



**AN EXPLORATORY ANALYSIS OF MASTERS'  
DISSERTATIONS IN PSYCHOLOGY UNDERTAKEN BY  
WOMEN AND MEN IN SOUTH AFRICA FROM 1964-1998**

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## ABSTRACT

This study was an exploratory thematic and categorical analysis of the titles and abstracts of women and men psychology master's dissertations completed from 1964 to 1998. These dissertations represent research undertaken at all South African universities. They are located on the Nexus database, developed by the Centre for Science Development (CSD) at the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and maintained by the National Research Foundation (NRF). This research is an investigation of trends, which might lead to conclusions regarding the areas of psychological specialisations chosen for research, the methodologies of research applied and the sample type employed in the research. Secondly, a longitudinal analysis was conducted to examine if any shifts of focus over time in any of the three areas already mentioned (i.e. specialisation, methodology and sample type) had occurred.

The methodology used was a combination of both quantitative statistical analysis and qualitative analysis of selected women's and men's dissertations. Content analysis was the preliminary research method used to code the data which was then statistically analysed by means of correspondence analysis. The literature review examined psychology's historical exclusion of women both as professionals and as potential subjects of research. The literature also examines the founding premise of psychological research dominated by scientific empiricism underpinned by logical positivism. Feminist literature was then reviewed in order to offer a commentary on the patriarchal underpinnings embedded in the discipline and to offer and explore alternatives.

The outcome of this study revealed a number of valuable findings. First, there had been a major increase in the selection of women masters' students in psychology. Second, the dominant methodology remains quantitative in nature. There is however a slight increase in qualitative and combined research by both women and men in the 1990s. Third, there has been a radical increase in the 1990s of women entering the male domain of industrial psychology. Fourth, no major differences were found between women and men masters' students and their choice of specialisation area, methodology and sample type selected. Finally, women more often than men recognised the gender and ethnicity of their sample subjects. It must however be noted that gender and ethnicity of the sample subjects were still relatively infrequently registered in the titles and abstracts of both women and men's masters' dissertations.

In conclusion the plethora of data available on Nexus and the findings identified in the present study a window has opened up to the potential for many future projects in terms of South African psychology masters' research.

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## **DECLARATION**

This dissertation was undertaken in the School of Psychology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg. This work has not been submitted to another university and is the result of my own effort unless specifically indicated to the contrary.

Lynn Foster

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# CHAPTER ONE

## INTRODUCTION

Women's subordinate and oppressed position in society has been thoroughly documented by writers in many academic disciplines, among them, medicine, theology, sociology and psychology. The position of women in the academic and professional domains has similarly been the subject of scholarly research and writing. The present study was embarked upon in order to contribute to this emancipatory agenda in respect of women in research, in the discipline of psychology. This emancipatory agenda involves a critical ongoing process to challenge the historical position of women. It further seeks to construct a position for women from which they can legitimately access the discipline, challenge dominant practices and meaningfully contribute to the construction of knowledge.

In the past social mores, religious tenets and the separation of the private domestic sphere and the public tertiary educational sphere in western society restricted women's progress in many academic disciplines. These values were further entrenched by some of the earliest well recognised European and American authors in psychology such as Stanley Hall, Thorndike, Cattell, Titchener, Freud, Erikson, Kohlberg and others who confirmed and upheld society's belief that restrictions should be placed on women in both their social and professional roles. The attitudes of these authors towards women who wished to study psychology are well documented and summarised by Thomas (1908). He stated that women in the early 20<sup>th</sup> century who followed a higher education in many academic disciplines, including psychology, risked social sanctions, especially in co-educational institutions that implied competition with men. Women were discouraged both from obtaining college educations and from entering the profession of psychology. The picture that emerged was that the early developmental theories viewed male development to be the norm and female development was measured against this norm.

Bartley (1990), in his research, confirmed that the psychological oppression of women restricted them academically. When women were admitted to the discipline of psychology they were allowed to take up only those positions defined by men as being appropriate to women in their assigned role of caregivers working in the more applied areas of psychology rather than scientific research. Scientific research with its emphasis on value-free, objective,

neutral research remained the preserve of men because it was deemed to be more suitable for the rational approach attributed to characteristics associated with men. Even when both women and men questioned the status quo and tried to introduce paradigm shifts in the various professions, mechanisms continued to exist which prevented the research findings of women from entering public forums through publication. The publication of research that questioned prevailing beliefs, values and the theoretical premises of psychology and other disciplines seldom found its way into academic journals. This meant that women found it difficult to gain access to the field of psychological research and to contribute to the growing body of published psychological knowledge.

In the early 1960s, the strong active voice of the women's movement and feminism initiated public debates through many different channels to create awareness of the position held by women in society and academic. By making the subaltern position to which women had been confined visible they were able to critique this position. Feminism and the women's movement also offered alternatives to the very prescriptive and submissive supportive roles they were challenging. Elizabeth Wright (1989) believes that "... if women are going to partake in history they must write themselves into it, overcoming the obstacles of a dominant male culture, emerging in spite of it through their writing rather than by virtue of any biological essentialism" (p.149). Joan Wallach Scott (1996) takes Elisabeth Wright's (1989) statement a step further by identifying that as feminist scholarship begins to explore research undertaken by women and men focussing on the study of women, new subject matter would begin to emerge. A critical examination of the validity of earlier historical material and the motivations lying behind the research could then be undertaken. Despite these efforts much work remains to be done by feminists in order for transformation to take place (Ramphel, 1996). It is Ramphel's (1996) view that until such time as persons have pride in their past and present their power to change historical positions remains limited.

The present study contrasts the historical position of women in psychology with the feminist commentary which offers alternatives at a theoretical, developmental and professional level. In addition it emphasises how important and valid it is to undertake research using a range of approaches in order to open the way for the development of new theories and innovative ways of processing new and old material. Feminists believe it is not about incorporation or adding on but rather about the integration of different modes of enquiry as being legitimate. This study investigates the nature of research undertaken by a sample of women and men in the

field of psychology. It seeks to understand choices of specialisation areas, methods and samples used in research from a critical perspective. Feminist theoretical perspectives on the position of women in the social sciences, in academia and in the applied professions inform this critical perspective.

The study focuses on the research trends revealed through an analysis of masters dissertations undertaken over the past 35 years in order to comment on the extent to which this research reflected themes similar to those identified in earlier research and documented above, regarding the historically held position of women. Further it was intended to report on whether research undertaken in South Africa followed the pattern reflected in the writing from both Europe and the United States of America or whether it critiqued it and revealed an awareness of the need for change at a social, theoretical, developmental and professional level.

There is also a developing consciousness that women within academic institutions have struggled to compete on an equal basis with men in their chosen disciplines such as medicine, theology and psychology. This research process was strengthened by the existence of a driving force emerging from the new political dispensation in South Africa and from South African research institutions. It has become apparent that there is a strong urge to address issues of gender, race, and inequality as well as increase the production of research by women, and to understand the inherent difficulties women academics face in trying to achieve recognition as valuable contributors to research within the discipline of psychology. This study was also stimulated by recent research carried out by the Centre for Science Development (CSD), which undertook a national research project completed in 1999, focussing on Women-in-Research in South Africa. This entailed an audit of women researchers and academics in the Humanities and Social Sciences in South Africa. The research focussed on the multiple roles that women fulfil on a daily basis as individuals, wives, partners, mothers and homemakers as well as having careers as academics, lecturers, researchers and supervisors. Questions probing the intersections between gender, race, power, and knowledge production in institutions were raised. This research confirmed the view that women in academia still have to contend with discrimination and that the problems facing women researchers and academics need to continue to be raised in order that they might be addressed. The CSD report recommended that women network, offering support, guidance and mentorship to other women in their academic endeavours, establish interest groups and

possibly collaborate on research projects as well as search for ways to work within professional associations in order to address the issues raised in different forums and lobby for the eradication of discriminatory policies and practices (CSD Report, January 1999).

In order to offer a feminist commentary on the research process, it was necessary to understand the importance of being continually reflexive throughout the analysis. To recognise the researcher's responsibility and accountability in the production and interpretation of the research, and to remain aware of the power relations in existence in negotiating a compromise between what is included and excluded in the final presentation of the material.

To achieve these aims meant investigating "... women's place in the community of psychology" (Bohan, 1990, p.220). Chapter Three reviews literature which presents a feminist commentary of the position of women identified as traditional in Chapter Two. What emerges from the literature is that there is no clearly defined feminist position as such but that the assumptions upon which the theories and methodological processes were based are questioned and new methods of analysis, new kinds of discourses and new forms of writing are proposed. These in turn, enable the reconstruction of the position of women in psychology. A profession sensitive to issues of gender and diversity is advocated requiring a paradigm shift from the mindset that the positivistic empirical model of research is the only legitimate way of scientifically investigating and validating research. Feminism acknowledges the introduction of qualitative research and the need to select a research methodology that is appropriate to the study being undertaken, be it quantitative, qualitative or a combination of the two.

Chapter Four explores the aims, objectives and purpose of the methodological processes implemented in this study. It examines why it was important that both quantitative and qualitative procedures be used. The chapter investigates why archival material or secondary data as it is otherwise known can be a valuable source of data for research. It describes content analysis and the deductive criteria used in the coding of the dataset and gives a brief overview of correspondence analysis as the exploratory descriptive statistic used to analyse the data.

Chapter Five presents the findings analysed quantitatively through the use of correspondence analysis, standardised residuals and bar graphs. Both women's and men's masters' dissertations were analysed and compared over 35 years in terms of psychological specialisation, methodology and sample type employed. The correspondence between specialisation and methodology, and specialisation and sample type were also examined. The sample type was further categorised in terms of whether or not gender and ethnicity was acknowledged and the exploratory descriptive findings were discussed in terms of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and Three. Chapter Five incorporates the concluding assessment and discussion, a critique of the limitations of the study and gives suggestions for future research.

Chapter Six, the concluding chapter, reviews the traditional position of women as presented in the literature reviewed in Chapter Two and the feminist commentary of this position and its suggested reconstruction discussed in Chapter Three. It reflects on the findings, analysis and discussion in Chapter Five in order to record whether feminist thinking has impacted on women's research as represented in women's and men's masters dissertations. Further it looks at whether there are indications that women's research is focussing on issues and using domains that are reflective of the South Africa context.

## CHAPTER TWO

# FEMINIST COMMENTARY ON WOMEN IN SOCIETY, ACADEMIA AND PSYCHOLOGY

This study is contextually rooted in the position historically held by women in society. This literature and research is overviewed here, not as a comprehensive analysis of the history of women but as a preamble in order to contextualise the study specifically in relation to women and research in the discipline of psychology. Ultimately, I envisaged this study as contributing to the ongoing research needed in order for transformation to take place at various levels within the discipline of psychology in respect of women.

It is only in recent decades that the paucity of research focussing on women has started to be addressed. This has led to an increase in research focus, by women and men, organisations, governments and feminists to close the 'gap' in knowledge and develop a body of research and writing concentrating on this neglected area in psychology. In order for this type of research to take place, researchers, such as myself, need to feel free to question the 'original theoretical premises' laid down in psychology; to challenge 'the given' in psychological theory; to offer alternatives through new research; to be able to dispute findings and conclusions of historical research that reinforced an inferior position for women in society and psychology and to support those doing research in this neglected area even though the possibility remains that it may threaten and make the discipline uncomfortable. Challenging existing paradigms needs to be positively received as offering alternatives rather than as a threat or criticism to the existing status quo in society and psychology.

Worrell (1990) believes that for each individual to become potentially free to select and choose her or his own identity, the social environment in which she or he operates and interacts also needs to adapt. This means extensive social changes need to occur in order for women and men to envisage new possibilities and achieve a different reality. This social change would allow women the possibility of full representation in the discipline and give them the same freedoms that men have long had, so that women may feel free to hold different outlooks and opinions and undertake research in previously neglected areas (Schiebinger, 1999).

## **2.1 An overview of the historical position held by women in society and academia**

The prevalent, socially accepted norms and beliefs held in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century strongly endorsed that a women's virtue should comprise as Welter (1966) described of "... piety, purity, submissiveness and domesticity" (cited in Bohan, 1990, p.217). Bohan (1990) explores how psychology mirrored the beliefs of the times, giving further credibility to already firmly entrenched societal attitudes. Concluding that it is in part due to societal pressures and constraints that women were ill-represented numerically, in positions of leadership in academia, as researchers and research subjects and were thus restricted from being able to make changes and offer alternatives.

Londa Schiebinger (1999) explores how women were excluded and denied access to education through the process of privatisation of the household and the professionalisation of the sciences which meant that research and analysis was centralised away from the home in universities and other institutions of learning. Women were predominantly excluded with the increasing polarisation of the public and domestic spheres. The family remained within the private domestic sphere and science migrated to the public sphere of industry and the university. This separation systematically marginalised and prevented women from participating in any formal scientific endeavours except from the periphery, working and acting as increasingly invisible assistants to their fathers, brothers and husbands. The reality was that universities from their inception up until the late 19<sup>th</sup> century, restricted women from studying. Women ultimately only began their modern careers in scientific endeavours after the women's movement of the 1870s and 1880s increased women's access to universities and formal institutions of learning. Although this was a major achievement the fact remains that universities have not been good institutions for women and have constantly resisted change at many levels (Schiebinger, 1999).

### **2.1.1 Historical position of women in academia**

Exploring the literature that focussed on women or gender revealed a paucity of research concentrating on this specific domain in mainstream journals, instead it was found in specialised international journals such as: *Quests: a Feminist Quarterly*; *Psychology of*

*Women Quarterly; Women Studies Quarterly; Feminism and Psychology and Women's Studies International Quarterly.*

The gendered nature of society was taken as given, men were acknowledged as the superior, dominant gender both physically and intellectually and women were denoted as less able in the majority of instances in relation to men. According to Finchilescu (1995) it is only really in the mid 1980s into the 1990s that issues of women and gender have become a focus in many academic disciplines such as the arts, social sciences and natural sciences. This has constituted a challenge to teaching and research on epistemological, theoretical and methodological levels and has highlighted the need for a reassessment in the various disciplines focussing on gender issues and the development of new theoretical frameworks.

Van Schalkwyk (1997) in her historical missiological research explains how women have continually been marginalised in theology by what she describes as the gendered Western dichotomy of the mind, associated with rationality (man), and body, associated with femininity (women). Traditional research that has historically been defined as rational and objective has therefore marginalised women as objects or subjects of research, or as researchers in a male domain.

Van Schalkwyk, (1997) described and cited the Italian physicist, Elizabetta Donini's (1954, 63-64) views on the objectification of science and quotes her as stating that:

Science is pursued from an elevated, hierarchical, 'head' position, from whence the (traditional male) researcher is in the position to rule and subdue the research object by way of his objective, 'neutral', rationalistic approach, 'from the outside'. From this objectified stance follows the 'death' and degradation of women and nature, as the lower, viler part of creation that is studied (and thus ruled and used) by androcentric science. Thus, in science, as in religion and society, women and other subjugated categories are kept in the inferior 'body' position (van Schalkwyk, 1997, p.610).

Sampson (1981) identifies how a cognitive perspective of psychology appears to reveal information about the human mind but in fact "... represents a set of values and interests that reproduce the existing nature of the social order" (p.730). He believes, we as researchers need to examine ideology and how it allows for a distorted picture of reality to perpetuate because it benefits the dominant group's interests. This has meant that women as a group have suffered systematic discrimination, having been constrained, marginalised, abused and

exposed to conditions of inequality socially, politically and academically in both theory and research (Faludi, 1992; Finchilescu, 1995).

These discriminatory practices according to Cock (1991) and others are equally applicable if not more so to women in South Africa. For in South Africa the impact of feminism in the 1960s and 1970s was minimally felt and isolated to small groups of aware individuals. Cock (1991) believes that it is only in the 1980s that feminism began to achieve a wider audience and impact with regard to the struggle of women with the issue of gender inequality receiving prominence. Cock (1991) further suggests a possible reason for this could be ascribed to the return of many political exiles who have been part of academic and social environments more sensitive to feminist principles and analysis. In South Africa this has led to issues of gender as well as areas relating to women, finding a place on the political agenda with the establishment of the gender commission as well as the formation of units such as Women-in-Research (WiR) in the National Research Foundation (NRF) that allocates specific funds to research focussing on women and gender issues and their associated difficulties and hurdles.

### **2.1.2 Women's educational oppression in South Africa**

The separation of public and private life not only increased the invisibility of women, it also restricted women from networking and operating effectively together, increasing their struggle to gain recognition. This made it difficult for women isolated from each other and from access to resources to achieve what Sampson (1981) underlines, as one of the requirements for critical thinking: that researchers need to be able to connect to others with questions in order to challenge the values and assumptions that have historically governed Western thought and which continue to serve and maintain particular interests and social arrangements about what is defined as acceptable practice or behaviour.

Van Schalkwyk (1997) noted the connection between the dualistic views of the sciences and the South African social context that justified the oppression of different groups and dominated the mindset and rationale behind racism, classism, sexism and economic exploitation. For decades the body-soul dualism dominated how individuals were grouped and assigned positions in society which emerged from the objectification of western thought and was reflected in the writings and research in the sciences including disciplines such as medicine, psychology and theology to name a few (van Schalkwyk, 1997).

Seedat (1997) elucidates on how science in its positivistic empirical research tradition has assumed superiority derived from the belief that it is based on human reason, objectivity and control over destiny. Historically, scientific research required it to be rooted in hypotheses deduced from *a priori* theories but that this in fact masked the reality that science is a product of its culture and time.

It can be concluded that psychology as a discipline and science in South Africa professed to practice and uphold the positivistic standards of neutrality, value-free objectivity, control and reason but in many instances was manipulated by industry and a specific political agenda and played a role in maintaining a dualist and oppressive culture in South Africa.

## **2.2 Barriers to professional advancement**

Further reading was undertaken in order to explore the conditions encountered by women who chose to become career psychologists. Four areas have been focussed on in this analysis: barriers to education and training; structural barriers within the academic discipline in the university; barriers placed on the publication of women's work; and the exclusion of women from the construction of knowledge.

### **2.2.1 Structural barriers to higher education**

In the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, women were discouraged from aspiring to careers based on the acquisition of a college education. Janis Bohan (1990) summarised Boring's (1967) report that the founder of the American Psychological Association, G. Stanley Hall, opposed a college education for women (1903, 1906). He maintained that the 'best' women were obliged to reproduce in order to ensure the continuation of the species or risk 'race suicide'. Hall also argued that women's primitive mental development would prevent significant achievement in higher education. Edward Thorndike (1906) was adamant about the mediocrity of women's intellectual potential and, on that basis, urged restrictions in their education. James Cattell (1909) ascribed "... the declining birth rate directly to the expansion of education for women" (cited in Bohan, 1990, p.219) and opposed the promotion of women in the profession. Edward Titchener set up a professional network, 'The Society of Experimental Psychologists' from which he prohibited women from becoming members (Bohan, 1990). These barriers were mirrored in other disciplines such as medicine

(Schiebinger, 1999) and theology (van Schalkwyk, 1997). It was recognised in the 1960s that psychology had 'neglected areas' yet in the late 1970s and early 1980s new scholarship still paid little attention to women in the discipline (Furumoto & Scarborough, 1986). Thus the early 20<sup>th</sup> century largely overlooked women psychologists in the history of psychology as a discipline.

It seems clear that women who wanted to follow a professional career in the field of psychology were likely to encounter many difficulties in pursuing their interests and career paths (Bohan, 1992; Hogan & Sexton, 1991; Matlin, 2000). These women were pitted against views such as those expressed by Hegel, a philosopher whose thoughts were influential during the late 19<sup>th</sup> century and into the 20<sup>th</sup> century, who maintained that:

... women may be capable of education, but they are not made for the more advanced sciences, for philosophy and certain forms of artistic production which require universality. ... When women hold the helm of government, the State is at once in jeopardy, because women regulate their actions not by the demands of universality, but by arbitrary inclinations and opinions (Moi, 1987, p.190)<sup>1</sup>.

These attitudes towards women and their education gave further credibility to the already firmly entrenched position held by society. Societal pressures therefore placed constraints on women and contributed to the fact that despite the increase in numbers of women entering the profession after World War I and World War II, they tended to be found practising in the applied areas of psychology, rather than in areas regarded as more scientific and research focussed. Applied psychology represented the presumed natural inclinations of women for caregiving, including motherhood, children, adolescent development and the functioning of individuals within a family system. This, according to Bohan, (1990) maintained, and "... reinforced women's subordinate position throughout the discipline" (p.219).

The above justification for confining women to this 'domestic' sphere in psychology reinforced and upheld what religious tenets and society's mores and customs had prescribed for decades (Bohan, 1990). As Rossiter (1982) states, "... at the most basic level, women were faced with the argument that science and femininity are incongruent – that [the term]

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<sup>1</sup> Hegel, *Philosophy of Right*, para. 166, Zusatz, trans. Knox (modified by Le Doeuff), pp.263-4; quoted in Michèle Le Doeuff, 'Women and philosophy', reprinted in Toril Moi (ed.) *French Feminist Thought* (Oxford: Blackwell, 1987, p.190).

