UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

FACTORS INFLUENCING JOB SATISFACTION OF FEMALE SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN THE EASTERN PROVINCE OF SAUDI ARABIA

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By

JAMILA MUAZU ABUBAKAR

Thesis Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia, in Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

July 2015

DEDICATION

*To my Husband Dr. Balarabe Yusha'u for without his unconditional love,
support and understanding this thesis would never have been possible.*

Abstract of thesis presented to the Senate of Universiti Putra Malaysia in fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of Master of Science

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Chair: Associate Professor Jamaliah Abdul Hamid, PhD
Faculty: Educational Studies

The widely held premise that satisfied principals are likely to have better retention rates and serve as the best advertisement for attracting future leaders has generated the need to consistently explore principals' job satisfaction. With the recent leadership crisis of principals' attrition and decreasing interest by teachers in taking up principalship positions due to their perception that principals are overworked, overstressed and underpaid, the need to explore principals' job satisfaction and factors that influences job satisfaction for intervention purposes became ever more necessary. Moreover, a number of researchers continue to report that little attention has been given to job satisfaction of school principals despite its importance in understanding employees' well-being, withdrawal, commitment, productivity, performance and job attitudes.

The general objective of this study is to find out factors that influence female principals' job satisfaction in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia. While the specific objectives are to determine the level of job satisfaction, work-family conflict and family-work conflict among female principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia; to compare the difference in job satisfaction based on age groups, experience in principalship, school size and school type; to determine the relationship between, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size, and school type with job satisfaction; and to examine the predictive ability of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size and school type on job satisfaction. The study used descriptive survey research design aligned with quantitative approach.

The study found female principals as satisfied with their jobs based on the Mean score of 42.56 and standard deviation of 12.10. For the level of work – family

conflict, descriptive analysis revealed moderate level of W-FC (M = 3.18, SD = 1.03). Descriptive analysis also indicated moderate level of F-WC among respondents (M = 2.48, SD = 0.84). An independent-sample t-test revealed no significant difference in job satisfaction between 36 – 45 years age group (M= 41.84, SD = 10.93) and 46 years and above age group (M= 43.58, SD= 13.62), $t_{(158)}$ = -.895, p = .372. Similarly, the ANOVA analysis also indicated no significant difference in job satisfaction with regards to experience in principalship, $F_{(2, 157)}$ = .741, p = .479, school size, $F_{(2, 157)}$ = 1.845, p = .161 and school type, $F_{(2,157)}$ = .47, p = .954. Pearson correlation analysis revealed that there is a significant negative and medium relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction (r = -.446, p < .01) and between family-work conflict and job satisfaction (r = -.396, p <.01). The Pearson correlation analysis revealed no relationship between age and job satisfaction (r = 0.07, p <.05); experience in principalship and job satisfaction (r = 0.03, p <.05) and school type and job satisfaction (elementary school) (r = 0.01, p <.05); (high school) (r = 0.006, p <.05). However, the analysis revealed a significant low negative relationship between school size and job satisfaction (r = 0.18, p <.05). Multiple linear regression revealed work-family conflict as a significant predictor of job satisfaction (β = -.301, t = -3.074, p = .003). Family – work conflict was also revealed by the regression analysis to significantly contribute to job satisfaction (β = -.204, t = -2.109, p = .037). However, the regression analysis revealed all the demographic variables with the exception of school size as not significant predictors of job satisfaction, age (β = .001, t = .007, p = .995); experience in principalship (β = -.058, t = -.784, p = .434); school size (β = -.149, t = -2.041, p = .043) and school type: elementary (β = .055, t = .681, p = .497) and high school (β = .010, t = .128, p = .898).

Although the study found principals as satisfied with their jobs, this should not be taken for granted. It is important for policy makers, superintendents and all those in charge of female principals in Saudi Arabia to put forth effort to either maintain this satisfaction or increase it to a higher level. Despite the moderate level of W-FC and F-WC among principals, there is need for family-friendly human resource management practices and related policies. This include employer assistance with dependent care, leaves to accommodate family needs, and counseling on family problems. Work-family conflict and family-work conflict should be considered in all intervention programs relating to female principals' job satisfaction. These two variables have been found as the best predictors of female principal's job satisfaction in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia
Sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk Ijazah Master Sains

