

**EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
OF FEMALE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN ILU ABA BOR ZONE**

**BY
KEBEBUSH BEYENE**



**JIMMA UNIVERSITY
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING & MANAGEMENT**

**JANUARY , 2022
JIMMA, ETHIOPIA**

**EXPLORING THE LIVED EXPERIENCES, CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES
OF FEMALE PRIMARY SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN ILU ABA BOR ZONE**

BY
KEBEBUSH BEYENE

A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING AND
MANAGEMENT, COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES,
JIMMAUNIVERSITY IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIRMENT FOR
THE DEGREE OF MASTERS OF ARTS IN EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

ADVISORS:

MAIN-ADVISOR: FIREW AMSALE (Asst. Professor)

CO- ADVISOR: TIGIST TAJEBE (MA)

**JANUARY , 2022
JIMMA, ETHIOPIA**

LETTER OF APPROVAL

Jimma University

College of Education and Behavioral Sciences

Department of Educational Planning and Management

This is to certify that the thesis prepared by Kebebush Beyene entitled, “*Exploring the lived experiences, challenges and opportunities of female’s primary school principals in Ilu Aba Bor zone*”, and submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Educational Leadership and Management fulfills the regulation of the jimma University and meets the accepted standards with respect to originality and quality.

BOARD OF Approval:

_____	_____	_____
Chairman name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Department Head Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Advisor Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
Internal Examiner Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____
External Examiner Name	Signature	Date
_____	_____	_____

Acknowledgements

Without the help and encouragement of a number of people, I would not have been able to finish this thesis. As a result, I had like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude to individuals who have helped me in various ways. First and foremost, I want to express my gratitude to the Almighty God for His direction, support, and protection throughout my educational life. Second, I express my gratitude to my Major Adviser Few Amsale (Asst. Professor) for his thoughtful assistance. His encouragement, remarks, and suggestions were important in the completion of this thesis. I would also like to thank my co-adviser Tigist Tajebe (MA) for her support and comments. The research participants who shared their personal lived experiences with female leadership deserve due appreciation. Their responses my understanding of female leadership. My husband Tilahun Gezahegn deserves special appreciation for his encouragement and support. Last but not least, I want to express my gratitude to my sisters. Demekech Beyene for taking care of the family your words of encouragement and support., My daughter Singitan Tilahun has been key in making all of this happen. As she has been there for me when I used to run out of courage and hope. Her patience while I was totally off home and far from helping her in education was remarkable. As a result, I owe her a huge sense of gratitude and gratitude without which this thesis would have been impossible. Finally, my thoughtful thanks go to instructors who have been supporting and helping me to come to success.

Table of Contents

Contents	Pages
Acknowledgements.....	i
List of Figures.....	vi
Abbreviations and Acronyms	vii
Abstract.....	viii
CHAPTER ONE.....	1
PROBLEM FORMULATION AND ITS APPROACH.....	1
1.1 Background of the study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3. Objective of the study	5
1.3.1 General objective	5
1.3.2. Specific Objectives	5
1.4. Significance of the study.....	6
1.5. Delimitation of the Study.....	6
1.6 Limitations of the study	6
1.7. Operational Definition of Key Terms	7
1.8 Organization of the Study.....	7
CHAPTER TWO	8
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE.....	8
Introduction.....	8
2. 1 Women and educational leadership	8
2.1.1 Men and women lead differently:.....	8
2.1.2 Leadership from a Feminist Perspective.....	9
2.2. Women Leadership Styles’ Impact on Educational Leadership.....	10
2.3. Barriers towards Women Leadership.....	10
2.3.1. Work and family conflict.....	11
2.3.2 Access to resources.....	11
2.3.3. Male dominated power structure.....	11
2.3.4. Gender stereotypes.....	12
2.4. Culture Impact on Women Leadership.....	12

2.5. Underrepresentation of Women.....	14
2.6 Gender and Women Leadership.....	14
2.7 Gender Stereotyping and Role Congruity Impact.....	15
2.8 Personal challenges.....	17
2.8.1. Emotional pressure.....	17
2.8.2 The lack of confidence.....	18
2.8.3 Life style conflict.....	18
2.8.4 Lack of role Models.....	19
2.9. Cultural challenges.....	19
2.9.1. Discrimination.....	19
2.9.2. Reduction of women.....	20
2.9.3. Devaluation of women.....	20
2.10. Administrative challenge.....	20
2.10.1 The lack of respect and negative attitude.....	20
2.10.2 Pressure to compete with previous managers.....	21
2.10.3 Management of change.....	21
2.11. Preparation for principal ship.....	21
2.12. Synergistic leadership theory.....	22
2.13. Gender script.....	23
CHAPTER THREE.....	24
RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY.....	24
Introduction.....	24
3. 1. Description of the Research Site.....	24
3.2. Research Design.....	24
3.3 Research Method.....	25
3.4 sources of data.....	26
3.5. Sample Size and Sampling Technique.....	26
3.6 Data gathering instruments.....	27
3.7. Interview Procedure.....	28
3.8. Methods of Data Analysis.....	28
3.9. Reliability and Validity of the Study.....	29

3.10 Ethical Consideration.....	30
CHAPTER FOUR.....	31
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA.	31
4.2 Participants career backgrounds and description of participants	32
4.3 Results and Discussion	34
CHAPTER FIVE	50
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	50
5.1 Summary.....	50
5.2 Conclusions.....	52
5.3 Recommendations.....	53
References.....	55
Appendix A.....	61
APPENDIX B.....	63
APPENDIX .C.....	65

List of tables

Table	Page
Table 1: Participants career profiles	35

List of Figures

Figure	Page
Figure 1	49

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women
DH	Department Head
DOE	Department of Education
FDRE	Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia
GTP	Growth and Transformation Plan
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MfM	Mention fir Mention
MOWCYA	Ministry of Women Children and Youth Affair's
PASDEP	Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to Poverty.
REB	Region Education Bureau
SGB	School Governing Body
SMT	school management team
TEIs	Teacher Education Institutions
WCYA	Women, Children and Youth Affair'
ZED	Zone Education Department

Abstract

The study observed into the lives of females primary school principals in the Ilu Aba Bor zone. The title of this thesis was Exploring the lived experiences, challenges and opportunities of female's primary school principals in Ilu Aba Bor zone. The objective of this study was to explore the lived experiences, challenges and opportunities of female's primary school principals in Ilu Aba Bor Zone. This study used a qualitative research design that focused on female principals' lived experiences. Purposive sampling technique was chosen to gain a thorough understanding of the issue. Data was collected using a qualitative research method study that was directed by four research questions. Ten female school principals in the Ilu Aba Bor zone provided the data. They were also interviewed in their schools' natural settings. In this qualitative research study, ten females' primary school principals were participated. And also this study used Purposive sampling technique was chosen to gain a thorough understanding of the issue. The study's target population was female primary school principals from ten primary schools. The data collection tools used were only interview. Interview was carried out with ten principals. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. Data analysis involves preparing and organizing, then reducing the data into themes. There were four main themes that emerged. They are: first experiences as initially challenging, work and home responsibility, networking as a means of dealing with challenges Mothering as a leadership style. Finally, when researcher summarized the study revealed that there are several different barriers that hinder women from accessing principal positions, also concluded that female do not make themselves noticeable for raise for principal ship by applying for the positions and recommended as Females need to be also take the initiative to learn new skills and advance professionally by working closely with the principals.

Key word: *experience, principal ship, explore, participants, thematic analysis, lived experience*

CHAPTER ONE

PROBLEM FORMULATION AND ITS APPROACH

Introduction

The research's history, problem statement, general and specific aims, significance, delimitation, and definitions of key words, as well as the study's organization, are all covered in this chapter.

1.1 Background of the study

Female's underrepresentation in management and decision-making is a global issue, and in most nations throughout the world, there are significant inequalities in the proportion of men and women in school leadership positions. Women's access to education is a clear difference between developed and developing countries. According to (Yulk. 2010), leadership is based on the assumption that it involves a social influence process. In order to shape the actions and relationships in a group or organization, one individual or group exercises intentional influence over other people or groups. According to the World Bank, gender equality is a key component of a good economic and human development plan (2003a). Despite this, the lack of women in managerial and decision-making positions is a global issue. In truth, there is a clear divide between industrialized and developing countries when it comes to women's access to education. In most countries where feminism has the most influence, women account for less than 10% of managers and 3% of company directors, according to the report, and this issue has attracted the attention of international organizations.

According to (Charol shakespeare 2014) the similarities across countries and finds that the development of a professional identity forms and is impacted by leadership, including how the economic, political, and social backdrop affects women and how their career pathways differ from males. Females must be empowered not just through gender equity, but also by bridging the gap between men and women but also for the welfare of children, particularly those with special needs, because every schoolchild, regardless of his or her family status, has the right to succeed in their learning process under the globally accepted concept of equity. Increasing the number of women in institutions, particularly in leadership roles. Addresses, promoting gender equality, including affirmative action, remains a complex and multi-dimensional issue. (Morley, 2014). Despite this, women take an active role in the community by managing all social activities. However, they do not reap the benefits of their labor and are marginalized on political, economic, social, and cultural

levels (FDRE, 2006). When it comes to involvement in leadership and decision-making positions, this reality also applies to women.

Women's empowerment is equally important as community empowerment, it critical to think about how to promote female principals' entry into the sector if we want to see a change in the types of admin staff who are trained to ensure that all students learn equally. Women continue to face challenges in gaining leadership positions. In a research of theories of prejudice against women, (Eagly and Karau, 2002) discovered that women emerge as leaders less frequently than males because women must fulfill a higher standard than men to be considered highly competent. Competence includes the ability to meet the position's various standards as well as the number of hours a person is willing to spend to their task. According to Moorosi (2010), there are policies in place that should address stereotypes. And the understated practices of discrimination suffer by women in the work place, there is still no change Women's Policy issued by (FDRE. 2006). In addition, the Ethiopian Women's Development and Change Package (2006), Plan for Accelerated and Sustained Development to Poverty, and the Labor Law Proclamation N0.377/2003 have clearly stated several rules to safeguard women's rights when forming work contracts (PASDEP). It is aim to reduce poverty while also ensuring gender equality (MoFED, 2006).

Gender mainstreaming is also being applied in Ethiopia's many industries. All of these tools are being used in Ethiopia to eliminate gender gap. In Ethiopia, women are now seeking to aspire to positions of influence in organizations and institutions, despite Ethiopia being ranked last among African countries in terms of education. Ethiopia's current president, Saile Work Zawude, the president of Dredawa University, Dr. Huba Adam, the mayor of Addis Ababa, Adanch Abebe, and Dagemawit Moges, the Minister of Road Transport, and Liya Taddese ministers, of health and other ministers are just a few examples of Ethiopian women. This clearly proves that, despite their small numbers in contrast to men, women can hold top positions in our country; this is encouraging thus far. So, why is there such a low female population? They can be learned and developed information and experience. When academics discuss the underrepresentation of women in leadership positions, which is a major concern in the educational system, they frequently neglect women's participation and use of school principal leadership positions.

The low number of female school principals in our country is evidence of this. Consider the number of female primary school principals and vice principals. The overall number of primary

school principals and vice principals in 2020 Statistics Annual Abstract show that is 44,694 from September 2019 to March 2020, with just 12.4 percent of them being females, a 1.2 percentage point increase from the previous year. According to the researcher's study area in Oromia regional state Ilu Aba Bor zone office report, school leadership positions number 448 in 2020 Statistics Annual Abstract, with only 15 (3%) of these positions held by women and 433 (97%) held by men. So, why are women underrepresented and exploited by more experienced men? Their leadership experience in school leadership positions, is insufficient. As a result, the researcher began to share the firsthand accounts of female school administrators in the Ilu Aba Bore Zone.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Education is a tool for a person's effective integration into society, allowing them to acquire self-consciousness, increase national awareness, and foster unity. Women still encounter challenges in gaining entry to positions in academia. Even if they are appointed, prejudice may occur if they are treated differently than their male counterparts. There appears to be a lack of comprehension surrounding this phenomenon. Only 5% of published studies in the body of research covered gender, according to (Grogan & Shakeshaft 2011). They also quoted (Brown & Irby 2005), who discovered that just 9% of dissertations were about women in educational leadership. This is because, in comparison to their male counterparts, female educational leadership roles have gotten little attention (Oplatka, 2006). The issue that women are under-represented in educational leadership positions is evident. As a result, additional investigation into the actuality of the women principals' lived experiences is required, and this study analyzes this topic in depth. When a female school director is present, the deputy must also be a man.

School leadership is now less gender biased as a result of this basic policy, resulting in more equal leadership (MoE, 2006). In practice, though, this isn't the case. Female directors are judged not just on the basis of their gender, but also on the basis of their leadership engagement and performance, according to Shakeshaft (1993); Skria and Young, (2003), Thurman, (2004), female leaders not only have to lead successfully but are scrutinized because of their gender. Female school directors who lead complex and dynamic tasks face a manifold challenge that is projected related to gender bias of man and other part of society. Strong cultural beliefs create additional barriers women must overcome while attempting to secure and gain acceptance in leadership positions (Lumby&Azaola, 2011).

Ethiopian's five-year national development plan, as well as the Development Plan for Women and Children (2011-2028) and Women (2011-2028) both make particular commitments to increase women's participation in political life and decision-making, as well as to promote women's rights. The lack of qualified women leaders in primary schools and school districts across the country has obvious implications for qualified women leaders, but it also has implications for education because few women find themselves in positions to influence educational policy. When academics examine female underrepresentation, which is a major concern in the educational system, they frequently overlook women's participation in and usage of school principal leadership roles.

Historically in Ethiopia, women are suppressed and believed that they are unable to lead people; only men are created to lead and participate in leadership. Because of this traditional thinking the perception of women in leadership is still very low (Aretha, 1993). In our country context, lack of female role model among teachers of young girls may have contributed to the unpopularity of teaching as career choices for girls in the past. Women are less likely than other political, socioeconomic, and cultural groups to be involved in and employ school principal leadership roles. The issue of women's underrepresentation in educational leadership roles is well-known the low number of female school principals in our country is proof of this. Take a peek at the number of female primary school principals and vice principals.

