

THE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST WOMEN IN MANAGERIAL
POSITIONS IN SOWETO SENIOR SECONDARY SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

This study focuses on the factors that prevent female teachers from occupying positions of senior management in senior secondary schools. These factors are seen as contributing to gender discrimination in the teaching profession, which is dominated by females. The study established that female teachers are discriminated against when being considered for promotion to positions of power and decision-making. Hence their under-representation in such positions (although it is not suggested that this discrimination is deliberate). Strategies are taken by the Gauteng Department of Education to eradicate gender discrimination. These strategies are not as effective as envisaged because those administering them are still holding onto patriarchal perceptions in as far as women and managerial positions are concerned. However, in some cases, women have been reported to be their own enemies as they tend not to support each other.

DECLARATION

I declare that this report is my own, unaided work. It is being submitted for the Degree of Master of Education at the University of the Witwatersrand. It has not been submitted previous for any degree or examination to any other university.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ANC	-	African National Congress
ATRCW	-	African Training and Research Centre for Women
DET	-	Department of Education and Training
GDE	-	Gauteng Department of Education
GETT	-	Gender Equity Task Team
HOD	-	Head of Department
HSRC	-	Human Sciences Research Council
RDP	-	Reconstruction and Development Programme
TED	-	Transvaal Education Department
UK	-	United Kingdom
UNECA	-	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNICEF	-	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund
UNISA	-	University of South Africa
USA	-	United States of America

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CHAPTER 1

1.1 BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

Throughout the history of education in South Africa, women have tended to suffer gender discrimination because they were destined for domestic roles, such as motherhood and homemaking, and were relegated to domestic obscurity. Gender in this case is defined as "the way females and males are brought up or socialised as women and men" (Truscott, 1992). This definition is used because it provides a deeper understanding of how the education system treats females differently from males.

When one looks at most of the senior secondary schools in Soweto, one finds that they are led mainly by male principals. The number of female principals is higher in primary schools as compared with senior secondary schools. For instance, in Gauteng, the number of male principals in secondary schools is 121 while that of females is 23 (Gauteng Department of Education Annual Report 1996). During the apartheid era, when women joined the teaching profession, they were encouraged to teach in primary

rather than in secondary schools. This was due to the belief that women have 'good temperament, love and care (nurturing) for the children' and also for economic reasons (Kotecha, 1994:70-71). Males were discouraged from becoming primary school teachers because the former qualities were felt to be within the domain of women as opposed to the tough and frightening authority of men. Hence, men were given posts in senior secondary schools where their qualities could be used to maintain discipline. Only males holding senior positions remained in primary schools so that they could maintain the *status quo* of patriarchy and keep women under their control.

The above background indicates that leadership is still seen in strong masculine terms and focuses on a 'strong, disciplinary, social control', while management is defined as the competitive ideal (Al-Khalifa, 1989:93). Such perceptions clearly show that schools as educational institutions are dominated by the male norm. Hence, "those who have power within the organisation are able to structure the environment and the meaning so that the vocabulary available to the individual members and the

nature of the concepts given currency in the organisation selectively operate to emphasize certain realities and make other parts of reality invisible".

Therefore, I agree with the survey done by the Gauteng administration that the new South African government is faced with the major challenge of ensuring that equal employment opportunity, public works and wages are guaranteed in all sectors of the public service and to ensure that women are recruited in a non-discriminatory fashion and free from sexual harassment and other undue hardships at work (Gauteng Administration, 1995:1).

1.2 AIM

The aim of this study is to investigate and establish why women are less likely to advance into senior managerial positions in senior secondary schools. By "managerial positions" I refer to those administrative positions in a school, such as heads of department, deputyships and principalships. Thus the term "management"¹ and

¹ Management means 'to create an environment conducive to quality education; to organise, plan, coordinate, systematise and structure; to facilitate, guide, support and enable; and to provide effective leadership in achieving educational goals (Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) Principles of Management: Better Schools, London).

"administration²" will be used interchangeably by the researcher.

Specifically this study aims to :

- * Investigate factors that hinder the promotion of women into senior managerial positions in senior secondary schools;
- * Analyse the conditions and requirements of appointments in such schools;
- * Assess the strategies implemented by the government in addressing the issue of gender discrimination in as far as women in management is concerned;
- * Develop policy recommendations and interventions as informed by the findings of this research.

² Administration involves 'implementation of policies, procedures, rules and regulation as set up by the management' (Commonwealth Secretariat (1993) Principles of Management: Better Schools, London).

1.3 RATIONALE

The issue of women's under-representation in senior managerial positions has received little attention in South Africa, especially in as far as the teaching profession in black schools is concerned. However, Sebakwane's (1993/4) study on "Gender relations in Lebowa secondary schools" stands out as exceptional because it illuminates what it feels like to be a black female teacher living under apartheid.

Despite the many changes that have taken place in education during recent years, women in senior managerial positions are still in the minority. In South Africa, for instance, the teaching profession is a feminine profession, but women are under-represented in senior managerial positions. There are many factors that account for the situation as it stands. Thus the researcher feels they should be brought to light in this study. This will help policy-makers to avoid previous mistakes in as far as the promotion of women into senior positions is concerned.

The study highlights that the structural problems inherited from the apartheid system call for a new approach because

the former methods were designed for a different era. The current system must correlate with the new realities. Therefore, the conditions and requirements which are laid down in appointing a teacher for a senior managerial post in a senior secondary school will be analysed. This is done in order to ensure that the new policies of promotion are not duplicating those of the previous apartheid education system. Hence, it is important to assess the strategies implemented by the government and develop policy recommendations in order to address the issue of gender discrimination.

Existing international and South African literature on gender discrimination in educational management will be reviewed. I hope extrapolations from this research will inform policy in correcting the gender imbalances that exist in educational management and generate further research in gender studies in South Africa.

1.4 ORGANISATION OF THE RESEARCH REPORT

This report is divided into six chapters. Chapter one is the introduction and covers the background, aims and rationale for this research. Chapter two reviews

international and South African literature on gender issues. Chapter three deals with research design and methodology. It expands on methods, sample and other procedures that were followed to collect and analyse the data. Chapter four gives the quantitative data of this research about the gender profile of the teaching corps in Soweto. Chapter five is about the presentation, analysis and interpretation of results. Chapter six covers the main findings and the recommendations of the research.

CHAPTER 2

2.1 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.1 Introduction

Davies (1990:61) in the United Kingdom argues that the under-representation of women in positions of decision-making and power within education is of crucial concern

"as a question of equal career rights for teachers;
to query masculinist definition of appropriate management".

The above points are very important because they illuminate that women as a force can guide change in a positive direction and improve our schools as one component of a broad group of participants (*inter alia* parents, students, and other stake holders in education). The matter of women being under-represented in school management should come to a speedy end. The government should realise that women are an important untapped source of experience and knowledge

and they should play an equal part in decisions aimed at improving our schools.

2.1.2 Literature in Developing Countries

As an international researcher, Davies (1990:62) conducted a study in Third World countries to investigate the under-representation of women in senior positions in schools. She discovered that the proportion of women post holders declined as seniority increased. The findings were as follows: in Fiji 51% of the teaching profession were females while 28% held senior posts; in Brunei 60% teachers were women while 2% were principals; in Zimbabwe 32% were women teachers while 10% were principals. These findings reveal that the percentage of men holding managerial posts is higher than that of their female counterparts. It also indicates that while men are largely responsible for administrative work in education, women are largely involved with classroom teaching (Davies, 1990:62).

Similar to research findings in developing countries above, Kotecha (1994) found the South African situation to be the same. The majority of teachers in this country are women. The ironical part is that men are holding the managerial

posts, especially in senior secondary schools. In 1991, 76% of teachers at primary schools employed under the DET were women, while 42% of them were at secondary schools (Kotecha, 1994). Also in her findings, she discovered that as seniority increases the number of women decreases. This clearly shows that gender factors played a role in keeping women in lower primary schools rather than in secondary schools.

In Botswana and Lesotho, teachers are trained in junior primary, junior secondary and senior secondary levels respectively, with women predominating at primary teacher training levels. It would be interesting to know why this is so. It was suggested by a Ministry official in Botswana that this may reflect the female extension of her "caring" role. This is not an adequate explanation since, prior to independence, teachers in primary schools in many African countries (including Botswana) were predominantly men. Gaynor (1990) suggests that there is every reason to suspect that the lower status attached to primary school teaching has a lot to do with the predominance of women.

When King (1981) researched on "the new role of women in the education system for whites in the Republic of South Africa", she found that the number of women teachers was not less than 71% of the total teacher corps in the former Tranvaal Education Department, while men occupied only 29% of the posts.

