

WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS IN MASERU HIGH SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed at investigating perceptions about women in management positions in the Lesotho schooling system in Maseru. The perceptions of three categories of people were investigated: women in positions of management, their female subordinates and their male subordinates. The perceptions of women in management positions were in terms of their management styles, their relationship with their subordinates, discrimination and their dual roles of family and career. The perceptions of the subordinates, both male and female, about their women principals were in terms of their management styles and their relationship with them, as staff.

Three methods of data collection were employed: interviews, questionnaires and observation. Data from women principals were collected in the form of career history interviews, while data from both male and female subordinates were collected through questionnaires. Both the principals and their staff were observed in staff meetings.

The study discovered that there is no distinct style of management followed by women, as this depends on the character of an individual and on the management situation. It also revealed that as far as the relationship between women principals and their subordinates is concerned, women principals get most of their support from male staff as opposed to female staff. It was also discovered that even though sometimes their subordinates doubt their potential as principals, they are not discriminated against. Their dual roles of family and work do not appear to have any negative impact on their job. One reason is that the job itself requires time management skills. While these findings confirm some of aspects of similar research conducted in other parts of the world, they challenge other aspects of international research. Since the study was limited to Maseru, its findings cannot be generalised to the rest of Lesotho.

KEY WORDS

Gender and management, educational management, women and management, Lesotho education, school principals.

DECLARATION

I DECLARE THAT THIS RESEARCH REPORT IS MY OWN, UNAIDED WORK. IT IS BEING SUBMITTED FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION AT THE UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG. IT HAS NOT BEEN SUBMITTED BEFORE FOR ANY DEGREE OR EXAMINATION IN ANY OTHER UNIVERSITY.



SIGNATURE

09-04-1989

DATE

In memory of my late grandmother

M'e Mamoea Alice Shale

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Despite the world's outcry for gender equality, women are still under-represented in managerial positions and subjected to various forms of discrimination at work (Shakeshaft, 1989). Various studies have been made on why women are under-represented in managerial positions. The literature has also shown how the few who have managed to go through this glass ceiling perceive themselves and how they are perceived by others in terms of their styles of management and their relationship with their colleagues both male and female. But a lot of this research is internationally based. This project addresses similar issues in relation to women in Lesotho, in particular women principals.

There is a lot of controversy as to whether female managers use the same style of management or they manage more or less like men commonly do. Shakeshaft (1989), Restine (1993) and Adler et al (1993), argue that female managers have a common style of management characterised by such qualities as collaboration, sensitivity, politeness, participative decision making, which reflect female character traits. Conversely, other researchers such as Genovese (1993), Koziara, Moskow and Tanner (1987) argue that there is no difference in terms of leadership styles between men and women. Dipboye (1987:23) also contends that "unlike unmanagerial women, managerial women's traits deviate markedly from those of typical women". He further asserts that women tend to follow those masculine personality traits which are viewed as good characteristics for management.

I tend to agree with researchers who argue that there is no essential difference in terms of management styles between men and women. This is because women are not homogeneous, they are individuals who have been subjected to various influences through the type of education they received, the manner and environment in which they were brought up, and the influence of their society. These influences have shaped their characters and their way of perceiving the world differently, they are therefore likely to approach management differently. Besides, the management style one chooses is determined by among other things, the situation one finds oneself in, hence not one management style is used. There are times, whereby a manager even if

he/she uses a collegial style of management will be bound to come up with a final decision because members of staff are unable to reach consensus.

Management is viewed by the society as "a man's world", and therefore not suitable for women who are viewed by the society as weak, incompetent and unable to make decisions (Adler et al, 1993). Due to these myths and sex stereotypes, women who get into management positions, sometimes have to manage more or less like men who are believed to be more autocratic and very authoritarian, mainly because they have few or no female role models in management to look up to. Besides if they do not use the styles that are commonly associated with men, they are likely to be viewed as weak. They therefore have to prove that they can do " a man's job " just like him.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Despite many changes which have taken place in education in recent years, women in management positions are still a minority (Ozga, 1993). Due to the fact that female managers are few, they are subjected to pressures which are not experienced by their male counterparts (Ozga, 1993). Women professionals have to work twice as hard as their male colleagues in order to be respected and taken seriously. As a result of this biased treatment, women in management find themselves in a situation whereby they have to manage like men are perceived to do in order to be recognised and respected by their colleagues. Also women tend to be viewed by the society as weak, incompetent and lacking self-confidence, they are therefore not seen as good candidates for management positions. This investigation therefore has attempted to establish whether, from the point of view of women principals and their subordinates, women principals are capable of managing schools effectively.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In particular the purpose of this study is to establish the perceptions about women in management positions in Maseru (Lesotho) high schools. The study established the views about women managers, how despite the way they are viewed by the society, they view themselves as managers in a male dominated profession. The study also investigated whether women have a similar style of managing or not and the way they relate with both their male and female colleagues. Their dual

role of career and family, and the issue of whether or not they are subjected to any form of discrimination have also been looked into. The study has also investigated the perceptions of subordinates of female principals both male and females, whether or not they share the same views with their women principals about them (women principals) especially on the issues of management styles and their relationship with their staff.

HYPOTHESES

1. Women managers in Lesotho do not manage in a similar manner, that is, there is no specific and common way of management style followed by women such as women managers being collaborative, sympathetic, and sensitive .
2. Women in management positions in Lesotho are discriminated against by their colleagues .
3. Although Lesotho women have dual role of career and the family, this does not have any negative impact on their jobs.
4. Women managers in Lesotho in most cases do not get along well with their female subordinates.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. What are the perceptions about women in educational management positions in Lesotho in relation to the following questions:
 - a. Is there a female "female style management" ?
 - b. Do female managers experience any form of discrimination mainly because they are women ?
 - c. Do female managers cope with their dual role of family and work ?
 - d. What is the relationship between female principals and their staff both male and female?

RATIONALE

Although the principle of equality of women and men was recognised in both the UN Charter of 1945 and the UN declaration in 1948, women are still under-represented in managerial positions (UN economic commission for Africa, 1995). They are also still subjected to various forms of discrimination at work (Kotecha, 1994). This is because of societal perception of women as weak, emotional, unable to take decisions, and therefore incapable of such jobs as management. They are therefore compelled to adopt various means of dealing with their situation.

This study is therefore of importance as it has investigated whether or not Basotho women in managerial positions have the same perceptions and experiences as those exhibited by women internationally and whether they are perceived in the same way by their subordinates. There is not much written on women in management positions in Lesotho. Some international researchers who had an interest in Basotho women were only concerned with migrant labour and its effect on women who are left at home to look after the families (Makara, 1982). To the best of my knowledge, Makara (1982) is the only researcher so far who has researched on women in formal employment. This study will therefore contribute to the scarce research on working Basotho women, especially those in management positions.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

This study has focussed on high school female principals in the Maseru district in Lesotho. Their perceptions may well differ with those of other women in management positions in other sectors of the formal sector and other female principals in other districts as the context within which they operate is not the same. Due to the present political instability in the country, interviewees were not free to speak up their minds for fear of putting their jobs in jeopardy despite the fact that they were assured anonymity. Another problem was that the teachers who worked for these female principals were not free to say how they were being treated by their principals as they feared reprisals. Also some of the women who were principals towards the end of last year (1997) when statistics were taken were no longer there. But some of the principals refused to be interviewed by claiming to be very busy even after being told that the interview was not going to take much of their time.

OUTLINE OF THE REPORT STRUCTURE

This report is divided into four more chapters. Chapter two is the review of related literature. This chapter is divided into three parts, international perspectives, Southern-African perspectives and Lesotho perspectives. Chapter three explains methods used to collect data, while chapter four presents and analyses data. Chapter five, the final chapter, concludes the report and presents recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO

THE LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature review is divided thematically, into the international perspectives, the southern-African perspectives and Lesotho perspectives. The international perspective is divided into four parts namely management styles, women's relationship with their subordinates, discrimination and dual roles.

INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

Research shows that despite the world's outcry for gender equality, women are still under-represented in senior management positions (Shakeshaft, 1989). This state of affairs has been attributed to both internal and external barriers of women (Shakeshaft, 1989).

Women are believed to possess internal barriers that prevent them from advancing. Socialization and sex stereotyping are viewed as the guiding forces behind all their behaviour (Restine, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1989; Cameroon, 1988). This perspective originates from a psychological paradigm which "blames the victim for her lack of achievement" (Restine, 1993:17). It is also argued that their under-representation is the result of their external barriers - that is, an organisational structure shapes the behaviour of its members, so the "psychological make up of individuals lies not in the structure and operation of individuals" (Restine, 1993:17). But some researchers argue that internal barriers as an explanation for women's perceived lack of motivation is inadequate. Shakeshaft (1989:10) stresses that, "it is not the woman's psyche that is at fault and needs changing, but the social structure of society which is the root cause of inequality". To support Shakeshaft's point, Restine (1993:20) emphasizes that internal barriers are merely a "camouflage for deeper societal roadblocks to women's advancement". She further explains that by accepting the fact that inequalities towards women occur because of some lack of ability or action, we are forced not to look anywhere for an explanation or to question the concepts that conclude that the victim is at fault.

I also do not share the view that women possess internal barriers or weaknesses such as low self-image, lack of confidence, lack of motivation and inadequacy which prevent them from being

promoted as these weaknesses are not biological but derive from the way they have been socialized. The way women are perceived by their society is the barrier that prevents them from progressing. This is therefore an external barrier, not an internal one. The society views women as weak and incompetent and as a result cannot achieve certain tasks that can be achieved by men. Due to this myth, women are not given opportunity to gain experience of certain duties so that they can achieve self-confidence, as one can only have self-confidence in the job he/she has experience of. Also because women are viewed as weak they tend to believe that they are incompetent, inadequate and lack self-confidence, as a result confirm the stereotypes about them. Despite all these, there are few women who have managed to go through this glass ceiling to become principals and deputy principals of their schools.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

Generally, women in management positions are pleased with their jobs (Larwood and Wood, 1987). Across a wide spectrum of position categories female managers have a higher degree of job satisfaction than non-supervisory women (Larwood and Wood, 1987). Their satisfaction derives from the fact that management positions give them a better chance to use their talents, they solve problems, they have the opportunity to make their voices heard and to creatively contribute their ideas to the betterment of their organisations (Larwood and Wood, 1987).

Some women managers believe that by virtue of their nature they are in a position to do well in management (Adler et al, 1993). They perceive their style of management which is more participative, more involving and collegial as appropriate for modern management (Adler et al, 1993). Dix (1993:31) also argues that, "women favour less hierarchical structures of management". She further explains that they prefer to operate at work on a set of people centred ethics rather than totally business centred concern. On the same point, Marshall (1993) argues that female managers who act from values defined as more typically female are likely to base their management style on concern for people and work through co-operation. Restine (1993) too believes that women are more concerned with interpersonal relationships and they respond to collaborative responsive relationship as a team-member and are non-competitive. But many people do not view this style, which is believed to be used mostly by women, as appropriate in management, but as a weakness, as a sign that they are ineffective and cannot make decisions on

their own. For instance, one head teacher interviewed in the US described her frustrating attempts to manage openly and collaboratively, her predecessor had been conflict oriented and the staff were resistant to working in an alternative way. This is what she said:

How can I get people to work collaboratively? There is such resistance. Everybody, including some members of the management team seem caught up in the idea that these things don't work. I have been told that the troubles of the school lie at my door because I am too democratic, too soft.
(Adler et al, 1993:120)

Restine (1993), too, interviewed a senior woman in higher education who tried to come up with her own style of devolved management. But this senior woman did not meet the expectations of many men who felt uncomfortable as they were used to more hierarchical forms of management. They also regarded it as a weakness (Restine, 1993:40). The issue of whether or not there is a "female style of management" and whether it is appropriate or a weakness is very controversial. As Restine (1993:30) asserts, "leadership is somewhat like 'beauty or love' in the eyes of the beholder, difficult to explain but recognised because of its bewildering effect". I personally do not think women have a unique and common way of managing. I think this depends on the character of a person as an individual and the situation in which one finds oneself in. One cannot use one style of management throughout but styles of management are influenced by the situation one finds oneself in. There are many women managers who do not follow the characteristics of "typical females" but manage in a very autocratic manner in order to be accepted. Singleton (1995) also contends that while what one is expected to do is prescribed, how one actually plays the role will be distinguished by personal nuances although this in most cases leads to the problem of conflicting role expectations.

Some research claims that a feminine style rather than a usual masculine one is regarded as relevant and successful in today's world (Adler et al, 1993:120) as it is collaborative and emphasises participative decision-making. One senior manager interviewed also asserted that the style that is more suitable for modern management style is the one practised by women (Adler et al, 1993). In this argument, Adler et al is also supported by Kayafski (1990: 69) who shows that

By the year 2000, management as we know it will not exist, in its place will be a network of relationships, partnerships and alliances... the future will be essentially female in character ...A future where the characteristics and skills displayed by men are not only worthless but may even be harmful.

But this view is not shared by some researchers. For instance Grace (1995) argues that in the UK, there is a growing evidence to suggest that the characteristics which are associated with successful management of the education service are becoming associated with male rather than female traits. He argues that this is because of the increasing emphasis on technical and financial managerial skills and on budgeting controls which reinforce the tendency for men to be viewed as more suitable candidates for school management (Grace, 1995). He also quotes Golding and Chen's study on the "feminization of education leadership positions in the elementary and secondary schools of Israel" who observed that as the number of women in the principalship increased, "the political, professional and bureaucratic power structures within which these women had to operate continued to be male dominated" (Grace, 1995:181). This shows that even though women are believed to be developing effective leadership styles, demonstrating the humane and effective outcomes, sharing and being collaborative, these achievements receive little public or career related acknowledgment. So, although the style of management that is believed to be mostly followed by women conforms with the encouraged and modern forms of management, collegiality and participative decision-making, they are not recognised and appreciated. This may be because they are women and good management is believed to be a man's domain.