The overall number of primary school principals and vice principals is 44,694 from September 2019 to March 2020, with just 12.4 percent of them being females, a 1.2 percentage point increase from the previous year. In primary schools, however, there are only 6,374 cluster supervisors, accounting for only 4.6 percent of the total. The low number of female school principals in our country is proof of this. As a result, the under representation of women in leadership posts in primary schools and school districts across the country has clear consequences for skilled female leaders. According to the researcher's study area in Oromia regional state Ilu Aba Bor zone office report, school leadership positions total 45 secondary school principal positions are all (100%) held by men, and vice school principals 45 positions are only 2 (2.2%) held by women, leaving 43 (97.8%) held by men, and all school leadership positions 448 from these positions held by women are only 15 in number or (3%), and the rest are held by men. As a result, the number of women in leadership roles is extremely low. This means that the number of women in positions of leadership

is quite low. So, why are women underrepresented and controlled by experienced men? Furthermore, no research has been done on the problem's specific area.

In addition, the researcher has worked as a primary school principal in various woredas throughout the study area for several years. Similarly, as the study area, Ilu Aba Bor zone, as the statistics of report data of the zones Education Office Department 2019/2020 shown. However, while primary school principals attended at the woreda Education Office for workshops on a regular basis, there were more experienced male principals than female principals. That is why the researcher motivated to conduct research on female principal lived experiences of leadership in the primary schools. Therefore, the main purpose of this study was to find the lived experience of female's principals in leadership position of the primary schools. In the case of these, the researcher would like to undertake research on phenomenology studies of female primary school principals' lived experiences of Ilu Aba Bor zone.

Basic Questions

1. How do female principals describe and perspective their leadership experiences of principal ship in Ilu Aba Bor zone?
2. What are the major challenges that female principals face in managing primary schools in Ilu Aba Bor zone?
3. How do female principals cope with the demands that come with the role of the school principal in Ilu Aba Bor zone?
4. What are the good experiences that they have experienced in Ilu Aba Bor zone?

1.3. Objective of the study

1.3.1 General objective

The overall objective of this study was to exploring the lived experiences, challenges and opportunities of female's primary school principals in Ilu Aba Bor zone.

1.3.2. Specific Objectives

- To describe and perspective leadership of female primary school principals
- To examine the key challenges of female's primary school principals face.
- To explore the coping mechanisms of female primary school principals towards leadership position?
- To share the positive lived experiences.

1.4 . Significance of the study

The result of the study will have significant for female principals to use their hidden potential and the right to exercise in leadership roles. It will have significant for policy makers and other stakeholders who wish to work in the area. Therefore, the findings of this research was hoped to be significance to address problems relating to female principals' leadership and management styles, and how to overcome these workplace challenges. In light of this, the study was believed to have the following contributions

1. The finding of the study may be a feedback for concerned bodies particularly for Regional, Zonal and Woreda Education Offices to recognize the problems relating to female principals' leadership and management styles, and how to overcome these workplace challenges.
2. The finding of the study may help all educational stakeholders, women, children's and youth affairs office
3. The study will give insight in to preparing future strategic plans that help to enhance female teacher's participation in school leadership.
4. It may help as literature to those who aspire to make further investigation in the area of female's primary school principals'

1.5. Delimitation of the Study

The scope of the study was confined to the extent to which female administrators have had prior leadership experience in selected primary schools. This would make it possible to think. Due to budget and time constraints the researcher keeps the scope of the study as small as possible, the researcher focused on the lived experiences of female primary school principals in ten primary schools of the Ilu Aba Bor Zone.

1.6 Limitations of the study

Hence the phenomenological findings are limited to the experiences of the persons working in the study who were female principals in Ilu Aba Bor Zone in 2013 E.C. The researcher encountered by a number of problems in this study which was the halfhearted to deliver conductive information, limitation of finance, time and the distance between the researcher and the university: the difficulties of weather condition while collecting the data and the distance between the districts or schools and the researcher, and in some amount the problem of COIVD-19 was one issue.

Though this outcome in the wastage of time to organize disjointed information as the researcher demands quality work. The listed limitations were overcome by designing numerous strategies. Like reacting to make or to form the conducive environment for defendants: Communicating to the woreda administrators to solve the problems related to the distance by providing a means of transportation and making the awareness to the respondent to understand the importance of their response to the study and make them free to use their time in responding the question. As far as the organization of the disjointed information was worried,

1.7. Operational Definition of Key Terms

Phenomenology is the study of lived experience with an aim toward “gaining a deeper understanding of the nature or meaning of our everyday experiences” (Van Manen, 1990).

Female principals- this term is used interchangeably for the context of this study; women leaders, Lived experiences- are the everyday experiences of a person in discharging of his/her primary functions which the person reflects on, perceives, feels, endures or enjoys as the case may be. This term is used in phenomenological studies and it emphasizes the importance of individual experiences as conscious human beings (Moustakas, 1994).

Patriarchal: - Society controlled by men in which their power to their own advantage.

Stereotype: - An image or idea of a particular type of person or thing that has become fixed through being widely held.

Underrepresentation-is a term used to describe the disproportionate (that is too small or none) representation of women in educational leadership.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one introduces the study with a brief view into the background, problem of the statement, general and specific objectives, significance, delimitation, definition of key terms and organization of the study. Chapter two relates to a literature review and involved an in-depth study of current literature on women and leadership. Chapter three were present detailed interpretation of the research design. It included the methods and procedures were used in sampling, the data source, collection of data, and an analysis of the data that were collected and ethical issues. Chapter four were presented the findings of the study as it emerged in the data. And Chapter five were presented a discussion of findings in relation to the literature studied, conclusions and recommended.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This section is devoted to a review of the literature on women in leadership roles, both at home and abroad. The goal of this study is to look into female primary school principals' real-life experiences and perceptions. This study investigates how female principals' real-life experiences can help to explain why they are underrepresented in educational leadership jobs. In a thematic evaluation of the literature, the important themes covered in the literature were reviewed.

2. 1 Women and educational leadership

According to Eagly and Carli (2007) the difficulties of female leadership, situational theorists say that "elements such as social values, the culture of the company, the nature of the work, and the attributes of the followers determine the environment of the scenario." The use of social, material, and cultural resources to create teaching and learning environments. It requires enlisting the assistance of faculty and students in identifying and confronting educational reform challenges, as well as mobilizing the resources needed to promote teaching and learning change. In a study that examined women's prejudice,

It was discovered that According to Eagly & Karau, reported in Eagly & Carli (2007), women emerge as leaders less frequently than men, owing to the fact that women must fulfill a higher bar than men in order to be seen as highly competent. Greyvenstein (2000, p. 30) claims that "women teach and men manage in the schools," referring to a gender-related inconsistency in the field of education. Even when women are well qualified, the majority of males in positions of leadership have instilled in them a belief system that male behavior is the norm. As cited by (Mestry & Schmidt, 2012). women frequently have difficulties gaining the acceptance of their male counterparts.

2.1.1 Men and women lead differently:

According to Eagly & Karau, reported in Eagly & Carli (2007), women emerge as leaders less frequently than men, owing to the fact that women must fulfill a higher bar than men in order to be seen as highly competent. Greyvenstein (2000, p. 30) claims that "women teach and men manage in the schools," referring to a gender-related inconsistency in the field of education. Even

when women are well qualified, the majority of males in positions of leadership have instilled in them a belief system that male behavior is the norm. As a result, women frequently have difficulties gaining the acceptance of their male counterparts (Mestry & Schmidt, 2012). A growing body of evidence suggests that women and men have more in common than they do not, both in terms of cognitive functioning and personality qualities (Eagly, et al., 2003). Emotional intelligence, empathy, and compassion, on the other hand, are more prevalent among women (Eagly Carli, 2007). Women styles are not at all likely to be less effective; in fact, they are more effective within the context of team-based, consensus-driven organizational structures that are more prevalent in today's world. The assessment that a woman's leadership style was less effective than a man's is not fact-based but rather driven, by socialization, to perception that certainly persists (Applebaum et al., 2003, p. 43).

The most recent literature on women's leadership style is presented by Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011). Some leadership attributes, according to the literature, are predominantly behaviors associated with women, and may include, but are not limited to, communication, relationships, shared decision-making, and developing others' potential. According to them, women educational leadership is characterized by five approaches: "relational leadership, leadership for social justice, leadership for learning, spiritual leadership, and balanced leadership" (Grogan & Shakeshaft, p. 6). Relational leadership refers to being in association with others in a horizontal rather than a hierarchical sense (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011).

2.1.2 Leadership from a Feminist Perspective

The feminist worldview arose from the dominant male and structural-functionalist perspective, according to Marshall (1995:484). Marshall (1995:488) also argues that female educational administrators are more sensitive to teaching, curriculum, and instruction, as well as children, perhaps because they spend more time as moms before becoming instructors. (Marshall, 1995) goes on to explain that when women talk, supervise, or lead in ways that contradict the dominant leadership paradigm, their work is not credited as leadership. According to the study, and centered attitude has prejudiced and disadvantaged women seeking leadership roles in institutions such as schools. Feminist reconstruction of leadership, according to Blackmore (1989:113), would integrate women in meaningful discourse of organizational life and values as autonomous

individuals rather than as objects of patriarchal discourse, with a focus on individual-leadership interactions.

This study applies feminist theory broadly, while always keeping patriarchal power relations and how they are exercised in a way that damages women's lives in mind (Connell, 2010). Feminist philosophy also strives to empower women by giving them a voice. Grader et al. (2000). Feminist theory validates multiple and diverse perspectives, in particular the values of examining these perspectives to clarify one's own beliefs and values, and for the pedagogical opportunities to help one to consider viewpoints of other individuals. Women learn from other women's voices and experiences.

2.2. Women Leadership Styles' Impact on Educational Leadership

Women's leadership literature frequently seeks to discover the distinguishing characteristics that may distinguish men's and women's leadership styles (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly, Johansson-Schmidt, & Van Engel, 2003) Transformational leadership, for example, emphasizes employee empowerment and has increased the number of possibilities for women to be appointed as leaders (Avolio & Bass, in Gaus, 2011). Applebaum, Audet, and Miller (2003, p. 43) conducted research to address the questions three questions: "Do women's leadership styles differ much from men's?" Are these approaches less likely to be successful? Is it a perception or a fact that determines women's leadership effectiveness?

2.3. Barriers towards Women Leadership

Barriers in the workplace not only discriminate against women, but they may also favor men. "Structural hurdles to women's advancement in organizations have their roots in the fact that most organizations have been "Changes in workplace culture, women's career development, and mentoring opportunities for women" are needed to overcome these barriers (Northouse; 2010 p. 319). Barriers in the workplace not only discriminate against women, but they may also favor men. "Structural hurdles to women's advancement in organizations have their roots in the fact that most organizations have been Founded by and for males," writes Moorosi (2007, p. 507). Moorosi cites Grogan (2007) also argues that the absence of women in powerful positions suggests that women are seen through traditional theoretical lenses and are measured against ideals that have historically best served men. (Rashid, 2010, p. 221).

This, in general, indicates a lack of women in positions of power. Mentors and role models offer two objectives for women seeking success. A mentor is defined as "someone with whom you have a professional, interpersonal relationship and who provides you with constructive career and psychosocial aid" (Gupton & Slick, 1996). Because, unlike boys, girls are socialized to be passive and given no options. This, in general, indicates a lack of women in positions of power. Mentors and role models offer two objectives for women seeking success. A mentor is defined as "someone with whom you have a professional, interpersonal relationship and who provides you with constructive career and psychosocial aid" (Gupton & Slick, 1996). In most civilizations, women lack experience with decision-making and leadership interests or ambitions in the public arena since girls, unlike boys, are brainwashed to be docile and given no or little opportunity to acquire leadership skills outside or within the family environment

2.3.1. Work and family conflict.

Work-family conflict is a common justification for women's underrepresentation in leadership roles. A form of this concept was included in Betty Friedan's *Feminine Mystique*, which focused on the ways in which work and home cultures failed to provide women with a method to balance these two obligations. The choice was plain for women: one or the other. Other scholars have pointed out how some women are simply rejecting leadership jobs in favor of a greater focus on family, a decision that inevitably affects their long-term career pathways in response to Friedan's emphasis on the role of work and home cultures in women's underrepresentation (Kellerman & Rhode, 2007).

2.3.2 Access to resources.

Women's access to resources focuses on the lack of professional advice, resources, mentoring, and socialization opportunities for women in academic leadership posts (Paludi, 2008). The ability to access these resources at work is also a measure of one's social capital. An individual's social capital refers to the number of networking ties within a community as well as the set of collective expectations that impact goal-seeking behavior among its members (Coleman, 1988). Davies (Davies, 2004)

2.3.3. Male dominated power structure.

A look at the male-dominated power structure finds that women are underrepresented in important leadership positions. In male-dominated major leadership jobs, for example, new principals will

most likely "resemble their sponsors in philosophy, deeds, appearances, and hobbies," according to Oplatka & Hertz-Lararowitz (2006). (p. 19). In other words, high-ranking guys will hire persons who are the most similar to them, reinforcing male supremacy in educational leadership (Oplatka & Hertz-Lararowitz, 2006, p. 19). Furthermore, when white heterosexual men control power structures, women, particularly on-heterosexual, non-white women, may be less well connected to systems

2.3.4. Gender stereotypes.

Gender stereotypes are common cognitive constructs that influence how men and women receive information. Despite significant changes in attitudes toward women's rights and professional ambitions since the 1960s, gender stereotypes about men and women continue and are constant across countries. When gender stereotypes are internalized by oppressed groups, they aid in the facilitation or maintenance of horizontal violence (Freire, 2000).

2.4. Culture Impact on Women Leadership

Culture and tradition have a significant impact on women managers. Culture is described as a country's, societies, or group of people's practices, traditions, and beliefs, according to Gillard (quoted in Khumalo (2006). Throughout society, persistent societal preconceptions impair women's ability to lead and manage. This is consistent with the findings of Moorosi's (2010) study, which indicated that traditional cultural value systems and institutional structures inside schools that are less favorable to women frequently harm women's experiences. The idea that women's experiences are influenced by sociopolitical, organizational, and personal variables.