With the above statistics one could reasonably expect that there would currently be a considerable number of women in promotion posts in education. However, the contrary is true because most women still hold post level one (non-promotional post) in the education department. It therefore becomes clear that women in developing countries are suffering gender discrimination and thus their number is minimal in senior managerial positions.

Findings of studies done in Africa on gender by the African Training and Research Centre for Women (ATRCW) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), clearly show that the dilemma for women in developing countries lies in their absence from school (ie they remain in the private sphere). This makes it difficult for them to

compete with men for the scarce wage-paying jobs in the Public Sector. Hence, education for most women in Africa functions as an instrument of oppression which reinforces gender-subordinate roles, rather than leading the way to equality and greater opportunity.

Women in Africa do 70% of the agricultural work and produce most of the food. This situation helps to explain the critical gender imbalances and inequalities that surface later in higher education as well as in employment opportunities for women on the continent. It is thus clear that major reforms are necessary in order to change the present functions of education and training in most developing countries.

In the South African context, studies by UNICEF regarding women and children show South Africa to be different from other African countries. There are in fact significant differences, with regard to gender, in relation to access to education. The statistics pertaining to school-going children, in South Africa, indicate that there are no gender differences which exist at primary school level among the various types of schools. However, in some former

DET schools, more boys than girls are enrolled .

Sebakwane (1993/4), in her research on gender relations in Lebowa secondary schools, argues that some of the factors that account for discrimination against women emanate from apartheid and patriarchy. These two factors are said to explain the political and the socio-cultural oppression of women in the teaching profession in South Africa.

Apartheid in South Africa explains the political set-up that prevailed then because people were divided into racial groups and used separate amenities such as educational facilities. In 1953 when the government wanted to reduce the cost of Bantu education, they manipulated gender representation by keeping women employed in lower primary schools rather than in secondary schools. Therefore, it becomes clear that black women teachers suffered both in terms of their race and their gender. According to Kotecha (1994), women suffered both 'formal' and 'informal' discrimination. 'Formal' discrimination refers to the laws that were legislated against women, while 'informal' refers to organisational practices that act as obstacles to free

movement and equality within the system (Kotecha, 1994:71).

In terms of culture as a factor in discrimination against women, Sebakwane (1993/4) argues that black cultures are patriarchal in nature. As such, patriarchy hindered the leadership of women in Bantu Education schools. In the interviews she conducted in Lebowa, she discovered that many female teachers had deep-rooted patriarchal perceptions of leadership. This was evident in utterances such as "a man is the head of the household" (p.93).

In relation to culture, she also discovered that factors such as sex stereotypes, myths and prejudices contributed towards women's discrimination (p.93). These factors are viewed as obstacles to increasing women's representation in managerial positions.

In addition to this, King (1981) argues that myths about women's leadership are critical aspects in the selection of school administrators. Women are held back mainly by a traditional view among both male and female employees that a woman should be in a subordinate position. For instance, among blacks there is a traditional belief that "tsa etwa ke ye tshadi pele di wela ka leopeng", meaning that any

organisation led by a woman will end up in a dungeon. King (1981) explains that the view of subordination is through self-acceptance, or primarily through fear of rejection by the community and by the man who protects his own ego.

In addition to patriarchal and cultural factors built into Bantu Education as underpinning gender oppression and discrimination, Sebakwane (1994) notes that there exist also socio-economic factors that maintain and encourage female oppression within the education system of South Africa, especially among the black communities. For instance, according to black custom, it was not cost-effective to educate a girl. A girl was expected to be married and become an asset for the in-laws rather than her own family. To educate a boy was more cost-effective as both his immediate and his extended family would be able to depend on him financially.

2.1.3 Literature in the United States

The facts regarding the position of women in education management around the world portray a unique, transparent history of chauvinistic priorities supported by an arsenal of blind prejudices. For example, the majority of

policy-makers and members of the administrative hierarchy continues to be dominated by males to the degree that schools have been referred to as "educational harems" (Restine, 1993).

Schmuck's research findings clearly indicate that the typical education manager in the USA today is "male, white, married for the first time, Protestant and politically conservative" (Biklein & Brannigan, 1980). As this profile is so prevalent and applies across the education spectrum, Schmuck concludes that it may represent a set of criteria according to which present and future managers are selected. Moreover, leadership positions in the teaching profession have been occupied by men for so long.

Just as in South Africa, women in the United States tend to predominate the teaching profession but men hold the more powerful, prestigious, and well-paying positions. Women are not as enthusiastically encouraged to aspire to these positions as men are. They sometimes face active opposition from officials who do the hiring, and also from their colleagues when they do have such aspirations, and when

they actually attain typically "male" posts (Stockard & Johnson, 1981:242).

Shakeshaft's study depicts that there are discriminatory practices which indicate that women are undesirable candidates for administrative positions, such as:-

- " - word of mouth recruiting only males;
- asking biased interview questions of women, particularly questions about family roles;
- offering women lower salaries than men and refusing to negotiate salaries with women;
- separating applications by sex and interviewing men by quota and not qualifications;
- allowing men to skip some steps on the career ladder but requiring women to have completed all steps;
- having only men as interviewers;
- asking women how their husbands feel about them becoming school administrators" (Shakeshaft, 1993:50).

These practices have all served to undermine women's self-esteem and confidence so that fewer women apply for positions for which they are not highly qualified, whereas men would not hesitate even if they do not have the necessary qualifications. This has led to more male

candidates being interviewed for managerial positions and thus increasing the chances of males being hired.

According to Shakeshaft (1993), the above situation depicts that women are not valued as highly as men and this bias results in negative attitudes and practices towards women aspiring to be school administrators.

Restine (1993:18) explained that there are three propositions that attempt to explain why women are under-represented in administration, such as:-

- * Women's socialisation
- * Formal and informal barriers
- * Myths about women's leadership.

Hence, it is inherent that socialisation theories about women in education assume that women are unsuited for administrative work and that teaching is a distinctly separate career from administration rather than an extension of it (Ortiz & Marshall: 1988).

The gender-role stereotypes that pervade our culture continue to produce people who function within the parameters of their socialisation, which is more often restrictive and narrow. The environment of schools mirrors this socialisation when the concept of "one's place" is embraced. This inhibits all people and particularly women from recognising their personal capacity to lead. Stereotyping and bias about women's backgrounds, experiences, and interests have produced unfavourable attitudes about women's ability to function in certain situations and in particular positions.

Lack of formal and informal networks hampers women's efforts in gaining access to positions in administrative ranks; and certain positions in particular. In the USA women superintendents are more often found in small districts. Women assistant superintendents are more often found in staff specialist or supervisory positions. Women principals are more often found at elementary school levels. The perception that women are not tough enough to handle the political environment or the discipline problems of a high school remains strong (Shakeshaft, 1993).

The elementary principalship, as well as certain central office positions has been considered by some to be a dead-end post. Given that more women occupy these kinds of positions, this view becomes a barrier and intensifies the degree of women's exclusion in the United States of America (USA).

Similar to findings in Africa, myths about women's leadership continue to be critical aspects in the selection of school administrators in the USA. Although there has been a growing preference for approaches and behaviours in school leadership typically associated with a female leadership perspective, these preferences are not held strongly as are the convictions about how a principal or superintendent look or behave like.

2.1.4 Literature in the United Kingdom

Doughty's research in the UK revealed that black women in administration are a minority (Adkinson: 1981). Her study of black administrators conducted during 1972-73 surveyed districts with civilian populations of 100,000. She found that black women were likely to hold positions as supervisors, elementary school principals, and

administrative assistants, while men almost exclusively held the secondary school principalships and central office line-management positions. The black women in her sample were older than either black or white males in administration. These women assumed their first administrative positions between the ages of their mid-40s to 50s.

The scenario, as outlined by Doughty in Adkinson 1981, is indicative of female discrimination in the United Kingdom, hence women enter managerial positions only once they are middle aged. It thus becomes apparent that few women are found in senior positions not because of 'dual roles' or 'lack of career aspirations', but because they are excluded from the key public decision-making roles in the schools.

Doughty argues that the black woman faces a "double bind" as the occupant of two negative statuses (her race and gender). She points that black women face greater discrimination than do black men, since either their race, gender or social class may evoke negative responses.

Furthermore, Ball (1987) argues that when coming to the work place in teaching, men and women typically teach different subjects to different groups of children; hold responsibilities for different functions within the schools, and generally have different chances within the system.

In terms of factors causing gender discrimination, Adkinson (1981) discovered the following to be prevalent in the UK:

- * career socialisation,
- * structural characteristics of the organisation,
- * social status and power, and
- * psychoanalyt. perspectives

These factors were discovered to be hindering the promotion of women in educational administrative positions.