**FAKTOR MEMPENGARUHI KEPUASAN KERJA PENGETUA
WANITA DALAM KAWASAN TIMUR ARAB SAUDI**

Oleh

JAMILA MUAZU ABUBAKAR

Julai 2015

Pengerusi: Associate Professor Jamaliah Abdul Hamid, PhD
Fakulti: PengajinPendidikan

Premis secara meluas dipegang yang berpuas pengetua mungkin mempunyai
kadar pengekalan yang lebih baik dan menjadi iklan terbaik untuk menarik
pemimpin masa depan telah menimbulkan keperluan untuk secara konsisten
meneroka kepuasan kerja pengetua. Dengan krisis kepimpinan baru-baru ini
pengetua pergeseran dan mengurangkan minat oleh guru dalam mengambil
kedudukan kepengetuaan kerana persepsi mereka bahawa pengetua yang bekerja
terlalu keras, overstressed dan underpaid, keperluan untuk meneroka pengetua
kepuasan kerja dan faktor-faktor yang boleh menghalang kepuasan kerja untuk
tujuan campur tangan menjadi semakin perlu. Selain itu, beberapa penyelidik
terus melaporkan bahawa sedikit perhatian telah diberikan kepada kepuasan
kerja pengetua sekolah walaupun kepentingannya dalam memahami
kesejahteraan, pengeluaran, komitmen, produktiviti, prestasi dan sikap kerja
pekerja.

Objektif umum kajian ini adalah untuk mengetahui faktor-faktor yang
mempengaruhi kepuasan kerja pengetua wanita 'di wilayah Timur Arab Saudi.
Walaupun objektif khusus adalah untuk menggambarkan tahap kepuasan kerja,
konflik kerja-keluarga dan konflik keluarga-kerja di kalangan pengetua wanita
di wilayah Timur Arab Saudi; membuat perbandingan dengan kepuasan kerja
berdasarkan kumpulan umur, pengalaman dalam kepengetuaan, saiz sekolah dan
jenis sekolah; untuk menentukan hubungan antara, konflik kerja-keluarga,
konflik keluarga-kerja, umur, pengalaman dalam kepengetuaan, saiz sekolah,
dan jenis sekolah dengan kepuasan kerja; dan untuk memeriksa keupayaan
ramalan konflik kerja-keluarga, konflik keluarga-kerja, umur, pengalaman
dalam kepengetuaan, saiz sekolah dan jenis sekolah terhadap kepuasan kerja.
Kajian deskriptif digunakan reka bentuk kajian tinjauan sejajar dengan
pendekatan kuantitatif.

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Kajian ini mendapati pengetua wanita sebagai berpuas hati dengan kerja mereka berdasarkan skor min sebanyak 42,56 dan sisihan piawai 12.10. Untuk tahap kerja - konflik keluarga, analisis deskriptif menunjukkan tahap sederhana W-FC (M = 3.18, SD = 1.03). Analisis deskriptif juga menunjukkan tahap sederhana F-WC di kalangan responden (M = 2.48, SD = 0.84). Bebas-sampel ujian-t menunjukkan tiada perbezaan yang signifikan kepuasan kerja antara 36-45 tahun (M = 41,84, SD = 10.93) dan 46 tahun ke atas kumpulan umur (M = 43,58, SD = 13,62), t (158) = -.895, p = 0,372. Begitu juga, analisis ANOVA juga menunjukkan tidak terdapat perbezaan yang signifikan kepuasan kerja dari segi pengalaman dalam kepengetuaan, F (2, 157) = 0,741, p = 0,479, saiz sekolah, F (2, 157) = 1,845, p =. 161 dan jenis sekolah, F (2,157) = .47, p = 0,954. Analisis korelasi Pearson menunjukkan terdapat hubungan negatif dan sederhana yang signifikan antara konflik kerja-keluarga dan kepuasan kerja (r = -.446, p <.01) dan di antara konflik keluarga-kerja dan kepuasan kerja (r = -.396, p <.01). The Pearson analisis korelasi juga menunjukkan tiada hubungan antara umur dan kepuasan kerja (r = 0.07, p <.05); pengalaman dalam kepengetuaan dan kepuasan kerja (r = 0.03, p <.05) dan jenis sekolah dan kepuasan kerja (sekolah rendah) (r = 0.01, p <.05); (Sekolah tinggi) (r = 0.006, p <.05). Walau bagaimanapun, analisis ini menunjukkan hubungan yang signifikan rendah negatif di antara saiz sekolah dan kepuasan kerja (r = 0.18, p <.05). Pelbagai linear regresi mendedahkan konflik kerja-keluarga sebagai peramal yang signifikan kepuasan kerja (β = -.301, t = -3,074, p = 0,003). Keluarga - konflik kerja juga diturunkan oleh analisis regresi dengan ketara menyumbang kepada kepuasan kerja (β = -.204, t = -2,109, p = 0,037). Walau bagaimanapun, analisis regresi menunjukkan semua pembolehubah demografi kecuali saiz sekolah sebagai peramal tidak signifikan kepuasan kerja, umur (β = .001, t = 0,007, p = 0,995); pengalaman dalam kepengetuaan (β = -.058, t = -.784, p = 0,434); saiz sekolah (β = -.149, t = -2,041, p = 0,043) dan jenis sekolah: asas (β = 0,055, t = 0,681, p = 0,497) dan sekolah tinggi (β = 0,010, t = 0,128, p = 0,898).