Women's perceptions in Ivorian society are shaped by societal norms and stereotypes. It was once thought that leading was a male activity. This thinking is particularly strict in rural areas, where people are constrained by tradition, which prohibits women from occupying leadership roles. In many cultures, women are (or have been) expected to remain silent in debates, denied the ability to consent (to marital sex, to vote, to property), and considered as irrational or inconsequential, according to Presler-Marshhall and Valters (2015, p. 8). Teacher disobedience, disrespect, and sexism are all linked to negative opinions about female principals.

In the sense that, as participants revealed, culture still has an impact on the collection of perspectives, values, rituals, and practices that exist inside their workplaces, populations, and school communities, the majority of cultural factors have an impact on females in school

they are exposed to their surrounding environment, accepting gender division of labor as the job that is naturally allotted to them. According to Pig Ford (1993). Even when women are in positions of educational leadership, they face additional challenges.” "Although women were given the title director, women leaders were not given the prominence or respect accorded to their male counterparts,”

2.5. Underrepresentation of Women

In many developing countries, female underrepresentation in decision-making roles is common and well documented, posing challenges to fairness, social justice, and long-term development. According to Burke (2015), the number is irrelevant because it will not, by itself, reduce gender inequality. She highlighted that having a large number of women in universities in the United Kingdom is insufficient for women to be empowered and the gender gap to be closed. Burke's perspective remains timely, as cultural bias, stereotypes, and moral and psychological oppression remain common views toward women, particularly among men. As a result, irrespective of the gender representation, what is important is how they are treated and perceived in higher education and what place is given to them.

Therefore, the problem is not the number but rather the culture and practices that women experience within the system. Actually, it is difficult to understand that at the level of higher education a certain category is neglected Poor recognized. Nonetheless, whether the leadership is exercised by men or women, it involves certain qualities and abilities, which need to be demonstrated with regard to the school context generally full of challenges and obstacles that stand in the way of women principals.

2.6 Gender and Women Leadership

Gender studies and women's leadership argue that gender still affects women... According to West and Zimmerman (1987, p. 126), as reported gender should be understood as a role rather than a set of traits (such as femininity and masculinity) (as in scripts for behavior). Gender is not a trait or variable but is an accomplishment, an interactional activity that we universally use to organize social encounters: Doing gender involves a complex of socially guided perceptual, interactional, and micro political activities that cast particular pursuits as expressions of masculine, feminine nature's (West & Zimmerman, p. 2).

Gender and leadership study was conducted in South Africa. In their literature review, Booysen & Nkomo (2006) found that there are contradicting results when it comes to evidence on gender disparities in leadership because male and female leadership styles are more similar than different. According to the study, the differences between female and male leadership styles are still primarily due to "sex role spillover, gendered action, or the expansion of their intrinsic roles" (Booyesen & Nkomo, 2006, p. 26).

Finally, research findings on leadership styles are often gender-stereotypical. Fourth, recent data favors women due to the democratization of the workplace and the promotion of transformative and interactional leadership, which benefits women over men. Fifth, despite this advantage and the workplace's Feminization, leadership is still seen as a male-dominated profession. Finally, if male leadership is considered traditional, female leadership is considered non-traditional. In the end, Booysen & Nkomo (2006, p. 26) recommend that: even though the feminine leadership style is seen to be more effective than the masculine leadership style, and there is evidence for a gender advantage, illogically it poses the following dilemma- the gender advantage became a gender disadvantage since female leadership is still perceived to be less effective.

Because of the "prevailing strong masculine culture, masculine stereotypes, and adopted masculine leadership mental models," according to Booysen & Nkomo (2006, p. 23), men will continue to dominate in leadership even if women are empowered. Women are held to a double standard since they are expected to be competent while yet displaying feminine characteristics. This is in line with Eagly & Carli (2007) and Booysen & Nkomo (2006), who argue that women confront a double bind: first, the female role is underestimated, and second, displaying stereotypical male conduct creates a barrier, resulting in such behavior being viewed as gender role different.

2.7 Gender Stereotyping and Role Congruity Impact

The challenge for female leaders, according to Damons (2008), is deciding whether to adapt oneself to fit into a preconceived role or to redefine leadership in terms of their own experiences and methods of thinking. According to Kanjere (2008), some individuals still believe women are incapable of leading. Due to cultural stereotypes and other prejudices, women are unable to reach their full potential (Kanjere, 2008). One of the greatest hurdles to women's representation in management positions is stereotypes and prejudices about women's abilities and attitudes (Chabaya, Rembe & Wadesango 2009). On gender stereotypes and leadership Johansson-Schmidt

& Eagly (2001, p. 786). Not only may gender roles spill over to organizational settings, but leaders' gender identities may also constrain their behaviors in a direction consistent with their own gender role. Also, the female gender role is more likely to be incongruent with leader roles than the male gender role is, producing a greater potential for prejudice against female leaders. Such prejudice could result in behaviors that affect leaders' behavior.

Gender role stereotyping has long influenced people's perceptions of female leaders' behavior and is one of the key challenges that female leaders have encountered in the workplace (Northouse, 2010). Even when they behave in the same way, female managers are rated lower than male managers, according to research (Eagly et al., 1992; Heilman, 2001; Ryan and Haslam, 2007). Furthermore, according to Giscombe (2007), gender stereotyping literature implies that males value consistency in how they are perceived and senior leadership traits. Women, on the other hand, continue to experience difficulties in progressing to positions of leadership because there is a mismatch between how they are regarded and leadership traits as a woman or as a leader (Lumby & Azaola, 2013). Aspiring female leaders are disadvantaged by leader and gender stereotypes because they must deal with this perceived incongruity.

Women who comply with the female gender role by displaying feminine qualities do not match the leader stereotype's requirements (Powel, 2011). Women's characteristics are a bad fit that will almost certainly lead to failure, whereas men's characteristics are a strong fit that will almost certainly lead to promotion. The role congruity theory proposed by Eagly and Karau (2002) "transforms [Heilman's] observations into a systematic theory by bringing together social-cognitive research on stereotyping and prejudice with organizational research on management and leadership" (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 579).

One of the primary challenges that female leaders have faced in the workplace is gender role stereotyping. And has influenced people's perceptions of female leaders' behavior for a long time (Northouse, 2010). Even when they behave in the same way, female managers are rated lower than male managers, according to research (Eagly et al., 1992; Heilman, 2001; Ryan and Haslam, 2007).

Furthermore, according to Giscombe (2007), gender stereotyping literature implies that males value consistency in how they are regarded and senior leadership traits. Women, on the other hand, continue to experience difficulties in progressing to positions of leadership because there is a

misalignment between how they are regarded and leadership traits as a woman or as a leader (Lumby & Azaola, 2013). Prospective female leaders are at a disadvantage because they must deal with this perceived incongruity due to leader and gender preconceptions. Women who comply with the female gender role by displaying feminine qualities do not match the leader stereotype's qualifications (Powel, 2011). Women's characteristics are a bad fit that will almost certainly lead to failure, whereas men's characteristics are a strong fit that will almost certainly lead to promotion. "By combining social-cognitive research on stereotyping and prejudice with organizational research on management and leadership, Eagly and Karau's (2002) role congruity theory converts [Heilman's] observations into a systemic theory," according to Eagly and Karau (Eagly & Karau, 2002, p. 579).

2.9. Challenges faced by women primary school principals

The majority of the material evaluated indicates that female principals encounter both internal and external problems. Internal obstacles noted include lack of confidence, balancing the roles of mother and leader, and emotional stress from a personal standpoint. External challenges, on the other hand, are divided into two categories: those that are administrative and hence tied to the organization, and those that are societal in nature (Lumby&Azaola, 2011; Kanjere et al. 2011; Boldur, 2009; Moorosi, 2007 & 2011; Van Vic, 2012; Parsaloi, 2012; Wrushen& Sherman, 2008; Uwizeyimana&Mathevula, 2014).

2.8 Personal challenges

2.8.1. Emotional pressure

According to Blackmore (2010), leadership during times of change is a highly emotional endeavor. People in positions of leadership are often confronted with emotional demands from their peers, students, and community members. As a result, their experiences, particularly their emotional responses, are shaped by the constraints of the educational system's ethos in which they work. "For some women, entering into management means additional stress, because they are associated with inflexibility," writes Moorosi (2007:508).

In contrast to what classroom teaching offers them in terms of meeting their time demands, they are restricted. Furthermore, as participants spoke about the challenges they face on a daily basis in their professions as middle-school principals, Parsaloi (2012: 31) adds that adjectives like "stressful" and "demanding" pervaded their accounts, and were used interchangeably with the word "tough."

2.8.2 The lack of confidence

Women's conception and awareness of their own power as school administrators is one of the most important topics that came from Wrushen and Sherman's (2008) study of Hispanic and Caucasian women. These female principals, they say, are uncomfortable with the concept of power and being identified as such. Rather, they prefer to be referred to as community servers. "Some women are drawn to the power that comes with being a student, while others are pulled to the authority that comes with teaching. They did not feel powerful in their leadership position." Furthermore, according to Parsaloi (2012), Kenyan female principals in her study admitted to lacking confidence in their work, especially in the early stages of their leadership. When coping with tough issues, women said they lacked confidence since they didn't know how to handle them. The bulk of the attendees stated that this will be their first time managing a school. According to Parsaloi (2012), women principals admitted to developing confidence as they progressed in their leadership responsibilities

2.8.3 Life style conflict

"Women are better at managing households than men," writes Irechuckwu (2010:183), "and the more of them in leadership positions, the more stable and dependable the world will become." According to female principals, working mothers "struggle to find a balance in the cultural structure of their life responsibilities, and construct meandering career routes during midlife" (Moorosi, 2007:512). She recognizes that balancing the roles of mother, wife, and career woman can be challenging for women leaders as reported Kirk A. Zeeck (2012).

Social practices still appear gender neutral because everyone appears to be subjected to them, while the reality is that these social practices sabotage women who cannot be available for the work all the time. Because they are still expected to perform their conventional duties as mothers and spouses in addition to their devotion to their career as school administrators, the gap makes balancing public and private commitments much more challenging for married women principals of reproductive age.

Women are disadvantaged by dual responsibility, which places them in situations when they are unable to execute both. She also believes that single female principals have an advantage since they are not as severely affected as married female principals and are able to dedicate more time

to management-related activities. Women created techniques to reconcile their lifestyle conflicts, according to study by Moorosi (2007), Parsaloi (2012), Mthembu (2013), and Smith (2011).

Getting help from relatives, working closely with members of the school management team to make their workload manageable, working after school hours to avoid interruptions, and working long hours during the school year so that they can spend quality time with their families during the school holidays are all common strategies.

2.8.4 Lack of role Models

Role models are strong sources of encouragement for females trying to pursue education despite the many hurdles they face, especially in underdeveloped countries, according to a number of studies (Muller, 2006).

2.9. Cultural challenges

In line with the findings of Higgs (2006:39) culture is what makes a people, a people. In the context of this study on female school principal challenges, culture denotes not only the outer manifestations of language, dress and dance, but also denotes especially people's beliefs, values and practices. It is in these beliefs and values that there exist certain stereotypes which believe that men are better leaders than women.

2.9.1. Discrimination

Moorosi (2007: 508) writes, "The reality of women principals' experiences suggest that women resist discrimination on two levels based on organizational and social levels." Women lack support from their families on a social level, and they must contend with the reality that leadership is linked with masculinity "Even the policy provides equal treatment of everyone,". Traditional and patriarchal values and practices, on the other hand, subjugate them and continue to devalue change activities aimed at achieving gender equity. In most societies, girls are assigned to domestic duties. Where they are confined and taught to accept the lack of experience to play a leadership role in a public context.

As a result, girls frequently lack the self-confidence and abilities necessary to embrace leadership roles and perform well in them. In addition to the effects of sociocultural impacts as a result of socialization, as mentioned in (Shakeshaft, 1999). Women are unwilling to take on the role of school director because the organizational structure and employment arrangement, as well as the

scheduling and planning of school activities, are dominated by men and custom-made to marginalize and discriminate women.

2.9.2. Reduction of women

Wrushen and Sherman (2008) examined the leadership experiences of women administrators and disclose that female leaders are under investigation which means being severely analyzed. Women leaders are watched in every move they make. As a result, this leaves these female leaders with a feeling of discomfort and fear. The most disturbing themes that emerged were the regular occurrence of hurtful comments and actions directed towards their gender, age and race. Pillay (2005: 71) concurs with Wrushen and Sherman (2008) that “the most significant explanation of resistance to women in positions of power in schools is their devaluation”. She further highlights that the assignment of less value to women takes the form of attitudes that favors males over females for management positions. This proves that women are not valued as much as men are. This then impacts negatively on their self-esteem.

2.9.3. Devaluation of women

Wrushen and Sherman (2008) examined the leadership experiences of women administrators and reveal that female leaders are under surveillance which means being severely analyzed. Women leaders are watched in every move they make. As a result, this asserts that “female principals adopted this style of leadership which is authoritative more especially when they conduct staff meetings because some teachers do not take them seriously because they are female”. This shows that women leaders have come to the realization that control and authority are sometimes necessary (Gatane, 2007; Swan, 2014).

2.10. Administrative challenge

2.10.1 The lack of respect and negative attitude

Negative sentiments regarding female principals are manifested in numerous ways, according to research done by Makhaye (2012), Aja- Okori (2011), Parsaloi (2012), and Kitele (2013). Female principals faced pushback from both female and male teachers, according to these studies. Due to myths and prejudices held towards female principals, teachers have been known to mistrust their leadership ability and principles. Furthermore, female teachers believe that female heads are "powerless," thus they rarely cooperate. In Moorosi's (2010) study, both male and female teachers were observed to have a "bring her down" mentality, and they said that they did not cooperate. The

lack of respect and recognition is often displayed in attitudes during staff meetings and also by not attending meetings.