‘woman scientist’ is a ‘contradiction in terms’. The woman who chose a career in science was therefore violating the culture’s dictates for proper feminine behaviour” (cited in Bohan, 1990, p.218).

### **2.2.2 Structural barriers in the academic discipline**

Structural barriers and discriminatory practices further hindered women from entering the profession: “... the self-conscious process of professionalisation within the sciences often served to exclude women from professional organisations” (Bohan, 1990, p.218). This exclusion prevented them from gaining access to graduate training, taking up academic positions, and in gaining recognition through being published (Gannon, Luchetta, Rhodes, Pardie & Segrist, 1992). Women found that in collegial discussions they were both formally and informally unwelcome and were often excluded from networks that underpinned professional growth (Bohan, 1990; Peplau, 1989; Schiebinger, 1999).

Uys (2001) wrote that the gendered positions of ‘woman’ and ‘scientist’ are often perceived as mutually exclusive categories. She attributed this to society and the social context in which science is practised. She claimed that society and academia were patriarchal which has resulted in women being systematically excluded from positions of leadership, playing roles in policy formation, from participating in the allocation of resources and decision-making, as well as being restricted from employment opportunities in higher education institutions in university structures.

Seedat (1997) comments on how historically psychology as a discipline in South Africa has managed to exclude blacks and women from academic structures. He ascribes this to the social legacy of racial and sexual domination and capital development that has protected the tertiary education system as the exclusive arena of ‘white male hegemony’. According to a survey carried out by Gardner (1980) on the ethnicity and gender of clinical and counselling psychology masters’ students, he found that change was underway in addressing the gender inequality but not in terms of the selection of non-whites. At seventeen South African universities from 1977-1979, of a population of 350 masters students, women (178) had numerically overtaken men (172) in selection in these two specialisation areas. What was disturbing from a South African perspective was that out of 350 students only 24 students were non-white and of the five Historically Black Institutions (HBIs), only two of them had

any masters students during this period, these HBI students accounting for 13 out of the total of 24 non-white students selected for masters in this period. Gardner's (1980) findings were borne out by Evan's (1989) study where he elaborated on how the lack of non-white students created a paucity of research activity at South Africa's traditionally black universities with white males being the guardians of South African intellectual history ensuring research, theoretical skills and the process of knowledge production still remained in 'white male hands'. He attributed this as possibly being due to the lack of financial inducement and resources allocated to research with the emphasis placed on under-graduate teaching and the fact that the brighter non-white students were often absorbed into historically white Afrikaans and English medium universities (Seedat, 1997).

Change has begun to take place in the recent past and continues slowly into the present. According to Finchilescu's (1995) research, psychology in South Africa and western countries has more women as students. At the level of practising psychology, white women in these countries constitute nearly half the total number but women are still the minority in other population groups. Women are also notably in the minority in the structures of the discipline. Historically, positions that have been tenured posts and more senior level management positions have been and are in the majority of cases still filled by males. One suggested reason for this is that proportionally fewer women pursue higher degrees that lead to academic careers, which has been the case in South Africa, but this does not hold for western countries such as the United States of America and the United Kingdom for the last decade (Finchilescu, 1995). Psychology as a discipline is not atypical of many other academic disciplines that also reflect a similar breakdown in compositions of their staff complement (Uys, 2001).

Primo (1999) in her overview of the Women-in-Research (WiR) project identified that one of the obstacles women faced in their attempts to carry out academic research and publish was that many of these women were concentrated in junior lecturer positions and therefore carried considerable teaching and marking loads. She claimed that women have also been excluded from "boys' networks" and have often lacked sensitive mentoring and research support.

### 2.2.3 Barriers to publication

In Dorothy Smith's (1978) view, gatekeepers exist in the academic community. They are the people who "... set the standards, produce the social knowledge, monitor what is admitted to the systems of distribution, and decree the innovation in thought, or knowledge, or values" (p.287). They have the power to decide which psychologist's work was published. As Steven and Gardner (1982) reported "... women who are psychologists are not the kind of psychologists who get cited in the scientific literature" (cited in Bohan, 1990, p.222).

Academic recognition in psychology, as in other disciplines, rests largely on published research and Bohan (1990) and Gannon et al. (1992) drew attention to the difficulties women experienced in getting their work in psychology published. According to Bohan (1990) and Furumoto and Scarborough (1986), writing and research by women that was published tended to be concentrated in fields and topical areas that were deemed less prestigious and less central to the discipline's self-definition, than the work more commonly associated with men in psychology. There is a suggestion by feminist writers that more research in areas relevant to women is taking place which infers that the small percentage of published articles relates more to the evaluation of editors than the actual lack of research (Grady, 1981). This view echoes what June Arnold (1976) wrote that:

If you were very clever and managed to include your voice inside their (male) language and get published, you were misreviewed by male papers and your work soon went out of print for economic (political) reasons. The words of earlier feminists were lost because they were the property of male publishers who easily avoided reprinting them (p.19).

Other gatekeepers of the profession are the lecturers, professors and teachers, who play a vital role in shaping the profession. They make the decisions regarding masters' selection and directly determine who will be the psychologists of tomorrow. Thus any change demographically is not only due to an individual's choice to enter the profession but is finally the result of decisions by gatekeepers. It has also been suggested that sex discrimination played a part in women's under-representation and that quota systems do influence selection criteria (Ostertag & McNamara, 1991). Gatekeepers also exist at the level of research selection for graduate research in terms of the requirements of supervision. This highlights that the availability and selection of a supervisor has an impact on the direction post-graduate

research will take. According to Bishevel (1991) young psychologists, in South Africa, whose academic prospects would be significantly influenced by their choice of research domain often chose to focus on potentially publishable areas of psychology. He notes that there is substance to the hypothesis that South African psychologists generally have chosen to shy away from subjects or areas of psychology with attached political connections.

Feminists realise that for change to take place they need to be represented among the gatekeepers in the publishing arena, as these individuals continue to play a pivotal role in shaping the discipline of psychology in regard to who is published and what gets read (Spender, 1989). Feminists have also acknowledged that in order for their research to enjoy the benefits of legitimisation that accompanies the printed word, they need to publish in mainstream journals and not only journals that are sympathetic to the position of women in society (Spender, 1989).

### **2.3 Summary**

This chapter has attempted to give an overview of the historical position held by women in society and academia internationally. It has also focussed more specifically on women's educational oppression in South Africa. Areas that have been explored: are the barriers women have encountered to their training and professional advancement; the structural barriers encountered in the discipline and the power of the gatekeepers who maintained the exclusivity of the discipline through the marginalisation and lack of visibility allowed women.

### CHAPTER THREE

## PSYCHOLOGICAL THEORY AND RESEARCH: FEMINISM'S COMMENTARY AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The previous chapter highlighted how women in society and academia have been excluded as professionals, denied access to leadership positions, prevented from publishing by gatekeepers and felt restricted in formal structures that were too rigid to accommodate difference. This chapter explores the literature further, on how women have been systematically excluded by academia from participating as equals in research driven towards theory development in psychology and other disciplines.

The literature reviewed was drawn from the body of psychological writing which emerged from mainly European and American psychologists, who are also the source of many of the psychological theories currently studied in most South African universities. This writing reflects the views of a largely white, western, male, middle-class discipline. References from three leading theorists, Freud, Erikson and Kohlberg are dealt with in order to examine the positioning and exclusion of women as revealed in their writings and recorded in research findings reflecting the position of women in the society of that period. A major focus of this chapter is a feminist examination of the psychological research process and how it perpetuated the marginalisation, invisibility and silences that surrounded women. It was also important to discuss through the literature the epistemological underpinning of knowledge, positivism and the alternatives explored in the feminist critique of accepted research methodologies. The present study examines and compares women's and men's masters' psychological research focussing on the areas of psychological specialisation, methodological preference and sample type selected in their research.

Having emphasised in the previous chapter, the exclusion and marginalisation of women, there is a need to recognise that although the literature that has been studied seems to criticise men for undermining women, feminism does not exclude men; both men and women can be feminists and both genders have produced important research furthering feminism (Matlin, 1996, 2000). What also needs to be acknowledged is that feminism is not a static theoretical perspective but is

continually being modified, adapted and developed; there is no single feminist viewpoint. Feminism accommodates many voices and is continually broadening its horizons. It must be noted as Ussher (1991) did that it may be naïve to talk about a feminist position as there are so many different strains but she believes that when feminism focuses on biological essentialism there is a consensus about the need for change.

A few of the principles of feminism focus on equality, the end to discrimination and the continued advancement of women's interests. This has meant in the academic environment many of the tenets underlying historical theories and practices have been scrutinised and demands made in the light of raised gender issues for new theoretical endeavours and the development and re-assessment of both the structure and practice of various disciplines including psychology. Although this is an international trend, South Africa lags behind in many of these areas of development (Finchilescu, 1995). However a small percentage of South African publications have begun examining the themes and trends emerging in psychology. Mauer, Marais and Prinsloo (1981) in their study explored what domains or specialisation areas had been written about in psychology from 1985-1989. They focussed in part on dissertations and theses and found that the two areas of greatest interest were applied psychology and social processes and issues. Van Staden and Visser (1990) analysed 10 years of articles from 1980-1989 published in the *South African Journal of Psychology* in terms of themes and statistical techniques. Their survey found that most of the articles could be categorised as clinical or counselling contributions with developmental, personality and experimental issues following closely behind. In terms of research techniques, those favoured by the researcher were likely to reflect the university's curricula, which according to these authors showed a vested interest in logical, empirical, positivist frameworks. They did however note an increase in qualitative research but stated this did not indicate that a strong movement to adopt this methodology was afoot. Richter and Griesel (1999) also identified that women were still selecting to do research in applied areas of psychology such as clinical, counselling, educational, developmental and industrial psychology rather than more basic scientific research. The present study attempts to present a picture of South African psychological research at a master's level and whether or not there have been any significant shifts from the early 1960s to the late 1990s in terms of specialisation, methodology and sample type selected.

### 3.1 Exclusion from the construction of knowledge

Epistemology is the branch of philosophy concerned with the study and production of knowledge. Epistemology seeks to answer questions about who can be the 'knower'; what criteria or beliefs must pass the test in order to be legitimated as knowledge; what kinds of things can be known; and what is defined as worth being known (Harding, 1987; Kaschak, 1992).

From the literature reviewed it would appear that little space was given to women in the construction of knowledge in psychology. Mani (1992) claims, the voice of science is a masculine one and history and research has been written from the point of view of men (the dominant class and gender); in addition to this the subjects of traditional research were always assumed to be male.

It followed that women were regarded as unimportant by the dominant early theorists and were thought too insignificant to be the focus of any serious enquiry. This can be seen in the general historical lack of attention given to gender as a category of social reality (Crawford & Marecek, 1989). In the words of Lewin (1986) cited in Crawford (1989):

... historically, much of psychological inquiry has been virtually 'womanless', not only in its subject of inquiry, but in the place allowed women in the profession itself. Women did not have control over the resources needed for the production of knowledge, and the topics and methods of accepted scholarship were defined in ways that were exclusionary at best and misogynist at worst (p.149).

According to Elizabeth Wright (1989), the positioning of women in psychology will never appreciably change without a theoretical understanding of " ... why there has ever been discrimination against women along gender lines" (p.143). Literature reviewed in Chapter Two attempts to provide a framework from the past in order to contextualise the critique to which feminism has subjected society and psychology.

## **3.2 Some psychological theories through the eyes of feminism**

Feminists highlight how patriarchy is evident in psychology and has allowed for the perpetuation of androcentrism, gendercentrism, ethnocentrism and heterosexism in early theories underpinning psychology. According to Harding (1987) both the content of theory and research has predominantly reflected men and their experiences. The psychological theorists defined men as the 'norm' and women were either absorbed within this category or constructed as 'the Other', deviant, inferior or deficient. The researcher either generalised about women or women were just excluded from research (Finchilescu, 1995; Uys, 2001).

### **3.2.1 The silences in some early psychology theory**

Early exponents of psychological theory based their hypotheses almost exclusively on evidence drawn from the lives of men. Worrell (1990) describes traditional psychological theories of development as providing a disservice to both women and men by formulating the quest for independent selfhood on models developed, in most instances, exclusively on the lives of men. Freud (1948, 1965) is the source of the most widely known and influential psychological developmental theory that exemplifies the early views of women's development. All four of the above 'isms' are present in his work. Other theories touched on in this review that support Freud's concepts and have played a part in restricting women's development are, among others, Erikson's theory of the eight stages of man (1963, 1968) and Kohlberg's theory of moral development (1969, 1976).

Worrell (1990) undertook an exploration into the pervasive undermining of women by these psychological theorists and recorded that the image that emerges from classical Freudian theory is that women are inferior to men in their biological potential to hold an equal role in both family and society. In Freud's view women who sought roles other than motherhood and who assumed 'masculine' characteristics such as assertiveness and ambition were afflicted by a disorder called 'penis envy'.

Subsequent research does not confirm Freud's theoretical findings in regard to women. According to Sherman (1971), classical Freudian theory of sex-role development has very little support in empirical research (Worrell, 1990). This was corroborated by Maccoby and Jacklin (1974) who reviewed more than 1400 published studies and concluded that very few sex differences have actually been substantiated by research. Yet, according to the findings of the American Psychological Association (1975, 1978), sex-role theory continues to be reflected in the practices and assumptions of many professional mental health specialists in their assessment of women's potential ability and in their treatment of women clients (Worrell, 1990).

Erikson (1963, 1968) proposed a model of development in which he identified 'eight stages of man', but had to adjust these in applying them to women to remain consistent with the assumptions about women's development current at the time. Erikson (1968) concluded that women defer the formation of their identity until they have met the man they will marry and for whom they will create a home. Woman's identity was therefore not defined by her commitment to a career, but by the role of wife and mother and the search for a man to give her life meaning and direction (Worrell, 1990).

Kohlberg's theories (1969, 1976) on sex-roles and moral development concentrated on how individuals develop a sense of moral understanding and mature ethical judgement. His theory was based on responses by young men to a set of ethical dilemmas. As Matlin (1996, 2000) commented, Kohlberg proposed that women solved moral problems from what he termed a 'care perspective'. Men, on the other hand, solved moral problems on the basis of abstract principles, termed the 'justice perspective', based on the laws of society. In his view this was a more morally advanced approach than that used by women (Matlin, 1996, 2000; Worrell, 1990).

Carol Gilligan (1987), in her response to Kohlberg's views, argues for the recognition that women's morality was not less than that of men, she advocated that women spoke 'in a different voice', one that conceptualised women's orientation as legitimate and representative of women's lives (Matlin, 2000; Worrell, 1990).

These views reflect those of a dominant patriarchal culture in which women are constantly defined in relation to men. Whether women are similar, different from or complementary to them, men, masculinity and male behaviour are always the reference point. Most frequently, women are defined in familial terms as carers and nurturers. Their identity and status is derived from their relationship to the explicitly gendered categories of mothers, daughters, sisters and wives (McDowell & Pringle, 1992). Not only are women defined in relation to men, they are seen as usually being dependent on men and subordinate to them. Men, on the other hand, are not defined in relation to women, or in familial terms. Men's specific gender is thus ignored, they represent the universal and the human to which women are 'the Other' (Fox-Genovese, 1991). This perception of women as 'the Other' was taken for granted in most social and political thought as well as in everyday life of the period (McDowell & Pringle, 1992).

Gender stereotypes have also played a decisive role in undermining women's search for identity. Stereotypes as beliefs refer to thoughts and cognitive reactions that may not correspond with reality but have immense power in maintaining and reinforcing both group, personal and societal misconception (Brannon, 1996). Uys (2001) believes that gender insensitivity occurs when gender is not considered as a socially significant variable. Often double standards have been used to evaluate, treat or measure identical behaviours, traits or situations because of the subject's gender suddenly becoming a socially significant variable, i.e. when examining 'appropriate sex roles' or 'appropriate gender identities'.

Various authors argue that historically theoretical frameworks have assisted in keeping women locked in traditional roles and behaviours. Women have also internalised these roles, thus diminishing their self-image, sense of self-esteem and expectations about what and who they can become. Where an alternative lifestyle has been chosen by women, it has been viewed by those invested in the existing paradigms as 'deviant', creating ambivalence and conflict in women who wanted to break out of prescribed roles (Bernay & Cantor, 1989; Worrell, 1990; Yorburg, 1974).

These androcentric and gendercentric theories and theorists, which emerged in response to feminist critiques, make it abundantly clear that the exclusion of women from the realm of psychological theory, was not "... simply a sin of omission – a simple matter of neglect or

forgetfulness which can be rectified by putting women back in – because we’ve seen that even when women do constitute part of the subject matter of ... theory they are still rendered invisible by the orientation, techniques and methodology used by the theorists. ... Presence, *being there*, is no guarantee of visibility, of accurate or appropriate treatment by the discipline” (Thiele, 1987, p.34).

### **3.2.2 Creating alternative theoretical frameworks**

Due, in part, to the increasing critique rendered by the women’s movement and feminism, certain sectors of psychology began to explore alternative theoretical options that did not deny women’s right to parity and moved away from theories that elevated all that is male and masculine to a superior psychological position, which in turn placed all that is female and feminine as inferior (Worrell, 1990).

Developing new theories in psychology is a lonely and difficult process because the resistance to letting go of existing theoretical positions means having to reconceptualise and question embedded values, beliefs, behaviours and knowledge that were taken for granted and mirrored the views of society. Therefore new theories run the risk of being rejected because they have the potential to break the boundaries upheld in a society by challenging the existing paradigms and raising questions that society and the individual (both man and woman) do not necessarily wish to answer.

### **3.3 Women as researchers and subjects of research**

Women have often been undermined as researchers and subjects of research by the patriarchal and androcentric nature of psychology (Uys, 2001). The consequence of this has been the devaluation of women’s contribution to psychology, science and many other disciplines. The reality is that generalisations have taken place when only one gender has been researched yet the conclusions have been made applicable to both genders (Uys, 2001). In Grady’s (1981) analysis and research on journal reports, she found that men were more often the subjects of psychological enquiry than women which she linked to a preference for researchers to use single-sex research

designs. This has meant that topics perceived as relevant to men have received legitimacy and been the primary focus of research whereas women's issues and concerns have been devalued, pathologised or ignored (Finchilescu, 1995). This has in many instances led to a gender bias in psychological research endeavours.

This is slowly undergoing change with the content of research and its epistemological premise having been affected by the awareness of the need to re-place women in psychology. Topics specific to women's experiences have been accepted as legitimate and worthy of research, such as, violence against women, menopause, premenstrual tension, breast cancer, motherhood and career and lesbianism. It has also been acknowledged that in fact most topics require a gender focus so as to present an unbiased, fair and realistic understanding of the human condition (Finchilescu, 1995). One of the aims of the present research is to ascertain whether the changes in the published literature are reflected in similar shifts and a greater awareness of gender issues at a master's research level in psychology in South Africa.

### **3.3.1 The relationship of power and research**

The importance of power and its ramifications is quite often not addressed directly but assumed or mentioned in a convoluted manner in relation to social behaviour in psychological theory (Finchilescu, 1995). The first step to change in psychology began with the initial process of disillusionment and sense of disempowerment associated with eurocentric psychology at the level of practice, research, training and teaching. Seedat (1997) highlights how progressive psychologists have expressed their concerns about the non-existence of a relationship between the epistemology, psychological concepts, language and techniques of psychology in relation to the many marginalised groups in South Africa. It has been from this place of discomfort, disillusionment and disempowerment that psychologists in South Africa have begun to engage in a creative critique of mainstream psychology in relation to its gendercentric, androcentric, ethnocentric and classist positions.

If we accept that the enhancement of research skills reduces the imbalance in power relations then it becomes imperative to increase the individual's capacity and skills. Neville Alexander felt

that it was vital to explore the relationship between research and power because he strongly believed that if power was going to be transferred there was an obligation to consciously teach skills emphasising the different research techniques. He believed that the universities would have to play an important role in the transference of skills and thus power (Hassim & Walker, 1992).

Psychology and social transformation can only be achieved if we move beyond just concentrating on the impact of oppressive ideologies, theoretical and research models and begin theorising and researching appropriate cognitive, moral, spiritual and psychological shifts required in individuals to facilitate change (Seedat, 1997). This does not devalue the importance of this type of research; it just acknowledges that there are other steps to complete the paradigm shift and transformation in the discipline.

According to Kottler (1990) mainstream positivistic psychology has played a powerful role in maintaining social relations through re-producing the existing power relations thus reinforcing societies' social belief systems. This impacted on what topics were researched and how the research was approached. It also allowed South African researchers to veer away from emotionally sensitive, psychological and political issues under the guise of carrying out objective, neutral, value-free, rational research. This was confirmed by Visser and van Staden's (1990) analysis of sample selection, sample composition and research design in published research in South African between 1979-1988, where only 17.4% were cross-cultural in nature and explicit recognition of the population or sample occurred in only 7% of the articles. These authors described how despite repeated calls for more cross-cultural research there appeared to be a decreasing trend.