Although some researchers such as Shakeshaft (1989) and Adler et al (1993) argue that the so called female style of management is very effective, there are some who do not share this view. Larwood and Wood (1987) and Genovese (1993) contend that women are accused of turning themselves into men by imitating their styles of management. Forrest (1989) also comments that women managers face difficulties because men define what makes a good manager and do so in their own likeness. There is even a complaint by some female researchers that Margaret Thatcher in the UK was not a good female leader as she adopted men's techniques and that she turned herself into a surrogate man (Adler et al, 1993). Also it is argued that Indira Gandhi of India did not identify herself in gender terms, but seemed to operate as an "honorary man" always asserting that, "as a prime minister, I am not a woman but a human being" (Genovese, 1993:126). According to the Indian feminist journal, "no woman could be more alienated from her sex than her" (Genovese, 1993:126). This clearly therefore shows that even if women may differ from men in character and nature, when they get to managerial positions, they tend to follow the characteristics of most men in management positions.

On the same issue of female management styles, a study conducted in UK shows that one lecturer interviewed (Adler, 1993) asserted that she did not believe there is a male and female style of management. As far as she was concerned, women are able to bring into situations qualities they have developed from their own experiences because of the range of emotional ties they tend to have which are much more varied than the average man. Shakeshaft (1989) also points out that women often bring their "traditional elements from their traditional domain, the home into the workplace"(Shakeshaft,1989:20). Shakeshaft (1989), further argues that, the style of managing a home and caring for individual children may for some women be similar to the style of running for instance a school with hundreds of kids. Singleton (1995) on the other hand contends that the belief that men and women have different "natural abilities" means that whilst sharing the same title women can find themselves playing quite different roles from their male counterparts. Singleton (1995) quotes John who states that "one should be wary of the view that women deputy heads are mother figures particularly equipped by nature to dispense hospitality, aspirins and sticking plaster" (Singleton, 1995:76).

Singleton (1995) quotes Plato who contends that "there is no function in society which is peculiar to women as women or men as men, natural attributes are similarly distributed in each sex and it is natural to share all occupations"(Singleton, 1995:76). But in reality this is not always the case: jobs whilst not legally labelled "for men" or "for women" are still viewed by many people as just that. Women are in most cases are not accepted by the society when they perform certain roles and the same happens to men. Singleton (1995) quotes Kanter who reiterates that the woman manager's attempts to reach out and create her own image are continually pre-empted by her organisation members expectations of her and this leads to the problem of dealing with differing role expectations.

Grace (1995) shows that out of twenty four women head teachers who participated in their study, only few made explicit reference to feminist perspectives or even to ideas about a female style of educational management. He shows that the majority took the view either explicitly or implicitly that while there were differentiating features in leadership style between focussed and power-sharing and between line executive and team executive modes, gender was not in itself a simple predictor of this. Their view was that some men and women head teachers operate relatively democratic and in participatory decision-making regimes and some men and women do not. They

argued that the critical factor here is a principled commitment by a head teacher and not simply the gender of a head teacher. The women interviewed showed that they were not sure as to whether or not a female style of management does exist (Grace, 1995). On this contestation they are supported by Dipboye (1987) who argues that women in management deviate markedly from stereotypes of a typical female who is less confident, caring, compassionate and who conforms to group pressures. Dipboye (1987) further argues that women in management tend to score higher on measures of "masculine" personality traits than women in traditionally female occupations. It is also argued that women who are highly educated, work in traditionally male work settings and are at high levels of management appear to conform more to the stereotype of the successful manager and less to the traditional female stereotype (Ellman, 1982). This therefore shows that although women are the same physiologically, they differ when it comes to the way they approach life or perceive things depending on their level of education and the position they hold both at work and within their societies as a whole.

Although female managers are sometimes accused of imitating men, I personally do not find anything bad with women using what are perceived as male techniques when they get to management positions in fact that is a form of empowerment on their side. This is because for a long time management positions have been occupied by men so women who get to management positions find themselves in a position whereby they have to look up to men as role models. Restine (1993), Adler et al (1993) also show that generally, women have had fewer role models and have been mentored less than men for certain leadership positions. Furthermore, the leadership behaviour and attitudes of those who might serve as role models in schools are often contrary to basic values and beliefs held by women about leadership. Women who join management positions therefore find themselves in a position where they have to imitate management styles which are generally practised by men. In the same way if presently management was a "woman's world," men who join that field would imitate the styles and techniques of powerful female managers. There is nothing wrong if women have role-models as those men with intriguing management skills and they could couple that with their own skills to make their positions worthwhile. There are also many men who adore their mothers for their characters and the way they brought them up. They in turn imitate them by bringing up their children in a similar way. They even marry women who resemble their mothers. Imitating is therefore good as we learn through imitations provided one imitates good and strong points.

Shakeshaft (1989), on the other hand, argues that women's day-to-day interactions are not only different from men's, but their style of administration offer contrast to the ways men manage schools. She further contends that studies in most cases do not show that women manage differently and better than men because the activities women undertake and their motivation for doing so are in addition to and different from those that men perform (Shakeshaft,1989). She goes on to argue that these studies have only viewed women within a male framework and from a theoretical background formulated on male behaviour. Kanter (1987) suggests that if female supervisors tend to be less effective than male supervisors, it is not because of differences in their styles as much as differences in the formal and informal influence that is associated with positions (Kanter 1987:125).

Society expects a woman manager to manage like men are perceived to in order be seen as effective and to win trust and respect (Dipboye, 1987). He looks at subordinate's satisfaction with their female managers. The findings were mixed. He discovered that the subordinates of female supervisors are equally satisfied or only slightly satisfied. He shows that they are less satisfied when a woman boss has less influence than a man. Because women in most cases do not have women mentors and the fact that they have to weigh their success basing themselves on how men do it, they find themselves having to manage like men as the characteristics of men, being aggressive, rational, tough and individualistic are viewed as attributes of a successful manager (Dipboye,1987). Women are therefore compelled to manage like men commonly do or even exaggerate those qualities in order to win respect of their staff. For instance, Indira Ghandi's performance was seen as profoundly shaped by a patriarchal political system in which women in power, "are there on men's terms and for their survival they have to forget that they are women" (Genovese,1993:39). To survive, women leaders in most cases must turn themselves into stereotyped male by being aggressive, competitive, ruthless and authoritarian and on the other hand continue to play a "good woman" role (Genovese, 1993). This is how Genovese (1993:40) views Indira Ghandi's leadership style:

... her leadership style as pragmatic, reactive and characterized by external periods of drift interspersed with periods of decisive action. When roles of the game worked against her she changed them. When the party bosses threatened her, she overthrew them ...

Because of the fact that she was as tough as men as far as her style of leading was concerned, she

is highly respected worldwide. She ranks among the strong leaders of the world mainly because she managed the way men in most cases do. She did not display character traits of a typical female such as sensitivity, politeness and gentleness to influence her style as she was aware she could not make it. So, the circumstances in which women find themselves in as managers force them to be "unfeminine" to be harsh and autocratic in order to fit and to win respect from the people they serve and the society as a whole.

Carazon Aquino, the then president of the Philippines, on the other hand, was accused of weakness and delay within her newly found cabinet (Genovese, 1993). This was because she established an open style of discussion and encouraged debate so that she could hear different views before making her own decisions (Genovese, 1993). She displayed the qualities of a "typical female" in her management and she failed because people in most cases do not expect to be managed in that way, they wanted somebody who was very autocratic and individualistic. Once one does not exhibit these qualities, she is seen in most cases as a failure as far as management is concerned. The reason may be that it is true that weak people who are not able to make decisions on their own, often involve people, so that they can do the work for them. It is therefore difficult to draw a clear demarcation line between those who actually want to involve people because they want them to have a say in the decision making, to be democratic and those who are weak or lazy and therefore are not able to make decisions on their own. So, even though characteristics of appropriate or recommended management style resemble the character traits of females, women in most cases are not accepted when they follow such styles, also such recommendations are only good on paper, in reality it is very difficult for one to follow them as human beings are very subjective. Women managers who are believed or perceived as strong are those who are very authoritarian, but this does not mean that participative management should not be used.

Restine (1993) also argues that there is a difficulty of implementing what she calls "female management style". She asserts that one "inherits situations and people who are used to working with different types of managers ..." (Restine, 1993:30). She states that it is difficult for a woman, to change that and introduce discussions in her own style and culture. Besides management styles which are adopted by some women managers which are co-operative, community linked and non-hierarchical, also have problems. For instance, one of her interviewees explained that there were

occasions when even junior staff felt able to ignore requests and instructions. She states that as managing people "is an essential part of the job, the ongoing battles against negative attitudes were sometimes felt to undermine one's self-confidence necessary in order to remain in control" (Restine 1993:30). She complained that they (women managers) think about other people's feelings but sometimes this can cause problems as people think one is weak and can be manipulated. I think when it comes to management styles or managing people as a whole, emphasis should not be placed on who can manage better between men and women but on the combination of good points irrespective of gender. This is because different styles of management can be adopted depending on the situation one finds oneself in. I think it is wise to pinpoint and combine those good management styles commonly practised by both genders, so that they can be classified or recommended as appropriate management to ensure effective management of schools.

WOMEN'S RELATIONSHIP WITH BOTH THEIR MALE AND FEMALE STAFF

Some researchers argue that women managers have harmonious relationships with their staff both female and male (Shakeshaft, 1989). But this is a debatable issue, as is evident in the different views of different researchers. For instance, Shakeshaft (1989) quotes Jones and Marshall who argue that, "women have a broader range of possible techniques for relating to others, as a result opening up alternative ways of communicating and getting things done" (Shakeshaft, 1989:56). Women are believed to be good at listening before acting, sympathetic, trustworthy, not dominating and getting things done by being nice to people. On this view, they are supported by Dix (1993) who argues that women managers prefer to operate at work on a set of people centred ethics rather than totally business centred concerns.

Sasoon (1987), on the other hand, argues that women managers interact more with women than with men, although they interact with male teachers more than male principals interact with female administrators. But he also asserts that sometimes this is not the case, he argues that both male and female teachers do not enjoy being led by a woman (Sasoon, 1987). He reiterates that men do not like it because culturally women are viewed as inferior to men and therefore cannot lead them while women just do not like being managed by women both because they view them as incompetent and also because women in most cases do not get along well with other women

especially at work situations. In one study conducted, "many women expressed their preference for working for a man and many men their abhorrence of a female boss" (Cameroon, 1988:40). This argument is supported by Dipboye (1987:89) who contends that "traditionally, no one wants to be under a woman because they are picky, opinionated, emotional, soft-headed and unpredictable". He goes on to show that despite bias against women in management there is also some pessimism. He asserts that a substantial majority of male and female college students, continue to hold unfavourable attitudes towards women in management. He argues that there is evidence from surveys conducted in several universities that the number of female students favourable towards women in management has actually dropped from the mid 1970's (Dipboye, 1987). This claim is supported by Vianello and Siemienska (1980:63) when they assert that, "women are not always in favour of women than men are". This may be attributed to the fact that some women can be unnecessarily harsh and hostile to other women, sometimes because they are insecure and feel that they are not given the respect they deserve.

Women managers are also accused of not identifying themselves with other women in terms of creating opportunities for them. Indira Ghandi of India, it is argued, did not identify herself in gender terms and she did little to advance the cause of gender equality (Genovese, 1993). It is asserted that during her reign, she did not appoint any woman to fill cabinet ranks or make any special effort to encourage women leaders and also during her tenure in office the conditions of the majority of women exacerbated.

While other researchers such as Gomez-Meja and Lourich and Jones quoted in Vianello and Siemienska (1980) argue that male and female managers do not differ in their attitude towards performance appraisal and their preferred styles of handling interpersonal conflict. Chonko, quoted in Genovese (1993) asserts that women supervisors are less willing to share information with colleagues, more Machiavellian and closer in their supervision and more prone to playing favourites especially to other women. This is basically how some women in most cases are, they sometimes think about themselves alone, not favouring the idea of creating opportunities for others as they want to be envied alone. They can sometimes be very petty and accuse or literally hate their subordinates for minor things especially if such subordinates are very active and critical as they regard them as threats. They in most cases do not take criticisms positively, this happens to men also, but worse in women. But female subordinates are also sometimes not willing to

cooperate and work harmoniously with their female managers as they just believe that women are not capable for management. They should understand that women in management positions have been assigned such positions not only because they are women but because they have the potential to carry out the job effectively. Also as Wallace and March (1991) point out, neither sex has an overall advantage or general handicap and neither sex should be more or less comfortable than the other in trying to arrive at the optimal mix in managerial strategies.

DUAL ROLES

It is often argued that women managers fail or are ineffective in their jobs due to the fact that they have to divide their time between work and family (Murray, 1994; Larwood and Wood, 1987). Murray (1994) argues that women's responsibility in the home makes it more difficult for them to operate equally with men in the formal employment sector. She goes on to show that the formal employment sector is designed in around a male worker who need not concern himself with domestic work. According to her, ordinary hours of work leave little time for domestic duties or child care responsibilities.

Dipboye (1987), supports Murray (1994) and Larwood and Wood (1987) by asserting that women managers are likely to find that they have less time and energy to devote to their careers than their male competitors have. Koziara et al (1987) also stress that women's dual roles or her "double burden/domestic obligation" exerts pressure on families. They show that to some people, the rise of women's employment seems a leading course of family break ups. One woman manager once commented that often people make discouraging and nasty remarks about women achievers such as "behind every successful woman is a divorce". On the same point, Cooper and Davidson (1984), claim that women in management experience role conflict between household responsibilities and organisational duties. They assert that on the basis of a study of female managers in the UK female managers are more likely than male managers to display symptoms of stress, such as headache, cigarette smoking, drug and alcohol abuse and marital problems. It is also asserted that women are obliged to take career breaks for such things as maternity leaves which have tremendous effect on their jobs (Cooper and Davidson, 1984). Singleton (1995) also states that the fact that women have dual roles places a significant burden on their shoulders no matter how helpful their partners are. She further contends that the notion that children are the

primary responsibility of the mother meant that women assumed the responsibility for organising childminders and felt guilty whenever their own school functions clashed with those of their children.

