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WOMEN TEACHERS' CAREER
ADVANCEMENT:
AN EXPLORATION OF CHOICE IN CONTEXT

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A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfillment* of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Education

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I declare that: "*Women teachers' career advancement: an exploration of choice in context*" is my own work, except where indicated, and that it has not been submitted before for any degree or examination at any university. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in this dissertation from the work or works of other people, has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

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Abstract

This study investigates the career choices of seven female teachers in meso-level leadership positions at three Western Cape schools. It explores their decisions to apply or refrain from applying for senior leadership positions through an examination of the interplay between their leadership disposition, habitus and the field of schooling. The semi-structured interviews with the seven respondents were guided by an interview schedule informed by five key topics: respondents' childhood socialisation; their internalised gender roles; their perceptions regarding the gendering of leadership; their career progression; and their engagement with the field of schooling. The analysis generated a grouping of participants along a continuum relating to their aspirations towards the principalship. One group aspired towards the principal position which was viewed as involving macro-level leadership incorporating decision-making and management. A second group valued a pastoral, classroom-based career, and were unwilling to relinquish this for a managerial principal position which they perceived very negatively. A third group appreciated the compromise they had reached between their pastoral-care and leadership orientation and did not aspire to the principalship for fear of losing this. The discussion draws conclusions regarding the influence of habitus, leadership disposition and the conditions of the field on these women's career decisions. In general this study shows how these female teachers make career choices which are shaped by an internal orientation guiding their aspiration towards leadership within their situational context.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Research question

Women make particular choices with regards to their career progression and aspirations. Their decisions are influenced by their past experiences and present dispositions, and opportunities and constraints in their environment. A variety of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations, agentic and structural concerns, and external impositions and internal impulses guide the choices women make.

This study investigates the career decisions of seven female deputy principals (hence deputy/deputies) and heads of department (hence HODs) through the lens of Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, leadership disposition and field. Using these concepts the study explores how the structure of the field in which these women operate was internalised in their habitus to guide the choices they made, and explores the interplay between the structure of the field and the habitus of these individuals.

Interviews were conducted with the seven women to explore their habitus and leadership dispositions, their socialisation experiences from their early childhood and throughout their careers, and their interaction with the fields in which they operate, including gender based discrimination to which they were exposed.

Background and rationale

Gender equity in South Africa

After the fall of Apartheid in 1994, the achievement of gender equity within societal structures and specifically at the macro-level was prioritised. Yet, almost two decades later, very little has changed at the macro-level with regard to gender equity. The Department of Labour general report for 2010-2011 regarding gender equity across the four occupational levels (illustrated in Figure 1: Gender equity per occupation level: South Africa 2011) reveals that, although strong gender equity was achieved at the technically skilled level (43.7% women) and to a somewhat lesser degree at the professionally qualified level (39.9% women), women are still marginalised at senior management levels (29.3%) and are all but excluded from top management levels (19%) (Department of Labour, 2010-2011). This confirms the continued gendered stratification of labour roles across the South African labour market.

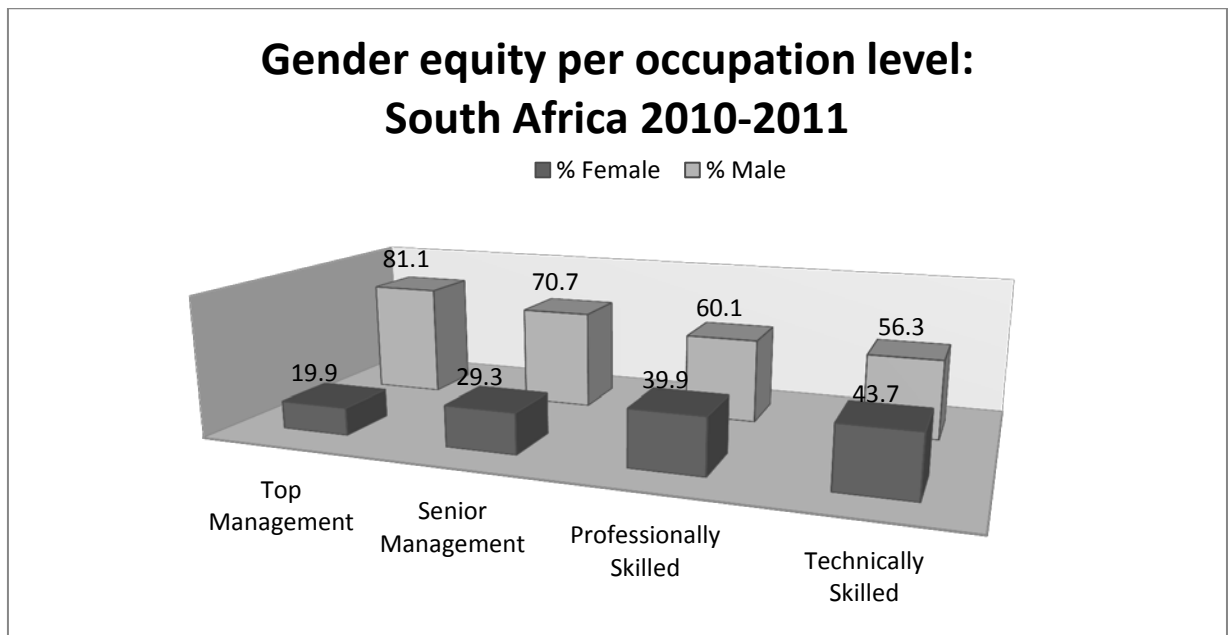


Figure 1: Gender equity per occupation level: South Africa 2011 (Department of Labour, 2010-2011).

Gender equity in South African schools

In schools, some progress toward greater gender equity within management teams has been recorded. However men continue to dominate in leadership positions, specifically as principals. Reported statistics for both principal and deputy positions reflect a consistently strong bias in male-to-female ratios:

- 2004: male-to-female ratio for principal and deputy positions = 62%-38%
- 2005: male-to-female ratio for principal positions only = 70%-30% (greater inequality than in 2004) (Department of Education, October 2004; Moorosi, 2007:507).

Political pressure has increased the emphasis on greater gender equity ratings within schools and education institutions. Yet, as previous Education Minister, Naledi Pandor stated:

We have passed laws to ensure equality in employment practices, but we know about the hidden glass ceiling that leads to the unequal distribution of men and women in leadership positions within education. (Pandor, 2005)

Men continue to hold the keys to the principal's office, despite women gaining significant "*pipeline roles*" (Skrla, 1999:5) in middle management, "*strong gender equity*" in school enrolment figures (DoE, 2011) and graduates from post-graduate leadership training programs¹, and despite the prominent visibility of women in executive and ministerial leadership in South Africa.

Research investigating the persistence of gender inequality in schools' management teams can in broad strokes be classified as investigating either empirical dimensions of, for example, structure and agency, or objectivism and subjectivism; or investigating differentiation employing concepts such as performativity and stereotyping. Many gender equity studies for instance examine the extrinsic and intrinsic barriers that constrain women from upward hierarchical mobility. Although many studies explore intrinsic barriers, few examine the reasons for and mechanisms of women teachers' decisions and choices (Young & McLeod, 2001) or explore reasons why many female teachers choose to remain in teaching positions and/or refrain from applying for management roles.

Contribution to existing research

This study generates an account of the choices and decisions made by seven female HODs and deputies from three Western Cape schools when deciding whether to apply for senior leadership positions. It demonstrates how their histories and prior experiences of leadership have shaped their decisions by examining how external structures and differentiations were internalised as part of their habitus to guide these decisions. The study further investigates how this internalisation influenced their leadership disposition and perceptions of senior management and their response to structural constraints and gender based discrimination.

¹ At UCT for instance, the ACE Education Management and Leadership Development programme comprised: Cohort 4 (2010/11) 31 female and 21 male and Cohort 5 (2011/2012) 67 female and 80 male; in BEd (Honours) (2011) 14 males and 29 females graduated.

Small scale qualitative research potentially generates valuable theoretical insights beneficial to theory-building and answers Bourdieu's call to work with and further evolve his theory of practice. By investigating the many factors influencing these women's behaviour, their ideas and subjective realities (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009), and the choices they make, this study aims to expand the existing theoretical knowledge domain by including the lived-experiences of these women (Shakeshaft, 1995). The seven respondents are not assumed to be representative of a larger population and although longitudinal research in other population and socio-economic groups, in other geographic areas and in larger groups may reveal similarities (Wood & Newton, 2006; Young & McLeod, 2001) the findings from this analysis will not be empirically generalizable. This is not considered a limitation as the study aims to generate theoretical rather than empirical insights from the seven respondents' lived experiences. In other words, the study aims to show how the relationship between the past experience and the current dispositions of these women, the field and the decisions made by these women worked, in these cases. These explanatory insights may inform the conceptualisation of future studies.

Structure of the study

This report incorporates six chapters. The first chapter presents the question, rationale and background, contextualising the study within historical, political and social realities. Chapter two reviews the literature pertaining to gender differentiation and its influence on structural constraints and organisational practices. It focuses on research relating to women's responses to gender stereotypical assumptions and gender based discrimination. The interplay between structure and agency is subsequently examined through the Bourdieuan concepts of habitus and field, which forms the conceptual framework for this study.

The research design is discussed in Chapter three which describes data collection instruments and procedures, ethics and validity issues. Decisions to employ particular instruments are explained and an analytic framework developed. Chapter four offers the analysis of the interviews with the seven

female leaders grouped according to their disposition towards leadership. Each group is discussed according to its members' habitus, leadership dispositions and engagement with the field.

The fifth chapter presents an overview of the study and a concluding discussion, as well as recommendations for future research.

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Chapter 2: Literature review

Women teachers' career aspirations ~ choice or opportunity?

Despite women having proven their capacity in educational leadership, males still predominantly hold the keys to the principal's office (Moorosi, 2007; Chisholm, 2001). Researchers questioning women's impaired career advancement have framed their research to investigate the following empirical dimensions:

- **Opportunities & barriers:** investigating the opportunities women are afforded in attaining leadership and management positions as influenced by external structural and organisational beliefs and practices;
- **Intrinsic constraints:** examining the behavioural, psychological and attributional barriers women face as well as the dilemma of achieving work/life balance;
- **Choice & agency:** studying the choices women make as active participants in their careers and lives, examining their agency and/or communality within their given situation or context.

Theorists approach these empirical dimensions through different conceptual lenses. While some investigate gender differentiating processes such as gender stereotyping (Wood, 2008; Jackson, 2001; Schein, 2001; Gerber, 1988) and gender role allocation (Weyer, 2007; Hepburn & Simon, 2006; Coleman, 2005 & 2003; Kaufman, 2005; Orser, 1994) others challenge gender differentiating structures within organisations or critique gender differentiating social practices at a public and private level (Diko, 2007; Moorosi, 2007; Priola, 2007; Rusch & Marshall, 2006; Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Powers, 2003; Chisholm, 2001; Gerber, 1988). Many of these researchers further explore women's internalisation and response to such gender differentiating practices as this informs the choices they make and their potential towards agentic behaviour. This review reports on these researchers' work regarding gender differentiation and women's response to it.

Within this context a further complication to this particular discussion is the highly contested field of educational leadership and management research where the many different voices and opinions often bypass gender equity. Based on theories of managerialism and neo-liberalism, research in this arena has a diverse understanding of these concepts. However Heystek's (2008) view of management and leadership as essentially different roles and functions fulfilled by the same school leader is valuable. Accordingly leadership is understood as influence, with an emphasis on relationships and communication that addresses the emotional intelligence and motivation of individuals within the organisation through leaders' actions. Management on the other hand is understood as positional authority with an emphasis on adherence to bureaucratic regulations, rules and policy decisions (Heystek, 2008:7). The school principal and heads of department are required to fulfil these types of roles at different times and in different contexts. However, the emphasis given to either leadership or management is often influenced more by external forces than the personality and style of the individual.

The South African schooling system generally favours a more managerial approach, placing strong emphasis on "*prescribed standards, quality and outcomes*" and expecting principals "*to perform within a framework of control systems and performativity*" – in itself core features of managerialism (Heystek, 2007:491).

A managerial approach to the role of the principal fosters strong hierarchies and linearity, and tends to reinforce gender differentiation and the gendered division of labour with men dominating macro leadership roles and women fulfilling the 'softer' options at micro- and meso-levels.

Gender differentiation

Studies show that gender differentiation is a resilient and pervasive pan-cultural phenomenon (Wood, 2008; Heilman, 2001; Williams, Satterwhite & Best, 1999) that disregards individual differences, qualifications and behaviours, and fosters the perception that the homogenous group, women, behave in similar

preconceived ways (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Jackson, 2001). Gender differentiation is described as the development and reinforcement of perceptions and assumptions governing the worth and assumed social roles of individuals based on their biological sex which serves as a primary differentiating mechanism (Moorosi, 2007; Moreau, Osgood & Halsall, 2007; Priola, 2007; Coleman, 2005; Chisholm, 2001; Marshall, 1995; Shakeshaft, 1995; Scott, 1986). Viewed through this lens, gender is seen as a result of differential processes of socialisation, normalisation and/or naturalisation that condition individuals' behaviour according to societal expectations and stereotypical perceptions of their gender roles (Weyer, 2007; Thomson, 2003; Skrla, 1999; Williams *et al*, 1999).

Researchers challenge gender stereotypical thinking and role allocation

In search of explanations for the continued low representation of women in management, gender differentiation theorists typically examine gender role assignment and stereotyping. They challenge the greater emphasis and importance these differentiating mechanisms place on the perception of what is masculine than feminine, and on the perception of men's roles and statuses rather than on women's (Wood, 2008; Coleman, 2003; Ancis & Phillips, 2001; Coleman, 2001; Greyvenstein, 1989; Acker, 1973). Their research indicates that female gender roles are accordingly associated with that of supporter and follower, nurturer and carer, a role more suited to domestic duties that "*the demands of positions of leadership*" (Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001:329); whereas male characteristics are associated "*more closely to the role of manager*" (Wood, 2008:614-615) since men are assumed to be naturally career-focused, assertive and authoritative (Wood, 2008; Moorosi, 2007; Heilman, 2001; Greyvenstein, 1989). The gendered division of labour is considered to be a direct result of these perceptions and signifies relationships of power, status and prestige within society (Weyer, 2007; Marshall, 1995; Welsh, 1992; Scott, 1986). Gender differentiation researchers therefore dispute the type-casting of women into traditional social roles (Cubillo & Brown, 2003), since it marginalizes

(Corsun & Costen, 2001) and devalues their leadership as un-authoritative and 'not-male' (Ross-Smith & Huppertz, 2010), and exploits their emotional labour and skills (Thomson, 2003; Billing & Alvesson, 2000).

The acceptance of the male-as-universal-norm and male-defined concepts of competency and efficiency is contested in numerous studies (Wood, 2008; Thomson, 2003; Karlin, England & Richardson, 2002; Chisholm, 2001; Shakeshaft, 1995; Acker, 1990). Many report the perceived incongruence of generally assumed masculine concepts of leadership and women's gender roles. These findings suggest that for women to succeed in leadership, they need to act contrary to their socially expected gender roles and conform to the prescribed masculine leadership role (Coleman, 2005 & 2003; Jackson, 2001). Various researchers (Fine, 2009; Corsun & Costen, 2001; Billing & Alvesson, 2000; Eagly & Johnson, 1990) subsequently contest the advantages of masculine, feminine or androgynous leadership and the ability to adapt leadership styles to context and situational needs. Although interesting, this "*has not demonstrably advanced understanding*" (Vecchio, 2002:647) which concurs with Marshall's observations that such studies are predominantly aimed at earning women acceptance "*against unquestioned norms of the successful [male] manager*" (Marshall, 1995:557). This bolsters the argument that for the status quo to change, gender differentiating perceptions and assumptions of men and women's value and the worth of their labour needs to be disarmed.

Many studies identify gender stereotyping and male-dominant preconceptions regarding women's gender roles and capabilities as the main barriers to women's career advancement (Wood, 2008; Heilman, 2001; Schein, 2001; Williams *et al*, 1999; Orser, 1994). Gender stereotyping and role allocation are shown to underpin structural and organisational constraints that uphold masculine hegemony and disadvantage those displaying feminine behaviour and leadership styles (Trinidad & Normore, 2005).

Gender differentiation influencing structural and organisational constraints

Researchers interested in gender differentiation typically examine structural barriers that prevent women from advancing to senior management positions. Metaphors of glass ceilings, glass walls, glass cliffs and glass elevators are commonly employed to describe the inhibiting effect structural constraints have on women's aspirations and/or to identify the practice of typecasting women into specific lower levels within the organisational hierarchy (Weyer, 2007; Coleman, 2003; Cubillo & Brown, 2003). Several structural filters are identified that are classified as either face glass ceilings that inhibit women's ascent or glass walls that divert them into lower level management positions, limiting their access to power and decision-making (Moreau *et al*, 2007; Weyer, 2007; Jackson, 2001; Ragings *et al*, 1998). Glass walls, it is commonly noted, crowd women "*in dead-end jobs*" (Acker, 1990:143) at the bottom of the organisational hierarchy where their assumed attributes (such as quasi-maternal caring and nurturing dispositions) would be best suited (Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Jackson, 2001). This is exacerbated by assumptions that women would have better relational (Thomson, 2003) and harmonising (Marshall 1995) skills and are better at conflict resolution and problem-solving; while another stereotype "*links women with the home and family*" (Grant 1989 & Evetts 1991 in Coleman 2001:85) and assumes women would give preference to their husband's/male partner's careers. In schools, common assumptions are that women would be unable to successfully maintain the school's finances or "*to cope with disciplining (teenage) boys or maintain sporting standards*" (Coleman 2001:85) and are therefore denied senior management positions.

Researchers show that glass barriers are maintained by the force of customary practice and male managers'/principals' fear of sanction from superiors and/or employees, the parent-body and/or the community at large (Karlin *et al*, 2002). These barriers are commonly identified in selection and placement processes and foster acts of gender based discrimination.

