more information to my study.

A limitation of case study research is its lack of generalizability due to the small number of participants involved. In this study, participants were limited to two schools within the same city, so it would be considered difficult to generalize the results to other teachers and schools. Acknowledging this, this study does examine themes that might be relevant in other schools. Therefore, while generalizations cannot be made from the results, in the future, researchers and other principals could examine their schools to see if theirs is similar to one of them in the research study. From there, they could begin to make comparisons as a starting point for understanding their own staff (Guthri, 2010).

Establishing Credibility

To ensure credibility in this study, triangulation was used to check the data that was provided (Golafshani, 2003; Maxwell, 1997). Observations were used to compare how people act with how they claim they act, to determine a difference. Unstructured interviews were used to talk to the participants in a more casual setting, so that they felt comfortable and would share more data. Unstructured interviews would also take place with different staff members to get various opinions about this topic. Finally, semi-structured interviews took place where participants were directly asked questions that related to the topic of my study. This triangulation was used to catch any discrepancies in the data that have been collected.

Ethical Considerations

This research study was approved from Brock University Social Sciences Research Ethics Board (REB 11-314). It was found to conform to all the ethical standards and considerations as specified by Brock University and the Department of Education. Before the start of each semi-structured interview, I read the participants a statement informing them that if at any point they did not want to participate, or if there was any question they did not want to answer, they were under no obligation. I reassured them that the name of the school and their names would not be released and that no one would have access to the data that was not involved in this study. There were no foreseeable risks involved in this study.

CHAPTER FOUR: PRESENTATION OF RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principals' effectiveness in two South African schools. Firstly, this research focused on investigating the perceived benefits and challenges associated with having a female principal. Secondly, it examined the desired leadership qualities participants wanted in a principal. Finally, this study wanted to understand how a person's race and gender influenced their responses.

To gather data, a case study methodology was employed to enable the researcher to observe and speak with participants while in their real-life context. This allowed the researcher to gain a deeper understanding of the participants' perceptions. Two schools were selected from the same geographical area. Each school varied with respect to gender ratios, predominant culture, socioeconomic status and learning environments. Five participants from each school were interviewed, each representing a different job levels at the school: teacher, head of department, and deputy principal.

During the data collection period, of four weeks, data were systematically collected at each location using participant observation, conversational interviews, and semi-structured interviews. Initial participant observations helped to contextualize the interviews. The first interviews were unstructured interviews conducted with both the ten participants and with eight other staff members. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with everyone involved in the study, which is where the majority of the data later used for coding came from. These interviews were recorded and then transcribed.

The data from the semi-structured interviews were analyzed using Galser's three stage approach to coding (Walker & Myrick, 2006). During the first stage (open coding),

each interview was read line by line, and separated into different data categories that emerged naturally. Notes were made about various themes that developed and theories were related to the information that was collected (Walker & Myrick, 2006). A constant comparison between the information collected and previous studies and theories was made (See Appendix A & Appendix D). In the initial stage, many categories appeared.

The second stage (selective coding) involved linking the different categories together and relating them back to the core question of this research study: How do males and females perceive female principals in South Africa? During this stage, themes began to emerge (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Coded data were then linked across related categories to become metathemes (Tesch, 1987).

In the last stage (theoretical coding) data collected in this study were related back to previous research as well as to theories. By doing the theoretical stage last, as opposed to first as in Strauss and Corbin's coding stages, the themes emerged naturally and in a deductive way (Walker & Myrick, 2006).

For the coding process, Nvivo was used to create themes that revolved around the core topic: perceptions of female principals in South Africa. The five themes that developed were: (a) desired principal qualities, (b) advantages of having a female principal, (c) disadvantages of having a female principal, (d) transformational leadership, and (e) intersectionality. Each of these themes was further divided into metathemes based on the participants' responses (See Appendix D). In this study, most data collected were from the semi-structured interviews. Since there was only a short period of observational time and the unstructured interviews were not recorded, they were only used to contextualize the data and to provide alternative insights into the research, either

confirming or contradicting the data.

This chapter begins with a description of the schools and participants. Next it is divided into sections based on each of the five themes. Within each theme, the data have been separated between schools (cases). All significant differences that were found between the schools or genders were reported under the intersectionality segment. All themes and metathemes in this chapter contribute to the understanding of how men and women perceive female principals in South Africa.

Description of Schools and Participants

The two schools in this study were located in two different regions of Masawana. A description of each school and the participants follows.

Kisumu School

The first school was located within the Nabasa Township along the outskirts of Masawana, in the Luwanada province of South Africa. In Nabasa Township houses were close together and the teachers claimed that there was a considerable amount of crime within the area. Kisumu was a high school, consisting of grades 8 to 12. The age range within each class varied considerably, as there was a low pass rate, and students often repeated grades. For example, in a grade 11 class that I visited, the students ranged from 16 to 26 years of age

According to the South African Department of Education, Kisumu was classified as a level 4 on a 5-point scale. To determine a school's rating, the income levels and literacy rates of the surrounding area are considered, even if families did not send their children to the neighbourhood schools. All the schools in the province are divided equally into the five different levels, with level 1 or 2 schools earning a no-fee status (Hall,

2008). According to the Department of Education, the lower the rank the school was given, the more money the government would give to aid students (Hall, 2008).

Sometimes, factors like school site and the quality of the building are also taken into consideration. Since Kisumu had received a new building recently, and since it was able to keep vandalism costs low, it received a high rank. The income level of the parents whose children attended this school was not given much consideration in this calculation.

At Kisumu, there were over 1,000 students, and not enough available teachers or desks for everyone. In some required subjects, like math or English, it was common to see 50 or 60 children sitting in one room, with one class observed having 73 students enrolled. Since the rooms were small, and there were not enough places to sit, three or four children would be crammed into a desk designed for one or two students.

The students of Kisumu faced a wide variety of challenges, often coming to school without eating breakfast. As well, many students spent their breaks playing sports instead of eating, as they had no lunch. Students at Kisumu were often in charge of taking care of their siblings when they returned home as they had absentee parents or no parents. This left little time for them to do homework as they had many other domestic responsibilities. As official statistics are not normally kept, canvassing several staff members and averaging the responses, suggests that approximately 70 students were in varying stages of pregnancy, and over half of the students were HIV positive at the time of my research.

In almost every classroom where observations were made, teachers would note that Kisumu lacked school supplies. There were not enough textbooks for the classes, which meant that the students had to copy everything that the teacher was saying into

their notebooks. Sometimes handouts were passed around for students to use, but they had to be returned at the end of class so the next group of students could use them.

Two different teachers indicated that a large percentage of the students did not have their own pencils, as they were only given one pencil at the beginning of the year. Students would have to share pencils, which meant that it took a long time to write anything down, making tests complicated. In addition, I was told that many students did not have the supplies they needed for the classroom. This was observed in almost every class.

A male math teacher and a female life orientation teacher explained that photocopies were expensive and rarities in the school, since the machines were often broken and teachers had no time to wait for their repair. Although Kisumu recently had a new library built, it could not afford the money to buy books or to hire a librarian. Therefore, it remained empty and locked.

A computer lab was donated before this study, but many teachers did not understand how to teach with computers, and therefore the lab remained locked and was seldom used. According to the teacher in charge of the computer lab, due to where the school was located, the school could also not secure steady Internet access for the students that was quick enough to be used, which was the main reason for the computer lab donation. This teacher claimed that there was a problem with the wiring and with interrupted Internet signals.

With the exception of two White teachers, the entire staff at this high school was Black. The teachers were a mixed range of ages, with the exception of a noticeable absence of recently graduated, young teachers. Several employees mentioned that a

significant number of their staff members were also HIV positive. This was mentioned in response to the deaths of teacher's family members due to AIDS related illness that occurred while carrying out my research.

At Kisumu, there was a high absentee rate of teachers. When walking down the corridors, one would often see classrooms full of students with no teacher in sight. This was considered a common practice, especially on Mondays and Fridays. During a short week where there was a holiday one of the days, it was noted that many teachers reported that their peers would not come to school for the remainder of the week. The principal was often not notified of teacher absence and students just waited in their classroom to see if someone would show up. At lunchtime, teachers were observed piling into their cars to leave, often not returning until well after classes had started.

The teachers at Kisumu talked a lot about the negative aspects of the school while rarely mentioning the positive things the principal had struggled for. It was apparent that the principal worked hard to maintain the school. She had put up fences to deter people from breaking in to the school and she made sure that any vandalism was taken care of right away and cleaned up. She also kept the school in good repair, ensuring that anything that broke was fixed promptly.

The principal of Kisumu noted that she had put in a lot of effort to ensure a fairly high pass rate for students. As a marker of success, the students demonstrated improved scores in the last few years. This principal also supported school sports, and the school had won many tournaments that resulted in prizes being donated to the school. She noted that it motivated the students to come to class and to develop a sense of pride in themselves as well as in their institution.

The principal worked hard to get people from the Department of Education involved with the school. She indicated that she reported teachers who flirted with students, and that she called in as many absences as she could spot when the teachers left early. Unfortunately, due to the strength of the teachers' union in protecting the staff, she noted that she had to be careful whom she complained to.

Participants

Five participants were selected from Kisumu School: a male deputy principal (Vice Principal), a female and a male head of department, as well as a female and a male teacher. While I was at the Kisumu, the deputy principal assigned me to observe teachers who had a lot of experience teaching. The heads of department were chosen because they were considered to have less experience than deputy principals and more experience than teachers, so this would provide a different viewpoint. It was assumed that the deputy principal would work closest to the principal, followed by the department heads, and then the teachers. Both genders were chosen to include two different viewpoints for this study. Originally, math and English teachers were selected as they represented traditionally female and male stereotypical subjects, which I thought would offer two different perspectives.

When students get to high school, their performance in certain subjects begins to vary along gender lines (Pajares, 2002). According to Pajares, many female students are thought to excel in English, and in both schools I observed many women teaching this subject. Math is considered to be a stereotypically masculine subject, and was taught almost exclusively by male teachers at Kisumu. Pajares claims that culture and the gender role stereotypes within a certain location influences the courses that students

selected, as well as their confidence level in different subjects. Bandura (1986) relates this confidence level to a student's ability to perform and also to the fact that math and English are also taught quite differently (as cited in Pajares, 2002). I had hoped that teachers of these two subjects would give me the greatest variety of participants.