Career socialisation of both boys and girls is different in most communities. Girls are taught to choose careers that are regarded as 'feminine', such as teaching and nursing, while boys are socialised into 'masculine' streams, such as engineering and medicine. This situation leads towards men occupying administrative roles in those careers regarded as 'feminine' when denied access into 'masculine'

ones. However, it is important to note that the sexual division of labour does not remain constant but is subject to political, economic and cultural change.

Organisational characteristics also play a role in depriving women of legitimacy in leadership positions. For instance, in a bureaucratic structure, authorities are less likely to support a woman in authority than a man. The remark by Stockard & Johnson (1981:2440) in the USA applies to the teaching profession in the UK, that "male dominance is embedded in the institutionalised patterns and concretely enforced by individual decisions in everyday interactions".

Women's discrimination is also caused by the issue of social status and power. In a patriarchal society, the male is regarded as "powerful" while the female is regarded as "weak". Davies (1992) elaborates on this point and maintains that in a male dominated society, "manhood has to be achieved in a process of struggle and confirmation" (p.134). Masculinity has to be demonstrated through relationships with women so that the female world and its occupants should be devalued and subordinated.

As a result, when men enter the managerial world, they define it in terms of male values so that they maintain their status and power.

The psychoanalytic perspective is another factor that causes discrimination because men are portrayed as being brighter than women. This perception explains why women were taught "softer" subjects, such as history, guidance, languages and needlework, while men were taught "hard" subjects, such as science and mathematics (Adkinson, 1981).

Strategies taken by the Gauteng Administration to eradicate gender discrimination

A recent study made by the Gauteng Administration (1995) and the Gender Education Task Team (1997) regarding "gender and equality" in Johannesburg discovered that women are still discriminated against in as far as public service positions are concerned. The studies revealed that very little was done by the government to address the issue of gender "equity". By "equity" is here meant 'fairness' or 'justice'. It is not the same as equality, which could mean 'sameness'. "Equity" refers to principles of fair distribution of resources such as money, or power or status

(Davies, 1990). Therefore, the researcher is going to assess those strategies taken by the government in that regard.

Stromquist (1993) who studied the US situation, found the same problem when assessing the influence of legislation on the issue of gender in education. She realised that the equity focused laws had particular shortcomings, such as:

- limited funding and
- weak enforcement and reliance on
voluntary efforts by educational
institutions.

These, according to her, hinder the achievement of a dramatic shift towards the anticipated goals. To relate Stromquist's findings to the South African situation, both the ANC's educational document and the South African constitution clearly enshrine non-racism and non-sexism, which are the foundations of gender equality. However, without ideological and material changes, these documents will not lead to substantial equality.

The 1995 paper of the Gauteng Administration, therefore, suggests that if gender equality is to include all marginalised or disadvantaged groups in the administration

of governance, it will be necessary to address not only the development of affirmative action and human resource development policies, but also the less visible constraints, which relate to strongly established social and cultural assumptions about permissible male and female roles.

The White Paper on Education and Training (1995) in contrast, suggests that in order for gender equity to be addressed, "there should be purposeful strategies for ensuring that the system protects the rights of the teachers and students to equitable treatment, fair opportunities for training and advancement in the education service, including affirmative action policy, in order to ensure an effective leadership cadre which is broadly representative of that population they serve". The representation of women in leadership positions must be drastically increased.

Anne-Marie Wolpe (1997) suggested that policy formulation on gender should consider the following crucial points: the composition of staff, recruiting procedures, the orientation and mentorship of new recruits, career paths,

opportunities for promotion and whether or not flexi hours operate for those with other responsibilities.

In addition to the above, Sebakwane (1992:292) and Pandor (1994:106) argue that the position of black women teachers in education requires serious attention. They suggest that attention will have to be given to the development of policies that address the current inequities of gender while also providing for the professional development of teachers.

Conclusion

It is clear from the literature reviewed in this study that the greatest single problem of contemporary women in respect of education management is the unjustifiable under-representation of women in senior managerial positions. This trend is certainly not restricted to the teaching profession.

Women tend to predominate the teaching profession but men hold the more powerful, prestigious and well-paying positions. Women are not as enthusiastically encouraged to aspire to these positions as men are. Furthermore, they may

face active opposition from officials who do the hiring and also from their colleagues when they do have such aspirations and when they actually attain typically 'male' posts.

The literature has further shown that empirical studies on gender discrimination within the education system of South Africa depicts that women suffer both formal and informal discrimination [King (1981), Kotecha (1994), Sebakwane (1992, 993-4), Truscott (1992), Pandor (1994)]. Also the literature has indicated that there are many factors which can be ascribed to women's discrimination in the teaching profession, though they are mostly related to apartheid and cultural traditions. The apartheid factor distinguishes the South African context from other countries.

The literature further shows that little has been done to eradicate the situation of discrimination and oppression in the teaching profession. The article on "Gender and Equality" by the Gauteng Administration (1995) has indicated that 'in the quest for equality of women's issues, most of the African governments are still struggling with reforms and legislation that would ensure

that women are protected from any form of discrimination". Also the G E T T (1997) report has indicated those dimensions that can be considered for policy formulation in South Africa.

Finally, the issue of gender discrimination is compounded by different theories from which the researcher selected the literature of this study; which ranges from feminist to equity approaches. The theories underlying the literature above explain how gender relations developed historically, and how these relations vary from culture to culture and from time to time. This shows that cultures are not static but continuously evolve maintaining certain traditions and developing new ones.

CHAPTER 3

3.1 METHODOLOGY

In order to collect data I visited the Gauteng Department of Education offices and where I was able to compile a factual and numerical profile of teacher deployment and gender division in the area. The general Gauteng data and District data were relevant in this regard. The recent data of 1996 were collected in this regard, and comprise the following important facts (which will be referred to in chapter four):-

- * number of teachers according to school level
(primary and secondary).
- * post level according to gender
- * salary notch according to gender
- * qualifications according to gender

3.2 Pilot Study

It was important that before I undertook the main study, I should first do a pilot study. This helped the researcher to check that all the questions and instructions were clear before being used for the main study. Piloting helped to remove items which would not yield usable data. According

to Bell (1993), the purpose of a pilot study is to "debugs" the instruments so that the subjects in the main study will not experience difficulties in completing the instruments and so that you can carry out a preliminary analysis to see whether the wording and format of questions will present any difficulties when the main data are analysed.

To "pilot" this study, I visited one of the schools where I undertook my practice teaching. After presenting my request to the principal, she organised a group of teachers from the school to whom I explained the importance of working with them. I gave them questionnaires to complete and thereafter interviews were conducted. This process was helpful because I was able to determine unclear and irrelevant questions which were present in the research instruments.

3.3 Sample

A non-random, stratified sample was selected. Mbilinyi (1992:60) is of the idea that people who participate in this kind of sampling should have:

" the attributes or histories under study. Included will be knowledgeable resource persons within the population who are especially articulate, critical, often carrying out the function of the local historians in their communities and facilities".

Ten secondary schools from District One were sampled. These schools were chosen because they come from previously disadvantaged black communities in Soweto (the former DET schools). Furthermore, the schools chosen were not far from each other in terms of their geographical location. School A is situated in Dlamini, B in Chiawelo, C in Mapetla, D and E are in Protea; all headed by female principals. Schools F and G are situated in Senaone, H in Chiawelo, I and J in Mapetla; all headed by male principals.

Ten principals from senior secondary schools were sampled, of which five were males and five were females. This was done to ensure that views from both genders were represented.

Ten female teachers were sampled. The sampling of teachers was based on their experience, age, qualification and position in the school. My intention was to interview those teachers who lacked success in obtaining promotion, but it was difficult to identify them. In fact in one of the schools, a teacher warned me not to use such a criterion as it had the potential of making teachers clash with their

principals (especially if the principal was male) because these teachers never advise their principals if they have applied for any senior posts. Thus they do not want to be seen as being "power hungry" by their male counterparts. Such an analogy is a stumbling-block to women's career mobility since it discourages them from applying for higher positions.

It was also my intention to interview the Director General and two District Directors or Inspectors. Unfortunately the interviews did not materialise because firstly, a letter from the Director General indicated that he was too busy to conduct an interview as he was addressing the issue of the 1996 exam crisis on the leaking of particular papers in the Gauteng region. Secondly, the District Director and two Inspectors from District One demanded that my research topic be registered and approved by the HSRC (Human Sciences Research Council) before I could be allowed to interview them. I was therefore referred to someone at the "gender desk" of the Gauteng Department of Education who represented the officials.

Ballantyne (1987:90) argues that in South Africa difficulties with the administration of a nationally based research project include:

- a) "the bewildering array of departmental procedures which have to be followed before permission is granted to allow school-based research to proceed;
- b) the suspicion and reluctance to allow research to take place in many departments owing to political sensitivity of educational matters within the country;
- c) the disruptions occurring due to staff and pupil boycotts, and the resultant closure of schools for many different periods of time".