Women and other disadvantaged groups need a clear understanding of how society resists change in order to attempt to shift existing paradigms or intervene at any level. McDowell and Pringle (1992) explored how forces in society work against change. They found that power has many different guises: it is visible in direct action, where force is used (as in violence against women), or in decisions taken on publicly discussed issues, it can be seen in attempts to stifle an issue as it emerges, or to redefine or reshape an issue into something less threatening through oppression or the trivialising of the issue, and it is used to manipulate a person's perceptions so that they are

unaware of having grounds for grievance (McDowell & Pringle, 1992). Sampson (1981) reiterates that it is usually the people who are already in a position of power that have the ability to shape and modify one's subjective experience thus reducing the potential for challenges to existing systems because the difficulties, conflicts or misconceptions have been rationally, objectively and credibly explained. Women who are aware of this dimension of power believe that it has often been brought to bear on their grievances regarding societal, psychological, economic and political restrictions placed on them.

A possible option for women is that, instead of using their energies in a struggle where the ground rules are against them, women should try to apply their energy to the active creation of alternatives outside of oppressive structures. Women need to seek out organisations, societies, groups, communities and individuals to which they can relate and can be recognised, as independent, competent academics. In doing this, women need to be critically aware that society may perceive such behaviour and options as deviant and challenging of the accepted status quo (McDowell & Pringle, 1992).

Within the framework of doing research for a masters it is not possible to seek alternative groups because the granting of degree and thus power is vested in academics within the formal structures of the university and it is these individuals who assess the academic credibility, validity and acceptability of the study and finally sanction it as worthwhile research within the discipline.

### **3.3.2 Reclaiming women's position in research**

In line with exploring the operation of power discussed by McDowell and Pringle (1992), those working towards the reconstruction of psychology needed to identify and recognise how knowledge is constructed. Bohan, (1990) argues that "... knowledge is fundamentally a set of agreements; [and] such agreements are negotiable. Gender is constructed; psychology is constructed; history is constructed" (p.222). Once this is understood, then it follows that the position of women in psychology is available for reconstruction.

Feminist critique and disaffection of psychology is multifaceted but predominantly relates to the invisibility and marginalisation of women reflected in the theories, structures and practices of the discipline (Finchilescu, 1995). Arising out of the growing concern over women's invisibility and marginalisation in psychology there has been a surge of research and writing out of the United States of America and Europe focusing on the need to reclaim the history of women in psychology (Finchilescu, 1995). In an attempt to make explicit women's roles, as researchers and writers in the history of psychology, Russo and O'Connell (1980) uncovered large numbers of women who had played a significant part in the development of psychology. The important part played by women since the inception of the American Psychological Association (APA) is traced in Hogan and Sexton's (1991) research and Katz (1991) recorded the historical contributions of women to research on social problems (Finchilescu, 1995). This type of recognition and research is valuable in making prominent women's contributions and in also providing role models for new generations of women psychology students. Awareness of this research also aids in diminishing the sense of isolation and alienation historically felt by women venturing into academic and research careers (Finchilescu, 1995). Ostertag and McNamara (1991) found internationally that women are increasing in numbers and participating in the field of psychology, and this changing gender ratio is presumed to have a number of implications for the profession. One of the negative assumptions associated with this increase is based on women's subordinate status in society, thus an increase in our numbers in the profession was presumed to be detrimental to psychology. Feminists on the other hand are trying to reverse the picture by saying that the change in gender ratio is likely to enhance the profession. Richter and Griesel (1999) also positioned their research from how women are meant to have negatively impacted on the profession of psychology but have not really done so, alleviating some of the anxiety around the demise of the professional status of the discipline.

Within the South African context the reality is that both South African society and its academic institutions have for the most part perfected the art of 'silence'. For psychology the 'silences' refer to the areas that have not received any priority in research or theoretical development. Seedat (1997) believes that many of the most significant silences in South African psychology include the collective national transformation process, psychological powerlessness and dispossession, sexism, politics and the marginalisation which has taken place in health care,

curriculum development, child labour, malnutrition, women issues, institutionalised racism, homelessness and the politics of training psychologists.

Seedat (1997) believes that progressive psychology needs to mobilise and conscientise historically oppressed groups. This means that continual change needs to take place towards the conversion and development of a theoretical and epistemological pluralism, by this he underlines that the aim is not for the demise of mainstream psychology but rather in seeking to remove the silences, and include all marginalised groups such as blacks, women, gays and the disabled at the level of knowledge production (Seedat, 1997).

### **3.3.3 Gender and the use of language in psychological research**

Seedat (1997) points out the paucity of research and theories dealing specifically with women's studies in South African mainstream psychology as opposed to the Euro-American feminist literature on the psychology of women, women's ways of knowing, women's moral development, black women and feminism, and the origins of sexual inequalities and bias. The low priority given to gender specific issues and pervasive sexism in the various journals reviewed by Seedat (1998) reflects South African psychologist's failure to integrate feminist critique into its theoretical development and research methodologies. Sexism needs to be identified and eliminated from all scientific theoretical development and research activity (Uys, 2001). Uys (2001) states that we need to be aware of being gender insensitive in our research and research by others. This occurs when gender is not considered to be a 'socially significant variable'. This study aims to analyse the research information presented by both women and men masters students in their titles and abstracts to ascertain how sensitive students were regarding gender and ethnicity of the sample type they chose to study.

The accepted scientific practice underpinning positivistic research accepted that language is only a vehicle for the transference of 'pre-existing' thoughts and ideas (Gross, 1992). This allowed patriarchal theory to avoid recognising its dependence on rhetorical figures of speech, images and metaphors that have portrayed the feminine and women as inferior. Thus biases in the use of language need to be identified and eradicated. Sensitivity in research regarding the power of

language to persuade and direct the reader needs to be recognised. The use of the male term 'he' as the generic term supposedly including women needs to be challenged. Even the practice of identifying it as the neutral term to be used throughout the document to refer to both male and female is a form of sexism (Uys, 2001). Feminism underlined that representation through language is important in quantitative or qualitative research because it portrays how the subject of the study is talked about.

### **3.3.4 Diversity in the group 'women' needs greater recognition**

The issue of diversity has posed problems in the feminist movement and its theoretical development. The reality is that women are not a unitary category with similar interests, values or agendas (Finchilescu, 1995). This is even truer within the South African historical, political, racial, social and educational development. These divisions affect women's experience and need to be acknowledged.

South African researchers when they undertake research need to take into account the time period, history and culture of any group being researched, especially women. Recognition is therefore given to the diversity and plurality of women's needs and their context (van Schalkwyk, 1997). This area of research will be covered in greater detail further on in the chapter.

Seedat (1997) looks at the relevance and assumptions of psychology as a Euro-American biological science and the requirements for South African psychology to transcend these cultural and ideological barriers entrenched in psychology's theoretical, philosophical and ideological research practices. He advocates the advancement of a more socially appropriate emancipatory agenda in South Africa.

To address the task of re-placing women in the history of psychology, Bohan (1990) believes that acknowledgement needs to be given to "... women's experience as a significant contextual force in the determination of their place in the field" of psychology (p.215). Bohan (1990) attempts to show that women's place, even their invisibility, can only be recognised from an awareness that history and knowledge are created products of their context and the power structures existing at

that time. This means that women's historically 'lived' experience forms a unique link to their relationship to psychology.

Feminism in psychology is striving to challenge the restraints and restrictions placed on writing, research and practice in the discipline. This is related to the need for research and theoretical development as well as the creative production of knowledge by and for all those who have been oppressed. This has led to questions being levelled at the output of knowledge development in the 'sterile ivory towers' of academia which has historically isolated itself in the name of scientific neutrality and objectivity (Seedat, 1997).

Retief (1989) acknowledges that there is evidence within academia and the psychological community that conceptual and theoretical issues are beginning to be addressed and are centred around the relevance of psychology and the current South African context. It is one of the exploratory aims of the present study to assess whether or not this can be disseminated at a masters level in psychology.

### **3.4 Research methodology**

Kruger (1988) offers some insight into why psychology has tried to and continues to place importance on the logical empirical process of undertaking research. Psychology as a discipline wanted to be seen as a natural science with its associated prestige. The natural sciences claimed that methods of research that were hugely successful in the scientific disciplines "... should be universally applicable to all enterprises worthy of the name of science" (Kruger, 1988, p.3).

Evelyn Fox Keller (1985) noted that the school of logical positivism, when translated to scientific empiricism in psychology, valued "... objectivity, control, ..., and the advancement of science through competing and rising above ordinary life" (cited in Kaschak, 1992, p.13), all of which were hallmarks of a Western masculine science.

A further criticisms raised by feminists focuses on the fact that science and empirical research attempts to test a given set of ideas and to accumulate 'hard data' but as Grady (1981) pointed

out, science cannot realise its potential, if data is not gathered because specific hypotheses or questions are never asked or if they are asked, the findings do not get published because they may have the potential to challenge accepted theories. This methodological orthodoxy has both restricted psychology and yielded a value system contained within narrow parameters (Richter, 1999). Empirical studies have historically dominated academic research within psychology, and have continued their dominance by being the accepted and recognised forms of research by a male-dominated academic environment (Deaux, 1985). A tentative hypothesis in the present study is that this belief is still the *modus operandi*. According to Peplau (1989) no research findings have established that women and men psychologists actually differ in their choice of research methodologies, she continues by emphasising that "... nothing is gained by perpetuating an unsubstantiated generalisation that women or men (feminist or not) are more or less likely to conduct a certain type of research" (p.395).

The accepted paradigm of doing research was characterised and underpinned by a positivist conception of science and its commitment to a universally accepted method of verifying and rejecting the stated hypothesis, one which disallowed any challenges by devaluing alternatives that acknowledge the silences, exclusions and context as irrelevant and unscientific (Gross, 1987).

Positivism is committed to the research remaining neutral and objective with the rationale that the researcher is able to separate *himself* from *his* (my italics) own emotions, socio-economic and political interests (Gross, 1987). As described by Allison Jagger, the positivist view of research requires that the 'good' scientists be detached observers following rigorous methodological guidelines thus enabling them to separate themselves from any interests, values and emotions generated by their class, gender, race or context (Morawski, 1997).

The history of scientific literature underpinned by logical positivism is represented by quantitative research methodology, which is preoccupied with independent and dependent variables, comparisons between control and experimental groups, and the control of extraneous variables that might bias the data. One of the basic measurement features in quantitative methodology is that it attempts to obviate interpretation, and instead imagines that it is possible to

produce a clear, predictable, controlled and unmediated representation of the object, animal or human behaviour being researched (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994a). Banister et al. (1994a) reflect that this "... belief in direct and unmediated ... behaviour is a starting point of much orthodox psychological research" (p.2).

According to Morawski (1997), research undertaken by Grady (1981), McHugh, Koeske and Frieze (1986) explains some of the methodological biases inherent in empirical research. Among those identified are: the misrepresentation of the sampling of subjects, the lack of recognition of the gender of the experimenter or researcher, use of sex-biased instruments and stimuli, an inaccurate analyses of data, unsound inferences and generalisations, and failure to systematically report certain experimental outcomes. Kaschak (1992) elaborates in detail, explaining that what has often happened is that research findings that have only made use of male subjects in experiments have been generalised to being valid in relation to women. She argues that in much research there has in fact been no identification of or testing for sex differences in research samples. In some cases the building of theories has been done by eliminating data from female subjects that does not correspond to data from male subjects as this complicated or undermined the research hypothesis.

There are abundant examples of research projects that report extraneous variables as including gender, class, race and personal history of the subject, as well as the possible effect of being an experimental or therapeutic subject. Others reflect actual, methodological errors that have been made and were accepted uncritically before the advent of feminist psychology. Kaschak (1992) examined an example of research by Hare-Mustin (1978, 1987) that explores how male theorists as well as various cultures and societies have historically viewed parenting by mothers and fathers as necessarily different. Hare-Mustin (1978, 1987) traces the source of problems, all too frequently, to enmeshment or the over-involvement of the mother with her children, "... neither acknowledging the bias inherent in the use of these terms nor understanding the patriarchal basis for this circumstance, but locating the problem within individual women. They blame women for being just what the society prescribes: intensely involved with their families and children" (cited in Kaschak, 1992; p.17). Many of these errors continue to be made by 'masculinist' and androcentric researchers (Kaschak, 1992).

These biases went predominantly unchallenged until the feminist methodological dialogue which developed through feminisms criticism of traditional positivistic research. Feminist critique of science represents the first steps in the reconstruction of psychology. Feminist analysis illuminates numerous inherent problems in the application of positivism. As Dubois (1983) succinctly stated, the issue is that "... we literally cannot see women through traditional science and theory" (cited in Jayaratne and Stewart, 1991; p.110).

It must however be noted that although much feminist critique examining psychological research focused on the tradition of positivism and empirical research, it is important to note, as Morawski (1997) points out, that there are feminist researchers who strongly advocate maintaining the psychological empiricist research tradition. Two such advocates are Letitia Peplau and Eva Conrad who, although they take the scientific 'value neutral' stance to be an 'illusion' and are sceptical of the possibility of 'universal facts or laws about human behaviour', nevertheless believe feminist psychologists should subscribe to the tenets of positivistic research. As Morawski (1997) highlights, "... their endorsement [of] the empiricist position is not elucidated but is equated with 'the methods of science'" (p.14).

### **3.4.1 The feminist dialogue with psychological research**

According to Kashak (1992) little acknowledgement was given to the recognition of societal influences which could effect behaviour, thus ignoring important experimental and situational influences, issues which have been addressed by feminism. One of feminism's goals is to serve as a catalyst for the paradigm shift that is anticipated by the widespread discontent with psychology's positivistic model (Harding, 1992; Harding & Hintikka, 1983). Feminism thus focuses on "... the awareness of context, the acknowledgement of the inevitable valuing in human science, [and] the inadequacy of dualistic models which revere objectivity" (Harding, 1992, p.222). The initial feminist dialogue has already contributed to the evolution of psychology and needs to develop further in order to maintain a dynamic role in this long overdue and necessary process.

Feminism, through its refusal to accept logical positivism's standards of 'truth', 'objectivity', 'universality', 'neutrality' and 'abstract reasoning', is neither defined nor motivated by these values in terms of research (Gross, 1987). With the development of feminist theory, women and the feminine were introduced as worthwhile areas of theoretical and psychological research. Thus women, having been denied value in patriarchal theory, could become the focal point of research (Gross, 1992).

Feminist theories and theorists recognise their own political positions and aspirations and accept that, far from being objective, they are motivated by goals aimed at acknowledging women's right to equality and autonomy in society and psychology, "... such motivation or purposiveness, [by] ... feminist theory, ... is its acknowledged function, its rationale" (Gross, 1992, p.201).

Feminists in their research consciously place women's peripheral condition at the centre. They now take women's experience and conditions both as researchers and as research subjects as key categories of interpretations (van Schalkwyk, 1997).

According to van Schalkwyk (1997) traditional research has been perceived as rational and objective which marginalised women. But recognition has begun to be given in the post-empirical methodological period to the importance of the researcher's subjectivity and the context of the research with the realisation that this can offer valuable insights enhancing the research and recognising that individual and group experiences are the basis of all knowledge. Scholars across various disciplines are becoming more prepared to acknowledge that research takes place in a subjective frame of reference. This is increasing the awareness of gender as a very important category when undertaking research (van Schalkwyk, 1997). A focus of this study examines whether or not masters psychology students take cognisance of the gender and ethnicity of their sample.

Feminist psychological research thus challenges androcentric scholarship, highlighting the need for a paradigm shift from a position viewed as 'neutral' but in fact androcentric or gendercentric, to a human one in which the perspectives and contributions of various marginalised groups including women are acknowledged (van Schalkwyk, 1997). Yet even with all of this women and

gender issues are still not 'mainstream' and many women researchers still prefer to do research from a position 'on the margins' of science (van Schalkwyk, 1997).

### **3.5 The emergence of an alternative methodology**

With the advent of the 'crisis' in psychology regarding its position in the sciences at the end of the 1960s and beginning of the 1970s, came an awareness and understanding of the impossibility of dealing with interpretation in research by attempting to suppress it or invalidate it and label it unscientific (Banister, Burman, Parker, Taylor, & Tindall, 1994b). Qualitative research did not emerge as a new paradigm from this crisis but it gained increased recognition (Banister et al., 1994b). The starting point that qualitative research in psychology then took was the awareness of the gap between the behaviour, activity or outcome being studied and how the researcher represented them, and the way interpretation necessarily comes to fill that gap.

Banister et al. (1994b) and others contend that the use of qualitative methodology in research has emerged in psychology only fairly recently, with an array of alternative approaches to those in the mainstream empiricist mode. Qualitative research involves a questioning of boundaries between the inside and the outside of psychology often offering contradictory interpretations (Banister et al., 1994b). Interpretation permits the possibility of the existence of different meanings that cannot be limited or controlled but which need to be recognised and not discarded as unworthy of recognition for research purposes. Qualitative researchers need to follow the interpretative process understanding that there will always be a gap but still take into consideration the context and integrity of the material (Banister et al., 1994b).

#### **3.5.1 The researcher's position**

Feminist inquiry challenges research that refuses to address the relation between knowledge and knowing and generally accepted research practices and power. Feminists pay attention to reflexive issues in the form of theorising and providing for the transformation process of academic production. This is achieved by the feminist researchers being aware of their position, as well as of their purpose, responsibility and the outcome of the research (Banister et al., 1994b).

As Denmark (1983) elaborates, "... our theories and the questions we researchers ask, as well as the interpretations of our data, can be feminist. However, the methods we use should be appropriate to our questions" (p.46). Feminist research has highlighted a greater awareness and need to understand the connection between socio-political phenomena and personal psychological experiences and respect for the diversity of psychological experiences and the possibility of change (Kaschak, 1992). Sandra Harding (1987) referred to the 'feminist standpoint', which allows for the existence of difference and does not claim a stable or unitary position for women or feminists (Banister et al., 1994b; Gordon, 1986).

Harding (1992) emphasised that, although there was much negativity towards positivistic forms of research within feminist circles, the strengths of positivist ideas in psychology need also to be acknowledged. Feminism's ability to ward off the tendency to equate feminism with qualitative research reflects the success of feminist critiques. Feminism recognises the valuable and important role that quantitative research can play in highlighting women's multiple roles (Harding, 1992). Schiebinger (1999) recognised the need not to be too quick to dismiss quantitative methods because this limits a scholar's ability to collect and interpret data from a variety of useful perspectives. In many areas of science, as in the humanities and psychology specifically, quantitative and qualitative studies can complement each other. What feminists need to do is remain vigilant because quantitative research when sensitively applied does allow for the generalisability of results to the greater population with similar lived experiences.

Feminist work and research does not attempt to adopt a specific method or methodology as its own, but allows for the research, its aims and the reasons for having undertaking the research in the first place to be critically examined and to dictate which process would be the best ethically and morally to adopt and would be the least biased in its reflection of what the data is revealing under investigation (Banister et al., 1994b). Stanley (1990) defines feminist research as the practice and theory development that connects experience and action. Peplau (1989) concludes that what feminist scholars maintain is that there is no one methodology that is intrinsically feminist.

Crawford (1989) noted that the changes that have taken place in psychological theory and research have been identified by feminist researchers, such as Maxine Bernstein and Nancy Russo (1974), Brinton Lykes and Abbey Steward (1986), Mary Parlee (1979), Mary Roth Walsh (1987) and others, who have documented feminist influences in psychology through the increase in numbers of women published as authors, listed as editors, footnoted by authors, and included as 'subjects', as well as the diminished proportions of male-only studies, the increased proportion of studies in which females are compared to males, and a broader use of methods and contexts beyond the laboratory into the realms of lived experiences (Crawford, 1989).

There are of course writers who do not present a transforming picture of the influence of feminism to effect change in any substantial manner in psychology. According to Fine and Gordon (1989), the changes that have taken place have not been enough and research conducted by feminist psychologists has asked relatively 'tame' questions in relation to gender, race/ethnicity, sexuality, class, as well as in other sensitive areas. Fine and Gordon (1989) undertook research to explore what feminist psychologists had published in the *Psychology of Women Quarterly* as well as in more mainstream journals during 1985-1986. In their study they attempted to establish a baseline of what feminist psychologists do methodologically, discursively and politically to assess whether this 'could/would/should' transform 'male-stream' psychology. Despite some small victories, the results were disappointing. Their results showed that feminism within psychology has a marked reluctance to engage in discussions relating to gender and the need to reflect it as an issue of power, seemingly refusing to ask questions of power asymmetry. Ultimately there was still a strong sense that even though there has been movement "... when feminism and psychology mate, feminism still seems to bear only recessive genes" (Crawford, 1989; p.150). The possibility exists that the present study may reflect similar results in terms of acknowledging gender and ethnicity as important in a South African context.

### **3.6 South Africa and psychological research methodology**

The historic views of women in the discipline of psychology described in the above literature were replicated in South African academia (Perkel, 1994). According to Perkel (1994), there was a tendency to devalue and undermine stereotyped feminine characteristics that perhaps,

emphasised "... people rather than things, subjectivity rather than objectivity, intimacy rather than distance, resolution rather than restriction" (p.10).