Walaupun kajian ini mendapati pengetua sebagai berpuas hati dengan pekerjaan mereka, ini tidak boleh diambil mudah. Adalah penting bagi pembuat dasar, penguasa dan semua orang-orang yang bertanggungjawab bagi pengetua wanita di Arab Saudi untuk mengemukakan usaha untuk sama ada mengekalkan kepuasan ini atau meningkatkan ke tahap yang lebih tinggi. Walaupun tahap sederhana W-FC dan F-WC di kalangan pengetua, terdapat keperluan untuk amalan pengurusan sumber manusia yang mesra keluarga dan dasar-dasar yang berkaitan. Ini termasuk bantuan majikan dengan penjagaan bergantung, daun untuk menampung keperluan keluarga, dan kaunseling mengenai masalah keluarga. Konflik kerja-keluarga dan konflik keluarga-kerja hendaklah dipertimbangkan dalam semua program intervensi yang berkaitan dengan kepuasan kerja pengetua wanita. Kedua-dua pembolehubah telah ditemui sebagai peramal terbaik kepuasan kerja pengetua wanita di wilayah Timur Arab Saudi.

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This thesis was submitted to the Senate of the Universiti Putra Malaysia and has been accepted as fulfillment of the requirement for the degree of Master of Science. The members of the supervisory committee were as follows:

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F-WC	Family roles conflicting or interfering with work roles
JIG	Job In General
WFC	Work – Family Conflict
W-FC	Work roles conflicting or interfering with family roles

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Background

The widely held premise that satisfied principals are likely to have better retention rates and serve as the best advertisement for attracting future leaders has generated the need to consistently explore principals' job satisfaction (Sodoma & Else, 2009, Fraser & Brock, 2006, Newby, 1999). With the recent leadership crisis of principals' attrition and decreasing interest by teachers in taking up principalship positions due to their perception that principals are overworked, overstressed and underpaid (Mathis, 2010; Fraser & Brock, 2006; Chirichello,2003); the need to explore principals' job satisfaction and factors that influences job satisfaction for intervention purposes became ever more necessary. Moreover, a number of researchers (Sodoma 2009; Sablatura 2002; Mack 2000), continue to report that little attention has been given to job satisfaction of school principals despite its importance in understanding employees well-being, withdrawal, commitment, productivity, performance and job attitudes.

Despite the seemingly importance of job satisfaction in educational leadership, not much attention has been given to school principals' job satisfaction. While job satisfaction is considered one of the most widely researched subjects in the field of Industrial/Organizational Psychology (Judge & Church, 2000), "studies on job satisfaction in the educational arena have not been as prolific" (Lombardo 2005, p.6). In their examination of 474 articles published in the first 26 volumes of the Educational Administration Quarterly, Thompson, McNamara and Hoyle (1997), found that only 41 articles addressed the issue of job satisfaction. Out of those 41, only 3 articles studied the job satisfaction of educational administrators. More recently, researchers such as Sodoma (2009); Sablatura (2002) and Mack (2000), also lament that little attention has been given to the job satisfaction of school principals.

The dearth of job satisfaction studies in Saudi Arabia was also noted by Maghrabi (1999, p.1) who reported in his study of job satisfaction of 153 managers in Saudi Arabia that job "satisfaction has been studied intensively in the west, but only a few studies have been conducted in non-western nations". Alsinani (2003, P.2) in his study of job satisfaction of faculty members in colleges of technology in Saudi Arabia asserts that "there have been only a few Saudi Arabian studies on job satisfaction in the education sector". More recently, Al-Rubaish, Rahim, Abumadini & Wosornu (2011), lament that very few job satisfaction were conducted in Saudi Arabia. Consequently, there is no comprehensive, empirical research on job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia,

particularly within the context of female school principals. Due to this dearth of literature, the need to explore principal's job satisfaction is timely and ever more necessary especially in Saudi Arabia.