The above incidents referred to the old education system under the apartheid government. It is, however, interesting to note that this process still occurs under the new democratic government as experienced by the researcher.

3.4 Data Collection

Since the study is based on gender discrimination, I have used multiple methods to obtain a broader perspective on the subject. Triangulation is an approach that has been

followed because "it allows the researcher to use two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour" (Cohen & Manion, 1994:233). An advantage of this approach is that it can reduce the researcher's bias and distortions which are likely to occur if one method only is applied. Therefore, this study has employed semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and career histories.

3.4.1 Semi-structured interviews

The main reason for employing this method is that it allows the people being researched to air their own views about the topic. Furthermore, the method is flexible as it can accommodate those questions emanating from the discussion and thus allows the researcher to redirect his/her focus. The point is that it gives space "to modify the sequence of questions, change the wording, explain or add to them" (Cohen & Manion, 1994:271).

Questions covered under this method include:

- * factors preventing the promotion of women to senior managerial positions in senior secondary schools;

- * conditions and requirements of appointments in such schools;
- * strategies implemented by the government in addressing the issue of gender discrimination.

3.4.2 Questionnaires:

Questionnaires were used to complement the semi-structured interviews to collect the biographical details of the interviewees. People were given questionnaires to fill in the required information before an interview session. This was done specifically to monitor returning of the papers and to give interviewees an opportunity to probe further if necessary. Personal information, such as name, address, age, marital status, teaching experience, qualifications, and position held, was gathered using this method. An advantage about using questionnaires is that they are very quick and cheap to administer (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Furthermore, each respondent is given the same set of questions, phrased in the same way. The data obtained from questionnaires are more comparable than information obtained by means of interviews. However, there are disadvantages or limitations about using this method (Cohen & Manion, 1994).

Respondents are more prone to being biased if they complete the questionnaires in front of the researcher. However, if the researcher is not present, the respondents may not understand what they are being asked and therefore give irrelevant information. The worst case could amount to not returning the questionnaires at all. In my case the respondents (ten principals and ten teachers) returned all the questionnaires because they had to complete them in my presence.

3.4.3 Life Histories

"Life histories" is a strategy that allows women to articulate their own views and present their experiences. This method involves at least two people, the 'life historian' and the 'producer' of the narrative (Mbilinyi, 1992). This method is representative and objective as it includes the experiences of women. The subjective accounts of life histories have integrity, because they are located within gendered positions.

In order to use the strategy above, I allowed women teachers to narrate their own life histories in the teaching profession so that their position could be put

within context. This method allowed the women teachers to reflect on the situation in which they work and it helped the researcher to be aware of the reality that exists under the new education department. In fact, the method made the researcher aware that only the names of the separate departments changed but not the "culture" of handling matters pertaining to promotion.

3.5 Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to the appropriateness, meaningfulness and usefulness of the inferences a researcher makes; whereas reliability refers to the consistency of scores or answers from one administration of an instrument to another, and from one set of items to another (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990).

The employment of triangulation ensured that the data collected were reliable and valid. If only two instruments were used to gather data by the researcher, then the issue of reliability and validity would have been doubtful. Therefore, the use of triangulation made it possible for the researcher to approach the problem of study from different angles, thus reducing the bias from both the researcher and the researched.

3.6 Generalisation of the research:

In every study researchers look at ways in which the findings of the research can be generalised to other settings. In this case, I will deal with both external and internal generalisations. Since the study employed interviews, the issue of internal generalisation was a bit problematic. Why? Because the researcher has to draw inferences from only what the interviewee says at that particular point in time. Therefore, in the process one misses other aspects of the person's perspectives that are not expressed in the interview (Mampell, 1992). Nonetheless, I think the number of people who were interviewed in a similar setting and the consistency of their accounts created more credibility to internal validity.

External generalisation has to do with the extent to which explanations can be applied to other contexts. Despite the fact that the study was done in an urban area of Gauteng, I think certain inferences can be drawn for other provinces as well, due to some similar conditions prevailing in other schools.

3.7 Limitations of the study:

It is worth mentioning that the issue of finance was a great impediment to the study as it limited my visitation to only District One which was not too far from the University of the Witwatersrand. As I visited ten schools in Soweto, it was difficult to travel to each school by taxi, without travel allowance. I do believe that if I could have spent more days in schools, I would have established a good rapport with the interviewees.

Furthermore, the issue of transport made it difficult to do observations to determine if there were any forms of informal discrimination taking place at school level. It is also important to state that owing to time constraints, it was not possible for the researcher to attend interview meetings to detect whether gender discrimination does take place during the selection process or not.

3.8 Conclusion:

The research methodology above was of great use to the study because it allowed the researcher to obtain first-hand information about how people think, act, and feel about the issue of gender discrimination in the teaching profession. Biographical information, people's views and experiences were captured.

CHAPTER 4

4.1 Gender profile of the teaching corps in Soweto

It is important to understand the gender profile of the teaching corps in Soweto. Thus this chapter is going to investigate the numbers of teachers according to school teaching level and gender. This will help us know the total number of males and females employed by the Department of Education in this area. These statistics will give us a clear picture of whether males or females are represented in the highest ranks or in the lowest. Hence, it will be appropriate to raise questions such as "if women are numerous in the teaching profession, why are they less represented in senior managerial positions"?

A school at its institutional level comprises the teachers, heads of departments, deputy principals and principals. All teachers are at post level 1, HODs are at post level 2, deputy principals are at post level 3, while principals are at post level 4 or 5 depending on the enrolment of the school. The difference

between "rank" and "post level" is that we may have subject advisors at post level 2 or 3, but not holding the rank of HOD or deputy principal. Unlike ranks, post levels are more detailed as they apply to the whole teaching corps rather than to a specific group of teachers.

4.1.1 Number of teachers according to school level and gender

Table 1

Gender breakdown of primary educators per district

C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
441	1,648	333	1,307	222	1,373	298	1,154	246	1,056	307	1,026
21%	79%	20%	80%	14%	86%	20%	79%	19%	81%	27%	77%

Table Keys (M = Male, F = Female, C = Central District)

The data above clearly show the predominance of women teachers at primary school level. The reasons for women predominating at primary school level have already been discussed in chapter one. However, it is interesting to note that there are women in the lower primary sector, whilst the majority of men are overwhelmingly represented in the senior primary sector.

Table 2

Gender breakdown of secondary educators per district

C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
585	610	516	646	570	820	489	520	242	483	381	669
49%	51%	45%	55%	41%	59%	48%	51%	33%	67%	37%	63%

The above statistics show that the majority of teachers in Soweto secondary schools are women although they hold lower positions in those schools. There is a remarkable difference between the rural area of Lebowa (Mahwelereng circuit) secondary schools and those in Soweto in as far as the percentage of female teachers is concerned.

In her research which was conducted in Lebowa (Mahwelereng circuit), Manamela (1995) discovered that women were under-represented in secondary schools as compared to their male counterparts. One of the major reasons women teachers are under-represented in rural secondary schools is the fact that women had limited access to post-matriculation training opportunities, which hampered their appointment in such schools. Similar findings were reported by Sebakwane (1992) when she studied "the careers of women under apartheid" in Lebowa secondary schools.

The explanation forwarded for the under-representation of women in senior positions was the under-development of women's education in the area. On the contrary, the under-representation of women in positions of management in Third world countries has been caused by, inter alia, the labour of women in farms while males are found to be in great numbers in schools (Gauteng Administration, 1995).

4.1.2 Age distribution according to gender

Female principals seem to be older and have more years of teaching experience than men in similar senior positions. Most of the female principals interviewed in Soweto were middle aged women whose ages ranged from 40 to 60 years (see the table below).

Table 3

Current Age of female principals interviewed

Principal	Current age in years
Principal A	45
Principal B	47
Principal C	53
Principal D	57
Principal E	60

This situation is similar to Evetts's (1994) findings in the United Kingdom, where she found that most women who occupied senior positions were older than the age of 40. Ball (1987) also asserts that in the UK discrimination against women is not only on the basis that they are women, but also on how old they are. Most heads will not promote any women under the age of 40 because promotion is regarded as a reward for long service and loyalty to the school.

4.1.3 Post level of teachers according to gender

As mentioned earlier, as one climbs up the ladder, the number of female teachers diminishes. For instance, most posts from levels 2 to 5 are occupied by males. It becomes clear that women are highly discriminated against in appointments to promotion posts. Women are not only discriminated against in positions above the school teacher level, but also in administration posts. Men seem to enjoy enhanced chances of promotion to such posts as HOD, deputy principalship and principalship.

The tables below indicate clearly what has been discussed above. They also show the gender statistics of post levels 2, 3, 4 and 5 in secondary schools in Soweto.