Selection and appointment decisions

Gender differentiation through interview and selection procedures

Numerous gender differentiation studies investigate the powerful influence of gender differentiation on selection and placement practices (Moorosi, 2007; Rusch & Marshall, 2006; Coleman, 2001; Acker, 1990). Findings indicate that selection and placement decisions are based more often on managers' often unspoken and/or unconscious assumptions and perceptions than candidates' true abilities. Hence gender differentiating filters are identified throughout the appointment and placement process to permit particular kinds of candidates to occupy particular occupational levels (Acker 1990; Kanter, 1977). During recruitment, for instance, carefully scripted advertisements encourage certain applicants and discourage others; while interview and selection panels are shown to reward those most like themselves through inclusion and the allocation of resources (Moorosi, 2007; Marshall, 1995). Since interview panels frequently comprise more males than females, Coleman (2001) concludes that men act as gate-keepers, powerfully influencing appointment decisions.

Appointment and placement decisions

Apart from male gate-keeping during the interview and selection process, various researchers challenge the on-going influence of gender differentiated placement decisions on women's promotion applications (Moreau *et al*, 2007; Weyer, 2007; Ryan & Haslam, 2005; Corsun & Costen, 2001; Jackson 2001). Placement decisions are powerfully influenced by frequently biased performance appraisals based on gender stereotypical assumptions that play a vital role in deciding candidates' competency levels and job-suitability. However, as many researchers point out, the evaluation criteria used are frequently biased and measure competencies based on assumptions and constructs that have historically served men best (Moorosi, 2007; Shakeshaft, 1995); that validate and permit male forms of embodiment (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010; Shakeshaft, 1995); and that view differences to this as a "*female deficiency*" exhorting women to "*change their behaviour to conform to a masculine*

stereotype” (Welsh 1992:123). These findings indicate that appraisals are influenced more by the gender stereotypical assumptions of predominantly male managers than the individual qualities and capabilities of female candidates (Corby & Stanworth, 2009; Coleman, 2003). Such biased, negative evaluations and prejudiced performance appraisals prevent women’s ascent and negatively influence recommendations for future positions (King & Botsford, 2008).

Research further highlights the practice of token placements of women onto management teams in order to increase organisations’ equity ratings (Oakley, 2000; Kanter 1977). Although creating the impression of upward mobility, these women are positioned with limited access to decision-making and influence (Le Feuvre, 2009; Thomson, 2003), and are typically isolated from male networks and informal meetings, and/or marginalised through limited access to information (Oakley, 2000). Researchers also find that tokens are commonly assigned to less-visible leadership positions that conceal their capabilities and deny them opportunities to gain confidence and respect in visible leadership roles (Jackson, 2001; Cubillo & Brown, 2003). This ‘invisibility’ can potentially damage the career progression of tokens since “*to rise to the more senior positions, one must be and be seen as a leader... one must have and be seen to have the potential for leadership*” (Appelbaum *et al*, 2003:43).

Contrary to token placements, Ryan and Haslam’s (2005) work investigates the placement of women into glass cliff positions where the potential for failure is exaggerated, increasing the likelihood of their early exit (Chisholm, 2001). Their visibility exacerbates “*on-the-job pressure and scrutiny*” and increases performance pressures since such women are more visible and consequently more vulnerable (Oakley 2000:329; Kanter 1977): should they make mistakes, these would be more public and therefore more damaging to their careers (Ryan & Haslam, 2005).

Selection and placement decisions are often exacerbated by gender based discrimination that devalues female leaders’ contribution and undermines their authority.

Discrimination within organisations

Gender based discrimination is the focus of numerous studies that investigate its negative influence on women's upwards mobility through the maintenance of the glass ceiling (Wood, 2008; Heilman, 2001). Researchers identify gender based discrimination that functions throughout organisational structures and practices.

Male networks ('old boys club')

Male networks are shown to generate "*institutional impediments to stall women's advance in organisations*" (Appelbaum *et al*, 2003:47; Corby & Stanworth 2009). Young male teachers are privileged through the transference of power alliances and friendships (Coleman, 2005; Oakley, 2000), mentoring and unofficial career opportunities preparing them for promotion (Jackson, 2001) and providing them with opportunities to gain valuable leadership skills and experiences. In contrast, female leaders are isolated and marginalised by male bonding behaviour and exclusion from male networks, especially from meetings where important decisions are made (Jackson, 2001) and information shared (Coleman, 2003 & 2001).

Double standards & the double bind

Various studies explore the double standards employed in judging male and female leadership behaviour according to different standards. When men work fervently in support of the male principals' goals, for instance, they are praised for their hard work and enthusiasm, yet similar behaviour from junior female managers is judged as unseemly and their motives questioned (Oakley, 2000). Foschi's research indicates that men further receive the benefit of the doubt when their leadership styles are less effective yet women are judged harshly when 'things don't work' (in Eagly *et al*, 2003). Furthermore women in leadership are perceived as "*cold, hard and single minded*" (Coleman, 2001:89), characteristics frequently valued in males but negatively received by female leaders' colleagues and superiors.

Double standards regarding payment discrimination have been highlighted by researchers such as Corby and Stanworth (2009). They found that women often receive lower salaries than equivalent males, yet even if they are aware of a gender pay gap it is considered taboo to discuss salaries thus suspicions cannot be verified. Ironically women who agitate for increases are commonly told that those who teach 'for the money' are ill-suited to the profession and instead calls are made for "*genuine caring*" since "*emotional labour is expected to be 'voluntary' and free*" (Thomson, 2003:33).

Moreover the acceptance of the male-as-universal-norm and male-defined concepts of competency and efficiency (discussed previously) often results in the femininity/competency double bind. Studies indicate that notions of competency are commonly attributed to masculine traits, yet women who display too strong masculine orientations (to appear more competent) are judged harshly for this, while women who appear too feminine are judged as incompetent (Appelbaum, Audet & Miller, 2003; Chisholm, 2001; Oakley, 2000).

Relations and organisational politics

Incidences of patronising, bullying and/or steamrolling aimed at women leaders are further reported in research (Chisholm, 2001; Coleman, 2001). Male colleagues devalue women's leadership through such behaviour, or repeatedly question their authority and/or demand they undergo excessive and repetitive competency testing. Women are therefore shown to take much longer to gain respect and legitimise their authority than equivalent male leaders (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2011; Coleman, 2005; Oakley, 2000). Other forms of discrimination aimed at women include gender joking, sexual harassment and habitual interruption of women's speech (Coleman, 2001). Such embarrassing and humiliating discriminatory behaviour aims to make women feel inferior by devaluing their contributions.

Although men and women have equal access to the teaching profession, research shows that this does not translate into equal opportunities for career advancement, and that structural filters and organisational practices

systematically excluded women from male dominated management tiers (Welsh, 1992). Women who hit the glass ceiling when negotiating entrance to senior leadership positions (Pandor, 2005; Eagly *et al*, 2003) hence have to either possess superior experience or qualifications, and preferably be single and childless, to gain entry (Wood & Newton, 2006), and once appointed face more obstacles and challenges to gain respect and recognition (Chisholm, 2001; Wolfram & Mohr, 2007).

Several studies however find that women respond very differently to structural barriers. While some accept these constraints and make career choices that reflect their socialised gender role allocation, others actively pursue opportunities for upward mobility despite many structural and organisational barriers. The next sections will investigate research findings regarding women's differing responses.

Women's internalized responses to gender differentiation

A recurring theme throughout literature relating to gender differentiation is its confrontation of societal assumptions that men and women do and are capable of doing radically different things and fulfil differentiating social roles based on presumed biological predispositions (Le Feuvre, 2009; Coleman, 2003). Several studies argue that women are socialised from a young age to accept and internalise gender differentiation as natural and normative (Weyer, 2007; Thomson, 2003; Hemson, 2002; Skrla, 1999). They are socialised to embody responses, mannerisms, practices and discourses correlating to their assigned gender role (Priola, 2007; Thomson, 2003; Skrla, 1999; Shakeshaft, 1995; Welsh, 1992; Scott, 1986) which is reinforced and maintained by tradition and custom, and structural and organisational practices (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Heilman, 2001; Welsh, 1992).

Functioning at all levels of society (Smith, 2010) gender differentiation is shown to create a normalcy in language and communication that subordinates female traits (Thomson, 2003) and constrains women within this biased discourse to

embody 'feminine' behaviour, speech patterns and attitudes as a performative function of their assumed gendered role (Coleman, 2005). This leads to a double bind for women in leadership (discussed previously) – if they act, speak and behave too femininely they are assumed incompetent (Oakley, 2000), yet they are judged harshly for displaying too masculine behaviour. Studies by Vinnicombe and Singh (2011) and Wood (2008) show that this is reinforced by the stereotype that women are better suited to domestic responsibilities and caring, supportive roles.

Other studies challenge assumptions that women lack confidence, self-esteem and competitiveness, fear failure (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2011; Coleman, 2005; Cubillo & Brown, 2003; Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001; Oakley, 2000) and lack the necessary aspirations towards management (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009; Acker, 1990). These conclude that although many women internalise such assumptions, displaying a lack of confidence in their leadership abilities and failure to plan their careers for instance (Moorosi, 2010; Coleman 2001; Mathipa & Tsoka, 2001; Shakeshaft, 1989) many do not adhere to this gender type-casting and aspire to principal positions, confident in their potential success.

Researchers further identify the potential difficulties experienced by women who have internalised gender differentiated roles. The internalisation of the carer/nurturer stereotype reinforces the assumption that women have a proclivity and greater responsibility towards childrearing and domesticity (Jackson 2001; Marshall 1995), whereas the internalisation of the male-as-head-of-the-home stereotype leads to women's tacit acceptance of the priority given to male partner's wishes, goals and careers (Coleman, 2005). Thus many women have to "*straddle dual worlds of parenting and working*" (Moorosi 2007:509) and commonly manage the majority of domestic chores even in dual-career households (Vinnicombe & Singh, 2011). Career-orientated women have to cope with the practicalities of multi-stranded lives (Jackson, 2001; Marshall, 1995). Findings further suggest that career orientated women who have internalised these gender differentiating assumptions experience tremendous role conflict which Coleman (2003:337) states is "*taking its toll on the marriages of women to a much greater extent than those of their male colleagues*" (Coleman 2003:337).

Moorosi (2007) and others conclude that women make career decisions that reflect their attempts to achieve work/life balance (Coleman 2003; Jackson 2001; Wirth 2001) and many reportedly make decisions to avoid situations where they would neglect "*family for the sake of career*" (Moorosi 2007:507).

Women, who defy society's gender differentiating assumptions and stereotypical gender role allocations, are often confronted by attempts to conform them to the 'natural way of the world' through negative sanction, penalizations and gender based discrimination (Eagly & Carli, 2003; Heilman, 2001; Welsh, 1992). Research shows that women respond differently to gender based discrimination. While some actively oppose it, others, socialised to accept this as a tolerable part of their everyday existence, remain silent, ignoring sexist banter and acts of discrimination in order to remain in otherwise satisfactory positions (Corby & Stanworth, 2009). Coleman (2003) found that women tended to brush aside incidences of discrimination, downplay acts of sexism and refrain from voicing their grievances, while Corby and Stanworth (2009:175) note "*we were surprised at the level of sexism and unfair practices women tolerated*" finding women were purposefully insensitive to male bullying and patronising behaviour. Acts of gender based discrimination have a dual function: to stifle the career advancement of those experiencing these acts and to inhibit witnesses who "*are put off*" from applying for exposed management positions where the potential for discrimination increases (Moorosi, 2007:509).

Gender differentiation literature repeatedly argues that gender differentiation and gender role allocation are "*major factors discriminating against women and holding them back from attaining higher-level jobs*" (Wirth, 2001:247). Researchers therefore conclude that women's career decisions are powerfully influenced by gender differentiation.

Career choices influenced by gender differentiation

Women's career aspirations have been the focus of numerous studies. Recently Smith (2011) and Oplatka and Tamir (2009) and Moorosi (2007), found that female teachers differentiate between occupational specifications of school

leadership and teaching functions. These and other studies indicate that female teachers perceive management to be inflexible and restrictive and reject leadership roles because they assume that they would have to “*renounce their pupil-centred values*” (Smith, 2011:517). Smith (2011) and Fitzgerald (2009) consequently identified three leadership levels generally experienced by women:

- i. **Micro-level leadership** impacting teacher’s routine work: dealing with bureaucracy, Department of Education guidelines and policies; and leadership of a subject area, grade or extra-curricular activity.
- ii. **Meso-level management** involving middle-management levels of deputy and HOD with increased responsibilities regarding bureaucratic, curricular and people-management yet without the autonomy implicit in macro-leadership positions. The additional work-demands add greater strain to work/life balance (Smith, 2011; Moorosi, 2007).
- iii. **Macro-level management** at principal level includes responsibilities of vision setting, strategic planning, policy decisions and interaction with the wider educational community. Often negatively perceived, the principalship is associated with high levels of control, commitment and political manoeuvring, isolation and increased strain on personality, lifestyle and personal preferences leading to burn-out from stress-related work-overload and health problems at the expense of family and personal time (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009).

Research shows that women teachers’ aspiration to different levels of leadership and their career decisions are influenced by their response to gender differentiation.

Female teachers aspiring to micro-level leadership, research suggests, internalise the ‘nurturer/carer’ stereotype: they believe themselves bound to a teaching-career (Coleman, 2005), trading off “*the possibility of promotion, better pay and more interesting work*” for a classroom/pupil-centred career. They reportedly deny promotion to leadership positions assuming this is a “*price worth paying for work/life balance*” and the maintenance of family and romantic relationships (Corby & Stanworth, 2009; Moorosi, 2007:508). Their life-style and career decisions are influenced by the primacy they give to home or career (Corby & Stanworth, 2009; Jackson, 2001) and the position they occupy in their

life-cycle, to accommodate career, family and domestic demands (Corby & Stanworth 2009).

In many cases, research found, that women who internalise and embody strong gender differentiating behaviour and thinking wait to be "*picked out for advancement by men*" (Corby & Stanworth, 2009:170; Marshall 1995) often into token meso-level positions. They reportedly only applied because the male principal/manager requested they do so (Corby & Stanworth, 2009; Oplatka & Tamir, 2009) and "*would not have aspired to their present jobs without male encouragement*" (Corby & Stanworth, 2009:163). As with similar token appointments, these women are often not allowed into powerful decision-making capacities but are instead tasked with pastoral, consultative duties generally judged as inferior (Coleman, 2005; Hemson, 2002).

Other researchers (Smith, 2011; Oplatka & Tamir, 2009) found that many women occupying meso-level leadership roles are unwilling to move into principalships. They reportedly experience their positions as a positive compromise between their desire to lead and to remain pupil-focused and often perceive the principalship very negatively, viewing it as a narrow technical function that focuses on administration, budgeting and external relationships. These studies indicate that women who internalised a relational-orientation towards leadership believe they lack the skills and leadership traits that they assume the principalship necessitates (aggression, manipulation, personal distance and impersonal relationships), and assume therefore that their orientation is ill-suited to this position (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009; Coleman, 2005). Oplatka and Tamir's (2009) study also found that many meso-level female leaders fear being overwhelmed by the demands exacted from the principal and the loss of work/life balance, a further reason why they deny the principalship.

Researchers furthermore challenge the internalisation of a discourse that values long working-hours and career commitment, potentially inhibiting women's aspiration to leadership. Moorosi (2007) disputes the expectation in schools that employees should separate their work and home lives while Corby and Stanworth (2009) contest the expectation that employees must sacrifice long

working hours in fulfilment of their career responsibilities, especially visible, Smith (2011) notes, in the demands placed on the principal's personal time. Their research challenges the discourse of sacrifice and loss or regret of individualistic and life-style choices to legitimate the long working hour culture. Wood and Newton (2006) moreover contest the internalised discourse that values an overriding commitment to work, allowing it to consume most waking hours and dominate life. Many women in leadership have been socialised to accept and internalise this discourse and feel under scrutiny to prove themselves and counter negative assumptions (Jackson, 2001), working harder and longer for there to be "*no criticism of their leadership*" (Coleman, 2003:330). These studies conclude that the long working-hour culture serves to inhibit many women at micro- and meso-level who instead choose to prioritise other aspects of their life.

Agency

Women aspire towards different leadership levels and make conscious and positive choices which several researchers argue are influenced by a potential towards agency. Agency is considered to be "*an awareness of one's capacity to take control of an aspect or aspects of one's life*" (Smith, 2011:530) in order to realise one's "*own interests against the weight of custom, tradition, transcendental will or other obstacles*" (Mahmood, 2001:206). Agentic behaviour is commonly associated with assertiveness and ambition, being competitive and problem focused (Weyer, 2007), and displaying personal choice and individualisation (Moreau *et al*, 2007); with risk-taking, daring, persistence and goal-orientation, and with individuals considered as 'tough' and directive (Smith, 2011), willing to change their situation to achieve success (Ancis & Phillips, 1996). It is commonly achieved through self-directed behaviour toward career aspirations and/or educational pursuits (Creamer, 2004) but can also be externally defined, such as career choices that are shaped by the actions of others or as a result of chance or circumstance (Smith, 2010; Oplatka & Tamir, 2009).

These researchers attribute differences in women's career progression to their differing engagement with agentic behaviour (Ancis & Phillips, 1996) and specifically an "*awareness of their own potential for agency, and how they choose to exert it*" (Smith, 2010:7). Parallels are identified between those displaying strong agentic behaviour and an aspiration towards meso- and macro-level management positions, and those denying promotion opportunities and displaying a limited capacity towards agency. However, while many reject the principalship and deny promotion opportunities (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009), Smith (2011) cautions against the assumptions that they do not display agentic behaviour. Female deputies in Smith's study for example, rejected the principalship as they perceived it would offer them limited scope "*to make their own decisions and take control*" (Smith 2011:530) thereby limiting their capacity to exercise personal agency. Thus agency and hierarchical career progression are not mutually inclusive notions as women display agency despite rejecting hierarchical advancement. Accordingly Nussbaum's Capabilities Approach (1999 in Lumby 2011:923) strives to gain acceptance and value for women's inherent choices to "*live lives they value*" based on the concept that "*quality of life is a primary indicator of success*" rather than the dominant discourse that defines success in terms of hierarchical positioning and economic earnings.

In conclusion...

Gender differentiation is pervasive and insidious, stratifying society based on assumptions that women's work and ways of doing are less worthy than men's. Organisational structures and practices are differentiated according to perceived capabilities of men and women, which lead to gender based discrimination limiting women's access to macro-level leadership. Structural gender filters channel men into visible leadership positions with increased potential of upward mobility, while women are channelled either into less-visible, dead-end meso-level management positions with limited potential for upward mobility or into exposed token positions where the potential for failure is greater and their access to power and decision-making functions are limited.

