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UNIVERSITY OF THE WITWATERSRAND, JOHANNESBURG

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

A GENDER PERSPECTIVE ON DEMOCRACY IN SCHOOL MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF A GAUTENG SECONDARY SCHOOL

By

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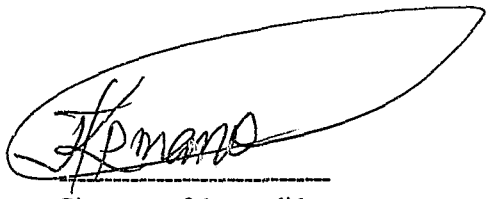
Professor Shirley Pendlebury

A Research Report Submitted in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Education (MEd)

1999

DECLARATION

I declare that this research report, A Gender Perspective in Democracy on School Management Practices of a Gauteng Secondary School, is my own unaided work, it is being submitted for the Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg and it has not been submitted to any other university.



Signature of the candidate

21-12-99

Date

Johannesburg

Place

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this single case study is to evaluate how far the government's policy measures and legislation have gone to overcome gender inequalities in the school management practices of a school in Soweto. The school was selected because of the role it played in the struggle against apartheid. To accomplish this task an account of the historical background of school management under apartheid is given. The study also develops a conceptual framework through an examination of the notion of democratic citizenship drawn out of Marshall's (1950) conception of citizenship, a conception of citizenship as articulated by the feminist theorists such as Dietz (1992) and Walby (1990) and five faces of oppression as conceived by Young (1990). The study deployed qualitative methodology. Data was collected through staff questionnaires and interviews, complemented by documentary analysis, informal conversation and on-site observation. The findings show that there is a gap between national gender equity policy and implementation at this school. There is also a gap between the explicit commitment to democracy at the school and its practices with respect to gender. Evidence from the study shows that gender inequalities and discrimination still exist in the school. These inequalities were reflected in the composition of the management staff, in the requirements of appointment and promotion of educators into management positions. It was also evident that many educators still hold negative perceptions about women.

Keywords

School management in South Africa; Human rights; Gender equality; Citizenship; Participation; Discrimination; Democracy; Oppression; Powerlessness and Marginalisation.

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To all of my friends who offered me a moral support and otherwise throughout my studies.

The above-mentioned people are shining stars to me. God Bless Them All.

DEDICATION

This research report is dedicated to my family, beloved sisters and brothers and my wonderful parents, Thobanye and Jack Komane, who are source of inspiration. They constantly remind me that "Thuto ke lehumo" (Education is wealth).

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC African National Congress

C2005 Curriculum 2005

DET Department of Education and Training

GEAR Growth, Employment and Redistribution

GETT Gender Equity Task Team

SASA South African Schools Act

SGB School Governing Body

SAP Structural Adjustment Programme

SADTU South African Democratic Teachers' Union

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Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Research aims

This project evaluates how far current educational policy and legislation have gone to overcome gender inequalities in the management of a Gauteng school. In order to accomplish the primary aim, a number of subsidiary aims will be given attention. These are:

1. To discuss staff management composition, the mission statement, the criteria for appointment and promotion of educators, and the perceptions of educators and the principal of the school under review.
2. To provide a brief critical account of the history of gender relations under apartheid.
3. To discuss the intervention strategies developed by the government since 1994 to deal with gender inequalities in education, particularly in school management.
4. To develop a conceptual framework based on the notion of citizenship as posited by Marshall (1950) and complemented by citizenship as conceived by Walby (1990) and Dietz (1992). Also, as a critical part of the conceptual framework, to give an account of the five faces of oppression as articulated by Young (1990). This conceptual framework will be used as a tool to explore gender patterns and trends in management practices of the school in which the study is contextualised.

1.2 Rationale

When the current government took power in 1994 it was faced with an enormous and

challenging task of transforming governmental structures and the society as a whole. Calls to address the legacy of apartheid included, among others, demands for gender equity in schools. Within a relatively short span of time, the government developed policy and passed enabling legislation to address the issue of gender inequalities and curb gender discrimination in schools. The White Paper on Education and Training (1995), the South African Schools Act (1996) and Curriculum 2005 (1997) (hereinafter C2005), although not primarily concerned with gender, were some of the measures intended to transform schools.

Against this background, the rationale for this project is to evaluate how far the democratic vision of gender equality has been realised in one set of institutions - schools. Firstly, it is important to ask the following question: Why focus particularly on gender issues in school management practices rather than on issues of class, ethnicity or language? The study takes gender as one of the critical dimensions in educational policy and implementation. However, the question of gender inequality and or discrimination should not be seen as being isolated from other forms of oppression as "it is imperative that we do not compartmentalise oppressions, but instead formulate strategies for challenging all oppressions on the basis of an understanding of how they interconnect and articulate" (Brah, cited in Carrim, 1995:31). As Carrim (1995), following Ellsworth (1989), has argued, one cannot "simply isolate a particular form of oppression and not explore the ways in which that form of oppression intersects with, is similar to, is reinforced by or militates against forms of oppression" (Carrim, 1995: 31). All forms of oppression are important to be explored as "they needed to be taken together, not papered over and thereby silenced" (Carrim, ibid.31).

The study acknowledges the interconnectedness of all variables as forms of oppression.

Nevertheless, as already mentioned, the main focus in this study is gender and school management practices. Gender analysis within school management practice and theory is an important issue in its own right. According to Davies (1990), the under-representation of women in the control of the locus of power and decision-making is a matter of serious concern. It is necessary for boys and girls to see women in decision-making. Gender is also critical to the culture of human rights stressed in South Africa's Bill of Rights. But gender is not only a political matter; it is also an epistemological concern. It is important to challenge masculinist definitions of appropriate management and to dispute male domination in the selection of knowledge and curricular matters.

Although it would be dangerously simplistic to think that change will take place overnight or within a short period of four to five years, it is equally important to reflect on the rate and patterns of change. New policy may be a necessary condition for transformation but a more critical and more difficult task lies in implementation.

Is the government merely paying lip service to policy implementation? According to Jansen (1998), one of the reasons why educational policies fail is that the state over-invests in the political symbolism of policy rather its practical implementation. He argues that:

> Social policy carries a broader symbolic significance than its simple technocratic ends, indeed all states use policy for purpose of legitimation. However, since 1994 it has been clear that the declaration of education policy was almost driven by political imperatives to the exclusion of practical considerations. (Jansen, 1997:36)

To what extent is this argument defensible? This question can only be answered if the intervention strategies intended to attain gender equity are assessed, which is the general intention of the research project. The specific focus of the project is gender issues in a school

management context.

I felt that it would be interesting to see how the Constitution and educational policy measures are impacting substantively on management activities of a Gauteng secondary school, namely Morris Isaacson High. There are three reasons for choosing only one school and for choosing Morris Isaacson High in particular. Firstly, I deemed it necessary to focus on one school so that I could give an in-depth analysis of its management practices. Secondly, the historic role that Morris Isaacson High played in the struggle against apartheid and its commitment to democratic norms and values make it an especially telling case for testing the extent to which policy has changed practices. It was interested to see whether the school is still sensitive to democracy, with particular reference to its management practices. Thirdly, it is my intention to discuss the findings of the study with the educators of Morris Isaacson High in the hope that they will be useful to any of their school-based initiative intended to attain gender in the management. Evaluation of policy and legislation is at issue because of the problem that is often caused by a gap between policy and implementation. Fullan cautions:

> Government agencies have been preoccupied with policy-program initiation, and that vastly underestimates the problem and process of implementation. We have a classic case of two different worlds - the policymakers on the one hand and local practitioners on the other hand. To the extent that each side is ignorant of the subjective of the other, reform will fail and the extent is great (Fullan, 1992:79).

There is an argument that, in many situations where changes are being contemplated, the likelihood of disjuncture between policy-formulation and the real world or point of service delivery is evident. It is important to see how this policy problem is addressed at the level of school management.

In addition to issues in policy and management, the study is motivated by an epistemological

concern. According to Hall (1989) the human subject has hitherto been plagued by the so-called 'crisis of identity'. It is not the purpose of the study to discuss in depth the stages that the conceptions of identity have gone through. What is important here is that "old identities which stabilized the social world for so long are in decline, giving rise to new identities and fragmenting the modern individual as a unified subject" (Hall, 1989:274). Hall argues that late modern societies are characterised by 'difference' that cuts them divisions from across the spectrum and produce permutations of identities. Laclau (1990) articulates the same point using the concept of 'dislocation'. He says that the crisis of identity is a never-ending process involving a dislocation or decentring of a structure. This structure is displaced and not replaced by another but by a 'plurality of the power centres'. This process of identity and change is the "pluralization of identities" (Hall, 1989: 278).

Educationally, the shifting nature of the identities of the human subject has far reaching consequences. Carrim argues that the notion of 'difference' has surfaced, in among others, philosophical and educational discourses. In his view the incorporation and acknowledgement of difference into antiracist project is necessary and it is also important to understand that "differences are not static and fixed, but mutable and culpable of shifts and changes" (Carrim, 1995: 30). The same thing applies to gender equity projects.

By implication, the study endeavours to reject essentialist notions about women's capacities or qualities of management and thereby argues that knowledge is socially constructed and not innate. In management terms, it is hoped that this study will enable us understand that women are not inherently inferior or managerially deficient. It is the assumption of this study that if and where women's performance has been inferior this is because they have been

marginalised, 'illegitimised' and 'inferiorised' and not because of their inherent qualities. Chapter one shows how various mechanisms such as policies and the law were used to legitimise gender biased practices in school management. Crucial in this is that the study provides a framework within which there can be a qualitative shift of ways in which women have been understood and perceived. Following other theorists, the study attempts to explain the previous understanding of a common knowledge (that naturally men are superior and women are inferior) as problematic, provisional and open to contestation. It is hoped that the study would show that the old patriarchal ways of thinking and practice are problematic. Such ways cannot be sustained anymore. This study in school management shows that it is important to undermine old ways of thinking by asserting that school management should be discrimination free and its central features should be among others equality and equity. The study opens avenues for policy and implementation that undermine such old patriarchal ways of thinking and practice. For example, in order for the government to address gender inequalities in school management it is important to come up with policies that incorporate gender equality. Such policies should treat both female and male educators equally in school management practices.

Besides its educational value, this study arose out of personal interest and experience. As a research assistant in the Democracy Research Project of the Faculty of Education (Wits University), I was exposed to issues of democracy, including equality, freedom and social justice. Although I spent only a short period in this project, I was able to acquire theoretical knowledge around these concepts and therefore saw it interesting to use them in conducting this study. Earlier I had studied human rights as a component of the Bachelor of Education programme.

Critics may question my credibility (as a male researcher) for conducting a research concerning women. Sebakwane contends that "black female views should be central to providing an alternate understanding of the impact of class, race and gender oppression on black women's careers under apartheid" (Sebakwane, 1993/4: 84). Although she argues that this view does not preclude participation of other researchers, she stresses that being black and female puts such researchers in a unique position to see their common experience differently from other researchers who have no similar experiences. It is the aim of the study to oppose the privileging of experience in conducting social research. It is problematic to use race and gender to determine who should conduct research on whom. The study of black female educators should not only be left to black female researchers alone. As Wolpe (1993\4) argues that the privileging of experience can result in a form of exclusion and lapses into reductionism and essentialism.

Although it might be possible that some black and female researchers may previously have been teachers, their experiences do differ and are also different from the experiences of the educators of the school selected for this study. This is not to rule out the possibility that there may be commonalities in their experiences. However, experience is something that may not be lived and conceptualised in the same way. Oppression under apartheid came in a myriad of ways, as did the experiences of this oppression. Privileging of experience is problematic because may lead to monopolisation of knowledge by black and female researchers. The pursuit of knowledge in the form of research should be a process and activity open for all to explore, regardless of race and gender.

1.3 Outline of chapters

The research report is based on a case study of one school in the context of a broader understanding of political, social and educational change in South Africa. Chapter two presents a broad historical background of gender vis-à-vis school management and traces the origins of male dominance that have created and perpetuated gender inequalities and discrimination in the area. This chapter also evaluates the impact of policy on school management issues. Finally, chapter two gives an account of the conceptual framework of the project. This conceptual framework is developed from the conception of citizenship posited by Marshall (1950) combined with a conception of citizenship with a gender dimension as articulated by Dietz (1992) and Walby (1990) and other philosophical literature of social justice as conceived by Young (1990).

Chapter three discusses methodological issues, namely the qualitative approach, requirements of case studies, data collection techniques and triangulation. The chapter also gives a brief history of the research site, Morris Isaacson High. Limitations of the research undertaking, its ethical implications and the ways in which data were analysed and interpreted will also be subjects of discussion.

In chapter four the conceptual framework is developed to ascertain whether there are indicators of gender inequality and discrimination in the school management practices. These findings reveal that gender inequalities and discrimination still exist. These were reflected in the composition of management staff, the criteria used to appoint and promote educators into management positions. It was also discovered that most educators still hold limited views

about women. The mission statement of the school outlines the commitment of the school to democratic practice in management but it does not prioritise gender equality. Patriarchal ways of thinking are apparent among both female and male members of staff.

Chapter five argues that the recommendations made by Gender Equity Task Team (herein referred to as GETT) should be translated into action. The question of capacity building is also raised as a critical one. Stakeholders should be equipped with skills to tackle the challenges that are brought by change. Affirmative action is also suggested as a matter for consideration in the event of appointments and promotions of educators into management positions of the school.

Chapter Two

LITERATURE REVIEW AND CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter is divided into four parts. The first part focuses on the historical background of school management in South Africa, as this will shed light on gender patterns and trends within the management practices of the school under investigation. This part draws on both international and local literature to show that gender imbalances in school management constitute a problem in the countries across the globe. Statistics will be provided to substantiate the claim that gender inequalities constitute a widespread phenomenon.

The second part critically examines factors that have blocked women's upward mobility in school management employment. These factors include, inter alia, the construction of school management along patriarchal lines, schools of thought such as deficit theory, and the role of curriculum in creating gender inequalities in education. It is important to identify these factors as policy problems so that appropriate intervention strategies can be implemented.

The third part, which is the longest, is divided into sub-sections. Before looking at the intervention strategies in South Africa, this part explores the Constitution (1996) and the White Paper on Education and Training as part of the enabling legislation to attain gender equity. Particular attention will be given to the Constitution (1996) since it provides "a future founded on the recognition of human rights, democracy and peaceful coexistence and development opportunities for all South Africans, irrespective of colour, race, class, belief and sex" (White Paper on Education and Training 1995:17, commenting on the interim Constitution of 1993).