Although it is true that women are faced with the dual roles of career and family, research shows that working wives do 50% less housework to cater for their job (Koziara et al, 1987). They further show that the effect of a working wife on the divorce rate is mixed. Sutherland (1989), on the other hand asserts that having to look after children does not have any effect on women's job because career women in most cases have helpers to look after their children.

The dual responsibility of women managers and the fact that they have to leave work for maternity leaves does not, in most cases, have a negative effect on their job. This is because lately, women managers and working women generally do not have big families, about three or four children which lessens their domestic duties and therefore they are able to carry out their career duties well. Dipboye (1987) explains that declining fertility rates have been an important trend reflecting and affecting changes in women's employment. He shows that in the UK the average birthrate has declined from 22.3 per thousand in the 1935-1955 period to 19.5 per thousand between 1955 and 1958 and is expected to be 15.8 per thousand for 1975 through 1995 to 2000. These declines in birthrate reflect changing employment and life styles for women. This means that more time can be devoted to work outside the home.

Currently, there are facilities which make domestic duties easier such as washing machines, hoovers and dishwashers which were not present many years back especially here in Africa. Although they may not be readily available to some people but at least, they are there and it is up to individuals to adopt some means of getting them. Domestic work is therefore no longer as demanding as it used to be. Besides there are also nursery schools where one can take one's kids, to be cared for during the day when she is at work. Also the issue of extended families which is still very eminent especially in the rural areas is of significance importance as working women can leave their kids with the relatives when they go to work.

Regarding divorce, there is no evidence, research or statistics supporting the argument that women in management positions are divorcees or potential divorcees. I do not think that the

position that a woman holds at work can lead to divorce unless the husband is threatened by his wife's upward mobility and power or if the wife is always boasting about her achievement and wants to treat her husband like her subordinates at work. Divorce as I see it, is a result of misunderstandings and poor communication between couples, misunderstandings which can be caused by many factors other than the woman's position at work, besides, divorce can happen to anybody including housewives who have all their time for their families.

Women's domestic function could also act as a potential source of discrimination and prejudice against them (Singleton, 1995). She explains that one respondent in her study described how during a discussion about her future, the inspector asked her how old her children were. When he learned that they were in their teens, he seemed relieved and more positive about her future career as her children would be much more able to fend for themselves and not need her that much. But another respondent viewed women's dual roles as the very reason why they make better managers than men. She showed that the fact that women have to cope with numerous tasks on different levels and work harder gave them an automatic grounding in many of the skills needed for management. Singleton (1995) refers to an article in The Sunday Times (12 March 1989) which fully supported this claim. Also a study conducted at Manchester school of management on men and women in sixty five different occupations show that apart from doing their job better, the fact that women with families are organised and juggle multiple commitments, make them better potential managers.

DISCRIMINATION

Teaching is one of the few professions that women occupy in large numbers as it resembles the female domestic role (Kotecha, 1994). But it is this same profession where according to Graves et al (1991) women are "the most exploited, most ignored, most intimidated and the most discriminated against". Shakeshaft (1989:39) asserts that more than 1/3 of the superintendents reported lack of acceptance by segments of the community, staff-members or male colleagues unaccustomed to working for a woman". Shakeshaft (1989) quotes Kuhn who also argues that in female-led groups, more hostility is exhibited towards the female leader, specifically if she is a "low-disclosing, high task person". Vianello and Siemieska (1980: 65) also document that both males and females disagreed, "more with female leaders than with male leaders" and they may not

be listened to as closely as are their male colleagues. This is the result of societal stereotypes about women that they are not capable and therefore cannot be trusted on issues which are believed to be of crucial importance.

Shakeshaft (1989) contends that women principals and superintendents, because they are tokens and because they are not involved in all male activities often "report less to collegueship with male administrators and therefore there is a deep awareness of loneliness at the top"(Shakeshaft,1989,172). On the same issue, Shakeshaft quotes Lauter who stresses that the environment for women administrators changes depending upon the number of males and females she works with directly. She goes on to show that if she is the only female or one of a few women administrators she assumes "token status". Tokens, according to Lauter, get extra attention, are the subject of more gossip, stories and rumours and are always in the spotlight. This produces feelings of isolation and anxiety in the woman concerned which may force them to behave in ways that might not be good for them as managers. Due to under-representation of women in management, they feel out of place as they find themselves in the company of men with whom they do not share similar interests. Shakeshaft (1989) also asserts that the climate in which women work may have an impact on the strategies they choose to use in managing. The more women are conscious of their own behaviour, the more they calculate each move.

Ozga (1993) explains that the fact that women do not socialize with their male colleagues puts them at a disadvantage. It is believed that it is in these informal get togethers, playing golf, squash or simply drinking beer that most decisions regarding work are taken. This is true, because for a long time, men were alone in management positions, so they could continue their discussions about work even informally after work, this did not pose any problem or marginalise anybody. So, because this is what they have been practising for a long time, they continue to do so even now that women, whom they are not always with after work, form part of management teams. Until such time that men get used to the idea that women are presently joining management positions and engage them in their informal talks, and women do not feel threatened by men and engage with them in their informal conversations, women in management will continue to be isolated at the workplace.

Language and conversations within organisations often exclude women who are in the minority

in the management teams (Adler et al, 1993). Such talks are often about areas outside the experience of these organisations and therefore participation becomes difficult. One woman once told her interviewers:

I'm the only woman in the senior management team of an all-boys school. I often feel like a real fish out of water. Sport is so important, the major topic of conversation

(Adler et al, 1993: 18).

This woman's social life is often defined by male interests and this reinforces her position of isolation. The situation is like this because maybe men have been alone in such positions for a long time, it will take time for them to learn to use language and conversation that will accommodate women. I think women in management should be flexible, they should familiarise themselves with many things, sports, party politics, they have to be broad minded so that they are in a position to participate in men's informal discussions and thereby do not feel isolated or marginalised.

One principal interviewed (Adler et al, 1993) complained that as women in management, they sometimes get confused as to what steps to take due to the bad treatment that they get from their subordinates. She explains that once she promoted one male teacher who deserved the promotion but she was accused by female teachers as trying to "keep all smart men to herself". When she was once on the side of a female teacher who was wrongly treated by her male colleague, she was labelled a lesbian by her male colleagues. So women managers often find themselves in a dilemma, not knowing what is right or wrong as far as their staff is concerned, as whatever they do, be it good or wrong is misinterpreted. This therefore leads to stress. The reason for this is that it is not easy to please all the people no matter how hard one tries whether one is a woman or a man and this has to be understood by women in leadership positions. Sometimes this is not done because one is a woman, but because a person feels that her/his interests have not been satisfied. So I think that if a woman manager feels that the decision she has taken is right and fair, she has to be firm and not be worried by remarks made by those who are dissatisfied as it is not easy to satisfy all the people at the same time.

Deem (1978) shows that in the meetings and discussions women teachers encounter many problems when they want to assert themselves. She explains that they are either ignored or interrupted by men or labelled aggressive and unfeminine (Deem, 1978). Due to this many female

teachers are effectively silenced and no longer participate in school meetings. Shakeshaft (1989), on the other hand quotes Lakoff who reiterates that women are usually ignored during meetings because female speech is inferior to male speech and that women should develop male language patterns in order to become more effective communicators. But the issue of women having different language patterns is not the cause of their discrimination in the meetings, but the attitude that some people have towards women, lack of respect for women by some people both men and women.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN PERSPECTIVES

Research on women in African countries in general is very scarce. In South-Africa women are divided into two categories, black and white. Their experiences and perceptions in management positions are therefore different as they were not treated the same under apartheid. Sebakwane (1993\4) shows that as far as women studies are concerned in South Africa, nothing has been written from the perspective of the oppressed. She argues that the little literature available on black women teachers has been written from a white perspective. This according to her has resulted in a situation whereby, "western research experiences have been universalized" (Sebakwane, 1993\4). She reiterates that black female views should be central to providing an alternative understanding of the impact of class, race and gender oppression on black women's careers under apartheid.

In her study, "Gender relations in Lebowa Secondary Schools", Sebakwane (1993\4) brings to light the impact of apartheid and patriarchal relations on black women teachers. She contends that both black men and women's lives are highly affected by apartheid but women are also negatively affected by the impact of patriarchy. Women in South Africa, like in many other countries are highly under-represented in managerial positions despite the fact that teaching is highly dominated by women (Kotecha, 1994). This is attributed to many factors, Sebakwane (1993\4) for instance argues that black cultures are patriarchal in nature, this therefore hindered the promotion of women to headship positions in Bantu education schools. In her interviews conducted in Lebowa, Sebakwane (1993\4) discovered that both men and women teachers have patriarchal beliefs of leadership which make it difficult for women to hold leadership positions. King (1993) also concurs with Sebakwane when he argues that women are prevented from progressing by

traditional views among both male and female employees that a woman should be in a subordinate position as any organisation headed by a woman is destined to fail.

Botswana too like other African countries still holds to its traditions which upholds men's superiority over women. Due to this, representation of women at the administration and high decision-making levels in the government is very low (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1995). Beliefs such as this make it difficult for people to accept or to elect a woman for a management position. Even those who managed to get to these positions are therefore likely to encounter problems, as they will not be fully accepted, and it will be difficult for men to take orders from them.

According to Kotecha (1994), in 1991, 76% of teachers at primary schools employed under the Department of Education (DET) were women, while 42% of them were at secondary schools. But she realized that when seniority increases the number of women decreases. On the same issue, King (1981) discovered that the same situation exists in the Transvaal. He shows that out of the 69.4% total number of teachers in 1978, only 15% held managerial positions.

There are also socio-economic factors like the belief that it is uneconomical to educate a girl, as her education will not benefit her parents who educated her but her in-laws upon her marriage (Sebakwane, 1993\4). Apart from this, girls used to get married at an early age and therefore dropped their studies. Under-qualification is therefore one of the reasons why women are under-represented in managerial positions in South-African schools. These factors encourage and maintain black women oppression and discrimination within the South African system.

It is also argued that women participate in and perpetuate their own oppression. In her study, Sebakwane (1993\4:87) discovered from women that their under-representation is the result of their low self-esteem and their lack of self-confidence which make it difficult for them to apply. Women teachers, it is argued, "act in support of the inherent domesticity of women and as a result take for granted their own status as professionals". Sebakwane quotes Smith:

Many women have to a certain degree internalized the attitudes and role expectations about women, that they have learnt to fit neatly into the stereotypes.
(Sebakwane, 1993\4:90)

She further shows that this can be a major handicap in the development of their individual personalities, their abilities and career potential.

Although it cannot be generally argued that women lack self-confidence as it is not always the case, because like Al-Khalifa (1989) shows, women teachers are not homogenous with similar characteristics. But a lot of research on women who presently occupy senior positions shows that they got to such positions out of persuasion and not free will. This was because they did not feel confident that they could do it, they did not feel they were suitable candidates. So sometimes women's under-representation is not the result of malice from men but their own doing and unless they improve the situations, it will remain the same.

Due to racism, promotion to administration positions poses problems (Sebakwane, 1993\4). This is because white teachers do not trust blacks let alone a woman, they therefore may not accept that black women be in positions of authority. This shows that black women who have been strong enough to get to such positions are faced with various obstacles if they have white subordinates as it may be hard for them to take orders from a black woman.

Some women teachers ascribe masculine virtues to posts of responsibility in schools (Sebakwane, 1993\4). They believe that women in management have to act like men in order to be successful. They contend that the shortage of women in management positions is their lack of "manly" characteristics (Sebakwane, 1993). One school studied, which had very good qualities was believed to be like that because of the considerable leadership qualities exhibited by the principal, who was referred to as "iron lady". The fact that she was referred to as an "iron lady" makes one to believe that she was very strong, very tough, "unfeminine" as they are commonly referred to and managed more like men are perceived to do, hence acceptance by her staff. There seems to be a general belief that for a woman to be a good and successful manager she has to exhibit male characteristics. This perception will be investigated from the women concerned in this study.

With regard to the dual responsibility of working women, Sebakwane (1994) asserts that no evidence has shown that married women are less career and responsibility oriented than other women. She further shows that although female principals spend a lot of time on domestic tasks than their male colleagues, domestic commitments do not have any negative impact on their

work. In Botswana, women who have acquired necessary professions and skills to get to employment are also facing the pressures of work and the demands of the traditional role of being solely responsible for the children, the sick and the elderly (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1995). But this does not interfere with their work as what is required is time management skills and hard work every time.

LESOTHO PERSPECTIVES

Lesotho is a traditionally patrilineal society, and as such, men are overall head of the household and make all decisions (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1995). Women take subordinate roles carrying out instructions from men (UN economic commission for Africa, 1995). This has continued to have a psychological influence on girls when trying to select professional lines (Makara, 1982). They tend to follow professions such as secretarial which are not challenging and lessen their competitiveness. This is one of the reasons why women are under-represented in administration and management positions.

It is against the background outlined above that the study on women principals in Lesotho High Schools was conducted. The literature on Basotho women in management positions is very scarce. Research studies on women have focussed on rural women, who generally have little basic education and participate in non-formal activities (Makara, 1982). To the best of my knowledge, Makara's study which looks at the factors that have helped women to get to the positions that they are holding in the formal sector, is the first formal study on a different group of women who are employed full-time in the formal sector (civil service, teaching, private sector and parastatals). Makara (1982) contends that the few published materials concerning women in Lesotho over the past ten years have been done by European and American scholars such as Gay and Mueller who were mainly interested in the problems of male labour migration to South African mines and the way this affects women in the rural areas. Makara (1982) shows that no specific study has been conducted to consider issues relating to women in employment in the formal sector and who are professional and skilful enough to qualify to hold management or leadership positions in the formal organisation that they work in.