Table 4

Gender breakdown of HODs in secondary schools

C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
76	53	63	76	66	94	69	68	31	63	50	157
59%	41%	45%	55%	41%	59%	50%	49%	33%	67%	24%	76%

According to the table above it is evident that women in Soweto secondary schools occupy positions of HODs in great numbers. This situation can be explained as being one which reveals the myths and stereotypes about women and positions. For instance, the old adage that "behind every successful man there is a woman" is still upheld by some male stereotyped principals when selecting HODs. It clearly shows that women are being used in order to help male principals be viewed as 'successful' (for men's selfish ambitions of further promotion into inspectorship posts).

Table 5

Gender breakdown of deputy principals in secondary schools

C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
585	610	516	646	570	820	489	520	242	483	391	669
49%	51%	45%	55%	41%	59%	48%	51%	33%	67%	37%	63%

Both Tables 5 and 6 clearly show the under-representation of women in senior managerial positions in secondary schools in Soweto. It is clear that as teachers move up the hierarchical, the chances for women being promoted into positions of power and authority diminish. Men are concentrated at the highest levels of the educational hierarchy, whilst women predominate at the lowest levels. This under-representation of women in positions of power and authority is problematic as it "transmits an implicit message regarding the male and female division of labour to both sexes" (Narsi, 1990: 17).

Table 6

Gender breakdown of principals in secondary schools

C1		C2		C3		C4		C5		C6	
M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
17	8	23	2	26	7	20	1	12	3	23	2
68%	32%	92%	8%	79%	21%	95%	5%	80%	20%	92%	8%

4.1.4 Salary notch and gender

Analysing the tables above, it becomes clear that women are found at the lower salary notches, while their male counterparts are found at the highest ones. This is because most women teachers occupy post level 1 and 2, while most

of the males occupy posts from levels 2 to 5. However, it should be noted that the issue of salary disparity has been eradicated at post levels. This move was taken by the government in 1981. The struggle for parity has been a hard and long one by various teacher organisations in the country and the position today is such that women are now earning the same salaries as their male counterparts. However, Sebakwane (1992:280) contends that in theory there is equality, but in practice there is discrimination because most women teachers are under-qualified.

CHAPTER 5

5.1 PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

This chapter focuses on rules and procedures for promotion within the Gauteng Department of Education; the factors which cause gender discrimination in senior secondary schools in senior managerial positions, and strategies taken by the department in eradicating gender.

5.1.1 Rules and procedures for promotion in the Gauteng Education Department

Rules and procedures pertaining to promotion of teachers constitute a very important part of the promotion policy. The rules should thus be clear, simple and practicable.

The Gauteng Department of Education was unable to provide the researcher with a current promotion policy document. The reason given had been that the old apartheid document was done away with and the new policy document is still in progress of being formulated. The documents that were given

to the researcher were only outlines of recommendations for promotion (ie an interim policy document). The responses given by all the interviewees at the school level demonstrated that they lacked information regarding a promotion policy.

However, when promotions are made at school level, the following recommended rules and procedures are applied:

- All vacancies must be advertised.
- It is the responsibility of the GDE to do the initial sifting of candidates to determine which candidates do comply with the minimum requirements for appointment, and only these candidates may be considered for shortlisting.
- The candidate must be a South African citizen.
- The minimum qualification requirement for appointment is the possession of a recognised (teaching) three year qualification obtained after grade 12 (formerly known as Std 10) (REQV13) plus 3-7 years experience depending on the post level (whether 2,3 or 4).
- The shortlisted candidates are then sent to individual schools for further shortlisting. This is

the final sifting by the governing body of the school; in the presence of observers from different teacher organisations.

- Interviews are made by a panel from the school governing body, in the presence of observers from different teacher organisations.
- An interview form in respect of each applicant interviewed should be completed.
- The interview panel should furnish their names and designation.
- The interview panel should compile a merit list of all applicants interviewed (Gauteng Department of Education- Minimum requirements for permanent appointment of educators to promotion posts, 1995).

It is apparent from the rules and procedures presented above, that the issue of gender does not feature anywhere in the policy document. This gives an impression that gender issues are not a problem in the education system, yet this is not a true reflection of the existing situation.

When analysing the above rules and procedures as laid down by the GDE, the following observations were made by the researcher. Firstly, it is evident from the interviews below that not all vacancies are advertised as stated, rather some are advertised through word-of-mouth.

Secondly, the final sifting of applicants for promotional posts by the governing bodies poses a big problem because these people are not trained to undertake such an exercise. This is disadvantageous to women because there is the possibility that the committee might not follow fair selection procedures. Moreover, governing bodies in most black township schools are dominated by males and consequently patriarchal perceptions are deeply entrenched in such schools.

The fact that women are South African citizens does not give them equal standing with their male counterparts. Rather there should be a loud and clear statement stipulating that people should not be discriminated against on the basis of their gender.

The question of whether gender discrimination does exist in the teaching profession has been the major one in this

research. When asked to air their views on this, most teachers in the sample agreed that gender discrimination does exist in the teaching profession. A female English teacher from school A, said the following:

yes it does, though things are not the same as before; such as salary, medical aid, housing subsidy, etc. But when coming to positions, women are still discriminated against.

Another female English teacher in school B retorted the following:

I think it still does exist even in the new South Africa. We only hear of change from afar but we don't see it happening in our schools.

However, there were two female principals who held a different view because they think that gender discrimination is no longer prevalent in the teaching profession.

The first female principal from school A explained it this way:

there is no such a thing anymore because the government is ours now. If it was existent, I would not have got this position.

While the second female principal from school B said:

this days opportunities are open for everyone and thus gender discrimination is becoming history

as more women are gaining access into school management posts.

It is apparent that women who gained entry into the management posts do not recognise gender discrimination as being existent in the teaching profession. This might be because they have managed to secure senior posts for themselves in the teaching arena.

Most teachers who experienced gender discrimination were females. According to the interviews conducted, female teachers admitted to having been discriminated against in one way or the another, while males reported not having had problems in that regard. According to the male principal interviewed, most of the laws governing the teaching profession then were favouring them as compared with their female counterparts. This indicates that female teachers do suffer on the basis of their gender. Furthermore, it shows that organisations, such as schools, are ruled and shaped by male norms.

When explaining her situation, one married female English teacher from school F recounted how her marital position mitigated against her chances of being promoted to a vice-principalship.

I was devastated to hear that as a married woman I can't compete for a permanent post because I was regarded as a temporary teacher. I had all the potential and the qualifications, but just because I was married ...

The above situation was said to have caused many women to divorce their husbands in order to receive benefits such as a housing subsidy and medical aid schemes (although this was just an arrangement of convenience). These benefits were not available to married women unless she could to prove that her husband's health was too poor to support her and that she was the "breadwinner".

In another scenario, female teachers mentioned that when the post of deputy principalship was vacant in their school, the principal went to notify the two male HODs to apply for the post while the female HODs were never approached at all. It clearly shows that women are less likely to be encouraged to apply for positions of power even if they do have aspirations and the necessary qualifications and experience.

5.1.2 Factors which contribute to gender discrimination

There are many factors which were cited as obstacles to women wishing to enter management posts. Some examples are:

Stereotypes and myths: Among the interviewees, these factors were almost mentioned by everyone. Stereotypes such as "women are too emotional, less ambitious, lack confidence, or underachieving" were amongst those cited. These are said to have contributed in hindering women for being recommended for positions of management, especially in senior secondary schools, where an "iron hand" is needed to maintain discipline.

Tradition and culture: Most interviewees hinted black cultures were being patriarchal in nature. This patriarchal nature has an impact on the promotion of black women into senior secondary schools. A female Geography teacher mentioned the following:

It is amazing how people still hold on to sayings such as 'a man is the head of the family' when talking about positions in the school, as though we are running a family. People should begin to realise that a school and a family are not the same, otherwise women will remain oppressed and discriminated against.

Judging from the statement above, it becomes apparent that schools have been an extension of the private domain and that women teachers' lives in the labour market remain

subordinate to men within the occupational hierarchy. Most women interviewed became critical of black cultures in the society as they have particular patriarchal and gender relations which are chauvinistic and sexist.

Women's socialisation: The issue of how girls are raised is one of the burning ordeals that has been pointed out by many interviewees. The interviewees cited this factor as having a major impact on the number of women occupying managerial positions in senior secondary schools. Socialisation affects how men and women function in a particular society. When commenting on this factor a female Zulu teacher in school F retorted:-

The way we were raised as girls, it really 'killed' us. Why? Because when you grew up as a girl, you always received and obeyed rules as compared to boys. When you questioned or defied authority, you were labelled a 'tomboy' and told that your chances of marriage were minimal

On the contrary, a female principal from school B felt that recently the process of socialisation is becoming redirected since girls are given latitude to do subjects which were previously regarded as masculine.