The role of the White Paper on Education and Training (1995) will be examined, as it provides guidelines on how to achieve gender equity in the educational system of which school management is a part. Nevertheless, the first sub-section examines the role of the SBGs in attaining gender equity as conceptualised in the SASA (1996). The South African Schools Act (SASA) will be explored in order determine the extent to which gender inequalities in school management are taken as a matter that needs attention. According to its preamble, SASA (1996) is intended to achieve democracy in schools and uphold the rights of all stakeholders such as learners, parents and educators. The second sub-section discusses and highlights a need for normative change on the part of educators. The third sub-section highlights gender equity driven role that the principals can play. The fourth sub-section looks at the roles of curriculum and teacher education in achieving gender equity. The fifth sub-section highlights the role that can be played by media in the achievement of gender equity. The sixth sub-section offers a critique of the recently unveiled five-year education plan, and the last sub-section looks at the ways in which the budgetary constraints imposed by Growth Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) and other global trends impact on the implementation of gender equity policies.

The fourth part develops the conceptual framework and analytical tools for the research. The conception of citizenship posited by Marshall (1950) is the primary framing concept. However, because Marshall omits gender, his notion will be supplemented by a concept of citizenship drawn out of the work of feminist writers such as Dietz (1992) and Walby (1990). These writers advocate an inclusive conception of citizenship, which is democratic in nature. The combination of these conceptions is useful because it captures the nature of citizenship as it is conceived in post-apartheid South Africa. In addition, part four considers Young's (1990)

analysis of "five faces of oppression", which are exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism and violence. The presence of any of these faces will serve as indicators of social injustices in the school management practices of the school under review.

2.1 Historical background

To understand the present management system in South African schools, it is important to locate it in its historical context. Gender Equity Task Team (GETT) (1997) states that it is necessary to know and understand gender differences which exist in all the levels of the education system in order to avoid the introduction of cosmetic changes, that, in the long term, will achieve little. The necessity for this historical account stems from the argument that, by and large, current educational policy is a response to the previous system of education, which was based on social inequalities and segregation and which intruded upon school management theory and practice. Hence, there is a need to redress these injustices. Harman (1984), supports the view that past policy influences the present policy by arguing that:

> A policy does not emerge within a vacuum. Rather it is developed within the context of particular sets of values, pressures and constraints, and within particular arrangements. It also is a response to particular problems, needs and aspirations (Harman, 1984: 17-18).

It is important to understand the nature of the organisational aspects that need to be changed. In this context, school management, as one of the aspects of education system, needs to be located within its historical context so that appropriate remedial strategies can be adopted. Gender inequalities caused by discrimination in the educational system in general and school

management in particular, have been recognised as policy problems and thereby new policy measures were put in place to address these problems created by the past gender biased school management system.

According to Nkomo (1990), the historical background of the system to be transformed is necessary to have a firm understanding of its genesis, evolution and the resultant crises. (1990). Nkomo is not of course, implying that there should be a retention of the characteristics of the current system. Rather, knowledge of this historical background is necessary as its "critical understanding must inform the construction of a system that is antithetical in its praxis" (Nkomo, 1990: 130).

There is overwhelming evidence, to suggest that there have been gender inequalities in school management across the globe. Davies states that "concerns about gender disparities within education have, in fact, been long-standing in many parts of the world" (Davies, 1990: 66). Although women make up a large portion of the teaching service, the teaching profession has been the province of men. According to Colin Riches (1990), although women were in majority in maintained schools (nursery, primary and secondary) in England and Wales in 1984-85, only 39% of all head teachers were female.

There are other countries in where gender disparities are extreme. For example, Siwitibav (cited in Davies 1990) observed that in Fiji female teachers constituted 51% of the entire teaching force; however, only 28% of them held managerial positions in secondary schools. According to the statistics from the Department of Education in Brunei (cited in Davies 1990), 60% of teachers are women, but they only constitute 2% of head teachers; and in the

Philippines, 57% of teachers are women, but only 17% of them are principals in secondary schools.

Similar patterns have been evident in South Africa. The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) recognises the fact that women are overwhelmingly represented in the teaching service, but are poorly represented in the higher echelons of administration. Gender disparities in school management are stark. According to the recent available information by Edusource Data News (1998), gender imbalances were noticeable in 1995. Shindler, cited in the report by GETT (1997), gives a short but complete picture to indicate that men held a disproportionate share of management positions in schools. She indicates that " while men make up 36% of all teachers in South Africa, they hold 58 % of principal posts, 69 % of deputy principal posts And 50 % of head of department posts" EduSource Data News (1995b: 18). Tables 1 and 2 illustrate gender imbalances in South African schools by indicating educators according to rank and gender in 1994 and 1997. What is evident is that despite the efforts by the new government to address gender inequalities in school management, little has been achieved.

Table 1: Management positions in terms of gender and rank.

Position	No. of female educators	Percentage	No. of male educators	Percent age
Principal	9790	42%	13 798	58%
Deputy	2045	31%	4480	69%
Dept. head	13 452	50%	13676	50%
Teachers	194 125	68%	90 537	32%
Total	219 412	64%	122 491	36%

Source: *EduSource Data News*. No 10 October 1995

Table 2: Percentage distribution of state-paid educators by rank and gender in 1997

	Female	Male	Unspecified	Total
Principal	35,8%	62,3%	1,9%	100%
Deputy	30,6%	68,4%	1,1%	100%
Head of dept.	48,8%	50,1%	1,1%	100%
Educator	65,5%	33,3%	1,2%	100%
Remedial Educator	91,2%	7,4%	1,4%	100%
Special Educator	80,9%	18,3%	0,8%	100%
Unspecified rank	60,0%	35,0%	5,0%	100%
Total	62,6%	36,1%	1,4%	100%

Department of Education

These tables show that between 1994 and 1997 gender inequalities in school management were not sufficiently dealt with in practice. The tables illustrate the gulf between policy and implementation. These are the only recent available figures that show gender imbalances and general trends on management issues since the new government took over in 1994. These tables cut across racial lines but there are still gender inequalities in ex-DET schools that are predominantly, if not exclusively, black.

2.2 Understanding the causes of male dominance in school management structures and practices

As already indicated, school teaching is traditionally a female profession, although women educators are under-represented at the level of school management. A high proportion of male educators (though they form a small percentage of the teaching force in South Africa) occupies management positions in schools. The dearth of women in school management can be explained by identifying barriers to women's recognition and advancement. Several factors have been implicated as bringing unnecessary impediments to the career development of women.

In her analysis Reiger (1993) gives a historical account of gender dynamics within organisations. She teases out the historical relationship between the emergence of the modern organisational structures and the family. In the context of this particular relationship, the formulation of public life was based on the exclusion of women, but nonetheless it relied implicitly on their labour. The public sphere became associated with the masculine and technical rationality and the feminine equated with the private sphere. This limited conception of women's role intruded into schools where female teachers have been given jobs associated with household chores while their male colleagues were (and, in many cases, still are) regarded as authority bearers.

In similar vein, Blackmore (1993) argues that since the mid-nineteenth century, educational administration has been constructed as a masculine enterprise in which a particular type of masculinity has become associated with bureaucratic rationality. Teaching in particular has

been constructed as a feminine activity; an extension of the nurturing mother. This pattern is evident in many countries. Women dominate the teaching profession but seldom occupy positions as principals, deputy principals and heads of department.

Women's absence in school management could be interpreted as a form of social injustice and violation of women's rights. However, according to the deficit theory, women's dearth in these positions can be explained and understood in terms of low self-esteem or low self-confidence and a lack of capacity to be effectively involved in school management issues. This argument essentially blames women (as victims) for their lack of achievement. It implicates personal internal barriers as blocking their career pathways. The belief that women contribute to their own lack of achievement is evident in the following comment by one of the female interviewees in Sebakwane's study: "I think that women are afraid to teach in high schools because they think that boys are more problematic. I think women have got inferiority complexes-they have no self-confidence"(Sebakwane 1993\4:93). Such arguments and opinions reflect an uncritical analysis of gender issues in school management and cannot be taken seriously. They fail to come to grips with the fact that, although women may blame themselves, it is because there are norms and values inculcated in their minds that they are their own enemies in terms of their promotional prospects.

Smuck (cited in Shakeshaft 1989) argues that women's lack the confidence to move up the managerial ladder is a product of male superiority and does not take into consideration the social conditions in which women have to operate. The argument that women are to blame provides mythological explanations that do not fit with reality and serve only to camouflage the reality about gender in school management. Gender or biological differences cannot at all

determine the nature of one's confidence. This argument is flawed in the sense that it homogenises women. It fails to capture the dynamics and complexities of difference among individual female teachers and treats them instead as a monolithic mass to be described with the same characteristics. To see women teachers as essentially the same (as lacking confidence) is to fail to grapple with the circumstances under which women operate. To quote Hanson and Tack:

> The chief source of male hegemony lies not in the psychological make-up of individuals..., but in the structure and operation of organisations. Women behave in self-limiting ways not because they were socialised as female, but because they are locked into lower power, lower invisibility dead-end jobs (Cited in Shakeshaft, 1989: 19).

Some theorists argue that state policies and schools can be held responsible for the creation and perpetuation of management structures and practices with patriarchal foundations. To quote Blackmore:

> Common recognition that the educational apparatus of the state and the state itself have, over time developed certain knowledge, policies and rules and regulations and ultimately certain patterns of power, which have systematically structured unequal relationships between men and women, girls and boys (Blackmore, 1993:9).

The state, curricula and teachers under apartheid played a pivotal role in producing and reproducing gender inequalities within school management. Truscott (1994) argues that through the introduction of Bantu Education Act in 1954 there is a sexist and racist ideology behind the historical positioning of women in the teaching profession. She quotes Hendrik Verwoerd in his explanation of the Act:

> As women by nature are so much better fitted for handling young children, and as the great majority of Bantu children are to be found in lower classes of primary school, it follows that there should be far more female than male teachers. The department will therefore... declare the assistant posts in ... primary schools to be female teachers' posts... Quotas will be laid down at training schools as regards numbers of male and female candidates respectively which may be allowed to enter for the courses... this measure will, in the course of time, bring about a considerable saving of funds which can be devoted to... children in school...(Quoted in Truscott, 1994:22).

As a consequence of this Act, more women became concentrated in lower primary school classes. These legacies of apartheid are still apparent. In most of the occupational structures of management in schools, especially secondary schools, men are dominant. This illustrates that the domination of African women on the basis of gender was accomplished directly through political means. According to Grant et al (cited in Wrigley: 1990), schools created gender inequalities through curriculum and can thus be seen as immediate targets for blame. They played an important part in inter-generational transmission of gender relations. In South African schools, gender bias was evident in subject choice, school organisation and the way in which knowledge was constructed (African National Congress: 1995) According to Ker Conway and Bourque say:

> ...educational systems are usually microcosms of gender systems of the societies in which they operate. The functions of formal education to instil appropriate behaviour and cultural norms consciously or unconsciously, includes gender specific messages. (Ker Conway and Bourque, 1993: 1).

This argument lapses into reductionism as it sees schools as conveyor belts of gender bias to the learners. Learners are not passive elements in the teaching and learning process. The adherents of this position fail to come to grips with the notion of human agency, which acknowledges the fact that schools are spaces within which learners can act in opposition to what is intended. Education systems with educational goals predicated on gender bias may not always produce learners who are gender biased. It is not a one way situation. However, as mentioned above, schools play a key role in the process of perpetuating society's limited views of women and men through curriculum and hidden curriculum. What is clear is that gender bias was evident in management practices of South African schools. What is more clear is that through the hidden curriculum, the schools and the teachers themselves, have been conveying the message to the learners that gender indeed makes a difference. Teachers

reinforced the taken-for-granted assumptions about the difference in gender as they showed gender preferences in attitudes, treatment, practices and expectations towards learners. Bonder argues that teachers promote inequitable gender ideologies as "gender values and stereotypes are usually internalised in the beliefs, attitudes and daily behaviours of teachers, who are simply not aware of them and participate in the reproduction, blind in the face of the obvious" (cited in Ulicki, 1997:73).

2.3 Intervention strategies to attain gender equity

This section critically examines the measures intended to address gender issues in schools. Particular attention will be given to the role that will be played by School Governing Bodies (SGBs) and by principals as individuals who are best placed to provide visionary leadership to effect changes. Another aspect to be looked into is the envisaged role of curriculum that forms the nucleus of education and the media as another possible means for addressing gender related problems. The review and assessment of the Curriculum 2005 are relevant to school management because gender equity should be achieved at schools in all levels especially in management and teaching. We need gender sensitive educators in both the teaching and management roles. The role of school governing bodies and the principals will be evaluated in relation to their capacity to effect changes on the ground.

As the educational system is the major component of the public service, there is a move to transform the system at the level of school management to embody democratic values, social justice and human rights. There is much emphasis on the need for a paradigm shift from the old apartheid male dominated school management system to a more democratic one. Gender

analysis within educational management in general and school management in particular is of fundamental importance in restructuring the educational system in South Africa.

To overcome gender inequalities in school management, the interim Constitution (1995) enshrines the Bill of Rights, which is fundamental for democracy. This interim Constitution was modified and ratified to complement the current Constitution. The Bill guarantees every South African citizen basic human rights, which are based on the principles of human dignity, equality and freedom. These constitutional provisions are also applicable in the policy process of school management. The Constitution (1997) embodies democratic concepts:

> Everyone is equal before the law and has the right to equal protection of the law. Equality includes the full and equal enjoyment of all rights and freedoms. To promote the achievement of equality, legislative and other measures designed to protect or advance, or categories of persons disadvantaged by unfair discrimination, may be taken. The state may not unfairly discriminate directly or indirectly against anyone on one or more grounds, including race, gender, sex, pregnancy, marital status, ethnic or social origin, colour, sexual orientation, age, disability, religion, conscience, belief, culture, language and birth. (Constitution, 1997: 7-8).

The Constitution lays a strong foundation for a democratic society, which recognises the rights of all. Although it is not a primary responsibility of the Constitution to address gender inequalities in school management, it contains a Bill of Rights which affirms the democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom (Constitution, 1996). These constitutional provisions are also applicable in school management practices. Democratisation of school management is crucial because it means an extension of civil, political, social and economic rights to both female and male educators. The Constitution is explicitly committed to democracy and non-sexism. For Penny Enslin this "implies that women come to participate fully in democratic procedures and structures, so that they benefit from them as much as men do. For this to be possible, it is essential that the theory of politics which underpins a process

of democratisation is adequately informed by an understanding of gender and its significance" (Enslin, 1993\4:15). Gender is an important dimension that should be taken into account in the management of South African schools.