Women in Lesotho, like in many countries, are under-represented in management positions. Most

women in Lesotho are found in traditional female occupations of secretaries, teachers and nurses, but the decision-making and top management ranks are still according to Makara (1982) a "male reserve". This is the case despite the fact that unlike many developing countries, women in Lesotho have educational advantage over their male counterparts. For a long time women in Lesotho have maintained higher literacy rates than men (UN Economic Commission for Africa, 1995). Right from primary schools, enrolment of girls outnumbered that of boys by a ratio of 1:4, the same thing applies to secondary schools. They had an opportunity of using educational facilities provided by the government and the church, when men went to South African mines to work as migrant labourers (Makara, 1982). For women, "education provided the only hope for a change to earn a decent living" (Makara, 1982:30).

Due to the fact that women are more educated than men, they constitute the major home based human resource the country has. Women constitute 85% of the teaching staff and almost 75% of the civil service. However, as Milligan quoted in Makara (1982) puts it

... there does appear to be some unwillingness or hesitation, however, to promote them to positions of major responsibility. These reluctance frequently have cultural bases.

(Makara, 1982:31)

This view is also shared by Gay quoted in Makara (1982) who stresses that women represent well over 60% of sales workers and service workers and less than 20% of professional/technical and management positions. Makara (1982) also asserts that Basotho women are generally more educated than their menfolk, provide the bulk of the labour force but they are least represented in managerial and senior administration levels. It is also contended that the colonial reports on education too claim that Sesotho custom opposes the idea of women holding senior public positions in the teaching service (Makara, 1982). She further reiterates that this kind of situation precludes women from being involved in decision-making, the factor which in turn affects, "the extent to which women can influence the direction that social development can take in the country" (Makara, 1982:27). The claim that women's under-representation in managerial positions is due to their under-qualification therefore does not hold. This is because even if a male and female teachers have the same qualifications or a man is under-qualified, he stands a better chance of being a principal just because he is a man and therefore destined to lead by Sesotho

culture.

But even though the reports acknowledged the fact that women constitute the majority of the teaching force, it is also argued that most of the women were only qualified to teach infant classes and this made it hard for them to hold headship positions.

Another factor which hinders the progress and promotion of women in the formal sectors in Lesotho is the legal system (Makara, 1982). She contends that there is the feeling among many Lesotho citizens that the legal system is unfair to women. She argues that the "introduction of the Roman Dutch-law is seen to have imposed disadvantages in respect of women's legal capacity" (Makara, 1982:32). The law leaves the woman's chances of working and earning a living to the discretion of the husband. Although many women are not objected from working by their husbands, they (husbands) still reserve the right to withdraw the permission for wives to work. Makara (1982) further shows that due to this a large number of women have lost their jobs and chances for promotions or for going for further studies. This law therefore does not protect women's interests, it is very disadvantageous on the side of working women as the employers are aware of this loophole and exploit it to the disadvantage of their women employees (Makara, 1982). For instance the civil service does not see the need of offering married women permanent appointments in senior positions when their husbands can withdraw their services at any time or refuse to have them transferred (Makara, 1982).

It seems that there is a long way to go before obstacles in the way of women promotions are eradicated. Until laws like the Roman Dutch-law are amended, women will continue to be under-represented in managerial positions, marginalised and discriminated against at work. Laws such as this were applicable in the olden days when women had to work in the fields and look after families while men were breadwinners. Presently, due to the high living standards, women are compelled to work too, not for their own good but for the benefit of the family as a whole. Besides, as Dipboye (1987) shows gender is culture specific and the roles that women play are different in any given culture. Also culture is not static, it evolves as societies become more complex. The roles played by men and women are not only determined by gender but by socio-political and economic factors (Dipboye, 1987). So, laws made have to be flexible to accommodate changes, women should therefore be accorded fair treatment and not be

discriminated against by law.

The fact that Lesotho is a patriarchal society and that the legal system does not favour women, explains why it is difficult for most women to hold or be promoted to managerial positions. The same factors clearly show that even the few women who managed to get to management positions are faced with major obstacles which are not experienced by their male counterparts, because by virtue of being women they do not "belong" there. They therefore have to either work extremely hard to prove themselves or adopt some strategies such as being very harsh, very authoritarian in order to win respect and be "accepted".

Regarding the dual responsibility of the Basotho working women, Makara (1982) argues that the majority of women in full-time jobs rely on paid domestic help for the care of their children and the household. She further argues that even though there are no properly recorded statistics for this category, it would be right to conclude that almost every full-time employed woman with a home and children has some kind of additional help in the house. Almost 100% of the respondents in her study have such paid domestic help.

CONCLUSION

This literature review has shown that a lot of research on women deals mainly with the factors that have contributed to the under-representation of women in management positions. Research shows that globally women are under-represented in managerial positions although the reasons for this state of affairs vary depending on the culture of the country. For instance, in Africa specifically Lesotho, the patriarchal nature of the country makes it hard for women to assume positions of responsibility. The same reason makes it very hard for women in management positions as they are viewed with suspicion by their colleagues. In South-Africa, due to racism and patriarchy, women principals experience many problems especially if they are black.

The literature has also shown that there are conflicting views as to whether there is a distinction in terms of management styles between men and women. Some researchers argue that women in management positions have a similar style of management, that is, participative style of management. While others assert that character traits of women in management positions deviate

markedly from those of "typical females" who are sensitive sympathetic, and they manage in more or less the same manner that men are perceived to do.

On the issue of dual roles, there are some differences also, there are some writers who contend that the fact that women have dual roles, places a significant burden on their shoulders irrespective of how much help and support they get at home. On the other hand, some researchers argue that working wives because they have helpers, do 50% less housework so that more time can be devoted to their work. Another view is that the dual roles of women is the very reason why women make better managers than men as it gives them automatic grounding in many of the skills needed for management.

Finally in relation to female principals' relationships with their subordinates, some researchers feel that women's relationship with their staff is good because they have a broader range of possible techniques for relating to others as a result opening up alternative ways of communicating and getting things done. But there are also those who feel that women in most cases do not get along well with their subordinates especially female ones, because they are emotional, unpredictable and prone to *playing favourites*.

It is therefore the purpose of this research to establish the views and perceptions of women principals and their subordinates on these issues; to discover whether or not women principals in Lesotho share the same views with other women in management positions globally.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

This is an exploratory research project, an in-depth investigation of the perceptions about women in senior management positions in Lesotho High Schools. The career history approach was used in order to get a clear picture about women principals, in terms of when they joined teaching, when and how they became principals, the job itself and their future plans. Methodological triangulation was used to explore the richness of the phenomenon used. Triangulation involves, among other methods, the use of interviews, questionnaires and observation as tools for collecting data. Observation as a research instrument is in contrast to interviews and questionnaires in that it does not rely on asking but on observing people's behaviour directly (Kerlinger, 1979). This is done as unobtrusively as possible by the researcher. Triangulation allows collaboration of information from different sources, to address the problem of reliability and validity normally associated with empirical research (Kerlinger, 1979). Triangulation is also appropriate for this research because it minimises "the biasness or distortion of the researcher's picture of a particular slice of reality ..." (Cohen and Manion, 1994).

The investigation depended primarily on qualitative methodology. However quantitative methods were used to supplement aspects of the qualitative work. The purpose of qualitative research is not to obtain a set of facts but to gain insight into a perspective (Singleton: 1995). Qualitative methodology was used to establish the views of women principals and those of their subordinates both male and female about them (female principals). Quantitative methodology was used to identify the number of schools which are headed by women, the number of women principals, enrolments in these schools and questionnaire responses. Qualitative research is of significance because of its concern with content (Kincheloe, 1991). Human experience is shaped in particular contexts and cannot be understood if removed from those contexts. Qualitative method attempts to be as naturalistic as possible, meaning that contexts must not be *constructed* or *modified*. Research must take place in the normal every day context of the researched (Kincheloe, 1991). I also found it appropriate for this study mainly because it is concerned with experience as it is "lived," felt " or "undergone" (Kincheloe, 1991), it tends to appreciate human experience in a

manner which is empathetic to the human actors who feel it or live it (Kincheloe, 1991).

Quantitative approach was found appropriate as, according to Sax (1980), it allows us to focus on variables of interest, and the use of mathematical symbols permits an economical summary of information.

SAMPLE

A study of ten female school principals in Maseru, the capital city of Lesotho, was undertaken. Out of forty six high schools in the Maseru district, only eighteen are headed by women. Although initially the researcher was supposed to work with eighteen women principals it was not possible. This was because the researcher got the statistics about which schools were headed by women towards the end of the year (1997), so the following year when she started conducting interviews, some of those women were no longer principals while others after many attempts by the researcher, were not prepared to be interviewed under the pretence that they were very busy.

Ten ordinary teachers from the ten schools were also included in the study, five males and five females. They were required to respond to the questionnaires on their perceptions about their women principals. The teachers selected were both young and old, that is those who have been in the system for a long time and those who have just joined the teaching fraternity.

DATA COLLECTION

Data were collected in the form of semi-structured interviews and questionnaires and observation

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEWS

Only women principals were interviewed. The questions which were developed for the interviews were designed to discover the extent to which the experiences of women interviewed matched what had been revealed in the literature. An attempt was made not to be biased by keeping the majority of the questions as open as possible. Semi-structured interviews gave teachers freedom to explore and reflect on their lives. This method according to Sax (1980) is flexible as it can

accommodate those questions emanating from the discussion and thus allowing the researcher to redirect his\her focus. It also gives space "to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain or add to them" (Sax, 1980:25).

As a research method, the interview is more than an exchange of small talk (Sax, 1980). It represents a direct attempt by the researcher to obtain reliable and valid measures of verbal responses from respondents. Its importance also lies on the fact that it is flexible and applicable to many different types of problems. Also, if responses given to the subject are unclear, questions can be rephrased. Its significance again lies on the fact that it allows the investigator to observe both what the respondent has to say and the way in which it is said, how the subjects respond may be as important as response content. It is also useful in collecting personal information, attitudes, perceptions or beliefs by probing for additional information (Sax, 1980). Interviews as research tools also have disadvantages, they are influenced by the emotional "set" of the interviewee, by his\her self-concern or self-pity, by his\her desire to appear at good advantage, his\her urge to please or antagonise the interviewer (Rummel, 1970). But this problem can be rectified by the interviewer establishing a good relationship with the interviewee and by being as neutral as possible to make it possible for the respondent to air her\his views easily, not trying to please the interviewer. Another disadvantage of interviews is that the interviewer is likely to misinterpret the interviewee's ideas by assuming that she\he has understood the respondent whereas she\he has not. To solve this problem, the interviewer had to repeat what the respondents had said to ensure that she\he had understood.

QUESTIONNAIRES

Questionnaires were used only on ordinary teachers of both sexes to establish their perceptions about their female principals in terms of their management styles and their relationships with their subordinates. Questionnaires and not interviews were used for ordinary teachers as they were not expected to give detailed information like the principals, and the questions required them to give more or less similar responses. Although questionnaires are believed to be the most used and misused method in educational research (Galfo, 1965), they are advantageous because each respondent receives the same set of questions phrased in exactly the same way, as they are on standardized text. Questionnaires are therefore supposed to yield more comparative data than do

interviews (Galfó, 1965). But questionnaires also have disadvantages, they are sometimes not returned or returned with some sections not completed. To maximise the number of questionnaires returned, the researcher made the respondents aware that they have an important contribution to make to this field. The questionnaires were also made to be as brief and clear as possible to ensure that they are fully completed. The interviewer also assured the respondents anonymity so that they could be free to state their ideas without fear of risking their jobs.

OBSERVATION

There are two types of observation: participant and non-participant (Bell, 1993). In this study the researcher used non-participant observation. Babbie (1992) asserts that in a non-participative study, researchers do not participate in the activity being observed but rather “sit on the sideline”, and watch. They are therefore not directly involved in the situation that they are observing. In this study, the researcher did not participate in the situation that was being observed, direct observation occurred during three staff meetings in three high schools.

Although the observation method is not an easy option, once mastered, it is a technique that can often reveal characteristics or groups or individuals which would have been impossible to discover by other means (Bell, 1993). Also direct observation may be more reliable than is sometimes alleged, it can be useful as it can discover whether people do what they claim to do or behave in the way they report.

Even though an observation method is viewed as very important, it is not without problems. For instance an observation can be overt, in that the researcher is easily identified and the subjects know that they are being observed (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990). It can also be covert in which case the researcher disguises her identity and behaves like any of the other participants (Fraenkel and Wallen, 1990). They also argue that covert participant observation has the potential of producing more valid observation of what really happens than the overt method, but it is often criticized on ethical grounds. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) assert that observing people without their knowledge and recording their comments without their permission is a questionable practice. For instance a researcher may spend a period of time teaching in an elementary school and at the same time observe what is going on (Fraenkel and Wallan, 1990). In this way even though it is ethically wrong, there is a high possibility that this teacher would get valid results as the people

she is observing are behaving normally not hiding anything, for they are not aware that they are being watched.

In this study the observation was overt because even though the teachers were not told that they were being watched, they were aware that there was a stranger amongst them although they did not know why she was there, nevertheless, it did not seem to bother them. The principals, on the other hand, were aware that they were being watched as the researcher had to get permission from them to attend the meeting.

RELIABILITY, VALIDITY AND GENERALIZATION

RELIABILITY

To ensure reliability, each category of respondents was given the same questions which were scheduled on semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. Hammersley (1993:74) regards reliability as "productivity of the measurements or the extend to which repetition of the study would result in the same data and conclusion". But because this study falls in the social sciences, the results may not necessarily conform to these "scientific criteria" due to the fact that human beings are dynamic and unpredictable. Also, this study deals with perceptions, and perceptions can be both true or false depending on the respondent. Turney and Rob (1971:10) when referring to the reliability of instruments say that the investigator must be certain that the instruments he chooses possess a characteristic called consistency or reliability. It should be clear that unless a measure of consistency is maintained, one cannot place much faith on the outcome of the research.