Women's internationalisation of gender differentiation and discrimination influences their response to this as well as their awareness of their potential towards agency in making decisions to live lives they choose even if such choices oppose tradition and culture. However structural and organisational barriers continue to maintain and normalise gender differentiating perceptions regarding women's leadership abilities, inhibiting their upward mobility. Hence their decisions are guided by both personal and situational limitations, which often lead to compromise and trading-off "*intrinsically satisfying work in exchange for the extrinsic aspects of convenience*" (Corby & Stanworth, 2009:166). To gain a clearer understanding of women's choices it is consequently necessary to contextualise agency and choice within power relations of social structures (McNay, 2000). The following section explores women's choices in context using Bourdieu's concepts of habitus, field and capital in order to develop a conceptual framework with which to investigate *how* women make career decisions.

Conceptual frame

Research examining social structures frequently employs dichotomies such as structure/agency or objectivism/subjectivism without accounting for the interplay between these polarities. For example, why do women who display strong agentic behaviour respond in different ways to structural constraints, or what influence does normalisation have on agency and decision-making?

Bourdieu's conceptualisation of social reality provides an epistemological and multi-dimensional bridge between such concepts by situating individuals within contexts as well as in relation to others, and situating organisations within wider contexts of society and history (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). His theories allow researchers to reconceptualise theories of agency and gender identity by moving away from solely focussing on gender differentiation or subordination (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010), to explore the interplay between individual choice, capacity and strategies within a context of organisational realities, relationship dynamics and structural properties (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). By using his concepts it is thus possible to better understand the choices women make, choices shaped by the interplay between preference, capacity and strategies, and embedded within power relations and contexts of organisational realities, relationship dynamics and structural properties (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

The conceptual frame for this study is derived from Bourdieuan concepts of habitus and field, and to a lesser extent capital, and the relationships between these. This allows for an exploration of respondents'...

- a) histories and the formation of their habitus: their socialised, conditioned perceptions and beliefs shaped by experiences and events from their past;
- b) current leadership disposition and aspiration towards leadership;
- c) engagement with the field exploring discrimination they are/were exposed to, the value of their capital and leadership legitimacy, and structural or organisational constraints they face(d), potentially inhibiting their promotion.

Bourdieu's key concepts are subsequently explored, focusing on habitus and field. Although for Bourdieu the notion of capital is a vital component of his theory, it is not a major focus in this study. The discussion will therefore explore the relations between habitus and field to inform the subsequent data capturing and analysis sections.

Habitus, field and capital

Bourdieu conceptualised habitus as interacting in complex ways with his notions of field and species of capital, to examine mechanisms functioning within society. In this study, these "*thinking tools*" allow for an examination of *how* women's choices are shaped by their habitus and constrained within social structures operating within their situated fields.

Habitus functions below consciousness as a durable structure that structures how women view, classify and categorise the world they live in using a system of dispositions, internalised principles and values that generate, organise and shape their decisions, actions and thoughts (Bourdieu, 1990[1980]; Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). Although adaptive over time, primary conditioning from early childhood embodied in one's gait, posture, stance, stride and facial expression, generally remains dominant (Mouton in Grenfell, 2008). Habitus is however formed throughout life: families pass on socialised perceptions, belief systems and conditioned behaviour to their children; and within society/organisations unwritten and unspoken rules embedded in organisational history and practices are internalised and reproduced through conscious and/or unconscious conforming (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). It therefore acts as the strongest, most durable mechanism to internalise the external social world (Bourdieu, 1998[1994]) shaping an individual's enduring sense of their place in the world, what they are capable of achieving and what 'is not for them' based on their embodied history and how they "*bring this history into ... present circumstances*" (Grenfell, 2008:52). (This slight differentiation is later expanded in the analysis section of this study: I labelled individuals' primary conditioning, their past experiences and histories - '*habitus*', and used the label '*leadership disposition*'

to refer to respondents' current dispositions, leadership practices and competencies.)

Women's choices are shaped by their habitus that integrates and embodies past experiences as second nature reactions (Bourdieu, 1990[1980]) providing the "*tendency, propensity and inclination*" (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005) that structures choice. It acts beneath the level of consciousness and discourse where most of the 'ways of doing things' are formed and transmitted (Wacquant, 2011). Choices that might seem instinctive and autonomous are thus made on the basis of past experiences, present circumstances and dispositions embodied in the individual's habitus. Gender domination for instance is transmitted and acts as an embodiment of *the* 'way of doing things', male domination appearing normal, natural and instinctive. Social, embodied and cognitive structures reinforce this and perpetuate the sexual division of labour (Le Feuvre, 2009), delivering different sets of dispositions to women and men and asserting that they are differentially better suited to certain types of positions (Bourdieu, 2001[1998]). Since habitus is inherently generative, women as victims of gender domination and differentiation may become perpetrators thereof, which Bourdieu attributes to symbolic violence:

... a gentle violence, imperceptible and invisible even to its victims, exerted for the most part through purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition (more precisely misrecognition), recognition or even feeling. (Bourdieu 2001[1998], pp. 1-2)

Bourdieu states that symbolic violence "*is exercised upon a social agent with his or her complicity...*" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:167) suggesting that agents participate in the determinism they are subjected to and may even contribute to the reproduction thereof, by misrecognising the symbolic violence wielded against them. Symbolic violence rests on the premise of submission to a shared collective expectation of the world and social structures which individuals are socialised to accept and that require no inculcation and go without saying (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Bourdieu's concepts of field and species of capital are intricately linked to that of habitus. A field is the social space within which interactions, transactions and events occur at a specific time and location (Grenfell, 2008). A field encompasses various networks or configurations of "*objective relations between various positions in the field*" (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992:97), each with its own entry and legitimizing requirements, i.e. species of capital (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). In each field different internal laws and logics apply as determined by the distribution of power within the field and subsequent hierarchization, as well as the distribution of capital therein (Bourdieu, 1990[1980] & 1998[1994]). The nature of the field defines the situation for its occupants (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005), for example the field of education defines the situation of subfields being individual schools through departmental policies, rules and guidelines.

Agents within a field constantly work to maximise and/or safeguard their positions and command of the capital valued in the field to better their potential power therein. Based on their command of rare or abundant capital at stake and their relation to those with more or less capital, agents thus occupy dominant or subordinated positions, a defining principle of several power relations in organisational contexts (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). This conceptualisation of capital enables researchers to explore the distribution of advantage and disadvantage, and accounts for the movement of social agents through space (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010). A Bourdieuan conceptualisation of capital encompasses:

- a) *economic capital* - command over money and assets;
- b) *social capital* derived from social interactions, networks and relationships (the old boys' club, political or religious affiliations for instance);
- c) *cultural capital* based on the accumulation of knowledge and learning, know-how that sets an individual apart from another.

Therefore a field can also be described as a structured space organised around the accumulation of a specific capital or combinations of capitals (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005). This is an important element of social distinction as different social groups possess different volumes and species of capital (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010). Within management for instance, masculine forms of capital

and embodiment have greater currency than feminine. Since men's capital is legitimated and considered symbolic capital, they consequently possess the required capital to move into management arenas (Corsun & Costen, 2001) positioning male players as dominant which enables them to shape the field of play. Bourdieu argues that women have a limited relationship with capital and limited capital-accumulation strategies, since their primary social role concerns the accumulation of capital for men (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010). They possess insufficient symbolic capital and are forced to '*play by the rules*' within boundaries established by men (Corsun & Costen, 2001). Conversely feminists insist that women possess feminine dispositions that operate as capital. However, such capital provides limited access to potential forms of power since femininity has tactical and not strategic value: it is localised and situation-specific with limited power to nullify constraints (Ross-Smith & Huppatz, 2010). Thus women rely on other forms of capital to gain access to power within social spaces, improving their education or gaining more experience in leadership, for instance.

An understanding of practice and choice necessitates an exploration of the relationship between habitus and field as each structure the other through a unique internal logic and history (Grenfell, 2008). To a large degree this relationship determines that which individuals believe 'is for them' and what they assume their potential for success in any given situation would be. Bourdieu and Passeron pointed this out in *The Inheritors* (1979[1964]), finding that students from a certain class would aspire and actively pursue a tertiary education while others would '*believe it is not for the likes of them*', instead '*preferring*' to follow in the working-class footsteps of their parents. This phenomenon is often evident in women of particular backgrounds and classes who would not feel comfortable in applying for leadership positions in society as they (unconsciously) believe it is '*not for the likes of them*'. Their aspirations are moulded on their belief regarding the 'natural' way to act and live (Grenfell, 2008) – beliefs based on the habitus-field relationship that is contingent on their past, on their belief in what is achievable and what is not, what is likely or unlikely. Maton states to this:

Practices within a given situation are... conditioned by expectation of the outcome of a given course of action, which is in turn based, thanks to the habitus, on experience of past outcomes. (Maton in Grenfell, 2008:58)

When conditions in the field change and the acquired dispositions from one field is mismatched with the dispositions required for success in a new, changed field (Grenfell, 2008), this necessitates the habitus to change accordingly and reposition itself. However, Bourdieu points out, a type of habitus-inertia often ensues where individuals might acknowledge the need for change but might not have the tools to realise this, causing them pain and suffering – he refers to this as hysteresis. Recent changes to policy and political support for women’s ascent to leadership has changed the conditions of the field, for instance, yet due to hysteresis and habitus-inertia women teachers have been slow in grasping such opportunities.

Habitus provides a powerful analytic instrument (Reay in Grenfell, 2008) as it allows the researcher to view structure “as occurring within small scale interactions and activity within large scale settings” revealing “the power dynamics of everyday interactions” (Grenfell, 2008:70) and transcending “the level of visible empirical relations” in order to “explore invisible mechanisms and structures” (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005:865). The concepts of habitus, field and capital bridge the many dichotomous stances prevalent in other theories of social practice. This is done through an insistence on an integral relationship whereby the habitus-field-capital conjunction structures and in turn is structured by the components of this construction.

In conclusion...

Gender differentiating assumptions and perceptions create and maintain the numerous multi-faceted and highly complex barriers to women’s career advancement (Moorosi, 2007; Greyvenstein, 1989). Research investigating structural and normative constraints or women’s agentic behaviour, inadequately explains *how* female teachers/leaders reach their career decisions. Examining social reality and the choices women make within contextual constraints,

Bourdieu's theory of practice provides an alternative move away from dichotomies of constraint and agency, of external imposition and internal impulse. His work provides the 'thinking tools' with which to examine individuals' actions and choices influenced by a society in which gender domination and symbolic exchanges reinforce the asymmetrical economy of exchanges in which women are treated as objects and men as subjects (Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992). It is through the economy of symbolic exchanges of capital, Bourdieu states, that male domination is able to reproduce itself; and it is this symbolic capital that women need to challenge through collective action aimed at the embodied and objective structures that enforce it (Bourdieu, 2001[1998]; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992).

Informed by the conceptual frame derived from Bourdieu, the following chapter will articulate the research design of this study, to explore the seven female respondents' habitus, leadership disposition and engagement with the field.

Chapter 3: Research design

This chapter clarifies the research design of this study that examines how seven female participants made their career decisions. The chapter reports on the choices made in this study: why and how schools and respondents were identified, and why specific methodologies were chosen and particular data production and management strategies employed. A discussion concerning considerations of ethics and validity explores notions of confidentiality and anonymity, and descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity in order to create internal consistency within the confines of the data analysis process that follows in Chapter 4.

Research design

The aim of this study is to provide a detailed exploration of seven women teachers' perceptions and experiences of gender interacting with leadership to provide a conceptualization of their orientations and choices (Procter & Padfield, 1999). A qualitative research methodology was employed to collect and analyse data. This inductive and interpretive approach has greater potential to explore participants' thoughts, beliefs, actions and feelings in relation to the research question than would a deductive quantitative approach.

Selecting schools and participants

The schools selected for this study needed to provide a homogenous group of subjects to maximise comparability (Silverman, 2010; Seale, 2004; Robson, 2002). These schools were chosen partly because they have similar histories, being located in close proximity to each other in a Western Cape town. They have all had only male principals and women have reached meso level leadership positions in the last fifteen years. Although their sizes differ (School A=±700; School B=±1096 & School C=±1170) they all share: a racially diverse student body, a similar ethos and culture, and are English/Afrikaans dual-medium.

School A is the oldest and located in the less-affluent part of town, close to the railway station, and attracts many learners commuting from poorer areas as well as middle-class learners from surrounding suburbs. Schools B & C, located in more affluent areas, are experiencing tremendous growth and in the last year each built seven new classrooms to accommodate more pupils. All are committed to education, sport and cultural development and Schools B & C have won various regional awards for Department of Education Gr 3 & 6 Mathematics and First Language tests. Most pertinent to this study, they all share a common history with regard to leadership gender: all three schools have only had male principals; however schools B & C have allowed women access to deputyships in the last fifteen years while School A still excludes women from the deputy position through male gate-keeping and placement decisions. In all the schools male teachers and managers are in the minority which speaks to the '*rare is valued*' principle.

The three principals were informed of the study's goals after which seven potential participants were identified from the schools' websites. The participants were selected by applying the criteria of: (a) gender (b) leadership position (HOD or deputy) and (c) school environment. Hence, seven female deputies and HODs from the three Western Cape schools were chosen and all seven agreed to participate. Pseudonyms for participants and generic coding for the schools were chosen to ensure confidentiality.

School A is represented by Karen, a Senior Phase HOD and Alice, the Foundation Phase HOD. In the last ten years School A has seen a succession of principals resigning with very short notice periods, leaving Alice and the male deputy to manage the school for extended periods while a principal was sought. Janine and Bernice are deputies at School B and responsible for vital decision-making structures within the school, respectively finance and selection/appointment of new staff. Daisy and Candice are the respective senior and Foundation Phase HODs and active members of the senior management team. Fransie is the female deputy at School C, subordinate to the younger male deputy and responsible for pastoral-care of students and staff with a seat on the school's financial committee.

Interviewing

Drawing on the range of qualitative data collection techniques, the most effective method to explore the seven participants' perceptions, orientations and career decisions was to interview them. I felt an interview would obtain "*qualitative descriptions of the life world*" of each participant (Kvale, 1996:124) and give insight into their subjective states (Silverman, 2010). I therefore employed a "*methodology of listening*" focused on "*seeing the world from [their] perspective*" (Glassner & Loughlin, 1987, in Silverman, 2010:157).

A semi-structured face-to-face interview format was chosen consisting of multiple probing questions sequenced in specific themes (Kvale, 1996) to explore participants' choices, behaviour, beliefs and attitudes (Robson, 2002). This type of interview is adaptable and flexible, allowing the interviewer freedom to change or adapt the wording of questions, to leave out inappropriate or include additional exploratory questions based "*upon the interviewer's perception of what is most appropriate*" (Robson, 2002:270; Kvale, 1996). Since the interview process is not a conventional reciprocal interaction, the semi-structured format allows the interviewer to create an interactive conversation beyond polite exchanges, and lets interviewees feel safe and secure in sharing their feelings and experiences, giving the interviewer "*privileged access to the subject's lived world*" (Kvale, 1996:125). In addition an interview schedule provides guidance for the conversation and allows the data collection to occur systematically allowing greater comparability during data analysis (Robson, 2002). I decided that the interviews would follow the process of introducing and contextualising the interview and each thematic unit, followed by direct questions from the interview schedule (Kvale, 1996).

Developing an interview schedule

An interview schedule was designed to explore how the respondents made their career decisions. The interview schedule comprised two parts: a cover sheet requesting basic demographic information such as respondents' age, experience and qualifications; followed by a range of open-ended questions informed by

Bourdieu's theoretical concepts designed to elicit information rich responses (Young & McLeod, 2001). Questions explored three broad categories: interviewees' past and present lives and the choices they had made (habitus), their view of leadership and principalship (leadership disposition), and their engagement with the field. (Bourdieu's concept of capital was included to a lesser degree in the last section that determined the value of the respondents' capital.) Correlating with the semi-structured interview format, questions were designed as a guide to facilitate discussion, and further questions were interjected where necessary to elicit elaboration or clarify points.

Five central thematic topics guided the questions and informed subsequent data analysis:

- (a) **Early childhood experiences:** exploring childhood socialisation by remembering parents' behaviour, attitudes and beliefs;
- (b) **Durability of habitus:** examining interviewees' present lives, their embodied social gender roles and domestic/career orientation;
- (c) **Autonomy of habitus:** investigating how dispositions influence their career choices;
- (d) **Material conditions of the field:** establishing what structural or organisational barriers influenced their career progression and development of their leadership disposition;
- (e) **Conditions for entry to field:** identifying witnessed or experienced incidences of gender based discrimination and the legitimacy and value of their capital.

Prior to the main interviews a pilot interview was conducted with a fellow student who has more than twenty years' teaching and ten years' experience as principal. After the pilot interview and discussions with her, the interview schedule was revised and discussed at length with my supervisor, before finalising it. The revision process concerned the re-formulation of questions to make these more open-ended, to economise on word-usage or to enhance clarity.

Data production

I started the data collection process by phoning the seven prospective participants requesting their permission for an interview. The initial calls served

a dual purpose: I wanted to establish whether they a) would participate and b) had ever applied for principal positions to ascertain their leadership aspiration.

Subsequently seven once-off qualitative interviews were conducted during the winter school holidays when it was hoped teachers would have more free time. Each interview lasted between 1 ½ - 2 hours. The first interview was held in a quiet coffee shop but due to peripheral noise degrading the sound quality, subsequent interviews were conducted in participants' homes.

Interviews were conducted in either Afrikaans or English depending on interviewees' preference. I focused on actively listening to what respondents were saying with limited interruption or prompting, to avoid influencing their recollections. Moreover I focused on keeping questions and prompts succinct and to the point, and showed my enjoyment of the research process to lower potential anxiety (Robson, 2002). I established rapport with participants by positioning myself as a fellow teacher with ten years' experience and showing genuine interest in understanding their experiences and guaranteeing confidentiality (Silverman, 2010).

Positioning of the Researcher

Data management

The credibility and trustworthiness of research is largely determined by the accuracy with which researchers' document procedure as well as the "*consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category*" (Silverman, 2010:224), showing the research consistently measured that which it set out to measure (Robson, 2002). I therefore planned and recorded the data collection and management process to reflect factual accuracy and truthful reflection of the data measured, as well as consistent and precise use of measurements.