Nonetheless, provision of rights by the Constitution is not an end in itself but rather a means to an end. Legal rights are one of the means by which the ends of gender equity can be attained. Rights are contained in the document of which is just ink on paper notwithstanding their importance. The more important task is to translate them into practice. In concurrence with this argument, the Gender Equity Task Team (hereafter GETT)(1997) argues that the cancellation of apartheid legislation created an enabling environment for changes to take place. But this does not mean that changes will automatically follow. Rather substantive conditions for equality and the concept of substantive equality need to be applied to eliminate "the deep systematic roots of inequality and the entrenched structural inequalities that continue to block access, participation and enjoyment of people's rights" (GETT, 1997:201).

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) states those management practices in schools must comply with the country's new constitutionally protected human rights culture. It also envisages the establishment of a permanent Gender Equity Unit in the Department of Education. The purpose of the Unit would be to study and advise on all aspects of gender equity. Its functions would include, inter alia; identifying means of correcting gender imbalances; proposing mechanisms for dealing with sexism in curricula, textbooks, teaching and guidance; proposing affirmative action policies in order to increase the representation (influence and authority) of women in responsible positions; and proposing a strategy for

countering sexism in the educational system.

2.3.1.The role of school governing bodies in attaining gender equity in schools

Like other recent education legislation, the South African Schools Act (SASA)(1996) states that the new national system of schooling is required to advance the democratic transformation of the society in order to combat racism, sexism, and all other forms of unfair discrimination. One of the functions of school governing bodies is to recommend to the Head of Department appointment of educators.

The SASA is regarded as one of the vital proactive strategies that will create conditions for the attainment of substantive equality. In the context of school management this would mean bringing female educators into senior management positions in schools and changing practices in school management to reflect human rights and democratic citizenship.

Since its enactment, SASA has been hailed as the most powerful initiative to extend the rights of stakeholders in education. SASA is an enabling act which set in motion the process of establishing a School Governing Body (SGB) in every public school. The procedures and processes of these governing bodies are believed to be democratic for they are an end product of the consultation of stakeholders from across the spectrum.

The establishment of SGBs in every public school is a major landmark in the history of school governance in South Africa. This is seen as a true manifestation of democracy because it fosters a climate conducive to stakeholder involvement in educational matters. It extends rights of participation to role players at a local level. Whilst decentralisation of powers to the

point of service delivery is a move in the right direction, it does not automatically deal with gender disparities.

There are several problems with SASA as legislation. The first problem is that there is no explicit mention of the need to address gender inequalities in school management. In view of this flaw, GETT recommended that SGBs should ensure that appointments and promotions of educators are made in accordance with the need to achieve gender equity in management. GETT states that "it is important that through these processes, school governing boards are supported in strategies for operational management, teaching and learning, and promoting social relations in schools through which gender equity can be promoted"(GETT,1997:92). School governing bodies should play a significant role in providing conditions in which gender equity visions can be made reality.

The second problem is that the powers of school governing bodies are restricted to recommending to the provincial heads of department the appointments and promotion of staff. By virtue of their legal powers, school-governing bodies are not in a position to implement gender equity strategies. Attainment of equity rests with the provincial heads of department. This shows that SGBs have no real powers to effect changes in management as the final decision to appoint educators lies with the heads of department.

The third problem relates to implementation as a process. Any policy measure destined to create gender equitable management cannot unfold without encountering impediments. Weiler (1990) argues that education is not a problem-free zone. Educational policy process is susceptible to conflict and controversy because of the challenges that emerge when dealing with policy issues. It is naive to think that gender equity programmes within school

management are not subject to these constraints. There is no doubt that governing bodies, which are comprised of people from different walks of life, will have differences of opinions. This may lead to intractable disagreements about basic questions of how to transform a school to make it gender inclusive in its practices. Rawls argues that:

> The first fact is that the diversity of comprehensive religious, philosophical, and moral doctrines found in modern democratic societies is not a mere historical condition that may soon pass away, it is a permanent feature of the public culture of democracy. Under the political and social conditions that the basic rights and liberties of free institutions secure, a diversity of conflicting and irreconcilable comprehensive doctrines will emerge, if such diversity does not already exist. Moreover, it will persist and may increase. The fact about free institutions is the fact about pluralism. (Rawls, 1992: 246).

The point is that members of the governing body will differ in many aspects in terms of their political, social, economic and cultural backgrounds and hold different views and beliefs. Such differences can be a breeding ground for conflict that undermines gender equity plans. There may be different interest groups with different agendas and in the final analysis, this can militate against any change aimed at attaining equity in school management.

Members of the body may have neither consensus nor a shared vision about the way in which gender equity programmes can be implemented. Miles sees vision as consisting of two dimensions of which "the first one is a sharable, and shared vision of what the school could look like, it provides direction and driving power for change, and criteria for steering and choosing ... The second type is a shared vision of the change process ... what will be the general game plan or strategy for getting there?" (Cited in Fullan, 1991: 12). What is vividly stressed is the fact that without a shared vision about changing the school management system, gender equity visions cannot materialise. In order to not undermine differences, strategies need to be sought which will help to build and develop a shared vision and a

common understanding of change.

In principle there is no reason to presume that the establishment of SGBs will, in and of itself, lead to practices which are compatible with human rights, democracy and social justice. A changed structure does not *ipso facto* suggest that there will be change in practices. Nevertheless, establishment of democratic SGBs should be applauded and be viewed as an enabling environment for the attainment of gender equity. Though necessary, it remains insufficient. GETT (1997) states that gender equity in educational management and development cannot only be achieved by increasing the numbers of women in management positions. The Task Team says that "it is also about the nature of the institutional culture, the value systems of decision makers whether they are women or men, and taking cognisance of the gendered roles of women and men in a way that facilitates them performing well in their work environment" (GETT, 1997:11). The establishment of school governing bodies represents institutional transformation or change; however, it is more important to effect normative change within school management practices. This is an important factor that needs to be taken into account. The purpose is to change the attitudes and perceptions of role players about the status of women in the society and in schools. This is to suggest that it is equally, if not more important, to change the mindset of stakeholders in schools so that their norms and values are in keeping with democratic tendencies. Changing structures is not an end in itself and is not causally linked to changes of perceptions about female educators in schools. Schools exist in a context of gender inequalities, and patriarchal social relations permeate every level of human interaction including school management. As agents of change, members of governing bodies might still be holding a male-dominant worldview: the belief that women are inferior and men are superior. It is difficult for such people, as drivers of

change, to actively support any gender equity programme. Neither SASA nor GETT spells out, in clear terms mechanisms which to change the mindset of role players and inculcate norms, and values which are democratic in substance.

2.3.2 The role of principals in attaining gender equity

Collective management is one of the hallmarks of democratic practices within school management and is encouraged in the new educational dispensation. The role of principals in driving change cannot, however, be underestimated. It is noteworthy that even in the post-apartheid South Africa, the bulk of principals are men. They may lack transformative skills or hold stereotypical or limited views about women and therefore show less commitment in supporting gender equity intervention strategies actively. By virtue of the position of principalship they can, to a large extent, determine pace of transformation. Green (1990) quotes the Biblical adage that says 'without vision the people perish'. He thus attaches a new meaning to it by arguing that "a growing literature of research has demonstrated that the most strong successful organisations have leaders with strong personal commitment to a set of values plus a clear vision of the future" (Green, 1992:235). For gender equity programmes to be successful in schools the principals should be in a position to provide visionary leadership so that gender inequalities and discrimination be dealt with effectively as policy problems. The central role of the principals is strongly emphasised in many quarters of policy discourse. Fullan (1992) argues that research on innovation and school effectiveness proves that the principal is the impetus which influences the likelihood of change in the school that falls under her or his sphere of influence. To quote Fullan once more:

> The principal is the person most likely in a position to shape the organisational conditions necessary for success, such as development of shared goals, collaborative work structures and climates, and procedures for monitoring results.
> (Fullan, 1992: 76).

Transformation of school management to make it equitable in terms of gender and other variables requires principals to be the people in the forefront of change; to have a vision and be equipped with skills and training on how to go about managing change in school. The report by GETT seems to underestimate the role that principals can play in instigating change to attain gender equity in school management. Although it recommends proactive strategies to address gender inequalities in education and outlines issues that need to be tackled to address gender matters in management, it makes no mention of the principal's role. As yet, there are neither school-based initiatives nor recommendations to equip principals with the know-how to manage change. Nor is there any mechanism to educate them about human rights and democracy. It is, then, justifiable to argue that without trained, skilled and visionary principals, any changes at school level are likely to fail. Transformation of school management cannot be immune to this failure.

2.3.3 The role of the new curriculum in achieving gender equity

It has been mentioned that the curriculum under apartheid also played an important role in creating gender inequalities. According to the African National Congress (henceforth ANC) Policy Framework for Education and Training (1995), the curriculum under apartheid not only perpetuated race, class and ethnic divisions, it also created and consolidated gender inequalities in schools. Thus it is clear that the new curriculum in the post-apartheid South Africa should undo what was done in the past through curricular activities. GETT (1997) argues that the curriculum should be the mechanism that can be used fruitfully to promote the gender equity agenda. Through the promotion of critical thinking, learners can be taught to interrogate the status quo or unequal relations embedded in our social fabric, specifically

gender imbalances. Bernstein (cited in Young, 1971) argues that schools' practices teach learners certain values and beliefs of the wider society. It is, then, critical to ensure that teaching and learning processes are changed and conducted within the broader framework of human rights and democracy.

Unlike C2005 of South Africa, which takes into account broader issues of human rights, the educational policy of the Clinton administration has been vehemently criticised for omitting social and democratic issues. The main argument against this policy is that its educational goals are defined in vocationally related terms; the instrumental justification of preparing pupils for the market is flawed because it lapses into reductionism (it reduces the role of education to one thing which is to prepare learner to fit in a world of work) (Shapiro, 1994). Shapiro argues that the educational policy of the United States government is framed in economic terms as it is mainly concerned with the teaching of technical skills and it ignores social issues such as race, class and gender discrimination. He argues that the meaning of education should be to connect young people with a democratic culture. It should be "about creating and nurturing the individual's capabilities to live critically aware, humanly sensitive and socially responsible"(Shapiro, 1994:19). School should become what Dewey called 'laboratories' of democracy where broader human, social, economic and environmental issues are explored. The main argument is that education should not break with every day life of the learners; hence, there should congruence between what takes place in the classroom and the daily experience of the learners.

Although these recommendations have been made to the Clinton administration and criticisms have been levelled against the educational policy of US, they provide some useful lessons for

policy makers and practitioners in South Africa, because the policy takes into account that the meaning and goals of education should not be one-dimensional. One lesson is that the curriculum should be structured in such a way that its goals are multifaceted in scope. While the outcomes in terms of which C2005 is structured are indeed multifaceted and do open opportunities for broad social awareness, it is up to the educational practitioners themselves to see that these opportunities are realised. As it is widely acknowledged that gender inequalities constitute a global phenomenon, educators should foster learning environments that are gender sensitive.

Dearden argues that "a curricular learning affects the kind of society wh.. :h comes to be, that such learning therefore implies a view of the good society" (Dearden, 1972:147). This is implied in Curriculum 2005 (henceforth C2005), which represents a quantum leap from an authoritarian approach to a democratic one. It sets out to persuade learners, as good future citizens, to embrace central principles of democracy: equality, freedom and human rights. Through pedagogical practice, Curriculum 2005 seeks to educate learners to become responsible citizens so that they can contribute to the normal functioning of the society. The curriculum has been structured in such a way that it reflects the norms and values of a democratic society:

> The overall goal of the curriculum is to provide children with opportunities to develop to their full potential as active, responsible and fulfilled citizens who can play a constructive role in a democratic non racist and equitable society. (Curriculum 2005, 1997: 7).

Through this participation there will be an effective functioning of what Rawls (1992) refers to as the "basic structure of the constitutional democratic regime". By this he means the society which consists of political, social, and economic institutions should fit together into a

single system of social cooperation. What remains evident is that there is no explicit mention of how the specific learning areas would be used in order to deal with gender matters.

Moreover, there have been skeptical arguments around issues relating to the implementation of C2005. Motala argues that it appears that gender commitment is a matter of lip service and this is evident in the "doubt cast by national department official on the priority of gender in the context of budgetary constraints"(Motala, 1997:11). She adds that there were criticisms leveled against the curriculum claiming that it did not look gender sensitive. According to Enslin and Pendlebury (1997), although the inclusion of gender in Curriculum 2005 shows signs of encouragement, the promotion of gender equality is not adequately emphasised. They contend that there is no consistency in the way in which rights are treated in relation to gender across Human and Social Sciences and Life Orientation. Moreover, the cross-curricular Critical Outcomes do not give a clear attention to gender discrimination.

Another concern was that provinces lack the capacity to implement the new curriculum at such short notice (Motala, 1997). Jansen (1997) argues that one of the reasons why this curriculum (organised around an Outcome Based Education (OBE) approach) is doomed to fail because teachers who are expected to be central to its implementation are not adequately prepared. Efforts were made to remedy this problem through the introduction of a cascade model of teacher development aimed at training teacher-trainers in all provinces. The model was inadequate in three respects: scope, depth and method. Secondary school teachers were not involved and the model was superficial and the method deemed ineffective (Vally,1998).

Also to be considered is that the new curriculum is likely to be influenced by the macro

economic policy of the government and other international pressures (as will be shown later in this section). The goals of education as outlined in Curriculum 2005 may be trapped in political rhetoric rather than in practice, as the outcomes of teaching are more likely to be dictated by the market forces than issues of equity.