2.10.2 Pressure to compete with previous managers

According to Wrushen and Sherman (2008: 463) “female principals are pressurized to compete with the legacy and style of the previous head teacher. They hold the view that these female principals struggle with owning their leadership role in building up the school as principals because of discomfort with more rigid standards of leadership that were established in previous years”. Aja-Okorie (2011:8) maintains that “the role of leaders such as school principals in today’s education system has transcended the traditional management functions of power, behavior, style and instructional leadership into more complex indies due to overwhelming students’ population explosions such as handling students’ needs, and accommodating students from diverse sociopolitical backgrounds”. Therefore, women have to be familiar with the objectives of the school as well as bringing positive change to schools.

2.10.3 Management of change

It is not easy to manage change within the education system because of some of the reasons as lack of resources and support from school governed body and educational authorities, and the fact that change is sometimes not well understood. Policies are corrected from time to time and this makes it difficult for school managers to successfully implement them. Female principals in Makhaye’s (2012) study admitted that some policies are not easy to implement, and so they face a lot of resistance from educators and some parents in other instances

2.11. Preparation for principal ship

According to West cited in Harris et al. (2003) there are three probable roles of a deputy principal, namely, deputy as the principal’s deputy (traditional role), deputy as a prospective principal or preparation for principal ship and the deputy as deputy principal of school or emergent role., Ibrahim (2011) suggests that preparation and development of principals can result in effectiveness and improvement of schools. As the key assumption of deputy principals is that they desire to become principals, therefore deputy principal’s emergent role is an important stage in their development as potential principals (Harris et al. 2003)

Responsibilities allocated to them differ from that of men. This is because ‘women are more likely to deal with rustic matters and men with discipline and curriculum matters’ (Harris et al. 2003, p.

13) This is because by preparing and developing principals, this could equip them with skills, knowledge and attributes to lead schools such that teaching and learning practices are improved (Ibrahim, 2011). While that is the case, the experience of being deputy principal is not always helpful in preparing deputy principals because of the lack of direct leadership experience they encounter in this role.

The principal remains the key gatekeeper to leadership functions in the school. This is because if the principal does not support a strong leadership role for the deputy principal, chances are that it may not happen (Harris et al. 2003). Hence principals could play a vital role in developing and preparing deputy principals for principal ship; this should form part of their duties and responsibilities. Also, there are limited opportunities for formal leadership training for deputy principals. Myerson, Orr & Cohen cited in Peters (2010) declare that wishful and emerging principals are ill-prepared and are not getting enough support to face the challenging responsibility of instructional leadership and school improvement.

The principal remains the key gatekeeper to leadership functions in the school. This is because if the principal does not support a strong leadership role for the deputy principal, chances are that it may not happen (Harris et al. 2003). Hereafter principals might play a vital role in developing and preparing deputy principals for principal ship. This emerging literature might assist in addressing access of women to principal ship in education as might develop confidence in women who aspire to be principals.

2.12. Synergistic leadership theory

Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011) stated that just 5% of published studies in a body of research cited either gender or race when examining the underrepresentation of women in educational leadership (2011). They also quoted Brown and Irby (2005), who discovered that just 9% of dissertations focused on women and educational leadership. As a result, there is a clear need for theories that include both men and women.

The Synergistic Leadership Theory (SLT) is a feminist-inclusive leadership theory established for the twenty-first century to answer the needs and challenges that education leaders confront in their leadership roles (Irby, Brown, Duffy & Trautman, 2002). This theory, unlike other leadership theories, is post-modern and challenges the hegemony of modernism that centres and marginalize, creating positions of privilege, dominance and exclusion, silencing alternative views and voices in

this case, the male-controlled type of leadership, (English cited in Irby et al., 2002). This is supported by Powell (2011, p. 5) who asserted that “early theories for leadership were based almost entirely on studies of male managers”

This contemporary theory (SLT) was developed by female researchers, utilized female samples and included feminine perspectives. This supports Grogan (1998) who asserts that because women’s lived experiences differ from men, new theoretical understandings of leadership premised on social justice must emerge.

2.13. Gender script

Roles that dictate expected behavior are known as gender scripts (Reynolds, 2002). As a result, gender scripts instruct women on how to act and influence how others perceive women's behavior. "What we anticipate males and females to do," says the gender script. A female gender script could be lauder; cooking, while a masculine gender script could be construction, mowing. In society, gender roles refer to how we are expected to act, speak, dress, train, and conduct ourselves based on our assigned sex. Gender scripts are roles that define how people should act in certain situations (Collard & Reynolds, 2005; Reay & Ball, 2000; Reynolds, 2002) "Organizational structures and environmental circumstances give distinct alternatives "

Reynolds (2002) explained. Women and men choose gender scripts from available options allowed by the discourse” (p. 4). In understanding how gender scripts influence the behavior of women leaders, it is helpful to understand how gender scripts will have evolved and how they are influenced by historical contexts. Reynolds (2002) analyzed the gender scripts of women educational leaders in the 1940s and 1950s and compared them to the gender scripts available to women leaders in the 1960s and 1970s.

While Reynolds used data from a study conducted in Canada, the historical factors that influenced gender scripts in Canada were also influential in the United States. The dutiful daughter scripts in educational leadership involved women sacrificing for the good of others. Reynolds (2002) described the dutiful daughter script as the woman who “stayed close to home, made a contribution to the community and often sacrificed her own wishes to satisfy the needs of the school organization” (p. 32).

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The research site, research design, research technique, data sources, population, sample size and sampling procedures, data collection tools, data collection procedure, data analysis method, and ethical considerations are all discussed in this chapter.

3. 1. Description of the Research Site

The Ilu Aba Bor Zone is one of Ethiopia's Oromia Regional State's zones, located in the southwest. It has a total size of approximately 12, 825, 22 km² and is located between longitudes 33o 47 W and 36o 52 E and latitudes 7o 05 S and 8o 45 N. (E.C. Kebede Negasu, 2005) To the north is Buno Bedalle, to the east is West Wollega Zone, to the south is Kefa Zone, and to the west is Gambella Regional State. The Ilu Aba Bor Zone is divided into 13 districts and one administrative town. Addis Ababa is 600 kilometers away from Mettu, the Zonal capital (Source: Geographical information system). As a result, a variety of crops, including maize, sorghum, peas, and primarily coffee, are planted in the area. The weather varies from one district to the next in the zone. The major language spoken in the zone is Afan Oromo, with Amaharic as a second language. It's a place where individuals from many walks of life live and work, earning a living through a variety of jobs.

3.2. Research Design

This study used a phenomenological qualitative research design that focused on female principals' lived experiences. Their personal stories were examined through guided, semi-structured one-on-one interviews. Because of the nature of the topic, which is human experience, interpretive phenomenological research was used for this study. The topic to be investigated in this study is current female primary school principals' leadership experiences and their daily leadership experiences in their particular schools. A crucial philosophical assumption of qualitative research is that individuals create reality via interaction with their social contexts when looking for lived experiences of female primary school administrators (Merriam, 1998).

Furthermore, qualitative research entails gaining an understanding of the phenomenon of interest from the perspective of the participants, rather than the researcher; conducting fieldwork;

employing an inductive research strategy; and focusing on process, meaning, and understanding through the creation of richly descriptive portraits (Merriam, 1998, pp. 6–8). A phenomenological research design was utilized to capture the lived experiences and reality of female elementary school principals (Creswell, 2013; Wertz et al., 2011). Rather than constructing abstract theories about the event under investigation through methods of quantification, phenomenology tries to disclose the essential meaning of the phenomenon under study by acquiring a description of the experience as lived (Gee, Loewenthal, & Cayne, 2013). Phenomenon under investigation in this case is Ilu Aba Bor zone female primary school administrators' lived experiences in a leadership position, and the major purpose was to locate the substance of their experiences from their points of view. This research design was also help to address the general aim of this research which states the following objectives:

- To describe and perspective leadership of female primary school principals of Ilu Aba Bor zone
- To examine the key challenges of female's primary school principals faced in Ilu Aba Bor zone
- To explore the coping mechanisms of female primary school principals towards leadership position in primary schools of Ilu Aba Bor zone.
- To share the positive lived experiences of female's primary school principals.

3.3 Research Method

The energy to comprehend the character of a location and the experiences of people in this setting is embodied by qualitative research methods (Merriam, 1998).The qualitative research method cannot forecast what will occur in the future. It's a type of analysis that helps those who are interested in the events of a specific place and time gain a better knowledge of them. To precisely describe the issue, qualitative approaches were offered that included extensive descriptions of the lived experiences of female primary school principals. The experiences of female primary school principals as recounted through their narratives, were explicitly illuminated in this study.

This qualitative approach exposed the contributions, expenses, frustrations, achievements, understandings, and, eventually, realities of Ilu Aba Bor zone female primary school principals through research on their lived experiences. The researcher used a phenomenological qualitative technique to focus on the lived experiences of female principals; their personal stories were told

through one-on-one semi-structured interview sessions guided by a set of questions. Because of the nature of descriptive phenomenological research, which explores the human experience, it was chosen for this study. Life world is the empire of immediate experience. Citing Husserl, Van Manen (1997) designates that each life world shows certain pervasive structures or styles which need to be studied. Moustakas (1994, p. 48) describes life world as “the way a person lives, creates, and relates to the world Phenomenology is also a means to understand first-person lived experience of a phenomenon. Husserl, regarded as the intellectual founder of phenomenology, defined it as “a descriptive philosophy of the essences of pure experiences”.

Based on Husserl’s phenomenology, Moustakas (1994, p. 100) expresses essence as “that which is universal, the quality without which a thing would not be what it is”. Phenomenology is the universal effort to “uncover and describe the structures, the internal meaning of structures, of the lived experiences” (Van Manen, 1997, p. 10). It is the description of the experiential meanings we live as we experience them. This attempts to describe and interpret these meanings to a degree of depth and fertility. It varies from other disciplines in that “it attempts to explicate the meanings as we live them in our everyday existence, our life world” (Van Manen, 1997, p. 11). Husserl believed, directs attention to our experiences and descriptions of external elements of life (Van Manen, 2014, p. 91).

The phenomenon to be investigated in this study is current female primary school principals' leadership experiences and their daily experiences in their various primary schools in the Ilu Aba Bor zone. I employed qualitative research methods to make it easier to interpret the meanings linked to their experiences. For research questions that center on the description of participants' perceptions of a common event, the phenomenological technique is most appropriate. The study's conclusion was based on the lived experiences of female principals in primary schools in the Ilu Aba Bor zone.

3.4 sources of data

In this qualitative research study, ten females’ primary school principals were participated.

3.5. Sample Size and Sampling Technique

The goals of this qualitative study were to investigate how lived experiences are comprehended, purposive sampling technique was chosen to gain a thorough understanding of the issue.

Interview was carried out with ten principals in ten purposive primary schools. The study's target population was female primary school principals from ten primary schools. In the study area, ten female primary school principals were purposefully chosen. In the initial qualitative study, samples were carefully selected from female primary school principals.

3.6 Data gathering instruments

Data was gathered through interviews with ten female primary school principals in the Ilu Aba Bor zone. The data collection tools used for this study were only interview. Interview was carried out with ten principals in ten purposive primary schools. The interview approach was employed as a data collection technique (see Appendix B). The interviews were audio recorded, transcribed, and analyzed to determine the themes/meaning units that emerged, as well as to describe the substance of these women's experiences (Moustakas, 1994). The phenomenological reduction strategy was used, which involved putting aside natural attitude while staying aware of the participants' preconceptions, biases, inaccuracies, and prejudices (Creswell, 2007). The primary advantage of interviewing is that it permitted explicit focus on the researcher's personal experience combined with those of the participants (Marshall & Rossman, 2011). Patton (2002, p. 104) stated, in describing phenomenology and interviewing, that: how they perceive it, describe it, feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others. To gather such data, one must undertake in-depth interview with people who have directly experienced the phenomenon of interest; that is, they have lived experience.

In collecting data from the principal's researcher conducted one-to-one in-depth interviews. The researchers were used interview as a primary data gathering tool. A semi-structured interview was designed the necessary interview protocol were adequately address main questions and possible follow-up questions and will also be flexible enough in order to address the research questions of this study (John, Creswell, 2007). Due to the nature of the research questions and the importance of flexibly assessing the context, the researcher was design an open-ended interview items so that the female principals will narrate about their views and experiences on their challenges and the coping mechanisms throughout their experiences as a principal in their respective schools. The items were generally allowing female primary school principals to narrate their experiences as a principal.

3.7. Interview Procedure

Interviews were audio recorded and the sitting for each participant lasted approximately 45-60 minutes. Notes were also taken in case the tape recorder malfunctioned and for example, to describe facial expressions. Data collection procedure typically involves interviewing individuals who have the relative experience. All the interviews were recorded and transcribed. The transcribed interviews were form the text for data analysis. Prior to the interviews, an interview procedure will be designed based on the search of literature regarding the exploration of participants' lived experiences. The participants were asked four major questions that relate to their lived principal ship experiences including perceptions, experiences, and challenges and coping mechanism of female primary school principals in Aba Bor zone

The interview items as well as the interview procedure was taken care of such issues as the purpose of the study, the confidentiality of the responses and how the interview data was taken which, in fact will be recording. Prior to the interview date, each of the participants was contacted in person and communicated the purpose of the study. After their consent for participation in the study was secured, time and setting for the interview was fixed. The researcher was explaining that the research data was kept confidential and in no way be disclosed in a manner it indicates the identity of the participants.

Besides, the researcher asks the participants if they could allow the use of tape recorder to record the data. Besides recording, notes were also being taken to avoid problems that might happen like possible technical failures with the recording material. The researcher was clarifying that they can withdraw from the interview at any stage with any reason of themselves. The notes also assisted the transcription process in which there were a series of listening what the participants were actually saying from the tape player. In general, about ten cassettes were used to record the interview sessions.

3.8. Methods of Data Analysis

The data analysis in this study was interpretive in nature. To make sense of my informant's tales, the researcher used Seidman's (2006) approach for interpreting phenomenological interview data and Miles and Huberman's (1994) case analysis approach. Using Seidman's method, the researcher first transcribed the interview material before creating narrative profiles for each of the women who were interviewed. In qualitative research, data analysis involves preparing and organizing

data for analysis, then reducing the data into themes through a coding and condensing procedure (Creswell, 2007).