The management of data involved three major processes: (a) transcription and translation, (b) designing the data analysis framework, and (c) reporting the data analysis.

Transcription and translation

The transcription process was carefully conducted heeding Silverman's caution that "*the preparation of transcripts*" should not be assumed a "*simply technical detail*" (Silverman, 2010:184). The digitally recorded interview data was transferred to my laptop using the software package, *Digital Wave Player*. Recordings were transcribed verbatim within 24 hours of the interview in order to incorporate mental recollections of interviewees' mannerisms, behaviour and/or facial expressions. During an internet search in the interview planning phase the software package, *Express Scribe*, was identified as a useful dictation device as it allows the user to slow down recorded speech to correlate to typing speed, without major loss of sound quality and diction – greatly expediting the transcription process. I furthermore used a combination of Silverman's (2010) and Seale's (2004) transcription symbols to capture and indicate pauses, stresses, intonation and other speech tics. Thereafter I re-listened to the recorded interviews comparing it to the first-round transcripts, making changes and adjustments to ensure accuracy and completeness. The transcripts were then printed and stored.

I decided to translate the Afrikaans transcripts to English to assist in the data analysis phase – a step which proved highly beneficial in creating cross-comparisons of phrases and sections of conversation. In a few instances where the translation of specific phrases and idioms proved problematic, I employed the assistance of a professional translator.

With the data in primary form I then progressed to the data analysis stage.

Data analysis

The analysis of the transcripts was guided by the five central thematic topics of the interview schedule. This process occurred in three phases: (i) primary analysis: preliminary coding using central thematic topics; (ii) secondary analysis: generating categories, themes and patterns; and (iii) concluding analysis: refinement of an analytic framework.

Primary analysis: preliminary coding using central thematic topics

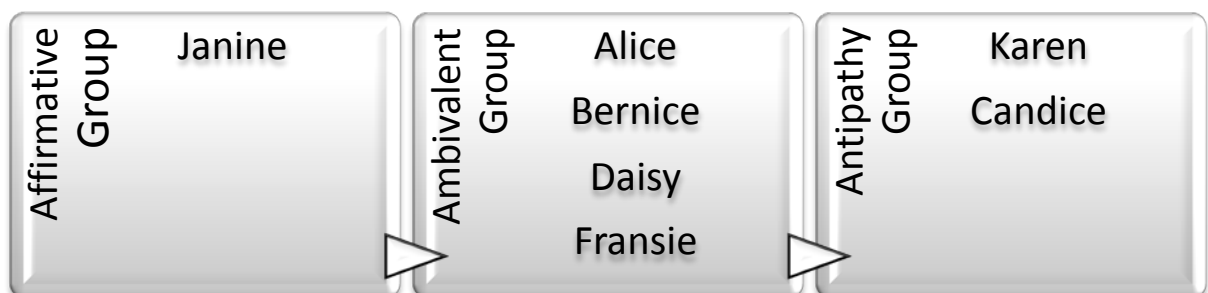
(A comparative table listing respondents' demographic data and career information has been provided as Appendix 2.)

The five thematic units guided the initial data analysis. Transcripts were searched for regularities and differences, and recurring experiences, histories and career-events; and perceptions and attitudes (Robson, 2002) regarding leadership and specifically the principalship. Rather than providing clarity, this very broad categorisation revealed further complexities in the data and was of little use.

Guided by the central themes, an individual analysis of each respondent's transcript followed. Comparing the individual analyses brought strong parallels to light, specifically regarding participants' aspiration towards the principalship. Respondents were accordingly categorised into three groups which I labelled the affirmative, ambivalent and antipathy groups:

- **Affirmative group:** those willing to apply to the principalship believing in their abilities and potential for success;
- **Ambivalent group:** those believing themselves capable yet unwilling to apply due mainly to personal considerations; and
- **Antipathy group:** those unwilling to apply refusing to abandon their pupil-centred philosophy and classroom-based careers.

These groups were positioned along a continuum according to the degree of willingness participants displayed towards becoming principals. The continuum was represented as:



Secondary analysis: generating categories, themes and patterns

The principles of comparative pattern analysis provided guidance to the next stage by illuminating recurring patterns in the data as these converged into broader categories (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009; Young & McLeod, 2001). Heeding the advice of my supervisor, supported by Miles and Huberman's comment (1994 in Robson, 2002): "*You know what you display*", the individual analyses were manually tabulated and compared on large A1 matrices. Data was at once visible for inspection and analysis, allowing for comprehensive treatment and incorporation (Silverman, 2010). The visual tabulation also allowed for a to and fro movement between different parts of data, a difficult task on a small laptop screen. This served several purposes: it organised and refined the information, reduced the large amount of data, decreased the risk of drawing "*hasty, partial and unwarranted conclusions*" (Tonkiss in Robson, 2002:476) and provided "*an integrated, precise model that comprehensively describes a specific phenomena [sic], instead of a simple correlation statements about antecedent and consequent conditions*" (Mehan, 1979:21 in Silverman 2010:215).

Broad categories informed by the central themes and based on the properties of the data were identified and used in the comparative tables:

- Socialisation and childhood messages about being girls and/or women
- Gender roles in childhood homes
- Gender roles and gendered allocation of duties / tasks in current homes
- Career history and progression to current position
- Engagement with field and gender based discrimination experienced/witnessed

The broad categories were refined using sub-categories that compared for instance the relationships these respondents had with their respective parents, their domestic roles within their current homes and their description of the deputy's/principal's tasks. The comparative tables clearly showed specific correlations and distinguishing differences between the respondents and importantly served to strengthen their position within the three groups on the continuum since even though group members differed on specific points, their

overall position regarding the focal questions were empirically evidenced and supported, heading Tonkiss' cautions (in Robson, 2002).

Concluding analysis: refinement of an analytic framework

Common themes emerged from the three groups' analyses and another comparative table was drawn to display points and identify key areas with which to discuss each respondent and group. Using the Bourdieuan conceptual frame, generalisations were classified under the headings of Habitus, Leadership Disposition and Engagement with Field. I included the socialisation respondents' experienced whilst growing up, their histories and past experiences, under the heading: Habitus, as separate from their current dispositions, leadership practices and competencies which I classified under the heading: Leadership disposition. After further refinement this evolved into the analytic framework as illustrated in Table.

Table 1: Analytic frame

Habitus (history)	Leadership disposition	Engagement with field
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conditioned socialised perceptions and beliefs • Gendered assignment of particular roles and duties • Gender articulating with power (association of power with gender) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • View of leadership • View of principal's/deputy's role • Gendered assignment of leadership roles • Aspiration to leadership 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Structural / organisational constraints • Discrimination • The value of women's capital

Reporting on the data analysis process

The findings of the data analysis process are reported in Chapter 4. It includes a more detailed discussion of the continuum and three groups identified in this chapter, and provides reasons and evidence for each placement. The report on the analysis process takes the form of a cross-group comparative discussion under the sub-headings provided by the analytic framework. Interviewees are briefly introduced within their respective groups after which each group is

analysed according to the analytic frame. A general discussion of the analysis process concludes the chapter.

In summary, this section recounted the process through which the data analysis procedure was refined following three stages of primary, secondary and concluding analyses. This led to the development of an analytic framework included in Table 1: Analytic frame, a precursor to the following section that reports on the data analysis. In the last section of this chapter I consider issues of ethics and validity, before making concluding remarks on the research design.

Ethical considerations

The process of interviewing is at once a private and public function. Participants in the interview process share private and personal experiences (often) with a stranger, cognisant that the information provided would be analysed and made public. Although this process potential has therapeutic value (Potter, 2002; Kvale, 1996) the interviewer is still faced with the dilemma of making public that which was shared in confidence (Bourdieu, 1998[1994]). This ethical dilemma was carefully considered and pseudonyms were used for the respondents and schools coded to preserve confidentiality and protect participants' identities. Following Young and McLeod's (2001) example, all reference to specific geographic town names and similar identifiers were removed to further obscure details. Digital voice recordings and transcripts were never electronically sent to a supervisor or other informants and were stored on a secure external hard drive.

At the start of each interview the research purpose was explained to participants as were the measures taken to ensure their anonymity and the confidentiality of the data they provided. They were then asked to sign a waiver giving their consent and were provided a copy of this for their personal records (Silverman, 2010; Seale, 2004, Robson, 2002). It was explicitly stated that participation in the interview process was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw at any point.

Validity and trustworthiness of research

Research is generally considered to be credible and trustworthy if threats to validity were vigilantly considered and avoided (Robson, 2002). Maxwell's (1992) typology of descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity identifies specific threats that potentially undermine the overall quality and validity of research projects. These threats are accordingly addressed as it relates to this study:

Descriptive validity

Descriptive validity refers to the researcher's descriptive report of observed occurrences, with reference to specific events and situations. The accuracy of descriptive reports can be determined and inter-subjective agreement achieved by accessing the appropriate primary data. Interviews were therefore digitally recorded and saved on an external hard drive, and transcripts underwent numerous cross-checks to ensure accuracy and reduce this threat.

Interpretive validity

Interpretive validity is achieved when researchers successfully suspend their own perspectives, beliefs and categories in search of the meanings and interpretations that participants attach to events, behaviours and objects and their belief and evaluation thereof (Maxwell, 1992). It is dependent on the epistemic reflexivity evident in the research process (Bourdieu, 1998[1994]; Bourdieu & Wacquant, 1992) whereby the researcher critically self-reflects, considering their own characteristics, perspectives and assumptions that might influence the data analysis and interpretation process (Oplatka & Tamir, 2009). In this regard Durkheim's first principle, to: "**abandon all preconceptions!**" (original emphasis) and Tonkiss' emphatic caution that: "*we cannot make the data say what is not there!*" (in Seale, 2004:377-378) is especially relevant.

Positioning of the researcher

I am a female teacher with over ten years' experience in South African, British and International schools. I live in the same town as do the research subjects, and have had prior contact with two of them. This means that my interaction with them was influenced by this common experience. On the whole this led, I believe, to a more open and empathetic exchange.

Apart from epistemic reflexivity, Mason suggests that interpretive validity is also dependent on "*assiduously charting and justifying the steps through which your interpretations were made*" (Mason, 1996 in Robson, 2002:171). Researchers need therefore to include themes and frames that emerge through their involvement with the setting and data analysis, mindful that various interpretations are possible.

These two principles guided the collection and interpretation of results. During the data collection phase, I critically reflected on various points that might influence the course of the interview: my gender - a woman talking with women, my previous professional relationship with Karen and Alice, and my professional background as teacher interviewing teachers. These influences I felt enhanced rather than detracted from the interview process, and assisted in building rapport and eliciting open and honest responses (a participant trusting me enough to openly cry when remembering painful moments). Interviews were meticulously transcribed (described above) and transcriptions carefully managed, adding in punctuation and explanatory words in brackets to indicate gestures or mannerisms; also 'cleaning' the speech to remove confused phrases and linguistic tics following Bourdieu's suggestion to rid the transcription of such occurrences (Bourdieu, 1998[1994]) and increase readability.

As analyst utilising Bourdieu's concepts and discourses I positioned myself at a higher vantage point in order to gain understanding of relationships and discern patterns evident in the data as a whole. Heeding Maxwell's and Bourdieu's cautions I made every effort to identify and avoid my own presuppositions and perceptions, and only interpret the respondents' views and explanations, drawing inferences from **their** words and recorded actions without imposing any preconceived frame to the meaning they attach to phenomena.

With reference to Mason's notions, I furthermore added a detailed description of the data-analysis process as described in the previous section, charting and justifying the steps taken during the data analysis process to validate interpretations reached and connections made. It was for instance concerning that after the primary thematic coding, the respondents in each group seemed to fit neatly into their various groups, creating the impression that they were 'made-to-fit'. Using the refined set of empirical categories of the analytic frame consistently tested and verified against transcripts and citing quotes as evidence, the similarities that exist between the respondents were subsequently substantiated (Robson, 2002), and differences identified. These steps reduced the threat to interpretive validity.

Theoretical validity

Theoretical validity refers to "*an account's validity as a **theory** of some phenomenon*" and determines the legitimacy with which a theory or concept was applied or whether "*agreement can be reached about what the facts are*" (Maxwell, 1992:292). Researchers achieve theoretical validity by considering alternative explanations and/or understandings of the phenomenon (Robson, 2002), and by incorporating emergent or existing relationships between concepts or categories used in the theory (Maxwell, 1992).

Based on the Bourdieuan conceptual framework, this study utilised his concepts of habitus and field, and the relationship between these to examine how the seven female respondents made career decisions influenced by externally imposed and internally acquired gender differentiating assumptions. These Bourdieuan methodological "*thinking tools*" were chosen because they provide an epistemological bridge between dichotomies of structure and agency to explain and understand how the social world is structured and internalised, and how women's choices are shaped by their situational context and agentic behaviour. Threats to theoretical validity for this study were therefore reduced as various theories were considered and alternatives evaluated, with Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field, and leadership disposition, considered best suited.

This typology of validity threats enabled me to consider and contemplate the nature of specific descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity threats in order to identify ways to avoid and overcome these. By addressing these threats, I strove to create internal consistency within the confines of my argument and to develop well-supported accounts through scrupulous readings of the data, offering insights into the respondents' career choices (Tonkiss in Seale, 2004).

In conclusion

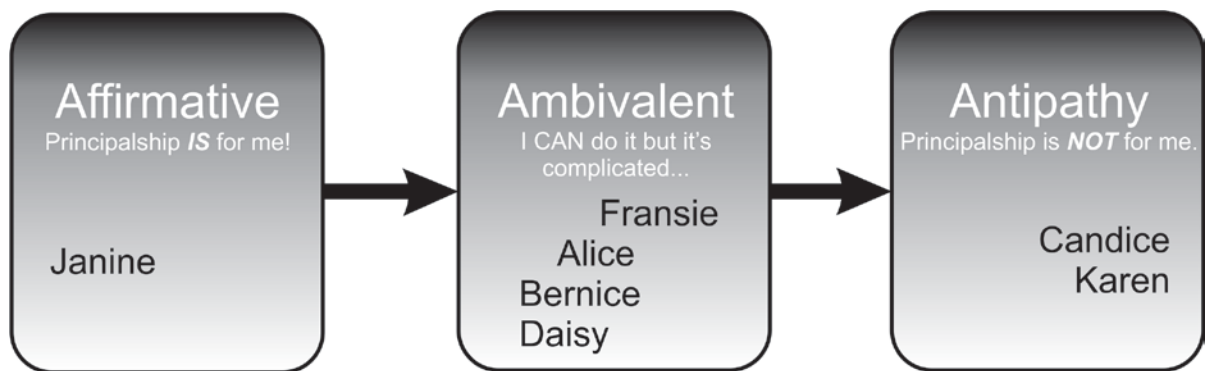
This chapter explored the research design process, accounting for methodological choices made regarding the production, management and analysis of data and the refinement of an analytic frame. A subsequent discussion elaborates the ethical considerations and threats to validity that needed to be overcome. Having charted the research design of this study, the next chapter explores and analyses the data obtained from interviews with the seven participants.

Chapter 4: Presentation of data and discussion of findings

The previous chapter provided an account of the research design and refinement of the data analysis leading to the development of an analytic frame. This chapter reports the results of the data analysis. It is organised to introduce and explain the categories and continuum used to group the participants followed by a cross-group comparative discussion based on the analytic frame. Respondents are briefly introduced within their respective groups after which each group is discussed.

Grouping respondents

The primary data analysis revealed similarities and differences between the seven respondents that served to categorise them into three distinct groups which I have labelled the affirmative, ambivalent and antipathy groups. These groupings were initially based on participants' willingness to aspire towards a principal position, the antipathy group completely rejecting it, the ambivalent group believing themselves capable but unwilling to apply and the affirmative group being willing to apply. However, after further refinement it became evident that respondents' positioning along the continuum was more accurately derived from their leadership disposition and in particular the weighting they give to specific leadership functions, correlating to the typology of leadership (Smith, 2011; Fitzgerald, 2009) discussed previously: the affirmative group striving for macro-level leadership positions while the ambivalent and antipathy groups were only willing to aspire to micro- and meso-level leadership that particularly involves pastoral care and supportive functions (illustrated below).



The boundaries between each group on the continuum are permeable and respondents occupied different positions along the continuum at different stages of their life-cycle and within each group, with members from the ambivalent group leaning either towards the affirmative or towards the antipathy group. Reasons for this variance are subsequently discussed in relation to their habitus, leadership disposition and engagement with the field.

Scrutinising the data according to these three main topics and subsequent topics from the analytic frame provided a better understanding of *how* each respondent chose their respective positions on the continuum, the factors that moulded and influenced their decisions and their internal response to external structural constraints and expectations. The following report thus explores these three key areas according to:

- a) **Habitus:** socialised, conditioned perceptions and beliefs formed by experiences and events from their histories and embodied in dispositions of gendered practices and alignment with gendered authority relations;
- b) **Leadership disposition:** respondents' alignment with gendered leadership functions evident in their view of the principal and deputy's duties which influences their leadership disposition and aspiration towards the three leadership levels; and
- c) **Engagement with field:** structural affordances or constraints and gender based discrimination experienced by respondents and the recognition or devaluing of their capital which further conditions their responses and aspirations towards leadership.

Affirmative group

Janine is the only member of the affirmative group - the only respondent willing to apply for a principal position. She displays distinct characteristics that distinguish her from other respondents. These regard her leadership disposition and a history of professional aspiration, social and personal commitment and delegated domestic responsibilities, as well as a particular gendered experience of strong women and gentle men.

Janine is the Foundation Phase deputy at School B where she has taught for 14 of her 26 years in education. She is married to a local businessman and their daughter studies teaching at a nearby university. She enjoys participating in and coaching sport and played provincial netball, starting netball clubs in the different towns where they lived. In many of these towns she was furthermore instrumental in starting *Jong Dames Dinamiek*, a group aimed at developing and uplifting women towards achieving more in life. Janine is career-orientated and states: *"For 26 years they [her family] had to come second... where I wasn't really there for my daughter, you know, she had to sort of raise herself – especially over weekends..."*

Habitus: conditioned socialised perceptions and beliefs

Janine's personal history is unique in this group of respondents. Her mother is the only mother of the respondents with a university qualification and professional career as bookkeeper. She delegated the domestic responsibilities in Janine's childhood home to three domestic workers, who Janine recalls did everything for them, explaining *"... my mom wasn't really involved in our lives."* The childrearing model Janine followed aligns strongly to that of her mother's: she explains that her schoolwork and career took precedence over her family, that her daughter had to raise herself to some extent and that she paid for extra lessons when she was not able to assist her daughter.