For the curriculum to be successful it needs a cadre of qualified, innovative and gender-sensitive educators. Therefore, it is important to explore the nature of the teacher education in South Africa briefly. This is relevant to issues of school management because a gender dimension must be integrated into the teacher curriculum. The more the teachers are sensitive to gender issues, the more the chances of imparting sensitivity to learners. This should generally lead to a school environment devoid of gender biases in all levels of the school including management. Curricular changes should not be effected in isolation from teacher education, as Mokgalabone argues "[t]eacher education and public schooling in South Africa are centralised systems of the state. The two systems are inextricably interwoven to such an extent that schooling social injustices are reflected in teacher education" (Mokgalabone, 1998: 18). According to Enslin (1990),most teachers and almost all black teachers were forced to take courses in Fundamental Pedagogics. Though it is dangerously simplistic to argue that all black teachers were duped into it, it is quite clear that courses in educational theory were taught exclusively in Fundamental Pedagogics. This happened at the colleges of education and universities established in accordance with extension of University Education Act of 1959. These institutions were set up to make provision for post matriculation education particularly of black teachers. The dominant discourses on education were organised within the framework of Fundamental Pedagogics and its related disciplines. Meanwhile, a minority of black teachers was educated at liberal universities and colleges offering an alternative

critical, theoretical discourse through liberal and Marxist perspectives (Enslin, 1990). Teachers' attitudes and behaviour towards students need to change to reflect democratic ethos in post-apartheid South Africa. Counter-discourses to Fundamental Pedagogics are necessary to reorient the perspectives of teachers to capture the new democratic dispensation. Enslin argues:

> When the regime and its apparatus are gone, those who have been constituted as teachers by the dominant discourse are likely to remain in their classrooms exercising what Foucault calls capillary power and constituting students as before.
> (Enslin, 1990:141)

To avoid the danger of teachers engaging in old pedagogical practices, it is imperative to review and radically overhaul teacher education programmes both at pre-service and in-service levels. The success of the implementation of Curriculum 2005 will be dependent largely on the extent to which educators are properly prepared to incorporate gender matters in teaching. Therefore the curriculum needs teachers who are critical thinkers with reflective reasoning and understanding of educational and gender issues. To enable educators to implement it more efficiently and effectively, they should be educated to change their teaching material and methodologies to incorporate gender issues so that they do not reinforce a biased view of women. Because of the need for a cadre of qualified teachers GETT report recommends the introduction of teacher education that is an antidote to the previous one. Human rights and gender issues should be included in the educator curriculum both at levels of pre-service and in-service courses. The report argues that teacher courses need "to incorporate gender concerns explicitly, and contribute to teachers' understanding of gender concerns in the broader framework of human rights" (GETT, 1997:109).

2.3.4 Using the media strategy to achieve gender equity

The role of the learner and educator curricula alone cannot deal with gender inequalities in schools. The media both electronic and print should also be involved. Although she does not delve deeper into its role, Young (1990) implicates the media as one of the social systems which produces and reproduces gender stereotypes that trickle down to every sector of the society. Harvey and Macdonald (1993) also implicate media in the process of reproducing a wide range of stereotypes around issues of class, race, sexuality, disability and gender. They argue that advertisements and television programmes portray women as wives and mothers, often in need of men to solve their problems. Nonetheless, there is a paucity of literature in South Africa examining the role of media in creating gender stereotypes that have been so dominant in the institutions of the society. It is thus clear that the media has a role to play in dismantling the dominant patriarchal discourse that conceptualizes women as "dependent, emotional, intuitive, nurturing, compassionate, caring, relational, deferent and submissive" while, on the other hand, views men as "rational, assertive, independent, aggressive, competitive, hierarchical and controlling beings" (Enslin, 1993\4:74).

The GETT report (1997) recommends the use of the media as a strategy for advancing gender equity objectives. The media can facilitate a shift in the mindset of the general populace by deconstructing assumptions of gender. It can eradicate myths, which in this sense, are broader social presumptions that dictate social roles for women and men. The public media are often underutilised in advancing educational goals. According to the working paper by Association for the Development of African Education " while education is a constant topic in the media in most countries focusing on speeches of educational officials, school strikes, or complaints about specific problems, rarely have governments consciously made use of media to promote

a dialogue around educational issues" (1995: 18). It should, therefore, be the task of the media to create a gender awareness debate within the public sphere. At the same time the media should undermine the mythologies and social constructs that categorise feminine and masculine values into private and public domains respectively. The role of the media should be to construct a new image about women and so balance the equation of the power relations between men and women.

Until GETT recommended that there should be Gender Equity Unit in the Department of Education, there was no effective form of monitoring and evaluation of delivery programmes destined to attain gender equity in all levels at local or school contexts. GETT (1997) suggests that changes do not take place within a short space of time. The Unit should be established in order to identify benchmarks and monitoring mechanisms. Such a Unit will set up target goals over a particular period of time so as to assess the performance trends of equity programmes. These monitoring strategies and procedures will also apply to the SGBs. Their progress in the achievement of gender equity in schools will be closely monitored over a substantial period of time. In order to accelerate the rate of transformation of the education system, the existent policy measures were recently boosted by a five-year plan.

2.3.5. The five year education plan

Subsequent to the second democratic elections, the ministry unveiled a new education plan that will span for five years. The new minister of education indicated that the current education and training system has some troubling features. These are the massive inequalities in access and facilities, the serious state of morale of the teaching force, failures in governance and management, and the poor quality of learning in much of the system.

It is apparent and surprising that there is no explicit acknowledgement of gender inequalities as a major problem that need to be addressed urgently. Nevertheless, this plan was met with different reactions from across the political divide and civil society. According to Vally, the plan was an indication of observation that is "impressive, candid and honest" (Mercury,Wednesday, August, 1999). Meanwhile, Jansen argues that the priorities set out the nine-point plan are "hopelessly ambitious targets even for the next decade" (Mercury, 1999). This is because among other things, the provinces lack the capacity and commitment to implement government policy. To a large extent, most of the analysts hailed the plan but they failed to interrogate its commitment to attain gender equality in education critically. With the notable exception of South African Democratic Teachers' Union (SADTU), which expressed its disappointment that issues such as gender equality had not received attention.

2. 3.6. Reflections on the macro economic policy of the government

The implementation of gender equity policies does beg an immediate practical question: Are resources available for these policies to materialise? All the intervention strategies as currently laid down are too costly, financially and in terms of person-power. As a long-term enterprise, they need to be sustainable, which depends largely on financial back-up from the government. The amount of public expenditure on education is significant as it is indication of priority. Examination of Growth, Employment and Redistribution strategy (GEAR) reveals that. Global trends have impacted negatively on the transformation of the education (management) system in South Africa. According to Kallaway, globalisation shapes the government policy as:

> in broad terms that trend can be characterised as a gradual pr ss of incorporation into the mainstream of the international political and economic order of the late

> twentieth century. More specifically it meant that the politics of the former liberation movements, which had been characterised for decades by adherence to a broadly left, socialist or social democratic position were gradually placed under pressure from the new politics of Neo-liberalism and the New Economic Order, where the market rather than social need is the key in policy development (Kallaway, 1997: 35).

The provision of education in general and achievement of gender equity in school management in particular, seems to affected by these global patterns, as GEAR is based on neo-liberal foundations of market orientation. Global influences are not simply rigid impositions on local policies, as the agency of local actors cannot be undermined. However, Chisholm (1998) argues that the local educational policies of many countries in Africa depend heavily on priorities promoted by world agencies such as the World Bank and UNESCO. The nature of this relationship has seen African countries acceding to the orthodoxies of structural Adjustment Programmes (SAPs). In similar veins, Stromquist (cited in Unterhalter, 1999) argues that "generally structural adjustment and free market regimes go hand-in-hand with a reduction of the education budget and worsening opportunities for the education of women and girls" (Unterhalter, 1999: 29). In South Africa the overall education system is located within broader economic and fiscal considerations. According to Vally (1997), there are fiscal austerity measures reflected in the public expenditure on social services including education. On the same line Motala:

> South Africa has been affected in many ways, we witnessed the decline of the rand, a sharp increase in interests rates, and concomitant slowing down of economic growth. High unemployment rate, continuing inequalities in income distribution and fiscal austerity continue to threaten the reconstruction and development priorities of the government. (Motala, 1998: 17).

She also argues that gender commitment is often a matter of little concern; evident in the "doubt cast by national department official on the priority of gender in the context of budgetary constraints" (ibid.). It seems as if the educational goals with a gender equity

mission will be difficult to attain because of the limited financial capacity. This is likely to have a negative impact on school management change. It is only through transformation of school management that the theoretical rights of women will be translated into practice. This would be problematic because educational change in school management that reflects human rights and gender issues is not need or equity driven. Rather, it is a budget driven enterprise. That is not to suggest that because of limitations imposed by GEAR on public expenditure we should not strive to attain gender equity in school management practices. Rather, policy practitioners should work within the limits of resource availability to make a difference.

2.4 Conceptual framework

This section discusses Marshall's three-fold notion of citizenship. However, he "obviously failed to account for the subordination of women in his analysis of citizenship" (Torres, 1998: 425). To make it more inclusive or democratic particularly to take the gender dimension into consideration it is combined with a feminist conception of citizenship. This conception advances the argument that gender should be integrated in the conceptualisation and practice of citizenship. To make the conceptual framework even broader the section also reviews philosophical literature on justice as articulated by Young (1990).

2.4.1.Marshall' s three-fold notion of citizenship

In this research project, I use Marshall's three-pronged notion of citizenship and supplement it from other sources so developing a more inclusive form thereof. This will be drawn from some of the feminist contributions to the notion of inclusive citizenship to examine gender issues in the chosen South African school critically. The consideration of gender in the

analysis of citizenship is critical because:

> By using gender as a unit of analysis, feminist scholars have revealed the inegalitarianism behind the myth of equal opportunity and made us aware of how such presumptions deny the social reality of unequal treatment, sexual discrimination, cultural stereotypes, and women's subordination, both at home and in the marketplace. To the extent that this sort of gender analysis leads to positive political programmes (Dietz, 1992:68).

Using gender as a lens of analysis is useful because it illustrates how women are victims of gender discrimination in the workplace. This will assist in the development of informed intervention mechanisms to deal with their situation.

According to Marshall (1950), citizenship consists of civil, political and social elements. He states that:

> the civil is composed of the rights necessary for individual freedom - liberty of the person, freedom of speech, thought and faith, the right to own property and to conclude valid contracts and the right to justice. The last is of different order from others, because it is a right to defend and assert all one's rights on terms of equality with others and due process of law. This shows us that the institutions most directly associated with civil rights are courts of justice. By political I mean the right to participate in the exercise of political power, as a member of a body invested with political authority or as an elector of the members of such a body. By the social element I mean the whole range from the modicum of economic welfare and security to the right to share to the full in the social heritage and to live the life of a civilised being according to the standards prevailing in the society. The institutions most closely connected with it are the education system and the social services" (Marshall, 1950:173).

The last element is more relevant to the project because it is related to education.

2.4.2.Towards a democratic citizenship in theory and practice

However, consideration of gender to afford people common citizenship is still necessary but inadequate. Provision for common citizenship to female and male teachers in school management practices, which implies equality in terms of rights, does not necessarily

eliminate gender disparities in this area. The equality embodied in citizenship rights, formal as it is, would have no substantive impact on gender differences. Elimination of gender gaps in managerial positions does not automatically flow from the status of common citizenship. It should not be assumed that equality would causally help female teachers move to positions of management in the teaching profession. The equality enshrined in this form of citizenship should be guarded against because it might serve as rhetoric of gender equality. Citizenship might bring with it an illusion of equality in terms of rights even if it does not overcome gender inequalities in school management. Alluding to this, on a caveat note Marshall argues that "[c]itizenship has itself become, in certain respects, the architect of legitimate social inequality" (Marshall, 1950:174). The issue of participation is of paramount significance in this project. However, Marshall's conception of citizen participation is narrow in the sense that it is limited to political representation. This form of representation in the electoral process is what Cerroni (cited in Torres, 1998) calls "democracy as method". This is important but for the purpose of this study irrelevant. In the school management context what is pertinent is participatory democracy or the "notion of democracy as content" (Cerroni cited in Torres, 1998: 433). This conception of participation permits the broadest involvement of the people at large in every aspect of their public affairs. According to Nkomo, "democracy is not the sole preserve of politics and the electoral process; in its broadest and proper sense it should permeate and inform all practices in all spheres" (Nkomo, 1993: 162).

Not only should citizenship construction include women, the issue of equal participation in the public realm is important, to promote democratisation of management practices in schools. Public participation of female teachers is important to ensure that the idea of equal

rights of citizenship offered by the state is not trivialised and is enforced. This would ensure that common citizenship granted by the state is not "a sham or a convenient ideological fiction that serves to obscure the underlying reality of a dominant male ruling class"(Dietz, 1992:69). Dietz defends democratic practice of citizenship whereby women, as responsible citizens, actively participate in the public realm. To quote her once more, "democracy gives us a conception of ourselves as speakers of words and doers of deeds, mutually participating in the public realm"(ibid. 75). There is much emphasis on collective and participatory engagement of the citizens. In this way, people are being transformed into citizens with equal rights. In relation to school management, female teachers should have a proportionate share in management positions and this qualifies them to be active citizens or participants in determining their own affairs. Dietz (1992) would argue that school management practice or theory should be characterised by virtues, relations and collective participation.

Such a combination, which includes Marshall's notion of citizenship and feminist contributions, stresses the fact that gender should be taken into account in terms of theory and practice, and is relevant to this research project. It offers a comprehensive conceptual strategy by coming up with a newly conceptualised notion of citizenship, which would be meaningful because it is in keeping with the South African Constitution. The new Constitution (1996), which is a common framework of reference for every public policy process, including the Educational Policy, is a cornerstone of democracy. It gives all South Africans common citizenship and equal entitlements to rights, privileges and benefits. The choice of such a notion of citizenship justifiably stems from the fact that it provides this report with a broader conceptual framework, which is democratic. In principle and theory it accords all individuals

uniform status, which affords them with the opportunity to take part in the activities of the school on the basis of freedom and equality.

2.4.3 Indicators of social injustice

Drawing from Marshall and others in terms of the conception of citizenship would be useful but inadequate in accomplishing the aim of this research project. To strengthen the framework, I introduced an additional analytical tool developed from the views of Young, specifically on the notion of oppression. The reason for this choice is its relevance to the topical issue of school management. Her indicators of social injustice are useful because they assisted me in identifying social injustices.

Young (1990) gives a comprehensive explication of oppression in such a way that it essentially captures injustices inherent in the gender patterns of school management. According to her, there are five faces of oppression, which are indicators of social injustice, namely *exploitation, marginalisation, powerlessness, cultural imperialism* and *violence*. She employs the concept of oppression not in a traditional sense, but in its "New Left usage". Oppression in this particular context is understood to mean disadvantages and injustices that some people suffer in the modern society. Her analysis of oppression is also in an extended structural sense, which refers to:

> Vast and deep injustices some groups suffer as a consequence of often unconscious assumptions and reactions of well-meaning people in ordinary interaction, media and cultural stereotypes and structural features of bureaucratic hierarchies and market mechanisms - in short, the normal processes of everyday life (Young, 1990:41)

Gender *exploitation* is viewed as one of the faces of oppression. According to David

Alexander, cited in Young (1990), feminine jobs involve gender bias tasks requiring sexual labour, nurturing and caring. In this situation, women are exploited because their energies and power are used to benefit others, usually men.