VALIDITY

Another important question which informed the design of this research was that of validity. Turney and Rob (1971:10) state that "validity is concerned with the meaning of what can be attained to a particular assessment". Thus validity is whether an instrument used to bring out the desired information necessary for the problem under investigation does what it is expected to do.

Hammersley (1993) defines validity as the "property of the measure that allows the researcher to say that the instrument measures what it is expected to measure"(Hammersley, 1993:73). It is believed that a well designed face to face interview can be one of the most valid instruments used to measure what the researcher intends to measure. It is significant at this point to deal with the issue of generalizations regarding findings.

GENERALIZATION

Generalisation, according to Bless (1988), refers to the extent to which results established for a sample apply to the general population from which the sample was drawn or to similar population in other geographical areas. Bogdan and Biklen (1982) too maintain that the term refers to "whether the findings of a study hold up beyond the specific research subjects and the setting involved"(Bogdan and Biklen, 1982:121). But as mentioned under limitations of the study page 4, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other females outside the scope of this study. It would be inappropriate to presume that the other women principals and teachers whose views were not investigated and who work in different contexts share similar perceptions and attitudes with those under study. Also a case study is not meant to make generalizations, instead, it is used to show a trend on how things are and why that is the case in that particular setting (Bogdan and Biklen, 1982). Also whilst the research carried out attempts to be open, its intention is to illuminate, and it lays no claim to being representative.

PILOT STUDY

A provisional questionnaire was tested in a short pilot study in order to assess and get feedback on the content, wording, sequence, clarity of the questions and the length of the questionnaire. The pilot study was done to make sure that the relevant issues were not misinterpreted by the respondents. According to Bell (1993), the purpose of a pilot exercise is to get the "bugs" out of the instrument so that subjects in the main study will experience no difficulties in completing it. Also it enables the researcher to carry out a preliminary analysis and check whether the wording and format of questions will present any difficulties when the idea is analysed. Commenting on the importance of pilot testing in research, Fink quoted in Khalanyane (1995)

asserts that a pilot test is " a tryout and its purpose is to help provide you with the information you need"(Khalanyane, 1995:40). He further shows that all types of questionnaires and interviews must be pilot tested as pilot testing quickly reveals whether people understand the directions that have been provided and if they can answer the questions.

During the pilot testing it was discovered that the teachers viewed the questionnaire as "tough" to use their word, because it required them to talk about their principals. I detected that they were scared that the principals were likely to know especially if they had said some things which were not good but true about them. This, they said despite the fact that I had assured them that the information was going to be treated with confidentiality. I therefore had to assure them repeatedly that the principals were in no position to see their responses. I also had to wait for them to fill the questionnaires. In cases where they had to fill the questionnaires in my absence, and had to give them to somebody else, I had to supply them with envelopes. Teachers also complained that the questionnaire was too long. The questionnaire was not long but there was a lot of space left for responses, which they did not need. The space was therefore reduced and the questionnaire looked a bit shorter. Adjustments were also made to some questions, for instance, on the question that asked them who they would choose between a male or a female principal, the space provided gave them two choices, male or female. But some of them showed that they were satisfied with any of them, another space therefore had to be provided for those who were not choosy.

CONCLUSION

This study is based on an explanatory method of research. In order to collect the relevant and valid data needed, interviews were administered to ten women principals and questionnaires were issued to hundred teachers, ten in each school although only 80% of them were returned and most of them had unfilled spaces.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

INTRODUCTION

In Lesotho, schools are either state, church or community owned but most schools are owned by the churches although the teachers are paid by the government. Nine of the ten women interviewed head church owned schools while only one heads a private school. As mentioned in the previous chapter, data from principals were collected in the form of interviews while data from teachers were collected through questionnaires.

This research attempted to determine the extent to which experiences of and perceptions about women in management positions in Lesotho high schools matched those of other women internationally. It also investigated whether women have a special style of management distinct from that used by their male counterparts. The extent to which their dual roles or double obligation impact on their career and whether or not they experience any form of discrimination were also looked into. The research also investigated the perceptions of the subordinates both male and female about their female principals in relation to management styles and their relationship with them, as staff.

This chapter sets out to analyse interviews and questionnaires beyond generalisations towards a more focussed position. This way it will enable a clearer understanding of the perceptions about women in management positions in Lesotho high schools. The analyses will depend crucially on interviews with informants, that is, respondents who were able to offer an articulated explanation of the issue. Data from other respondents will be used for the purposes of illumination and triangulation. This approach does not intend to reduce the contributions of other respondents to insignificance but to avoid repetition.

As in the literature review, the presentation of data has been divided into themes: management styles, relationships between women principals and their subordinates, discrimination and dual roles.

For better understanding of this chapter it was found appropriate to give a brief description of the principals interviewed. (The names have been changed to ensure anonymity.)

Principal 1

Sister Benedicta is 53 years old and a head of a Catholic church school. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and a Diploma in Administration. She has been a principal of this school for fifteen years. Before occupying her current position she was a principal in another Catholic school. She was selected for this position by the propriety committee of the school. Her school has 458 children and twenty two teachers, six men, thirteen women and two nuns.

Principal 2

Mrs Monese is aged 65 and she heads an Evangelical church school. She holds a Bachelor of Arts degree and has been a teacher since 1956. She applied for the principalship of this school in 1994 after retiring from agricultural college where she was a principal. Her school has 400 students and fourteen teachers, eight women and six men. She has four children the youngest being 32.

Principal 3

Mrs Modiba is a 59 year old woman who heads a private school. She has a Diploma in Education. She has been teaching in the same school since 1973 and she applied for the position of principal in January 1998. Her school has 620 children and twenty two teachers who are all women. She has three children who are all married.

Principal 4

Mrs Latuka is a widow aged between 45-50 and holds a Masters in Education. She is a principal of a Catholic school. She has been a teacher since 1959 although she has been in and out of schools while she was advancing herself educationally. She has been a principal in three different schools before holding her current position. She applied for this position and she has been holding it since 1996. Her school has 600 students and twenty two teachers of whom eleven are men while another eleven is women. She has two grown up children.

Principal 5

Mrs Leseli is aged between 45-50 and holds a Bachelor of Education degree. She is a principal of Evangelical church school. She has been a teacher for twenty seven years. She started as a primary teacher then became a principal of the same primary school for ten years. She occupied her current position in January 1998 after being nominated. Her school has 640 students and eleven teachers, seven women and four men. She has four children who are still at school.

Principal 6

Mrs Matla is aged 45 and holds a masters degree in education. She heads an Anglican church school. She has been a teacher for twenty six years and a principal for twenty four years in the same school. She was nominated for this position. Her school has 600 students and twenty five teachers of whom fourteen are women and twelve are men. She has two children who are students.

Principal 7

Mrs Lebitsa is 46 and holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree. She has been teaching since 1967. She taught for ten years at a primary school then after acquiring her degree taught at a high school for ten years before becoming a principal. She was nominated for this position six years ago. She has four grown up children.

Principal 8

Mrs Letsie is 41 years old. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree. She is a principal of Anglican church owned school. She has nineteen years teaching experience. She came to this school in 1990 to take up a principalship position. She applied for this position. Her school has 400 children and twelve teachers, eight women and four men. She has four children two of whom are still at primary school.

Principal 9

Sister Augustine is aged 54 and has been a teacher for thirty years. She is a head teacher of a catholic school . Before she occupied her current position which she has been holding for fifteen years, she was principal of another Catholic school for five years. Her school has 600 children and twenty two teachers, fifteen women and seven men. She was appointed for this position.

Principal 10

Sister Baptista is 38 years of age and a headmistress of a Catholic school. She holds a Bachelor of Arts in Education degree. She has eighteen years teaching experience and eight years as a principal. Her school has 400 children fifteen teachers thirteen females and two males.

MANAGEMENT STYLES

Under management styles five points will be discussed: whether women principal use one style of management, whether gender determine one's management style, whether or not female principals are satisfied with their job, how much autonomy they have in their job and whether there are any special qualities that women in management positions possess. Responses given will be illustrated by the use of vignettes.

All principals interviewed showed that they do not use only one management style. The study revealed that they use mainly two management styles: participative or democratic and authoritarian styles. They argued that the situation or the nature of the problem determines the type of management style that they use. They reiterate that although in most cases they involve teachers in decision-making, and so use a participative management style, there are times when they have to take a final decision and just inform them. Below are different responses given in relation to this point. The quotations are verbatim and no corrections have been made.

Principal 1

I use participative style of management. I inherited this from my father who used to consult us in many things. I delegate duties, I have a number of task forces which I have to consult with if there is a problem. First there is a board of governors at the top which is chaired by my manager, and I, as a principal, a secretary, then there is a standing committee made up of me, the manager and deputy principal. Thirdly there is heads of departments who are in charge of issues happening in their departments. There is also a disciplinary committee which is made up of teachers and students, the head boy and the head girl. Finally there is a student body which is made up of a head girl and a head boy and class monitors. If there is a disciplinary problem, the student body tries to solve the problem before it is brought to the disciplinary committee in which the students are represented by the heads girl and boy. If the disciplinary committee fails to solve a problem, it is brought to the standing committee to finalise it. Sometimes a problem is brought to the heads of departments if it is affecting student's learning. The disciplinary committee has a right to recommend what has to be done in terms of punishment. So if finally I say I suspend you for two weeks, it is because this was agreed upon by many people not imposed by me, what I do is just to bring it forth to the children and the parents whom I have to invite before a student is suspended or we invite the parents and discipline the kids together. But there are also certain cases where I do not have to co-decide with teachers but to just come with a final

decision. For instance if a girl is pregnant, I make a final decision as this is a religious school and does not accommodate pregnant students. When this is the case, I talk to the girl concerned and then tell her parents, it is after this that I inform the teachers. So in cases whereby the law or regulations of the school stipulates, I just make a final decision.

Principal 2

I use a combination of democratic\ participation and authoritarian. In most cases if there is a problem, I ask the teachers for their views. But I may turn against those opinions of theirs, if I feel that I do not go along with them and as long as I know that the law will support me in whatever decision I make. Also if I feel that there is a likelihood that there will be a problem if I take their suggestions, I will not take such decisions. Sometimes the nature of a problem requires me to just give a final decision. But it is only in rare cases that I give a final decision and also because I know I do not have support if I make a final decision, they will resist it.

Asked what she does if they resist her decisions, she said “ if it is something that I can do alone, I just carry it out alone no matter what they say”.

Principal 3

I use a combination of styles, sometimes I use participative style while sometimes I use authoritarian depending on the nature of a problem. Sometimes if a teacher encounters a problem with a student in the classroom, such a problem is brought before all the teachers so that we can find ways of solving it. But there are also times when I have to come up with a final answer, but this rarely happen as it good when teachers are involved in decisions that are made.

Although they all claim to be using participative style, the way they actually go about implementing it, is different. Principal 1 seems to be delegating most of her powers, she has a number of task forces which are responsible for dealing with different problems. She has very clear structures and she seems to be very clear of what she is doing. In this way decisions are reached through consensus with the staff except in cases where rules are laid down by the regulations of the school. Principal 3 also apart from issues which demand that she gives a final answer, works together with her staff in solving problems. Most decisions reached are a result of a joint venture between the principal and staff. But the way principal 2 implements what she believes as participative management is completely different from the way principals 1 and 3 do it. She asks for the views of her staff but she goes on to do what she wants to do and ignores

their ideas, if they do not agree with her. The question is why does she involve them in the first place if she knows that she may not take their suggestions. What she has to do is discuss everything with them, if she does not agree with them, that has to be clearly stated and together they have to come up with other options. There seems to be a lack of trust between the principal and her staff, the principal fears that because her staff does not support her, they may not participate in good faith in whatever decisions are being made and they may come up with decisions that are aimed at sabotaging whatever she intends to do. This principal does not practise participative style as she claims to be doing. In participative management decisions are reached through consensus and also for this style to be effective there has to be trust between the parties concerned otherwise it would not be possible to agree on anything and reach consensus.

Asked whether gender determines one's management style all the teachers interviewed argued that one's character or personality and not gender determines how one manages. But five principals showed that even though gender is not a determining factor, "women are more sympathetic and understanding". So although they claim that gender is not a determining factor, they argue that women by virtue of being women are more sympathetic and understanding. This sympathy and understanding may to a certain extent affect or influence the way they manage, in this case gender can influence ones' style of managing. But also not all women are sympathetic and understanding and therefore these attributes may not affect their style, so gender is not a determining factor. This is consistent with Grace's (1995) study that while there are differentiating features in leadership between focussed and power sharing and between line executive and team executive modes, gender is not in itself a simple predictor of this. He contends that some men and women head teachers operate relatively democratic and in participatory decision making regimes and some men and women do not. Singleton (1995) also asserts that while what one is expected to do is prescribed, how one actually plays the role will be distinguished by personal nuances. Also Genovese (1993), Koziara et al (1987) concur with Singleton (1995) that there is no difference in terms of management leadership style between men and women. But even though they agree that gender does not determine ones' management style, they also agree that women principals are more sympathetic and more understanding. The interviewees reiterated that women because they are mothers, they understand children better, they understand why they behave in certain manners, they are therefore able to mother them while male principals are not able to father them hence the reason why schools headed by men are prone to strikes. In support of this argument,

this is what Principal 2 said:

I think as a mother !!! you know and understand the problems of children better than a man can. For instance when I am sitting in my office I always look at these children when they are playing, I watch them as they come and go, I know children with problems than I would if I were a man. Taking my deputy here, he is a father, you would hear him saying such and such a child is like this and this and I would say oh! Let me tell you why that child is behaving like that, he has a, b, c problems and you know psychologically when he is like that, he is likely to behave in in such a manner.