Psychology in South Africa has also historically reflected close links to the theoretical and scientific research paradigms and methodologies that have emerged from the western male European and American psychological discipline (Denmark, 1998). These traditions stressed the importance of highly developed empirical research that valued both objectivity and neutrality (Dawes, 1986). Holdstock (1981) in his article raised the question about whether the essence of human behaviour was getting lost because of the way psychologists have chosen to approach science and research from a positivistic framework based on pure research and maybe researcher needed to reassess their criteria for valid research (Finchilescu, 1995).

Generally it is already accepted that science cannot be value-free because the values of a particular endeavour at a particular time will always be reflected in the attitudes inherent in the theories of the specific discipline. The historical belief that science and psychology should be neutral, value-free and objective has allowed psychology in South Africa an excuse for many decades not to delve into the highly political arena of the psychological impact of oppression on different groups including women. As Biesheuvel (1991) acknowledges, "... [t]o declare a science to be neutral is to disembodify it" (p.132).

Retief (1989) emphasised the importance of focusing on the relevance of science and psychology in South Africa by looking at the epistemology of the discipline and questioning what is knowable? Retief (1989) reaffirmed Dawes's (1986) belief that psychological knowledge will remain suspect if it maintains its adherence to an objective, value-free, neutral stance because this has furthered existing repressive social and political practices for decades in South Africa.

Foster (1986) emphasised that for those South African psychologists who have viewed society in South Africa up until the political violence and strikes in 1985 through the "... lenses of traditional psychology, it will no longer be easy to entertain an ahistorical stance" (p.50). This period has shown South African psychologists "... that social and historical contexts cannot be

ignored in attempting to understand individuals' lives" (p.50), but it did not necessarily lead to any rapid changes in the discipline of psychology.

Liddell and Kvalsvig (1990) highlighted how empiricism with its notion that all sciences should be objective and unbiased had allowed many South African psychologists to veer away from research surrounding social accountability and thus by default the impact of apartheid and gender oppression. These authors do not believe an ahistorical approach is what is required, rather their goals were to discern the realities, historically, in the present and the future, and redress where possible rather than ignoring or diverting research attention away from these sensitive areas of social change. They strongly advocated that scientific neutrality is not a viable alternative or in South African society's best interests given the transformation process we as individuals and as a nation have to adjust to. Therefore as members of the discipline of psychology who are involved in research, what is required is "... reconciliation between our role as scientists and as responsible agents of social change" (Liddell & Kvalsvig, 1990, p.7).

Finchilescu (1995) in her research restates that feminists have argued that the scientific experimental method in the positivistic methodological framework strips the study of any socio-political context and often obscures factors that are vitally important to understand the experiences of women and other oppressed groups (Finchilescu, 1995; Unger, 1981). She focused specifically on the areas of developmental psychology which have received considerable critique with questions being raised about how psychology has constructed childhood, masculinity, femininity, motherhood and education. Feminism has criticised these developmental theories for how they have assisted unfair social relations in the family, in societies and across cultures (Finchilescu, 1995).

Strümpfer (1981) believed that the South Africa situation provided exceptional opportunities for socially relevant activities and research in psychology. He believed that there were many possible strategies to rapidly advance and validate psychology. He recommended better use of "... inductive inference, more short-run empiricism, greater use of qualitative methods, greater use of combined quantitative and qualitative methods, and approaching subjects as co-inquiring participants" (p.18). In Strümpfer (1981) examination of the 1980 National Psychology Congress

at which the focus was *"Taking Responsibility"* he identified the importance of getting out of psychological laboratories and undertaking research in the real world, where the environment couldn't be controlled or manipulated in experimental sterility and instead for the researcher to enter "... into the places where people live and work in dread, dearth and desperation" (p.18).

Strümpfer (1981) does not advocate one form of research above another but places them on a continuum, stretching from the abstract to the practically applicable. Strümpfer (1981) cites Morton Deutsch (1969) as having said: "... we also need psychologists who will make the future contributions of psychology to society more valuable by their willingness to investigate unexplored territory with unorthodox methods even as they lack any assurance that their exploration will have any useful results" (p.19).

Vogelman (1987) does not underestimate the importance of acquiring empirical data but emphasises that it is important to focus on people's subjective experiences as well. With regards to psychological research in South Africa, Vogelman (1987) refutes that it can be value-free since all research, even pure empirical research "... can be applied and may have social consequences" (p.28). Therefore researchers have to be reflexive and recognise that choices are continually being made and that any research is or could be used to uphold political or commercial interests.

Butchart and Seedat (1990) emphasised that one of the central tasks for South African psychologists as practitioners and researchers is the need to be self-reflexive and aware so as to contribute to the empowerment of all South Africans through the identification and elimination of oppressive forms of social and psychological theories. Seedat (1997) and Vogelman (1987) recognised the importance in South Africa of continually critiquing and challenging traditional scientific paradigms and research methodologies.

Seedat (1997) emphasises that research institutions and psychology, as a discipline needs to ensure that researchers as producers of knowledge re-present the experiences of the people involved in the study to the best of their abilities. Sensitivity needs to be given to the diverse attributes of the population being researched. Both Foster (1986) and Kottler (1990) agree that some psychological research done during the mid 1980s began to use alternative theoretical

frameworks other than that of positivistic research thus beginning to contribute "... towards the real, not imagined, social arrangements in which full human lives may be lived" (Foster, 1986, p.65).

Durrheim and Mokeki (1997) highlighted that if knowledge is to be seen as context driven then changes should have begun to occur in research content and methodology. This study aims to determine whether this has taken place in terms of more women entering the discipline and the shift and possible trends regarding research specialisation, methodology and sample type.

To advance the involvement of research into historically disadvantaged groups at the level of knowledge production, the discipline need to encourage action programmes at tertiary institutions (Seedat, 1997), develop forums to air disillusionment and disempowerment, promote diversity, recognise gendered realities, critically focus on the silences and marginalisation of various groups and establish ongoing emancipatory paradigms and methodologies. Given the creation of a new democratic constitution, women have moved onto the political agenda through the creation of the Bill of Rights and institutions such as the Gender Commission and others. It is thus important yet again that psychology, in its training and research, recognise and acknowledge the role it played historically as a discipline that assisted in reinforcing and reproducing power relations along racial and gender lines, but also actively adapt to becoming more relevant and accountable as a discipline and profession in South Africa (Biesheuvel, 1991; Vogelmann, 1987).

Durrheim and Mokeki (1997) in their content analysis of 478 articles published in the *South African Journal of Psychology* between 1970 and 1995 found that almost 70% of the papers used quantitative methods, from which they inferred strong forces in the discipline still lean towards quantification. They also found a dominance of philosophical papers were written in the 1980s which they ascribed to the possibility that increasing debates were taking place in and around apartheid and the relevance of psychology in a South African context. A tentative hypothesis developing out of this and other research was that there existed the likelihood that similar trends would be found in the present study of masters' dissertations.

### 3.7 Transformation

Although, as Fine and Gordon (1989) reflected, transformation of psychology by feminists has been modest, they believed that it is important to focus on feminism's impact on psychology and its recognition of women. There is no doubt that a vibrant, strong strain of feminist psychology survives and flourishes, but mainstream psychological research remains basically unchanged. Continual refocusing needs to take place with an acknowledgement that feminist psychologists can enrich the discipline of psychology. There is little doubt that psychology can and is being reconstituted and reconstructed and that "... feminist psychologists must enter the space – to interrogate how women (and men) position and are positioned in ways that relay, inscribe, experience, and critique the social as a personal moment" (Fine & Gordon, 1989, p.169).

Feminism, its theories and epistemologies, have thus been required to recognise the overt and covert forms of misogyny which have gone unchallenged in patriarchal theories (Gross, 1987). They have also needed to develop a critical awareness and an ability to recognise where there have been historical absences, silences, exclusions and gaps in research relating to women. Feminists have needed to analyse this blanket of silence that has functioned to maintain and benefit one group above another, in order to find ways to articulate what roles these silences and male representations played in the suppression of women and femininity.

Gross (1992) holds that feminism, in rejecting leading theories and existing epistemologies is involved in continual exploration and experimentation with new forms of writing, new methods of analysis and new kinds of discourse (Gross, 1992).

Bohan (1990) asserted that feminists not only need to critique existing epistemologies but also develop theories, produce research and publish alternative positions in order to challenge the research that contains and oppresses non-dominant groups. Denzin and Lincoln (1994), in their reflections of the requirements of a feminist researcher, highlighted the need for the researcher to develop an awareness and reflexivity that requires her or him to watch, listen, ask, record and examine carefully the research and the process itself. Ultimately, from a feminist perspective how these activities take place depends on the researcher's purpose for undertaking the research

project. It is this purpose which is ultimately shaped by the researcher's epistemological and methodological commitments (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). These forms of feminist awareness demonstrate that patriarchal theories are not and cannot be 'neutral', 'universal' or 'unquestionable' models, but are the effect of the specific, political positions maintained historically by men and were, for a long time, unquestionably accepted by women both inside and outside the discipline (Gross, 1987).

As Brodsky (1980) pointed out, over the last two decades a growing body of research has challenged long-held conceptions of the aims of psychology as well as the research methodologies followed by psychologists. Exploration of societies' stereotypes and their scientific, or lack of scientific basis has exposed the cultural construction of gender and, in psychology more specifically, the construction of women's position within the discipline of psychology (Deaux, 1984; Sheldrake & Fox, 1997). Florence Denmark (1994) talks about the 'engendering' of psychology, by which she means, the cultivation of a profession that is sensitive to issues of gender and diversity. Joan Wallach Scott (1996) believed that by acknowledging the gendered opposition between male and female as problematic and constructed, an opportunity to redefine old questions in new terms, such as those considering the family and sexuality, may be provided. In this way, women may become visible and active participants in the fabric of the discipline of psychology and society.

The task of the new century lies in the continual development of more complex and integrated feminist models of epistemology and change. The aim is not to definitively find the one correct way to describe or explain all women's experiences but to "... seek instead the interstices of the complex influences that make up psychological experience within a particular context" (Kaschak, 1992, p.29). It is this enterprise that Harding (1992) refers to when she reflects that new construction is underway in psychology.

## CHAPTER FOUR

# AIMS AND RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study involved an exploratory, thematic and categorical analysis of the titles and abstracts of Masters degree dissertations in psychology written by women and men in South Africa that were commenced and completed from 1964-1998. The reason for this time frame was that the Nexus Database only includes work from the mid 1960s onwards and this study was commenced in 1999.

This chapter outlines the aims and objectives of the study, before describing the research methodology and analytical techniques employed to explore what these women and men undertook to research. These dissertations represent research undertaken at all South African universities during this time period and are located in the archival database, the Nexus Database System, housed at the National Research Foundation.

### 4.1 Aims of the study

The primary aim of this study was to investigate the nature of research undertaken by women towards a master's degree in psychology. In order to be able to draw conclusions from the analysis of the findings and accomplish the other aims, described, there needed to be a comparative sample. Therefore a sample from the men's masters' research in psychology over the same period were selected and analysed. The project aimed to explore what had been researched and whether during this 35 year period, women's research was in any way different from that of the men's research in terms of the focus of their research and in relation to apparent historically dominant psychological research practice with regard to choices in methodology, sample type and psychological specialisation. One of the sub-investigatory goals of the study is to raise awareness of the contributions that women and men have made to the field of psychology within the South African context. The research findings of this study have the potential to enlighten and inform the discipline as well as the wider society about both women's and men's contributions to the knowledge-base of psychological research and more generally to masters psychological scholarship in South Africa.

#### 4.1.1 Objectives

The objectives of the present study were to:

1. Conduct a longitudinal analysis to determine whether there were any substantive differences between women and men with regard to the selection of specialisation, methodology and sample type; and
2. Explore whether any trends emerged separately within the women's and men's dataset which might lead to inferences being made when comparing the areas of psychological specialisations, methodologies and sample types chosen.

Published research, surveys and articles found in the literature began to present exploratory hypotheses in terms of the present study. Some of these exploratory hypotheses were that:

1. There would be an increase in the number of women being selected and completing their master's in psychology.
2. The dominant methodology would remain quantitative but that qualitative and combined research would increase.
3. There would not be an increase in cross-cultural research in the last two decades that was contextualised in a South African social context.
4. Women would be dominant in applied areas of psychology, such as clinical developmental, social, educational and other applied specialisation areas in psychology.

#### 4.2 Nexus as a database system

The Nexus Database system (hereafter referred to as Nexus) was developed by the Centre for Science Development (CSD) at the Human Science Research Council (HSRC) and is currently maintained by the National Research Foundation (NRF). Nexus is a database of current and completed research projects. It is an archival source and contains a relatively comprehensive database of research undertaken in South Africa. It contains information on about 63 000 post-graduate projects in the Social Sciences and Humanities in South Africa.

Nexus is dependent on submissions from universities and other research institutions for its primary information. The information is generated through these organisations' reporting on research being undertaken at their institutions. One of Nexus's shortcomings is that there is no obligation to register post-graduate research, or any departmental research and forward the information to the NRF. Individuals can choose to submit to the NRF independent of their institution, but if neither does so it highlights one of Nexus's limitations, which is that it may be missing information. Research undertaken at Historically Black Institutions (HBIs) may be unavailable or incomplete on Nexus. The NRF does, however, continue to request the information from all institutions, annually, in order to remain as current as possible.

Nexus is continually upgrading its services; for instance, all the titles of projects in languages other than English have been translated into English (Nexus: Academic Addenda: Bulletin November/December 1996). Nexus has many potential benefits as a research tool. Some of the perceived advantages that users have reported are that it keeps researchers abreast of some of the latest developments and prior research conducted in South Africa. Researchers have found that, through being acquainted with problems and results obtained from previous research, there is the potential for a widening and deepening of research and increased research networking and co-operation with other scientists leading to more inter-disciplinary research. It allows access to bibliographic information on literature, dissertations, theses and research projects not commercially published. The inclusion of both published reports and unpublished research on Nexus has meant that clients have access to a far wider pool of information (Nexus: Academic Addenda: Bulletin November/December 1996). The inclusion in Nexus of unpublished research has prevented this research from becoming the production of data that is not shared or accessible to other academic department (Raubenheimer, 1980).

#### **4.3 Preparation for the research**

All entries in the field of Psychological Research contained on Nexus, developed by the CSD and maintained by the NRF from 1964-1998 were purchased in disk format. The data was imported into an Excel database for data management purposes.

#### 4.3.1 The database

The initial database received comprised 9254 post-graduate Social Science and Humanities research projects for degree and non-degree purposes that were undertaken by both women and men in South Africa. All 9254 projects were reported and captured from 1964-1998 on Nexus. This is not all the post-graduate research undertaken during this period as Nexus relies on research institutions to inform the NRF of research being undertaken, and this requirement has not always been fulfilled.

#### 4.3.2 The sampling frame

The initial step was to systematically remove all extraneous data, in terms of the needs of this research project, so that, finally only women's and men's Psychology Master's dissertations that had been commenced and completed from 1964-1998 remained.

##### 4.3.2.1 The selection criteria

The cleaning of the database was achieved through the systematic removal from the various fields of all data that was not specified as a Masters dissertation conducted by women or men in the disciplinary fields of Psychology. This step-by-step process began with the:

1. Removal of all post-graduate research in the Qualification field that had been undertaken for non-qualification purposes;
2. Removal of all post-graduate research in the Qualification field, with the following specifications: D. Admin, D.Sc., DBA, D. Com, D. Th., PhD Sc, DBL, D. Phil.; D. Lit et Phil.; Ph.D., D. Ed., D. Sco.Sc., D. Sc. and PhD Soc Sc.;
3. Removal of research of a psychological nature undertaken in other departments not for the qualification of a masters in psychology, i.e. Dept. of Psychiatry, Dept. of Nursing, School of Management Studies, etc.;
4. Removal from the fields; Gender of Researcher(s), entries with the following specifications: unknown sex and more than one sex;

5. Removal of all research that was undertaken by a lecturer or full-time researcher; and
6. Removal of all duplicates. This was achieved by sorting the dataset alphabetically on the author's name so as to remove any duplicates (which had the same Record Number, Document Number, Surname, Initial and an identical title).

The post-graduate research in the Qualification field that remained has some of the following specifications: MA, M. Ed, M.Sc, M.Comm, M Admin, M. Soc Sc, M.Phil, M. Econ, MPL and M. Psych.

Table 4.1 shows that, out of the initial database of 9254 entries only 3681 entries related to Psychology Masters research undertaken by both women and men. The final dataset of importance for this project, once it had been systematically cleaned, contained 1533 entries for women and 2148 entries for men. This was designated too large a population given the demands in undertaking a thematic and categorical analysis.

**Table 4.1:** Psychological Master's dissertations on Nexus from 1964-1998

Women	Men	Total
1533 (41.64%)	2148 (58.36%)	3681 (100%)

When all 3681 entries were sorted according to their university of origin as seen in Table 4.2, the percentages show that ten out of eighteen universities comprise 93.8% of the psychology masters dissertation available on Nexus from 1964-1998. It is important to note the small contribution of dissertations received by Nexus from HBI's. Several possibilities may account for this:

1. The HBI's may not have the systems in place to collect and forward the information to the NRF.
2. The departments at these HBI's may be understaffed and priorities are focussed elsewhere.
3. The HBI's for a large part of the time period under investigation were involved in challenging the political regime of the time and therefore may have chosen not to acknowledge any organisations associated with the apartheid government.

**Table 4.2:** Master's research received by Nexus from the different universities

No.	Institution recorded on Nexus	Number of Psychology Master's Dissertations	% of total database per Institution
1	University of Pretoria	525	14%
2	University of South Africa	464	12.7%
3	Rand Afrikaanse University	434	11.8%
4	Stellenbosch University	388	10.6%
5	University of the Witwatersrand	326	8.9%
6	Potchefstroom University	282	7.7%
7	Orange Free State University	278	7.6%
8	University of Cape Town	277	7.5%
9	University of Natal	273	7.4%
10	University of Port Elizabeth	204	5.6%
11	Rhodes University	95	2.6%
12	University of Durban-Westville	67	1.8%
13	University of the Western Cape	41	1.1%
14	University of the North-West	8	0.2%
15	University of Zululand	8	0.2%
16	University of the North	7	0.2%
17	Vista University	2	0.05%
18	University of Fort Hare	2	0.05%
	<b>Total of the 18 Universities</b>	<b>3681</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### 4.4 The sample

Due to the fact that the population size was so large, an initial random sample from each of the population groups, women and men, was taken, using a random number selection programme<sup>1</sup>. According to Tables consulted in Page and Patton (1991, p.169) and in consultation with my supervisor and research psychologists it was determined that an overall 11% sample of the full population would be sufficient for the purposes, aims and objectives of this study. The final sample contained 405 Masters dissertations completed by women and men. For the sample to be stratified and proportionally representative, the following procedures were undertaken.

<sup>1</sup> The Random Generated Sample Programme (Rangen) was written by Professor R.D. Griesel, Research Professor, Faculty of Human Sciences, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa

1. The women and men population groups were separated. Each population group was sorted according to commencement and completion date as well as being placed in alphabetical order according to surname.
2. An important requirement was that each entry recorded had both a commencement date and a completion date. To complete the missing data, the data was chronologically arranged from commencement date and the mean timeframe to complete a master's in psychology was calculated for each year for both women and men. The mean was 3 years from commencement to completion. All the data entries missing either a commencement or completion date were allocated a date based on the mean completion time.
3. An 11% sample was taken from each group, women and men. Once this had been done it was found that the random sample did not adequately represent certain timeframes, i.e. in some periods many units of analysis had been selected and in other timeframes very few or no units of analysis had been included in the sampling process. This initial sample could not present a clear longitudinal picture of research undertaken over the 35 year period by both women and men. It was therefore deemed not to be representative and resampling took place.
4. For the next random stratified sampling process to take place, the units of analysis were grouped according to the decade in which the research had been commenced. An 11% sample was then taken in each decade to guarantee that the final sample included master's dissertations from each period.

The sample was divided into the four decades to acquire an equal sample from each period in the history of master's psychological research in South Africa. The decades were selected to be able to reflect any shifts that had occurred over time within and between women and men.

Before the final random sampling procedure was undertaken all units of analysis were removed that did not have an abstract on the database. This meant that approximately 33% of the database was rejected as incomplete, as the requirements of the research required an abstract. This was justified as though this reduced the population group from which the final sample was taken, the loss was spread across each decade and there were enough units of analysis to be able to continue the research process. Another reason for this was that it would be extremely time consuming to

apply for the missing abstracts through interlibrary loan and there were no guarantees that the university of origin would have the dissertation. Units of analysis with partially completed abstracts were maintained as these could be sourced from the Nexus website.

According to the information contained on Nexus reflected in Table 4.3, at a post-graduate master's level in psychology women were poorly represented and men were predominantly selected in the 1960s and the 1970s. In the following two decades women began to be more equally represented as can be seen by the number of women increasing to 44% and 47% respectively in the 1980s and 1990s.