Mpho (Black female): Mpho has been a teacher for 11 years and has taught at only one other school. Currently, she is head of economic management and sciences and teaches business and accounting. Mpho is involved with various sports at Kisumu and she participates in curriculum development and assessment workshops. She expressed a desire for additional time and funding for her to partake in more professional development.

Kabo (Black female): Kabo has been teaching for 14 or 15 years, and she started while she was still in university. She taught at four other schools before transferring to Kisumu, where she is currently teaching life orientation and tourism to grades 10 and 11. She began her year teaching English but, to her disappointment, her classes were rearranged when she returned back from her maternity leave and she was teaching life orientation at the time of this study. Kabo is heavily involved in sports at Kisumu, and helps out with the netball team. Every year, Kabo attends a weeklong workshop about addressing concerns students are facing (i.e., drugs, pregnancy, assault). After being nominated by a past student, she was selected as a teacher who had helped make a difference in someone's life for assisting a student with raising money for university.

Tebogo (Black male): Tebogo is a department head at this school. He has been teaching for 16 years: 14 at this school, and 2 in another province. He teaches history and life orientation from grades 10-12 and is the school guidance counselor. When it

comes to professional development, Tebogo is quite into sports. Since he teaches life orientation, he also participates in workshops on sex education and crime.

Tau (Black male): Tau is one of the deputy principals at this school. He has been a teacher for 21 years, and has been a deputy principal for 11 years. He teaches grade 11 tourism and grade 8 technology. He started his career at an elementary farm school, where he was quickly nominated for the role of principal, before moving to his current location. At Kisumu, Tau is in charge of academics. He organizes the timetables and examinations. If there were any curriculum problems, after speaking with a subject advisor, participants would speak to him next. Tau recently completed his technology certification at university and he is looking forward to starting a course in tourism when it is offered.

Moswen (Black male): Moswen has been teaching for 17 years. When this school opened, he taught grade 8, but now he only teaches grades 11 and 12 English. He has taught at this school only, and worked in an armament factory before becoming a teacher. Moswen grew up in the Nabasa Township, and likes to point out to students that his mother still resides there. Moswen is currently involved in a weekend program for grade 12 students that is partnered with the local university. Every Saturday potential university students from townships meet with teachers to help them prepare for their first year in university.

Amoni School

The second school in this study was located in a fairly middle class area of Masawana. It is an all girls' high school, which offers grades 8 to 12. Students paid 11,000 Rand (approximately \$1,400 Canadian) a year in school fees to attend the school,

although a few students were on sport or academic scholarships from the nearby township.

In the senior grades, the classes at Amoni School were comprised mostly of Black students. The younger grades had a more even split of Black and White students as a result of a recent campaign to attract wealthier families in nearby big cities to create a more even balance of ethnicities. A large portion of the students stayed in dormitories on the school campus, and only went home if they wanted to on the weekends. The students who attended from the nearby township were day students and returned home at the end of each day.

The classrooms within the school were covered in posters explaining different literary or mathematics concepts. In some of the rooms, where observations were done, motivational posters were featured along with different items the teachers had chosen to brighten up their room and to provide additional stimulation for the students. Every student had her own textbooks, and the teachers had a few extra copies in case the students forgot them. The students at Amoni were well prepared for class, with scientific calculators and pencil cases full of writing tools. If students were in need and unable to afford them, the school usually arranged for a donation to be made on their behalf, or arranged for the students to have the supplies on loan.

Computers were in a wide abundance at the school, as each classroom had one, and there were several computer labs where students were able to stay and work until the evening. After school, there were many different activities that the students could participate in, and students were heavily encouraged to join a sport or a club.

Being a school rich in tradition, every student belonged to one of three groups,

where students would work as a team to score spirit, academic, and extracurricular points that would be put towards the house cup they could win at the end of the year. The school's tradition also included sending students to a leadership retreat at the beginning of first term, with a different focus each year. Staff members at Amoni School aimed to bring the students closer together while motivating them to take on leadership roles.

Several times a week, Amoni gathered for a 20-minute assembly, where the principal or deputy principal would give a little speech about whatever topic she thought was relevant on that day. Sometimes these assemblies were more directed towards being fun, having events such as choosing a Ms. Spring of the school. On Fridays, students who showed exemplary behaviour were rewarded in front of their peers.

All of the teachers at that school were White with the exception of one Black female instructor. Amoni was mostly composed of a female staff, with only four young males being employed there. Many of the teachers at the school either had their Master's degree, or were working towards it. Every morning before class the teachers gathered to have a meeting where they would all take turns leading and speaking about any difficulties they were having as well as something they were proud of. They would end these meetings with a group prayer and positive thoughts for the day.

The school also had enrichment opportunities offered once a week while the students were in assemblies. Here, each teacher would take a turn to help their colleagues with something they felt they needed more instruction on. One teacher provided a workshop on computer skills while another demonstrated the use of a new math tool he had learned about during a workshop that was recently attended. Occasionally, the principal would plan something fun that was considered to focus on team building,

ensuring that the staff worked as a unit.

At Amoni, it was mandatory for teachers to participate in extracurricular activities. They were asked to be in charge of sports teams, lead an assortment of clubs, and make themselves available for homework help after school. They often worked late into the night at the school, and were regularly expected to give up their Saturdays to run additional activities.

Participants

Five participants were selected from Amoni; a female deputy principal, a female head of department, as well as a female and two male teachers. The selection of participants at this school varied from those at Kisumu for a couple of reasons. Kisumu had two male deputy principals, Amoni had two women deputy principals, so it was impossible to interview two deputy principals of the same gender.

At Amoni two male teachers and only one female department head were interviewed, as there were no males occupying this position. Since this study had a stronger focus on gender as opposed to someone's position within a school, I chose to interview two males instead of another female department head to have a better balance of sexes.

At Amoni, once again, I chose to interview participants from the English and mathematics stream. My first day in the school I specified the gender and streams I was looking for, and was partnered up with the English and math head of department by the deputy principal. From there, the department head provided me with teachers that I would be able to use in my study. I was able to observe the same teachers during my time at Amoni, and they agreed to participate in the interviews.

Danielle (White female): Danielle has been teaching for 29 years, and is head of the mathematics department. She teaches science for grades 8-11, and mathematics for students in grades 8-12. She also teaches math literacy for grades 10-12. In her career, she has worked at three different schools. Danielle is very open about challenging the principal, to allow her to have a say in the vision of the school. She participates in training that is provided at the school and translates some papers for her subject advisors. She claims that working at this school, and being involved in many extracurricular activities, leaves her with little time to participate in a lot of professional development programs.

Deanne (White female): Deanne taught for 14 years before becoming a deputy principal, which she has been for the last 4 years. She taught Afrikaans and English at three different schools. While she states that she and the principal disagree about many things, they do so only behind closed doors, working hard to maintain a united front in front of the staff members. Deanne is also in charge of running assemblies each Tuesday, with a theme that represents different struggles the students are facing at that time. In terms of professional development, in addition to the regular workshops, she attends many conferences focused on promoting female education.

David (White male): David has been teaching for 5 years. He teaches mathematics, but has also taught physical science, social science, economics, and technology in the past. He has worked at two different schools. David helps out with the chess team, and does a bit of coaching in various sports for Amoni. David has an honours degree and has recently completed his Master's. He likes to attend workshops that involve using computer software to help with math, and had recently gotten back from a

workshop on new graphing software.

Darcy (White female): Darcy has been teaching for 11 years. She is a mathematics teacher, and prefers working with the senior students, but teaches a wide variety of grades. She has worked at four different schools. Darcy has participated in several staff development workshops as well as meetings about the new curriculum. She is a self-proclaimed follower, and mentioned that she is more comfortable letting someone else lead.

Daniel (White male): David has been teaching for 5 years. He teaches English and social sciences, and has worked at two different schools. He believes that teachers should be able to diverge from the curriculum and teach what the students are interested in or what is relevant to them to keep them engaged. Daniel likes to participate in professional development, and is appreciative of the opportunities he has been given. In the past year, he attended a school expo in the United Kingdom with a different deputy principal. In the future, he is hoping to become a principal.

Desired Principal Qualities

To better understand the participants' preferences for masculine or feminine leadership styles, participants were asked to describe what qualities they would want in a principal. During the interview, the participants were also asked to explain what traits they would look for if they had a role in selecting a future principal. When the results were coded, the following seven categories emerged: visionary, hardworking, a good relationship with staff, disciplined, delegation of responsibilities/duties to staff, and a good/transformational leader (as defined by Dvir et al., 2002; Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002; Griffith, 2004; Lewthawaite, 1992; Marks & Printy, 2003)

Kisumu School

When it came to selecting the desired principal qualities at Kisumu, the participants gave answers that fell into four of the subcategories. Mpho (HOD), Kabo (T), and Tau (DP) wanted someone who was hardworking. As Kabo (T) put it, “If you are a principal and you are not hard working, how can you to expect your staff to work hard?”

Two of the staff members wanted qualities that revolved around discipline. Moswen (T) said, “First and foremost in my books will be maintaining discipline...and getting through to the learners.” Moswen (T) mentioned that discipline was needed because of the problems that students in the school experienced (i.e., poverty, hunger, broken families). Tau (DP) wanted a principal who was self-disciplined; someone who was punctual and professional. He claimed that the school needed someone who would be an example to the staff. Throughout the unstructured interviews, many staff members noted that they wanted a leader who could control some of the staff members.

During the interview process, it became apparent that there was a problem in the school regarding the truancy of teachers. Many interviews had to be rescheduled due to the absence of participants from school or pushed back until later in the day when teachers arrived at school late. Many teachers were unhappy with the consequences of having teachers who were not present as it meant an increased workload for them.

Kabo (T) felt that the school needed to have a principal who would delegate responsibilities to the staff, ensuring that the work was divided. This would ensure that all the teachers would have to be committed to their various assignments. Some teachers had to cover their peers’ classes or duties when they were absent and, as a result, no longer had time to participate in these interviews. The principal of Kisumu identified that this

was a trend in the school, which left teachers unhappy about the situation. Kabo (T) wanted a principal who would ensure that all teachers have equal responsibilities.