Although Johnson & Holdaway (1994; 1991) stressed the urgent need for job satisfaction studies in view of the changing role of the school principal in many places, they assert that there remain several reasons for continued research into the job satisfaction of school principals. These reasons according to Johnson & Holdaway (1994) include: concerns about declining satisfaction in the education profession, the desirable condition of job satisfaction in itself as it is closely related to the overall quality of life in a society, the nature of modern work with its increasing emphasis upon technology and accountability; and its higher stress levels indicate a need for greater attention to the nature and causes of job satisfaction.

Apart from exploring job satisfaction as a way towards improving school heads' recruitment and retention, assessing factors that influence job satisfaction is also necessary. The need to determine predictors of job satisfaction has frequently been emphasized by researchers (e.g. Rayfield and Diamantes 2004; Sutter 1996). Factors such as work-family conflict, the work itself, autonomy, promotional opportunities, relationship with co-workers and supervisors are among the variables found to influence individuals' job satisfaction (Hackman & Oldham, 1980; Smith, Kendall, & Hulin, 1969).

One prominent predictor of female principals' job satisfaction is work-family conflict (Eckman 2000, 2010; Thomson et. al., 1997). Work-family conflict (WFC) is generally defined as 'a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role' (Greenhaus & Beutell 1985:77).

In her study of female principals' role conflict and job satisfaction, Eckman (2000) found an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and female principals' work-family conflict, that is the higher the work-family conflict experienced, the lower the level of job satisfaction and vice versa. Eckman also found failure to resolve the conflicts between female principals' professional role and her role as a wife and mother as causing tendency of attrition in female principals. WFC was also found affecting females' interest in principalship. Blount (1998) noted work-family conflict as one of the reasons affecting females' aspiration towards administrative positions. She argued that large number of women has not aspired to administrative positions because the time demands conflicted with their family responsibilities.

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Researchers (e.g., Netemeyer, Boles & McMurrian, 1996; Pleck, 1977) have found work and family as two fundamental and interdependent systems for dual-career live. Any inconsistency in the work or family system may consequently have an influence on the other system. These directional influences of work and family can lead females to two types of conflict, namely, work-family conflict (W-FC) and family-work conflict (F-WC). W-FC occurs when work activities interfere with family responsibilities, whereas F-WC occurs when family responsibilities spill over and interferes with work activities.

As a result of the role played by WFC in female principals' job satisfaction; this study aims to look at the influence of WFC (in terms of work conflicting with family and family conflicting with work) on female principals' job satisfaction within the context of Saudi Arabia.

The Expanding Role of the School Principal as an Urgent Need for Principals' Job Satisfaction Studies

There appears to be an increasing concern across the globe by educational scholars, school superintendents and policy makers over an impending leadership crisis in educational administration. Recent literature has consistently reported a steadily decreasing interest by teachers and principals in principalship (see e.g., Eckman & Kelber, 2010; Fraser & Brock, 2006; Young & McLeod 2001). Teachers, a cadre from whom principals' positions are filled are discouraged from the perception that principals are underpaid, overstressed and overworked (Fraser & Brock, 2006). Principals on the other hand, are reported as "leaving the profession, and beginning new career, and some are returning to the classroom for various reasons" (Haines 2007, p.2). The crisis is a predicted future shortage of educational administrators. This crisis is prevalent both in Western countries and also in some Middle Eastern countries such as Saudi Arabia.

In her study of female principals in Saudi Arabia, Mathis (2010) reported that teachers and even principals "prefer the position of assistant principal to that of principal because it is less responsibility" (p.13). Similarly, in the United Sates, Chirichello (2003) lament that qualified candidates for principalship indicated their disinterest in the position due to the "high level of stress associated with the job; pressures of accountability for student success; insufficient salary; and a lack of time for personal life" (p. 356).