**Table 4.3:** Total Nexus population of master's dissertations over 35 years

Decade	1960s		1970s		1980s		1990s	
Total population	144		901		1418		1218	
Women (W) or Men (M)	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>W</b>	<b>M</b>
Gender population per decade	39	105	291	610	629	789	574	644
% of the population per decade	27%	73%	32%	68%	44%	56%	47%	53%
11% sample of the population	5	12	32	67	69	86	63	71

#### 4.5 The research method

Content analysis was chosen as the preliminary method for analysing the dataset in this study because the data being explored was categorical. The initial process involved an inductive process of content analysis which was later discarded (reasons for this will be described further on in this chapter). The second content analysis process was deductive in nature with various psychological categorical systems being combined in order to make sense of the dataset. Once the data had been coded and captured on the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (hereafter known as SPSS). The findings were statistically generated using correspondence analysis statistics and graphics, cross-tabulation tables and bar graphs.

#### 4.5.1 Content analysis

Content analysis is the systematic study of a set of objects (e.g. cultural artefacts) or events analysed by counting them or interpreting the themes contained in them (Reinharz, 1992). It is a methodology for transforming various kinds of documents, presentations or information into a form that social scientists can, if necessary, analyse by means of statistical techniques. Content analysis is described by Holsti (1969) as circular and supplementary, as quantitative methods are utilised for the analysis of qualitative data. Sanders and Pinhey (1983) state it is by moving between these two approaches that the researcher is most likely to gain insight into the meaning of the data. Content analysis, according to Vorster (1994), is used to facilitate an objective, systematic analysis of content qualitatively manifest in research (e.g. words, phrases, concepts, themes) or recorded information so that the analysis can be repeated and is reliable.

##### 4.5.1.1 Secondary data

Content analysis is a method of analysis that uses available data. Such methods fall into the category of *secondary* (my italics) research as opposed to *primary* research. Stewart and Kamins (1993) describe secondary research as differing from "... primary research in that the collection of the information is not the responsibility of the analyst. In secondary research, the analyst enters the picture after the data collection effort is over" (p.3). It is important to note that the term *secondary* is used to refer to existing, available data and does not imply anything about the importance of the information, other than that it is being used for research beyond the original reason for gathering the data. Historical documents, or artefacts such as written records by individuals, have two distinctive properties. Firstly, they possess a naturalistic quality because they are not created necessarily for a specific purpose or research requirement. Secondly, they are non-interactive, requiring no questions or observation of behaviour. The process of studying them does not affect them; instead the researcher can examine the 'texts' without ever having to interact with the people who produced the research (Reinharz, 1992). "All primary research may ultimately become someone else's secondary source" of information (Stewart & Kamins, 1993, p.4).

There are some distinct advantages and disadvantages to secondary research.

Some of the advantages are:

1. The cost and time saved in acquiring the data;
2. It provide a useful starting point for additional research in different areas; and
3. Secondary research may provide a useful comparative tool for examining differences and trends over time.

Some of the disadvantages are:

1. It is often initiated with a specific purpose in mind that may produce a bias, either deliberately or unintentionally;
2. Data may be so extensive that when interpreting the findings the researcher could arrive at different, even conflicting conclusions that might be supported by one or other subset or the coding of the data; and
3. Problems may occur because the data was originally collected for a particular purpose and not for the research it is being utilised for now (Stewart & Kamins, 1993).

#### **4.5.1.2 The process of content analysis**

The process of content analysis includes the systemic observation of the selected data. This means that the data are examined systematically to record the incidences of themes and the ways in which these themes are presented (Tukey, 1969). The steps in performing a content analysis correspond closely to those found in direct systematic observation of behaviour (Huysamen, 1994):

1. The data to be analysed should be clearly defined.
2. Appropriate sampling methods should be chosen. As in all research, the emphasis should be on the typical or the representative rather than on what is likely to confirm the researcher's bias.

3. The next step involves a description of the way in which the units of analysis should be coded. This coding process may require the researcher to record the number of times a theme, construct or category occurs.
4. The coder(s) or rater(s) should be trained properly. The objective of such training is to ensure high interjudge reliability, a property which it is important to determine.
5. Finally, the statistical analysis of the data obtained consists of determining frequencies or percentages of occurrence of the chosen content (Huysamen, 1994).

#### **4.5.1.3 Coding schemes**

A major component of content analysis is the development of a coding scheme that can be used to analyse the available data. "Coding is the process whereby raw data are systematically transformed and aggregated into units which permit precise description of relevant content characteristics" (Holsti, 1969, p.94). Monette, Sullivan and DeJong (1990) emphasise how, in some cases, it is possible to find existing coding schemes. In others, the author develops a coding scheme specifically for a particular study. Coding categories should aim to be exhaustive and mutually exclusive. Categories are exhaustive when there is a category available for every relevant element in the raw data. These requirements force the researcher to have precise definitions for each category so that there is no ambiguity concerning which items it includes and which it does not (Monette et al., 1990). According to Durrheim and Mokeki (1997) there is no best way and the blurred nature of the boundaries between some of the category areas often makes unambiguous classification impossible and means that some data can be placed in more than one category. This would require a decision by the researcher as to which was the most appropriate category. Durrheim and Mokeki (1997) state that although it depends on the type of research being undertaken, it must be assumed that there will be inherent limitations with any categorisation system.

#### **4.6 Units of analysis**

In the present study, the titles and abstracts of each dissertation were the sample unit. Each abstract was coded in each of the different categories studied: i.e. thematic analysis utilising the

psychological specialisations in psychology; whether the research used quantitative or qualitative research methodologies; and the subject(s) selected as the sample type in each of the dissertations under consideration.

#### **4.6.1 Thematic word content analysis**

The initial process undertaken was to extract from each unit of analysis (the title and abstract), important psychological terms and constructs (strings of words) as they emerged. The various themes were placed in categories. This process was manually accomplished. The initial inductive analysis was discontinued, as it did not reveal substantial results that could not be achieved through a deductive process in terms of the aims of the research.

#### **4.6.2 Analysis by category**

After the initial inductive process was discontinued a deductive process was undertaken. This meant that the categories were developed and then the dissertations were coded according to the category that defined them. There are examples of research where psychological texts have been content analysed and classified according to various deductive categorical systems. Various database systems such as Nexus and PsychINFO have their own classification systems for psychology as a discipline. A brief description follows of the various deductive categories but for further reference purposes the expanded classification and definitions are to be found in Appendix A of this study.

##### **4.6.2.1 Classification of areas of specialisation in psychology**

The categories used for this purpose were the different psychological specialisations generally accepted in the field of psychology. The various classification systems were investigated to assess their suitability for the needs of this research. Finally, for the purposes of this study the Nexus classification with Durrheim and Mokeki's (1997) categories which were quite closely aligned to the standard, first-year textbook psychological topics were combined. There were ten specialisation areas that were identified, clinical, cognitive, personality, social, industrial,

developmental, experimental, educational, cross-cultural and philosophical psychology (see Appendix A).

#### **4.6.2.2 Type of research methodology utilised**

The classification employed was derived from conventional distinctions in use within the field of social science research and was meant to distinguish between quantitative, qualitative, theoretical and combined types of methodologies employed in the dissertations (see Appendix A).

#### **4.6.2.3 Sample type utilised**

This classification was employed to identify the sample types being investigated. Categories of sample type were developed and defined according to the primary group which made them eligible for selection, i.e. a pregnant woman about to give birth was placed in the category 'mother, mother and child' and not 'adult'. The sample types were categorised in terms of adults, children, family, mothers, adolescents, employees/employers, individual/patient/subject/client, student, mixed (child/adult) and none/uncertain. In the sample type analysis there was a need to inductively develop sub fields because some abstracts reflected a need for multiple codes depending on how much detail about the sample was contained in the title and abstract. The multiple codes of the general categories: were the sex of sample (female or male) and ethnicity of the sample (i.e. abstract's that had specified different racial groups, religious groups, cultures and languages, see Appendix A).

#### **4.7 Reliability**

It was important to measure the interjudge agreement to examine the reliability of the coding prior to the statistical and graphical analysis of the data (Stone, 1986). Although many of the dissertations straddled two or more categories, the instructions given were to examine each dissertation holistically and decide which themes or categories were primary and which were secondary in relation to the whole. In most cases this was achievable but for the most difficult cases a category of uncertainty was utilised.

A sub sample for examining reliability was created through the selection of every fifth abstract beginning at 1, 6, 11, ... 405. A total of 82 dissertation titles and abstracts were selected, 20% of the total number of abstract from the sample of 405. Training was undertaken in terms of the chosen coding system. On completion of the coding, the statistical measure for interjudge agreement, Cohen's kappa was calculated to check whether the judge was "... doing any better than flipping a coin" (Howell, 1997, p.160).

It was determined that if Cohen's kappa was above .75, there existed a strong enough agreement. Cohen's calculated kappa for sample type was 1.0, for methodology was .8 and for specialisation was .87. The simpler approach of calculating the percentage of agreement varied in relation to Cohen's kappa in terms of methodology with the percentage of agreement at 90% and Cohen's kappa at .8. The other two categories were relatively similar with the percentage agreement for sample type being 100% and for specialisation, 89%. According to Cohen's kappa the interjudge significant levels were considered to be acceptable.

## **4.8 Statistical analysis of the data**

### **4.8.1 Correspondence analysis**

Greenacre (1984) is a well-known proponent of correspondence analysis. Though much of his book is written at a high mathematical level, the introduction describes the underlying principles of correspondence analysis. He states:

... that graphical displays provide the best summaries of data – a picture is worth a thousand numbers. A graphical description is more easily assimilated and interpreted than a numerical one and can assist all three functions...: summarising a large mass of numerical data, simplifying the aspect of the data by appealing to our natural ability to absorb visual images, and (hopefully) providing a global view of the information, thereby stimulating possible explanations. In spite of these advantages, it is only in recent years that the value and tremendous potential of statistical graphics have been realised. This is mostly due to the rising importance of exploratory data analysis in a world which grows more complex and varied each day, where there is a continual proliferation of potentially interesting phenomena and an abundant supply of information available (or obtainable) to study them (p.3).

Though its origins are said to go back to Fisher in the 1930's (Greenacre, 1984), correspondence analysis in psychology is a relatively new technique for exploring the implications of a cross-tabulation of frequency data. Correspondence analysis goes further than a single chi-squared test on the table. It also has elements of factor analysis and can accommodate both "...nonmetric data and non-linear relationships" (Hair, Anderson, Tatham & Black, 1984, p.513). Correspondence analysis produces bi-plots, figures resembling factor-loading plots of two factors, on which the categories of both the rows and the columns of the cross-tabulations can be requested. Greenacre (1984) explains that "...a data matrix suitable for correspondence analysis is a two-way contingency table which expresses the observed association between two qualitative variables" (p.8) and that correspondence analysis "... is basically a fairly simple technique from the mathematical and computational point of view" (p.11). "By contrast [to other cross-tabulation techniques], correspondence analysis has no aspirations of modelling the data statistically" (Greenacre, 1984, p.258). These features made correspondence analysis seem appropriate for the current data, where cross-tabulations such as specialisation over decade, among several others, were planned.

#### 4.8.2 Assumptions in correspondence analysis

Correspondence analysis as with the more traditional multidimensional scaling techniques shares "... a relative freedom from assumptions ... The lack of assumptions, however, must not cause the researcher to neglect the efforts needed in ensuring the comparability of [variables] and, because this is a compositional technique, the completeness of the [categories] used" (Hair et al., 1984 p.514). As Greenacre (1984) notes "... it would be possible to investigate the patterns which we suspect *a priori* to exist in the data, but we rather want an exploratory framework where the patterns reveal themselves" (p.4).

Correspondence analysis has both advantages and disadvantages.

Some of the advantages are:

1. Its usefulness in terms of other techniques, correspondence analysis is possible given nominal data whereas factor analysis requires interval data (SPSS help guide, 1990).

2. According to Weller and Romney (1990), it provides a method for representing data spatially. This means that one can examine relations not only among row or column variables but also between row and column variables” (p.55).
3. It is useful as a visual representation that compliments “... the more conventional examination of numerical frequencies” (Carroll, Green, & Schaffer, 1986, p.279).
4. It interprets both “... contingency tables and other kinds of cross-tabulation data” with relative ease (Carroll et al., 1986, p.279).
5. It allows for the analysis of “... existing responses or to gather responses at the least restrictive measurement type, the nominal or categorical level” which can then be presented in the same perceptual space (Hair et al., 1984, p.515).
6. It also allows for the row and column categories to be displayed in the same dimensionality and interpoint comparisons to be made where “... relative proximity is directly related to higher association among separate points” (Hair et al., 1984, p.516).
7. Although it is a two dimensional graphical display, Greenacre (1984) strongly advocates that while “... we have sacrificed some ‘information’ (as little as possible) to obtain a display which is much easier to interpret. The usefulness of a technique like correspondence analysis is that the gain in interpretability far exceeds the loss in information ....” (p.7).

Some of the disadvantages are:

1. In its simplest form correspondence analysis only graphically presents two dimensions. Three dimensions as Greenacre (1984) acknowledges would improve the display but it would also complicate the picture.
2. A disadvantages as well as a general principle of all descriptive statistical methods is that there will always be “... a trade-off between ease of interpretation and completeness of description” (Greenacre, 1984, p.7)
3. It is not an appropriate technique for hypothesis testing rather it is an exploratory, descriptive technique as it has “... no method for conclusively determining the appropriate numbers of dimensions. As with other similar methods the research must balance interpretability versus parsimony of the data representation” (Hair et al., 1984, p.516).

4. It is also quite sensitive to outliers and for the purposes of generalisability, the omission of variables and categories can pose a critical problem (Hair et al., 1984).
5. Even though the researcher cautioned the observer of the graphic configuration not to assume relationships, they may "... (consciously or not) be prone to interpret all distances as comparable ..." (Carroll, Green, & Schaffer, 1987, p.450).
6. Finally, due to its relative newness as an analytical tool, an entire scholarly debate continues and can be traced in the literature (Carroll et al., 1986, 1987; Greenacre, 1989), conducted in part at the level of matrix algebra, on the appropriateness or even correctness, of one or another step in the treatment of data.

#### **4.8.3 The process of correspondence analysis**

As Hair et al. (1984) confirms, there are a number of different computer programmes available to perform and analyse data using correspondence analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was chosen because it was the most readily available at the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg.

Correspondence analysis was selected to analyse the data that had been categorically coded using content analysis. One of the reasons for having chosen correspondence analysis is because it describes "... the relationship between two nominal variables in a correspondence table ..., while simultaneously describing the relationship between the categories for each variable" (SPSS help guide, 1990). Even though correspondence analysis is a recently developed statistical process to analyse data, it has developed in complexity.

SPSS offers the user a choice of distance measures (Euclidean or Chi-squared); how many dimensions should be extracted and standardising and normalising options. Its 'default' is for the chi-squared distance measure, two dimensions and symmetrical normalisation. As a general principle SPSS's 'defaults' are chosen to suit the most usual applications. But correspondence analysis has developed many options and variations, which have been reflected in the sharp scholarly exchanges between Carroll et al. (1986, 1987, 1989) and Greenacre (1989) in articles published in the *Journal for Marketing Research*. Thus I accepted that correspondence analysis is

a descriptive, exploratory technique, and without going into statistical explanations, I used the 'default' or symmetrical normalisation when exploring and comparing women's and men's research in terms of psychological specialisation, methodology and sample type across all four decades and women and men's research in terms of specialisation versus methodology and specialisation versus sample type.

#### **4.9 Theoretical interpretation of results**

Carroll et al. (1986) believe that the correspondence analysis is trying to answer a number of questions visually that were pertinent to the current study: "... what relationships or comparisons can be made of distances (between row points, column points, and/or row and column points) in the geometric representation obtained from correspondence analysis" (p.272).

As Lebart, Morineau and Warwick (1984), recommended, I have limited the interpretation to the first two axes only. First of all, the Figures depicted in Chapter Five will attempt to show the principal relationships among the profiles on the basis of the first two dimensions. I have tried to perform successive interpretations of the proximities of the variables and categories. With only two categories in one variable (i.e. women and men psychology master's students), SPSS's default settings could not produce a bi-plots, therefore, for any trends or changes in my specific area of interest, research on women and men psychology master's students, the use of a simpler analysis or pictorial representation than correspondence analysis is supplied by stacked bar-graphs. Also with 'decade' being the only category that is not nominal, other possibilities arose such as identifying high standardised residuals as being worthwhile commenting on.

#### **4.10 Overview of correspondence analysis**

As correspondence analysis is a relatively new statistical technique, it is understandable that different authors are going to disagree on what can be legitimately described when presented with the spatial structure of the statistical graphics. Therefore there is no absolute set of rigid steps to analyse data using correspondence analysis. It is for this reason that I have chosen to use the default on SPSS. A conventional chi-squared list of some of the cross-tabulations would be

inappropriate because of the many cells with small Expected values. But having selected the 'default' chi-squared distance measure, it is straightforward to match the chi-squared standardised residuals (available in the SPSS cross-tabulation procedures) to the distances on the correspondence analysis plots. These residuals were only identified as being of interest above or below 2.

SPSS has something of a reputation for voluminous output, and due to the constraints imposed on the length of a master's dissertation, the raw data, normalisation tables, contingency tables and any other additional information is available from the School of Psychology, Natal University, Pietermaritzburg.

The findings generated from the coded and analysed data and their accompany discussion will be dealt with in detail in Chapter Five.

## CHAPTER FIVE

# RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 5.1 Current research findings and discussion

The primary aim of this study was to investigate research in South Africa completed by women and men psychology masters students over 35 years and to assess whether there were any noticeable shifts, trends or differences relating to the gender of the researcher in terms of areas of specialisation, methodology and sample type selected. Various exploratory hypotheses began to emerge from the literature, surveys and published research. Some of these hypotheses are that the numbers of women selected for masters would increase in relation to men; quantitative research would still dominate but qualitative and combined research would increase in the 1980s and 1990s; research focussing specifically on women's issues would not dominate; cross-cultural research as an area of specialisation would not have increased; women's masters research would continue to be in the applied areas of psychology; and gender of the sample would not be considered a socially significant variable with the ethnicity of the sample only gaining relevance in cross-cultural research.

For ease of reading and understanding, the results of the analysed data have been presented, described and integrated with the literature. The results are presented in the form of correspondence analysis figures, cross-tabulation tables with chi-squared standardised residuals and stacked bar graphs. This is also the order of presentation in the Chapter but in certain instances for ease of layout and space this order has been slightly altered. All the additional statistics that were generated in order to create the correspondence analysis bi-plots are not included but are available from the School of Psychology.

### 5.2 Population of psychology master's dissertations on Nexus from 1964-1998

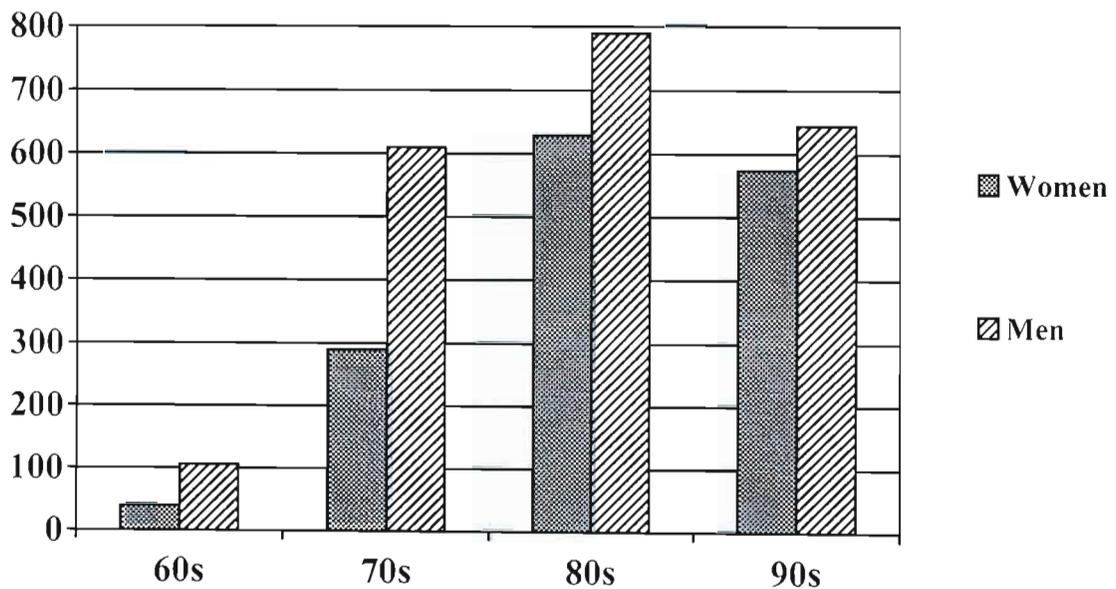
Table 4.3 in Chapter Four shows the breakdown of the population in detail regarding the gender of the researcher, their numerical composition and associated percentages across the four

decades. A similar picture is presented in Table 5.1 in terms of the random stratified sample that has been drawn from the total Nexus population.

**Table 5.1: Sample of 405 dissertations over the decades**

Sex of Researcher	Commencement				Total
	60s	70s	80s	90s	
<b>WOMEN (% of Total)</b>	5 (1.2%)	32 (7.9%)	69 (17.0%)	63 (15.6%)	169 (41.7%)
<b>MEN (% of Total)</b>	12 (3.0%)	67 (16.5%)	86 (21.2%)	71 (17.5%)	236 (58.3%)
<b>Total Count (% of Total)</b>	17 (4.2%)	99 (24.4%)	155 (38.3%)	134 (33.1%)	405 (100.0%)

Figure 5.1 graphically reflects the changes in terms of the amounts of women entering the discipline of psychology. It shows how men were dominantly selected for masters in psychology in the 1960s and 1970s but in the 1980s and 1990s the gap narrowed substantially in the selection of women and men.