Tebogo (HOD), on the other hand, felt that it was more important to have someone who would be a good leader, and who was approachable and helpful when it came to dealing with issues in a staff member's classroom or personal life. From what I observed, and heard from some teachers, this was reflective of the current principal. Several staff members, many of whom were female, mentioned that they felt comfortable discussing their personal problems with the principal. During these interviews, stories were told of her flexibility and the assistance that she provided.

Amoni School

The participants' responses at Amoni fell into four categories. Both Daniel (T) and Darcy (T) listed traits that were considered to be that of a good leader, as defined by transformational leadership (Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002). Daniel (T) made several references to wanting someone who was a "mentor," someone who will "Do things because it is for the benefit of the school, more for the benefit of the girls." He also claimed he wanted someone who was open to different things, but would still remain structured. Darcy (T) wanted someone who was highly involved. "I think she must be willing to see what we do and to do it with us and...to lead us in every way."

The teachers at Amoni also wanted a principal who was a visionary for the school. Darcy (T) wanted someone who would provide the staff with an idea and work on it collectively. The group would then be responsible for finding any flaws in the vision and for creating solutions to move past them. She stated that a new principal "...Should have ideas in what to change with what the previous principal left behind." Deanne (DP)

further added to this by suggesting “Without a vision, without having a dream for a school, you can’t be a principal.” What these three participants are claiming they want is very representative of what they already had in their school. Many teachers described the principal of Amoni as constantly coming up with new ideas to implement, all with the goal of improving the quality of teaching and the school climate.

When it came to the category of wanting a good relationship with staff members, Danielle (HOD) wanted someone who was “soft,” which she later described as “approachable, understanding, caring.” Deanne (DP) also indicated that she wanted someone who would be compassionate, while Daniel (T) wanted a “person who respects others.” David (T) identified only one quality and was the only participant who wanted a principal who had more qualifications than he.

Benefits of Having a Female Principal

One of the questions asked to the participants was focused on the benefits of having a female principal. This was asked to see if participants would mention stereotypical qualities about women or provide answers that come with negative connotations. When coding data, six different subcategories emerged: (a) perseverance, (b) considerate of other people’s feelings, (c) motherly, (d) understanding, (e) opportunities for empowerment through learning, and (f) being a female provided a benefit in general.

Kisumu School

The participants at Kisumu responded with answers that corroborated with six of the different categories. When it came to consideration of other people’s feelings, Moswen (T) noted that women were “More in control of their emotions.” He claimed that

they were able to “Put themselves in the shoes of the person feeling the pain or the problem and empathize.” Moswen (T) stated that males do not do this, as their focus is more on discipline and being strict. Being in control of emotions makes people feel more relaxed and that the principal is concerned about each staff member’s well-being. It was interesting that Moswen (T) was the only participant to mention this trait. While I was at the school a teacher was absent because he had lost a family member. I was informed that in the weeks prior, a few other staff members had special permission to be away from the school, as they had known people who had passed away or had a family member who had become sick. Many allowances had been made for staff members, which I would consider to be a display of considering other people’s feeling.

Tebogo (HOD) and Moswen (T) both indicated that they saw female principals more like a mother figure. Tebogo (HOD) explained that it was a “culture thing” that was associated with respecting elders. Since the staff looked up to her as a mother figure, Tebogo (HOD) stated, when teachers experienced problems they would go and talk to the principal. He finished by adding that, “She would take [the teachers] and handle them as if it’s a problem experienced by her child.” Moswen (T) compared female principals to a “Mother in a household situation.” He said that this allowed them to relate more effectively to the staff in the workplace, and this worked out better than when there was a male leader. They both felt that when they were having difficulties, with their families or personal lives, they were able to go and discuss it with the principal and get advice.

Despite the comments of describing the principal as was like a mother figure, both Tebogo (HOD) and Moswen (T) remarked to different questions in their interviews that they talked to the vice principal first, as he was easier to approach. Only when he was

unavailable, or the issue was serious, did they approach the principal. Even some of the female staff repeated this, with Kabo (T) declaring “[The vice principals] are more understanding because we are afraid of the principal so most of the time we’ll talk with our vice principals.” The participants described the principal as strict in the beginning of the interview, and then later labeled her as motherly. These statements seem to conflict, which leaves me to question whether they have a different definition of motherly, which would explain their responses. This will be further developed in Chapter Five.

Moswen (T) described women as being understanding. He stated that if a person came up to the principal and described why he/she needed time off from school, “You can get listened to.” Tau (DP) explained that, “Somehow, she is very understanding.” These responses overlap with being motherly and considerate of other people’s feelings. They all represent the focus being on the other person. It appeared that the participants liked how women are very “other centered.” This has shown to be beneficial to an organization in the long run (Moon, Kamdar, Mayer, & Takeuchi, 2008).

Moswen (T) also felt that female principals are empowering. He remarked, “The best part is you pick up a lot of experience but you only realize that in her absence.” He went on to clarify that the principal was always showing a person how to do different, complex things in the school. Kabo (T), on the other hand, felt that female principals were empowering in a different way. According to her, women principals show men and women that “Women can be able to run the school.” Though in different ways, both these participants felt that having a female in a leadership position would increase knowledge by dispelling negative stereotypes of females or by sharing strategies that could make someone a better teacher.

Mpho (HOD) claimed that unlike males, female principals were very persistent in going after what they wanted and were quite dedicated to following through with their ideas. She stated that, “But in a women, even if it will drag...they know that at the end, at the ultimate end, [they] will get what [they] want.” She later went on to clarify during the interview that in general, women principals have more perseverance; that they will work hard to ensure that everything is done right. Simply by looking at the success rate in the school since the principal took over, you can see the perseverance of the principal that they have. Several people identified the success that this principal has had over the years from working really hard and overcoming the many obstacles that came up. It was clear from many participants that they admired this, but it was not brought up during the interviews as a perceived benefit of having a female principal. They seemed to have taken this positive quality that the current principal brought to the school and considered it to be a quality she had, and did not associate it with her gender.

Amoni School

The participants at Amoni supplied answers that fit into five of the different categories. When it came to perseverance, Darcy (T) responded that women are determined when it comes to making new ideas work in schools. They remain flexible with how they get to their desired goal and always have several backup plans. Darcy claimed that women think, “Whatever comes in the way, if it’s not working, okay next one,” always being ready with a new plan.

Several of the participants at Amoni mentioned that female principals were more considerate of other people’s feelings. This made working with them, both as staff and students, a much more positive experience. Deanne (DP) was full of examples of this,

often comparing these benefits to male leaders. She explained that they are more thoughtful, doing things like ensuring the staff was catered to on their lunch break or making sure there was sweetener in the staff room. Deanne (DP) put it simply, “You know, with small things you can actually accomplish a lot.” While sitting in on daily staff meetings and morning breaks, I was able to see what a typical morning was like for the teachers. There were many small things that the principal had arranged for and, judging from the positive anecdotes in their interviews, it was greatly appreciated.

David (T) explained that “Female principals will first look at the person, and then the problem and solve the problem by also [personally] benefitting the person.” The ability to help other people in a way that will make them happier explains his statement later on in the interview that “Women are more in tune with their emotions.” This included always considering the staff members’ needs and feelings in addition to looking for solutions that benefited everyone. Deanne (DP) made similar comments when she explained, “Female principals would ask, “Are you okay?” Whereas, a male principal would say, “What influences your efficiency at the moment?” I think Danielle (HOD) explained the feelings of some of the staff members best when she said, “Women can actually understand why you’re in a bad mood and that you can easily get out of it.” At Amoni, this rationalizes all the little actions that the principal did to try and make the staff happy.

There appeared to be a definite theme across many staff member’s responses at Amoni, founded on their belief that female principals were able to understand and influence a person’s emotions. Whether it was through providing snacks, sitting down with a member of staff to solve a problem that will be beneficial to that person, or just

understanding emotions better than a male principal, this theme was brought up in many of the participants' interviews. Amoni had greater resources available to do this since it had access to more money through high tuition fees and sponsorships. The principal could afford to cater to the staff and provide them with treats to boost their spirits. She also had more staff employed to handle various issues around the school, including counselors, and dorm heads the girls could talk to. This left the principal with more time to be able to consult with staff members regarding their problems.

At Amoni, some participants claimed that the benefits of having a female principal simply came down to gender differences. David (T) believed that women are more open to hearing about any problems that are being experienced at home and giving a teacher time to go home and take care of it. Deanne (DP) stated that, "Learners benefit from the detailed creative planning that a women offers." David (T) stated, "If you have a strong woman that has good leadership abilities, she can outstand any man."

Danielle (HOD) believed that it was empowering to have a female principal, especially in a single sex school. She claimed that in addition to showing the students that a women can be a top leader, "She proves to the girls that ladies, ladies can also get somewhere in the world. You just have to fight for what you want." David (T) agreed with Danielle (HOD), after he remarked that it gave them a brighter perspective of the future, since they were able to see a woman working in a leadership position. Deanne (DP) contributed to both these participants' statements when she suggested that it was empowering for young girls to have a strong female leader.

Daniel (T) felt that being maternal was one of the benefits of having a female principal. He mentioned that, "[Women] have got more of the motherly effect over the

girls and the staff, and they see things what men would find to be unnecessary or trivial.” Danielle (HOD) noted that women were more understanding, especially with regards to the problems that occurred at home. Danielle (HOD) provided the specific example of when a teacher with a sick child was given time off.

Disadvantages of Having a Female Principal

During the interviews, the participants were asked to discuss any possible disadvantages that were connected with having a female principal. This question was asked to see if there were any stereotypes associated with female leaders. It also provided a less direct way to ask the participants to express their feelings about female leaders. Answers were coded into four categories: (a) undermining authority, (b) mixed sex schools, (c) preference for masculine qualities, and (d) struggle with authority in majority male populations.

Kisumu School

Participants’ responses at Kisumu fell into three of the coding categories. Of these, undermining by the staff appeared to be one of the biggest disadvantages. As an example, Mpho (HOD) talked about staff undercutting in the actions of their current principal.