It is clear that socialisation has been used as an instrument for oppression of women and it really affects how they are looked at in society. What we experience during socialisation as boys and girls raises expectations and perceptions of how either sex should behave. These expectations and perceptions, in turn, can affect the acquisition of and achievement in administrative positions. For instance, if a male supervisor expects a female teacher to cry when she is criticised, he may not criticise her. That may prevent her from having an opportunity to improve the specific situation, to increase her self-confidence in the process and, if she does have difficulty receiving criticism, to learn the important skill of not interpreting criticism about work as a personal affront.

It is the perception of some of the interviewees, that the fact that women bear children and are primary care givers seem to be some of the reasons why women are discriminated against as school heads. A female principal from school D had the following to say:

it is very difficult to find a newly, young, married woman as a principal of a secondary school because her maternity leave will require her to stay at home. The majority of women principals around Soweto are elderly women.

The above view is reiterated by a male principal from school F:

for the mere reason that women become pregnant and very sickly during the same period, I think, it may be one of the reasons why they are discriminated against for higher posts.

The above situation depicts that women are discriminated against because of their reproductive function. Hence, older women are preferred as compared to younger women.

Organizational structures and processes: The androcentric³ nature of organisation has been identified as a major obstacle. Men seem to have an advantage over women when acquiring or functioning in a position of educational leadership. This has been seen to discourage women from applying for positions of power. The processes occurring in most organisations seem to be "gate keeping" so that women are denied access to the hierarchical ladder. For instance, many principals arrange to have official meetings in the afternoon, proceeding late into the evening. Sometimes workshops are conducted at awkward places away from home. From these, one can see that females' needs are not

³ the practice of viewing the world and shaping reality from a predominantly male perspective (Mbilinyi, M. 1992 "Research Methodologies in Gender Issues", in Meena, R. Gender in Southern Africa: Conceptual and Theoretical Issues, Sapes Trust, Harare.

considered and thus the need for restructuring schools as organisations is important.

Nepotism: Most of the interviewees felt that nepotism is a common practice that affects administrative posts. They mentioned that teachers having direct channels, especially relatives in an education department, are the ones getting positions because of their influence. Similar findings were reported by Sebakwane's (1992) study in Lebowa secondary schools and Gaynor's (1990) study of secondary school teachers in Botswana. Both studies report that teachers with the right family ties in the government, inspectorate or on school committees were able to influence their own horizontal or vertical movements within teaching. One female teacher illustrated this point when she stated:-

When I went for an interview in one school, I met a lady who said she was made aware of the post by her uncle in the school. Hence, at the end of it she managed to get the HOD post.

This indicates that when one has contacts in appropriate places, it is possible for him/her to obtain a post. Such people speak up for their relatives in front of the interview panel. This will influence the panel to be biased and subjective.

Furthermore, a male principal from school G had the following story of how he was appointed to the principalship post, :

A friend of mine who is an inspector came to give me the forms to complete and then submitted them on my behalf. I was never interviewed. To be honest, I was just called to sign the assumption of duty forms after a while, and then I got the job in this school.

In Shakeshaft's (1993) study in the USA cases such as the above have been revealed as being discriminatory practices which indicate that women are undesirable candidates for administrative positions. This is due to the fact that men are recruited by word of mouth and are allowed to skip some of the steps selection process.

Qualifications: The main reason women have been discriminated against is because it was said that they were mostly under-qualified. According to the interviewees they believed that the statement was true in the eighties and is still sometimes the case with women in primary schools, but not with "women of the nineties" who are upgrading themselves with institutions such as University of South Africa (UNISA), Vista University, etc.

When asked about the under-qualification of female teachers in secondary schools, a male principal from school H said:

I don't know about the general figures of the under-qualifications of women in Soweto *per se*, but what I do know is that most of the highly qualified people in this school are women. One has got a masters degree while the majority have their honours degrees. Most of our male teachers are still having college diplomas. You see their problem is liquor and nothing else.

A female principal from school D disagreed with the view that women are sidelined on the basis of their under-qualification. She claimed that some of the male principals in Soweto are still studying towards their first degrees and have been placed in such posts not because they were appropriately qualified but due to the riots which prevailed in Soweto schools during the mid-1980s:

These people have been placed during the riot times in Soweto when women were regarded as being incapable of controlling the youth in the area; not because they were well qualified but because males represented authority and discipline.

The following table gives the qualifications of the ten principals interviewed according to gender:-

Table 7

Qualifications of principals interviewed according to gender

Degree/ Diploma	Males	Females
SED (diploma)	1	0
BA/BAED (degree)	0	1
BED/HONS(postdegree)	2	2
M.Ed/MA (postdegree)	2	2
TOTAL	5	5

Analysing the table above, one male principal is occupying his rank with a secondary education diploma. In this case, the principal's experience was put forward as a motivation for occupying the rank. All five female principals interviewed have degrees while only four males have degrees. However, it should be noted that the sample above can not be used to draw any generalisations. It is only relevant for the scope of this study.

Experience: Most interviewees cited experience as being important in order to occupy a senior position. In order to qualify for a promotional post, one needs three years of teaching experience. Sometimes qualifications are overlooked if it is discovered that one has the experience

for the position he/she has applied for. For instance, the HOD for commercial subjects in one school was appointed to the post because of the experience he obtained while he was 'acting' in the post before it was advertised.

It was interesting to note how different principals moved through the hierarchical ladder to where they are currently. Most male principals claimed they had not competed for the positions they are holding. Responses on this issue ranged from being recommended by their male predecessors to being informed by inspectors who are their friends. On the other hand, female principals claimed to have attended formal interviews to be appointed to their current post.

The above situation depicts that there are discriminatory practices, such as using verbal recruitment for males, which indicate that women are less desirable candidates for administrative and senior positions. Such practices serve to undermine women's self-esteem and confidence, resulting in fewer women applying for positions for which they are not highly qualified. Conversely, men would be encouraged even if they do not have the necessary qualifications.

In order to apply for any post one wishes to, one needs to be well informed about the requirements thereof. Most interviewees were of the opinion that they were informed of the requirements for occupying the posts they were holding. One female teacher said:-

The requirements are clearly stipulated in the government gazette which advertises the posts, so that the applicants know exactly what is required before applications are made.

One may find that even though the requirements for promotion are laid down, they are not followed as stipulated by the selection panel. Sometimes they are changed in order to suit a specific need at a particular moment. This is evident in the following statement uttered by a male principal:-

Requirements are laid down as guidelines for selection. If a particular person with other exceptional qualities that are of great value to the school can come, the panel might decide otherwise about that individual. The person might be taken even if he/she does not have the stipulated experience or qualifications. For instance, our vice principal here was taken because of his good credentials though he has two years experience.

It is therefore clear that sometimes rules and procedures are not applied consistently. Another female teacher said

there are those requirements that are not stipulated in black and white but embedded in people's perceptions, such as gender, and this becomes evident when the panel makes a choice.

When asked to comment on the gender representation of the selection panel, most of the interviewees admitted without hesitation that the selection panel was usually not gender representative. When recalling the interview they attended, it was not uncommon to find amongst the women statements such as:

When I entered the room, there were some men with only one lady in their midst. The whole situation just made me feel intimidated. (1st)

I was interviewed by a panel of ten people of which eight were men and two were women. All these people were inspectors who were former principals. (2nd)

The fact that most of the interview panel members are males is indicative of the fact that the Department of Education needs change. By "change" I mean that there should be new laws that will regulate that selection panels should be representative in terms of gender. This will allay some fears that may emanate from women interviewees.

Training is an important aspect of management. When asked whether they received any management training, all the principals responded that they had not received any form of management training since being appointed to their positions. The last training that they received was when they were still HODs before the 1994 elections.

It is important for any government to realise that principals, as heads of schools, need to be well trained through in-service training, taking into consideration that most principals have not been exposed to an administrative atmosphere (especially women). Leadership and management training are important to prepare, support, and guide men and women into positions of educational administration.

When asked about the attitude of male/female teachers towards their position, principals gave different answers such as:-

I think their attitude is positive as I involve every teacher in the running of the school. They are all very supportive and I can't say whether male or female (male principal).

Sometimes female teachers can be their own enemies when it comes to self-upliftment. This is because they were raised

to believe that women can not lead properly and thus their attitude towards female leadership is sometimes negative. The following statements were common examples of the sentiments expressed by female principals:

To be honest with you, female teachers can, sometimes, be negative towards a female principal. In my school here, I almost get more support of male teachers than female teachers .(1st)

Women have got a phd (pull her down) syndrome. Most of the time I find myself pushing them in order to do their work. Why? It's like they want to prove that I am incapable .(2nd)

Deducing from the above quotes, it becomes evident that "women contribute to their own subordination and when they act in support of the inherent domesticity of women, they undermine their own status of professionalism" (Sebakwane, 1993/4).