Several researchers (e.g., Sodoma & Else, 2009; Fraser & Brock 2006; Norton 2002) attribute the disinterest in principalship to the changing role of the school principal. The role of the school principal continues to expand. From the "principal teacher" (Matthews & Crow 2003, p. 18), a principal is now an instructional and transformational leader, a politician, an advocate, a manager,

supervisor and a mentor (Matthews & Crow 2003; Leithwood& Duke 1999). Further, a principal is expected to sustain good interpersonal relations with parents, teachers, students as well as with community leaders and social service personnel (Richford & Fortune, 2001). The increasing demands and responsibilities placed on school principals were illustrated by the United States National Association of Secondary School Principals (NASSP) in the following:

> Today's principal must be a legal expert, health and social services coordinator, fundraiser, public relations consultant, parental involvement expert, and security officer, who is technologically savvy, diplomatic, with top-notch managerial skills, whose most important duty is the implementation of instructional programs, curricula, pedagogical practice, and assessment models (page anonymous)

Although the social, political, and national context within which principals across the globe practice may vary, the challenges facing principals each day are common and often quite frightening (d'Arbon et al., 2001). In her study of female principals in Saudi Arabia, Mathis (2010, p.87) reported female principals as describing their role as a "huge responsibility". The female principals reported their roles to include: managerial, supervisory and leadership responsibilities, maintaining school safety and student behaviour problems, maintaining good relationship with parents; teachers and students, checking students' weaknesses and making plans for improvement, planning extra-curricular activities for the students, providing a safe and convenient environment for learning and at the same time implementing the goal of the Saudi Ministry of Education in all areas including educational, academics, and behavioral.

With the changing role of school principals and the ever-increasing demands on principals, the question of how the role of the principal can be redesigned or restructured so as to reduce the demands and conflict that make the position seem unattractive to position holders and aspirants became necessary (Eckman & Kelber, 2010). Researchers have suggested a number of solutions and strategies including reconfiguring the principal's role to a two-person team (Eckman & Kelber, 2010), publicizing the satisfactory aspects of the principalship and improving salaries and benefits (Tallerico & Tingley, 2001) among others. Determining principals' job satisfaction is considered the first step in addressing issues of retention and disinterest in principalship (Sodoma & Else, 2009; Fraser & Brock, 2006). According to Latham (1998), "one of the best ways to strengthen the teaching profession would be to make teaching a more satisfying career. Not only would this encourage bright young prospects to become teachers, it would also encourage experienced teachers to stay in the profession" (p. 82). Haines (2007) maintains that this should also hold true for school principals as well as other professions.

On the importance of job satisfaction in addressing the current leadership crisis, Fraser & Brock (2006) assert that principals who love their jobs are likely to have better retention rates and serve as the best advertisement for attracting future leaders. Teachers who work with happy and satisfied principals are more likely to have positive perceptions about the principalship and view it as a career choice. Similarly, Haines (2007) contends that since job satisfaction is an important factor in the retention of employees, it will also be important in helping us understand why principals are leaving and others are not entering the profession.

Although disinterest in principalship is not the focus of this present Masters research, the results of this research may also shed some lights onto the situation of female principals in particular to the problem of the future succession of female principals in Saudi Arabia. While the procedures of selection and succession may ensure the continuation of the line of appointment of future female principalship in Saudi Arabia, it is the quality of the role holder in terms of their resiliency and commitment to the challenges of their tasks that we must address. In this light, the objective of this research is to study the level of job satisfaction of female principals in Saudi Arabia and factors attributed to that satisfaction. In so doing this research hopes to highlight some ways that the interest and motivation in female principalship is sustained.

Increasing Participation of Saudi Women in the Workforce

Women's workforce participation in Saudi Arabia has undergone dramatic changes as a result of the active support of women's education by the Saudi government through establishment of girls' schools and women campuses in almost all universities in the country (AlMunajjed, 1997). This has produced a good number of female employable graduates ready for the labour market. In 1990, for example, 47% of undergraduates' enrolment at Saudi Arabian colleges and universities were women (Hamdan, 2005). Further, the existence of what Doumato (2002) termed as "all-women workforce" – a working place that comprises only females from top to bottom - has by far helped Saudi women in securing jobs thus increasing the population of working women/mothers in Saudi Arabia. According to Fakhro (1996, p. 257), "sex segregation of women in Saudi Arabia gives them a professional advantage since there is no competition with male counterparts for jobs in women's schools, banks and universities". Saudi Arabia, as the epicentre of sex segregation, separate men and women at the work place, women have their own schools with women as leaders and teachers, and girls as student. In his interview with educated Saudi women, Hamdan (2005) reported that with regards to women's employment rate, Saudi women suggest that because of segregation, women are having access to more jobs and do not have to compete with men.