Researcher: So how do people undermine her then?

Mpho: Like not taking instruction effectively like maybe when she says this, the others they may defy her by saying that no we will do but you can see with the acts of the teachers, sometimes even if somebody is not saying something directly but you can see with the actions that... Maybe if she said "I wanted this to be done at this time," when they are not handing in

that thing on time. Then you can see these people they are undermining maybe this uh, her management.

Mpho (HOD) stated that the principal would get so upset with teachers not being in class, that she would end up shouting on the intercom to get them back there. Tau (DP) further reinforced her comments about undermining by confirming that, “Some teachers just loaf around for months.” He said the principal would constantly have to check up on teachers to ensure that work was being done. Tebogo (HOD) noted that he had heard of teachers who were not happy with the principal’s decision, and had consulted the union or department officials in order to produce results more in their favour. During the unstructured and semi-structured interviews, Tebogo (HOD) referred to unhappy teachers, but never discussed specific situations or revealed any details about who was complaining. While some comments about individuals who were suspected of filing complaints did arise during the unstructured interviews with other staff members, many teachers claimed to be happy with most of the principal’s actions. When analyzing Tebogo’s (HOD) comments, it must be considered that he may have been validating his own feelings by claiming that there is a group of teachers at the school who are displeased with some of the principal’s decisions.

Undermining authority appeared to be a common theme at Kisumu, as it was discovered that teachers frequently left school early or stayed in the staff room, despite insistence that the teachers return to their classroom. Some staff members also undermined her direction as a school leader in subtle ways, such as not finishing their report cards within the deadline. Though this question was intended to ask about women in general, many of the participants answered about their specific principal. This made it

difficult to determine whether they felt that all women would experience this undercutting, or just her in general. Since participants did supply so many positive comments about the principal, in earlier sections, and with the specific statement by Moswen (T) about “Males being uncomfortable with women in leadership positions,” it will have to be assumed that they would think this would apply, to some extent, to all female principals.

Some participants chose to respond to the question in a different way. Instead of talking about the disadvantages associated with women, they noted the benefits of having males in a leadership position. Moswen (T) admitted that this was because males were stricter and wanted to get the job done; therefore, they would not take excuses for anything. They wanted their staff to work. Tau (DP) said that female principals are “soft” when compared to a man, whom he also described as being stricter.

One stereotype that was brought up in this category revolved around female principals being emotional. Tebogo (HOD) claimed, “[Female principals are] emotional. She will just burst and ya, ya like, shout at you and if it was a male, a male would somehow handle it professionally.” This comment went against what many teachers at Kisumu stated at different points in their interviews, claiming that this current principal was very tough, unsympathetic to some of their problems, and does not budge in her decision making. While I was at the school, I witnessed a few teachers break down and cry to the principal in regards to classroom or discipline problems that they had, and those teachers both mentioned that the principal had not reacted with any emotions to the situation.

When it came to struggling with authority, Mpho (HOD) had difficulties with how women handled problems. She claimed that male principals were “Casual and not too strict.” She said that female principals want things done their way. When asked which principal she found to be more effective, Mpho declared, “The other one,” referring to her past experiences with male principals.

Amoni School

Danielle (HOD) pointed out that there was some undermining of her authority when she stated, “So, most...the majority, we complain...We complain behind her back.” While most participants did not mention undermining in their interviews, signs of undermining were still evident amongst the staff. In the interviews, it was revealed that the principal insists the staff lead extracurricular activities. However, it was later indicated by many participants that teachers do not give these activities their full attention and often only put in minimal effort. Throughout my time at Amoni, two different teachers noted that they put in minimal effort to get things done, often taking shortcuts, especially with extracurricular activities. One teacher claimed that she had no interest in the sport she was asked to lead; therefore, she found it hard to become motivated to place a lot of effort into running in.

Only one participant at Amoni mentioned the benefits of having male leaders. Deanne (DP) stated, “Males are task-oriented. They want to get things done.” When asked, the other teachers would provide answers that actually reflected women as being a better leader, despite the question. However, when the recorder was turned off, participants would often keep talking, and then mention positive qualities male leaders had as an afterthought. Despite probing, few participants at Amoni revealed what they

considered to be disadvantages of having a female principal. This could be in reaction to the social desirability bias, where participants respond in ways that show themselves and their school in the best light possible.

Transformational Leadership

When participants were asked about the qualities that they would choose if they could select a future principal, their responses were also coded to see if there was a preference for transformational leaders. Transformational leaders mentor staff members while acting as role models. They ensure that each individual's strength is utilized in order to accomplish goals as a team (Bass & Riggio, 2006; Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002) When answering this question, participants were not supplied with any qualities to choose from, so that they would not be preconditioned in anyway. The responses that they gave were separated into the four different categories of transformational leadership: (a) idealized influence, (b) intellectual stimulation, (c) individualized consideration, and (d) inspirational motivation (Hall et al., 2002; Judge & Piccolo 2004). (See Table 2 and Table 3)

Kisumu School

Participants at Kisumu fit into two of the categories. A few people wanted a principal who had idealized influence, someone who was a role model to others with high moral and ethical standards (Hall et al., 2002). Mpho (HOD) wanted "The person who's hardworking in himself." She stated that she did not care about their gender, as long as they met this quality. Kabo (T) also wanted someone who was hardworking as this set a positive example for the staff. She remarked, "If you are a principal and you are not hard working, how can you expect your staff to work hard?"

Table 2

Transformational Qualities Wanted by Participants at Kisumu

Transformational Quality	Participants' Responses at Kisumu
Idealized Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The person who's hard working in himself – Mhpo (HOD) • Hard working because if you are a principal and you are not hard working or how can you expect your staff to, to work hard whereas you are not working – Kabo (T) • A person who's disciplined, who's professional. I think all the rest will come now. If you are just disciplined and punctual and be able to come to your work every day that's what is wanted because when the leader is not exemplary other people won't be able to be disciplined –Tau (DP)
Individualized Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Democratic, approachable, strict but have a room for personal problems or curriculum related problems of teachers and try to come up with strategies to help this particular person...before whipping and condemning and writing reports and stuff. – Tebogo (HOD) • A person who can talk to people nicely – Tau (DP) • I think sharing the work. Sharing, so you give each and every teacher something to do...and then the teachers report back to you so that the work can be done.- Kabo(T) • The ability to maintain discipline and get through to the learners and under[stand], because you see you can be a Principal then, but the minute the setting is different from where you come from, it does, it couldn't make you successful. Black kids need, need a lot of understanding of their background, the problems they come from...the broken families, the single parents, the hunger, poverty, not anybody can become a good Principal, in the so called township school as we called them, the Black schools – Moswen (T)

Table 3

Transformational Qualities Wanted by Participants at Amoni

Transformational Quality	Participants' Responses at Amoni
Idealized Influence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acting and showing us and making plans and, I think she must be willing to see what we do and to do it with us and lead us in every way and she does. We really depend on her- Darcy • In this school specifically to be a leader is a person, as a person it's actually quite, there is a mentor to others – Daniel • Obviously number 1, they need to be a people's person with great leadership .- Daniel
Inspirational Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • She's a visionary so she get an idea... and we have to work it out – Darcy • People here take things in their stride and do things because it is for the benefit of the school, more for the benefit of the girls – Daniel • Passion for education, the schools need visionaries – Deanne
Intellectual Stimulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be open to different things – Daniel • She should have a qualification above my own, she should be experienced in a manner, she should have ideas in what to change what the previous Principal left behind – David
Individualized Consideration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approachable, understanding, caring... – Danielle • A person who respects others – Daniel • Compassion- Deanne

Tau also agreed with Kabo (T) that principals should be role models of what is to be expected. He wanted someone who is, “Disciplined, professional...and punctual.” The participants wanted a principal who had qualities that the staff would like to see reflected in their peers. Principals would become role models at the school, hopefully having their work ethic inspire others.

Other participants wanted a principal who had individualized consideration, where it is recognized that each staff member has unique needs and requires personalized feedback (Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Tebogo (HOD) wanted a principal who would be approachable, someone who was “Strict but has room for personal problems or curriculum related problems.” Tau (DP) sought someone who can speak to people nicely. Kabo (T) felt that a principal needed to be able to “Share the work... so you give each and every teacher something to do.” Moswen (T) commented that any future principal of Kisumu must understand the needs of Black township students. “Black kids need understanding of their background, the problems that they come from...the broken families, the single parents, the hunger, poverty, not anybody can become a good principal in the so-called township school.” Whether it was for the students or themselves, all these participants wanted someone who could look at each problem and situation and the circumstances that went along with it. Yet, if a principal was more understanding of individualized circumstances, it is realistic to assume that more staff members would take advantage of this. It appears that though some staff members want a leader who is transformational, the environment that they currently have at the school might not fit with the all the qualities that they want.

Amoni School

At Amoni, participants wanted a principal who fit into all the categories of a transformational leader. When it came to idealized influence, Darcy (T) wanted a role model who would “Be willing to see what we do and do it with us and lead us in every way.” Daniel (T) thought that being a principal meant being a leader first and foremost, while mentoring the staff members. Both participants indicated that they thought the principal’s job was to be a role model for staff and students, as well as to guide the school in continuing to progress in every aspect.

Participants at Amoni also wanted individualized consideration for themselves and their students. Danielle (HOD) felt that someone who was “Approachable, understanding, caring,” would work best. She wanted to be able to approach the principal about curriculum advice as well as have her understand how personal problems might be affecting her work. Deanne (DP) claimed that any future principal at the school needed to show compassion for staff, and Daniel wanted to make sure that their principal was always “A person who respects others.” These participants wanted someone who would make them feel valued and appreciated, just like how the current principal does with her small gestures.

The two male participants wanted a principal who could provide intellectual stimulation. This is where the principal encourages the staff to think beyond traditional approaches to problem solving, and encourages the staff to challenge any assumptions that they have made. Daniel (T) wanted the principal to be open to different things in the school, especially when a teacher brought an idea forth. David (T) wanted the principal to “Have ideas in what to change what the previous principal left behind.” He wanted

someone who would come up with new solutions to problems.