Most teachers concurred that gender is not important in as far as senior management positions are concerned, because they felt that it would be unfair to confer a particular person with a position due to his/her gender. They believe that a person should have a position because he/she is

capable and competent. "Tokenism" should not be applied so that everyone can get a fair opportunity.

However, there are those teachers who believe that gender is important when coming to senior positions. These people believe that men are socialised to be 'brave and strict' and thus they are deemed suitable for the management of secondary schools; while women are inclined to be 'timid and sympathetic'.

Despite many perceptions that prevail about women and management, most interviewees were positive that women are capable of leading secondary schools. This was supported by the fact that some of the best schools in the district are led by women and they have been producing good matric results. This was a good indicator that women are capable of leading secondary schools. One female principal expressed herself this way:

We can't talk of women being incapable when they have never been given a fair chance to prove themselves. Let them be given opportunities and exposure first, then their performance can be assessed.

It is true that women have been less exposed to school administration and management because these domains were regarded as an arena for males. If women were given a chance, they could bring about change because they have been an untapped source which, if used, could be for the benefit of the majority.

From the above information one is tempted to ask the following question: *What is the government doing in order to open positions of power to women, in senior secondary schools?* It was interesting to listen to teachers' responses to this question when asked by the researcher. The teachers said that they are not aware of any mechanism taken by the Department of Education in trying to address the issue of gender equality. One woman teacher put it thus:

The only thing we hear of is 'affirmative action'. What is funny is that it only happens right at the top, at the government offices, not here at school level.

The above statement indicates that change is not visible at the lowest level. Therefore, the Department of Education should start planning tentative measures in order to eradicate gender discrimination right at grass roots level.

There were a number of strategies suggested by teachers that could be taken by the Department of Education in bringing about gender equity. These ranged from:

- * hiring more women in positions traditionally occupied by men and thus increasing their representation in middle management,
- * Inservice training should be given to women in order to improve their administrative skills,
- * educating both males and females about gender issues,
- * women teachers should be given bursaries in order to improve their qualifications as well as those men whose careers are hindered because they have younger siblings or the aged to support,
- * Interview panels should be monitored to ensure gender representivity.

Assessing the strategies taken by the government to eradicate gender discrimination:

One of the purposes of this study is to assess the strategies taken by the government to ensure that gender equity is given top priority in the restructuring of the Department of Education.

The principal instrument used by the state to effect reform is the law. Changes by legislature, where it is deemed desirable, are effected by new laws being introduced, where wide reforms are needed, or by old laws being amended to bring them into conformity with the new (Gauteng Administration, 1995).

In reality, serious discrepancies exist between legal provision and public provision. The legal system is by and large a reflection of the social values of the dominant gender group in our society. The situation facing women in both Public and Private sector employment in South Africa will depend on the steps that the government employ to ensure proper and effective planning. Legal reform needs to go far beyond the mere drafting of legal and official policy into the form of a Bill. There is a need for a concrete declaration of the intentions to protect women's rights in employment.

The government policies from the apartheid regime neglected gender issues in planning for development and public needs. Lack of proper recognition of the role of women led to discriminatory policies and negative

attitudes towards women. Thus this historical legacy of discrimination in South Africa led to unequal employment opportunities.

The system of occupational segregation was only formally (and indirectly) abolished by the Public Service Act (111) of 1984 of the Gauteng Administration, Which states in section 10, that in making or filling any post in the public service:

- * no person who qualifies for the appointment, transfer or promotion concerned shall be favoured or prejudiced;
- * only the qualification, level of training, relative merit, efficiency and suitability of the persons who qualify for the appointment, promotion or transfer concerned, and such conditions as may be prescribed or as may be directed by the Commission for the making of the appointment or in the filling of the post, shall be taken into account (Gauteng Administration, 1995).

Furthermore, the ANC introduced current policies of the RDP in terms of equality and affirmative action

recommendations. Some of the Gauteng Administration initiatives of improving the Public Service Employment policies include the introduction of a new Staff Code in August 1994. The new policy guidelines call for the old, biased recruitment and selection practices to be replaced by a new approach. The new policy calls for the removal of barriers to employment with respect to race and gender and it shows commitment to the principle of merit as a key criterion for hiring and promotion in all sectors of the Public Service.

The government needs to take specific measures to incorporate gender equity in national legislation and to set specific targets in all aspects of development planning, including human resources in the Education Department. In many national plans women's roles remain unrecognised in sectoral strategies, and opportunities for expanding women's participation are not seized. The specification of gender equity as a goal in education needs to be addressed urgently.

According to the White Paper of 1995, the Minister of Education recommended that there should be a Gender Unit in

the Education Department nationally. Therefore, a Gender Education Task Team (GETT) was formulated to heed the call of the Minister to ensure that gender issues had received a platform in Education. According to the GETT report of 1997 by Wolpe *et al.*, there are some recommendations which were made to the Ministry of Education to ensure that gender issues are addressed in as far as educational management is concerned. The report recommends, among other issues, the following:

- * **Advertising** - there should be other techniques that are required to access the disadvantaged, in addition to newspapers.
- * **Recruitment** - the use of valid selection criteria that are an actual and real reflection of the requirements of the job.
- * **Interviews** - interviews should be part of a merit-based selection process: that is, selecting the best person for the job. Interview panels should be well acquainted with, trained and practiced in, recruitment and selection processes and their implementation. Panels should be gender-balanced so that there should be a range of perspectives to decision-making.

- * Mentoring - strategies need to be put in place to ensure that women in leadership are not always relegated to "solo-status", without the informal networks to which men have traditionally had access. Formal, non-hierarchically based mentoring programs need to be put in place (Wolpe et al., 1997:195).

One major problem mentioned by the GDE interviewee with the structures implemented to eradicate gender discrimination is the lack of funds. For instance, members of GETT from the nine provinces of South Africa "complained about not getting funds from their own provincial governments in order to run their programmes" (GETT, Provincial Representatives' Meeting: 1997).

There are also other problems which affect the smooth running of gender structures in different provinces of South Africa, such as:

- * The structures are heavily influenced by men with little support from women.
- * Stereotypical and patriarchal notions are expressed.

- * Some structures placed by the Department of Education have apparently no mission and thus nothing concrete appears to emerge from them.
- * People in certain departments are resistant to the introduction of such structures (GETT, 1997).

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

It is clear from this research report that certain factors mitigate against the advancement of women in the teaching profession, although the discrimination against them is not necessarily wilful. Stereotypes and assumptions about gender have produced a climate in the field of education that fails the professional development of all people (especially women).

How we perceive cultural attributes plays a large part in the experiences that we provide for "others" and the degree to which "others" are viewed as significant players in the organisation. Our expectations of "others" become critical factors in how their success or failure is measured. How we behave and respond to others' capacity and aspirations is influenced by the beliefs and assumptions we hold about difference and diversity (Restine, 1993).

Main Findings:

- * The discrimination against and under-representation of women in posts of responsibility in senior secondary schools is a striking feature, even though women constitute a large percentage of the teaching corps.

- * The gender discrimination against and under-representation of female teachers in positions of management is attributed to both formal and informal factors.

- * Aspiring female administrators suffer discouragement and lack of support from both their male and female counterparts.

- * Female principals tend to predominate in primary schools as compared to secondary schools.

- * The legacies of patriarchy, traditional and cultural factors, which favour men in positions of authority and women as subordinates, are rooted among Africans.

- * Although there are policies to correct the gender imbalance in the educational hierarchy, these are not sufficiently monitored. In some instances these new policies are driven by those who still hold on to patriarchal perceptions.

- * Most of the interview panels are not gender representative. Most of the panel are inspectors who are predominantly males.

- * Criteria for selection are often not clearly stated and thus the potential for subjectivity and bias is increased.

Recommendations:

To ensure that women teachers are given equal access to further training and promotional opportunities, it will be essential to take the following points into cognisance. However, it should be noted that these ideas are not exhaustive; rather they are means towards attaining the solutions. They can be used to generate discussions that can improve areas where gender inequality is prevalent.

- * Provision of training is the most popular strategy to bring about change. An awareness training programme for men and women is essential. For women it will provide them with necessary skills to gain sufficient confidence while, for men, it will remove negative attitudes and imbue them with positive ones.

- * Education is one of the principal forces in establishing different roles and expectations for males and females in most societies (socialisation). I therefore suggest that teacher education should be used as the most direct and effective vehicle to counteract sexism in education. As all teachers undergo an established and prescribed training this would appear to be the logical forum in which to intervene and ensure that education becomes a positive force of resocialisation on the issue of gender relations.

- * The policy-makers should examine the current promotional criteria and procedures in order to remove any assumptions, attitudes or structures that are sex-biased. The government should legislate or officially correct gender imbalance in the educational hierarchy.