Singleton (1995) also states that “ the belief that men and women have different natural abilities means that whilst sharing the same title women can find themselves playing quite different roles from their male counterparts”(Singleton,1995:170). She also quotes John who contends that women principals are mother figures particularly equipped by nature to dispense hospitality, aspirins and sticking plasters.

When asked whether their work offers them job-satisfaction, responses varied, some showed that they are quite satisfied and enjoy their work while some showed that they are not. Six out of ten principals interviewed explained that they are satisfied with their job while four stated that they are not. Those who are satisfied are satisfied because they find their job challenging and stimulating while those who are dissatisfied, feel like that because of the fact that they miss teaching which they claim to love more than administrative work, also they complain that they do not get support from their female staff. The view of women who enjoy their work is consistent with Larwood and Wood (1987) who stress that women in management positions are pleased with their jobs, as their positions give them a better chance to “use their talents, solve problems and they have an opportunity to make their voice heard and to creatively contribute their ideas to the betterment of their organisations”. To illustrate this point this is what the interviewees said:

Principal 1

There are many problems, but I really enjoy my job, it gives me satisfaction. There are many challenges that one comes across and it keeps me up to date as there are many things that I need to know. There are many problems, new and old, new ones require a new approach while old ones I already have strategies of dealing with them. But I enjoy most when teachers and students perform well in terms of exam results.

Principal 2

The job itself is very satisfying because the harder I work the better it becomes, even at home I am always busy. But working relations are not good, especially women, they seem to be giving me more problems than men. We are always making noise saying that we are being discriminated against whereas really, if you manage women, they do not give you support. If only these things that are being said by women lawyers and in church, that women should change their attitudes, I wish we could really do that. Most people call me a feminist, but I say no, I am not a feminist, I am one of the people who argue that if a person has qualities for a certain job, s/he has to do it and women should support her/him whether it is a man or a woman. But in most cases, women support men more than they support women even if they have similar qualities. Really here my main problem is that I do not get Support from women.

Principal 2, though satisfied with the job, working relations are not good and she does not get support from her staff especially female. For a principal to be effective good relations have to be maintained between herself and the staff. It must therefore be very hard for her, she is faced with a serious challenge and she has to develop appropriate strategies to deal with the problem otherwise it will not be possible to achieve the goals of the school.

There are also those principals who are completely not satisfied. Here are examples:

Principal 6

I used to be very satisfied with my job initially but now things have changed, my job no longer satisfies me at all. This is because some years back, during my earlier years as principal, both the teachers and students were very understanding and committed to their work but now, that is no longer the case. Both teachers and students are very troublesome. I guess as years go by people change, the type of teachers and students I have now is completely different from the one's I used to have previously and this makes my job very hard and unsatisfactory.

Principal 3

I am completely not satisfied with my job because I am a person who enjoys working harmoniously with people. All these years I have been here, there were many bad things which were happening which I was not aware of, now I am aware of them and they hurt me, they hurt me to an extent that they make me clash with people

Let me tell you, since I have been a principal at the beginning of the year, nine teachers have been suspended, mainly because there are things that I cannot tolerate. I was aware that the principal I replaced was not satisfied completely, but I didn't know what the problem was. She could not express what the problem was as she could not go about saying "so and so are doing that and that". So now that I see these things, I have to deal with them, and this creates enmity between me and my staff. Parents in the same way, when last they saw me as a teacher to their children, now they look at me in a different way. So really I wasn't expecting all these things, even the administration work is too much. Even though I enjoy teaching, I do not have time to do that, the subjects I used to teach with devotion and love, are now lost.

Principal 6 seems to enjoy being comfortable, she does not like change but prefers doing the same old things and applying the same strategies. Now that the students and teachers have changed, she sounds a bit miserable as she has to adopt a different approach. The change may be because the younger generation, both students and younger teachers who are currently joining the teaching fraternity, due to such things as political democracy, emphasis of human rights, are more aware of their rights, they are more critical, for instance they strike over salaries if they are not satisfied, they do not just take orders imposed on them. But before teachers were a bit docile as teaching was regarded as a call, one was supposed to join teaching for the love of it not for money. But principal 6 does not take this as a challenge to her profession, the stage whereby she has to employ her human relations skill and deal with different types of people and their changing attitudes. Principal 3 in the same way is not satisfied due to the deteriorating relationships between herself and her staff. She too was supposed to view this as a challenge. She stated that seven months as a principal, nine teachers have already been suspended, due to this, one would suppose that because she knows how to handle the situation, how to deal with people who become unruly, she would feel more in control and more satisfied. Although it is true that it is a bit depressing when relations are not good, that has to be viewed as a challenge, as that is the very reason why there are principals and managers - to make sure that everything runs smoothly.

For one to be able to carry out the organisation's decisions well she/he has to have power. Asked how much autonomy they have to carry out their decisions, seven out of ten principals stated that their decisions are limited as their autonomy is limited. They argued that the school boards limit the amount of power they have as they have to get their consent before they can carry out any

major decision especially those which require finance. They showed that the school boards dictates what they have to do especially when it comes to financial matters. But there are also some principals who feel that they have the full autonomy to carry out any decision they want to carry out. Below are illustrations to support this point.

Principal 5

I have no autonomy at all, everything we want to do has to be approved by the school board, this board is made up of old men the age of my mother, who have never been to school and know nothing, the next thing they want to tell us what to do, that is why my deputy and I are defying them.

Principal 4

As I head a Catholic school, school fees has to be taken to the reverend, Whenever I want to carry out anything I have to get permission from him, he is very hardheaded, if I can send somebody, maybe my deputy, he will not agree to anything he says. I therefore have to go to him myself and I will spend the whole day trying to convince him why I want to do something. This is very discouraging.

Principal 1

I have full autonomy, I have allocated both the manager and the board certain powers. They do not tell me what to do, if I am not satisfied with what they have done, I tell them straight away. For the past seven years I worked alone in terms of responsibility, that is I had to make all decisions alone. When the boards were introduced, I told them what I expected of them. Even now, the manager, I told him to handle cash but I am the one who tell him what I want, that I want this to be done or I don't want that to be done.

Singleton (1995) quotes a popular version of the legend of King Arthur and his Knights of the round table, the riddle that King Arthur posed was "what thing is that which women most desire in this world?" The answer was "what most women desire is to rule over men - yea even the greatest"(Singleton, 1995:169). As Singleton asks, is this really what women most desire or does it reveal more about male fears and fantasies than the ambitions of women? But it has been established that irrespective of gender, power or perceived power is essential for a person to have credibility in a management role. But most principals under study showed that they do not have all powers to carry out any project or decision they want to carry out. Singleton's (1995) study of women head-teachers also revealed that their freedom to act autonomously was severely

restricted by the very hierarchical and autocratic decision-making process in their schools. There are various sources of power, position is one source, Handy quoted in Singleton (1995) contends that "the occupancy of a role entitles one to all the rights of that role in that organisation"(Singleton,1995:169). But she goes on to show that position power depends ultimately on the value the organisation places on the person in the position. This therefore explains why most principals under study do not have autonomy, although they hold such important positions, their employers do not view the holders of such positions as important, hence the reason why their autonomy is limited and whatever they want to do has to be approved by the school boards who are not even effective.

When asked if there are any special qualities that women in management positions have, all interviewees unanimously showed that women have very special qualities which make them good principals. They argued that schools headed by women are highly disciplined, students keep their uniforms well and are not prone to strikes. Principal 3 claimed that women are sympathetic to the needs of both teachers and students, she further showed that, "it is hard for a man to understand if a female teacher says that she has gynaecological problems although this is a very serious illness". One argued that women are fair and understand better why kids sometimes misbehave.

WOMEN PRINCIPALS' RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR STAFF

Almost all female principals interviewed reiterated that they get most of their support from male staff. They argued that most of their female subordinates are not supportive. The general view emerging from all interviewees was that women work better with men than with other women. It is a bit difficult to understand as to why women in most cases do not get along well at work situations with their female bosses or principals. Subordinates often complain that "female principals want people to feel that they are in charge", "they are emotional and moody, gossip, practise favouritism and bring their personal problems to work". Maybe this is the case but why is it that in most cases these things are noticed mainly by women? The reason may be that sometimes women like to make big issues out of some things which are not serious, things that one could ignore if they do not affect one's job. It is also argued that because they lack self-confidence, women in management positions are good towards men so that they can help them towards certain things that they do not know. But there are some female subordinates who

already have an attitude that because one is a woman, she is bound to behave in a specific manner. They can also be very sexist, responses like “I do not like women to lead because they are not born leaders”, show that there is a serious problem, this woman does not only undermine and underestimate the potential of women but that of herself. Because of the way she was socialised and her culture, that women cannot do certain things, she is not aware that culture is dynamic, it is not static and now women can do certain things which they were not given chance to do in the past. As far as she is concerned, women, by virtue of being women are destined to fail in management, as a result she cannot see any goodness in them, even if there is.

DISCRIMINATION

Principals interviewed feel that they experience two forms of discrimination, men who want to make them feel that they are inferior and are reluctant to take orders from them, and women who do not give them support. Three out of ten principals interviewed experienced discrimination from men. To support this point, this is what the principals said:

Principal 5

Some of my male subordinates like to defy my orders by pretending that that they did not understand, but I know how to deal with them. I always watch the behaviour of my subordinates thoroughly to determine whether when they make mistakes or they fail to do what they were expected to do, is it intentional or a genuine mistake. If it is intentional, I discipline them, I don't even call the person concerned to the office, I talk to him right in the staff room.

Principal 1

I don't experience any form of discrimination, there is only one male who always in the meetings wants to pretend that he does not understand, but because I know him I do not repeat.

But they argue that they do not get support from women. This is what principal 2 said:

My only problem is that I do not get support from my female staff.

There are two main reasons why women in management positions are discriminated against,

one, Lesotho is a patriarchal society and therefore it is believed that management positions are a male domain, that is why some men find it hard to take orders from women. The second reason is that the way women have been socialized has instilled in them that they do not have potential for certain jobs, for this reason even women sometimes do not support other women. But the interviewees showed that there are only rare cases where men want to make them feel inferior or try to discriminate against them, in most cases they are more supportive than female subordinates. The fact that women fail to support other women may be because there are some women who have been so much influenced by culture that women have to take up docile positions that according to them any woman who occupies a senior position is destined to fail. But there are also some women principal whose human relations are so poor that they fail to maintain good working relations between themselves and their staff, as a result they feel like they are being discriminated against. Although some responses from the subordinates show that women need training to manage better, but, there are some things which one cannot acquire from training. Skills like what style of management works best and ideas on how to handle one's staff can be attained through training but how one actually relates to people and how to maintain such harmonious relations comes from within, it is something which an individual has to possess, hence the reason why the character of a person plays such a major role. So female principals have to change their attitude towards their subordinates and deal with them in a more professional manner in order to win their respect and trust. In the same way subordinates have to change their attitude towards women principals and understand that culture is changing and more women are getting educated and therefore they are in a position to handle almost anything.

Under-representation of women in managerial positions is also viewed as a form of discrimination. Asked why women are under represented in managerial positions despite the fact that teaching profession is dominated by women, all of them showed that this is due to culture and socialisation. This is what principal 2 said:

This is due to two main things culture and socialisation - that because of the way women have been brought up, they have been made to feel that they are inferior to men and cannot or it is not right for them to take up certain roles, they are therefore scared to occupy such positions, they feel they have to be subservient and take up docile positions. Because of socialisation women underestimate themselves, they lack self-confidence hence the reason why they are scared to apply for such positions even if they qualify or even over qualify.

Like Al-Khalifa (1989) shows a lot of research on women who presently occupy senior positions shows that they got to such positions out of persuasion and not free will. Sebakwane (1993/94) also quotes Smith who contends that “women have to a certain degree internalized the attitudes and role expectations about women that they have learned to fit neatly into the stereotypes” .

Principal 4

Most schools are church schools and managers who are dominantly male, choose who they want to choose and in most cases they choose men. Sometimes women are scared to apply even if they qualify, they may be having inferiority complex, I don't know. Sometimes I send female teachers to attend some workshops but they fail to write reports when they come back because maybe unlike men they were scared to ask or even participate freely.

Principal 3 also asserted that this under representation is the result of stereotypes that men are better managers because they head families, they can head everywhere “heading and heading” even though practically it doesn't work as women make good principals because they are sympathetic to the needs of both teachers and students. This argument is supported by Restine (1993), Shakeshaft (1989) that socialisation, sex stereotypes and myths are the causes of women under representation. Sebakwane (1994), King (1993) concur with Restine and Shakeshaft when they argue that black cultures are patriarchal in nature the factor which hinders the promotion of women in headship positions. They discovered that both men and women teachers have patriarchal beliefs of leadership which make it difficult for women to hold leadership positions. King (1993) further shows that women are prevented from progressing by traditional views among both male and female employees that a woman should be in a subordinate position as any organisation headed by a woman is destined to fail. So because Lesotho is a patriarchal society, women are viewed as incapable of certain duties which are viewed as a man's domain i.e. management , as a result employers are reluctant to appoint women to such positions as they feel they will fail. The way women have been socialised has also contributed to their under representation as they have been made to believe that they are inferior and that it is unlady like to take up certain roles. Due to this women lack confidence in themselves and sometimes are scared to apply for positions of leadership even though they qualify or even over-qualify.

DUAL ROLES

The literature shows that working women have double obligation or dual roles of career and family, this, it is argued has a very negative impact on their job. All principals interviewed unanimously agreed that the fact that they have dual roles does not have any negative impact on their job. This is consistent with Koziara et al (1987) and Sutherland's (1989) argument that women's double obligation does not affect their job. This may be because apart from nuns, most of the interviewees are more than 45 years of age as a result do not have small children who demand a lot of attention. This is what interviewees said in relation too this point:

Principal 2

I don't have any problems as far as this is concerned, this is because my children are all grown up, my youngest is 32, I am also not staying with my husband as he is teaching at home. But if I was a head when my children were still young, there would be problems, most of my time would be spent on the children , for instance, when they are sick. I would have to attend to them. Just this morning I was telling my students that if you do this, I will detain you and I don't care even if I get home at ten o'clock as nobody will be bothered. So I don't think my job suffers in any way.