Daniel (T) and David (T), the two participants who wanted intellectual stimulation, are also the participants who talked about their own education quite a bit during the interviews and informal conversations. David (T) had just finished his Master's and mentioned different educational ideas he had been working on. Daniel (T) talked about how he strived to work his way up in the education system by continuing to take professional development courses so that he could become a principal eventually. It was demonstrated that both of these participants valued their education, and pointed out their educational achievements. For them, it would seem appropriate that they would want a principal who would continue to push them academically and encourage them to find new creative ideas.

Finally, the participants at Amoni thought that someone with inspirational motivation was needed in their school, a principal who was charismatic and enthusiastic about his/her work and encouraged staff members to meet their goals. This included the visionaries that both Darcy (T) and Deanne (DP) sought: a principal who wanted to continue working on improving the school, while encouraging staff members to participate in these changes. Deanne (DP) thought that wanting to improve the school involved, "Passion for education." Daniel (T) indicated that at this school, he needed people to want to do things for the benefit of the school and the all-female population. Everything the participants wanted required a principal who was enthusiastic about education and would not be content to leave the school as is, someone who wanted to make changes and implement new ideas.

It is not surprising that this school would want a principal with these qualities, as

they definitely tried to inspire their students. When sitting in on classes, it was clearly evident that many of the teachers tried to motivate students to do their best by selecting subject topics that would appeal to them. Even in the classrooms, the walls were adorned with encouraging posters and inspirational sayings, reminding students to stay determined. Evidence was seen in the principal's actions of displaying inspirational motivation, both to the students and the staff. Every Friday, students would receive a Muffin Award, a treat given out to those students who had done something above and beyond what was required, academically, athletically, or socially. The idea was to motivate other students to want to achieve one as well. With staff, treats were handed out each morning and each teacher was supposed to take a turn to read something positive to their fellow staff members to encourage them to try their best and have a great day.

Intersectionality

Intersectionality theory explains how different social, cultural, and biological categories a person belongs to impacts the level of social inequality they experience. Intersectionality clarifies how a person's different identities affect their lives, their responses in social situations, as well as their beliefs about gender (Davis, 2008; Shields, 2008). In the present research, I argue about the usefulness of intersectional theory as a construct that assists in understanding the participants' responses with respect to the research question regarding their perception of female principals. While analyzing the data of this study, some significant disparities became apparent between the responses of participants. With certain themes, there were differences in how men and women responded or what each school mentioned. This section will outline the differences that

were found to be significant; additionally, it outlines the differences that were found to be significant.

Difference Between Genders

This section outlines the differences between men and women across schools. It demonstrates how each sex viewed the benefits of having a female principal. This section will focus on the two significant differences found related to the qualities of perseverance and being motherly

Though there were different categories that the participants' responses were coded into, many of them overlapped in both schools. When participants talked about female principals being understanding or considerate of other's emotions, this was also something that could be considered as motherly. Female principals wanted to take care of their staff and put their best interests forward; something that could be seen as something of a mother role.

However, two interesting gender differences emerged around this question. First, when it came to describing women principals as perseverant, only women mentioned this. A possible reason for this could be because women, in comparison to males, are better able to recognize the perseverance of a woman because they are more aware of various barriers. Women understand that to achieve leadership positions, they have to overcome different barriers and setbacks based on their gender, like undermining by staff or lack of equal opportunities. Women better realize the difficulty associated with becoming a leader and making changes once they get to that position, and recognize it requires perseverance. Therefore, women were able to identify this as being one of the benefits of having a woman leader.

The other gender difference was that only males mentioned being motherly as a benefit. From both schools, participants mentioned that female principals “mothered” the students and the staff. They explained that women take care of other people, listened to problems, and tried to solve them. The way that these participants described the benefit of female principals was in a very stereotypical way, in which women are placed in the role of mother. Other participants mentioned similar characteristics about women, but labeled them differently. They claimed women were considerate of other’s feelings or understanding, both things that could be considered motherly, but do not come with the same harmful stereotypes, like being overly emotional or images of scolding.

There was a large difference in how the males at Kisumu responded in comparison to all the other participants. These male participants supplied very few positive qualities about female principals, in comparison to the others, and the answers they did supply occasionally had negative connotations associated with them. Tau (DP) described his principal as “a little bit soft as compared to a male.” This was something that I understood to not actually be a positive thing, as Tau mentioned that she occasionally lost control during staff meetings. Tau (DP) also mentioned during our first meeting and our interview, that he believed the students needed strict discipline to keep them in control. It was frequently brought up that he thought that students were not punished enough for their actions by their families or individuals within the school.

The one exception to this was Moswen (T). He supplied many positive characteristics of female principals. In almost every category that was coded, he seemed to have comments that were included. He mentioned that he felt that women make better leaders, and felt like he was qualified to say this as he had worked for males in the past.

Moswen (T) also referred to his mother and his own household more than most other participants in the interviews, often comparing her to the way female principals lead. This would indicate that she must have influenced his view of female leaders in a way that was different than some of the other participants.

Difference Between Schools

When this section examined the two schools, it recognized that the main distinctions between participants at Kisumu and Amoni were race and economic status. Kisumu's participants were Black and the school had a lack of resources, leaving them with a low socioeconomic status. Amoni, composed of a White staff, was fortunate enough to draw in higher school fees, so the school had a high socioeconomic status.

When the participants' responses were coded, there was very little overlap between schools. The only common category between the schools was the request for someone who was a good leader. However, the vast number of qualities that transformational leadership encompasses leaves this category open to a wide number of responses.

The other qualities Kisumu chose were delegating staff, hardworking, and being disciplined; all traits that include setting an example for staff members about what should be expected within the schools. All qualities that were requested could be claimed to be in response to the difficulties that they experienced with the staff or the troubles with the students. While some of the comments made by staff could be seen as wanting somewhat of a transformational leader, delegating staff and providing discipline refer more to maintaining control. It is interesting to point out that the current principal of Kisumu would be considered a transformational leader by the actions that were observed and

accounts that were told. Her strong vision for the school, motivation, and inspiration has achieved significant results in terms of improving the academics within the school; yet, the participants did not list these as traits that they would want if they were able to assist in choosing a new principal.

Participants at Amoni, it seemed, wanted someone who was thinking of the future and working towards school progress. The qualities that they listed involved having plans for the future of the school, and doing things for the benefit of the students as well as having a good working relationship with the staff. This school did not have the same staff or student problems as Kisumu, and it appears that they had a different set of expectations for the principal. It seems that the two schools wanted very different things in terms of future principal qualities perhaps in regards to the very different school environments and priorities that they each have.

Disadvantages of Having a Female Principal

When comparing Kisumu and Amoni, it was shown that one school could see a trait as a disadvantage while another school considered that same characteristic an advantage. Moswen (T), Mpho (HOD), Tebogo (HOD), and Tau (DP) responded that women could be too soft or emotional. Yet, at Amoni, teachers praised their principals' emotional sensitivity and flexibility towards the staff. They claimed that showing emotions made the principal appear motherly; changing the atmosphere of the school and making those in it feel appreciated.

One issue that came up between the two schools was the level of strictness that was either disliked or desired by the participants. An important contributing factor to this was how the staff behaved and viewed the staff meetings that could have influenced the

perceptions of the principal. At Kisumu, participants referred to staff meetings as a hectic experience. Teachers would speak in different languages or bring up issues that were not on the agenda. Trying to satisfy everyone, the principal allowed all staff members time to speak, leading to some participants claiming she was too soft, especially with regards to how she ran these meetings.

At Amoni, the principal acted in a similar manner but received different reactions from staff members. At these meetings, everyone was allowed to speak, giving them a chance to share any difficulties they were experiencing or students that they needed help with. These participants claimed that this contributed to having staff meetings be positive experiences, where they felt like they were a team.

These principals, in a sense, were doing similar things, but were perceived quite differently at each school. Some staff members appreciated the principal's actions, while some found fault in them and labeled it as a disadvantage of female principals.

The participants also heavily influenced the idea of women either being too strict or not strict enough, and whether that was viewed positively or negatively. During the course of the unstructured and semi-structured interviews, when I talked to some teachers at Kisumu, they mentioned that the principal was not strict enough. Many teachers would leave school early and would not return despite the principal's order to do so. Some teachers would report this as not being strict enough, but these were the teachers who were already in their classes.

However, these teacher comments must be measured carefully for two important reasons. Firstly, the principal struggled with having to face the very strong South African teacher's union while attempting to keep the teachers present in the classroom. Secondly,

the teachers that claimed she was too strict were some of the participants who decided to take an entire week off school and later mentioned to me, once I was not recording, that they were tired; therefore, they decided to not come and teach. These participants might have perceived her actions as too strict as the principal would not have allowed this and would have had to speak with them when they returned, which would probably cause some tension between them. Clearly, teachers' perceptions in the area of their belief that the principal was either "too strict" or "not strict enough" varied. As a researcher, one has to understand the contexts and be mindful of the dilemmas the principal faces with reference to the teacher's union.

At Amoni, many teachers praised the principal for being strict. Once they spoke with me, while not being recorded, the participants then mentioned that they believed the principal was occasionally too strict with requiring staff members to participate in several extracurricular activities. One even mentioned that she had to take medication to help her deal with her high stress levels caused by this.

CHAPTER FIVE: SUMMARY, DISCUSSION, AND IMPLICATIONS

The purpose of this study was to inquire into 10 secondary school educators' perceptions of female principals' effectiveness in two South African schools. Research examined what high school teachers perceived to be the challenges and benefits associated with having a female principal as well as what was considered to be the most desirable qualities in a leader. Finally, this study wanted to examine the role that race and gender played in how the participants responded to questions.

This chapter provides a summary of the study, including the different methods of data collection that were used. Next, a discussion is provided of the five major themes that emerged from the findings presented in the previous chapter. This chapter concludes by discussing implications for practice, making recommendations for future research, as well as addressing the limitations of this study.

Summary of the Study

This study was carried out in Masawana, in the Luwanada Province in South Africa. Two diverse schools were selected to partake in the study, with five participants from each school being involved. At each school, a deputy principal, teachers, and department heads were interviewed and observed.