In phenomenological research, thematic interpretation is a typical approach aimed at capturing participants' real lived experiences without bias or interference. After the researcher has completed the data collection, the data will be transcribed. All of the transcribed documents will be read by the researcher. Initially, an attempt was made to identify relevant material from each of the transcripts in accordance with the researcher's predetermined study concerns from each of the interviews independently. These repeated ideas were categorized into themes and sub themes.

Raw Text → Relevant Text → Repeating Ideas → Themes

Major themes and sub topics, as well as pertinent material, were developed during the study. These were read and re-read to determine if there were any changes that could be made to the categories and topics. As a result, four broad themes and various sub-themes emerge first around the four research topics. The researcher will incorporate content from the participants' recorded information about their lived experiences into the analysis. Each record is carefully listened to by the researcher several times. The researcher will begin the analytic procedure once the interview audio recordings have been transcribed, as per Braun & Clarke (2006), which has already been highlighted under four different research projects. Familiarization and initial coding helps the researcher gain familiarity and be able to take note of emerging potential codes.

3.9. Reliability and Validity of the Study

Reliability “can be regarded as a fit between what researcher record as data and what actually Raw Text, Relevant Text, Repeating Ideas, Themes & Items of lived experience of female primary school principals’ perceptions and lived experiences of Ilu Aba Bor zone. Qualitative validity was also being determined by using strategies to check the accuracy of the findings of these studies. According to Creswell (2007), clarifying bias from the outset will also enhance validity as the reader w understand the position of the researcher and any biases or assumptions that may impact on the study. The researcher will, then, answers the same questions asked to the participants and the interview was transcribed. Accordingly, in this research member checking and peer questioning were used to check the accuracy of the research occurs in the natural setting that is being researched” (Louis Cohen, 2007, p. 149). Numerous plans by which the validity and the reliability of the qualitative research was maintained. (Creswell, 2007).

3.10 Ethical Consideration

Confidentiality were very important in research because it gives the respondents the confidence to answer and reveal even the negatives or challenges that are facing them in an organization. Prior to the interview process, for instance, the researcher is informing the participants about the purpose and the process of the study openly and that their participation in the study is fairly willingly. The researcher ensured that their agreement for the participation in the study is safe. The researcher informed that they can drop out from the study at any point if they think doing so is essential for whatsoever reason. The researcher promised that their individuality in the study was made anonymous, that researcher was used pseudo names though treating their responses the researcher was employed a lot of courtesy throughout the data collection period and more so when administering the interview schedule. This allowed the researcher to probe the respondents for more information about the key research questions. And researcher was upholding strict confidentiality.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE DATA.

4.1 Introduction

The study was carried out to explore the lived experiences of female principals emphasizing their experiences, success, and challenges they face and how they cope up with them. The data were gathered by means of semi-structured interviews. Series of interviews were held with the participants based on their time and place preferences the interviews were recorded, transcribed and translated to English language. And then thematically analyzed in line with the pre-determined research concerns following the conducted all the interviews, the researcher transcribed the texts of each of the interviews read all the transcribed documents which was followed by the identification of relevant items were identified. From each of the transcripts in line with the pre-determined research concerns relevant items from each of the interviews separately. Then the researcher looked for repeated ideas from each of the relevant items under four research concerns. These repeated ideas were, identified and then, categorized into themes and sub-themes.

Within each section, the researcher thematically represents the data findings. In examining the phenomenological analysis of the interview data and the description of participants' lived experiences as discussed in the previous part, the researcher listed every significant statement relevant to the topic. Statements were then clustered into themes or meaning units. Which was followed by the description of the researcher then described what had been experienced which revealed the participant's experiences; through textural description. This would include direct quotes from the transcribed interviews. Finally, the researcher wrote a composite description that presented the essence of the phenomenon called essential invariant structure or essence (Creswell, 2007). After the discussion of the participants' descriptions and career backgrounds, the findings were presented.

Basic Questions

1. How do female principals describe and perceive their leadership experiences of principal ship.
2. What are the major challenges that female principals face in managing primary schools?
3. How do female principals cope up with the challenges that they face while they were on leadership position?

4. What are the good experiences that they have experienced?

4.2 Participants career backgrounds and description of participants

The information composed on the participants' context included teaching experience, number of years of teaching before being promoted to management positions and number of years they have been in their current positions, i.e. principal ship. The women were drawn from ten primary schools of Ilu Aba Bor zone. Pseudonyms were used in order to maintain confidentiality of the participants in terms of their career backgrounds. It focuses on their teaching experience, the number of years before they were promoted to management positions and number of years they have been in the current positions of principal ship. Their years of teaching were in order maintain confidentiality. Between five and twenty-three years, were BMBN having served the longest, i.e. twenty-three, Their experience as principal's averages between two and sixteen years

In probing the phenomenological analysis of the interview data and the description of participants' lived experiences as discussed in chapter three, the researcher listed every significant statement relevant to the topic. Each participant designated own pseudonym based on one word supposed to reflect her overall interview and lived experiences as a principal ship. Repetitive and vague expressions were eliminated or presented in more exact descriptive terms. Statements were then clustered into themes or meaning units. The researcher then described what has been experienced which explained the participant's experiences; this process is called textural description. This would include verbatim quotes from the transcribed interviews. The researcher, then wrote a composite description that presented the essence of the phenomenon called essential invariant structure or essence (Creswell, 2007). After the discussion of the participants' career backgrounds, the findings were presented. And the presentation was according to the research questions which included.

All ten participants agreed to be interviewed and audio recorded as they explained their lived experiences with the expectations they perceive to exist for them as female primary school principal. Each female principal participated in a face-to-face interview where her responses were recorded. Generally, the profile of the participants in terms of their career background and their experience as principal's averages between two (BMBN) and CMBD and RMBA (16) years. All of them had first degree in different fields. Although female principals participating in the study represented different school districts.

Table 1: Participants career profiles

No	Principals	Age	Marital status	Number of years in teaching	Number of years in the current school	Number of years as a principal	Number of children	Level of Edu
1.	AMBB	45	Married	22	9	12	2	BA
2.	BMBN	41	Married	23	2	2	3	BA
3.	YMBO	39	Married	5	2	9	3	BA
4.	CMBD	35	Married	9	3	16	4	BA
5.	AMBM	33	divorced	8	4	8	1	BA
6.	SMBB	36	divorced	8	5	5	1	BA
7.	YMBQ	35	Married	6	9	9	3	BA
8	TT04	38	Married	6	3	12	2	BA
9	TMBG	30	Married	7	6	6	2	BA
10.	RMBA	35	Married	6	3	13	1	BA

4.3 Results and Discussion

In the study analysis yielded four major themes and several sub-themes. Significant statements and meaning units were purified to central topics and discussed below. A complete list of themes and additional supporting quote data is included below.

I. Theme: Experiences as initially challenging

1. Sub-theme: principal's self-commitment

Women are perceived as lacking ambition for a variety of reasons, according to Eddy (2008). For example, first women are pleased with their current employment and hence did not contemplate career changes. Second, no one has encouraged them to follow a higher degree of leadership in their own schools. Participants of the study also have indicated their perception on their leadership roles. Accordingly, pr. 1, AMBB stated,

When I came to leadership position, without any competition and differences in salary of teachers and principals at that time my salary is less than teachers.so no interest for the position because the salary was less than teachers. No one advised me that salary of less. Yet, I served for 12 years as a principal. (AMBB19, 08/2021).

The preparation for principal ship, women principals perceive themselves as being leaders before being actually promoted to a formal leadership position. When describing what motivated her, CMBD said: "You are what were interested in and dedicated to or participated in what you are passionate about in your life, for the more competent as pr.3 stated,

I worked as principal for 16 years, if there was any job to be done at school, I was particularly dedicated to it because I was qualified for a position. I used to share anything leadership-related with other organizations. I was extensively involved in department events and worked on the curriculum for the department. I attended seminars and guided and conducted various workshops (CMBD, 8/07/2021).

This study exemplifies how the women identified their leadership experience after reviewing the participants' actual experiences of how they became principals. When asked about their experiences, the participants responded that once appointed as principals, they considered their new position to be challenging.

As AMBB began to explain her experience:

I have an interest to be a principal and different people encouraged me to take this position. I spent 12 years as a school principal. This was a position I was capable of holding. There was a lot of hostility there. Female counterparts are typically viewed as incompetent by their male counterparts. Every action I took was closely watched. When confronted with the prospect of intimidation, I had to be cautious (AMBB 19/08/2021).

I performed because the person who was most senior chose not to act; he did not want to act, and then I decided to take an opportunity as I felt I had been in the occupation long enough. BMBN still felt that her intention was never to become a principal. As she stated,

I worked as a school principal for two years. I honestly don't think I would have applied for any other school's principal ship. I had no idea what satisfying method when I become a principal I was hoping to be the principal. it took me a long time to practice. I believe that the role of teacher and principal are extremely (BMBN, 20/07/2021).

SMBB had similar experience when she found herself in a situation where she did not know what she was doing. However, instead of blaming the lack of information and training, she said that she regretted not having the opportunity to learn from her previous principal while she was the vice principal. She stated,

... I spent five years as a school principal. I had no notion what a satisfactory strategy to apply when I became a principal. It took a long time for me to adjust because it was such a significant adjustment and it was not working as well as I had hoped. (SMBB, 21/08 / 2021).

According to (Skria and Young (2003) and Thurman (2004), female principals are evaluated not just because of their gender, but also because of their leadership participation and performance. Female school female who oversee complicated and dynamic duties confront a variety of challenges that are deteriorated by male and other societal gender biases. There is a general impression that women are not good leaders, which is strengthened by the fact that if a leader is a

woman, tragedy is bound to happen. This proverb encourages female discrimination in the community and work environment.

Also, the other participant expressed herself as:

If you have confidence for all the work you perform you will be continuing in the future by updating yourself through education. When you learn you may not think always you are a leader, because the education may not invite you to continue. So you find the other chance above that. Performing my job at the given place is also my duty (AMBM, 2/6/ 2021).

2. Sub-theme: Community negative perception

As Lumby (2010:12) explained "The lack of acceptance of women as principals within the broader community which continues to display bigoted cultural stereotypes about women as leaders." This could have an impact on how female principals perform in the long-term. Instances that were resolute did not suggest a lack of respect for and negative attitudes towards female principals. One of the participant YMBO as stated that:

I worked as a school principal for nine years. When I became principal, I felt insulted by gender preconceptions, such as women being weak So, I formed a bad attitude towards male parents; whenever I address them, I appear serious, demanding, and aggressive, yet, when approaching female teachers, I appear gentle. The society misses understanding words. (YMBO, 5/6/ 2021).

Also, the other participant described the society's attitude as follows:

I worked in school principal for 13 years so in my experience the challenge may face me School board committee conflict with me on implementing the school budget plan. And also even the societies used the proverbial that damaged women leader's e.g. women haven't knowledge she born who have a knowledge and they reject the women from leadership position only for the cause of stereotype ((RMBA, 18/07/ 2021).

The other participants AMBB stated that:

Gender still influences women. Women's major challenges are the backward outlook of the society were that the women cannot lead slogan Their contribution in different aspects were degraded and devalued but the women can lead, the internal and external bodies cannot have encouraged you. (AMBB, 19/08/ 2021).

As CMBD indicated, to keep up with all the issues related to the principal's position. She attributed this challenge to not being able to be a delegator which, when sharing their experiences about their challenges, they stated that resistance from members of staff is one of the common challenges that they faced at the schools.

I believe that the most important factor is people; you cannot always measure it, but I believe that people are more precious than everything else. Also, the staff, whose lives I have touched, have always appreciated the assistance I have provided; the inspiration I've provided them, and just being there when they are going through difficult times. Especially the children, who don't always get that at home. (CMBD 08/07/, 2021).

3. Sub-theme: Parents' negative perception

According to Kanjere et al. (2011), there is a general impression that women are not good leaders which is strengthened meaning that if a leader is a woman, tragedy is bound to happen. This proverb encourages female discrimination in the community and work environment. Female principals in this study reported that some parents had negative attitudes towards female principals. As TT04 indicated some male parents even demanded that they could lead the school much better than she does. The following attitude was picked up during interviews. Some male school board committee member said this after a parents' meeting: Some parents say that; "females are weak, you can't take bold decisions", RMBA also discussed the pressures that she feels go along with being a female primary school principal. In her opinion the expectations placed on "male principals are higher than those placed on female".

I think that sometimes we are held to a higher standard. I think that sometimes there are things that a male principal can do that would be overlooked but if a female does it we are held to a higher standard ((RMBA, 18/07/ 2021).

As TT04 also maintains that some parents were not comfortable to be addressed by her with regard to the children or their problems. There are still those who believe that female are not capable of solving problems. AMBM adopted discrimination in response to socio-cultural expectations. Female principals are under pressure from the society because they are expected to portray feminine qualities. Seven of the ten participants are in this study reported that some parents had negative attitudes towards female principals.

4. Sub-theme- Teacher negative perception

As Lumby (2010:12) explained “the lack of acceptance for women as principals within the broader community, which continues to display bigoted cultural stereotypes about women as leaders”. This could have an impact on how female principals perform in the long-term. Instances that were determined did not suggest a lack of respect and negative attitudes towards female principals. There are few teachers who are problematic and do not cooperate. They had once incited learners to become unruly and troubled at some point. As CMBD) stated,

Wow leading is very Challenges. Contradiction are there. When I tell you start from teacher’s behavior, the teacher who undisciplined was there. And he prisoned for 6 months after that he acknowledged me. You are my hero. The past directors did not tell me my fault, but you showed me the way. Then we agreed each other to work together (CMBD 08/07/ 2021).

The researcher explained that this could be due to fact that the staff knew about her visit, and therefore acted consciously. The teachers were unwilling to adapt to change in the education system and policies. Teachers are difficult to change. They resist changes to be implemented,

One of the participant AMBB said that:

The attacking teachers with me sometimes revealed. The great challenge in my school is internal fighting, there are different teachers who fight with me, even when I posted the news this two teacher erases every day. The problem is when there is no peace in our country or our town, it happened. At the beginning I mentioned before to give solutions, (AMBB, 19/08/ 2021).