Another symptom of social injustice is *marginalisation*. This occurs when a group of people (in this instance, female teachers) is obstructed from useful participation in social life. Young argues that *marginalisation* is the most dangerous form of oppression and it is "unjust because it blocks the opportunity to exercise capacities in a socially defined recognised way" (ibid: 54). In school management in South Africa, female teachers have been marginalised because they were blocked from practising their managerial capabilities by becoming head teachers.

Powerlessness is another face of oppression, because in certain environments, such as the workplace, there is a rare direct participation in policy process which is not democratically organised. People lack authority or power in such circumstances. Young also argues that there is injustice associated with *powerlessness,* lowers the professional respectability of those who are not privileged. In school management in South Africa, female teachers have been powerless because they have been inhibited in the development of their capacities, lacked decision-making power in management issues and they have been exposed to disrespectful treatment such as sexual harassment.

Cultural imperialism is perceived to be another form of oppression. Young argues that "[c]ultural imperialism involves the universalisation of a dominant group's experience and culture, and its establishment as the norm" (Young, 1990:59). According to Nancy Fraser, cited in Young (1990), some groups have primary access to what she terms interpretation and

communication. By virtue of the group's possession of these tools, it is able to express its experience, values, goals and achievements. In a patriarchal society, practices, beliefs and attitudes are informed by male experience as opposed to female experience. This worldview is that of male superiority and female inferiority. Such stereotypical assumptions were permeated in South African society, so women were perceived to be inferior and could not take up managerial positions in schools.

Violence is seen as the last face of oppression and it is also seen as a social injustice. Young (1990) argues that violence is systemic because it is directed at members of the group that are considered vulnerable. For Young, group-directed violence is institutionalised and systemic because institutions encourage, tolerate and enable confirmation of violence. Living under a threat of violence is unjust, because it deprives members (of a victimised group), of freedom and dignity.

All these forms of oppression seem to be applicable in the school management system in South Africa, because female teacher in particular, have been susceptible to such injustices. This conception of oppression is significant because it sheds some light on the understanding of the ways in which democratic citizenship status has been or could be undermined through injustices, which are associated with oppression.

Chapter Three

METHODOLOGY

This project was a single case study of one Soweto secondary school, Morris Isaacson High. As this research grounded within a qualitative framework, such a framework will be explored in detail. A discussion of the case study approach and its methodological requirements and procedures and the nature of the research site will follow this. The chapter also discusses data collection and triangulation. In addition, I discuss problems I encountered in the research undertaking. The chapter concludes with a discussion of research ethics, as well as a brief account of methods of data analysis and interpretation.

3.1 Qualitative methodology

In conceptualising the methodology of the project, I followed Bogdan and Biklen's (cited in Fraenkel and Wallen: 1990) outline of common features of qualitative research. The first one is that the natural setting is a direct source of information. In this research the natural setting was the school from which the data were collected. I spent a considerable amount of time learning about the micro-dynamics of the setting. The second feature is that data are collected in the form of words or pictures rather than numbers. In this research, data include interview transcripts, audio recordings and field notes. The third feature is that researchers who are engaged in the qualitative research undertaking are concerned with both process and product. They are interested in seeing how events take place. It was one of my intentions to explore the management practices and processes. This helped to see how social relations in the school produced negative perceptions and attitudes about women. The fourth characteristic is that

data are analysed in an inductive way. In most cases qualitative researchers do not set a hypothesis and go out to verify or falsify it. They collect data before deciding on the important issues to be considered. It must be mentioned that although there was no hypothesis set for this research, of course I had some assumptions. These were informed by my previous work on gender and school management. The last and fifth feature of qualitative method is that researchers who employ qualitative methods are primarily concerned with how people make sense of their lives. The main focus of this study was to get the perspectives, assumptions, attitudes, perceptions, reasons and values of the subjects (teachers and the principal of the school selected for this inquiry) in relation to school management.

In order to defend my choice of a qualitative approach, it is necessary for me to comment briefly on the alternative, that is, a quantitative approach. Cohen and Manion (1994) describe quantitative method as being based on an objectivist or positivistic model in which the world is viewed as knowable because it is real. Huma behaviour is explained and understood in accordance with natural and universal laws with experimentation as the main tool of collecting data. For Maykut and Morehouse (1994) quantitative research can be linked to research undertakings in natural sciences (e.g.physics and chemistry) because it is dominated by a belief in objective observation, quantifiable data and verifiable truths. Furthermore "mathematics, or more specifically, statistics plays an important part in the shaping of this view of science" (1994:17). Thus the essential part of quantitative research is statistical analysis and it is often concerned with the explanation and prediction of observable events. Given the nature of this method it cannot in its entirety be suitable for a study of school management as a social phenomenon.

A qualitative method as appropriate for this project as it stresses the importance of subjective experience in the creation and interpretation of the social world. Organisations are perceived to be an invented social reality. They are seen as dependent upon people and their goals and also as instruments of power, which some people control to attain their own personal ends. Valle and King, (cited in Maykut and Morehouse 1994), agree that the phenomenological position of qualitative research understands and explains the individual and her or his world as co-constituted. They say " in the truest sense the person is viewed as having no existence apart from the world, and the world as having no existence apart from the person" (1994:3). It is within this context that research on school management was conducted through the use of the qualitative method for it "generally, examines people's words and actions in narrative or descriptive ways more closely representing the situation as experienced by the participants" (Maykut and Morehouse 1994:2). However, it should be noted that quantitative and qualitative methodologies are not considered to be mutually exclusive in the research. This is to say that although a quantitative approach is not suitable for the research, this does not preclude the researcher from using some of quantitative elements where appropriate.

3.2 Case study research

Maykut and Morehouse (1994) argue that it is through the case study approach that the results of qualitative research can be presented in a most effective way. Bell (1993) argues that case study is an approach that is appropriate for qualitative research because it allows for one aspect of the problem to be studied in some depth within a limited time scale. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) argue that qualitative case study design means that the analysis of data pays attention to one phenomenon which the researcher chooses irrespective of the number of

sites, participants or documents for a study. On the basis of these and related arguments, I deemed case study research as suitable for my investigation of gender and school management.

There are two main types of case study: multiple and single case studies. Multiple case studies are when there is an investigation of a specific social phenomenon in which individuals or groups or organisations form part of the research as cases or primary units of analysis. (Yin: 1994). An example of a multiple case study would be when the researcher investigates the topical issue of school management at the same time using two or more schools as the settings where relevant data can be collected. This research is a single case study. Unlike multiple case studies, a single case study focuses on one setting as a case for investigating particular research questions. I chose a single case study in order to limit my scope and to concentrate in one school and explore its management practices in greater depth.

3.3 The research site

The research was conducted at Morris Isaacson High, located in Central Jabavu section, Soweto. This school is well known because of its history of resistance to apartheid education that dates as far back as 1976. It was one of the schools which was at the forefront of the Soweto uprisings that ensued during and after 1976. During this critical period, students who formed the nucleus of the leadership of the student movement included the late Tsietsi Mashinini who was studying in this school.

It is against this historical background that this school was chosen as the site of my single

case study. Given the school's history in the struggle, I wondered whether it would show commitment and sensitivity to democratic issues, especially in its management practices. Besides its particular history, the justification is also informed by the introduction of Bantu Education Act of 1954. This Act was implemented and acutely felt particularly in the ex-DET schools. Morris Isaacson High is one of example of an ex-DET school. This Act that was one of the instruments that entrenched gender difference in terms of division of labour in the DET schools.

3.4 Methodological requirements and procedures of case studies

In every research undertaking using either a multiple case study or a single case study approach, it is necessary to meet certain methodological conditions. Yin (1994) argues that to ensure that requirements and procedures are adhered to, four logical tests should be taken into account. These are *construct validity*, *internal validity*, *external validity* and *reliability*.

According to Yin (1994), *construct validity* has to do with establishing correct operational measures for what is being studied. To increase construct validity multiple sources of evidence should be used. This project used evidence from various sources such as interviews, the school mission statement, informal conversation and observation.

The second test is *internal validity*. Yin (1994) states that it is a concern only for causal or explanatory studies, where the researcher is trying to determine whether a particular event automatically leads to certain results. If the investigator concludes on spurious grounds that there is a causal link between the two, then he or she has failed to deal with the threat to

internal validity. The project guarded against this threat because it evaluates the policy impact on school management practices but does not assume a straightforward causal link between policy and changed practice. Given the fact that there is a strong acknowledgement of gender disparities in school management, it should not be assumed that this will automatically lead to an eradication of gender inequalities in this area. Furthermore, the whole problem is not viewed as having been caused by one factor but many.

External validity is the test dealing "with the problem of knowing whether a case study's findings are generalizable beyond the immediate case study"(Yin, 1994:145). It is difficult to generalize on the basis of contextually limited results. Stoeker (1997) warns, "[a]s with any case study, while we can accurately specify the causal process within the case, generalizing is more difficult" (quoted in Neuman, 1997:181). The results of this study cannot be generaliseable to other contexts. To draw general conclusions about management practices in all South African schools on the basis of a single case research would be invalid. Schools are unique entities in different contexts and their management practices are strongly influenced by the contexts in which they are located. However, such results are important as they serve to illuminate essential issues in the management of the school in particular. Moreover, these context bound results are critical, as they will open other avenues for further research. The findings will contribute significantly to the solutions intended to address gender inequalities and combating gender discrimination in other schools with similar problems. In this way knowledge relevant to providing a solution to general problem will be produced. McMillan and Schumacher (1993) argue that it is through research that knowledge is advanced and educational practice is improved.

Nevertheless schools in South Africa, particularly those previously reserved for the black population, share the same history. They are all victims of Bantu Education Act and its legacy is still visible in most of them today. The case of an ex-DET school in the Gauteng region serves to illuminate key issues pertaining to gender in school management. Moreover, there may be general patterns and trends that are similar with other schools. Therefore, "[c]ase studies help researchers connect the micro level, or the actions of the individual people, to the macro level, or large-scale social structures and processes"(Vaughan cited in Neuman,1997:71). Walton contends that "the logic of the case study is to demonstrate a causal argument about how general forces shape and produce results in particular settings"(cited in Neuman, 1997: 30).

Reliability is the fourth test. According to Yin (1994) *reliability* is maintained when an investigator can use the same methodological procedures and arrive at the same findings and conclusions similar to the investigator who used them before. It could be difficult to maintain the *reliability* of this project given the changing nature of gender relations in school management activities. Nonetheless, using the same conceptual framework outlining indicators of human rights, democratic values and social [in]justice can be useful in other areas where is a need to attain gender equity.

3.5 Triangulation

As mentioned above, different methods were used. Together they constitute what Cohen and Manion (1994) call methodological triangulation. They define triangulation as the employment of two or more methods of data collection in the study of a social phenomenon.

It is important to use different data collection strategies to increase construct validity. Exclusive reliance on one method may be susceptible to bias or the distortion of a particular aspect of reality that is under investigation (Cohen and Manion 1994). Through this rigorous form of investigation the viewpoints of different interviewees were thoroughly investigated, compared and checked for consistencies and contradictions.

The use of triangulation is also helpful because it surmounts the problem of 'methodological boundedness'. This is the use of a single method to gather data and it is not reliable. Boring has this caveat to offer:

> As long as a new construct has only the single operational definition that it received at birth, it is just a construct. When it gets two alternative operational definitions, it is beginning to be validated. When the defining operations, because of proven correlations, are many, then it becomes reified (Boring cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994:62).

All these data collection strategies were used in relation to the central purpose of the research. Targeted primary issues included: the qualifications, the length of service in the teaching profession and the qualifications held by the educators. Such methods also helped a lot to examine their perceptions female educators (including women themselves), indicators of social justice, the way in which the extra curricular work is divided amongst educators, the intervention strategies by the government to deal with gender related issues and the mechanisms they think would be good to address these problems.

3.6 Data collection techniques

Two primary methods of data collection were used: questionnaires and interviews.

Conversations and observation supplemented data collected by these methods. At the time of the research the school employed twenty-nine educators, all of whom were given questionnaires. The primary selection criterion for the interviews was gender. It was important to probe the perceptions of both female and male educators, both in management positions and teaching positions. I interviewed a total of twenty-three, of which eleven were males and twelve females. All staff in management positions were interviewed.

3.6.1 Questionnaires

The questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions (see appendix A). Closed questions were intended to elicit background information about the school. Open-ended questions were meant to explore the opinions, attitudes and beliefs about school management. Questionnaires were distributed to all twenty-seven teachers of the school to complete and return them as soon as possible. Despite constant reminders and polite requests, only sixteen were returned, ten by female and six by male educators. The rationale behind the distribution of questionnaires before was to familiarise the potential interviewees with what the research would cover. The information gathered through the use of questionnaires was inadequate because some participants gave short responses to certain questions. Interviews were used to probe more deeply and to extract information from those who had not returned their questionnaires.

3.6.2 Interviews

Carnell and Kahn (cited in Cohen and Manion) define the research interview as "a two person conversation initiated by the interviewer for the specific purpose of obtaining research-relevant information, and focused by him on content specified by research objectives of

systematic, description, prediction, or explanation" (1994:271). Because interviewing involves gathering data in an interactional context or through direct verbal interaction, it allows opportunity for clarifications and follow-ups of certain questions. Kerlinger (cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994) suggests that it might be used to follow up unexpected results, for example, or to validate other methods, or to go deeper into the motivations of respondents and their reasons for responding as they do.

To get more insight into perceptions about gender and school management eleven males (including the principal and his deputy) and twelve female educators were interviewed. I had hoped to interview all the educators on the staff, however because four of them declined to be interviewed because they were too busy and another two were transferred to another school.

It was important to get responses from both males and females. On one hand, female educators' participation in the research undertaking is important because they would be able to reflect on their own feelings, thoughts and experiences. Women are more knowledgeable about their situation and they can provide innovative solutions to their problems if consulted. Their participation in the project is indispensable, as it would afford them with opportunity to express their needs and desires.

On the other hand, it is also important to create conditions conducive for male teachers to take part as well. Given their daily interaction with women in school it is worthwhile to find out about their attitudes and perceptions in relation to their female counterparts. South African society has been structured along patriarchal lines that put men in superior positions and women at lower ranks of the hierarchy at all levels of the social fabric. Do the male teachers

who participated subscribe to these commonly held stereotypes with a propensity to associate women with 'inferior' status jobs? To a considerable degree their attitudes and perceptions about women will determine the success or failure of any intervention strategy intended to attain gender equity in school management. In its report, GETT (1997) also acknowledges the significance of the active participation of men on issues of gender because it will be critical to the success of gender equity programmes.