Three types of data were collected to triangulate the data to ensure credibility of data. Field notes were taken during participant observation of 10 classrooms as well as staff rooms in both schools, noting the interactions of the staff. Participant observation allowed the researcher to participate in classroom discussions and staff meetings, but I also observed the staff members. These observations took place for 3 days at Kisumu School and 2 days at Amoni before the interviews began, and 12 days at Kisumu and 3

days Amoni during the time semi-structured interviews were conducted. Following the participant observations, unstructured discussions took place with the participants and other teachers at both schools. Initially, the conversations were short and directed around the questions that arose during the observational phase. Clarification questions also centered around the different school routines. Once a level of trust was gained, these discussions became much longer and began to provide a deeper understanding of the school environment. Since there was only a short period of observational time, and the unstructured interviews could not be recorded or transcribed, they were only used to contextualize the school and provide information about the participants. For the data analysis, they offered some insights that either confirmed or contradicted what the participants said. Finally, semi-structured interviews were used to collect the majority of the data.

Once the data were collected, the interviews were transcribed and coded for using Glaser's three stages of analysis (Walker & Myrick, 2006). Themes emerged around the core topic: male and female perceptions of female leaders in South Africa.

Discussion

This section situates the research findings of this study in the literature. This discussion is organized according to the themes that emerged from the data. The themes are (a) desired principal qualities, (b) advantages of having a female principal, (c) disadvantages of having a female principal, (d) transformational leadership and (e) intersectionality.

Desired Principal Qualities

With respect to the stereotypical masculine or feminine qualities that participants

wanted in a principal, the results of this study conflicted with previous research. Past research indicated there was a preference for male leaders and for masculine qualities (Eagly et al., 1995; Peters et al., 2004; Stelter, 2002). Additionally, literature suggests that women were more accepting of women in leadership positions (Eagly, 2007).

Data from this study revealed that two participants from Kisumu identified stereotypically masculine qualities, like maintaining discipline, as a desirable quality of a new principal. This preference for masculine leadership qualities was found by Reed and Evans (2008), who also noted that Black female principals had a harder time than men in being accepted since they occupied two minority statuses: being Black and a female. Reed and Evans noted that in South Africa, although Black people are the majority race, until recently, Whites held most positions of power within the country. Therefore, Reed and Evans argued that people who are Blacks would be considered to be of the minority group due to their lack of authority and power as a race. Since the participants interviewed all grew up in the pre-Apartheid era, this would strongly influence their opinions and perceptions related to Black females in power (Reed & Evans, 2008).

When asked about the qualities desired in a new principal, the staff at Amoni listed several qualities and provided less stereotypical feminine traits than Kisumu (e.g., nurturing or motherly). This supports Appelbaum et al.'s (2003) claim that when a staff is composed primarily of women, males tend to ignore the gender of the principal and instead judge them on the basis of their actual abilities. This was the case of the two male participants, Daniel (T) and David (T). The participants at Amoni may have been stating that they wanted the same qualities in principals that they saw in their current principal. The remaining participants provided responses that varied greatly but all provided

specific examples of the benefits of female principals.

Several possible explanations exist for the findings of this study that contradict previous research on leadership. The participants at the two schools that were interviewed both had female principals who had occupied that position for many years. Perhaps, the participants had become accustomed to the female leadership style. Also, some participants had never worked with a male principal and so they had no comparison. In some cases, the participants could have answered the questions with reference to the qualities they observed in their current principal on a daily basis.

Regardless of the differences in the qualities that participants identified, all participants wanted a principal who made students a priority. Participants at Kisumu stated a preference for a principal who was hardworking, disciplined, and a role model for staff. Participants also noted that they wanted a principal who could create an environment that is conducive to student learning, and someone who would get their peers back into the classroom and focused on teaching. This was in response to their frustration at their current situation, where teacher truancy was a problem that sometimes affected the quality of education.

At Amoni, the participants did not experience the same type of problems as Kisumu, yet the desired principal qualities identified also revolved around creating a better environment for students. Participants wanted a principal who was a visionary, who would do anything to benefit students, and who constantly wanted to implement new ideas. The staff in both of these schools wanted a principal who has qualities that foster a positive learning environment.

Benefits of Having a Female Principal

When examining the benefits of having female leaders, research is contradictory. Some research reveals no real difference between men and women, and some research suggests that women leaders use a more transformational style and are, therefore, better leaders (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Coleman, 2003; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005; Oplatka, 2006; Stelter, 2002). Still other research suggests that even when women leaders are viewed as less effective (Eagly, 2007).

In this study, when participants were asked to discuss the benefits of having a female principal, several categories of responses emerged. Even though some gender neutral characteristics, like perseverance or dedication, were identified, many of the characteristics were things that were stereotypically associated with female leaders, such as empowerment, care and empathy, and understanding (Eagly, 2007; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005).

According to Appelbaum et al. (2003) some of the stereotypically feminine characteristics, such as caring and empathy, provide an advantage for female leaders (Appelbaum et al., 2003). With respect to considering other people's emotions and being understanding towards staff members, women are consistently rated higher than males (Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). These same characteristics were identified as being appreciated by staff at both schools. At Kisumu, women were perceived as more understanding and focused on the needs of the staff members than men. Participants at Amoni also reported that they valued the actions that demonstrated to the staff the principal's appreciation for their hard work, as well as her understanding attitudes about problems at home. According to Appelbaum et al. and Eagly (2007), these traits were

associated with being a transformational leader, specifically individualized consideration that preferred leaders demonstrate, especially within schools.

According to Lipinska-Grobelny and Wasiak (2010), most women in leadership positions are considered to be androgynous (48.3%). Androgynous female leaders reported higher job satisfaction than female leaders who demonstrated stereotypically female traits. Androgynous leadership is correlated with motivating high work performance and fostering positive relationships at work. In this study, the participants preferred female leaders, which contradicted research that found a preference for androgynous leadership (Appelbaum et al., 2003; Coleman, 2003; Lipinska-Grobelny & Wasiak, 2010; Madsen, 2006).

However, there was a difference in how participants in the two schools responded. Participants at Amoni identified many more advantages of female leaders than at Kisumu. This supports Eagly's (2007) research that suggests that women leaders in environments where the staff is composed primarily of women, staff members rate women leaders as more effective. When there are a large number of male staff members, the overall rating of effectiveness of female leaders decline (Eagly, 2007).

In this study, one benefit of a female principal is maternalism. In Western countries, this quality is typically considered as a negative (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009). According to Carlin and Winfrey (2009), people would think of a female leader who was labeled motherly as overly emotional, which Tebogo (HOD), Moswen (T), Mpho (HOD), and Tau (DP) stated as a disadvantage of female principals. Being labeled as motherly also conjures up images of being scolded, which would make people view female leaders in a negative way (Carlin & Winfrey, 2009).

The literature suggests that there is a difference in how cultures view leaders who are classified as motherly. In Black communities the role of the “other mother” is associated with community involvement and with the empowerment of others (Mogadime, 1998b). The women who take on leadership positions are often well-respected and work hard to promote personal accountability (Collins, 1991 as cited in Mogadime 1998a) These other mothers work on behalf of the Black community and often advocate for higher standards of education for the children in their schools (Ladson-Billings, 2009). Ladson-Billings found that Black parents typically prefer Black teachers, as they are often more understanding of the situations that their children are exposed to, and they are more supportive of students. According to Moswen (T), Black teachers were more understanding of the situation that the township kids came from. However, this was not true of the Amoni staff who confided in the unstructured conversations that the Black parents preferred to have mostly White teachers at their schools. Part of the preference for White teachers could be explained by internalized racism, where people of African descent accept stereotypes, aspects of racism, and the beliefs created by White supremacy (Watts-Jones, 2002). Internalized racism produces negative attitudes and opinions about a person’s own ethnic group, and this can lead to the belief of their own inferiority (Williams & Williams-Morris, 2000). According to Mason (1990), when a person sees his/her own group this way, he/she will develop a preference for a different group that he/she considers is more highly valued. Mori (2007) argues that in South Africa, Coloured people prefer leaders who were White. It can be theorized that at Amoni, parents of Black students could have a preference for a White teacher because of internalized racism. Deanne (DP) alluded to this when she stated during the school tour

that parents and students had negative attitudes to the Black teacher on staff, and often requested to have their children moved to a class with a White teacher.

Disadvantages of a Female Principal

One of the biggest reoccurring themes in the data was that female principals were being undermined. In Coleman's (2003) survey of 882 female and male principals, over two thirds of female principals noted that they experienced sexist reactions when they were promoted to the position. Eagly (2007) stated that these sexist reactions would be more commonly found among men that still embraced traditional gender roles. This would help to explain why the principal at Kisumu was frequently undermined. As Moswen (T) explained, "It's a Black thing." Many staff members, both in the unstructured discussions and in the semi-structured interviews noted that undermining women is ingrained in the culture, that a man's word is final. Participants were used to seeing male leaders, and they stated that having a female in that role made them uncomfortable. Appelbaum et al. (2003) found that when women form less than 25% of the management level, they are at the highest risk of negative stereotypes and reactions. This was the case at Kisumu.

Kisumu is not unique in this situation. In Lumby and Azaola's (2011) study of South African female principals, all participants had experienced some sort of negative response to their gender. Changing the attitude and perception of a culture takes extensive education and several generations to accomplish. With Apartheid and the push for equal opportunities occurring less than 2 decades ago, sufficient time may not have passed for a change in attitudes. The actions of staff members at Kisumu may have reflected traditional cultural values.

It was apparent that the qualities that were highly regarded in males were often frowned upon in women. Research suggests such qualities as being hard working and being strict, are respected in male leaders, but not female ones (Heilman, 2001). At Kisumu, when the participants indicated a preference for a principal who is hard working and able to delegate to staff, they viewed them as positive qualities. They even noted how they liked that about their previous male principal. Yet, they noted that their current female principal was too strict, which they did not like. According to Heilman, successful women leaders were often described in negative ways when they demonstrate such characteristics.