However, to deal with the many challenges. All participants shared their experiences of the trials that they faced in their principal positions. BMBN shared her experience:

The nastiest is when someone refuses to collaborate you. Instead of consulting with you, you may find that they consult with someone else. They would not consult with me as a principal, the department head Sometimes you go to the school management team (SMT) about a problem before going to the staff, and the staff already knows what you are going to say.(BMBN 20/07/2021).

II. Theme. Mothering as a leadership style

The literature review as Lumby & Azaola (2013) female principals used their mothering skills to try to overcome social problems in schools and communities,, and also to overcome gender stereotypical challenges in their schools. For the purposes of motivation, encouragement, and to get support, participants felt that networking was important, but frequently due to time and financial constraints this is not possible. Two participants recalled how the women principals support network used to help them.

Ilu Aba Bor zone had a women's primary support network that was started by a female district officer. We hoped it would expand and be made available to all members of the school administration. However, because we lacked the means to operate initiatives like this, we had to rely on sponsors; this is why we occasionally experienced malfunctions or hiccups. However, it was quite beneficial (YMBO 5//06// 2021).

Female principals employ a variety of strategies to deal with their complex situation; they act as problem solvers, they have shown a desire to share power and credit through team and relationship building. They have also shown the desire to manage their schools effectively despite all the stereotypes and gender discrimination level led against them. So, they cope up their challenges by using different stakeholders or supporters.

1.Sub-theme- Family support

For principal AMBB, Networking is important, participants felt that time is always a factor, as all principals are busy with the demands of the day. Unlike men, female have additional responsibilities that prevent them from taking the opportunity to network.

YMBO stated that:

As a female we have to consult while a man can just go anywhere after school, even though he is late to pick up a child it's still okay" somehow we, as female, I think we are more responsible than men I would say, for any task we do we always make a plan men can suddenly do this and that's it, we work differently (BMBN, 20/07/2021).

CMBD who said, Females are seen to work differently than men. Four females indicated their supported by her children and their husband by anything sometimes .by caring babies and also she supported her social life by them May be supported by ideas (AMBB.) Apart from the interacting, female principals indicated that they have taken it upon themselves individually to make contact with more experienced principals, regardless of gender, to support them. In the discussion about the flexibility of an academic job, many of the female admitted that it was beneficial to their lives. Especially as mothers. , (AMBB, 19/08/ 2021).

As a mother, YMBQ had a similar view of her academic job. Arguing that there is great honor in having an academic job, and with that comes freedom and flexibility. It became obvious that these female principals struggle to balance their positions between home and work. This is assign to the fact that the role of the principal and of the mother both demand time. A principal one does not work normal hours like the rest of the teachers and this balance becomes a challenge four Female principals TT04 indicated that:

It's extremely difficult. We try to avoid fighting one against the other to the best of my abilities. Sometimes we have to be called while you are at home after I leave school at the end of the day, but we try to strike a balance. Our responsibilities were balanced between work and home, but we were guided by a plan. So, as far as I can remember, putting the needs of others first has always been our way of life. This is a result of our upbringing and early life. We attempt to strike a balance between school and life. (TT04 20/08/2021).

When AMBB faced a challenge from staff members when she had just been promoted, she believed that praying about it helped her to overcome this: This, she believed to be a result of the resistance she faced from the staff because she is female in positions of leadership.

A significant challenge..., I feel was only by God's intervention that I was aided; we prayed about it, and now we are all working along so well, but it was a significant obstacle to overcome. Female principals regard their early leadership experiences as difficult. My leading began from that time. At the first I was afraid. But it was a big challenge... I believe that it was only through being helped by God. we have prayed about it and now we all works together (AMBB 19/08/, 2021).

2. Sub-theme. Gov't support

Participants handled that networking was important, for encouragement, and to get support, but frequently due to time and financial constraints this was not possible. Ten participants recalled how the female principals support network used to help them. Interacting is vital and is much needed, being part of the district female principals grid meeting has sure helped me see my position in not being the only female to experience the challenges are facing with the sharing of innovative ideas, information and advice from experienced and successful principals is crucial for the success of our own school. It helped one grow from strength to strength.). One participant AMBB indicated that,

To be a role model and have my school recognized at the zone, regional, and national levels, as well as to serve as a model when visitors came to visit this school. The Oromia Development Association has a special class 5-8. They encouraged me to do further work, so I received a laboratory supplies grant from Oromia for this school, worth around 500,000 Br. In these year. (AMBB, 19/8/ 2021).

3. Sub-theme: Capacity building

Short-term training and seminars are important for developing the leadership Capacity of female leaders. As AMBB stated,

I worked as vice director for four years and then director of this time. Without any fear and shyness, for women sharing experience and making diplomacy with others are important so I

implemented this. And I have that, from Jimma University I developed how the school run away.so I got different strategies by attended seminars and short term training. Thus it encouraged me for further work (AMBB, 19/8 / 2021)

4. Sub-theme. NGO support

AMBB didn't specify collaboration in particular, she stated that she attempted to get cooperation from all involved:

I'm not the type to be bossy, overbearing, or making demands. I make every effort to be reasonable, to elicit everyone's participation, and to collaborate with everyone. Leading has different Challenges-Being a human is also other challenges. Gender still influences on women but the MfM came &do to develop the leading power. They encouraged me for further work have my school recognized at the zone, regional, and national levels, as well as to serve as a model when visitors came to visit this school. (AMBB, 19/08/2021).

III.Theme. Home and work responsibility

Participants of the study who have indicated their perception on their leadership roles. Accordingly, as one participant RMBA stated that:

Personally, I feel that sometimes my family commitments disturb me in carrying my managerial duties also my husband works far from home, I don't have enough time Sometimes I wish to spend longer at work but I can't because of home duties and even my office cannot evaluate my work fairly. They find the mistake on me (RMBA, 18/07/ 2021,)

According to Smith (2011:137) "female gender roles imply that women are to be primarily wives and mothers. They work hard to accomplish professional success". From the interview it is clear that family responsibilities not only affect the female's leadership roles, but could also be viewed as another reason why there are few female in school leadership posts. The roles of men and women as imposed by society affect female more. This suggests that not all female principals are struggling to balance their work and home responsibilities. Both work and home responsibilities can be demanding, this was also confirmed by some women in this study who indicated that

sometimes role conflict could be assumed to be the factor discouraging most women educators from participating in leadership. It is revealed from data that female with fewer responsibilities cope better with their management work.

Well, I don't know: Females have many family responsibilities. In having less time for socializing and carrying out their home responsibilities. We have double responsibility. The women can tolerate everything so Women 's lives are too complex as PR, one. (AMBB, 19/08/ 2021).

According to Kagoda (2012:10), “Women 's lives are too complex where they are often juggling to be good mothers and competing for leadership with men who are likely to be free from parenting roles”. Balancing home and work was also a challenge to the principals because of both these demand time. The other challenge that was cited was financial constraints and labor. To cope with these demands, the female had to web, in order to make sure they have some form of support systems and they collaborated with both the staff and learners. In leading their schools, they were motherly as part of their approach to the staff and also to the learners need as Sp.1, 4, and 7

Most of the husbands also depend on their wives to physically take care of them. Husbands are not used to doing task for themselves. To a certain extent, they need to be taken care of as much as children because they cannot fully be in charge of their families except being wage earner. Husbands cannot single mind cope with job and need assistance from their wives. All participants mentioned that spirituality helps them to be where they are, to overcome or to cope with the challenges that they come across as principals.

One of the participants RMBA stated:

It's difficult; it's extremely difficult. To the best of my ability, I do not try to put one ahead of the other. I credited my capacity to cope up with participation in a spiritual awareness program... Accepting the universal ideals of love, truth, good conduct, peace, and nonviolence allows me to manage my time more effectively. (RMBA, 18/07/ 2021).

Challenges reported ranged from administrative to personal. Most challenges indicated by female principals emanate from cultural and traditional belief systems that continue to view female as unfit for leadership positions. The school is a social institution and therefore some stakeholders

bring along their beliefs which may attitude challenge female principals. Female principals still face discrimination, gender inequality and cultural stereotypes which are displayed in various forms. Such as negative attitudes towards female principals, lack of dedication, respect and support, late coming from teachers and learners, unruly behavior from learners, and the rejection of female principals by the community.

Females are still perceived as to write in the kitchen, and unfortunately even by other female who are supposed to be supportive. It should not be surprising when female principals aspire not to pursue leadership in future. Data revealed that female principals encountering many challenges in their schools are demotivated to advance to further leadership roles while those with less challenges acquired more qualifications in preparation for future leadership positions.

I. Sub-theme: Collaborative way of leadership

According to Grogan & Shakeshaft, (2011) emphasized that the leadership conducts that relate with female may include, but are not limited to, communication, relationships, shared decision making and building capacity in others. It is also suggested that apart from people orientated way of leading, female also practice leadership as a learning approach by prioritizing student learning. CMBD described herself as a situational leader. She stated that this is because it depends is because sometimes there are non-negotiable. In these sense there is style when an autocratic style should be used and also regarding policies that need to be enforced.

All participants stated that the autocratic style of leadership is the most challenging in the sense that people become resistant, though participants pointed out that being collaborative works, they indicated that it comes with certain disadvantages, AMBB related this to a challenge she had with members of staff to her leadership style. She described.

You do not see yourself in this situation because you think you know everything. You see others' skills and what they have to contribute, and you learn a lot from them, even from newer and less experienced teachers, and you put all of their brains together and come up with this lovely blueprint for how things should evolve. (AMBB, 19/08/2021).

Participants suggested that when leading schools, they prefer to consult with the staff on decisions. They also indicated that they tried to cooperate with everyone. They noted that sometimes staff

would take advantage of them and acknowledged that sometimes they need be autocratic which itself presents more challenges. When sharing their experiences about the greatest achievements that the participants feel they have accomplished as principals, it was noted that for all of them people are very important. They indicated that managing to ensure that teachers work together as a team is a great achievement. AMBB said:

My greatest achievement, I believe, is bringing the workforce together. I can happily state that now everyone in school participates, and everyone now has a role to play, whereas before I could perceive tension when I was seated together. I was mix with everyone because I was acted as a family with my all school stakeholders. (AMBB19/08/, 2021).

According to Lumby and Azaola (2011) uphold that in their study women principals confirmed to use mothering skills to overcome the gender stereotype challenges in their school. Six of them are cited the societies outlook are going to in miss-understanding their contribution in different aspects was degraded and devalued that means they says women can't lead. All female participants are recognized as a mistake. A female principal admitted that when dealing with opposition from senior men, she applies the maternal role of submitting to them to gain cooperation which makes them feel important. The school principal's morale is boosted and a better service is provided based on a team approach and ownership-taking. This is not happening as many competent women do not apply for leadership positions fearing the obvious, that the post is for men (Nguni 2006:21) So Sp 1,4, 7, and 8 are agree with these ideas.

Other participant *CMBD* as stated that:

When I became to principal, I felt I was disrespected by gender preconceptions, such as women being weak. Then you endure everything, including society's attitude even students parent attitude is a problematic. As I have stated, there is a negative attitude about women. It's possible that the work you do isn't visible. There are numerous track event facing female leaders. But Women are capable of leading a country. (TT04, 20/08/ 2021).

From the discussion under the theme, the researcher recognized that all participants perceived that they see themselves as being collaborative, consultative and caring for others; compassionate and people oriented in their decision-making practices.

IV. Theme: Networking as a way of dealing with the challenges

Grogan and Shakeshaft (2011:456) discusses “if we deem gender as a valid way of looking at leadership, women voices and experiences are more important and there is a need to draw from them”. Challenges are according to originate from various stakeholders such as parents and *communities*, learners and teachers they indicated challenges arising from teachers’ insubordination, unruly learners, parents with a negative attitude and behavior towards them as female principals.

1. Sub-theme: Lack of educational office support

According to Moorosi (2010: 11) female principals see themselves visible but without significant power which leads to unjustified stress in their leadership duties. Also complained that in challenges that involve in the community,

The lack of support from educational office which was demonstrated in various ways. Female faced rejection from the community because of the traditional and cultural beliefs that only men are capable to lead. More appropriate for primary school principal ship. Also the office can't evaluate my work fairly because they do not see women's as a leader, do not facilitate anything in place of this they find the mistake on me. (RMBA, 18/07/ 2021).

According to Moorosi (2010: 9) emphasizes that “women continue to experience the same prejudicial attitudes from selection committees under the notion of principal ship is for strong men”. She emphasizes that female experience more obstacles than men do, and that central to these experience is the underlying male norm of who is more appropriate for primary school principal ship. As opposed to they, YMBO appreciated the support she has always received from her unit leader and indicated that he made sure that she was not lost in upholding her managerial duties. Some participants indicated the lack of support from parents which was displayed in various ways. Female faced rejection from the community because of the traditional and cultural beliefs that only men are capable to lead (RMBA, 18/07/ 2021).

Also the other participant express herself:

Instead of initiation there were people who ignore you to hide your work. Then you tolerate all the things including the outlook of societies and also as an office a lot of ignorance is there. Instead of supporting they gave me warning they do not find the solution for failure. This makes to me hate the leading. But the women lead or do more than men. (CMBD 08/07/ 2021

Also, lack of support for female principals was revealed in parents failing to attend parents' meetings which showed they did not collaborate. Therefore, female principals find themselves managing, leading and governing the school at the same time, because they have to make timely decisions. At the societal level, female lack support from their families and communities which is due to the fact that principal ship is associated with gender. In inquiring about supports and sources of influence in their lives, TT04 and TMBG shared with researcher stories of their husband., One of the participant stated,

My husband was an employer and my mother was a stay-at-home mother. I think that's probably one of the reasons for my professional success that the academic life was really attractive to me. So I supported socially as different aspects. Therefore, I handled very carefully my own position. And he helped me in different aspects. Because he is an academic person and support me at any angle. (TT04, 20/08/ 2021).