The research interviewees were all asked the questions listed below. I also used additional questions to probe for further information where appropriate. These additional questions were formulated in response to particular points made by individual respondents.

- Do you think that there are gender inequalities in the management of your school?
- Are there any government programmes implemented in your school to address gender inequalities and prevent gender discrimination in management of your school?
- Since its establishment how effective has been the role of the School Governing Body (SGB) in attaining gender equity in school management?
- What in your view could the role of media in achieving gender equity in every sector of the society including schools?
- How does the principal of your school perceive female educators?

Because the interview may be used in combination with other methods in a research undertaking (Cohen and Manion 1994:273), informal conversation and observation were also used alongside with interview.

3.6.3 Informal conversation

To supplement the formal interviews I initiated informal conversations with the research subjects, in their vernacular language. This was an open situation where a considerable degree of freedom and flexibility was maintained. A great deal of relevant information was revealed during these sessions. The reasons for this might be that people were expressing themselves in their respective vernacular languages thus allowing for more flexibility and freedom. People were able to disclose information displaying a sense of calmness and comfort that was absent during structured interviews.

3.6.4 Observation

Observation was used to read the interaction process of the teachers, particularly between male and female teachers. Observations were made during sports activities on the playing fields where most of the teachers were present and also during their interaction in the staffroom and in the corridors. Observation was useful because it helped a great deal to see what underlie social relations of teachers from across the board. As Woods claims applauds the naturalness of this technique by stating that "as with observation one endeavours to be unobtrusive in order to witness events as they are, untainted by one's presence and actions" (cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994:275). With observation the researcher was able to observe the interaction of the subjects flowing without interruptions.

3.7 Limitations of the study

This research undertaking was never problem-free. Several methodological problems and constraints were encountered. Initially, it was planned that data would be collected in two

schools. This was not possible because of distance and financial constraints. Time constraints were also contributory factors in this regard.

On the chosen research site, three females and one male teacher declined to either fill the questionnaires or be interviewed citing too much work and lack of time as reasons for their reluctance. Four male educators who did complete questionnaires did not interact with me either at the level of interview or informal conversation. Clearly, several of the staff were uncomfortable with the role of the research subject.

While these methodological problems raise questions about the reliability of the findings, nonetheless these findings provide a general picture of management practices of the school. They furthermore help to come up with micro-level interventions to remedy the situation

3.8 Research ethics

Ethical issues were taken into serious consideration in all research interactions. Researchers may encounter moral predicaments because of what is known as the cost\benefit ratio. This ratio emerges because researchers have to strike a balance between their benefits as professionals and personal costs of the people taking part as research subjects. Nachmias and Nachmias allude to ethical issues in relation to rights, which are:

> ...the right to research and acquire knowledge and the rights of research participants to self-determination, privacy and dignity. A decision not to conduct a planned research project because it interferes with participants'welfare is a limit on the first of these rights. A decision to conduct resea[illegible] unite an ethically questionable practice... is a limit on the second right [illegible] Nachmias cited in Cohen and Manion: 1994,145).

Cc [illegible] .994) argue that in a research undertaking the right to privacy of the

participants should always be protected through anonymity and confidentiality. I followed several procedures to protect the rights to privacy. Firstly, I negotiated access and acceptance through the office of the principal of the school. I was granted permission to conduct research on the school site. Secondly, to obtain informed consent and co-operation of the subjects who assisted in this investigation a research protocol was drafted (see appendix B). In the protocol the researcher undertook not to reveal the actual identity of the subjects and in compliance with this, pseudonyms were used in the report in of case of direct quotation. It is also worthwhile to although real names of the research participants are not disclosed through the permission from the principal I the name of the school is mentioned in this research project.

3.9 Analysis and interpretation of data

The data gathered from the research site was analysed and interpreted in terms of qualitative methods and in accordance with the concept of democratic citizenship, which is a blend of Marshall's account and feminist analysis of citizenship. Data were analysed in relation to the five faces of oppression as discussed by Young. Chapter four presents the data analyses, using these concepts as indicators of the extent of gender inequalities and discrimination in management of the school under the spotlight.

Chapter Four

PRESENTATION AND INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

This chapter combines the analysis and interpretation of data collected at Morris Isaacson High. It examines the perceptions of educators and the principal about female educators in the school. Such perceptions need to be looked into because they play an important role in influencing social relations in the management structures and practices. I have discussed the research findings in the present tense for the sake of convenience. This does not mean that the situation at the school has remained static. Perceptions of people and their social relations are susceptible to change.

As has been mentioned, two analytical tools will be used. The first combines Marshall's three-pronged notion of citizenship and a feminist conception, which calls for an analysis of citizenship that integrates gender in theory and practice. The second is Young's five faces of oppression worked out from her conception of justice under which "injustice refers primarily to two forms of disabling constraints, oppression and domination" (Young: 1990,64). She argues that the presence of any of these faces or conditions makes it sufficient to call a group or individuals oppressed. These two analytical tools (explained in chapter two) constitute criteria for determining whether female educators are oppressed or not. They will be applied to the management practices, as well as the perceptions of the educators and the principal of the school. However, not all faces of oppression are manifest in the school management practices. The faces of oppression that are discernible at the school are *powerlessness, exploitation, marginalisation* and *cultural imperialism.* It is important to state at the outset that the study at no time assumed that female educators experience oppression in similar

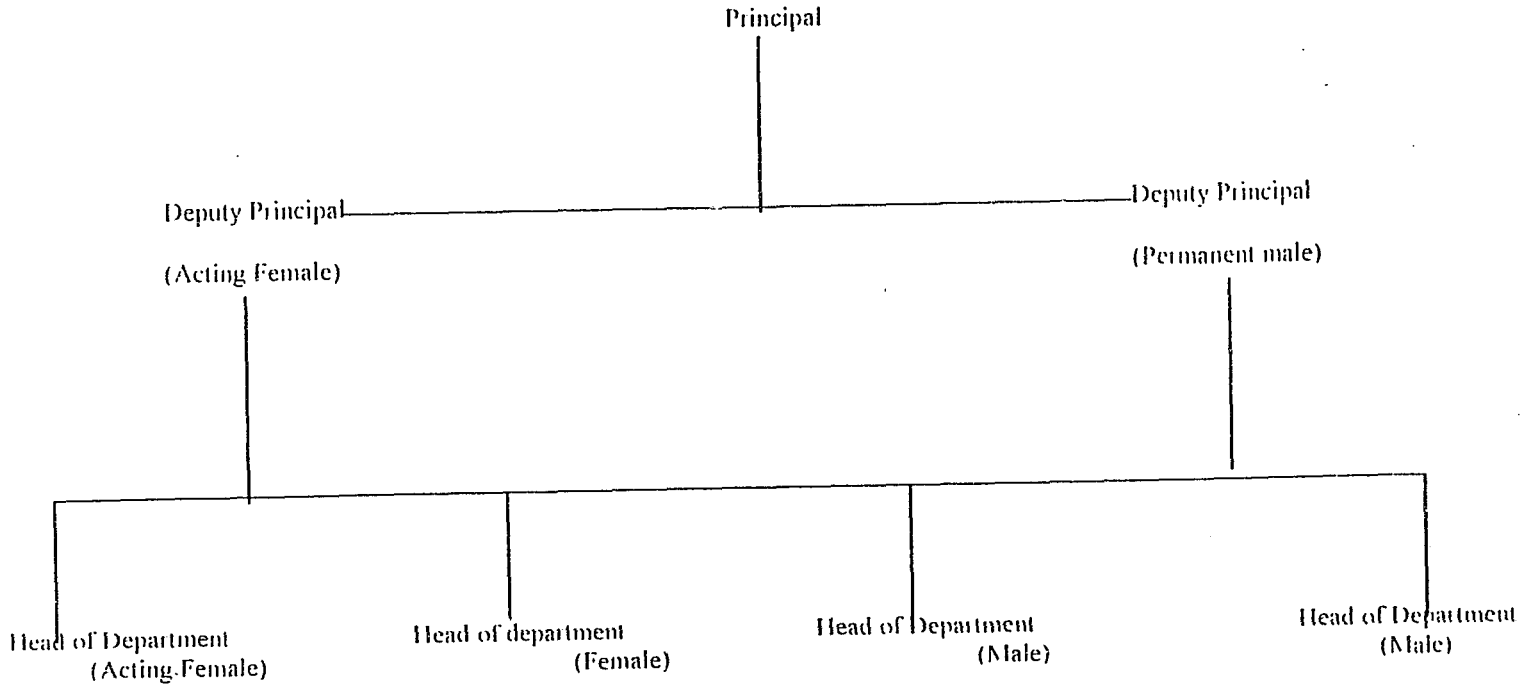
ways. As Mouffe claims, "relations of subordination are multilayered, and in fact, individuals may play a dominant role in one relationship and a subordinate role in another" (cited in Torres, 1998: 71). Again the notion of difference as articulated by authors such as Carrim (1997) and Hall (1989) reminds us that these female educators are not uniform in terms of values, beliefs, practices and orientations.

Using the conceptual framework developed in chapter two, my discussion is presented in five sub-sections: the management structure of the school, the mission statement, women educators' thoughts about themselves, the principal's perception of women in the school and the perceptions of male educators about their female counterparts. My discussion of educators' perceptions begins with those of women because they are the immediate victims of gender inequalities and any attempt to deal with these inequalities will benefit them. The principal is the second focus because he is required to provide an effective leadership in the context of achieving gender equity outcomes. Putting the perceptions of male educators last is not intended to diminish their significance. Men on the teaching staff are in a strong position to support or impede changes in school management practices, depending on their perceptions.

4.1 The management structure of the school

In terms of staff composition at the time of the research, the school consisted of twenty-seven educators including the principal and his deputy. Table 3 shows the management structure of the school. Two female teachers were declared to be in excess and according to the redeployment policy of the Ministry of Education, were asked to report to another school. As

Table: 3 The Management structure of the school in 1998



a result of this redeployment the school is left with twenty-seven teachers across the board. Fifteen women form the bulk of teachers; the remaining twelve are males. Men dominate the positions of authority. The principal is a man, as is his deputy. When I visited the school for the first time there were two positions of deputy principal. Because of the decline of the student population, the two positions were subsequently combined into one, which was advertised, and the current holder, a male was appointed. There are four heads of departments: Languages, Commercial Subjects, Social Subjects and Natural Sciences. Two males and two females headed these departments at the time of my inquiry. One of the women was only in an acting capacity. The principal and the deputy intimated to me that this position is going to be advertised.

Thus, female educators are disproportionately represented in the management positions of the school. The staff composition in the occupational management structure does not reflect the staff demographic profile of the school. The demographic dynamics in management produce a particular male advantage. In the South African context, cultural practices and the unjust apartheid system have put men in a more privileged position than women. Male educators benefited from the education system at the expense of women albeit in varying degrees. This is because gender distinctions in school management were statutorily or legally and normatively sanctioned.

Given the hierarchical management structure in the school it is evident that males dominate female educators. This *domination* is an indicator of women's oppression in school management. This is because they do not take part in management activities not out of choice but because they are inhibited from participating in management issues. Although the agency

of women cannot be simplistically denied, it can be argued that to a large extent, the fact that they are not in management positions may hamper their efforts to call for concrete measures of dealing with gender inequalities.

Young captures their condition aptly when she argues that "in the most general sense, all oppressed people suffer some inhibition of their ability to develop and exercise their capacities and express their needs, thought and feeling" (Young: 1990,40). By virtue of not occupying senior managerial positions in the school, women's potential and prospects of growth and development are seriously hindered. However, that is not to suggest that all women are oppressed because they are not in management positions. There are some women in the school who occupy management positions, and thus they cannot all be homogenised. Female educators in management positions cannot be regarded as dominated by their male counterparts.

Those women who do not occupy managerial positions because of unfair discriminatory practices are reduced to what is commonly known as "second class citizens'. In other words, they do not to enjoy citizenship that values, among other things, *participation* in structures of governance, including issues pertaining to management at schools. For citizenship to be regarded as inclusive and democratic, it should be open to all men and women equally and practically. This can only be realised in a situation where overt forms of gender inequalities are removed and gender discrimination is actively discouraged. Male domination at the management level of the school shows that most of the females are denied of the right of participation, which defeats the whole logic of democracy. According to Nkomo (1993), Dietz (1992) and Cerroni (1998), the concept of participation is at the heart of democracy. To

associate democracy with politics and the electoral process alone is shortsighted. The concept of participatory democracy was coined in order to broaden this conception to include participation in all the structures of civil society and governance including schools. If female educators are not taking part in the management of the school then it is justifiable to argue that the school is undemocratic in its practices.

The numerical dominance of men in the senior positions at the school indicates that male teachers benefit at the expense of females. Reflecting on this disproportionate share of management roles, Young argues that "indeed, in every oppressed group there is a group that is privileged in relation to that other group"(1990: 42). In this particular instance it is clear that men have an edge over women as they are given preference in the appointment of management positions.

The exclusion of women from top positions is an instance of *marginalisation*. For Young (1990), *marginalisation* occurs when the system will not or cannot use certain people. These "marginals" are blocked from useful participation, which causes material deprivation as it blocks people from exercising their full capacities. This analysis captures the condition of women in the school under the spotlight. Women are marginalised in their exclusion from top positions in the school. In terms of rights it can be argued that although there are official documents such as Employment Equity Act, which grants them equal rights in the workplace or school; so that these rights are not translated into practice to have concrete and strategic gains accompanying such rights. Marshall (1950) argues that civil, political and social rights are prerequisites of citizenship. Dietz (1992) argues that citizenship should include equal participation of both women and men in the public realm.

It is, again, clear that women suffer oppression which manifests itself in their *powerlessness.* Almost every participant agreed that although women are sufficiently represented in the school governing body (SGB), they lack the capacity to influence change, which is in favour of gender equity. The argument is not that women cannot influence because they are on the periphery of the decision making structures. Although their participation in the school governing body enables them to influence decisions, due to their powerlessness, that influence is likely to be of little effect. It is by reason of this and that of not occupying top positions that they are faced with *powerlessness*, which according to Young (1990) is one of the faces of oppression. According to her, one of the indicators of powerlessness is rare participation in decision making exercise. People who are powerless lack authority and have little opportunity to exercise their skills to a maximum. Using this analysis as a barometer to gauge whether there are injustices in the management of the school is evident that women are oppressed in the sense that although they are represented in the SGB, they lack capacity to effect change.