Some participants at both schools did not address the disadvantage of female leaders, but instead talked about the benefits of male leaders. The research on this is divided. Some research acknowledges that males are different, more transactional and authoritative (Collard, 2001; Lee et al. 1993; Littrell & Nkomo, 2005). While the literature suggests that male leaders are not as effective as transformational leaders, it also notes that some people appreciate this style of leadership because it gives clear-cut explanations of what is expected.

More recently, researchers have claimed that the differences between genders is starting to fade as leaders adopt more masculine and feminine traits, giving them an androgynous leadership style (Coleman, 2003; Lipinska-Grobelny & Wasiak, 2010; Shum & Cheng, 1996; Suyemoto, & Ballou, 2007). According to Coleman (2003), the success of transformational leaders has encouraged more men to adopt feminine characteristics. Male leaders are starting to become more collaborative and people oriented, characteristics typically attributed to women. Therefore, according to the more

recent research, the preference for male traits should slowly become less prominent. Perhaps the preference for male leaders at both schools will change over time.

There was a stronger focus by participants at Kisumu than at Amoni on the disadvantages of female leaders. At Amoni, participants almost avoided the question, or answered in a way that still showed female leaders in a positive light. They did not really provide a view on the disadvantages of female leaders. It may be that the participants at Amoni had uncovered what my research was about and were giving me answers that either they thought I wanted or that reflected a social desirability bias.

Transformational Leadership

Transformational leadership emerged as a theme when participants were asked about the qualities that they desired in a future principal. When examining the answers provided, the fact that people unanimously wanted a leader who was transformational was not surprising. Previous research had shown that a transformational leadership style is the most effective and desired as it promotes team work while giving each individual a chance to use his/her strengths in all areas of the school (Dvir et al., 2002; Eagly, 2007; Fullan, 2002; Griffith, 2004; Lewthawaite, 1992; Marks & Printy, 2003). A preference for a transformational leadership style is also noted in the literature of a range of countries, (e.g., Australia, Zimbabwe, and India, and cultures, such as the Black and White subcultures in South Africa, and both the French and English populations in Canada; Den Hartog, House, Hanges, Dorfman, & Ruiz-Qintanilla, 1999; Muenjohn & Armstrong, 2007).

In this study, it was evident that participants in both schools wanted a leader they could trust and respect, qualities that are associated with being a transformational leader

(Arnold, Barling, & Kelloway, 2001; The transformational leadership report, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, 2003). Despite the limited complaints about the principals being too demanding (Amoni and Kisumu) or having meetings that were too hectic (Kisumu), it was evident that the participants trusted and respected their principal. Many participants and other staff members at Kisumu noted the principal's effort in significantly improving the students' grades and pass rates as well as to helping to create student clubs that have won awards and scholarships for their excellence.

The staff at Amoni all praised the principal for motivating female students to break gender barriers in their career ambitions and to always do their best. These participants trusted the principal enough to allow her to continue with her vision for the school, feeling confident that she would be successful in creating a positive change. Due to the transformations that had been realized at both schools, the staff appeared to have immense respect for the female principals as leaders in that sense. This further supports the idea that participants value a transformational leader, someone who they can hold in high regard as well as trust to constantly strive towards improving the school (Arnold et al., 2001; The transformational leadership report, 2007; Tschannen-Moran, 2003).

Of the four categories of transformational leadership, the most participants at both schools described qualities that were related to idealized influence. According to Hall et al. (2002), this quality represents a leader who is charismatic, is a moral leader, and is considered to be a role model. All participants seemed to want someone who would motivate the staff members to do "the right thing" and follow the leader's example. Idealized influence is an essential quality since leaders need followers who want to imitate their actions, to ensure their vision for the school can be realized (Atkinson &

Pilgreen, 2011). Since leaders encourage staff members to be independent and take on more responsibility, and thus experience higher levels of work engagement (Atkinson & Pilgreen, 2011; Harrison, 2011).

Participants at Kisumu stated that a role model was necessary to reduce ongoing problems between staff members. Participants at Amoni noted that they required a role model to set an example for the students. Yet, participants did not indicate a desire for a leader who encouraged them to take on more responsibilities or become more independent. At Kisumu, the participants appeared content to be handed documents that outlined what to teach, and they took on few additional responsibilities within the school. At Amoni, according to Danielle (HOD) staff complained behind the principal's back about having to do extra work.

The other category that participants at both schools wanted was a leader who offered individualized consideration to staff. Avolio and Bass (1995) linked individualized consideration to a leader who is able to take on the role of a guidance counselor. A leader who demonstrates individualized consideration, on a group level, helps to build trust and respect between staff members, which is essential for working as a team to improving the school (Avolio & Bass, 1995). Such a leader ensures that each individual gets what he or she needs, which is not necessarily the same thing for everyone. Avolio and Bass (1995) highlight the importance of the needs of the school and the needs of the individual (Avolio & Bass, 1995).

At both Kisumu and Amoni, the balance seemed to be a bit more towards the school, or at least the participants perceived it that way. Participants at Kisumu claimed that the principal was too strict, and that they were sometimes unable to approach her.

While participants at Amoni felt that they could talk to their principal, they also indicated in the unstructured discussions that she overworked them, putting the students' needs first. The data suggests that the participants at both schools selected this quality as something they felt they wanted to see more of.

Characteristics of transformational leadership reflect the values of Ubuntu, or other mothering (Booyesen & van Wyk, 2008; Erasmus & Schenk, 2008). The traditional African style of leadership promotes group work as well as helping others succeed by empowering people in the community and the school (Mogadime et al., 2010). Ubuntu leaders work towards creating an atmosphere that supports staff members in reaching their full potential (Booyesen & van Wyk, 2008; Erasmus & Schenk, 2008). Like the strong preference for transformational leadership that the literature suggests many people hold, Ubuntu is regarded positively in African communities. Consequently, it is not surprising that participants expressed a desire for leaders who possess the Ubuntu and transformational qualities (Booyesen & van Wyk, 2008).

While listening to the stories that came up during interviews, it became clear that the teachers at both schools had grown accustomed to working in an empowering and transformational environment. Some interviewees spoke of instances where the female principal encouraged both teachers and students to go beyond expectations and excel in many different ways. After many positive examples of the benefits of female leaders were listed, it was easy to understand why the participants would want a leader who was able to maintain this atmosphere.

Transformational leadership requires transformational teachers (Anderson & Sherman, 2008). Both teachers and the principal must be willing to put in effort and

contribute their previous knowledge to develop innovative practices within the school. However, being a transformational teacher requires additional work and more time spent in the classroom (Gunter, 2001), things that many teachers at Kisumu and Amoni claimed that they did not want. It has been argued that while transformational leadership appears theoretically sound, the implications for practice include more work, stress, and increased self-management, and in that sense may be undesirable for teachers (Timperley & Robinson, 2000).

According to Timperley and Robinson (2000) the ideals that transformational leadership support are often difficult to maintain in a school because they can lead to burnout. The positive qualities of transformational leadership combined with the exhaustion of becoming a transformational teacher, perhaps helps to explain the disconnects between the answers supplied in the formal interviews with what was reported during the unstructured discussions and observations.

Intersectionality

Participants' responses included anecdotes that showed glimpses into their unique identities. They referred back to their upbringing, their teaching experience, and even their young age as reasons why they liked having female principals. Since past studies used participants who were quite different than those in this study and were done in different contexts, that may have contributed to the discrepancy between the data and the literature (Collard, 2001; Lee et al., 1993; Peters et al., 2004).

The fact that participants in this study could not be neatly divided into simple categories like male/female or Black/White, may reflect the complex social structure in South Africa. Since the various dimensions of a person's identity are intertwined, it is

difficult to separate them into distinct categories. The participants referred to their own backgrounds throughout the interviews, thus providing insight on where their views and opinions may have come from. Recognizing that people who are part of the same group, like men, will not necessarily have the same opinions as all other members of the group was important in determining why the results of the study varied substantially from other research. Three males in this study highlighted this point. Tau (DP) from Kisumu indicated that he was raised to believe that men are supposed to be leaders, and that he had a hard time adapting to having a female principal. Moswen (T) stated that he had been raised in a single parent home, and since only experienced a mother who made decisions, he felt comfortable around female leaders. Daniel (T), from Amoni, noted that he witnessed his mother being in charge more often than his father and, as a result, he felt more comfortable with having a women lead his school. These participants are all male yet, due to the disparity in backgrounds, have very different viewpoints.

Implications for Practice

This study suggests that a transformational leadership style should be promoted in schools as participants appreciate the trust and respect that is created between leader and follower. It is also preferred because transformational leaders are more likely to recognize the uniqueness of their staff and to consider the personal situations that might affect their work. This study also suggests that female principals need to maintain a balance between traditionally labelled masculine and feminine traits to gain more positive perceptions of their ability, although they must maintain stereotypical abilities because staff members appreciate the nurturing and caring environment that is associated with women. The study also suggests that female principals should continue to use

individualized consideration and idealized influence, as these are the two qualities of transformational leadership that the participants in this study felt were most important. Also, to increase these positive perceptions of leaders, more women should be promoted into management positions. Overall, this study suggests that principals need to continue to work towards creating the best learning environment possible for students, as this is what can be assumed from the participants' responses in this study. This might mean having to deal with some staff issues first, but, ultimately, the participants in this study wanted to continue working towards improving the educational experience of their students.

Implications for Further Research

Since Apartheid, there has been a comprehensive effort to work towards gender equality in South Africa (Bathembu, 2010; Garson, n.d). Future research could examine how different generations perceive women in leadership positions differently. This would increase our understanding of the extent to which gendered views remain rooted in a culture, or if they are adapting to changes that are occurring in their society.

Since this study was only done in one small city in South Africa, it would be interesting to assess the perspectives of teachers in rural and urban areas around the country. Additionally, since there are many different groups of people in South Africa, it would be useful to look at how their answers differ according to their backgrounds.

Future research could also focus on how to change the attitudes of staff in schools to help them become more open and respectful of female leaders. Since many of the participants listed desirable leadership qualities that they saw in their own principal, more research needs to be done on the unique characteristics of female leaders. This research

focused on high school teachers. A similar study could focus on elementary principals in South Africa. Future research could focus on female principals in other emerging economies such as India or China. This impacts of globalization may also warrant investigation.