Principal 5

I have a very supportive husband who helps me in many ways, but I also have two helpers who help me with my children and my chicken project as I also sell chickens, so my job really does not suffer at all.

The view that the fact that women have dual roles, does not negatively affect their job, is supported by Koziara et al (1987) who argues that working wives do 50% less housework to cater for their job and also Sutherland (1989), Sebakwane (1994), Makara (1982) assert that having to look after children does not have any effect on women's jobs as career women in most cases have helpers to look after their children. But although they argue that they do not have problems as far as their dual roles is concerned, principal 6 who is the only one who has younger children shows that her family suffers as she sacrifices her family time for her work. She shows that she gets home very late as there are many things she has to finish up before going home, also when she gets home she is so tired that she does not have time for her children. This is what she said:

I do not think my job suffers, I think my family is the one that suffers, after school I have to stay behind and finish up certain things, I therefore get home very late . Even when I get home I am so tired that even when my youngest child tries to play with me, I only attend to her for a very short time as I am very exhausted.

Principal 6 's view is consistent with Singleton's (1995) argument that the fact that working women have a dual role places a significant burden on their shoulders no matter how helpful their partners may be.

The fact that most women principal interviewed are over child bearing group and therefore do not have a serious problem as far as dual roles is concerned, shows that women who feel that they do not have a lot of work at home because they do not have young children are the ones who take up these challenging positions. Some of the interviewees even showed that if they had occupied these positions earlier when they had young children, their jobs were going to suffer as the welfare of their children would be their number one priority. But this does not mean that young women who have young children cannot cope as what is important is proper time management, one has to balance ones time so that she spends quality time with her family. There are also nursery schools and helpers at home to take care of the children and domestic work. This therefore means that women can devote a lot of their time to their jobs.

QUESTIONNAIRE RESPONSES

TEACHERS' RESPONSE ON WOMEN PRINCIPALS' MANAGEMENT STYLE

The questionnaires were designed for teachers who work for women principals. The questionnaire aimed at getting the views of teachers about their female principals on issues of management styles and the relationship of their principals with them as staff. They were also aimed at determining the extend to which the responses of subordinates matched those of their principals on these two themes. The questionnaires addressed two themes namely the styles of management used by their women principals and the relationship of women principals with their staff. The questions were asked randomly and it was after responses were given that they were analysed and it was determined which themes they were responding to. Questions one to three were personal questions and required some information about the respondents. Questions seven and ten address the theme of management styles, questions four up to six, eight and nine and

eleven up to sixteen address the theme of the relationship between female principals and their subordinates. As stated out under methodology only 80% of issued questionnaires were returned and out of that 80% most of them had many blank spaces. Also most of unreturned questionnaires were taken by men.

When asked what type of management style their principals use, 39/80 which is 49% showed that their principals dictate orders without considering the feelings of their staff, 35/80 which is 44% on the other hand contend that their principals involve them in decision-making, that they use participative decision making while 5% which was in one school said that she uses laissez fair. But in one school, out of eight questionnaires which were returned, seven showed that the principal involves them in decision-making while in two schools, all those who responded argued that the principal dictates orders without considering their feelings. So even though they are all women, they are individuals and their style of management differs.

When asked if there is a distinction between women and men in terms of the way they manage 46/80 that is 58% of the respondents said that there is a difference while 42% said there is no difference as this depends on the character or personality of an individual not sex. Out of the 58% who argues that there is no difference 13% of them were in favour of women, that female managers manage well while the rest stated that male principals are the best. Various reasons were forwarded for this difference in their style of management. In one school all respondents both male and female showed that there is a difference. One male teacher aged between 30-35 said, "men manage with reason, women with emotion generally", another male aged between 35-40 also said:

From my experience men are clear headed, when they manage, they do not want to make everybody notice that they are the boss. Women managers spend most of their time impressing it upon others that they are the boss.

Statements below are a summary of the responses made in relation to why there is a difference in management styles between men and women. More females than males responded to this question.

- Female teacher aged 25, "women have let themselves to be controlled by jealousy whereas male principals are not"

- Female aged between 25-30 “women like competition, they are jealous and bias and they don’t forget”
- Male aged 45-50 “men are just in decision making during crisis and firm in taking disciplinary actions”
- Female aged 45-50 “women seem to think that people respect them less just because they are women”.
- Female aged 30-35 “ students fear and respect male principals”
- Female 35-40 “men are over-confident and therefore make mistakes, women are more considerate”
- Female aged 35-40 “most men are dictators and they like to manipulate their staff”
- Female 25-30 “men tend to be rude and treat their female staff as inferior and are more likely to abuse them”.
- Female 25-30 “women are understanding to both students and teachers , they understand female staff problems i.e. family problems, illness etc.”
- Female 30-35 Being “hers they tend to be more understanding”.

The study has also established that some principals even though claiming to be involving teachers in decision making, make decisions alone then bring them to teachers for suggestions. These principals then go on to complain that teachers do not contribute while in fact there is nothing to contribute as a decision has already been made. Also teachers cannot in most cases refute the decision that the principal has already made for even if they do, she cannot change it for the same reason that she made it alone in the first place.

It cannot therefore be generalised that women in management have a similar style of management characterised by staff participation in decision making, and that they do not dictate orders.

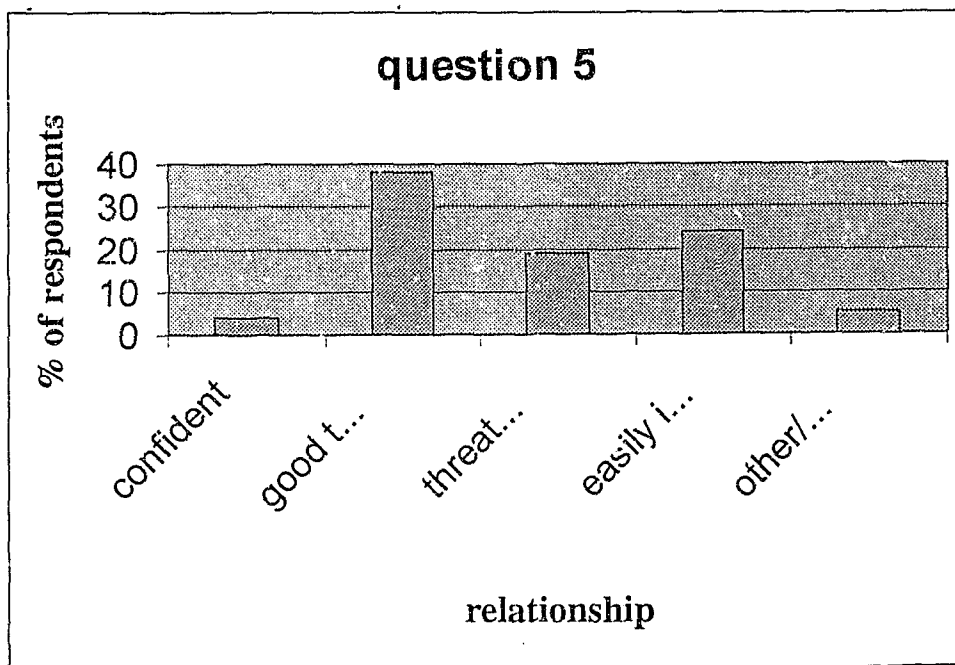
The questionnaires have revealed that even though all principals claimed to be using participative approach, this is not the case in practise, there are some women principals who do involve their teachers in decision making and reach decisions through consensus but there are also those who are authoritarian, who just dictate orders without considering the feelings of their staff. So individual character\ personality or the situation that one finds oneself in, determines or influences one’s management style. All principals interviewed showed that although generally women are sympathetic and understanding, gender does not determine their style of management.

But if women are sympathetic and understanding, this is likely to influence their way of managing, and therefore in this case gender is a determining factor. But most of the subordinates of these principals on the other hand complain that their female principals are in fact not sympathetic and understanding, therefore gender does not determine one's style of managing as not all women are sympathetic and understanding.

WOMEN PRINCIPALS RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR SUBORDINATES

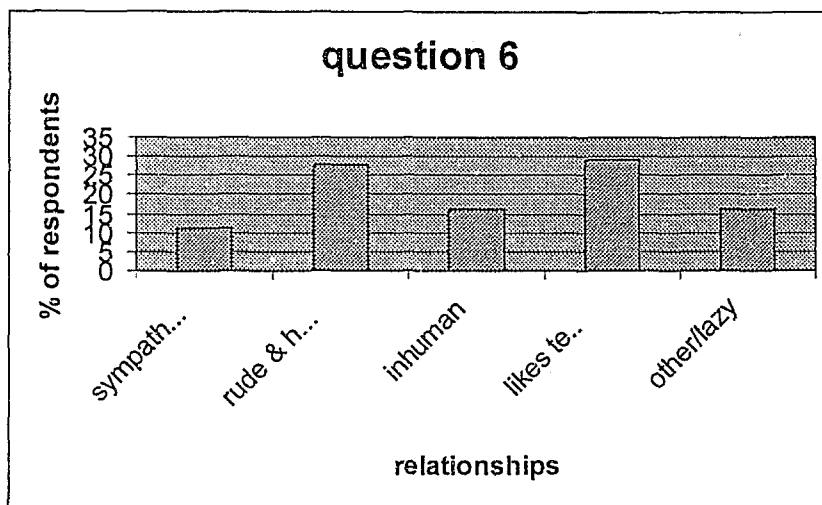
Question 4 asked them if they enjoy having a female principal, 35/80 that is 44% said they do, 30% of these are women while 14% are male. 37/80 that is 46% showed that they did not enjoy having a female principal 32% of these are women while 14% is men, only 3% said that they do not mind working for either of them.

Question 5 asked them what type of a principal they find her to be and this is how they responded to the question,



Responses they had to choose from were: confident, good to work with, threatened by her staff, easily influenced, other\lazy.

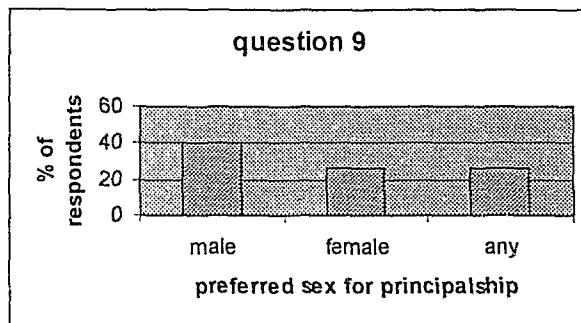
Question 6 asked them how they perceived their principal's relationship with her staff. This is how they responded.



Sympathetic, rude and harsh, inhuman, likes team work, other\lazy.

Question 8 asked them how they expected their principals to behave. Responses given revolved around the following. They wanted them to be firm, cooperative, confident, not to practice favouritism and be nice to teachers. In one school, teachers said they wanted their principal to be exemplary and go to class in time, have goals and not lead by crisis, listen to other teachers and not be moody and emotional.

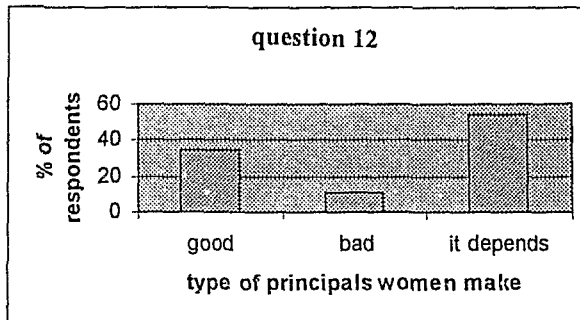
Question 9 asked them whom they would choose if they had to choose their own principal. Below is a summary of their responses.



Question 11 requested them to give their views about women in management. Feelings were mixed, 39% felt that women are good and make good managers while 61% felt that women have inherent weaknesses which make them fail as managers. Positive views revolved around the following, they are good in as far as management is concerned because they are democratic, trustworthy and devoted. It was also argued that they are good and can be exemplary. Conversely some teachers argued that women are incapable when it comes to management positions. One male teacher aged between 35-40 said that, "there are excellent women managers, but others like ours find themselves in such positions and do not know how to handle them as a result they fail". One female teacher showed that women cannot make it in management positions because they lack self-confidence and self esteem while another female aged between 25-30 argued that women enjoy gossiping and practice favouritism. This is what another female teacher said, "I do not want women to lead because they were not born leaders". She further argued that one would think that unmarried women, in this case nuns, like her principal would be better because they do not have family problems, but they are not any different. One female teacher aged between 30-35 also argued that, "women are pompous and want people under their control to feel their presence".

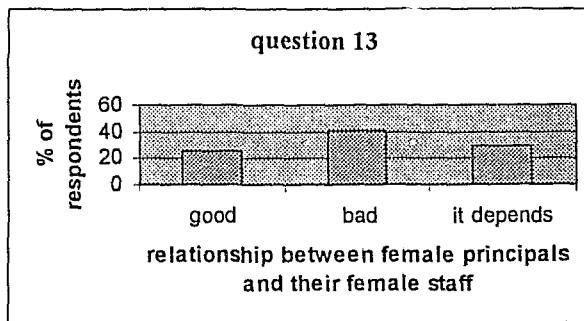
Question 12

Asked them whether women principals make good or bad principals.



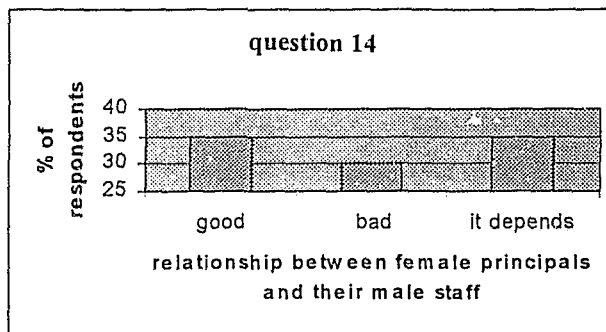
Question 13

This question asked them their views about the relationship between women principals and their female staff.