Also, by virtue of not occupying top management positions, women are oppressed as they possess no management authority and consequently cannot exercise develop and improve their skills in that field. Young (1990) argues that this powerless status impacts negatively on them. They lack privileges that accompany a professional status. They are both materially and symbolically deprived as they cannot move to the top of the hierarchy, and as result they cannot enjoy the benefits thereof. Firstly, they cannot get the monetary rewards that go with management positions in the school. Secondly they cannot gain expertise, professional development and rise in status. It seems as if female teachers in the school are stuck in lower positions because of the glass ceiling of gender bias. They cannot experience upward social

mobility in the teaching profession and are "powerless in the sense that this lacks orientation toward the progressive development of capacities and avenues of recognition"(Young: 1990: 57).

On the same point, Young (1990) argues that if there is *powerlessness,* female educators lack autonomy because they are often under the authority of men who hold top positions. She also argues that the status of these women is so low that they do not have what she calls 'professional respectability', which extends beyond the workplace or school. Female teachers lack this because do not occupy positions that are treated as respectable. They do not hold senior positions that are associated with expertise and authority.

4.2 Mission statement of the school

The mission statement of the school is said to be a product of broader consultation with all stakeholders. According to SASA (1996) it is one of the responsibilities of school governing body to develop a mission statement of its own school. The school governing body developed the mission statement in compliance with this Act. As one might expect from a school that played a central role in the struggle against apartheid, the mission statement shows a great sensitivity to human rights and democracy. It asserts that:

> The school shall protect, promote and fulfil the rights of all people and affirms democratic values of human dignity, equality and freedom as identified in the Bill of Rights. All learners and teachers at the school have the democratic right to due process and to participate in decision making about matters affecting them at the school. They also have the right to have their views heard about(sic) these matters. (Mission Statement of Morris Isaacson High: 1997).

She reiterated this in an interview:

> we cannot say the principal sees women as his equals even though he treats us differently to men in this school. The treatment of us teachers differently in a way says a lot on how he perceives women. Like during staff meetings he often appoints a male educator to chair the meeting. In many cases he has sent male educators to represent the school in certain occasions. This proves that he trusts men and leaves much to be desired on his perception about us. (Interview: February, 1998).

The same point is advanced by Martha when she argues that:

> We are perceived as minors, our views about the running of the school are not taken into consideration. We are more overloaded with work more than the male educators are. With female educators work is being imposed on them whereas with male teachers it is not the case. (Interview: September, 1998).

As far as Dikeledi is concerned:

> The principal does not want to delegate duties to female teachers. He does not believe in them to be given management positions. He says that women are emotional and they are always sick and therefore cannot be suitable for any management positions (Interview: September, 1998).

The interviewees feel that the principal has negative attitudes towards them because of his tendency to allocate the least important duties to them. Perhaps the allocation of duties in terms of gender indicates the principal's perception women in the school. This area will be further explored in the sub-section which examines the perceptions of the principal.

The way in which the principal is thought to perceive women educators is also reflected by my informal observation. The principal was called an urgent meeting and sent a member of the non-teaching staff to inform every teacher to attend. That member entered the office in which I was holding an interview with one of the female educators. Upon hearing that there was an urgent meeting called by the principal she responded that the principal should continue the meeting with male teachers alone as he does not use or accept input from the female teachers. This reaction explains the women's perception of the principal. It shows teachers'

feeling of unimportance because of the principal's lack of appreciation of women's input during staff meetings.

4.4 Women educators' perceptions about themselves

The main focus of this sub-section is women perception of themselves in the school. It is necessary to explore their perceptions in the context of their relationship with male counterparts. By focussing on women, one sees how they come to understand and position themselves as females, and the extent to which their definition or development of self potentially limits or liberates them. The main theme is the personal internal barriers of women and the dilemma encountered by women who assume family and professional responsibilities.

The following extracts from an interview suggest that women are enemies of their own career development. Sheila believes that she has none of the capabilities needed to be for senior and middle management positions. She did, however, admit that:

> I did not apply for the position of deputy principal when it was advertised. This is because of the fear of the unknown. Although I was not sure I knew that the job was challenging and I thought I do not have skills required to cope with the problems and challenges of the new job. (Interview: Sheila, 1998).

The following view by Clara also indicates that women can also block their own career pathways:

> I believe that I cannot handle the position of management competently because it is demanding. The worst thing about it is that you need to have an understanding of broader issues and I do not have that. For example you need to have a knowledge and understanding of not only management issues, but also the politics of trade unions and I do not like to be involved in politics (Interview: August, 1998).

Lindiwe's comment shows that internal personal barriers also keep them out of top positions in the school. She says:

> I did not apply for any management positions in this school and I think will never. This is because I have problem with leading people. May be is because I am not a born leader since I think I do not have leadership qualities necessary for one to be a principal or a head of department (Interview: August,1998).

So far the focus has been on how women's perception of themselves can block their promotional career prospects. It now turns to the dilemma of the double responsibilities with which women are faced; those of schoolwork, and the fulfillment of domestic and maternal roles. This dual role makes it difficult if not impossible to hold management positions in school. Mahlako stresses the same point:

> Because of family responsibilities I think women should not be in management positions otherwise the school will suffer. Unless the government makes sure that household chores are shared equally amongst partners, then we are to face pressure as a result of overloaded work (Interview:Mahlako, 1998).

Martha holds the same view:

> Most men are able to manage schools in effective ways because they concentrate only on management and teaching. As women we are expected to teach and manage in schools and also be involve in so many activities within the families. These family duties make it almost impossible for me to take on or apply for a management positions which is even demanding. (Interview: February, 1998).

One of the authors, Elisabeth Al-Khalifa holds the same view.

> There is also evidence to suggest that women can be scrupulous in self-evaluation and therefore more critical and selective about career moves than men do. Personal priorities and responsibilities outside work roles can also be seen to vie with professional commitment (Al- khalifa: 1992,196).

Many women teachers mentioned that they hesitate to seek promotion into management posts because they anticipate difficulties in striking a balance between public and private work. A management post would compound problems caused by overwork. Amanda said in an interview that as a single parent with five young children to look after she cannot put extra

burden on herself by taking a managerial position in the school. In acknowledgement of the predicament faced by most female educators, she agreed that women's greater commitment to caring is at the same time a disadvantage to them. The male dominated family reinforces the problem and is incompatible with full citizenship. Most women in the school committed to family duties, and to occupy a management position under these circumstances would be difficult. Therefore, becomes clear that the women's confinement to the household chores impedes their participation in the public realm - in this case school management.

4.5 Looking at women – the perspective of the principal

In the context of organisational change there should be someone responsible for directing the process - notwithstanding the necessity of collective action by members. In any school the principal is in good position to drive forward the process, and indeed is expected to lead change. This sub-section discusses the perceptions of the principal of the school. Any action towards gender equality will benefit women. With the full support of the principal, such measures are likely to fare well.

Most of the female educators think that the principal holds stereotypical assumptions about them. To draw conclusions only on the basis of women's responses, without examining what the principal himself thinks about women would be shortsighted. However, his responses during our informal conversation seem, in some respects, to contradict his responses to the questionnaire. At the beginning of the interview I explained the aim of the research project; that is; to investigate the extent to which current intervention strategies introduced by the government to overcome gender inequalities specifically, in school management have been

successful. When asked about his views on gender equality and how he perceives women in relation to the management positions in schools, he indicated that he whole-heartedly complies with the Bill of Rights entrenched in the national Constitution. The Bill gives every citizen equal rights. He also cited the mission statement of his school. He strongly emphasised that he upholds the democratic values and norms embedded in the mission statement and said, "it gives us the direction that must be followed by the school. Basically, we practice what is contained in our mission statement" (Interview: February; 1999). He furthermore indicated that gender inequality and discrimination are undesirable phenomena in schools and thus argued that means and ways should be sought to deal with them in an effective way.

He mentioned that within the school environment, the prevailing conditions in the management practices exacerbate the domination and oppression of women. This results in the under-use of their skills, knowledge and experience. He regards women as:

> hardworkers, disciplinarians and very organised when coming to their school work than men (sic). And this shows that had they been given a chance to showcase their capabilities and talents, perhaps we wouldn't be experiencing the problems we are facing today in our schools (Interview Mr. Mahlangu: 1999).

When asked why a man was preferred to fill the then vacant position of deputy principal, he responded that:

> I wished to have seen a woman who is diligent, with a maximum degree of commitment appointed or promoted to that position. However, the selection panel of which I was a member thought otherwise. It preferred to consider a male applicant. Much emphasis was placed on experience in management and the male applicant became successful precisely because he was at that time the acting principal and deputy principal in his former school. Most of the women who applied were heads of department. (Interview: Mr. Mahlangu, 1999).

But with evidence from the informal conversation suggests that his responses were contradictory. He argued that:

> Mmuso ga mmogo le basadi ba swanetse go amogela gore maemo a pele ke a banna. Basadi ba swanetse ke go hlokomela bana ka gae, go ruta bana dikolong tsa primary. (The government together with women must accept those positions of leadership or management or authority belongs to men. They must look after children at home, teach children in lower classes in primary schools) (Interview: Mr. Mahlangu: 1999)

He seems to be gender biased, but because of his position of principalship he is obliged to comply with gender equity policies. The principal's limited views about women and their capabilities, invariably affect future transformation of the school to a more equitable management. Almost all interviewees concur that "the governing body does interviews for teachers who are looking for appointment and promotion. But it is clear that the final say lies with the principal" (Interview: Martha 1998).

When asked whether there is a division of duties on the grounds of gender the principal said:

> division of labour in terms of gender is there. You cannot allocate managerial duties to a female educator who is not a manager. That work does not fall within the scope of her job description. But in terms of other duties there is a need to allocate suitable duties to suitable people. There are duties which cannot be done by women and as a result I give such duties to men" (Interview: August, 1998).

This view highlights the point that the principal still believes that is natural to divide duties in terms of gender. This is a disadvantage to women, since influences appointment and promotion of staff.

Mr. Mahlangu admitted there was no consideration of an affirmative action strategy to attain gender equity in school management. The above evidence illuminates the complex views of the principal. At times he indicates that he considers human rights and other democratic issues in running the school, specifically on the management front. However, his questionnaire response to the question on his view on to the relative absence of women in management

response to the question on his view on to the relative absence of women in management positions, he stated that women "were unwilling to lead and manage"(Ibid.) Whilst this argument may be plausible to a limited degree, generalisation is problematic. There are many barriers to the appointment and promotional prospects of women.

The principal's statement contradicts his claim that women are caregivers and traditionally handle young children in lower primary schools. The assumption that women are suited to teaching young children is captured in the speech which explained the rationale behind the Bantu Education Act of 1954 (Truscott 1994). The inconsistencies in the principal's responses may be the result of the complex role he occupies. He significantly affects the success or failure of innovations in the school. As agent for change who is expected to set the tone for organisational change in order to bring about initiatives that will invoke gender equity in school management. The attitude of the principal towards change with egalitarian goals is critical. His capacity to deal with gender imbalances is evident in his influence on appointments and promotions of educators. The way in which the principal manages the school and his views on women are crucial to the efficacy of change.

It is obvious that there is indirect discrimination against women, particularly in the selection procedures for management positions. All who completed the questionnaires or interviewed admitted that for an educator to be appointed or promoted to management positions, experience in that field is one of the criteria. In terms of personnel recruitment, appointments to management particularly the school governing body should be cognizant of the need to attain gender equity. (SASA: 1996).

This subsection explores both the attitudes and perceptions of male educators about their female counterparts. This will shed some light on the nature of the social relations between males and females; especially those in management positions. The central theme is the manner in which tradition and cultural practices are invoked to justify the 'naturalness' of the status quo.

The mission statement does not acknowledge the need to transform the norms and values held by the educators in the school. It is important to find out whether male educators see any need to transform the social relations in the school. Nine out of eleven male educators were found to be gender biased. To cite an example, gender stereotyping is evident in the comments of James in response to the questionnaire:

> In our culture (black culture) females are always oppressed. They are not supposed to hold higher positions than males. Females were not born leaders. They always need help from male educators even at school when it comes to discipline. (Interview: February, 1998)

He emphasised this even during an informal conversation with him. He said:

> Ke tlhago gore basadi ba seke ba eta banna pele. Re ka se fetole seo se dirilego ke tlhago (It is natural that men must lead women and not be led by them. We cannot change what nature has created).

In an interview, Edward also pointed out that

> It is our culture and tradition that women must not lead men and it must be like that. But I have realised that democracy and our African culture cannot mix. Democracy, which is a western culture, will definitely cause confusion in our lives. (Interview: February, 1998).

These views show how tradition and cultural practices based on the patriarchal ideology are used to justify the exclusion of women from the most critical sites of power and influence.

The informants are of the opinion that because of these cultural and traditional practices, women should be excluded from management positions. If this is the general conviction in the school, women are likely to be disempowered; deprived of their rights and entitlements. The implication is that their voices will be silenced and not considered in management issues.

The persistence of these customary laws and conventions renders women in the school subordinate. According to James,

> it is important for our culture as African men in the school to be vigilant of western influences such as gender equality. These influences will definitely undermine our culture as they call for women to be in the positions of power. For me women should always be controlled and looked after by men. Because of the biological attachment between women and children what is naturally suitable for them is take care of young children in crèches and primary schools (Interview James: February, 1998).

Women are expected to be dependent upon men and remain outside management positions and within narrow confines of duties related to their domestic or reproductive roles. They are posited as beings that are not autonomous; as citizens with no rights, inferior to their male counterparts. Patriarchal thinking and practice not only violates women's rights; it also denies the school potential development driven by women.

The assumption that school management is a male field highlights the existence of feminine objectification. This othering can create a dichotomy between men and women in the school. This 'them' and 'us' mentality can affect resource allocation of the educators. It distribution of positions is influenced by the gender divide. The school's practice of division of labour on grounds of gender is evident in the following comment by Malcolm:

> Although it is required to practice gender equality in our school activities, we must be realistic at some point when allocating certain duties on men and women. You cannot allow women to perform duties that need physical strength. Women in our school usually perform light duties like preparing tables whenever there is going to be a

> formal function. In management issues it is very important to allocate them duties that are not beyond their capacity. (Interview: February, 1999).

Most of them may still view managerial positions as purely the domain of men can impede any measures taken to achieve gender equity in school management. Culture is used to legitimise women's subordination. The opinions above show how women's exclusion is justified on the basis of cultural stereotypes. For Young (1990) this oppression manifests itself through what she calls *cultural imperialism*. In this particular case, the ideologies of a society based on male worldview are used to facilitate women subordination. The partriachal conception of women is upheld normal cultural product. It is evident that female educators in the experience this form of oppression as it is uncritically naturalised that men should in the management positions. They continue to suffer cultural domination, which confines them to "ordinary" teaching.