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With growing number of women in the labour force, women are challenged with multiplicity of roles at work and home (Geurts & Demerouti, 2003). These roles of a mother and/or spouse and a worker have been found to be mutually incompatible and capable of draining emotional and mental resources in women, thus leaving them feeling fatigued, restless, guilty, and dissatisfied. According to the role theory (Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek, & Rosenthal, 1964), multiple roles give rise to a number of role expectations and simultaneous occurrence of a number of role expectations may trigger responses and tasks that may be competing so that compliance with one would make compliance with the other more difficult or impossible thus causing role conflict. A fundamental aspect of this theory is the scarcity model of roles (Goode, 1960) which contends that resources in terms of time, and energy are limited and that multiple roles inevitably reduce the resources available to meet all role demands, thus leading to inter-role conflict (e.g., work-family conflict), which functions as a stressor and subsequently causes strain and job dissatisfaction (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1970). This study aims to test the validity of role theory within the context of female principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia.

The Female Principal

Women in educational administration have faced continuous underrepresentation and underutilization in leadership positions and in educational administration research (Young and McLeod 2001; Bell & Chase 1993; Shakeshaft,1989). The androcentric nature of educational administration theories by having a male defined conceptual base and the disproportionately low representation of women in principalship despite their large number in the teaching force is well documented in the literature (see e.g., Bell & Chase, 1993; Blackmore & Kenway, 1993; Shakeshaft, 1989). In the United States for example, Pounder and Merrill (2001) reported females as earning more than half of the administrative degrees and licenses in educational preparation programs. In the same year Young & McLeod (2001) reported that only 26% of secondary school principals were females in the United States.

Right from inception, educational administration has been " obstinately gender-blind " (Blackmore & Kenway 1993, p.98), consequently, " male dominated " (Eckman 2004, p. 366), " male defined " (Mertz & McNeely, 1998 p.196) and stereotyped as " masculine " (Erickson, 1985, p.288) with the thought that only an " androgynous " (Erickson 1985, p.288) female administrator has the potentials to succeed in the field. Beginning from the 1980's and beyond, scholars (e.g., Epp, Sackney & Kustaski, 1994; Shakeshaft, 1989) detected the evidence of androcentric bias in educational administration literature and call for theory and research that would be more inclusive of women's perspectives. Androcentric bias is simply a situation where "authors focus on men as the subject of research but unquestioningly generalize their models and findings to women" (Yeakey, Johnston & Adikson, 1986 p.116). Addressing the gender gap

in educational administration research, scholars (e.g., Epp et al. 1994; Shakeshaft, 1989) argued that theories and concepts emerging solely from a male consciousness may be irrelevant for the female experience and inadequate for explaining female behaviour. Thus they call for the need to build up a body of literature that reflects the female experience in educational administration. Unless such studies are being conducted as they argued, current theories cannot be questioned for androcentrism neither can they be re-conceptualized to include female perspective.

It is within this context, to capture the female perspective in educational leadership that the researcher undertook this present Masters study to fill the theoretical gap identified by scholars and to build on a body of literature that reflects female experience in educational administration, particularly in the context of Saudi Arabia.

1.2   Statement of the problem

The conservative nature of the Saudi society (Hamdan, 2005), and its traditional gender ideology of work roles more salient to men, and family and home roles responsibilities more salient to women, can make the Saudi female principal highly vulnerable to WFC thus affecting her job satisfaction. Studies have found that traditional gender role expectations can contribute to high level of WFC in women (Wang, Lawler & Shi, 2010; Geurts & Demerouti, 2003) thus influencing their level of job satisfaction (Adam, 2008). The presence of traditional gender roles in Saudi Arabia may also expose the Saudi female principal to internal conflict. Erickson (1985) reported female principals as experiencing a gendered type of internal conflict as a result of their socialization process in the society. Eckman (2000) asserts that internal conflict occurs because women were socialized to behave one way and then found themselves in roles that required a different type of behaviour. The role of the principal according to Erickson, demands masculine characteristics such as assertiveness, independence, control of one's emotional and strength which contradicts the way women are traditionally taught to behave in the society through their socialization process. Thus, in order for the female principal to be successful in principalship, she needs to understand and practice the concept of androgyny (Erickson, 1985). This requires her to make personality shift or what the work/family border theory (Clark, 2000) termed as "extreme transition" due to the differences in the masculine nature of principalship and what is expected from her as a female by virtue of the way she's socialized in the society. The female principal is reported as shifting her role a 180 degrees when she gets home due to the difference between her gender role of a mother and a care giver and her professional role. An informant in Erickson study reported that "I feel resentful and a little ridiculous when I have to ask my husband for 10 dollars for groceries and he questions the expenditure, after I have just spent the day managing a budget of thousands of dollars" (Erickson 1985, p. 290).