As this study outlined, researchers are claiming that men and women are beginning to take on more androgynous leadership perspectives. Since participants in this study gave many stereotypical benefits of principals, future research could investigate how feminine and androgynous principals compare. It would also be useful to compare the geographical region, and cultures to better understand how perceptions of female leaders differ.

One of the limitations in this study was that, ultimately, the principals, deputy principals, and head of departments got to choose who was interviewed. Since every school would want to be shown in the best light possible, participants may not have been representative of the teachers at the school. Judging from what was said in the interviews when compared to the previous studies, it appeared that the hardest working and most positive teachers at the school were chosen for me to work with. In the future, random sampling should be done to ensure that there were fewer biases in the participants who were chosen.

One of the most difficult limitations of this study was understanding that the answers some participants were giving me were contradictory. In both schools, the participants gave me information that directly negated what other staff members had told me or what I had seen earlier in my observations. The social desirability effect, or wanting to give answers that showed the school and staff members in the best light, had a

strong effect on the answers they had given. Future research could overcome this by using multiple interviews and spending longer periods of time in the school, to make the participants feel more able to open up to the researcher about the subject area.

Researcher Reflections

Though the participants were given probes to reveal more information, some of the answers that were given did not go deep enough to provide a clear understanding of a person's views and opinions. I think if I had pushed them to expand a bit more on their answers or let them have more time to think about what they wanted to say, richer descriptions would have emerged. At Kisumu, I think this difficulty was in part due to the language barrier that was experienced. For the participants there, English was their second or third language. Also, as I am from a different country, I know that I have an accent that was hard for some participants to understand.

One of the biggest limitations in this study was that I was unable to use the observations and unstructured discussions in the way that I had intended. The information collected was not focused or detailed enough, which meant that it did not provide as much additional information as I would have liked. If more observation time were had as well as longer periods to reflect on the unstructured discussions, the data collected would have been more useful.

One of the limitations at Amoni was that the participants were more aware of the topic of my research. The participants asked a lot of questions about the study, and while they were not told about the specific topic, they could have determined it from asking questions or talking to their peers who had already been interviewed. I feel that their responses might have been influenced by the desire to show their school in the best light.

At Kisumu, I had trouble interviewing teachers in the subjects that I wanted. The teachers I was assigned to were often not present, and I bounced around between classrooms quite a bit.

In any further studies, it would be helpful to have each participant fill out a form that addressed his/her personal background. This would include educational experiences, some aspects of their home life, and information about their culture or ethnicity. When analyzing the intersectionality part of this study, it was difficult to draw any inferences about the research without a lot of information about the participants.

Finally, as mentioned by Guba and Lincoln (1985, as cited in Cope, 2005), this research only revealed a “slice of life.” All information and perceptions from the participants could be changed in an instance as they only represent a specific point in that person’s life. The opinions and perspectives of the participants are also highly influenced by their experiences and the situation that they are currently in; therefore, their answers could have reflected any events that happened to them recently.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to provide insight into understanding how men and women perceived female principals in South Africa. The data were divided into results of this study outlined five different themes that influenced the perceptions of female principals. These categories included: (a) desired principal qualities, (b) advantages of having a female principal, (c) disadvantages of having a female principal, (d) transformational leadership, and (e) intersectionality. Each theme was broken down into smaller metathemes that better explained the participants’ answers.

Female leaders in South Africa continued to experience difficulties in acquiring

the respect and the perceived effectiveness that males receive. Years of stereotypes ingrained in cultures has led some people to believe that there are disadvantages of having female principals or that males do a better job. However, this research indicated there is change occurring as many participants were able to mention the benefits of women or claimed that they wanted feminine qualities in a leader. These changes and differences in perspectives were influenced by a person's intersectionality. Regardless of the desired gender, it was evident that all participants want someone who is a transformational leader in their school.

The data suggested that the benefits of having a female principal included gender neutral qualities such as perseverance and dedication as well as stereotypical feminine qualities such as empowerment, caring, and being empathetic. Staff members at both schools appreciated the welcoming and understanding environment that female principals provided.

The data also suggested that one of the most significant disadvantages of having a female principal was the undermining from the staff members. Participants at both schools mentioned things that staff members did that went against the principal's authority and these actions were also observed during the research period.

Finally, the desired qualities wanted in a new principal that were supplied by participants indicated a strong preference for a transformational leader. Although it was shown that a principal with a strong vision for the school was greatly appreciated, the data implied that the strongest preferences were for a leader with idealized influence and individual consideration. Participants wanted someone who was a role model for the staff and students and would consider each teacher's needs.

While this research just started to skim the surface of this topic, it did contribute to the body of research on perceptions of female leadership. The information provided by this study will continue to help in South Africa's quest to increase equality between the genders by shedding light on how women are perceived.

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Appendix A

Major Studies Used in the Literature Review

Author	Title	Year	Theme of Research
Appelbaum, Audet, & Miller	Gender and leadership? Leadership and gender? A journey through the landscape of theories	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Difference between male and female leadership style and whether these differences were caused by perception or reality • Effectiveness of female leaders • How socialization and gender role effect leadership
Coleman	Gender and leadership style: The self-perceptions of secondary headteachers	2003	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Female leadership • Men taking on feminine qualities as principals • Adoption of more transformational leadership/qualities
Eagly	Female leadership advantage and disadvantage: Resolving the contradictions	2007	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outline of the benefits and disadvantages of different types of leadership • Situations where women are advantaged/disadvantaged in leadership roles
Hall, Johnson, Wysocki, & Kepner	Transformational leadership: The transformation of managers and associates	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discusses the four different types of transformational leadership • Idealized influence, intellectual stimulation, individualized consideration, and inspirational motivation
Heilman	Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder	2001	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gender bias in evaluations • Descriptive and prescriptive stereotypes • Women who display masculine traits are rated less favourably

Hilton & von Hippel	Stereotypes	1996	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The development of stereotypes and schemes • How people maintain or change stereotypes they have about other people • The application of stereotypes to different people
Lipinska-Grobelny & Wasiak	Job satisfaction and gender identity of women managers and non-managers	2010	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Job satisfaction of female managers in relation to their gender role orientation • Many managers display masculine/androgynous personality types
Littrell & Nkomo	Gender and race differences in leader behaviour preferences in South Africa	2005	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership preference of White and Black women in South Africa • Difference in leadership styles of women of different races
Lumby & Azaola	Women principals in small schools in South Africa	2011	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive and negative characteristics of female principals • Principal's experiences and roles (including curriculum)
Oplatka	The principalship in developing countries: context, characteristics and reality	2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unsettling gender • Examining the difference between principals in developing and Western countries • Primary role for the principal • Lack of instructional leadership in some instances

Oplatka	Women in educational administration within developing countries: Towards a new international research agenda	2006	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Barriers women experience when becoming a principal in a developing country (Gender, cultural, discrimination) • Female principal experiences • Female principal leadership style
Peters, Kinsey, & Malloy	Gender and leadership perceptions among African Americans	2004	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Judgments of female and male leaders by university students • Found there to be more of a consensus when rating male leaders • Men rated women leaders lowest • Attributed to the stereotype that men lead and women follow
Shields	Gender: An intersectionality perspective	2008	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Summary of some contributions towards the field of intersectionality • Issues with intersectionality in research • How individuals experience intersectionality
Stelter	Gender differences in leadership: Current Social Issues and Future Organizational Implications	2002	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Examines gender differences from many different theories

Appendix B

Interview Questions (Adapted from Professor Petro Du Preez):

1. How many years have you been teaching?
2. What do you teach?
3. In how many schools have you taught?
4. Tell me about your experiences with the principal? Vice-principal?

Probe questions:

- Have you ever asked for assistance with lesson plans? Curriculum development?
 - Do you meet with your principal to discuss your class?
5. Are there other staff members who act as leaders in the school? Who are they?
 6. Have you ever challenged, changed, or conformed to the school principal or other leaders in the school?
 7. What gifts do female principals bring to the profession?

Probe:

- Have you ever worked under a male principal? How does that compare?
8. What do you see as the primary role for a principal? What qualities do you think they should have?
 9. What role do you think that principals should have in curriculum implementation?
How do you expect your principal to assist you?
 10. Do you feel you have any role to play with the curriculum development on a national level? What about in your own classroom?

11. Do you think that your principal should have a role in the national curriculum? In your own classroom?
12. How does what your principal do influence what goes on in the classroom?
13. How do you deal with the problems that students face on a daily basis (ex: students coming to school hungry)? How do they impact your school?
14. What does it mean to be a school leader in this particular community?

Probe:

- What can the school do to further meet the student's needs?

15. What professional development programs do you participate in? Which ones would you like to be made available to assist you in the future?

For the Head of Departments:

1. What do you do when a teacher is not performing as well as you think is necessary?

For the Vice Principal:

1. What kind of concerns is brought to your attention?
2. What do you see as your role as opposed to the principals?
3. Do you think teachers feel more comfortable talking to you? Why or why not?

Appendix C

Pseudonyms

To ensure confidentiality for all participants involved, pseudonyms were used for the province, city, schools, and participants in this study.

Participants' Pseudonyms

Kisumu (School 1):

Deputy Principal (BM) – Tau

History HOD (BM) – Tebogo

Economics HOD (BF) – Mpho

English Teacher (BM) – Moswen

Life Orientation Teacher (BF) - Kabo

Amoni (School 2):

English Teacher (WM) – Daniel

Math HOD (WF) – Danielle

Math Teacher (WF) – Darcy

Math Teacher (WM) – David

Deputy Principal (WF) - Deanne

Appendix D

Themes and Metathemes

Theme	Metatheme
Benefits of Having a Female Principal	Considerate of other's feelings Female gender in general provides a benefit Motherly Understanding Opportunities for empowerment through learning Perseverance
Disadvantages of a Female Principal	Undermining authority Mixed sex schools Preference for masculine qualities Struggle with authority in majority male populations
Desired Principal Qualities	Visionary Hardworking A good relationship with staff Disciplined Delegation of responsibilities/duties to staff Transformational leader
Transformational Leadership	Inspirations motivation Intellectual stimulation Individualized consideration Idealized influence