Question 14

It asked them how they view the relationship between between female principals and their male staff.



Question 15 asked them if there are any special qualities that women in management positions possess. 45/80 that is 57% said that there are special qualities that these women possess while 11/80, 14% said no. 6/80 that is 14% on the other hand said this depends on individual's personality. Those who argued that there are special qualities that these women possess argued that women by virtue of being women sometimes they feel for students and understand their family problems more than men do. They further showed that they tend to be more companionate, motherly understanding and patient.

Questionnaire responses show that the majority of teachers do not enjoy working for a female principal, more women than men showed their dissatisfaction. This supports Sasoon's (1987) contention that neither male nor female teachers enjoy being led by a woman because women are viewed as unsuitable for management positions. But although the majority of the respondents did not favour the idea of working for a woman, it cannot be generalised that people do not enjoy working for a woman as there were some extreme cases in the information collected. In principal 6's school all respondents, both male and female, said that they enjoyed working for a woman, in principal 5's school, all female respondents argued that they were satisfied, while the men said that they were not satisfied. In principal 9's school, only females responded to the questionnaire and all of them were not satisfied, while principal 2's school, all respondents both male and female were completely dissatisfied with their principal. But in some schools responses were mixed. It can therefore be inappropriate to generalise and say that subordinates of females are dissatisfied as gender in this case is not the main determining factor but individuals' interpersonal skills or human relations. The character of an individual be it man or woman will determine whether one will have good working relations with her staff. It is not automatic that because one is a woman, she is bound to be accepted or not accepted by subordinates.

The same thing applies to subordinates, both male and female. There are some responses which reflect the beliefs and attitudes of respondents as individuals, not beliefs or perceptions based on facts and experience of how women manage. Although most interviewees showed that they get most of their support from men, some men irrespective of age or education are very sexist, this is reflected in the type of responses they give. From the responses they give, one can detect whether the woman really is failing or a subordinate just does not like her. It is a woman and therefore not suitable for that position. Responses like "being a woman and therefore not suitable for that position."

I will understand and be understood better by fellow men ”or “women are not suitable for management positions ”. show that from their point of view a woman will never be effective as a manager because as a woman she does not belong there. So no matter how good and committed a female manager can be, men like these will never be impressed as they will always try to find a fault, which they will find as nobody is perfect. But responses like “ there are excellent female managers. but others, like ours, found themselves in such positions and do not know how to handle it ”. show that this man is in a position to judge and analyse the situation, he is aware that although there are some who fail, there are also some who succeed depending on their devotion, commitment and potential.

Not all female principals behave in the manner expected by their subordinates. Some are accused of things such as being harsh, inconsiderate and practising favouritism, so again one’s individual personality will affect or influence her relationship with her staff. Principals who practise favouritism are bound to encounter problems with their subordinates as there won’t be consistency, people will not be treated equally as this would be influenced by how much one is liked by the principal. There are also some women who occupy such positions with preconceived ideas that people are going to underestimate or not respect them just because they are women. Due to this, they unnecessarily dictate orders and are very defensive as they want to make people feel that they are in control. Due to this, they are bound to have constant clashes with their subordinates. Some feel that by holding the positions they hold, they have achieved a lot, they have achieved something that cannot be achieved easily by any other person, as a result they feel that people are bound to be jealous of them, which is not always the case, they are also not in a position to accept any form of criticism as they believe it is motivated by jealousy.

Respondents argued that women bring their family problems to work, they complain that when they have problems at home, these principals take out their frustrations on them (teachers) by shouting at them, being emotional and moody. This affects their relationship with their staff. It is a bit difficult to determine whether women behave like this because of problems at home or because of problems at work, that is, things not working out well, but whatever the reason may be, they have to learn to behave in a professional way and control their feelings, as getting angry and being emotional make it hard for one to make rational decisions.

Women principals therefore have to strive to maintain good relations with their staff as it is when relations are good that they can work collectively towards the attainment of the goals of the school. They have to avoid things which are likely to create conflicts, they have to unite and not divide teachers by overt liking or hatred towards subordinates, they also have to ensure that there is trust. This is because even though it is not easy for one to satisfy all her staff, but someone fair and straightforward is likely to win trust and respect from all. They should not regard people who criticize them as threats, but have to learn to take criticism positively, as building as it through criticism that one learns one's weaknesses and improves on them. It is also through criticism that we grow mentally as nobody is perfect.

CONCLUSION

The data collected shows that women principals use two main styles of management: participative and authoritarian, although it is only in rare cases that they use authoritarian style. They showed that the character of a person and the situation one finds oneself in determines or influences one's style of management. But even though the principals claim to be using participative approach, the subordinates on the other hand complain that this is not true, they argue that the principals just impose decisions on them without any consultation with them. It has also been discovered that one's personality and not gender influences one's management style as a result, women do not use one management style.

The interviewees showed that they are sometimes discriminated against by their subordinates who because of cultural beliefs, are reluctant to take orders from them. They also complain that they do not get support from their fellow women. Due to these their relations with their staff are strained. But the subordinates also argue that women principals, because they lack confidence in themselves often ill-treat their staff in order for people to feel that they are in control.

Although the women in the study are over the child-bearing age group and therefore did not have any problems as far as dual roles are concerned, it was discovered that this poses a problem if one has younger children at home as one does not have enough time to spend with them.

CHAPTER FIVE CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study established the perceptions about women in management positions in Lesotho High Schools. It investigated styles of management used by women, that is whether women have a similar style of management. It also examined the relationship between women managers and their subordinates, whether or not they experience any form of discrimination and to what extent their dual roles of family and work impact on their careers.

This research discovered that principals use two main styles of management: participative and authoritarian, it further revealed that the character or personality of an individual and not gender determines one's management style, so women do not have a similar style of management. On the theme of women principals' relationships with their staff, the study established that generally women principals have good working relations with their male subordinates than their female one's although they are sometimes discriminated against by their staff who due to cultural beliefs are sometimes reluctant to take orders from them. It is a bit difficult to establish as to why women do not support other women, one would suppose that by virtue of being women they would feel obliged to be supportive of each other. Further research will therefore be necessary to determine as to why this is the case. The study also illuminated that even though it is often argued that working women have a problem of handling dual roles of career and family, older women, that is those over the age of 45 in most cases do not have such a problem, this may be because their children are old enough to take care of themselves. But it has also been discovered that the issue of dual roles poses a problem if one has younger children at home, even if one has helpers and a supportive husbands as one does not have enough time to spend with one's children. Finally, it was discovered that women principals are not discriminated against by their colleagues.

While the findings confirm some of the aspects of similar research conducted in other parts of the world, it also challenges other aspects of international research. The findings are consistent with international research on the aspect of discrimination: the study has revealed that sometimes women principals are discriminated against by their subordinates who are sometimes reluctant to take orders from them. The study has also revealed that women are under-represented in

managerial positions. But the findings also challenge international research on certain aspects, it has been investigated that women subordinates are not supportive of their women principals and that they do not have good working relations, but women principals get most of their support from men. It has also been established that there is no single style of management common to women. The study has further revealed that the issue of dual roles of career and family does not have any negative impact on working women. The differences may be attributed to both culture and context in which the research was conducted. The context within which these researches were conducted is different. Lesotho is a developing country and the conditions under which people work is quite different from what happens internationally. The culture of these countries is also different. African culture is different from European one and the way women are viewed may therefore be different.

The research also had some limitations. due to some problems encountered by the researcher, only ten women principals were interviewed, these women head urban schools, their perceptions may as a result be different from those of other women principals especially in the rural areas.

To ensure effective and efficient management of schools by women, the report shows that a number of issues need to be addressed. The following recommendations are therefore proposed.

Women should be supportive of each other. One would expect that women would work harmoniously together but research shows that this is not always the case. Women in management positions should have a positive attitude towards their women subordinates, they should treat them with respect in order to win their respect and help them towards their advancement. It is impossible for women to be promoted to management positions if women who hold such positions do not recommend their fellow women who have necessary qualities. Female subordinates in the same way should be helpful and work together as a team with their fellow principals. They should change their attitude that women are potential failures as far as management is concerned. It also has to be borne in mind that culture is dynamic, that due to changes in socio-economic situation, many women are getting educated and holding those positions which were traditionally labelled as for men.

As research shows that most of the laws and policies discriminating against women have been

developed by men. one would expect that men especially subordinates of women would not be supportive of women in management positions. But all principals interviewed reiterated that they get most of their support from male teachers who despite only a few of them, are willing to take orders and carry out their duties well. It is argued this is because women in management positions often treat their male subordinates with respect with the hope of winning their support because they think they know a lot and therefore can help them. The good relationship between female principals and their male subordinates may also be explained scientifically that “unlike polls attract each other”. But whatever the reason may be, men tend to give women moral support and try to help them in any way they could which is good and therefore should be appreciated.

Women have to believe in themselves, they should not be easily threatened as this often has a negative impact on their relationship with staff. They should learn to take criticism positively, not as a sign of hatred and to use it to improve themselves as nobody is perfect.

Another important factor that has to be put into consideration is the need for consistency. Subordinates should be treated equally in order to maintain healthy working relations between the principal and the teachers. Favouritism should not be overtly practised as this leads to division among staff hence lack of cooperation.

Many teachers argue that their female teachers are very authoritarian and just impose ideas on them without taking into consideration their feelings. This as a result creates a situation whereby teachers divorce themselves from decisions made as they feel that they are not party to them. Participation and team work are therefore not enhanced as a result the school is not in a position to fully achieve its goals. Principals should therefore be democratic in the way they manage people as it is through proper sharing of ideas that the goals of the school can be easily achieved.

To ensure a good representation of women in management positions, women have to apply for such positions. although it is sometimes argued that women do apply but they are not considered, not all principals interviewed applied for such positions but were nominated. The fact that they were nominated shows that their potential is recognised even though in most cases they underestimate themselves because of the way they have been socialized.

Women should be in a position to separate their personal problems from work. Most teachers who participated in the questionnaire both male and female argued that some female principals tend to be highly emotional, rude, and very harsh depending on their moods, which in most cases are influenced by the state of affairs at home. They complain that if they have problems at home or any personal problem, they want to dump their frustrations on teachers by shouting at them even in front of the students. But the point is one does not need to shout at people to be heard especially when dealing with adults as by behaving like this, they confirm or support the myths about women.

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APPENDIX 1

N.B. THE INFORMATION YOU GIVE WILL BE TREATED WITH GREAT CONFIDENTIALITY. I KINDLY REQUEST YOUR PERCEPTIONS ABOUT WOMEN IN MANAGEMENT POSITIONS, WHETHER ACCORDING TO YOU WOMEN MAKE GOOD MANAGERS OR NOT. NO NAMES AR. NEEDED TO ENSURE ANONYMITY.

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS WHO WORK FOR A FEMALE PRINCIPAL

1.SEX(please tick)

FEMALE

MALE

2.AGE GROUP

1. -20
- 2.20-25
- 3.25-30
- 4.30-35
- 5.35-40
- 6.40-45
- 7.45-50
- 8.50-

3.QUALIFICATIONS

- 1.University degree
- 2.College certificate
- 3.Other

4.Do you enjoy having a female principal?

1.yes

2.no

Give reasons for your answer

5.What type of a principal do you find her to be?

- 1.Confident
- 2.Good to work with
- 3.Threatened by other members of staff
- 4.Easily influenced \ unpredictable
- 5.Other? Specify _____

6.How do you perceive her relationship with her staff?

- 1.Sympathetic and polite
- 2.Rude \harsh
- 3.Inhuman
- 4.Enjoys working collectively with her staff
- 5.Other? Specify _____

7. What style of management does she use?

1. Dictates orders without considering the feelings of others (authoritarian)
2. Involves staff members in decision making (collegiality)
3. Diplomatic
4. Transactional
5. Laissez fair

8. What do you expect from her as a principal?

9. If you were to choose your own principal who would you choose?

1. Male principal
2. Female principal
3. Any

Give reasons for your answer

10. Is there any distinction between women and men in terms of the way they manage?

1. yes
 2. no
- Please give reasons
-

11. What are your views about women in management positions?

12. Do you think women make good or bad principals?

1. Good
 2. Bad
 3. It depends
- Please give reasons
-

13. How do you view the relationship between female bosses and their female subordinates?

1. Good
 2. Bad
 3. It depends
- Please give reasons

14. How do you view the relationship between female principals and their male subordinates.

1. Good
 2. Bad
 3. It depends
- Please give reasons

15. Are there any special qualities that women in management positions have?

1. yes
 2. no
- Give reasons
-
-

APPENDIX 2

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR WOMEN PRINCIPALS.

PERSONAL QUESTIONS

A

1. Age
2. Marital status
3. Number of children
4. When did you join teaching?
5. When did you become a principal?
6. How did you become a principal - did you apply or were you nominated?
7. What is the size of your school ?
8. Number of teachers - how many males and how many females

B

1. How do you feel about your work as a principal – do you enjoy it or not?
2. Which style or styles of management do you use?
3. How do your subordinates feel about your style of management?
4. How do you view your relationship with your subordinates?
5. Do you think gender determines one's management style, that is do women have a similar style of managing?
6. How much autonomy do you have to carry out decisions?
7. Have you ever experienced any form of discrimination mainly because you are a woman?
8. What are your views about women in management positions?
9. Are there any special qualities that women principals possess?
10. Do you think the issue of dual roles of family and career has any negative impact on women's career?
11. There are forty six high schools in the Maseru district but only eighteen are headed by women. What do you think is the cause of this under-representation of women in management positions.
12. Where do you see yourself in five years time?

Author Shale N L

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