- * Policy alone can not bring about change, rather it should be followed by temporary special measures in order to overcome the current disadvantaged position of women in the teaching profession. This may include special measures concerning recruitment, training, guidance and grooming of women for promotion. For instance, in Holland the city council of Amsterdam decided that new heads should be chosen out of the high ratio of women in the teaching profession, i.e. from women applicants who met the job requirements (Davies, 1990:83).

- * Monitoring is an important aspect. It will be necessary to maintain a clear and informal perspective on the position of women when promoting equal opportunity for their advancement. This will require data collection and monitoring of the situation, which should not be left to the initiative and time of a few individuals, but rather incorporated in all activities related to career and promotional opportunities.

- * A stronger teacher organisation with more dialogue and consultation with authority on conditions affecting the

profession as a whole can also better serve the interests of women. However, care should be taken that separate women's committees do not serve to marginalise women's interests and concerns. Rather, gender disaggregated information should be maintained with perhaps an "equity" officer designated to implement and develop work on gender issues.

Further Research:

Although the study reviewed the strategies taken by the Department of Education in eradicating gender discrimination, it did not find many concrete measures in place. This is due to the fact that the study was conducted during the period of 1996/7 when there were much discussion on implementing such strategies by the new government. I, therefore, suggest that a study be undertaken to investigate the success of those strategies and how they have influenced the lives of women, if at all.

Another important area of investigation is to identify resources currently or potentially available for implementing such strategies.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS AND PRINCIPALS

University of Witwatersrand

Private Bag 3

Braamfontein

2001

October 1996

Dear Sir/Madam

The following questionnaire is designed to gather biographical information of the interviewee. This information will be treated with confidentiality as no names will be attached.

Your co-operation will be highly appreciated as the information will be used towards the study of the discrimination against women in senior managerial positions in Soweto senior secondary schools.

Yours faithfully

Ambrose Pule Rakgoathe

QUESTIONNAIRE

PLEASE TICK IN THE APPROPRIATE SPACE WHERE POSSIBLE, TO PROVIDE THE REQUIRED INFORMATION. DO NOT WRITE YOUR NAME.

PERSONAL BACKGROUND:1. Sex: Male Female 2. Age: 25-29 30-39 40-50 51-65 3. Marital status: Single Married Divorced Widowed 4. Number of children: 0 1-3 4-6 7-10

5. What is your home language? _____

6. What other languages do you speak? _____

EDUCATION AND TRAINING:

1. What academic qualifications do you have?

Matric or equivalent

Certificate of education

Undergraduate degree

B.Ed or Honours

Masters degree

Other (please specify) _____

2. What was your level of qualification when you started to teach? Please list your qualifications in order of their achievement.

Title	subject(s)	Year of completion	Institution

3. What qualifications have you acquired since you started teaching?

	Subject/ Description
first degree	
B.Ed/ Honours	
M.Ed/M.A	

4. Are you currently enrolled on course of study?

Yes

No

TEACHING CAREER:

1. Year of entry in teaching _____

2. Years of teaching experience _____

3. Post level _____

4. What age group, subject and standards do you teach at the moment?

Age	Subject/s	Standard

2. List all separate teaching post which you have held before your present post

Duration	Post level	Description	Region of school

APPENDIX B**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 1 (FOR TEACHERS)**

1. What do you understand by gender discrimination?
2. Do you think gender discrimination exist in the teaching profession?
3. Have you ever experienced gender discrimination in your career as a teacher? Can you explain?
4. Why do you think women are found in less numbers in senior managerial posts in senior secondary schools?
5. Do you think women are better as heads of primary or senior secondary schools?
6. How many women are presently occupying managerial positions in the school?
7. Do you agree with the statement that says 'most women are underqualified thus they are found in less numbers in managerial positions' ?
8. What are those factors which you think are hindering women in entering managerial positions in senior secondary schools?
9. How are posts advertised in the school?
10. Have you ever applied for a promotional post?
11. Were you familiar with the conditions and requirements of such a promotional post?
12. During the selection procedure, were you ever asked questions that did not relate to your professional life? What sort of questions?
13. What obstacles did you encounter while applying for such a post?
14. Do you think the DET selection panel is well representative in terms of gender?
15. How does the department regard married women as compared to single women in relation to the following:-
 - i) maternity leave ?
 - ii) housing subsidy?
 - iii) salary ?

iv) medical aid scheme ?

16. Do you think women are capable of leading senior secondary schools? motivate
17. To what extent does your present job give you the opportunity to use your abilities and talents ? Give examples
18. To what extent does your present job give the opportunity to keep learning and improve skills ? Give examples
19. How many women are present in the PTSA committee ?
20. Do you think gender is important in as far as positions and management are concerned?
21. Do you think the government is doing enough in opening positions of power to women, in senior secondary schools?
22. Do you think teacher unionism can bring solutions to the issue of gender discrimination?
23. Can you suggest some strategies that can be taken by the education department in addressing the issue of gender discrimination and inequality?

APPENDIX C**INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 2 (FOR PRINCIPALS)**

1. What do you understand by gender discrimination?
2. Do you think gender discrimination exist in the teaching profession?'
3. Have you ever experienced gender discrimination in your career as a teacher? Can you explain?
4. Why do you think women are found in less numbers in senior managerial posts in senior secondary schools?
5. Do you think women are better as heads of primary or senior secondary schools?
6. How many women are presently occupying managerial positions in the school?
7. Do you agree with the statement that says 'most women are underqualified thus they are found in less numbers in managerial positions' ?
8. What are those factors which you think are hindering women in entering managerial positions in senior secondary schools?
9. How are posts advertised in the school?
10. How did you secure the position you are occupying presently?
11. Were you well informed with the requirements needed to occupy this position?
12. Which method was used to select you as the suitable candidate?
13. During the selection procedure, were you ever asked questions that did not relate to your professional life? What sort of questions?
14. Do you think the DET selection pannel is well representative in terms of gender?
15. Did you receive any training ever since you occupied this position?
16. What obstacles did you encounter while applying for this position?
17. Do the departmental meetings consider your dual role?
18. How does the department regard married women as compared to single women in relation to the following:-

- i) maternity leave ?
 - ii) housing subsidy?
 - iii) salary ?
 - iv) medical aid scheme ?
19. What is the attitude of male/female teachers towards your position?
 20. How do the parents and the community at large respond to your position?
 21. Do you think women are capable of leading senior secondary schools? motivate
 22. To what extent does your present job give you the opportunity to use your abilities and talents ? Give examples
 23. To what extent does your present job give the opportunity to keep learning and improve skills ? Give examples
 24. If you have problems in your work, whom do you generally talk to?
 25. How do you see yourself in relation to women occupying managerial positions in primary schools?
 26. When allocating work for extramural activities in your school, do you regard gender as being important?
 27. How do you find working with women/men?
 28. How would you describe your relationship with female teachers as compared to male teachers?
 29. How many women are present in the PTSA committee ?
 30. Do you think gender is important in as far as positions and management are concerned?
 31. Do you think the government is doing enough in opening positions of power to women, in senior secondary schools?
 32. Do you think teacher unionism can bring solutions to the issue of gender discrimination?
 33. Can you suggest some strategies that can be taken by the education department in addressing the issue of gender discrimination and inequality?

APPENDIX D

INTERVIEW SCHEDULE 3 (FOR GOVERNMENT OFFICIAL)

1. What do you understand by gender discrimination?
2. Have you ever experienced discrimination in your career as a teacher?
3. Do you think gender discrimination exists in the teaching profession?
4. Why do you think women are found in less numbers in senior managerial positions in senior secondary schools?
5. Do you think women are better as heads of primary or senior secondary schools?
6. Do you agree with the statement that says 'most women are underqualified thus they are found in less numbers in managerial positions'?
7. What are those factors which you think are hindering women in entering managerial positions in senior secondary schools?
8. How are school promotional posts advertised?
9. Can you clearly state the requirements for appointing a teacher into a managerial post in a senior secondary school?
10. Are the requirements above different from those in a primary school?
11. In appointing a particular teacher into a senior position in a senior secondary school, do you regard gender as being important?
12. Who constitute the selection panel?
13. Do you give any training to people who constitute the selection panel?
14. Which method is used to select a suitable candidate?
15. Is there any training provided for those people who are appointed for senior posts?
16. How does the department regard married women as compared to single women in relation to the following :-
 - i) maternity leave?
 - ii) housing subsidy?

iii) salary?

iv) medical aid scheme?

17. Are there any laws protecting women from gender discrimination?

18. What is the status of male teachers with reference to the above?

19. What is the department doing in order to open senior posts for women in teaching, especially
in senior secondary schools?

Author Rakgoathe A P

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