Janine's socialised perception of herself is very positive. She displays agentic behaviour, viewing herself as capable, strong and assertive, similar traits to

those her mother reportedly embodied. Her mother displayed strong agentic behaviour and disregarded societal expectations regarding her assumed gender role, which shaped Janine's habitus to shirk socially constricting "glass walls". This enabled her to achieve more than the other respondents as is evidenced in her drive to develop other women through mentorship and the many netball and women's clubs she started.

Habitus: gendered assignment of particular roles and duties

Janine embodies a different perception of the gendered assignment of particular roles and duties in the fields in which she operates, in contrast to the other respondents.

She is the only respondent to be socially and professionally committed to a variety of programmes, and delegates the majority of the domestic chores to a domestic worker and gardener. Janine and her husband share those domestic chores that are not managed by the domestic worker or gardener. Tasks are not allocated according to traditional gendered duties, with her husband doing his own ironing (when the domestic worker is away) as well as buying groceries when necessary, and Janine working in the garden whenever time allows.

Her non-gendered role perception is reflected in her career choices and commitments. Apart from class teaching and leadership responsibilities, she is actively involved in the school's sport programme and extra-curricular activities. She is a longstanding member of the governing body where she occupies a position of power and decision-making, on the financial committee where she is the only woman apart from the secretary and a mother who manages the marketing on an ad hoc basis.

Habitus: gender articulating with power

Janine had a very particular gendered experience of strong women and gentle men whilst growing up, which further sets her apart from the other women in the group. Her mother was the only mother of the respondents to command dominance of cultural capital within the home which strengthened her dominant

position within her marriage(s). She graduated from a university with a Teachers' Diploma and followed a professional career as self-taught bookkeeper. Janine's father held a Grade 12 certificate and worked in the men's clothing shop owned by her mother's family, occupying a subordinate position with regards to cultural and economic capital. In contrast to her mother's strong, domineering personality she recalls her father's gentle, loving nature, saying: "*My father was a very gentle person and very loving... I would say that I got that from him...*" (also later sharing a good relationship with her stepfather who had a similar gentle nature). This further elevated her mother's position of dominance.

In Janine's view her mother was domineering because she was "*the only daughter and was incredibly spoilt. My grandfather ... spoilt her rotten.*" This created in her mother the perception that her wishes and desires took precedence and fulfilling her needs and goals was a taken-for-granted expectation in life. This perception and expectation was transposed to her career and domestic life where her mother's career and social goals took precedence over her children and domestic responsibilities, with Janine explaining that "*she could delegate ... EXTREMELY well!*" Janine emphasised that her mother even delegated her assumed responsibility as parent to assist them when they were physically sick, saying "*she just did not do that.*"

Thus Janine's habitus was structured to view the role of men and women with regards to dominant and subordinate power positions as non-gendered. In opposition to the patriarchal conditioning model, her mother embodied strength and domination as a woman, was assertive and forceful - characteristics generally associated with males. There are strong similarities between Janine's mother's disposition and Janine's, who was socialised to view positions of power and dominance as an accepted and natural position for women to occupy.

Leadership disposition: view of leadership

Janine views leadership as a macro-level decision-making and management function and enjoys the challenges and responsibilities thereof, stating: "*for me it is just that I like to organise things and take the lead...*" Her leadership

disposition has been enhanced by the variety of leadership styles she experienced in the different schools where she held appointments. This increased her repertoire and experience of leadership techniques which was wider than that of the other respondents.

When discussing her leadership style and what she believes determines effective leadership, Janine emphasised her commitment to her colleagues, to their development and especially to keeping them informed as much as possible. She believes in affirming and supporting teachers, often leaving a note or chocolate treat to thank them for their efforts or to encourage them in difficult, stressful times. Effective leadership according to Janine is determined by the example set by the leader. She states that:

I have to work upfront. My people must know that I work much much harder than them. I just have to!... So I do more than is ever expected of me to show them: this is how you should do it! My motto in life is: JUST DO IT! – you know, Nike. Don't stand around quibbling, just do what is expected of you and get on with it!

She is furthermore the only leader among the respondents to actively mentor those under her leadership; Candice, one of her HODs, commented in this regard:

I think she [Janine] is a stunning stunning leader when it comes to that sort of thing [mentorship]. She'll say 'You must do this – You CAN!' So I think she's one of the biggest reasons that you grow in your position and she'll also push you to go further...

Janine is driven to achieve, is assertive and occupies a dominant decision-making position within the school, which sets her apart from the other respondents. Similar to her mother, Janine does not subscribe to society's view of women, embodying leadership traits more generally associated with dominant male leaders.

Leadership disposition: view of principal/deputy's role

The role of principal is for Janine a managerial, overseer function. She says of her current principal that the final decisions and full responsibility of the school are on *his* shoulders; he holds the final authority, commenting that “*the buck stops with him.*” Parents expect him to manage the discipline in the school:

When parents don't want to listen to us then he has to come and sort it out because parents just look at him for that... never mind that I'm in charge of the discipline! Because I'm a woman the dads just insist on seeing the principal because he's a man.

She also expects that a principal “*has to have a very large knowledge base*”, and thus command and embody substantial cultural capital. Their principal, according to Janine, relies heavily on her embodied cultural capital (her content knowledge of the Foundation Phase) respecting and legitimising the cultural capital she brings to the field. In this context she explained that she would consider a principal position for a primary school should she be supported by a strong academic deputy, like Bernice, stating that she did not feel she had the necessary knowledge base to lead teachers in the Senior Phase – a perceived lack of cultural capital.

Furthermore, Janine states, a principal needs to work much harder than anyone else on the staff, stating: “*He has to work upfront – if the teachers stay till 5pm then he must only leave at 6pm.*” However she acknowledges the tremendous demands this position places on the personal life of a principal saying that the parents at School B expect the Principal to attend all school functions “*even though you have your own life and cannot do it, they still expect it of you.*”

Janine identifies the role of the deputy as being “*supportive and executive*” towards the principal, and fulfilling a pastoral-care function towards the staff, saying of herself “*...I can see what they do, I spend time with them – I am really very involved with the staff and support them.*” She also manages the discipline in the Foundation Phase. It would thus seem as if she leads in an agentic manner but approaches staff more relationally, displaying a transformational

leadership style that is context and situationally bound. Although her cultural capital is legitimized by the principal the parent body question her gender and leadership role, reverting to the 'known' masculine role regarding discipline.

Leadership disposition: gendered assignment of leadership roles

Corresponding to the example of her mother, Janine does not assign leadership roles based on gender. On the contrary she has instead requested tasks traditionally associated with a male deputy and is the only respondent who actively pursued more responsibilities. She had unsuccessfully requested the grounds and non-teaching staff portfolio, for instance, (traditionally a male deputy's role) stating: "*personally I think a woman would be able to manage this better than a man, but they think a woman cannot do this.*" When prompted, she added that the workers respect her as she listens to them and she feels: "*I work differently with them... I'm very particular when it comes to job descriptions and check lists and following up...*" She does not doubt her ability to manage this portfolio, but feels constrained by gender stereotypical role assignments.

Janine is the only respondent to identify aspects of her current principal's leadership style that she would approach differently, particularly mentioning his handover delegation style and his relationship with staff. She feel that he should be more actively involved in the various areas of the school to have a better knowledge of departments and promote relationships with the staff to know how to best support and develop each one. She also mentioned her frustration when she assigns tasks and responsibilities to each teacher after extensive consultation and the principal changes these, saying: "*in the end he manipulates it so that each one ends up doing their own thing again!*"

In negotiating positions of power within the field, Janine's leadership disposition favours competence and personal relationships rather than gender; she does not see herself as personally subordinated but attaches her subservience to her position.

Leadership disposition: aspiration to leadership

Janine's mother's aspiration towards achievement and success, and her father's example (as provincial sportsman) of hard-work, dedication and personal ambition were woven into her habitus. This structured Janine's habitus to view hard-work, commitment, achievement and success as natural and taken-for-granted.

She aspires conditionally to the position of principal: she would apply for a preparatory school principalship or to a primary school principalship should she be supported by a strong Senior Phase academic deputy. Since there are no preparatory schools in this area (and since she does not see herself starting one deterred by high costs) she has decided to remain in her current position. At the time of the interview the vacant principal position at School A was not yet public knowledge and we could therefore not pursue this option.

Engagement with field: organisational constraints and discriminatory attitudes

Janine's ambition and drive motivates her to seek a better more powerful position within the field. She therefore requested the workers and facilities management portfolio, knowing it is traditionally assigned to men. However the principal denied her request, because (she believes) this position is mostly given to male managers. Janine's comment that "*they will delegate more to you if you are a man...*" supports this.

During her time as HOD of the Foundation Phase, Janine faced very specific gender based discrimination from the principal who openly dominated and fulfilled his role as gate-keeper. She explains:

When I was appointed at School B, we had a woman as Foundation Phase deputy. When she resigned the principal made that position a whole school deputy post and took it away from the Foundation Phase. He also came to Bernice and I and told us that we need not apply as he wanted a man to apply, the school, he said, needed more men in

promotion posts. So he took away my Foundation Phase deputy position and gave it to a man and told us to our faces not to apply.

The principal's actions in controlling entry into the positions of power persuaded both her and Bernice to believe that the position was not for them and therefore they did not apply. Years later they were appointed to deputy positions under males who were entrenched in the most powerful and dominant positions. This suggests that they were given deputy positions to fill equity quotas. The governing body furthermore comprises mainly men, Janine being the only permanent woman, which further speaks to the hegemonic male dominance in the school's leadership and of the operation of male networks and social capital in maintaining this dominance.

Engagement with field: the value of women's capital

Although Janine's appointment to deputy might suggest tokenism, the school seems to recognise and legitimise her capital as a leader. She states that the governing body values her "*input*" and "*listens to her opinions and suggestions*". Comments made by the other respondents at School B indicate that the staff respect her and, as Candice states, admire her leadership skills and mentoring. When appointed as deputy, Janine requested the responsibility of managing the whole school's task allocation. This has allowed her to work closely with all members of staff, including the male Senior Phase teachers, and to develop and nurture a good relationship with them.

In conclusion, regarding Janine's habitus, her leadership disposition and her engagement with the field in which she operates, certain defining characteristics are evident that set her apart from the other respondents. She is willing to take on the position of principal, albeit conditionally. There are strong parallels between her embodied leadership disposition and her experience of strong women and gentle men from her childhood. This parallel is especially visible in the manner in which she articulates gender with power corresponding to the example set by her mother. She has not bowed to the socialised conditioning that pertains within her social environment, but has instead been career

orientated, placing her career above domestic responsibilities, and occupying traditionally masculine positions within the field. With regards to leadership she assigns primary importance to decision-making and is willing to take the dominant position within the field; a position traditionally gendered as masculine.

In order to foreground the striking contrasts between the antipathy and affirmative groups, the antipathy group is discussed next.

Antipathy group

As members of the antipathy group, Karen and Candice share certain perceptions and beliefs setting them apart from the other respondents. These concern their view of the principalship and their leadership disposition, a history of power being gendered, a specific gender role allocation and an overriding commitment to their careers.

As the oldest respondent, Karen has 42 years' experience in education, of which she spent 37 at School A and 26 years (thus far) as HOD. She does not intend moving to another school and plans to eventually retire from her HOD position at School B. Since she could not have children of her own, she says that her passion is teaching the children in her class, classifying herself as a "*heart and soul teacher*". Her husband is a retired part-time farmer and Post Level 1 teacher. Karen's mother is still alive and they are very close; she left school after completing Grade 10. Her father dropped out of University during his first year in Medical School and became a Public Health Inspector and part-time farmer, known in the district by the nickname of Bulldog which refers to his strict, forceful disciplinarian personality. He has since passed away. *Bulldog* placed tremendous pressure on Karen to achieve at school and to get the highest marks. She states: "... *he always demanded that I must be the best, always the best. It was a very oppressing factor in my life... VERY!*" She ascribes her perfectionism as a direct result of this and attributes her determination, perseverance and strong will to a combination of both parents' influence on her life.

Candice was appointed in 2006 as HOD of the Foundation Phase at School B, an appointment that Janine describes as follows:

Oh she is wonderful! She is simply wonderful! Let me tell you, that was an affirmative action appointment but... God really knew what he was doing there! She really is fantastic!

Having spent 10 years at her previous school that was “*mostly a black school*”, Candice wanted to experience “*what the other side was doing*” and applied at School B. Candice believes she is called to teach and gets particularly upset when teachers waste children’s time or make comments like “*I didn’t know...*” Her answer to this is “*How could you not know? It’s your job to know!*” stating that every opportunity should be used to better the education of the children. When she was first appointed as HOD at her previous school, she was one of the youngest HODs and felt severely intimidated by the older members of staff, saying that:

... it was very difficult getting other people to change their mindsets ... because then you were starting to look at things like ‘What were your Literacy results?’ and ‘What were your Maths results’ and you know, ‘why is it so poor?’ And then you know what you wanted to do or you know where you wanted to be and I don’t think I had the skills to draw people or to call people to the next step. I think basically that came with experience...

She feels more confident at School B and mentions the many phone calls from fellow teachers asking for her assistance or advice, especially regarding her computer expertise. Candice’s father holds a Master’s degree in Accounting and her sister is a High School Biology and Science teacher, while her mother holds a Grade 10 certificate and has retired from her secretarial career; she now looks after her grandchildren while their mothers teach. Candice recalls her father’s strict “*hands-on*” childrearing and how he would make her sit in her room as a Grade 5 scholar practising her “*story blerrie sums*” while the rest of the neighbourhood’s children were outside playing. After school when her friends

went back-packing around Europe, he refused to let his daughters go since he wanted them to finish their tertiary education.

Habitus: conditioned socialised perceptions and beliefs

Strong parallels are visible between Candice and Karen's respective childhood memories and their current perceptions and beliefs. Although they were raised in separate generations (Candice in 1970-1980, and Karen in 1950-1960) and separated by the Apartheid Government's segregation act classifying Karen's family white and Candice's as coloured, the similarities between their childhood homes are striking.

Their fathers commanded strong dominant positions as breadwinners, holding greater economic and cultural capital than their mothers. Candice's father completed his Master's degree when she and her sister were studying for their teachers' qualifications so that he continued to hold a higher qualification than they did. Both fathers placed great emphasis on Karen and Candice's academic achievement and their accumulation of cultural capital yet did not encourage their wives in the same way, thus maintaining their command of cultural capital. Both commented on the strict conduct of their fathers and their close relationship with their mothers: Karen talks daily to her mother and visits her regularly, stating that they are more like sisters; Candice still calls her mother "mommy" or "grandmommy" and sees her almost daily as her mother cooks for the entire family during the week. Karen's mother was a home-maker and supplemented the family income with dress-making or cooking. Candice's mother held a secretarial/clerical position in clothing factories until her retirement, and was the one who "spoil" them by "scraping together" to buy the latest fashion accessory or clothing that they wanted. Thus they were socialised to associate men with dominant, leadership positions and women with subordinated, supportive domestic duties.

Habitus: gendered assignment of particular roles and duties

Karen and Candice's embodied internalisation of feminine behaviour and their perceptions of gender roles reveal striking similarities. Both mothers' transferred specific messages about the type of women they wanted their daughters to become, socialising them to maintain a specific type of relationship with men. Candice recalls a specific incident illustrating this process, that occurred when she was seen walking very close to a boy from their church at age fourteen:

We were walking down the road the one day and walking with our hands around each other's waists. It was nothing you know. But by the time I'd got home my mommy had already heard. One of the ladies obviously drove past and saw I was doing this and had told her. And when I got home did she give me a hiding?!? I was fourteen years old already! A hiding with a wet dishcloth, 'cause she was doing the dishes!

Candice's mother was 'embodying' through physical inculcation that her behaviour was unbecoming and through punishment reinforced in Candice the belief that she should be physically distant and reserved, not allowing herself to be seduced by the disingenuous behaviour of teenage boys and men.

In contrast to Candice's childhood memories, Karen does not recall her parents explicitly teaching her to behave in a certain manner, to behave like a girl or act like a woman for instance. Instead these messages were implicitly stated as she says:

Never ever... because I just knew how things should be done because of my perfectionism. I was far too scared to do something wrong, not like today's children who risk far more and aren't scared of making mistakes...

Implicitly transmitted messages are often the most powerful. Karen cannot remember ever being told how to behave like a lady, but socialisation has taken place at the level below consciousness and discourse and has therefore been especially durable. Being often in her mother's company socialised her to perform gender in a similar manner: she recalls the two of them singing old

Afrikaans songs while her mother sat sewing, illustrating their gendered positioning – they are inside, her mother working with the material and Karen learning to sew. This transmitted her mother’s embodied mannerisms and dispositions to Karen from a young age: today she dresses in an especially feminine way, wearing long flowing non-revealing outfits; she speaks in quiet, gentle tones and carries herself in a very elegant manner, embodying perceptions of femininity.

Whereas both Karen and Candice’s mothers were responsible for domestic and child-rearing duties, their internalised gendered task allocation differed significantly. Karen’s internalised domestic role allocation resembles her mother’s example: she does the cooking, sewing and much of the cleaning in their home whereas her husband maintains the garden, their home and cars. In contrast Candice’s mother fulfilled tasks and responsibilities often associated more with men than woman. She recalls her mother teaching them to “*never wait for a man to get a job done*”, often fixing the family car or collecting wood in the nearby forest. This correlates with the non-gendered task allocation in Candice’s home: her husband does the majority of the dishwashing and remembers the anniversaries and birthdays, while she rarely cooks, chops the firewood and “*when he [her husband] gets home the fire is already burning...*” Her husband, she feels, perceives this to be a masculine task, especially chopping wood but she explains:

...it’s not even chopping - it’s just whacking! And he’d say: did you do that on your own? You know for them it’s unbelievable and I just don’t see what the fuss is about!

It is tempting to associate gendered task allocation with leadership and domination. As Candice’s case illustrates, even though she and her mother perform tasks generally perceived as masculine, they do not occupy dominant positions within their homes but are subordinated to their husbands who make the decisions even though they experience this domination as less explicit.

