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Leadership challenges experienced by female school principals in primary schools and the coping strategies they employ in the Capricorn District in Limpopo Province

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the leadership challenges experienced by female school principals in primary schools and the coping strategies they employ in the Capricorn District in Limpopo Province. A literature review showcased that South African women in education face challenges as women in leadership positions. The study was conducted using the post-structural feminist approach. The study's objectives were to understand the leadership challenges faced, explore strategies they employ to resolve them and discover how they adapt to successfully build a school considering the challenges women face in a male-dominated society. Two data collection instruments were used, namely interviews and observations.

Moreover, purposive sampling was used to identify the target group required for the research. Also, it fits well into the study as this research was guided by the qualitative research method. Also, the results discovered were analysed. Findings suggest that the interviewed primary school principals were coping well as principals, managing to handle challenges they came across and did not feel intimidated by male colleagues or other male principals they knew.

The study recommends that more women be appointed in school leadership posts and more studies be conducted now in the new era to discover if women are still underrepresented like before. The interviewed women mentioned they felt empowered and showed to be in control. The outlook depicted as they communicated suggested they were not diminished but were excelling in their leadership post. The support the interviewed principals received and their drive showed that they were capable and were transforming their schools to excellence. If this can be implemented on a broader scale of the entire South African community, then the future would be bright not for women alone but for all future generations in the country.

Keywords: Female primary school principals, Capricorn District, leadership, women, challenges