Total: N = 3681

**Figure 5.1: Total Nexus population of psychology master's students over 35 years**

**Table 5.2: Kruskal-Wallis trend test**

Ranks				Test Statistics	
		N	Mean Rank		Commencement
Commencement	Women	169	218.35	Chi-Square	5.582
	Men	236	192.01	df	1
	Total	405		Asymp. Sig.	.018

To clarify this the Kruskal-Wallis non-parametric test of monotonic trends as described by Marascuilo and McSweeney (1977) was used (see Table 5.2): all dissertations in the 1960s are tied, with a ‘score’ of 1; in the 1970s with a ‘score’ of 2; in the 1980s with a ‘score’ of 3; and in the 1990s with a ‘score’ of 4. While there are clearly more men, overall, the women are becoming more prominent in the 1980s and 1990s and for this sample of 405 dissertations the trend is significant at 0.018. It highlights that women began to rank more noticeably in the 1980s, with a mean rank of 218.35, whereas men’s dominance occurred in the 1970s reflected in their mean rank of 192.01. From the total population of 3186 it is important to note (see Figure 5.1) that the pattern developing is one of women entering the profession in far greater numbers in the present than in the earlier decades. Women are numerically beginning to draw abreast of the numbers of men entering the psychological profession. These findings have also been established in research by Gardner (1979) and Richter and Griesel (1999).

The significant gap between men and women in 1960s and 1970s may have some connection to early societal and developmental tenets that women were inferior to men biologically and mentally (Worrell, 1990) and thus proscribed from following a career in psychology as reviewed in Chapter Two and Three. The lack of women entering the profession in the 1960s and 1970s highlights what the literature confirmed that women wanting to become psychologists encountered barriers both in education, training and selection in the departmental structures (Bohan, 1992; Matlin, 2000). These numerical results support Seedat’s (1997) findings that tertiary education systems have been the exclusive arena of ‘white male hegemony’. A feminist reading of why women were absent in the discipline acknowledges that societal pressure and the misuse of power found women ill-represented and constrained from moving into academia, as their primary purpose in life was one of ‘domesticity’. Thus reinforcing “... women’s subordinate position through the discipline” (Bohan, 1990, p.219).

With the shift in society and the growth of feminism, views upheld by society, early psychologists such as Stanley-Hall, Cattell and Titchner, philosophers such as Hegel and developmental theories by well known psychologists such as Freud, Erikson, Kohlberg and other have begun to lose their power to constrain, channel and restrict women from furthering a professional career in the discipline (Bohan, 1990; Gannon et al., 1992). This led to massive changes in the early 1960s and 1970s in Europe and the United States of America in general regarding the position of women in society and psychology. The changes experienced in the West only began to impact tangibly in South Africa in the late 1970s and the subsequent decades of the 1980s and 1990s which defined a major shift in representation in psychology at a master's level. Gardner's (1979) survey showed that more women had been selected in a 3 year period from 1977-1979 in the clinical and counselling masters categories. Due in part to the growth of feminism and the women's movement beginning to impact on the discipline in South Africa, women are becoming a much stronger force in many areas of their society, community, the business environment and academia. A South African author, van Schalkwyk (1997) recognised the historical connection between science and society that justified and rationalised gender, racial and academic oppression. Women in academic disciplines as van Schalkwyk (1997) points out will no longer be subdued. They have begun to make their mark and claim the spaces that have been historically and ideologically inaccessible to them. The literature identified women's numerical advancement as being an important positive shift for the profession's credibility as an inclusive rather an exclusive discipline (Cock, 1991; Faludi, 1992; Finchilescu, 1995).

Another reason for the narrowing of the gap between women and men qualifying in psychology in South Africa may be due to the discipline creating professional registration in the mid 1970s. Thus as Richter and Griesel (1999) have identified with the advent of feminism and the selection of more women students from the 1970s the impact was finally felt in the mid 1990s when in 1996, "...there were equal numbers of registered male and female psychologists (2130 and 2125)" (p.3). This is not ascribed to an exodus of men from the discipline but due to the increase being largely taken up by women (Richter & Griesel, 1999). Another variable that may be operating from the 1970s is the different types of master's degrees, either by (pure) dissertation versus a coursework masters with the dissertation component ranging in percentage value. This information is unavailable on Nexus.

As discussed in Chapter Four (section 4.9), it was not possible to generate correspondence analysis bi-plots with only two entries, i.e. women and men researchers. Therefore some descriptive cross-tabulations were undertaken (see Table 5.3). As also mentioned in Chapter Four (section 4.10), only standardised residuals above or below 2 were defined as worth commenting on.

**Table 5.3: Sample of women and men: University of origin (percentage of sample)**

<b>University</b>		<b>WOMEN</b>	<b>MEN</b>	<b>Total</b>
UNISA (Unisa)	Count (% of Total)	30 (7.4%)	35 (8.6%)	65 (16.0%)
	Std. Residual	.6	-.5	
University of Pretoria (Pta)	Count (% of Total)	24 (5.9%)	41 (10.1%)	65 (16.0%)
	Std. Residual	-.6	.5	
Rand Afrikaanse University (RAU)	Count (% of Total)	26 (6.4%)	25 (6.2%)	51 (12.6%)
	Std. Residual	1.0	-.9	
University of Port Elizabeth (UPE)	Count (% of Total)	18 (4.4%)	22 (5.4%)	40 (9.9%)
	Std. Residual	.3	-.3	
Witwatersrand University (Wits)	Count (% of Total)	20 (4.9%)	16 (4.0%)	36 (8.9%)
	Std. Residual	1.3	-1.1	
Orange Free State University (OFS)	Count (% of Total)	10 (2.5%)	20 (4.9%)	30 (7.4%)
	Std. Residual	-.7	.6	
Stellenbosch University (Stell)	Count (% of Total)	11 (2.7%)	17 (4.2%)	28 (6.9%)
	Std. Residual	-.2	.2	
Natal University (Natal)	Count (% of Total)	12 (3.0%)	13 (3.2%)	25 (6.2%)
	Std. Residual	.5	-.4	
University of Cape Town (UCT)	Count (% of Total)	10 (2.5%)	14 (3.5%)	24 (5.9%)
	Std. Residual	.0	.0	
Potchefstroom University (Potch)	Count (% of Total)	4 (1.0%)	14 (3.5%)	18 (4.4%)
	Std. Residual	-1.3	1.1	
Rhodes University (Rhodes)	Count (% of Total)	2 (.5%)	9 (2.2%)	11 (2.7%)
	Std. Residual	-1.2	1.0	
University of Durban Westville	Count (% of Total)	0 (.0%)	6 (1.5%)	6 (1.5%)
	Std. Residual	-1.6	1.3	
University of the Western Cape (U-WC)	Count (% of Total)	2 (.5%)	2 (.5%)	4 (1.0%)
	Std. Residual	.3	-.2	
Vista University	Count (% of Total)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)	1 (.2%)
	Std. Residual	-.6	.5	
University of the North	Count (% of Total)	0 (.0%)	1 (.2%)	1 (.2%)
	Std. Residual	-.6	.5	
<b>Total</b>	Count (% of Total)	169 (41.7%)	236 (58.3%)	405 (100.0%)

In terms of the women's and men's sample in relation to their university of origin, no standardised residual in Table 5.3 is in any way large enough to comment on. What is important to note is that because the sample was random and stratified according to commencement date (see Table 5.2) it reflects a similar gender representation to the population of 3681 dissertations (see Table 4.3, Chapter Four).

Table 4.2, in Chapter Four, Table 5.3 and Figure 5.2 substantiate that the universities training the majority of psychologists over the last four decades have been primarily historically white Afrikaans-speaking universities followed by white English-speaking universities with the HBIs producing very few graduates. These findings parallel what Gardner (1979) found in his survey of 350 psychology masters students at seventeen South African universities from 1977-1979. He found that out of five HBIs, only two of them had any masters' students during this period, these HBI students accounting for 13 out of the total of 24 non-white students selected for masters in this period. Richter and Griesel (1999) in their research also noted the dominance of the Afrikaans and English speaking universities over the HBIs.

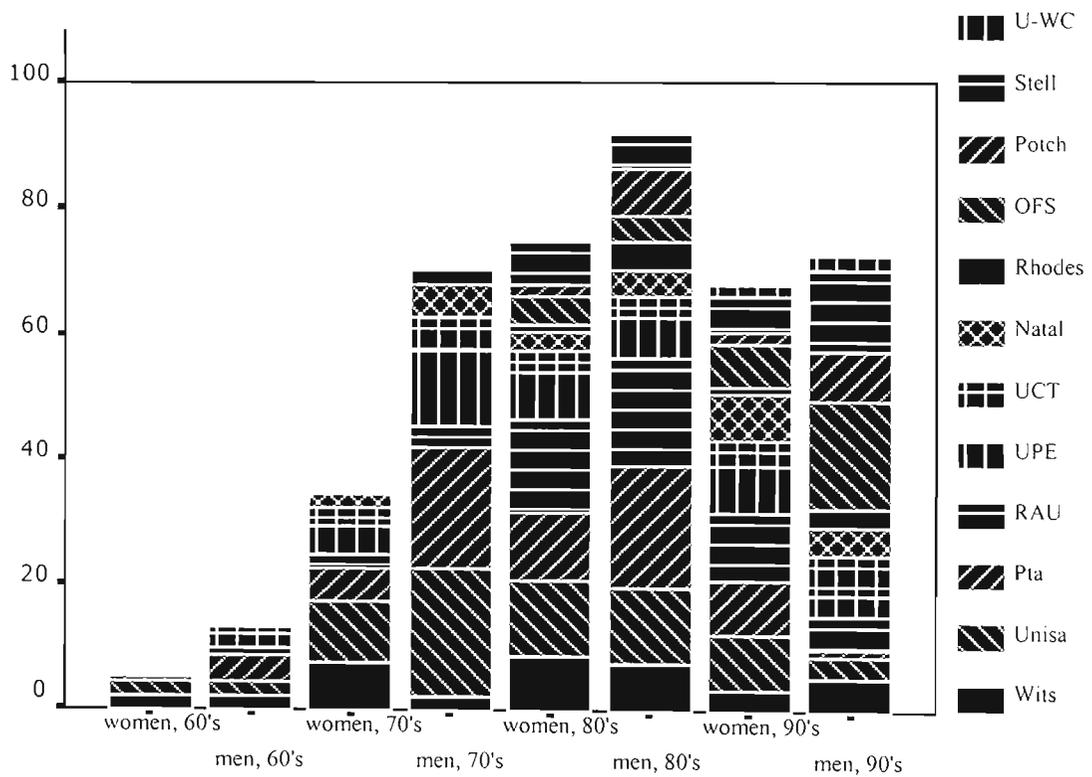


Figure 5.2: Sample of women and men: University x decade

A disappointing finding from this study in terms of South Africa and the feminist emancipatory agenda is the dearth of research emanating from HBIs who submitted their student's research to Nexus over 35 years (see Table 4.3, Chapter Four). Of eighteen universities and a Nexus population of 3681 (100%), the seven HBIs produced only 135 (.04%) dissertations in 35 years. This highlights that more work is required to meet the many other feminist agendas now that gender equality has been attained. As Gardner (1979) found and this study corroborates change has taken place in addressing the issue of gender inequality. However the feminist emancipatory agenda needs to be taken further to bring an end to discrimination which Gardner (1979) identified in the lack of selection of non-whites students at all South African universities and the present study while not being able to reconfirm this as the racial groups of the masters students are not registered on Nexus, it still reflects a serious lack of research being produced at HBI's. An important area for future research could be a repeat study of Gardner's (1979) survey re-exploring the South African academic environment and their selection procedures to ascertain whether or not the gap is closing between white and non-white post-graduate students in psychology in South Africa.

### 5.3 Specialisation over decade

The statistics in the correspondence tables (available in the School of Psychology) comparing women's and men's dissertations in terms of their areas of specialisation over decade shows that the cumulative proportion of inertia for women is .964 and for men is .965. This means that the patterns in Figure 5.3 and 5.4 describe the relative association between specialisation and decade with very little information being lost in the two-dimensional graphical representation of the material. Figure 5.3 and 5.4 illustrate what is numerically presented in Table 5.4.

In Figure 5.3, it can be seen that women's research in the 1960s and 1970s focussed on developmental psychology, confirmed by the large positive standardised residuals of 2.6 and 2.3 (see Table 5.4) followed by a substantial decrease in research in this area by women in the 1980s.

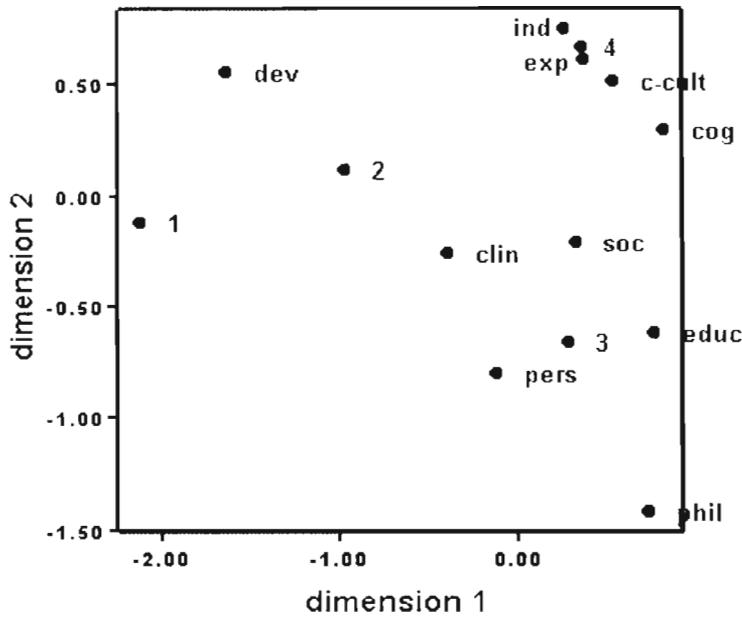


Figure 5.3 Abbreviations

- c-cult = cross-cultural
- soc = social
- educ = educational
- dev = developmental
- phil = philosophical
- ind = industrial
- clin = clinical
- exp = experimental
- pers = personality
- cog = cognitive
- 1 = 1960s
- 2 = 1970s
- 3 = 1980s
- 4 = 1990s

Figure 5.3 Correspondence Analysis: Women researchers - Specialisation x decade

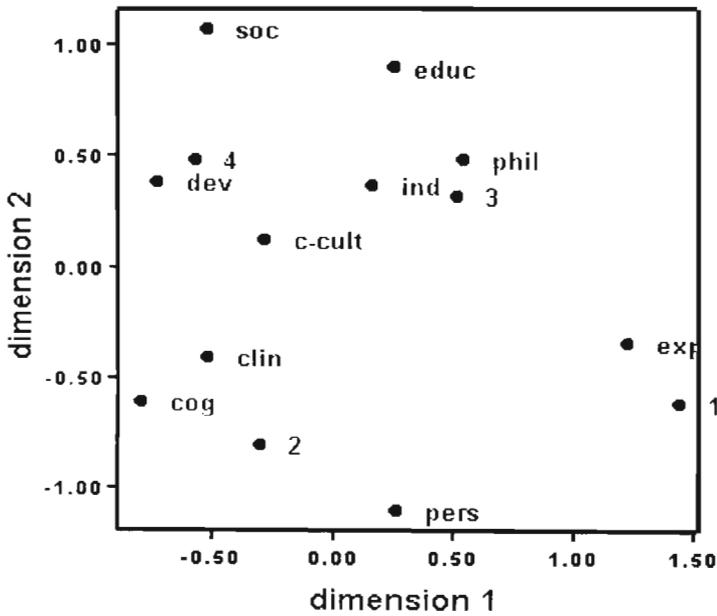


Figure 5.4 Abbreviations

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Figure 5.4 Correspondence Analysis: Men researchers - Specialisation x decade

The opposite can be said of the men as Figure 5.4 demonstrates no relationship between the 1960s and 1970s to developmental psychology existed but rather a preference for experimental research in the 1960s (with a standardised residual of 2.2, see Table 5.4) and the 1980s with no association to the 1990s, confirmed by the standardised residual of -2.5 in Table 5.4. In the 1970s clinical psychology emerged as a research domain for women (see Table 5.4).

Women's dissertations in the 1980s displayed no association with developmental research instead reflecting a broadening of research domains which included clinical, personality, social, educational and philosophical psychology (see Figure 5.3), again established in Table 5.4 where it can be seen that clinical, personality, social, educational and philosophical psychology all have positive standardised residuals. Dissertations focussing on the philosophical domain dominated the 1980s with the largest residual of 2.1 (Table 5.4). Specialisation domains worth noting in women's research are in the philosophical, cross-cultural and industrial psychological areas.

Although there were only a small number of dissertations in the philosophical area, they were dominant in the 1980s. A possible reason for the writing of philosophical dissertations by both women and men in the 1980s may be because this was a period of political, social and economic upheaval in South African history and as feminism had done in the West by recognising ideologically oppressive structures and historical exclusions so too did some South African psychologists, such as Foster (1986), Dawes (1986), Kruger (1988) and others. They began to challenge, write and publish about the need for the discipline to contextualise itself in the South Africa's multi-cultural environment. The increase in philosophical research during this period may be attributable to the discipline becoming more aware of the need to allow for theoretical questions to be asked of the discipline in their striving for social change (Peplau, 1980). Although not the aim of this study but linked to possible further research, implications found from a cursory overview of these dissertations confirmed that these students were questioning traditional views, epistemology and ways of knowing, the construction of knowledge, challenging the historical linear thinking and moving away from the study of a relativistic reality to one that values the ecosystem in which the subjects exists. Table 5.7 highlights that although research during this period did not show an overall altering of methodological preferences; all the philosophical research was either theoretical, qualitative or of a combined nature.

**Table 5.4 Women and men researchers: Specialisation x decade (standardised residuals)**

WOMEN	SPECIALISATION	Count	Commencement				Total
			60s	70s	80s	90s	
	clinical	Count	2 (.5)	14 (1.6)	21 (.2)	12 (-1.5)	49
	cross-cult.	Count	0 (-1.0)	3 (-1.3)	11 (-.7)	19 (1.9)	33
	personality	Count	1 (.6)	3 (-.2)	11 (1.3)	3 (-1.4)	18
	industrial	Count	0 (-.7)	3 (-.1)	4 (-1.1)	10 (1.5)	17
	social	Count	0 (-.6)	2 (-.4)	7 (.5)	5 (-.1)	14
	develop	Count	2 (2.6)	6 (2.3)	1 (-1.9)	4 (-.4)	13
	philosophical	Count	0 (-.5)	0 (-1.2)	7 (2.1)	1 (-1.1)	8
	experimental	Count	0 (-.5)	1 (-.3)	2 (-.5)	4 (.9)	7
	cognitive	Count	0 (-.5)	0 (-1.2)	3 (1.1)	4 (.9)	7
	educational	Count	0 (-.3)	0 (-.8)	2 (.7)	1 (-.1)	3
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>32</b>	<b>69</b>	<b>63</b>	<b>169</b>
		<b>% of Total</b>	<b>3.0%</b>	<b>18.9%</b>	<b>40.8%</b>	<b>37.3%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
MEN	SPECIALISATION	Count	60s	70s	80s	90s	Total
	clinical	Count	1 (-1.2)	27 (2.2)	15 (-1.7)	20 (.2)	63
	industrial	Count	3 (.3)	9 (-1.4)	21 (.7)	17 (.5)	50
	cross-cult.	Count	1 (-.4)	8 (-.1)	9 (-.5)	11 (.8)	29
	experimental	Count	4 (2.2)	7 (-.2)	15 (1.6)	1 (-2.5)	27
	personality	Count	2 (1.3)	8 (1.6)	4 (-.8)	2 (-1.3)	16
	philosophical	Count	1 (.3)	2 (-1.1)	8 (1.1)	4 (-.2)	15
	social	Count	0 (-.8)	1 (-1.5)	5 (.0)	8 (1.8)	14
	educational	Count	0 (-.8)	1 (-1.3)	7 (1.3)	4 (.2)	12
	cognitive	Count	0 (-.6)	3 (1.0)	1 (-.8)	2 (.1)	6
	develop	Count	0 (-.5)	1 (-.1)	1 (-.4)	2 (.7)	4
<b>Total</b>		<b>Count</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>67</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>71</b>	<b>236</b>
		<b>% of Total</b>	<b>5.1%</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>36.4%</b>	<b>30.1%</b>	<b>100.0%</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>17</b>	<b>99</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>134</b>	<b>405</b>

Table 5.4 reflects a substantial increase in the amount of women's dissertations focussing on cross-cultural research in the 1980s this grew dramatically into the 1990s (Table 5.4 reflects a residual of 1.9). It is hoped that this is a positive trend in the context of South Africa and the relevance of psychology as a discipline. A positive outlook to the move into cross-cultural research at a master's level in psychology confirms Foster (1986) and Dawes (1986) recommendations that psychology needs to become relevant to the South African context.