Despite the seemingly effect of WFC on the female principal and her job satisfaction, there is no sound empirical research available to guide social discourse on this topic in Saudi Arabia. Therefore, it is not known what the level of work-family conflict and job satisfaction is among female principals in Saudi Arabia, nor is it known whether work-family conflict and job satisfaction correlates positively or negatively. How the relationship between these variables might in turn influence Saudi female principals' job satisfaction is also unknown. This study aims to find out among other things, the level of W-FC and F-WC among female school principals in Saudi Arabia, and the extent to which this conflict influence the principals' job satisfaction.

Recent literature review (e.g., Brown, 2009; Sodoma & Else, 2009; Newby, 1999) also shows demographic variables such as age, experience in principalship, and organizational variables such as school size and school type as influencing principals' job satisfaction. Bruce and Blackburn (1992) maintain that "a number of scholars have concluded that older workers are more satisfied than younger colleagues and that the length of time an employee has been on the job directly affects job satisfaction". (p. 57).

In their study of 266 female principals throughout the United States, Fansher and Buxton, (1984) found school size as one of the three variables having greater predictor of overall job satisfaction for secondary female principals in the United States. Armstrong (2001) found that as school size increases, levels of job satisfaction among principals' decreases. He suggested further studies to look at school size as a predictor variable for job satisfaction. Hence, research needs to be done to see if above findings holds true for female principals in Saudi Arabia.

Further, current literature on Saudi school principals mainly focused in the domains of principals' leadership role, behaviour, skills and beliefs, for example, principals' behaviour (Mathis, 2010; Aldarweesh, 2003; Badawood, 2003; Alsufyan2002; Al- Askar, 2002), principals' perceptions of the school counsellor role (AlGhamdi & Riddick, 2011), principals' perception of their role in the implementation of middle school characteristics (Hadi, 2002), and principals' attitudes toward cooperative learning methods (Basamh, 2002). A few studies were carried out on the principals' selection policy (Al-Kheshaiban, 2002). The relatively few studies that dealt with job satisfaction of employees in the education sector in Saudi Arabia focused mainly on colleges and university faculty members, for example, job satisfaction of faculty members in Saudi universities (Almahboob, 1987), job satisfaction of faculty members in the Saudi teacher education colleges (Al-Hakheem, 1995), and job satisfaction of faculty members in college of technology (Alsinani, 2003). Subsequently, a significant dearth of literature on school principals' job satisfaction in Saudi Arabia, and in particular, female school principals' job satisfaction. The paucity of job satisfaction studies in Saudi Arabia was reported by Maghrabi (1999);

Alsinani (2003); and more recently by Al-Rubaish, Rahim, Abumadini, & Wosornu (2011).

Further, a review was conducted based on a computerized search - Springer, Proquest, SAGE, Emerald, EBSCOHost, and Science Direct. Several related keywords to the variables within this study were identified and searched. Not a single study that examined the work-family conflict and job satisfaction of Saudi female principal was found.

With regards to current work-family conflict studies, when one reviews the literature on female principals' work-family conflict, it is immediately apparent that the bidirectional nature of work-family conflict in female school administrators has not been specifically addressed. Whenever female principals' role conflict is explored, the main concern has been on documenting the existence of conflict for women in educational administration (Eckman, 2001). There has been relatively little attempt to specifically explore the level of W-FC, that is work interference with family or F-WC, that is family interference with work. In this vein, Netemeyer et al. (1996, p. 400) asserts that "although a conceptual distinction between work conflicting with the family and family conflicting with work has been made, most research has assessed only work-family conflict " that is work interference with family. Recognizing this gap in the WFC research of female principals, this masters study aims to explore the bi-directional effect of work-family conflict (in terms of work conflicting with family (W-FC) and family conflicting with work (F-WC) on job satisfaction of female principals in Saudi Arabia. The researcher believes that the bi-directional effect of conflict between work and family represents a more fluid and realistic embodiment not only of the duality of roles, but also the superimposing and overlapping flow of conflict from work to family and vice versa, from family to work place. By examining the bi-directional flow of conflict, it is hypothesized that we would be able to discover which of the two flows appear more prominent amongst female school principals in Saudi Arabia. Related to that, we may also discover which of the bi-directional flow affects their job satisfaction.