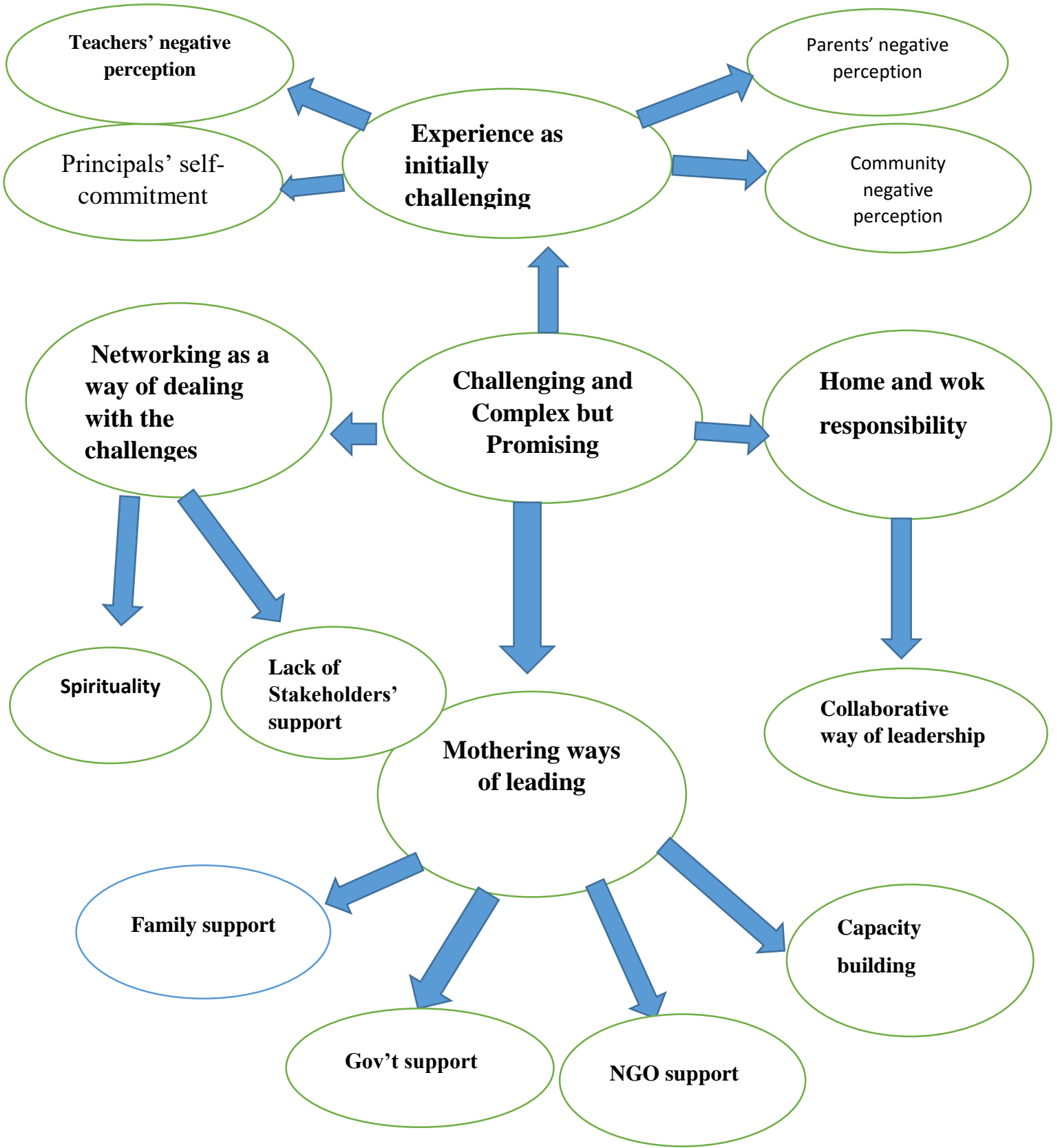
Also, TMBG'S husband was an academic, she explained she was able to go to him for advice and help. AMBB also commented about the role of her parents and how they continued to influence her perspectives on her life, specifically with the idea of working hard and doing the noise work, but also in being considerate of others and being able to see the big picture. Of the participants who were married, husbands came up in the discussion of supports. AMBB, TMBG, RMBD, CMBD and TT04 indicated their husbands were a prime sources of support. For each female, this support may have been in different forms. TMBG said that having an academic husband who could discuss the struggles and challenges of being an academic was a great support to have. She said that having a husband in the same field helped, because he understood the context of her work and the pressures she faced. When asked me if they were given an induction by their immediate

supervisor when they started work as principals, they indicated that they received no introduction. There was no guidance which created a huge challenge for each of them. Pr.2 BMBN, said:

Nothing educational office supportive system, I mean, all such education stakeholders had a significant problem with females leading when I saw this no any awareness only instruction. And they asked me only report even the challenge is faced don't support, in place of this me they gave me warning. So there is no women's appreciation from education office especially in my lived area. Now, I changed my self through practice how to provide solutions and direction to our leading style. (BMBN, 20/07/ 2021).

2.Sub-theme: Spirituality as a way of coping with the demands

According to Grogan & Shakeshaft (2011) indicated that spiritual leadership is another way for female to lead in education. A major influence in study participants being resistant was their spiritual beliefs. Spirituality was really the core of their decision-making and their relationships with others. There is need for an internal strength and power to be able to endure what they faced in their journey as school leaders. It's thematically in spirituality as a source of personal strength as well as a way to understand their contacts to others. Many females are recognized the importance of spirituality as a source of personal strength in the difficult situations. As regards this, AMBB indicated that God plays a big part of her life; that is why I believe I am inspired today. It was evident that spirituality was a great importance.



4. 1 Figure of theme

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 SUMMARY

This qualitative study used semi-structured individual interviews to look into the perspectives of female leaders. It starts with a discussion of the overall conclusions that have arisen from this study as a whole, as well as the organization's context in relation to other existing studies. In addition to describing the female principal ship phenomenon. The study also intended to figure out how female principals succeed in their positions as principals. It also looked into and described the lived experiences of female principals, including the obstacles they face and how they deal with them. In order to have a better understanding of the experiences of female primary school principals in the Ilu Aba Bor Zone,

A total of four themes have merged. These are the themes: first experiences as initially difficult; work and home responsibilities; networking as a way of dealing with obstacles; mothering is a way of leading. According to the findings of this study, female principals with children, such as AMBB and CMBD, used their mothering know-how to acquire respect from students and educators. This has aided them in prioritizing people and viewing the entire school as a family. Women could be better principals, according to CMBD, because of their competence as mothers. She stated that a woman is the mother of everyone and everything; she also stated that if there are issues with teachers, she would have motivated, encouraged, and mold them by being a mother. This is consistent with the literature review, since Lumby and Azaola (2013) discovered that female administrators used their mothering talents to try to solve social problems in their schools and communities, as well as gender stereotyped challenges.

TT04 also stated that when dealing with senior males, she took on the mother role of submitting to them in order to secure their cooperation. This contradicts the literature that claims that women are inferior to men and that parenthood is incompatible with leadership (Lumby & Azaola 2013) cited. Female principals discussed how their social lives had been influenced by their access to the position of principle, as they had to alter their private and family lives as a result of spending longer hours at school.

According to this research, women utilize collaborative, relational, participatory, capacity-building, and consultative methods (Grogan & Shakeshaft 2011). women's leadership behaviors

included, but are not limited to, communication, relationships, shared decision-making, and developing others' potential (Grogan & Shakeshaft, 2011). It was also proposed that, in addition to a people-oriented approach to leadership, women used leadership as a learning strategy, emphasizing student learning. This was obvious in the findings, as all stated that they believe in staff professional development and development of others to improve teaching and learning and promote teacher leadership.

These findings back with the work of other researchers who have focused on gender and leadership in their research. One of the participants, AMBB, argued that it was impossible to be both collaborative and autocratic. Even though she had difficulties, she remarked, 'They took my advantage because I was fair and not demanding and strict, I was trying to be reasonable and compassionate. They took my advantage because of my personality and manner'. This is consistent with the literature, which states that women in positions of leadership confront a double bind. According to (Irby et al. 2002)'s Synergistic Leadership Theory, values, beliefs, and attitudes are a core aspect in leadership because they speak to how people understand leadership in relation to gender.

Generally, the study revealed that there are several different barriers that hinder women from accessing principal positions and also when they have accessed principal's positions. Apart from organizational/structural barriers it has emerged that socio-cultural and personal factors also contribute towards underrepresentation of female in principal positions. These factors also affect female when they are already in the positions as principals. The researcher believes that this study adds to the understanding of female principals in primary schools and hopes that it will assist in facilitating future research on female and leadership.

5.2 Conclusions

This phenomenological study was conducted to investigate the lived experiences female primary school principals of Ilu Aba Bor zone. Ten participants presented for their perceptions and describe regarding their lived experiences as primary school principal. Semi-structured interviews were used to collect qualitative data to analyze the participants' lived experiences regarding their perspectives on the leaders, the challenges they faced by female principals and strategies utilized to be successful. Data analysis revealed that all participants were promoted from different schools where they worked when their principals had gone.

This study concludes that female do not make themselves noticeable for raise for principal ship by applying for the positions. The study also revealed that female experienced principal ship as challenging as beginning their roles in their schools. It emerged that female principals are not prepared as they do not receive training or guidance before assuming principal ship. Even after assuming principal ship, they do not receive induction that could help them to journey their way in their roles as principals. It also emerged that females experience some resistance from members of staff as they assumed principal ship.

In coping with these challenges, it has emerged that females use some support systems that would help them. Another challenge that female experienced are the conflicting demands of work and home as both demand time, and frequently these female principals arrive home late and still have duties to carry out in the home. Networking has emerged as a method used by female principals as a support and participants are members of support networks in their surrounding schools.

The study has also revealed that female's way of leading is collaborative and participatory. They believe in consultation and teamwork. The other amazing thing in this study is that females believe that their gender as mothers is also important in their leadership. This study focused on female principals' lived experiences as it wanted to explore and understand why female are underrepresented in principal ship positions. Apart from organizational or structural barriers, it has emerged that socio-cultural and personal factors do also contribute towards under representation of female in principal positions. These factors also affect female when they are already in the positions as principals.

5.3 Recommendations

From this thesis several recommendations were given for educational administration and female principal ship positions in primary schools emerged. Depending on the findings of the research and the experiences of female primary school principals, the recommendation will strengthen them. These suggestions also help policymakers in the education administration become more aware of the issues. This analysis revealed that these female principals were only appointed because they were already vice principals. As the starts in the positions were available. Then they had the opportunity to fill principal roles.

This study within the context of their relationship with other literature on female and leadership through accepted research approaches. In this study, the researcher has made an intended effort to discuss the findings in relation to the review of the literature as a result attempted to answer the four research questions stated in chapter one. Females need to be also take the initiative to learn new skills and advance professionally by working closely with the principals. They need also network with other female principals and participate in activities designed specifically for women in order to feel powerful and confident. Experienced female principals tried to associate with novice and aspiring female principals as a kind of networking to provide guidance and mentorship.

In this paper, doing phenomenological research is very challenging. Therefore, I hope this paper contributes to the under-standing of phenomenological underpinnings and methodological principles of thematic analysis based on descriptive phenomenology. So, this paper has the potential to provide researchers and students who have an interest in research on lived experiences with a comprehensive and useful method to thematic analysis in phenomenology.

Suggestions for further research, as evidenced by the literature, female leadership needs greater inquiry. Some of the areas where more research is needed include:

- The work environment need to be made more encouraging by introducing good looking system to promote the participation of female in principalship and provide them with skills to enhance their self-perception.
- There is a need to strengthen female leaders network including female primary school principals and support system in each woreda of the Ilu Aba Bor zone whereby successful female principals and female educational offers could serve as self-confident mentors for beginners, aspiring female teachers and serving female principals.

- Females are advised to confident which can be achieved through knowledge gaining, education and consequently make maximum effort to update themselves through trainings of different kinds both off and on jobs.
- It is recommended that female leaders take the initiative by working closely with the principals to acquire the skills and advance professionally in a way it would help them aspire for position in schools.
- Interacting groups are advised to implement affirmative action programs to empower women.
- Experienced female principals are advised to be linked with novice and aspiring principals to give guidance and mentorship.
- From the finding new women leadership characteristic or style emerged. Namely spirituality and mothering. So, it is good if more and comprehensive study even in the study areas other than Ilu aba Bor zone be conducted and consequently, make possible benefit out of it.
- This report describes a phenomenological-based strategy for thematic analysis. It's difficult to do phenomenological research. As a result, the researcher hope that this study contributes to a better understanding of the phenomenological reinforcements and methodological principles of interpretive phenomenology-based thematic analysis.
- This study has the potential to give a thorough and practical method for thematic analysis in phenomenology to researchers and students interested in research on lived experiences.
- More research studies on these will add more insights to women leadership literature.
- A study of existing principals of schools regarding how they prepare and develop female deputy principals for accessing principal ship.