However this positive view needs to be tempered with the recognition and awareness Sampson (1981) identified of how historically psychological research has been used to reproduce and

reveal information that represents the values and interests of the existing social order. Therefore in terms of future research these dissertations identified as cross-culture in nature need to be examined to identify if there are any ideological or political positions that have been furthered by the research and if it has allowed for a distorted picture of reality to be perpetuate because it benefits the dominant group's interests.

Women have also become large contributors to industrial psychological research in the 1990s. Table 5.4 identifies and confirms that in the earlier decades women did not focus on industrial psychology, but the 1990s saw a move in women's research to industrial psychology. This is important in terms of the feminist agenda that no domain should be allowed to remain the exclusive preserve of men. The field of industrial psychology seems to be opening up for women, in that it is the biggest growth area for women in the 1990s and the gap between women and men has narrowed substantially. Men's industrial psychological research has remained relatively high across all four decades with the only decrease being experienced in the 1970s, a period in which clinical research (standardised residual of 2.2, see Table 5.4) became dominant in men's dissertations.

The relative lack of research in the developmental and educational domain suggests that perhaps women masters' students in South Africa did not feel constrained to do research in psychological domains that historically were identified as women's preserve. Women are also producing more cross-cultural research than men in the 1980s and 1990s. The 1990s was the only decade in which women showed any interest in experimental research (see Figure 5.3) and fewer clinical psychology dissertations were written. It is also noticeable how little research by women focussed on educational psychology; this may in part be due to the coding of the categories, which meant that for example research that was educational as well as cross-cultural was coded in the latter category in this study. Women have begun to produce more research that is cross-cultural in nature in the 1990s whereas men have remained relatively constant in their production of cross-cultural research. The majority of all the philosophical research dissertations produced by both women and men emanated from the 1980s.

**Table 5.5: Women and men researchers: Specialisation over all 4 decades**

<b>Specialisation</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Clinical	49 (.3)	63 (-.3)	112
Cross-cultural	33 (1.4)	29 (-1.2)	62
Personality	18 (1.0)	16 (-.9)	34
Industrial	17 (-2.1)	50 (1.8)	67
Social	14 (.7)	14 (-.6)	28
Developmental	13 (2.2)	4 (-1.9)	17
Philosophical	8 (-.5)	15 (.4)	23
Experimental	7 (-1.9)	27 (1.6)	34
Cognitive	7 (.7)	6 (-.6)	13
Educational	3 (-1.3)	12 (1.1)	15
Total	169	236	405

(Standardised residuals in brackets)

Across all four decades women focused their research on clinical and cross-cultural research whereas the men focussed on clinical and industrial psychology. Overall industrial psychology shows a large negative residual in women's research due to their lack of research in this domain in the first three decades and a large positive loading in men's research. It needs noting that men produced more dissertations that focus in the educational areas of research than did women.

When all four decades are grouped together it can be seen that women still undertook research in developmental psychology with cross-cultural research being the next most selected area and women did not do research in industrial (standardised residual of -2.1, see Table 5.5), experimental (standardised residual of -1.9, see Table 5.5) and educational psychology. This information is skewed because of the lack of research in the earlier decades. Men on the other hand showed a reversal of the above picture preferring industrial and experimental psychology and seldom undertook research in the developmental areas of psychology (residual of -1.9, see Table 5.5).

From a feminist point of view it is important to highlight that the fears expressed by early proponents within the profession that women would shift the direction of psychology towards more applied 'less prestigious' areas of psychology which is what Bohan (1990) and Scarborough and Furumoto (1987) found in women's published research have been unfounded at

a master's level of research in South Africa. Sheldrake and Fox (1997) underlined the importance of how challenging paradigms should be embraced positively. Women researchers have shown they are moving into areas that were hitherto primarily seen by society as the male domain. In fact women were becoming well recognised in industrial and clinical research (see Figure 5.3 and Table 5.4).

#### **5.4 Methodology over decade**

The statistics for Figure 5.5 and 5.6 show that very little information was lost in the use of a two-dimensional graphical representation of the material. The cumulative proportion of inertia is .953 for women and .995 for men.

In terms of women researchers their least selected methodology was theoretical as seen in Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.7 this method was reflected seldom out of the total amount of women's dissertations (8 out of a sample of 169). They also are only associated with the 1980s as it is the only decade in which they were found in women's research. Women researchers across all decades dominantly used quantitative methods with qualitative methods increasing in the 1980s and 1990s (see Table 5.6).

For women there is a relatively close association between the 1970s and combined, quantitative and qualitative methodology as seen in Figure 5.5 and Figure 5.7 which identifies that no combined research took place in the 1960s yet in the 1970s (see Table 5.6) it represented the second most number of dissertations. Women interestingly undertook more combined research on average in the 1970s than in any other decade. For the specific women researchers who chose to do research by combining both methods, this may have been less threatening for them as a way of introducing, including and validating qualitative research in the discipline of psychology, men on the other hand did not feel restricted in producing pure qualitative research in the 1970s (see Table 5.6).

Men's research is also linked to the selection of quantitative methodology in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s (see Figure 5.6). Figure 5.7 graphically displays this dominance. In the 1970s, men

also undertook far more pure qualitative research than the women with a shift in the 1980s and 1990s to combined quantitative and qualitative research (see Table 5.6).

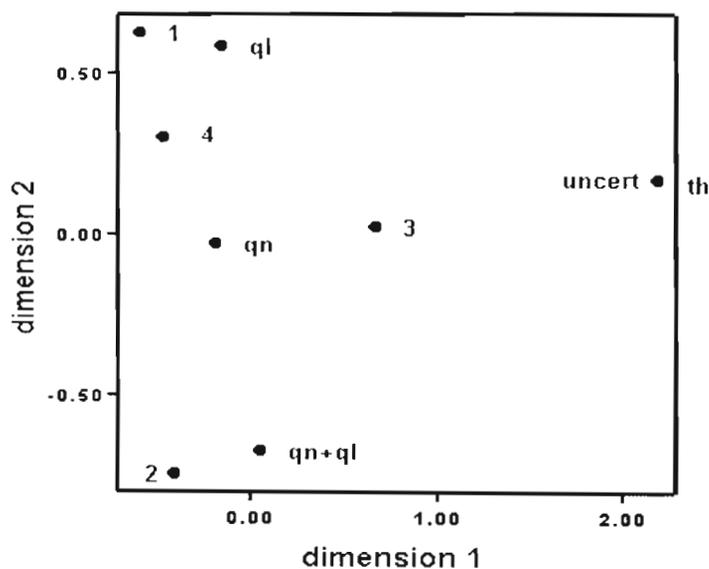


Figure 5.5 Abbreviations

- qn = Quantitative
- ql = Qualitative
- qn+ql = Mixed
- th = Theoretical
- uncert = Uncertain/Unknown
- 1 = 1960s
- 2 = 1970s
- 3 = 1980s
- 4 = 1990s

Figure 5.5: Correspondence Analysis: Women researchers - Methodology x decade

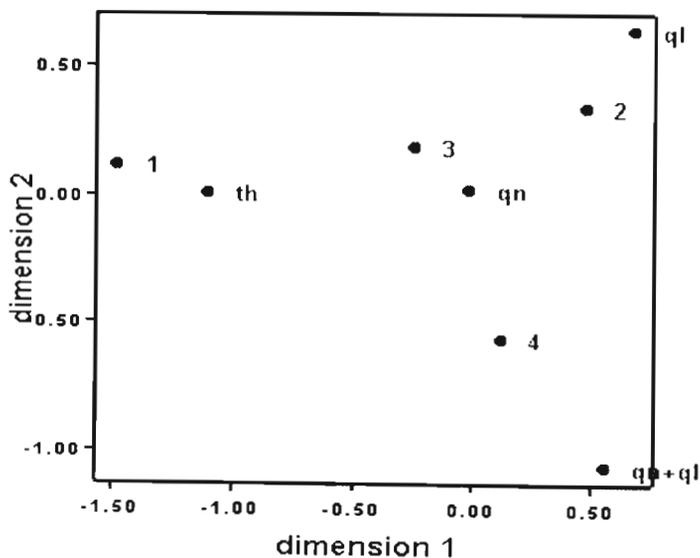


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- ql = Qualitative
- qn+ql = Mixed
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- 4 = 1990s

Figure 5.6: Correspondence Analysis: Men researchers - Methodology x decade

Table 5.6: Women and men researchers: Methodology x decade (standardised residuals)

WOMEN	METHODOLOGY		Decade				Total
			60s	70s	80s	90s	
	quantit	Count	4 (.7)	20 (.5)	34 (-.8)	37 (.3)	95
	qualit	Count	1 (.0)	4 (-1.0)	13 (-.3)	17 (1.1)	35
	quant + qual	Count	0 (-.9)	8 (1.1)	12 (.0)	9 (-.6)	29
	theory	Count	0 (-.5)	0 (-1.2)	8 (2.6)	0 (-1.7)	8
	uncertain	Count	0 (-.2)	0 (-.6)	2 (1.3)	0 (-.9)	2
	Sub Total	Count	5	32	69	63	169
<b>MEN</b>							
	quantit	Count	9 (.2)	47 (.0)	60 (.0)	49 (-.1)	165
	qualit	Count	0 (-1.2)	12 (1.4)	10 (-.1)	6 (-.8)	28
	theory	Count	3 (1.7)	3 (-1.4)	11 (.9)	6 (-.3)	23
	quant + qual	Count	0 (-1.0)	5 (-.3)	5 (-.8)	10 (1.6)	20
	Sub Total	Count	12	67	86	71	236
<b>TOTAL</b>			17	99	155	134	405

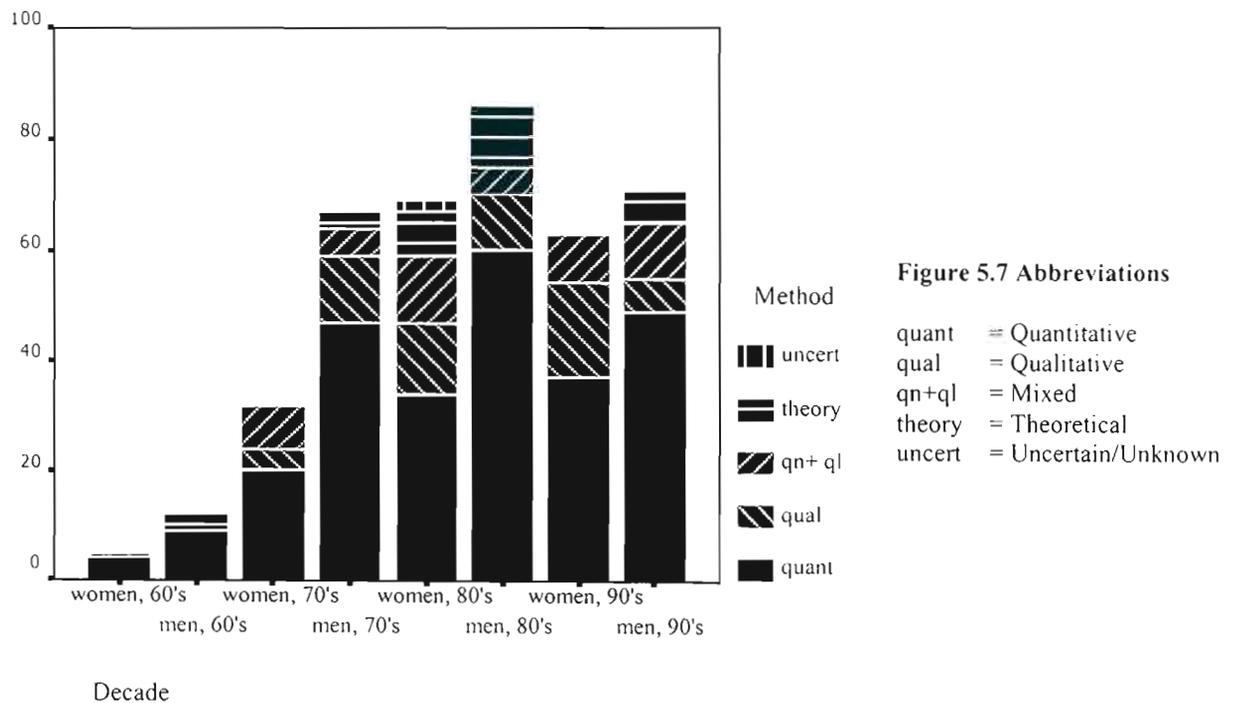


Figure 5.7: Women and men researchers: Methodology x decade

Theoretical research, much more prevalent in men's research in general was closely associated with the 1960s and the 1980s (other than quantitative research this was the only other methodology used in the 1960s).

Figure 5.7 dispels one of the greatest fears expressed in the literature, that with the increase in women reading for a master's degree in psychology there would be a strong move away from the use of the quantitative empirical research methodology associated with a male dominated profession. Certain feminist researchers such as Peplau (1989) and others recognise the significance of quantitative methodology and the importance of universality in terms of findings and results to the discipline of psychology. These views are however tempered with the awareness that the values associated with this type of research are what have led to biased, gendercentric, androcentric research outcomes that have maintained and reinforced societal stereotypes and informed many psychological developmental theories. Quantitative research in fact has produced results that are not neutral, value-free or objective but have a context, involve power relationships and interpretation. Because of the association made between quantification and science, there developed a resistance to using or acknowledging sometimes more appropriate different research methods. As noted by Richter (1999), quantitative research does not need to be contained in limiting parameters but can be sensitively, ethically and reflectively undertaken as well as presented. Therefore quantitative research in the present, needs to address some of the criticisms and misrepresentations of the past in terms of being aware and if necessary recognising the gender and ethnicity of the researcher and sample and being careful of making unsound inferences and generalisations. Quantitative research needs to remove the filters that have blurred, excluded and made women invisible and assist psychology to reach its potential by as Grady (1981) pointed out, gathering the data and asking the questions not yet asked until recently in psychology about women's experiences and differences from the periphery in society and academia.

Finchilescu (1995) highlights the need for a reassessment in methodological and research training in psychology. A balance needs to be attained where neither quantitative or qualitative research is prioritised or associated with specific types of research, e.g. gender research being seen as predominantly qualitative. As Yllo (1986) showed, research on abuse of women can be

sensitively and ethically undertaken using quantitative methods and the analysis of cause and effect.

Choosing to implement relatively new methodologies and ways of analysis can be a difficult process and this is confirmed by firstly, the majority of men and women continuing to use quantitative methods although qualitative methods are being used more frequently than before. Thus even though women are increasing in numbers there has not been an expected and anticipated radical shift towards qualitative and combined research.

In terms of the fears expressed in the literature that as more women read for a master's in psychology there will be a shift from quantitative to qualitative research, this is not borne out in the present research as is reflected in Figure 5.5 and 5.6. As Peplau (1989) emphasises and the present study validates, women and men do not differ in their choice of research methodology and the "... unsubstantiated generalisation that women or men ... are more or less likely to conduct a certain type of research" (395) acts as a disservice to the discipline of psychology. Even though women are drawing abreast of men numerically as reflected in Figure 5.1, the preferred research methodology remains quantitative in the 1990s with qualitative and combined research beginning to make their presence felt in the 1980s and 1990s, comprising 33% of the total number of dissertations in this decade. As Fine and Gordon (1989) stated, qualitative research is still not mainstream and there needs to be ongoing investment in teaching these methods at both an under-graduate and post-graduate level. Another reason for quantitative methods dominating at a master's level may be because it can potentially be undertaken over a shorter period of time, this means that with the time constraints imposed at a master's level, quantitative research becomes a much more realistic option for carrying out research.

The findings in this study show that the fear that women would radically change the methodological practice in psychology is unfounded at the level of masters' research. This finding has implications for further research in that it may be valuable to the discipline in South Africa to identify how and what women and men have written and published subsequent to qualifying as psychologists. The feminist standpoint presented by Sandra Harding (1992) and other feminist authors believe that feminist writing has not and should not be identified by

distinctive research methods but rather the researcher needs to look at the different methods and their applicability to a specific problem. Instead, feminist research, quantitatively or qualitatively analysed needs to be done with sensitivity and guided by personal values and the recognition that human behaviour is shaped by social, historical and political forces (Peplau, 1989).

## **5.5 Specialisation over methodology**

As the researcher I wanted to look at combinations of categories other than just in relation to time. I wanted to ascertain whether anything worth noting would appear when both the women's and men's research was explored comparing psychological specialisation and methodology.

In terms of both women and men, there is a strong relationship between philosophical research being undertaken theoretically, which is a natural deduction to make. These are also both outliers on Figure 5.8 and 5.9 which is confirmed when one turns to the standardised residual in Table 5.7 that reflect the pairs substantially large residuals, women were 9.1 and men were 6.2, highlighting the inseparability of these two fields in psychological research and their lack of association to anything else. The other relationship that can be graphically noted in Figure 5.8 is that women's quantitative research focussed in areas of industrial, cognitive, personality, educational and experimental psychology. Women undertook qualitative and combined research with a focus on clinical and developmental psychology. The other specialisations were not closely associated with any specific methodology.

The men also had a quantitative focus for industrial, cognitive, personality, educational and experimental psychology with combined methodologies being strongly associated with social psychology and with qualitative research being most aligned to clinical psychological research. More women's research in the specialisation cross-cultural was qualitative and combined than that of the men's which was quantitative in nature.

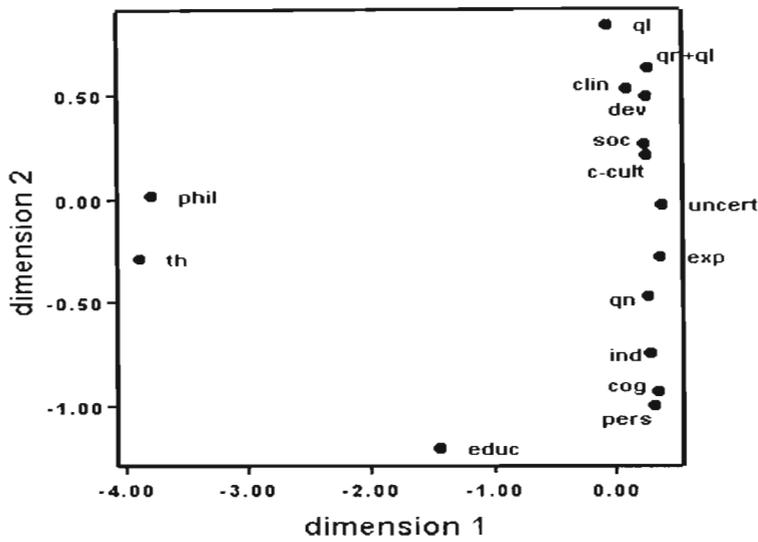


Figure 5.8 Abbreviations

- qn = quantitative
- ql = qualitative
- qn+ql = mixed
- th = theoretical
- uncert = uncertain/unknown
  
- clin = clinical
- dev = developmental
- soc = social
- c-cult = cross-cultural
- exp = experimental
- ind = industrial
- cog = cognitive
- pers = personality
- phil = philosophical
- educ = educational

Figure 5.8: Correspondence analysis: Women researchers - Specialisation x methodology

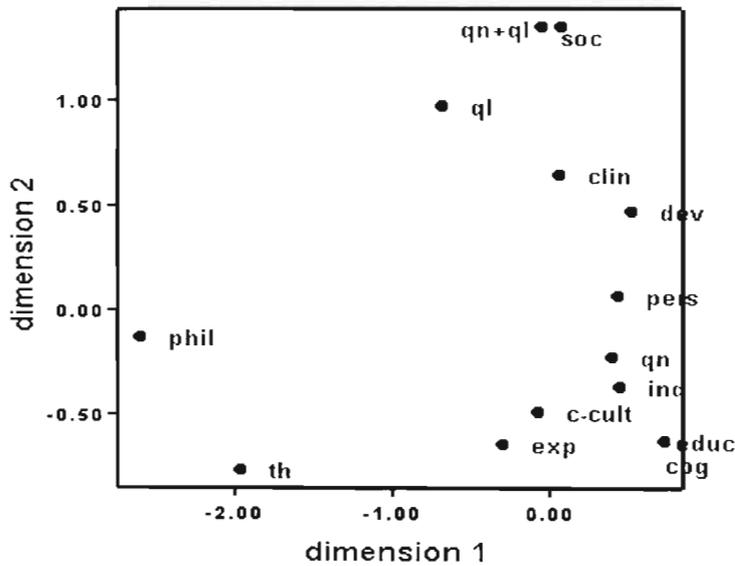


Figure 5.9 Abbreviations

- qn = quantitative
- ql = qualitative
- qn+ql = mixed
- th = theoretical
  
- clin = clinical
- dev = developmental
- soc = social
- c-cult = cross-cultural
- exp = experimental
- ind = industrial
- cog = cognitive
- pers = personality
- phil = philosophical
- educ = educational

Figure 5.9: Correspondence analysis: Men researchers - Specialisation x methodology