1.3   Research objectives

The general objective of this study is to find out factors that influence female principals' job satisfaction in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia. While the specific objectives are as follows:

1. To determine the level of job satisfaction, work-family conflict and family-work conflict among female principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia;
2. To compare the difference in job satisfaction based on age groups, experience in principalship, school size and school type;

3. To determine the relationship between, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size, and school type with job satisfaction;
4. To examine the predictive ability of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size and school type on job satisfaction.

1.4   Research questions

In order to achieve the above objectives, this study was guided by the following research questions:
1. What is the level of job satisfaction, work-family conflict (W-FC) and family-work conflict (F-WC) amongst female school principals in Eastern Province of Saudi Arabia?
2. Are there significant differences in job satisfaction among female principals based on their age, experience in principalship, school size, and school type?
3. Is there significant relationship between work-family (W-FC) and family-work conflict (F-WC), age, experience in principalship, school size, and school type with job satisfaction?
4. Is W-FC, F-WC, age, experience in principalship, school size and school level significant predictors of job satisfaction for female school principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia?

HYPOTHESES
In addition, the following hypotheses were formulated with the research objectives of the study.
Objective 2: To compare the differences in job satisfaction based on age groups, experience in principalship, school size and school level:
H_A1: There is significant difference in job satisfaction of female principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia based on their age group, experience in principalship, school size and school type.

Objective 3: To determine the relationship between, work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size, and school type with job satisfaction;

H_A2. There is significant relationship between work-family conflict, family work conflict, age, experience in principalship, school size and school type with job satisfaction among female principals in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia.

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Objective 4: To examine the predictive ability of work-family conflict, family-work conflict, age, years of experience in principalship, school size and school level on job satisfaction:

H_A3: Work-family conflict, family-work Conflict, age, experience in principalship school size and school type significantly contributes to job satisfaction among female principal in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia.

The formation of these hypotheses was based on previous studies discussed in chapter two.

1.5   Significance of the Study

Research devoted solely to the study of female school principals' job satisfaction and work-family conflict (WFC) is yet to be conducted in the Eastern province of Saudi Arabia. Thus, it is expected that the results of this study would (a) contribute to a larger body of literature on female principals job satisfaction and work-family conflict (b) help to establish a foundation for the study of female principals' job satisfaction and work-family conflict in Saudi Arabia (c) help to explain factors that can inhibit or enhance female principals' satisfaction with their jobs (d) provide data that can be used to compare experiences of the female principal in a sex segregated society and the female principal in a mixed society (e) assist the Saudi Ministry of Education, the Eastern province school district and superintendents in identifying strategies for making decisions which affect female school principal.

1.6   Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined as they were operationalized in this study.
Job Satisfaction: The feelings a worker has about his or her job.

Work-Family Conflict (WFC): a form of inter role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect. That is, participation in the work (family) role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the family (work) role.
Work conflicting with Family or Work-Family Conflict (W-FC): This conflict occurs when work-related activities interfere with home responsibilities.
Family Conflicting with Work Conflict or Family-work Conflict (F-WC): This conflict arises when family-role or responsibilities interfere with work activities
School type: In this study, I have decided to base school type according to the criteria of schools specified by the Ministry of education in Saudi Arabia: This refers to the 3 school levels which comprise of:

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- ‹ **Elementary school:** Public school from grade 1to 6 for girls with females as school leaders and teachers. The school is established and financially supported by the Saudi Ministry of Education.
- ‹ **Intermediate school:** Public school from grade 7 to 9 for girls and with females as school leaders and teachers. The school is established and financially supported by the Saudi Ministry of Education.
- ‹ **High School:** Public school from grade 10 to 12 for girls, with females as school leaders and teachers. The school is established and financially supported by the Saudi Ministry of Education.

Experience in principalship: In this study the researcher has chosen to define experience in principalship as the total cumulative time served as school head, regardless of the number of schools served. These are grouped into 1-5 years, 6-10 and 11 and above years.

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