Habitus: gender articulating with power

Although raised on opposite sides of the Apartheid Government's boundaries, both Karen and Candice were socialised to internalise masculine domination as normative, a perception maintained throughout their careers. This correlates with the manner in which gender articulated with leadership in their childhood homes where both fathers were dominant and maintained their dominance by being very strict. Karen recalls: "*Oh he was extremely strict, extremely!*" and Candice states: "*He was very strict, you know, growing up...*"

Karen's family enjoyed a privileged position as *whites*, as the family of a government inspector and farmer, and member of the Dutch Reformed Church – all sites of strong male domination and conditioning. Karen specifically mentioned two previous principals whom she admired: both lead through strict command-and-control styles, fostering very strong hierarchies within the school, with men fulfilling powerful, dominant positions similar to that of her father.

Candice on the other hand was raised in a home powerfully affected by discriminatory practices of the Apartheid Government's classification of her family as coloured. This creating an environment where her mother was forced to leave school after Grade 10 to become a factory clerk in order to supplement her family's income. Her father was also only allowed to attend certain tertiary institutions. Her mother's lesser cultural and economic capital reinforced her subordination in the marriage, exacerbated by societal pressure, tradition and custom that exemplified masculine domination.

Leadership disposition: view of leadership

The two respondents in the antipathy group distinguish between the three leadership levels and although both hold meso-level leadership positions, they are focused on teaching at a micro-level. Both report a life-long dream to become teachers with Candice adding "*...for as long as I can remember that is what I was going to be.*" For them teaching is an all-consuming activity, leaving no time for other interests: Karen relates how she spends her holidays planning,

setting exam papers and creating innovative educational activities; while Candice declares that for her it is all about the child and making every moment count in their education.

In describing their leadership and job descriptions, Karen states that she sees herself as supporting the principal in the execution of **his** duties whereas Candice sees her role as helping her colleagues especially regarding their computer skills, saying:

...that to me was just something that just came because you could help people, not just help people do it, you know show people how to do it, you know click here and take the mouse and do this, you know, and this is how you're going to do that. So that to me I thought was something that I added to what my colleagues had...

At the same time she says she avoids confrontations. She explains how she diverts such issues to Janine, saying: “Lovey, we’ve got a problem!” Neither Karen nor Candice are therefore willing to fulfil dominating roles in their leadership but act from profoundly subordinated positions as leaders of Post Level 1 teachers.

Leadership disposition: aspiration to leadership

Since Karen and Candice hold a pupils-first philosophy they value the teaching function of leadership more strongly than the other functions. They both display remarkable determination to follow classroom-based careers and remain HODs, with Candice stating: “*I still want to teach, you know. And I’d rather go and study ... than to apply for a position where you need to be in charge and think for other people...*” According to Candice she never aspired to leadership positions but was always keen to teach and help others, displaying a caring/nurturing orientation. Her emphatic refusal of a deputy principal position aptly explains this:

... I went down to the Free State and the bus stopped at this one school ... in the middle of nowhere with cows grazing nearby... And he [supervisor] said to me: don’t you want the deputy principal post here? And I said ARE

YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND? Here I was with just my small little baggie with my hardcover books with some planning, and I said NO NO NO!!!!

Karen in contrast stated that the HOD promotion fulfilled her dreams. She only dreamt of reaching this leadership level and is unwilling to apply for further promotion, having been an HOD for the past 26 years (the first female HOD in the school's 120 year history). At the time she recalls having to fight for her appointment, explaining:

*I had to **FIGHT** for it! If I hadn't fought so hard I would not have been given the promotion. You see, men were always appointed first and I just said **NO!** I do more than that man! I deserve it! but they appointed him even though I felt that I did sooo much more than him for the school ... So they accepted my argument because they knew I was telling the truth but in those days they always appointed the men first because us women were inferior to the men.... and women under the old regime were not supposed to be career women, they didn't get permanent appointments, they kept us there... [Demonstrates by pushing her thumb hard against the tabletop.]*

Karen is not currently interested in a deputy position and has not applied for the three vacant deputy posts that were available at School A in the last fifteen years, showing that she is unwilling to move out of her role as teacher in order to take on greater managerial and executive functions. However in a brave moment she did once apply for a deputy position at an all-girls school but an internal appointment was made at that school. Perhaps this school's rejection reinforced her perception that leadership '*is not for the likes of her*' and she subsequently chose to remain in her safe, known position – choosing not to apply for the deputy positions available at School A.

Leadership disposition: view of principal's/deputy's role

Candice and Karen view the principal's role as that of manager, removed from teaching. For them "**he**" has a far greater burden of responsibility than the

deputy, especially regarding the school's finances, marketing and the appointment of new staff. Candice states:

*I think the principal is more the manager – **he** is the face of the school... I think it's very different from where it was in the past ... I don't see a principal nowadays in a classroom. I see **him** more ... managing **his** school, managing **his** teachers...*

The role of the deputy in both their opinions is executive and directive: to support the principal and staff, Candice adding that: "**he** needs to see to discipline, to the administration of the school and the curriculum..." and Karen stating: "A deputy is basically the buffer between the staff and the principal. **He** is their spokesperson." The deputy accordingly fulfils a supportive and executive role and sees to the tasks that hold lesser power within the school. Since teaching holds most value for Karen and Candice, executive deputy or managerial principal functions are unattractive to them.

Leadership disposition: gendered assignment of leadership roles

In contrast to Janine's non-gendered assignment of leadership roles, Karen and Candice both associate the dominant decision-making position of principal and to some extent that of deputy as masculine. This is evident at a linguistic level where both use only masculine pronouns when referring to a generic principal position, as indicated in the bolded pronouns used in the quotes above. This contrasts with Janine's comments regarding the principal at her school. Karen believes the staff associate a man with authority, saying:

I think the staff ... and I include myself ... as a member of the staff find it is much more acceptable that a man is supposed to be the authority figure, the head, the principal.

Authority and the decision-making function of leadership are for this group vested in men and as women they accept and maintain their subordination, even perpetuating this through misrecognition of their dominated positions.

Engagement with field: organisational constraints and discriminatory attitudes

The Apartheid Government and Department of Education gender discriminatory policies pre-1996/1997 created many organisational constraints hindering the career progression of women in education and conditioning them to remain in subordinated positions. When Karen started teaching, unequal remuneration scales paid male teachers more for the same work, because as she explains *“they are supposed to be the breadwinners and not us women because the women are inferior to the men!”* In 1973 Karen was furthermore forced to resign a permanent teaching post as married women were not allowed to hold permanent positions after five years’ teaching. She held a temporary position for seven years before this policy was rescinded.

When Candice entered the labour market in 1996 the education system was under tremendous strain post the 1994 elections. After qualifying Candice was unable to find a position as a result of the Department’s policy to freeze all permanent appointments. In later years she was surprised when appointed as HOD as it was generally assumed that such promotion positions would go to older, more experienced teachers. After her appointment she recalled many instances where her inexperience and youth were held against her, exacerbated by the staff’s masculine gendering of authority and leadership at the school. She recalled this time as follows:

.. it was very difficult getting other people to change their mindsets ... because then you were starting to look at things like ‘What were your Literacy results?’ and ‘What were your Maths results’ and you know, ‘why is it so poor?’ And then you know what you wanted to do or you know where you wanted to be and I don’t think I had the skills to draw people or to call people to the next step. I think basically that came with experience...

The discrimination experienced by both women as described above has profoundly influenced their perception associating authority and power with men.

Engagement with field: the value of women's capital

In their career paths, both Karen and Candice have confronted tremendous changes to the field in which they operate. Both recognise that equity legislation has eased women's access to leadership positions by adding value to their capital, with Candice stating that she holds her HOD position as a direct result of this, saying: "*I wouldn't have been in this post if it wasn't for what the government policies were saying...*" However, the structural constraints experienced by both have served to devalue the perception they hold of their capital and thus their access to the field.

In conclusion, Karen and Candice's habitus regulates their perceptions of the gendered role allocation of men and women: men are associated with authority, decision-making and leadership, whereas women are seen as supportive and subordinate. The strong dominant position held by their fathers is reflected in their embodied perceptions that men hold positions of authority and women are subordinated. This is expressed through their actions, language and behaviour. Their linguistic use of the masculine pronouns for the principal and deputy positions is an example of this acting below the level of consciousness and discourse. In their early careers they furthermore faced structural constraints as a condition of the field, influenced by the conditions as determined by the field of power. This served to further strengthen both their perceptions of the gendered nature of authority residing with males and to embody in them the *expectation* that it is natural for women to teach, care and nurture and for men to lead and dominate. Candice and Karen therefore lead from a subordinated position weighting their teaching function as most important. There is a strong correlation between their unwillingness to consider the possibility of taking up a position of greater power within the school and their domination to perceive that such positions are *not for them*.

Ambivalent group

The members of the Ambivalent Group, Fransie, Alice, Bernice and Daisy, are simultaneously convinced of their capability to become principals and their

unwillingness to “*pay the price*” (Bernice and Daisy) that they perceive this position demands. These conflicting thoughts place the respondents in this group towards the centre of the continuum leaning towards either of the polarities depending on their leadership aspiration and view of the principalship. Their negotiated entry to the field and leadership was problematic and they identify hegemonic practices that serve to subordinate women and maintain hegemonic male dominance. Their experiences differ regarding the visibility of the dominant-subordinate relationship dynamic and of the gendered assignment of particular roles, tasks and duties.

Introducing Fransie, Alice, Bernice and Daisy

Fransie is the Deputy at School C where she has been a teacher for the past 31 years. Raised on a wheat and sheep farm, she speaks of her mother’s caring nature, delivering farm produce to the needy, and how as district nurse, the sick and injured were brought to her for treatment. Her father was a very active and diverse farmer but passed away when she was fourteen, and in the following year her mother had a brain tumour removed leaving her with no short term memory. Fransie loves teaching in the Foundation Phase and steadfastly remained a class teacher for 4 years after her appointment to deputy, eventually giving up this position at the end of 2010. As a compromise, she now extracts children during the school day for a support and extension program. As deputy, she fulfils a pastoral-caring role to the staff, being “*an ear to them*” explaining: “*that is what I want to mean to the staff... that they have the liberty to return to my office because it’s a safe haven for them.*” She is not willing to apply for a principal position as she says: “*... at the end of the day you do neglect your people...*” and adds “*I won’t apply for a principal position as I definitely don’t want to stop teaching.*”

Alice recalls being a shy, quiet teacher who wanted nothing more than to teach her Grade 1 or 2 classes when she started her career 32 years ago. However her principal at the time encouraged her to apply for the HOD position at the school, despite her many excuses. She was appointed as Foundation Phase HOD 25 years ago and has since worked with three male principals and thrice

shared the acting principal duties with the male deputy. She has not applied for the three deputy positions that have been available in the last fifteen years and was not sure whether she would apply for the principal position that was available at the time of the interview despite the Governing Body's faith in her abilities to "*run the school*".

Alice remembered her parents as loving and caring, saying "*their door always stood open at any time to anyone*" saying that they were extremely hard working and sacrificed a great deal to serve their immediate family and community's needs. Her father studied part time for an LLB and a few years after graduating resigned to study for a Bachelor of Theology at Stellenbosch University. Her mother "*was never a housewife*" but worked as a secretary, supporting the family while her husband studied and later "*enjoyed her role as parish wife*" when her father was appointed as preacher.

Bernice is the Senior Phase academic deputy at School B. Raised by a hard-working shoe-factory worker father and a home-maker mother, her father taught them that a woman can do any job as well as a man, a message she says that continues to motivate her. In their childhood home, her mother was responsible for raising the children and her father only allowed her to take a job as a floor manager at the OK Bazaars once they were in high school. As a child, her mother repeatedly "*preached*" to her about her tom-boyish behaviour and implored her to play inside and behave more like a girl, a message she recalls only heeding in high school when "*wanting a certain boy to notice*" her. She has been at School B since 1994, fulfilling the HOD position for 8 years before being appointed deputy. Bernice is unwilling to apply for a principal position as she does not want to lose the work/life balance she has achieved, and feels that the added time that this position demands is not a price she is willing to pay.

Daisy loves teaching and admits that if she weren't married she would happily "*eat out of a can and carry on working*" - and that she would have been "*a headmistress a long time ago.*" She chose to place her domestic duties above her career, being the only respondent to have taken a career-break to raise her boys, and says that she makes all her decisions based on the maintenance of

the work/life balance she has achieved. Her husband is a life-coach and they enjoy spending time together especially going on overseas trips. She has been in teaching for 25 years and at School B for eighteen, of which seven have been as HOD for the Senior Phase. She describes herself as “*a real go-getter*” and being extremely outspoken, believing she was appointed as HOD because of this: the principal wanted to appoint someone else, assuming that Daisy would retire, but she fought for the promotion saying she was not willing to let things “*just happen*” to her. Daisy is willing to consider a deputy position, especially as head of academic and curriculum development but says since she does not speak Afrikaans, she doubts that this aspiration would be achieved (before she retires as she turns sixty in 2012).

Habitus: conditioned socialised perceptions and beliefs

There are strong parallels and differences between the socialised perceptions and beliefs of this group’s respondents.

Raised in intact families they saw their fathers as head of the family and their mothers as fulfilling supportive roles. Different to the other respondents this group’s parents all had Grade 12 certificates, many with tertiary qualifications - Alice and Daisy’s mothers held secretarial diplomas and their fathers’ degrees; Fransie’s mother was a qualified nurse. Thus they were conditioned from a young age to value the cultural capital associated with a tertiary education regardless of gender. A further socialised perception that all the respondents commented on was their parents’ work ethic and the way in which their parents worked very hard to provide for the family. Bernice’s father often remained at the factory when work demands were high, and eventually became the manager; Fransie’s father expanded the farm and diversified into a wide range of activities; while Alice’s father studied through many nights towards his degrees and Daisy remembers her father “*always working on site*”. This aligns with the respondents’ comments regarding their own work ethic and the many hours they spend doing their school work.

Except for Fransie, who could not share an adult relationship with her parents, all four respondents furthermore had strong, positive relationships with their parents and speak with tremendous affection of **both**. This affection is reflected in Alice's comments: "*they were incredibly loving and caring people, a very close-knit family... they were two tremendously caring parents!*" In all their narratives their mothers' caring and community involvement was highly visible: Fransie and Bernice recall their mothers' example of always giving to the less fortunate and Alice stated: "*...we were raised that your door is always open for everyone, everyone's doors stood open for you!*" Daisy remembered how her mother's friends changed her name to Grace as "*... people absolutely loved her and adored her so they called her Grace and she certainly was a Grace!*"

All the mothers in this group found employment outside the home. Daisy and Bernice's mothers stayed at home while they were in Primary School but returned to mornings-only jobs thereafter. Alice's mother was the only career-orientated mother in this group and supported the family as secretary and later became a parish wife. Fransie's mother was the district nurse in between her community work. Three of the four respondents were career-orientated and only took short periods off for maternity leave, Daisy being the only exception, suggesting that their strong work ethic was modelled on their parents' hard work and their mothers' career-orientations.

Habitus: articulation of power and authority with gendered assignment of roles and duties

Striking parallels are visible between respondents' conditioned and embodied perception of gendered role allocation and the nature of power and authority.

The respondents are all from middle-class homes where both partners work to support the family's income, similar to the examples set by their mothers in this regard. They also followed the socially ascribed path of marrying and having their children at a relatively young age, all of whom have since left home having qualified from various tertiary institutions, perpetuating this social practice.

The gendered role allocation within the respondents' childhood homes reflects equivalent patterns to the gendered assignment of tasks and duties in their current homes. Their fathers worked outside the home as do their husbands, whereas their mothers were career-orientated and focused strongly on community care, reflected in their pastoral care and supportive leadership dispositions.

The gendered allocation of domestic chores in the homes of these four respondents differ with Fransie and Daisy doing the typical 'women's work' while Bernice and Alice share domestic tasks with their husbands when time allows for this. However they all acknowledge their husbands as head of the home. In Alice's relationship she is an HOD and acting deputy while her husband is a Post Level 1 master teacher. They employ a live-in domestic worker and share the remaining chores, such as gardening and grocery shopping. She acknowledges him as head of the home, first discussing the possibility of her application for the principalship with him before making her decision. Bernice's husband commutes more than an hour to and from work each day and only gets home very late at night. He assists with domestic chores over weekends and during holidays, generally leaving Bernice to attend to the home and garden during the week. About 20 years previously, when Bernice and her husband were applying for promotion posts, she refused to apply against him and made him apply and get appointed first; both wanted promotion and he was appointed to HOD, but she eventually accepted a Post Level 1. She was recently appointed as deputy while he has been a principal for a number of years. Fransie's husband bought a dishwasher and pays for the domestic worker, saying it is his contribution which exempts him from other domestic chores, however he takes care of all the home maintenance, cars and gardening.

Respondents' husbands are positioned as head of the home yet their dominance is not explicit or strictly enacted; their support and shared role allocation makes this less visible. Their position, it would seem is based on the arbitrary socially accepted perception that the male is the head of the home and should hold the power and authority even though the partners seem to make joint decisions regarding the family's future.

Daisy's home is a glaring exception. Responsible for the domestic duties she admits that "*there is definitely role play.*" At times she asks him for help and recalls:

I often say to him I'm not going to do that because that's a male thing to do and he just says to me: Whoever's capable can do it. I try and get away with it but I don't!

His words make him sound gender equal yet his actions speak clearly of the opposite. Daisy defends his inaction and states that he is not chauvinistic. Bourdieu refers to this paradox as a result of the gentle nature of symbolic violence: "*exerted for the most part through the purely symbolic channels of communication and cognition (more precisely misrecognition), recognition or even feeling*" (Bourdieu, 2001[1998]). The dominance exerted by Daisy's husband is reinforced by the gender role allocation and the perception that the wife takes care of the home and the husband works to support the family. It also serves to maintain the perception that the authority and power resides in the man, as she states that he takes care of all their financial decisions and their future – "*everything*" – and thus makes the important family decisions.