When asked whether it is necessary to implement gender equality measures in the school management, Jeff argues that:

> if we say men and women should be equal we therefore suggest that they are the same. We are different from women and it is acknowledged in many quarters of the world. Even the Bible says a woman was made out of a man. How do we change something that is natural (questionnaire:February, 1999).

Matome has this to offer:

> To put women and men in equal position everywhere in the structures of our society including in school management is to undermine nature. Men are born leaders and they should look after women and children. Gender equality programmes will not succeed because they do not take this as given. The fact of the matter is that there will never be gender equality simply because God made us to be this way. (Interview: February, 1999)

These comments show that it is the respondents consider gender inequalities a *fait accompli*

as if there is no room to maneuver. Gender inequalities were created and enforced in various ways. Rather than viewing their gender bias as historically and socially constructed and maintained through social institutions, processes and practices, it is conceived to be naturally determined and God-given. Matome goes on to say:

> in our school most of the senior positions are occupied by men and the school is doing well in examination results and extramural activities. This is indeed because men are hard workers, creative, independent and organised. To be honest, the situation would not be like this if women were in charge (Interview: August, 1998).

Thus, women are perceived to be incompetent, dependent upon men and disorgainsed. The respondent reduces the woman subject and treats women as the same as if they share similar attributes or homogeneous. The evidence thus far indicates that women are not perceived as inadequate for managerial positions in the school.

Despite these negative perceptions, two male educators argued that gender or sex does not in anyway determine the competence of people. Lasarus said:

> it is grossly unfair to regard all women as incompetent to manage schools. Most of my male and even female colleagues still believe in these myths. We often hold informal discussions of about gender issues and we always differ due to their stereotypes. They usually tell me about culture and tradition and I tell them that these issues (culture and tradition) are not natural or made by God. We make these ourselves. It seems as if they do not agree with me on this (Interview: August, 1998).

Thomas agrees with this view:

> In our school most of the teachers are traditionalists as they believe that it is against the tradition to be led by women. This prejudices women in most cases. In management men dominate women, but they outnumber we men in the school. They have qualifications that most men even those in top position do not possess. But because of the mindset that is prevalent in our school women cannot be given a chance to show that they can mange the school. The call to create human rights culture is schools is not taken into account. (Interview: February, 1999).

This argument is plausible and it concurs with some argument raised elsewhere in chapter one

of this research report. Cultural norms do impede the prospects of career development of women in schools. However, culture should not be used to justify undemocratic practices of gender discrimination.

4.7 The role of the School Governing Body

This section examines the role of the school governing body as perceived by the interviewees. With the exception of the principal and his deputy, all the teachers believe that recruitment is the task of the SGB as a collective body under the substantial influence of the principal. The principal and all the interviewees admitted that experience is the primary criterion in appointments and promotions. Using experience as major criterion implies that it plays a determining role in promotion of educators to the higher echelons of management. This engenders a mechanism of exclusion for women as it indirectly discriminates against their inferior experience. This experience is used as one of the main requirement for promotion to management positions and it definitely excludes women. In the past, several measures were implemented to ensure that many male teachers occupy positions in high echelons of authority in schools. Given this special opportunity they were put in a better position to gain management experience. The experience acquired in the gender bias management environment is still used as an important factor in personnel recruitment. This is indirect discrimination because experience that appears to be neutral through an immediate analysis can exclude female educators from management consideration. Male educators were put in advantaged position through gender bias policies and experience gained under such undemocratic circumstances. Though this may be an important criterion, it is used as a fundamental factor in staffing the school management. This indirectly discriminates against

women who were unable to gain experience because of the sexist system. An education system that supports democracy cannot use such a yardstick in personnel recruitment.

Many interviewees were skeptical about the effectiveness of the school governing body in bringing about gender equity in school management. It was clear that since its establishment no substantive changes were initiated as this could be illustrated the status quo. Before the SGB was set up, males dominated the echelons of authority in school, and are still doing so momentarily. In an interview Mahlako expressed her dissatisfaction with the role that the SGB plays:

> The school governing body is there in theory but absent in practice. They seldom hold meetings to discuss transformation issues. I only saw the chairperson once when he was introduced to the school community. Even though women are fairly represented in the SGB, I don't believe it can address gender issues to our satisfaction. (Interview: Mahlako: February, 1999).

Margaret echoes the same view:

> You see gender issues are very important such that we need to have people who are in the SGB to understand them fully. I do not think that members of the SGB have knowledge and understanding of these issues. If we don't understand gender issues we cannot come up with good methods to achieve equity in management (Interview:Margaret:September, 1998)

In concurrence with this, Margaret states that:

> The school governing body, of which the principal is a member, conducts interviews. It then makes recommendations to the department, which approves who is it to take the post. But I must mention the fact that the principal is the person who is always consulted before any position could be filled. The department relies on him because he has insider's knowledge about dynamics of the school (Interview:August, 1998).

People who are entrusted with the task of ensuring gender equity in management should have the capacity to deal with issues of gender awareness. They must have an understanding of gender and rights issues.

Asked about the structure or a person responsible fc staff appointment and promotion all the informants agree that is the school governing body's duty. Nonetheless, they felt that the principal is, ultimately, the person who does the work in most circumstances.

John said:

> Most of the times interviews are conducted by the principal together with the governing body and representatives from the teachers union but eventually the principal has a final word.(John: Interview: February,1999).

Sylvia who is also in a managerial position at the school expressed similar view:

> Here in our school the principal does everything in relation to management issues. Although I am in management, decisions are not a product of consultation with us as a school management team and governing body. (Interview: September, 1998).

On the same note John stated in an interview that:

> The principal is the sole person who decides who is suitable to take management post. He even does it secretly without proper consultation with the school management body of the governing body. (John: Interview: February,1999).

In an informal conversation, Sylvia intimated to me that:

> Here in our school the principal does every thing that has to do with management, decisions are not a product of consultation with us as a management team of this school. This autocratic style of management applies in other things in the school. (Sylvia: Interview: September, 1998).

This view is supported by Lasarus:

> As a person who believes in gender equality I think the school governing body is not doing enough to deal with gender inequalities in the school. May be it is because the people in the body does not know and believe in gender equality. Since it establishment, I expected the governing body to deal with gender issues as they are crucial like any other issues. They have been dealing other issues to the exclusion of gender. (Interview: February, 1998)

These statements highlight the ineffectiveness of the School Governing Body in addressing gender inequalities in school management. As a body which represents stakeholders from

across the board, it fails to come up with strategies to effect change in management.

Chapter Five

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This research report gave the historical background of school management and gender. It also provided a conventional explanation advanced in the educational discourse for the relative absence of women in school management. Owing to the fact that the government acknowledges gender inequities, policy initiatives and legislation were also subject to critical discussion. The implementation of intervention strategies was also discussed. These measures require financial capacity, and so were evaluated against the budgetary background with particular reference to the Growth, Employment and Redistribution (GEAR) strategy as the macro economic policy of the government that determines public expenditure on social services including education. Gender was used as unit of analysis alongside with the conceptual framework that is viewed as inclusive in theory and practice.

In summary, the findings reveal that, despite policies to attain gender equity in management at the government level, there are gender inequalities in the management of the school under scrutiny. Using Young's (1990) five faces of oppression it was revealed that most of the women educators in the school are still oppressed. It was shown in chapter four that despite the policies introduced by the government to address gender inequalities in school management, women educators continue to experience cultural imperialism, powerlessness, marginalisation and gender exploitation in management. Gendering is reflected in by the unequal staff composition of the management structure of the school, in the process of staff appointment and promotion, and division of labour long sex lines. Gender discrimination is also evident in the patterns of interaction between and among women and men, the limited stereotypical view of women as naturally inferior and subordinates and masculine

assumptions underlying management practices. The reflections and practices of the respondents provided valuable insights into each of these dimensions.

It was also revealed that little has been done in the school to attain equity at the management front. In other words, rhetoric still runs ahead of actual practice in gender matters. The recommendations made by the Gender Equity Task Team have not yet been implemented. The respondents stated that there is no school-based initiative to deal with transformation issues of school management. Much work is left with the governing body, but it was apparent that this structure was dysfunctional. In order to bridge the gap between policy and implementation or to confront the double standards of the school so that not only the rhetoric of gender equality is highly respected, but practised as well an effective strategy is imperative. This strategy would be to set up a gender team in the school, which will act as a pressure group to facilitate the effective integration of gender equity into the school management practices and implementation of gender-equal policies as part of the broader policy of the school.

There is no dialogue between macro and the micro levels in terms of service delivery. The unequal treatment of women in the school is inimical to democracy. This results in a paradox because, ostensibly, the country is sensitive to democratic issues, and this is not reflected in the micro practices of the school. It is ironic that a school fundamentally opposed to the apartheid education system is undemocratic in its management practices under the new dispensation.

This makes it difficult to suggest recommendations because the GETT already came up with

viable strategies to deal with gender inequalities and discrimination. To ensure that gender equity is not trivialised by government, these recommendations should be taken seriously and efforts taken to implement them. The report by GETT gives national and provincial departments a blue print for strategies to deal with gender equity in the education system.

Within the framework of capacity building the school governing body should set up moments, opportunities and mechanisms of to enable stakeholders, especially educators and the principal to attain gender equality. These could be achieved in the following ways:

- Reflection sessions, including for example, discussions of issues around gender equality.
- Exchanges of experience, workshops with other people involved in similar issues.
- Internal or published gender bulletins.
- Building and maintaining stronger links or partnerships with academics, researchers and activists.

These mechanisms would enable stakeholders to manage change in the school. Although it is mentioned in the SASA (1996) the capacity of members of the SGBs should be developed to deal with change in their respective school. there is evidence that it was not happening in the studied school. Stakeholders in the school should be organised to attend either on-site or off-site training in issues that integrates matters such as human rights, gender issues, conflict resolution skills, group decision making and group consensus-building. The SGB should organise such activities and conferences, workshops, seminars and even debates in the school that revolve around gender issues. These could make a difference in changing the belief or value system by reflecting issues compatible with democracy.

The school governing body should develop an effective system of monitoring the school's progression in terms of gender aware and gender-equal organisation. This internal monitoring system from a gender perspective should be a permanent, on-going process. The way of evaluating the success or failure of gender equality policies should not only be in terms of quantifiable results; increasing the number of female educators in managerial positions. It is important to set and meet numerical targets, and equally crucial to assess change in the management practices of the school from a gender perspective with qualitative indicators. Such indicators could be the procurement of gender sensitive knowledge and skills, changes in attitudes or institutional behaviour and better working relationships. Such things cannot be counted, but they are crucial indicators of progress or lack of it. Because quality is difficult to measure, the criteria for doing so should be identified and negotiated among different groups of stakeholders represented in the governing body of the school.

The school governing body should be accountable to the school constituency in terms of the number of appointments and promotions it has made in school in the context of the need for equity. There should be a flow of information to the school community, in the interests of transparency and commitment, addressing equity concerns and needs. Flow of information about the progress of gender issues in the school governing body should also indicate set goals which are specific, manageable, attainable, realistic and time bound.

There is a need to review the process of recruitment of personnel into management. It is important to take into account qualifications in this process. However, it is not in the interest of affirmative action to make experience a significant criterion in the selection of school managers. Experience should be seen as an element of subtle discrimination as it could

hinder progression of women into management positions.

This study covers gender and management issues in only one school. It has implications for the transformation of management practices in other South African schools. However similar studies need to be carried out in other schools to highlight the importance of gender equality in schools, and in their management practices in particular.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is part of my research report for Masters in Education in the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg. Its purpose is to elicit information pertaining to gender matters in school management practices of the one chosen secondary school in Gauteng. In case of quotation, pseudonyms will be used to protect the actual identities of the participants.

Thank you for assistance.

(1) Name (Leave the space blank if you prefer to be anonymous):----------

(2) Sex:----------

(3) What are your qualifications?

---

(4) How long have you been in the teaching service?

---

(5) What position are you presently holding?

---

(6) In your experience, explain the way in which female educators are perceived in your school?----------

---

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(7)

(8) Schools have been the areas where violence has been taking place especially against the vulnerable people like women and girls. Would you say this has been the case in your school?

If yes, explain the ways in which it was dealt with?

---

(8) Who is responsible for the promotion and appointment of educators in your school?

---

(9) Are female educators well represented in that structure and to what extent are they influential in the decision making processes?

---

(10)What criterion is used to promote and appoint educators in your school?

---

(11)Is that criterion taking into account the need for the attainment of gender equity school management?

(12) According to the White Paper on Education and Training (1995), women are dominant in the teaching profession but very seldom to see them in managerial positions such as principalships, deputy principalships and heads of department. In your view, what are the reasons explaining relative absence of women in these positions?

---

(13)The national Constitution contains Bill of Rights which gives every person common citizenship regardless of race or gender. This inclusive citizenship quarantees every South African human rights with entitlements, benefits and privileges. The Constitution also prescribes the establishment of Commission on Gender Equality that will ensure that there is a development of human rights and attainment of gender equity in all sectors of the society. To what extent have any attempts to achieve equity been successful in your school?

---

(14)What do you envisage to be the role of the following actors in overcoming gender inequalities in schools in general and in your school in particular?

15.1 The state or government.

15.2 The society.

15.3 The school

15.3.1 The governing body

15.3.2 The principal

15.3.3 The educators

15.3.5 The learners

(15)Are there any other recommendations you would like to make, which in your view, could contribute towards the attainment of gender equity in management of your school?

APPENDIX B

This research project explores the measures by the government intended to address gender inequalities in school management practices. In the process of evaluating such measures the project intends to find out whether democratic issues such as equality, human rights and equity are taken into account.

To collect data questionnaires will be distributed to both the principal and the educators of the school. I, Joseph Papi Komane, hereby undertake to conceal the actual identities of people who participate in the project. Information obtained from them will be treated with utmost confidentiality and in case of quotation pseudonyms will be used.

Please attach your signature in the space provided below to give consent to your participation. The final research report will be submitted in the faculty of education of the University of the Witwatersrand, Johannesburg, for the partial fulfillment of a degree in Masters in Education.

I, ----------hereby agree to participate in this research project. Please fill the attached questionnaire.

The final copy will be available on request by the school or anyone who took part in the project. Thanks for your cooperation.

Author Komane J P
Name of thesis A Gender Perspective On Democracy In School Management Practices Of A Gauteng Secondary School Komane J P 1999

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