References

- Amondi, O.B. (2011). Representation of women in top management leadership position in Kenya. *Advancing Women in Leadership*, 31, 57 – 68
- Applebaum, S.H., Audet, L. & Miller, J.C. (2003). Gender and leadership? Leadership and gender? A journey through the landscape of theories. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 24(1), 43-51
- Brinia, V. (2012). Men vs. Women; educational leadership in primary schools Greece: An empirical study. *International Journal of Educational Management*, 26(2), 175-191. <https://doi.org/10.1108/09513541211201988>
- Burke, P. J. (2015). Reducing gender equity to a battle of the sexes is simplistic, crude a dangerous. *The Guardian*. Retrieved from <http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/mar/08/gender-equity-battle-of-the-sexes-simplistic-crude-dangerous-universities>
- Charol Shakeshaft (2014), increasing gender equity in educational leadership. *Hand book for achieving gender equity through education* 133-160.2014
- Cherry, J. (2010). What holds the woman back? Women and men's perceptions of the barriers to women's progression. *Opportunities now*, 1 – 19
- Coleman, M. (2002). *Women as head teachers: Striking the balance*. Stoke on Trent Trentham Books.
- Coleman, M. (2003). Gender & leadership style: The self-perceptions of secondary head teachers. *Management in Education*, 17(1), 29 - 33. doi: 10.1177/08920206 030170010901
- Creswell JW (2013) *Qualitative inquiry and research design: choosing among five approaches* (3rd edn.). Sage Publications, USA.
- Creswell, J. (1998). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five traditions* (pp. 22–23). London: SAGE publication Ltd.
- Creswell, J.W, 2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design: Choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- DoE. (Department of Education). 2008. *Statistics South Africa 2006*. Pretoria: Government Printers
- Doepke M. and Tertilt M. 2010. *Does Female Empowerment Promote Economic Development?* Addis Ababa, Ethiopia

- Eagly, A. H. & Karau, S. J. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573–598.
- Eagly, A. H., & Carli, L. L. (2007). Women and the labyrinth of leadership. *Harvard Business Review*, 85(9), 63 – 71.
- Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573-598. doi:10.1037//0033295X.109.3.573.
- Eagly, A. H., & Karau, S. (2002). Role congruity theory of prejudice toward female leaders. *Psychological Review*, 109(3), 573-598. doi:10.1037//0033- 295X.109.3.573.
- Eagly, A. H., Johann Essen-Schmidt, M. C., & van Engen, M. L. (2003). Transformational, transactional, and laissez-faire leadership styles: A meta-analysis comparing women and men. *Psychological Bulletin*, 129(4), 569-591. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.129.4.569>.
- Eddy, B. (2007). Faculty development in rural community colleges. *New Directions for Community Colleges*, (137), 65-76. 107
- Eddy, P. L. (2013). Developing leaders: The role of competencies in rural community colleges. *Community College Review*, 41(1).
- Emebet (2014) women’s participation in educational leadership in government and private secondary schools of Addis Ababa city administration
- Ethiopian Society of Population Studies. 2008. Gender Inequality and Women’s Empowerment In-depth Analysis of the Ethiopian Demographic and Health Survey 2005
- FDRE (2006), *Women’s role in development*, Training Manual, Addis Abeba, Ethiopia.
- FDRE House of Representative (1995). The Constitution of the Federal Democratic Republic of Ethiopia, Berhanena Selam Printing Enterprise, Addis Ababa
- FDRE MLSA .2013. Labor Market Dynamics in Ethiopia Analysis of Seven Key Indicators of the Labor Market (KILM), Draft.
- FDRE. (1994a). National educational and training policy. Policy report, Addis Ababa, Ethiopia doi: 10.3168/jds. S0022-0302(94)77044-2.
- Federal Ministry of Education. 2010. Education Sector Development Program IV (ESDP IV) 2010/2011 –2014/2015

- Gagne, J. C. De, Walters, K. J., Coordinator, S., & Program, E. D. (2010). JOLT – Journal of Online Learning and Teaching. The Lived Experience of Online Educators: Hermeneutic JOLT - Journal of Online Learning and Teaching, 6, 1–11.
- Gervais, S.J. & Hillard, A.L. (2011). A role congruity perspective on prejudice toward Hillary Clinton and Sarah Palin. *Analyses of Social Issues and Public Policy* 11(1), 221–240.
- Getane, jean. Marie and Alex Martines 2004, Race, gender and leadership perspectives of female secondary schools, Florida International University. USA
- Grogan, M. & Shakeshaft, C. (2011). *Women and Educational Leadership*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Harris, A. (2003). The changing context of leadership: Research, theory and practice. In A. Harris, C. Day, D. Hopkins, M. Hadfield, A. Hargreaves, & C. Chapman (Eds.), *Effective Leadership for School Improvement* (pp. 9-25). Routledge, New York, NY.
- Harris, A., Muijs, D., & Crawford, M. (2003). *Deputy and Assistant Heads: Building leadership potential*. Full Report, National College for School Leadership.
- Haslam, S.A. & Ryan, M.K., (2008). The Road to the Glass Cliff: Differences in the Perceived Suitability of Men and Women for Leadership Positions in Succeeding and Failing Organizations, *The Leadership Quarterly*, 19(5), 530-546.
- Heilman, M. E. (2001). Description and prescription: How gender stereotypes prevent women's ascent up the organizational ladder. *Journal of Social Issues*, 57, 657 – 674.
- Hill, C., Miller, K. Benson, K., & Handley, G. (2016). *Barriers and Bias. The status of women in leadership*. AAU Washington. Retrieved 2017, 30 July from and-bias.pdf.
- Houser. J. (2018). *Nursing research: Reading, using, and creating evidence* (4th ed.). Burlington, MA: Jones & Barlett Learning.
- Kanjere, M.M. (2008). *Challenges faced by Women Leaders as School Principals in Rural Areas* (Unpublished Master's Thesis). University of Limpopo, South Africa.
- Khumalo, S.S. (2006). *Challenges faced by women as school managers in primary schools in Warm baths area* (Unpublished Master's Thesis). Thwane University of Technology South Africa.
- Lauterbach, A. A. (2018). Hermeneutic Phenomenological Interviewing: Going beyond Semi-Structured Formats to Help Participants Revisit Experience. *The Qualitative Report*, 23(11), 2883–2898.

- Laverty, S. M. (2003). Hermeneutic Phenomenology and Phenomenology: A Comparison of Historical and Methodological Considerations. *International Journal of Qualitative Methods*, 2(3), 1–29.
- Lindsey, L. (2011). *Gender Roles: A Sociological Perspective* (5th Ed). Pearson.
- Lumby, J. & Azaola, C. (2011). Women principals in small schools in South Africa. *Australian Journal of Education*, 55(1), 73 – 85.
- Lumby, J., Azaola, C., De Wet, A., Skervin, H., Walsh, A. & Williamson, A. 2010. Women school principals in South Africa: Leading the way. Matthew Goniwe School of Leadership and Governance in association with Commonwealth Council for Educational Administration and Management. Southampton: University of Southampton
- Madill A, Jordan A, Shirley C (2000) Objectivity and reliability in qualitative analysis: Realist, conceptualist and radical constructionist epistemologies. *Br J Psychol* 91: 1-20.
- Maguire, M., & Delahunt, B. (2017). Doing a Thematic Analysis: A Practical, Step-by-Step Guide for Learning and Teaching Scholars. *AISHE-J*, 3(3), 3351-33514.
- Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education* (2 , rev a expa ed.). San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. Michael. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- Miles, M. B., & Huberman, A. Michael. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: An expanded source book*. Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.
- MoE. (2017). Ministère Del'Éducation National. Données Statistiques de la Direction Des Strategies de la Planification et des Statistiques (DSPS).
- Moorosi, P. (2010). South African female principals' career paths: Understanding the gender gap in secondary school management. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, 38(5) 547–562.
- Moreau, C. (2014). Rapport de la Côte d'Ivoire sur la mise en oeuvre du programmer d'action de Beijing vingt ans après
- Morley, L. (2013). The rules of the game: Women and the leaderist turn in higher education. *Gender and Education*, 25(1), 116–131
- Morley, L. (2013). The rules of the game: Women and the leaders turn in higher education. *Gender and Education*, 25(1), 116–131.

- Mortari, L. & Tarozzi, M. (2010). *Phenomenology of research: An introductory essay. Phenomenology and Human Science Inquiry.*
- Moustakas, C. (1994). *Phenomenological Research Methods.* Thousand Oaks, CA: SAGE.
- Muller, T.R. (2006). Education for social change: Girls' secondary schooling in Eritrea. *Development and Change, 37 (2), 353-373.*
- Northouse, P. G. (2010). *Leadership: Theory and Practice (5th ed.).* New Delhi, ND: Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd.
- Oplatka, I. (2006). Women in educational administration within developing countries: Towards a new international research agenda. *Journal of Educational Administration, (44) 6, 604-624.*
- Pinkie Euginia Mthembu. (2013). *Phenomenological study of the lived experiences of women in South Africa.* University of KwaZulu-Natal, Pietermaritzburg.
- Reynolds, C. 2002. *Women and school leadership.* Albany: State University Press
- Seidman, I. (2006). *Interviewing as qualitative research: A guide for researchers in education and the social sciences (3rd Ed.).* New York: Teachers College Press
- Smit, B. 2013. *Female school leadership as a relational narrative.* Inaugural lecture,
- Smith JA, Flower P, Larkin M (2009) *Interpretative phenomenological analysis: theory, method and research.* Sage Publishing, USA.
- Spinelli E (2005) *the interpreted world: an introduction to phenomenological psychology (2nd edn.).* Sage Publications, USA.
- Tuffour I (2017) *a Critical Overview of Interpretative Phenomenological Analysis: A Contemporary Qualitative Research Approach.* *J Health Common.* Vol. 2 No. 4:52.
- UNESCO. (2016). *Education for people and planet: Creating sustainable future for all. Global education monitoring report (2nd Ed.).* Retrieved from <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002457/245752e.pdf> University of South Africa, 20 February.
- Vachon, D.B. & Lavis, C. (2013). *Women in Leadership: perceptions and priorities for change.* The Conference Board of Canada, Women in Leadership Report.
- Van Manen, M. (1997). *Researching Lived Experiences: Human Science for an Action Sensitive Pedagogy (2nd Ed).* Canada: The Athlouse Press. Perceptions of gender role congruity in leadership. *Sex Roles, 55, 51-61.*

- Wharton, A.S. (2005). *The Sociology of Gender: An Introduction to Theory and Research*. USA: Blackwell, Malden.
- World Bank. (2014), *International Human Development Indicators*. Retrieved from <http://hdr.undp.org>
- World Bank. (2017). *World Bank Annual Report 2017*. Retrieved December 27, 2017,
- Yulk, G. (2010). *Leadership in Organizations (7th Ed.)*. New Jersey: Prentice Hal
- Zama, P., Hope, K. & Persress, T. 2008. Teachers' perceptions of women in principalship: A current perspective. Paper presented at the Annual Women in Educational Leadership Conference, Lincoln, New England, and September 29-30

APPENDIXES

Appendix A

Jimma University

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION AND BEHAVIORAL SCIENCE

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL PLANNING & MANAGEMENT

Participants interview guide

Dear-participants:

My name is Kebebush Beyene

I am a post graduate student at Jimma University college of Education and Professional Development Studies, Department of Educational Planning and Management. Currently, I am conducting a research under the supervision of Frew Amsale (Ass.Prffessor) on the exploring Lived experiences of female's primary school principals of Ilu Aba Bor Zone The purpose of this study is to understand the lived experiences of women principals who will give descriptions of their work lives, the obstacles they faced, in order to determine how female principals are successful in obtaining their positions. This will be accomplished through in-depth interviews. The reasons women continue to be underrepresented in the role of principal ship. As you are a woman principal in your school situated in Ilu Aba Bor zone, I will interview you at your convenience and it should take approximately 60 minutes. The interview will be recorded using an audiotape with your permission and it is also possible that articles and presentations may be the outcome of the study. All the information about you and your responses will be kept confidential and only I and my supervisor can access. You will be able to withdraw from the research at any time during the study. And then sign the consent form on the next page. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to email me at kebebushbeyene123@gmail.com contact no. 0910451263 or contact my supervisors using contact details below:

frew.amsale@gmail.com and Tigist Tajebe Email- tg2005mwu.

Faculty of Education Jimma University

Thank you very much for your help me

Kebebush Beyene .

Basic Questions

1. How do female principals describe and perceive their leadership experiences of principalship.
2. What are the major challenges that female principals face in managing primary schools?
3. How do female principals cope up with the challenges that they face while they were on leadership position?
4. Is there something that you can tell me as a good experience?

Interview items

1. Subsequently this study is about lived experiences, I would like to start with some general questions.
 - A. Would you tell me about your past experience/live related to school principal, please?
 - B. How did you come to a school principal position?
 - C. What was your primary school experience while learning?
2. The way the school principals perceive and describe their leadership experiences
 - A. What do you say about your work now? How do you relate to your life?
 - B. What sense does it make to you?
3. How the factors in their live interacted to bring them to their present situation?
 - A. Where do you see yourself going in the future?
4. What is the major challenge you have ever faced in order to be successful in your job?
 - A. What are the major challenges that female principals face in managing the primary schools?
 - B. Tell me, how do you balance your family and professional obligations?
 - C. Is networking with other principals vital for your success?
5. What type of support do you have for your professional career?
 - A. What strategy and recommendations would you offer women aspiring to be principal?
 - B. What do you have reconstructed in this interview?
 - C. Is there something that you can tell me as a good experience

Thank you very much for spending your time!

APPENDIX B

JIMMA UNIVERSITY

Collage of Education and Professional Development Studies

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Demographics survey for principals

1. What is your age in years? _____ Years

2. What is your marital status?

Now married

Widowed

Divorced

Separated

Never married

3. Do you have children? If yes how many? -----

4. What is t level of education (for example: TTI, DIPLOMA, BA, BSc, MA

6. Service in teaching -----years.

7. in principal position-----years.

Yours sincerely

Consent Form for Participants

I have read the Participant Information page for this study and have had the details of the study explained to me. My questions about the study have been answered to my satisfaction, and I understand that I may ask further questions at any time. I also understand that I am free to withdraw from the study before analysis has commenced on the data or to decline to answer any particular questions in the study. I agree to provide information to the researcher under the conditions of confidentiality set out on the Participant Information Sheet. I agree to participate in the research conducted by Kebebush Beyene. I also agree for the information to be used for the writing of the thesis, the publication of the articles and meeting presentations.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Additional Consent as Required

I agree / do not agree to my responses to be tape recorded.

Signed: _____

Name: _____

Date: _____

Researcher's name and contact information:

Kebebush Beyene

Email: kebebushbeyene123@gmail.com

APPENDIX .C
JIMMA UNIVERSITY

Collage of Education and Professional Development Studies

Department of Educational Planning and Management

Member checking

Research title: Exploring the lived experiences of female primary school

Principals in Ilu Aba Bor zone

Subject: sending the interview data for member checking

Dear participant:

I would like to thank you for your willingness to dedicate your time to partake in my Study through providing thoughtful and relevant information regarding lived experiences of female primary school principals' have transcribed the interview that we had in the last two week. Attached is the transcription of the interview to you seeking for your validation directing at ensuring the accuracy of the information you have delivered. I have tried my level best to put everything of the interview as it seems in the tape to keep the originality of the interview. I have make only a slight edition of the language in the interview data without affecting the contents of your idea. Please, read the transcription and do not vacillate to comment. Furthermore. I would like to thank you from the lowest of my heart for your priceless contribution to the study. I thank you very much.

Yours sincerely

Kebebush Beyene

Ilu Aba Bor zone Mettu.