Leadership disposition: view of leadership

The respondents value the supportive, carer function of meso-level leadership. Fransie sees herself as pastoral-carer to the staff, an ear to listen to their troubles and concerns. She respects the hierarchy of power within the school as does Alice who states: "*I am a professional person, so I don't go outside my jurisdiction... I always go to my ... principal to ask how something should be done.*" Her leadership disposition in particular values sacrifice and service to *her school*, validating and substantiating the hard work and long hours she spends doing the majority of the male deputy's work in addition to her HOD duties. Bernice and Daisy view their leadership positions as legitimating their authority to manage staff and bring about change. They feel comfortable with conflict and state that a leader must be thick skinned, commenting on the way that staff tend to avoid them once they had given them negative feedback or criticism. Daisy

values open communication and assertiveness in leadership and especially in achieving one's goals, saying of women in general: "*we don't fight enough for what we really want*" while Bernice as academic deputy encourages reflection and renewal and sees her role as implementing innovative educational methods and practices.

These respondents are all of the opinion that they could successfully fulfil the responsibilities and expectation associated with the role of principal, but choose not to apply. Bernice's statement echoes the sentiments of the other respondents: "*I think I have the ability to do it but because of the choices I have made I don't want this position.*" These choices concern their view of leadership and the value they add to their specific leadership function and is characterised by role conflict regarding their career choices as opposed to time spent with family and competing domestic responsibilities.

They all view the principalship as a managerial, decision-making function removed from teaching: Bernice explained how in her opinion the principal's role has been redefined in recent years, from traditional *headmaster* to *principal*, saying: "*I see principals nowadays completely as managers and not the old fashioned headmasters that they used to be...*" and Daisy states that the principal's role has "*become more admin... it's almost like running a business.*" They perceive the principalship as tremendously time-consuming, placing stress on relationships with spouses and families. Daisy expresses this aptly:

Being a principal... it is such an arduous job. It swallows your soul. You know you've got parents complaining, parents wanting this, money, government not fulfilling their promises, running a business... It's very rewarding for our principal, I'm sure, 'cause he's achieved remarkable things. But at a cost... It's not a price I'm willing to pay.

In Fransie's opinion, she already spends most of her time doing school work, and is unwilling to sacrifice more, stating: "*I spend so many hours doing schoolwork that I honestly cannot see how I can spend any more because you do neglect your family and your home...*" These respondents particularly

commented on their workload and lack of time, reflecting Fransie's sentiments. Daisy states: "*There are days when I feel you know, I'm soooo loaded...*" and Alice identifies the least enjoyable aspect of her job being "*overloading in the sense that I don't have time to do anything properly... somewhere something is always left undone.*" Bernice agrees and states "*I wish I had more time ... there are so many things I would still love to do if only I had the time – these just have to happen after hours now!*" Work overload and guilt for not spending time with family places tremendous strain on working women (Court, 2004), exacerbated by role conflict (Coleman, 2001). Recognising this, these women have chosen not to apply for the principalship to avoid the perceived demands on family, personality and time this position exacts.

Leadership disposition: aspiration to leadership

Bernice and Daisy reported an early aspiration towards school leadership, saying that they always knew they would become school leaders, displaying agency towards realizing their goals against the weight of customary school practice. In contrast Fransie and Alice recall their lack of aspiration and confidence in their leadership abilities. They only applied for promotion to HOD once approached by their male principals to do so and would not have aspired without male encouragement. This was repeated later in Fransie's career: she successfully filled the acting deputy position but did not apply for it, only applying years later for a Governing Body deputyship once prompted by the principal. This is poignantly evident in Alice's career choices as well: in the past fifteen years three principal and three deputy positions have been available at School A, yet Alice has not applied for any of these. Influenced by masculine gender domination, both Fransie and Alice have internalised gender differentiation to accept their ascribed gender roles, leaving the macro-level leadership roles to men. The principle of hysteresis might also explain their choices. The inertia of both their habitus' to grasp opportunities prevented them from applying despite conditions in the field changing to introduce greater gender equity and the appointment of women into senior management. Alice's very emotional rendering of the gender based injustice she faces at School A might therefore be a reflection of the deep pain that hysteresis evokes yet as

she feels unable to change. A further explanation might be found in Eagly *et al's* (2003) findings that women who have previously experienced discrimination would not apply for exposed positions where they perceive further discrimination would be enacted.

Fransie and Bernice share a common commitment to remain in their current positions until they retire. Daisy mentioned that she would consider a deputy position overseeing academics and curriculum development, but thought this highly unlikely due to her age and lack of Afrikaans. Alice, at the time of the interview, was considering her application for the vacant principal position at their school but said she would first weigh up the "*pros and cons*" as there were many factors to consider, such as: the hostile politically-volatile parent body, the gendered perception among the staff and parents that the principal should be male, and the perceived continued gender based discrimination that she would experience once appointed. (She eventually decided not to apply.)

Leadership disposition: view of principal/deputy's role

The principalship for these respondents is a managerial decision-making function accompanied by tremendous responsibility. The principal is responsible for the actions of everyone and has to "*know exactly what is going on in the school at all times, know about every little aspect of the school*" (Alice) a sentiment echoed by Bernice. Fransie believes a principal has the last say as the "*the buck stops*" with him. They insist that a principal must be able to delegate and hand over specific tasks without "*constantly interfering*" yet expecting teachers to "*keep him informed*" of progress or possible problems (Fransie and Bernice).

All four perceive the deputy's role to be executive and supportive with fewer responsibilities than the principal. Fransie explains that she has no responsibilities "*if the school's account runs in the red*" since even though she sits on the finance committee and has to evaluate and grant the budget requests, the principal makes the final decisions. The deputy has to "*lighten the load of the principal*" (Alice) and "*strengthen the principal's hands in the*

execution of his tasks...” (Fransie). Alice and Bernice refer to the channels of communication that exist within the school with the deputy acting as “...*the link between the teachers, the parents, the children and up to the principal...*” (Bernice) ...a point echoed by Fransie. The deputy further buffers the principal, addressing parents’ complaints and acting like a lightning arrestor to avert lightning strikes “*by constantly keep(ing) their ear to the ground to pick up any grumble in the jungle and inform the principal before it explodes...*” (Bernice). Daisy and Alice list the deputy’s portfolios of responsibility: discipline, contact with parents, the workers and grounds, school security, timetabling and curriculum development.

The differentiation that these respondents draw between the roles of the principal and deputy reveal their perception of the hierarchical division of power: the principal is positioned at the pinnacle of the hierarchy while the deputy is subordinated to the principal. The perceived burden of responsibility assigned to the principal position empowers the principal to control all activities within the school since the perception exists that “*the last buck stops with him*” and that “*he has the last say*” (Fransie). The respondents in this group are subsequently not willing to take on this dominant position of power associated with the role of principal and are only willing to hold the subordinate position as leader of other subordinates in support of the principal.

Leadership disposition: gendered assignment of leadership roles

Within their schools, these respondents’ gender role perceptions associate the dominant position of the principal and in some cases the senior deputy with males although not as strongly as do the respondents from the antipathy group. As with Janine, they refer to the principal at their school using pronouns “*he*”/“*him*” and not to a generic position as did Candice and Karen. In contrast to the antipathy group though they draw a distinction between their own views and those of the school or Governing Body, stating that it is the school or Governing Body that views this position as masculine. Fransie explains: “*I don’t think schools easily see a principal as a woman especially not of a very big school...*”

[because] *it is human nature to associate a man from a male point of view with an authority figure*", a point supported by Alice and Daisy. Bernice differentiates between two types of schools, stating that the more traditional schools "*are more conservative in their thinking and would rather appoint a man*" and that a more open minded institution would rather "*go for a woman who can do the job just as well.*"

Engagement with field: Structural/organisational constraints

Various organisational constraints in the form of overt discriminatory practices and subtle gate-keeping by senior male managers were reported by all four respondents.

Selection and appointment procedures were especially differentiating. Daisy recalled the accepted practice when she started teaching to appoint men into promotion posts saying: "*males got the HOD posts cause that's what kept them or that's what lured them. And shame, you know they're the breadwinners ... so they must earn more.*" They all commented on the commonly held perception in schools today that there is a need for male role-models within the school and stated that this practice might be on the increase again. The manner in which adverts are written, they report, further acts as preliminary filters inferring through carefully chosen phrases whether a male or female would be better suited. Fransie explains that adverts indicating "*Facilities and Non-Teaching Staff*" are aimed at excluding female candidates as this portfolio is associated with male managers – as she personally experienced when the male foreman refused to "*work under a woman*". Bernice recalled the explicit emphasis an interview panel from another school placed on the rugby coaching ability of the HOD position disregarding her many strengths and qualities. A further explicit example of this patriarchal mode of control at work occurred when Bernice and Janine, were directly told not to apply for the deputy position available at the school.

Decision-making within the senior management team further serves to exclude and marginalise woman leaders, especially those in token positions. Fransie

experiences this often when the male principal and deputy make decisions excluding her, and later comment “*now why didn’t we ask Fransie first?*” in an effort to disguise this practice and perpetuate their dominance. She was excluded from the Foundation Phase building project after numerous requests to the principal to be allowed a voice on this committee since it directly influenced the teachers in her team. She eventually approached the architect and project manager directly and became an invaluable resource to them, and managed to get the classes fitted according to the Foundation Phase staff’s requirements.

Fransie and Daisy also related their on-going battle against male gate-keeping through the covert actions of the male leaders aimed at benefiting the younger male teachers. They give as example the way that it is assumed that male staff members would need to earn extra cash whenever opportunities arise disregarding the young female staff members who should receive the same opportunities. Daisy speaks out against the notion that “*we must keep these males so we must groom them*” referring to the practice among male managers to “*pad the CV of young males*” saying “*Well what about 80% of the females who are just as stunning?*”, a point that Bernice concurs with.

The fathers within a school also perpetuate male dominance as experienced by Fransie and Bernice who refer to the manner in which aggressive fathers disregard them and are only willing to discuss a specific matter with the male principal who would be able to “*handle it.*” Fransie declares:

A difficult father approaches a male principal very differently ... I’m not saying the woman can’t handle this but I’m saying that all these professional daddies out there need to first gain respect for a woman ... before they’ll trust her to handle a difficult situation... It’s just as if a man commands authority much easier from a male point of view – it’s a human perception...

Alice experiences a much stronger form of male gate-keeping: the principalship at her school is vacant and the male deputy was appointed as acting principal while the school advertises for a new principal. However in the last few years

more than 75% of his deputy duties had been added to her duties as he was not able to manage these effectively. She says of this:

I've been given all this administrative responsibilities and I still have to teach a full day, so you don't really have enough time in a day to say, mark your books or to do your planning, or the admin for that matter. There is always something that is left undone. I find that very very unsatisfactory. That's not very nice. You're always rushing – this has to be finished so you sit working till all hours to finish it, but then something that you should also have paid attention to must wait for later...

Four years previously when the previous principal had left the school unexpectedly Alice was tasked with “*doing the admin and running the school*” while this male deputy was given the title of acting principal despite his incompetence. When the present acting principal was appointed the Governing Body, fully aware of his incompetence, appointed him nonetheless knowing that Alice would have to do much of his duties. They stated that the community would be shocked if an HOD was appointed above a deputy as justification. In this way the male Governing Body members, guilty of double standards and gender based discrimination, ensured that the power resides with the male deputy while Alice’s subordination is maintained.

These instances illustrate the on-going gate-keeping function of male leaders who privilege male teachers towards leadership and positions of power within the school hierarchy, despite political support for gender equity. Through a gendered division of power specific portfolios are not given to women but remain in the domain of the male leaders. Such a portfolio concerns the grounds and non-teaching staff/workers, a portfolio generally associated with a male Deputy. Bernice lists the position as First Team Rugby coach as another male position of power and prestige closely guarded by the male leadership of the school.

Engagement with field: gender differentiating attitudes and discrimination

The ambivalent group related incidents of gender based discrimination perpetuated by male teachers, questioning their authority through patronising comments and derogatory statements.

Bernice related incidences where male teachers made derogatory statements directed at her personally in front of large groups of people. In one incident a young male teacher taking over one of her sport portfolios told a group of parents “*you can stop worrying because now that a man is taking over we’ll turn this whole thing around!*” On another occasion when the principal asked the staff to take on more responsibilities within the school, a disgruntled male teacher stood up in a full staff meeting, looked directly at her and said:

don’t come and complain to us about your workload – you asked for this job! Don’t expect us to do more work because you have a lot of work to do!... She asked for this post so she can work for her money – she gets more money than me anyway!

Bernice related the berating words and humiliation she felt having been spoken to in such a patronising manner in front of large groups of people but stated that she “*got over it and moved on*”.

Alice reported an incident where a male teacher purposefully spread rumours about her which negatively affected her relationship with the male deputy at the time. When Daisy started teaching in South Africa she recalls male teachers reprimanding her for speaking up in a staff meeting, telling her to stop attacking the principal, saying “*in those years it wasn’t really acceptable for a woman to stand up and voice her opinion.*”

These incidents reflect the manner in which male staff challenge the authority of woman leaders, informed by gender stereotypical perceptions associating leadership as a masculine domain. Yet, corresponding to similar research

findings (Coleman 2005; Corby & Stanworth 2009), these women tolerate sexist and unfair practices, brushing aside and downplaying incidents of discrimination.

Engagement with field: the value of women's capital

The capital brought to leadership positions by women is often devalued to subordinate women to male dominance. In the early 2000s Fransie and Alice proved their capability as acting deputies but much younger less experienced male candidates were appointed, legitimising the social capital of the male candidates and devaluing theirs. Bernice was explicitly told not to apply for the previous deputy position as the male principal wanted a strong male in this position. Under the influence of the Department of Education's gender equity policies Fransie and Bernice's principals and by implication the Governing Bodies approached both candidates to apply for the Governing Body deputy positions seemingly legitimising their leadership capital, as Fransie states: "*How do you say no thank to something that is actually a complement?*" However, the capital they hold is not valued the same as that of the male deputies, with the male deputy and principal making decisions without consulting them and as Fransie states, purposefully excluding them from committees where their input would have been highly valuable. These incidents speak to the way in which male leaders not only practice gate-keeping by privileging other males for entry but also delegitimise the capital brought by these women leaders, placing them in positions of some power but retaining the most prestigious and powerful positions in the field for males.

In conclusion, the ambivalent group displays pertinent similarities even though they differ on many fronts. Their habitus perceives their gendered role as being supportive to their husbands', correlating to that of their parents, and even though they might share domestic chores with their husbands they consider them to be the head of the home. They are career-orientated but prioritise their relationships with family despite the long work hours that they keep, and are not willing to take on the position of principal as they assume that this would place greater demands on their time and personal relationships. Their leadership disposition values a supportive and pastoral-caring function and contrasts to the

principalship which they perceive to hold an asymmetrical dominant position within the school – a positions they are unwilling to occupy. They identify the gender stereotypical view held by many schools and Governing Bodies as associating the principal's position with male candidates although not personally ascribing to this view as the members of the Antipathy Group did. Their entry into the field was problematic and they faced different forms of gender discrimination and male gate-keeping practices that served to entrench in them the belief that *principalship is not for them*.

This chapter has reported on the data analysis of this study. The concepts of habitus, leadership disposition and field provided the “*thinking tools*” that guided the data analysis. In the last chapter I draw final conclusions and implications for the future.

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Chapter 5: Discussion and implications

Overview of the study

The focal question this study has investigated concerned the career choices of women in teaching, asking *how* they make their decisions to aspire towards the principal position or refrain from this. The central argument was that women choices are constrained within contextual conditions and underpinned by gender differentiating assumptions that they internalise through the socialisation process and embody in their leadership disposition. The interplay between women's habitus', their leadership disposition and the manner in which they engage with the field of schooling therefore shape the choices they make and influence their belief whether the principalship 'is for them' or not.

The study was structured to articulate the focal question, background and rationale and a lay-out of the structure of the study as introduction in Chapter 1. The following chapter reviewed literature pertinent to the study of gender within school leadership and explored Bourdieu's concepts of habitus and field in designing a conceptual frame for the study. The review of literature and the conceptual framework accounted for the move away from traditional foci of structure and agency as underpinned by gender differentiation, to investigate the interplay between such dichotomies, as it serves to shape and structure the choices women make. Chapter 3 charted the course that the research design followed, explaining methodological choices made to conduct qualitative face-to-face interviews, how such interviews took place and the data management decisions taken. Data analysis occurred as a constant comparative process that took place in three stages of refinement, categorising respondents into three groups and placing them on a continuum based on their leadership disposition. This section culminated in the design of an analytic frame, a precursor to following chapter reporting on the analysis. Chapter 3 concluded with a discussion of research ethics that were considered as well as considerations of descriptive, interpretive and theoretical validity.

The data analysis process was reported in Chapter 4. The grouping of respondents and their placement along the continuum based on their leadership disposition was defended. A constant group comparison utilising the analytic frame's focus on habitus, leadership disposition and respondents' engagement with the field, revealed that the antipathy group were unwilling to aspire to macro-level leadership as they value the pupil-centred teaching function of micro- and meso-level leadership, whereas the affirmative group valued the macro-level decision-making and managerial function of leadership and was willing to apply; the ambivalent group valued the pastoral care and support functions of meso-level leadership and were unwilling to apply for the principalship, also citing the maintenance of their work/life balance and the negative view they hold of the principalship as reasons. The chapter concluded with a discussion of findings, indicating that the interplay between habitus, leadership disposition and field strongly influences the career choices of women with leadership disposition playing a pivotal role in shaping the career decisions of the respondents.

The last chapter provides an overview of the study and a discussion of the findings from the data analysis as well as implications for future research. The study concludes with a reference list and appendix containing the questions from the interview schedule.

Discussion: reflections on the findings of the study

The data derived from interviews with the seven participants in this study provided insight into the processes and influences shaping their career decisions. Respondents were grouped into three groups, the affirmative, ambivalent and antipathy groups, and positioned along a continuum according to their leadership disposition and specifically the weighting they place on different leadership functions: teaching at micro-level, pastoral care and support at meso-level and managing and decision-making at macro-level. The analysis examined respondents' leadership disposition, their gendering and view of leadership functions and their willingness to apply for the principal position, as informed by

the interplay of their habitus and the social practices, perceptions and beliefs enacted in the field.

Habitus

Respondents' internalised perceptions and assumptions were strongly influenced by the childhood socialisation and the gender differentiating conditioning they experienced throughout their careers. Gender differentiation is internalised and evident in respondents' embodied gender roles at home and school, and specifically their perception and articulation of gender and power - how they associate leadership positions and authority with a particular gender.

Childhood socialisation in the antipathy group normalised masculine domination, with both (very strict) fathers reportedly dominating the household into subordinated positions. The ambivalent group reported a more equitable relationship between their parents, yet still viewed their fathers as head-of-the-home and mothers as supportive carers who balanced the demands of a career with their domestic responsibilities. The affirmative group is characterised by a reversal of traditional gender roles whereby the mother fulfilled the dominant position within the home, dominating the cultural capital and means towards gaining economic capital. (Thus Janine was socialised to embody strong agentic qualities as a natural and normal way of being, viewing herself as capable and assertive, and shirking gender differentiating constraints.)

All the respondents greatly value the work/life balance they achieved, correlating with findings from other researchers (Moorosi, 2007; Coleman, 2003; Jackson, 2001; Wirth, 2001). They embody a very strong work ethic and reportedly spend long hours completing school-related activities employing domestic workers/gardeners and sharing domestic chores with their husbands (bar Daisy and Fransie) to facilitate this. The data however revealed that domestic role allocation was not an accurate reflection of the internalisation of gender differentiation and thus predictor of dominance: most respondents' husbands occupy dominant positions in their homes, being the decision-makers (in varying

degrees) yet share many domestic chores, freeing their wives to focus on career and teaching-related activities.

The manner in which respondents articulated gender and power was of far greater value to indicate their internalisation of gender differentiating perceptions and assumptions. The affirmative group viewed women as strong and capable of leadership, Janine having a very particular childhood experience of a strong woman and gentle men. In contrast, the antipathy group were socialised through very strict, dominant fathers and subordinated mothers, to internalise this gender differentiation and associate women's roles with support, nurturance and care, guided by the decisions of male superiors. The ambivalent group internalised differentiating assumptions regarding the gendering of power and authority as evident in their reverence of male guidance when making decisions: Fransie and Alice only applied for promotion once prompted by a male principal; Alice would first speak to her husband about a possible application for principalship before making a decision; and Daisy and Bernice reported never making important decisions without consulting their husbands.

The particular manner in which respondents articulate gender with power and the gendered socialisation of their habitus are valuable indicators of their internalised gender differentiating assumptions and unconscious belief systems, shapes their subsequent career choices and view of leadership roles.

Leadership disposition

The participants' view and experience of leadership functions confirm and strengthen their positioning along the continuum. Similar to Smith's (2011) and Fitzgerald's (2009) findings, they differentiated distinctly between the macro-level managerial leadership of the principal, the meso-level of the deputy and HOD positions and the micro-level teaching role of educators. To differing degrees, they perceive the principalship as a narrow technical function with limited interaction with pupils, exacting tremendous demands on the principal's time and family commitments. The antipathy and the ambivalent groups cite this as a major reason for rejecting this position. Contrasting to their negative

perception of the principalship, the respondents view the deputy position very positively. They see it as a supportive and executive function, a good compromise between a pupil-centred philosophy and leadership aspirations and associate this position with pastoral care, administrative and academic management and a relationship-orientation that encourages and supports staff and pupils. Their conditioned perception of the deputy's subordinated position and the principal's dominant position reinforces the hierarchy of power distribution within the field legitimizing the principal's power and subordination of staff. The ambivalent and antipathy groups reject the principalship based on their negative perception of this position as well as the inherent domination that they assume this position holds. Their association of this position with masculine qualities and traits further reinforces their rejection thereof. Janine is the only participant who holds a positive view of the principalship and who does not gender type-cast the position as masculine, hence accepting this position as a possibility in her future.

Thus their leadership disposition and gendered view of the principalship, and the pastoral caring role associated with the deputyship influenced the career choices of the women participating in this study. In most cases the principalship was associated with a male candidate and viewed negatively while the deputy principalship was viewed as a good compromise between a desire to lead and manage, and to remain pupil-centred. Their aspirations towards particular leadership positions are further influenced by the nature of and their engagement with the field of schooling as this defines the situation for its occupants (Özbilgin & Tatli, 2005).

Engagement with field

The participant's particular engagement with the field of schooling, in particular the structural and organisation constraints and gender based discrimination they experienced, provides a further explanation of their career decisions.

Structural and organisational constraints and gender based discrimination function as gate-keepers in retaining leadership positions for males and

devaluing and/or not legitimizing the leadership of women. The respondents in this study all report structural and organisational barriers to their career advancement, specifically noting the influence of gender differentiation in the gate-keeping practices of selection and appointment procedures and the subsequent advancement of young male teachers to the detriment of female teachers. The members of the antipathy and ambivalent groups in particular recalled various structural barriers hindering their upward mobility and '*putting them off*' from applying for promotion posts (Moorosi, 2007). As young teachers Karen and Candice were denied permanent appointments and they internalised the assumption that associates senior leadership positions with male candidates. All the ambivalent group members reported male gate-keeping practices functioning throughout their careers, aimed at excluding them from senior leadership and important decision-making functions. It became evident that male principals and deputies played an important role in conditioning and normalising gate-keeping practices, evident in the long histories of hegemonic domination of leadership the three schools only interrupted in the last fifteen years with the appointment of women to HOD and deputy positions. The members of both these groups have internalised this differentiation to such a degree that they do not consider further promotion citing a loss of their pupil-centred classroom-based careers and their work/life balance as primary reasons.

There is a strong correlation between their unwillingness to consider the possibility of taking up a position of greater power within the school and their domination to perceive that such positions are *not for them*. Bourdieu refers to this parallel as being a result of symbolic violence in subordinating women and retaining dominant positions for men.

The many and varied acts of gender based discrimination experienced by the respondents in the antipathy and ambivalent groups further stifled their aspiration towards promotion. It inhibited their aspiration towards further promotion as they assumed further discrimination would be enacted against them in more senior positions, correlating with findings from other studies (Corby & Stanworth, 2009; Coleman, 2003)

Janine's response to structural constraints and gender based discrimination sets her apart from the other respondents. She 'played the game' in the field according to the rules, not applying for a deputy position when told not to by the principal, but a few years later became the school's first female deputy. Her agentic behaviour, leadership disposition and particularly her perceptions of gender articulating with leadership, have allowed her to disregard gender based discrimination and to make life choices that allow her to aspire to macro-level leadership, affirming her position along the continuum. (Her insistence that she would only apply for a principalship where she would possess the necessary cultural capital/subject knowledge, is perhaps more indicative of her specific leadership disposition portraying what she values in leaders than of as a response to gender differentiation that restrains her choice.)

In conclusion, it is clear that gender equity policies have had a positive effect on women's access to meso-level leadership in the three selected schools. However, although the respondents were allowed entry to meso-level leadership positions under the guise of gender equity, they were systematically placed into subordinate positions by the dominant male leadership, camouflaging the restructuring and reproduction of their domination (Bourdieu, 1998[1994]). Internalised gender differentiating assumptions and perceptions successfully subordinated the respondents in the antipathy and ambivalent groups to believe that the principalship is "*not for them*" thus maintaining male hegemony of leadership.

The interplay between habitus, leadership disposition and the conditions of the field defined respondents' career choices. Childhood socialisation shaped their habitus and conditioning throughout their careers moulded their leadership disposition. This was influenced by acts of gender based discrimination and structural constraints evident in the field which powerfully affected their aspiration and career decisions.

Based on the experiences of the three groups, strong parallels suggest that if all three these influences are negatively affected by gender differentiating assumptions and conditioning, the career choices regarding leadership

aspirations of women are equally limited and constrained towards micro- and meso-level leadership. Both the antipathy and ambivalent groups favour a pupil-centred approach and their leadership disposition therefore supports micro- and meso-level leadership. The strong gender differentiating socialisation the antipathy group experienced in their childhood homes exacerbated by negative gender differentiating conditions within the field further stifled their aspirations. Although the ambivalent group's childhood socialisation and conditioning during their early careers was not as negative they experienced gender based discrimination as a condition of the field which seems to counteract any advantage they might have gained in this respect.

Janine was exposed to similar field conditions, yet the childhood socialisation she experienced allowed her to view leadership as non-gendered and underpinned in her habitus the assumption that women and men are equally capable of senior level leadership positions. Thus despite negative conditions in the field, the positive influence of her habitus and leadership disposition had a positive influence on her response to the conditions in the field and particularly her career aspiration and choices.

It would therefore appear that two rights have the potential to negate a wrong: should two of the career-choice-influences be positive the third negative could be overcome and a positive outcome achieved. The inference is that if conditions in the field were to be very positive in support of women aspiring to macro-level leadership, it would potentially have a positive effect on the conditioning of the leadership disposition of an individual, creating a favourable environment for the subject to aspire and make positive decisions towards promotion. Alternatively, as in Janine's example, positive childhood socialisation inscribed in the habitus powerfully influences the leadership disposition to associate power and leadership with either gender, which in turn has the power to disrupt the conditioning process in adult years and overcome the negative gender differentiating conditions of the field, allowing the subject to aspire towards macro-level leadership. It is evident therefore that leadership disposition plays a pivotal role in this hypothesis since a positive non-gendered habitus or positive non-gendered field conditions potentially influences the leadership

disposition of the subject towards aspiring to macro-level leadership and overcoming the negative effects of the 'third influence'. In Candice's case, for instance, it would be interesting to measure longitudinally what influence Janine's mentoring (strengthening of her leadership disposition) coupled with greater acceptance of women at macro-level leadership within the school (positive field conditions) would have on her aspiration towards leadership enabling her to overcome the negative gender differentiation inscribed in her habitus. Equally in Alice's case, a positive mentorship might bolster her leadership disposition and strengthen the positive childhood experiences she had, to overcome the very negative gender differentiating field conditions at her school and empower her to aspire to the principalship.

In closing, this study has revealed the pivotal role played by subjects' leadership disposition, supported either by positive conditions in the field or by a positive non-gendered childhood socialisation process and habitus formation. It also indicated the potentially powerful influence of mentorship to bolster subjects' leadership disposition to overcome negative habitus or field conditions.

Implications:

Whenever the absence of women at the top of any area of public life is raised, the inevitable response is that it is only a matter of time. Like fish growing feet, women are apparently evolving into suitable candidates and will get there in the end but the process should not be forced. (Kennedy, 1996)

This study supports the claims made by gender equity researchers examining the influence of dichotomies such as structure and agency on the career decisions of women. It adds to the heterodox discourse by portraying the integral relationship between habitus, field and leadership disposition as these influence women teachers' belief that leadership *is for them* or *not for them*. The findings from this study expands on recent work by Oplatka and Tamir (2009), and Smith (2010; 2011) who found that many women make active choices not to follow traditional hierarchical career paths but choose to remain terminally in

meso-level leadership positions, by offering an explanation of how the seven respondents reached their career decisions – to remain terminally in their meso-level leadership positions or to aspire to macro-level leadership.

The absence of women at macro-level leadership, as Kennedy implies, is not likely to improve given enough time – if that were the case women, given the changing socio-economic and political contexts, should by now have reached far greater representation than is currently the case. This process can and should be actively pursued. Gender equity policy has done much to improve the access of women to leadership position. An examination of women's choices in response to such changes in the field is therefore valuable as it reveals how further positive change might be enacted: by positively influencing women's leadership dispositions. This is potentially achieved by either interrupting the gender differentiating socialisation process of girls in childhood homes to let them view leadership as gender neutral and embody in them strong agentic behaviours; or by positively influencing the conditions of the field to reduce and eliminate incidents of gender based discrimination and through policy changes dismantle structural and organisational barriers to women's advancement. In order to challenge the heterox discourse that associates leadership with men and women with subservient domestic and supportive roles the hegemonic dominance of men needs to be illuminated to make the doxic visible in order to effect change.

Research of this nature, does not aim to bring about change through might or power, but is aimed at disarming the arbitrary power of the dominators of society in order to empower the dominated to resist their domination (Bourdieu, 1988[1984]; Bourdieu 1990[1980]).

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Appendix 1

Main arguments from the conceptual framework:

1. Women's habitus can act as a hurdle to their career advancement. Early childhood experiences are most important in the formation of the habitus and occurs through embodied dispositions such as the gait, mannerisms, stance, speech and so forth, as well as through performance dispositions for example leadership dispositions, 'gender role' dispositions and power relations
2. Habitus is durable and will withstand changes in the field to conserve its primary conditioning. This is evident in lasting gender roles for instance.
3. Habitus is autonomous and therefore actions seem like second nature.
4. Habitus in relation to the material conditions in the field, structures that which an individual believes is 'for them' or 'not for them', their potential for success in a given situation; it is further shaped by the unequal distribution of capitals.
5. Field boundaries are set by the conditions for entry – gate keeping practices

Introductory questions:

- a. Who did you grow up with?
- b. If the interviewee was raised in a single parent household by a mother / female caregiver, ask: Which man played an important role in your childhood?

This will then be used as an alternative to the term 'father' in subsequent questions. Alternatively if she was raised by a single parent father, ask which female played an important role in her childhood and use this person's name alternatively to the term 'mother' in subsequent questions.

Early childhood experience:

- a. How did your father spend his days?

- b. What level of education did your father have?
- c. How did your mother spend her days?
- d. What level of education did your mother have?
- e. Do you have an early memory (or memories?) that describes your father most appropriately - perhaps one word or a list of memories?
- f. Do you have an early memory (or memories?) that capture the essence of your mother?
- g. Following from the above, do you think either of these can be used to describe you?
- h. Do you remember your mother or father telling you: girls don't do that or girls do this...? Could you recall what they were referring to?
(If not stated, ask: Who was it that told you this? Mother / Father)
- i. Do you agree with their opinions about what girls should or should not do?
- j. Do you still act in such a way?

Durability of habitus visible in lasting gender roles:

Using the initial data capturing sheet, determine the relationship status of the teacher as this will have a bearing on the following questions. Use the following guide for a "single"-status teacher:

- If the person is single and has never had a 'live-in partner' leave out question 3 b, rephrasing 3c to ask: **What do you do in unforeseen emergencies (your pet gets sick or your house is flooded by a faulty household appliance for instance).**
- If the person is a widow use the same questions but ask them according to her lived-experiences of when her partner was alive.
- Should the teacher be in a lesbian relationship, ask the same questions but reword to take this into consideration.

Questions in this section are thus:

- a. What are the most (time) consuming responsibilities in your home?

- b. In your relationship, can you roughly estimate what **percentage** time per week each of you spend managing the following domestic responsibilities?

Activity	Interviewee	Husband / Partner
Preparing Meals		
Washing dishes / cleaning after meals (stacking the dishwasher)		
Cleaning / tidying house (in general)		
Outdoor tasks (lawn and garden)		
Grocery shopping		
Washing clothes		
Paying bills		
Car maintenance		
Driving children or family members around		
General childcare (helping with homework or school projects for instance)		

- c. Who in your relationship generally steps in to manage unforeseen or unpredictable problems, like taking care of sick children or relatives, or organising the repairmen when the geyser bursts?
- d. Who is the one that remembers family events such as birthdays or anniversaries?

Autonomy of habitus:

- Why did you choose teaching as a career?
- Describe your career progression up to now.
- Did you plan your career, when you would apply for promotion and to what level you would go? (Did it work out the way you had planned?)
- Can you recall the time before you were promoted and specifically how you thought your work life would change after you were promoted?
- How did you feel when you were promoted to your current position?
- What are the most rewarding aspects of your job?
- What aspect of your job do you enjoy least?

- h. What guided the choices you made in your career progression up until now, for example what posts to apply for and which posts to accept?
- i. Do you think women are as comfortable in leadership positions as they are in the classroom?
- j. If you were offered a Principal position what factors would you take into consideration in either accepting or declining the offer?
- k. Do you think you would have made the same decision ten years ago?

Material conditions of the field structures habitus:

- a. At the time when you were promoted, were there any obstacles to your promotion? If yes, ask: What were they?
- b. Did anyone in particular encourage you to seek promotion or made a positive contribution towards you getting the promotion?
- c. Do you think you would have applied for this promotion without this person's encouragement?
- d. Do you think being a woman has given you an advantage in getting your current promotion? Why do you say so?
- e. In your current promotion position, do you face any obstacles because you are a woman? Could you give me an example or two?
- f. Do you think it makes a difference whether the candidate is a man or a woman when someone is appointed to a promotion position?
- g. How do you think the role of the Principal is different to that of the Deputy Principal?
- h. Do you think being a Principal would be a good 'fit' for you?
- i. Could you think of reasons why some women choose to remain Deputy Principals and choose not to become Principals?

Conditions for entry to field:

- a. In the staffroom, are there moments when you feel uncomfortable being women? Can you give me an example or two of such incidents?

- b. At your school, do you think the staff and members of the management team treat you the same as they would treat a man in your position? Can you provide examples?
- c. Have there been moments in your career when you were overlooked for a position of responsibility in favour of a male colleague? Can you give me an example or two of such moments?
- d. Have you experienced overt sexism in your teaching career? Can you provide some examples

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Appendix 2

	Karen	Alice	Janine	Bernice	Candice	Daisy	Fransie
	School A		School B				School C
Age	64	55	47	49	39	59	48
Race	White	White	White	White	Coloured	White	White
Religion	Christian	Christian	Christian	Christian	Christian	Christian	Christian
Sons		25 & 23				30 & 26	26
Daughters		27	21	25 & 21	10		22
Relationship	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married	Married
Qualification	DE III (& other courses)	HDE IV (JP)	HDE IV (JP)	HDE (IV) OBE courses	DE III ACE	HPT Dip ACE	DE III
Current position	HOD	HOD Acting Deputy	Deputy GB: Deputy 3 years before	HOD GB: Deputy	HOD	HOD	Deputy
Applied for principal post?	No	No	No	No	No	No	No
Years teaching	43	32	26	26	15	25	33
Years in leadership	26 (since 1985)	26 (since 1985)	HOD: 15 years Deputy: 1 year	HOD: 14 th year Deputy: 6 th year	5	GB: 3yrs WCED: 4yrs	GB: 3 WCED: 2

	Karen	Alice	Janine	Bernice	Candice	Daisy	Fransie
Class size	20	19	19	23	28	30	-
School size	750-780	700	1096	1070	1000+	1018	1170
Job husband	Retired teacher / farmer	Master teacher	Business owner (Cars)	Principal	Claims assessor	Corporate coach management skills	Electrical contractor
Age husband	68	57	48	49	40	63	53
Other	Applied for deputy once	Applied for deputy at current school	Will only apply for principal post at Prep School	Applied for two deputy posts	Didn't apply for deputy post	Didn't apply for deputy post	Only ever applied for deputy at current school