**Table 5.7 Women and men researchers: Specialisation x methodology**

WOMEN	SPECIALISATION		quantit	qualit	qn + ql	theory	uncertain	Total
	clinical	Count	22 (-1.1)	16 (1.8)	10 (.5)	1 (-.9)	0 (-.8)	49
	cross-cult.	Count	18 (-.1)	7 (.1)	8 (1.0)	0 (-1.2)	0 (-.6)	33
	personality	Count	16 (1.8)	1 (-1.4)	1 (-1.2)	0 (-.9)	0 (-.5)	18
	industrial	Count	14 (1.4)	2 (-.8)	1 (-1.1)	0 (-.9)	0 (-.4)	17
	social	Count	7 (-.3)	4 (.6)	2 (-.3)	0 (-.8)	1 (2.0)	14
	develop	Count	6 (-.5)	3 (.2)	4 (1.2)	0 (-.8)	0 (-.4)	13
	philosophical	Count	0 (-2.1)	2 (.3)	0 (-1.2)	6 (9.1)	0 (-.3)	8
	research	Count	4 (.0)	0 (-1.2)	2 (.7)	0 (-.6)	1 (3.2)	7
	cognitive	Count	6(1.0)	0 (-1.2)	1 (-.2)	0 (-.6)	0 (-.3)	7
	educational	Count	2 (.2)	0 (-.8)	0 (-.7)	1 (2.3)	0 (-.2)	3
<b>Total</b>			95	35	29	8	2	169
	% of Total		56.2%	20.7%	17.2%	4.7%	1.2%	100.0%
MEN	SPECIALISATION		quantit	qualit	qn + ql	theory	uncertain	Total
	clinical	Count	39 (-.8)	13 (2.0)	9 (1.6)	2 (-1.7)	-	63
	industrial	Count	44 (1.5)	2 (-1.6)	2 (-1.1)	2 (-1.3)	-	50
	cross-cult.	Count	22 (.4)	3 (-.2)	0 (-1.6)	4 (.7)	-	29
	research	Count	19 (.0)	0 (-1.8)	2 (-.2)	6 (2.1)	-	27
	personality	Count	13 (.5)	2 (.1)	1 (-.3)	0 (-1.2)	-	16
	philosophical	Count	0 (-3.2)	5 (2.4)	1 (-.2)	9 (6.2)	-	15
	social	Count	7 (-.9)	3 (1.0)	4 (2.6)	0 (-1.2)	-	14
	educational	Count	12 (1.2)	0 (-1.2)	0 (-1.0)	0 (-1.1)	-	12
	cognitive	Count	6 (.9)	0 (-.8)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.8)	-	6
	develop	Count	3 (.1)	0 (-.7)	1 (1.1)	0 (-.6)	-	4
<b>Total</b>			165	28	20	23	-	236
	% of Total		69.9%	11.9%	8.5%	9.7%	-	100.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>			260	63	49	31	2	405

In terms of the specialisation and methodology, it still appears as Mani (1992) identified that little space is taken up in philosophical theoretical research within master's research by either men or women. A possible reason according to Biesheuvel (1991) is that in general, psychology has shied away from research with political overtones. As discussed earlier a closer overview of these dissertations reflected the importance of the ecosystem in psychological research which in a South African context in the 1980s required a political and social awareness not overtly mentioned in the title or abstract of the dissertations.

At a master's level the power to promote the academic research as acceptable lies predominantly with the supervisor who act as a gatekeeper and has the power to dissuade the student from

writing in areas that have political, social or ideological overtones that may challenge existing paradigms. For master's students this finding may also infer that to challenge the construction of knowledge may have been too risky and less of a priority than qualification.

## **5.6 Sample selection over decade**

The choices that women and men master's students had made in terms of the sample they selected in their research was felt to be an important area to look at in the present study. Feminists have identified that in historical research women have been excluded from research as subjects or samples and findings have often been generalised from an all male sample to incorporate women (Mani, 1992). Therefore it was felt to be worth noting whether or not there were any preferences in sample selection by either women or men at a master's research level.

The women's sample in the 1960s comprised of only 5 dissertations which meant that no major relationship existed with a specific sample type. The associations between sample type and decade are much more closely linked in the 1970s, 1980s and 1990s. For women the mixed sample group was largest in the 1970s (standardised residual of 1.8, see Table 5.8) which reflects the strong corresponding relationship as seen in Figure 5.10. Adults have been selected throughout all four decades. The family as a sample does not reflect a close relationship of any great importance but was mainly utilised in the 1970s and 1980s with a decline in selection in the 1990s. Children were a well-utilised sample in the 1970s and although numerically the same number of dissertations selected children in the 1980s (see Table 5.8), this was a far smaller percentage of the total sample for the decade. Research carried out with a student population was dominant in the 1980s and 1990s, with adolescents emerging as a preferred sample in the 1990s. The specific sample type mother was only reflected as a category in the 1980s and 1990s and the employees/employers category showed a substantial increase in the 1990s with very few women doing research using this sample in the earlier three decades (see Figure 5.12).

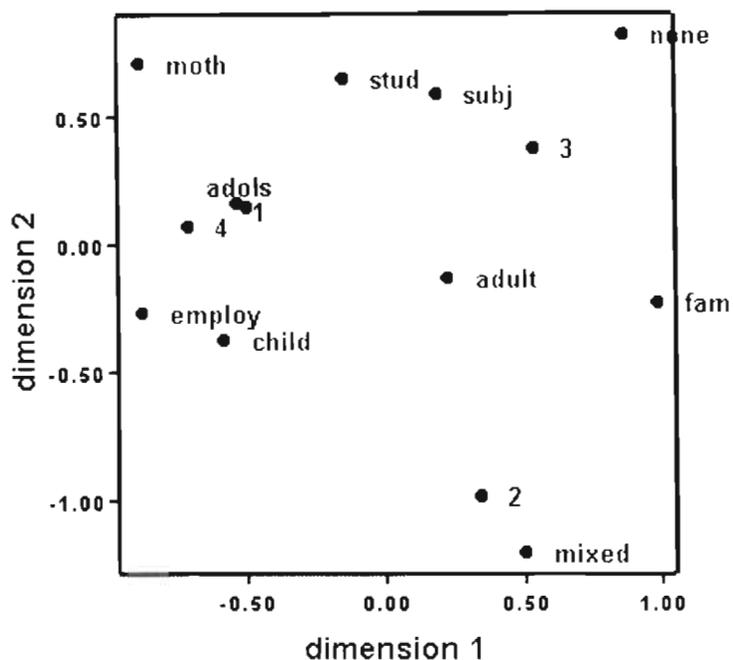


Figure 5.10 Abbreviations

- mixed = adult+child (adols, stud)
- child = children
- adult = adult
- stud = student
- none = none/uncertain
- subj = subject, individual
- moth = mother+child
- employ = employee(er)
- fam = family
- adols = adolescents
  
- 1 = 1960s
- 2 = 1970s
- 3 = 1980s
- 4 = 1990s

Figure 5.10 Correspondence Analysis: Women researchers – Sample selected x decade

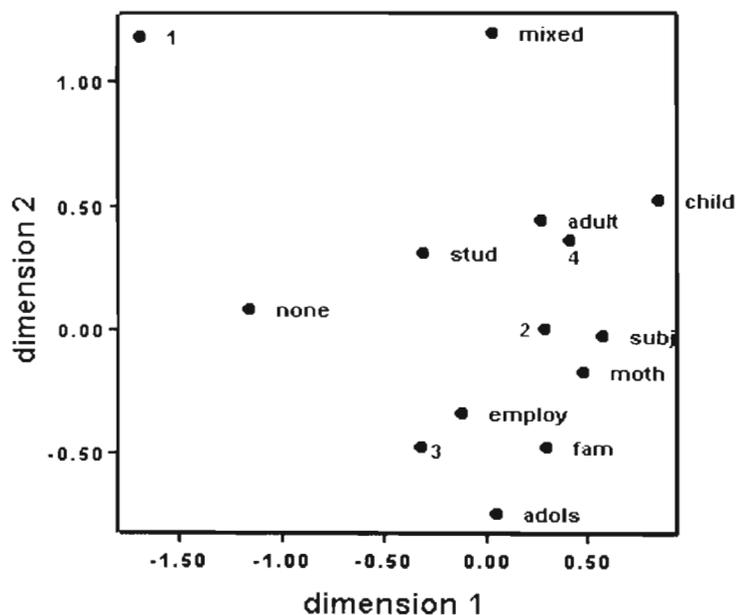


Figure 5.11 Abbreviations

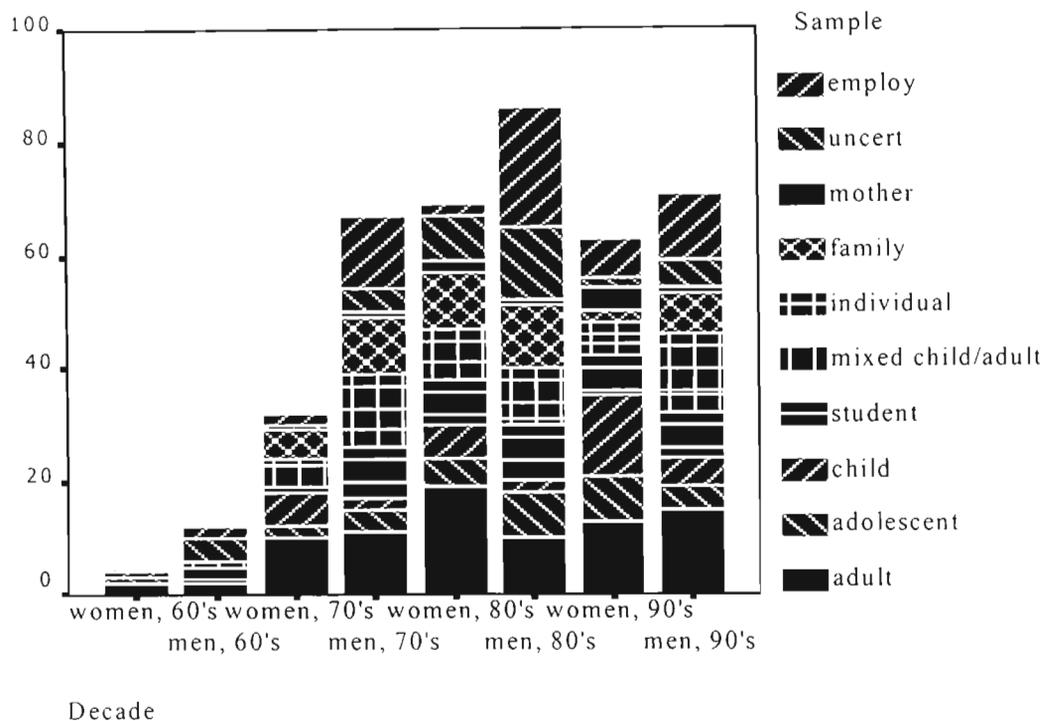
- mixed = adult+child (adols, stud)
- child = children
- adult = adult
- stud = student
- none = none/uncertain
- subj = subject, individual
- moth = mother+child
- employ = employee(er)
- fam = family
- adols = adolescents
  
- 1 = 1960s
- 2 = 1970s
- 3 = 1980s
- 4 = 1990s

Figure 5.11 Correspondence Analysis: Men researchers - Sample selected x decade

**Table 5.8 Women and men researchers: Sample selected x decade (standardised residuals)**

		Decade				Total	
		60s	70s	80s	90s		
<b>WOMEN</b>							
	adult	Count	2 (.6)	10 (.6)	19 (.2)	13 (-.8)	44
	child	Count	1 (.2)	6 (.4)	6 (-1.5)	14 (1.2)	27
	family	Count	0 (-.7)	5 (1.0)	10 (1.2)	2 (-1.7)	17
	student	Count	1 (.7)	1 (-1.2)	8 (.4)	7 (.3)	17
	adolescent	Count	1 (.8)	2 (-.6)	5 (-.6)	8 (.8)	16
	individual	Count	0 (-.6)	1 (-.8)	6 (.7)	4 (.0)	11
	uncertain	Count	0 (-.6)	1 (-.8)	8 (1.7)	2 (-1.0)	11
	employee	Count	0 (-.6)	2 (-.1)	2 (-1.2)	7 (1.4)	11
	mixed child/adult	Count	0 (-.5)	4 (1.8)	3 (-.4)	2 (-.7)	9
	mother	Count	0 (-.4)	0 (-1.1)	2 (-.3)	4 (1.2)	6
<b>Total</b>		Count	5	32	69	63	169
		% of Total	3.0%	18.9%	40.8%	37.3%	100.0%
		Decade				Total	
		60s	70s	80s	90s		
<b>MEN</b>							
	employee	Count	2 (-.3)	13 (-.2)	21 (.8)	12 (-.6)	48
	adult	Count	2 (.0)	11 (.1)	10 (-1.0)	15 (1.1)	38
	individual	Count	0 (-1.2)	10 (.5)	9 (-.6)	11 (.7)	30
	student	Count	3 (1.2)	9 (.2)	10 (-.3)	8 (.8)	30
	family	Count	0 (-1.2)	10 (.7)	11 (.2)	7 (-.5)	28
	uncertain	Count	4 (2.3)	4 (-1.2)	13 (1.1)	5 (-1.0)	26
	adolescent	Count	0 (-.9)	4 (-.3)	8 (.9)	4 (-.4)	16
	child	Count	0 (-.7)	2 (-.3)	2 (-.7)	5 (1.4)	9
	mixed child/adult	Count	1 (.9)	3 (.5)	1 (-1.1)	3 (.4)	8
	mother	Count	0 (-.4)	1 (.2)	1 (-.1)	1 (1.1)	3
<b>Total</b>		Count	12	67	86	71	236
		% of Total	5.1%	28.4%	36.4%	30.1%	100.0%
<b>TOTAL</b>			17	99	155	134	405

In relations to the men's sample, according to Table 5.8, the student sample was the only sample that showed any form of relationship to the 1960s and as a sample type remained relatively stable throughout the next three decades. Men differentiated in the 1970s towards the individuals, family, adults and employees/employers. The spread of sample type selected by men researchers was relatively even in the 1980s with the only exception being employees/employers that increased substantially (see Figure 5.12) with the close relationship reflected in Figure 5.11. The 1990s indicate an increase in the use of an adult sample and points to an increase in research employing children as the sample as well as a reduced focus on the employees/employers.



**Figure 5.12 Women and men researchers: Sample selected x decade**

The correspondence analysis and standardised residuals that focussed on the women and men researchers across the decades in terms of the sample selected for research show women in their research reflect a large loading towards children as a sample whereas men have chosen not to do research using children. This is confirmed when we look at the specialisation areas, women dominate the developmental psychological areas and men were very poorly represented in this area. The literature revealed that women were defined in terms of men or in familial terms with their identity and status formulated in terms of gender roles such as mothers, daughters, and wives. It is important to note that although women focussed more on women in their role as mothers (with or without children), this was not a regular sample selected by women master's students in their dissertation research. Women focussed on a mixed sample group in the 1970s whereas in the 1980s their choice of sample became much more diffuse, focussing on the family, adults and individuals and moving into the 1990s with a focus on children and employees/employers. Men on the other hand focussed interestingly enough on the individual in the 1970s, then in the 1980s moved to employees/employers, the family and adolescents, finally in the 1990s shifting again to focus on adults which is highlighted by the increase in clinical

research as identified in Table 5.8. Men also studied children as a sample more often in the 1990s than previously. This is not a major shift but may be worth exploring in more detail to ascertain whether this is an increasing trend for men masters students but in terms of these findings women are still choosing to do more research than men using children as their sample.

Men have dominated industrial psychological research but it can be seen that women are beginning to move into this area of research in the 1990s. Women still used children more frequently than men across all decades but began to focus less on the family in the 1990s whereas the men increased their research in terms of the family in the 1970s and 1980s with a slight drop in the 1990s. These relationships indicate that there are no areas that are the sole domain of either women or men but that both shift between the sample type selected.

It is noteworthy that women are focusing on women in their role as mothers in the 1990s and this warrants a closer analysis to assess exactly how women are researching the role of mother in the 1990s. What is important to note is that very few dissertations by men studied women in their role as mothers (with or without children). Another gap identified in the masters' psychological research is that no research from the 405 dissertations selected explored men in their role as fathers. This raises many interesting questions for future research regarding how psychological theories have defined men and the role of fatherhood. The correspondent relationship between specialisation and sample type will be focussed on later.

The shift that Finchelscu (1995) has noted in terms of women and gender becoming a central focus in many disciplines in the last decade does not seem to be paralleled at a master's level of research. From a feminist reading it may be surmised that there are committed academics writing in this areas but that the departments and schools of psychology are not prioritising teaching in feminism and psychology and women and psychology at an undergraduate and post-graduate level or encouraging graduate research in these areas. The possibility exists that this gap mirrors the gap or lack of importance in undergraduate and post-graduate training in this psychological domain. Further research is required to identify departmental positions in terms of offering courses and models on the feminisation of psychology and women in psychology, their position, their writing and their development.

Finchilescu (1995) advocates that there is movement within psychology to address legitimate topics specific to women as worthy of research. Further closer research in a later study on a few dissertations would allow for this to be confirmed or denied in terms of master's level research. As expected from Table 5.9, women showed a strong relationship to selecting children (standardised residual of 3.1) and adults and were less closely associated to employees/employers (standardised residual of -2.7) which is in fact reversed for men in terms of sample selection.

**Table 5.9 Women and men researchers: Sample selection (standardised residuals)**

<b>Sample</b>	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	<b>Total</b>
Adult	44 (1.7)	38 (-1.4)	82
Employee(er)	11 (-2.7)	48 (2.3)	59
Student	17 (-.6)	30 (.5)	47
Family	17 (-.4)	28 (.3)	45
Individual/patient	11 (-1.5)	30 (1.2)	41
Uncertain/none	11 (-1.1)	26 (1.0)	37
Children	27 (3.1)	9 (-2.6)	36
Adolescent	16 (.7)	16 (-.6)	32
Mixed (adult+child)	9 (.7)	8 (-.6)	17
Mother	6 (1.2)	3 (-1.0)	9
Total	169	236	405

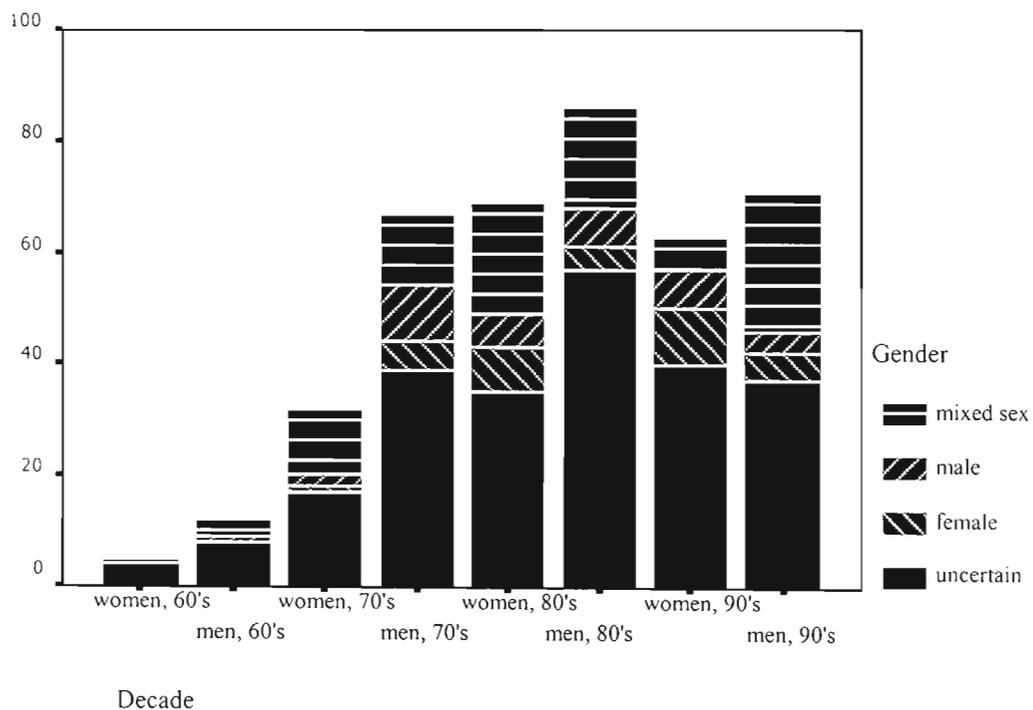
(Standardised residuals in brackets)

Men were dominantly associated with the employees/employers sample and seldom focussed on children overall as their sample type (standardised residual of -2.6). Table 5.9 condenses a 35 year period and the trend towards more women entering the field of industrial psychological research involving an employees/employers sample in the 1990s (see Figure 5.10) is lost in these more generalised statistics.

### **5.6.1 Recognition of the sex of the dissertation sample**

An initial feminist working hypothesis was that women would acknowledge the sex of their sample because of their awareness of the historical lack of attention given to gender as a category of social reality (Crawford & Marecek, 1989).

A valued result from a feminist standpoint would have been that women's own perception of 'otherness' needed them to define the sample more specifically than men and that men would feel more comfortable in ignoring the gender of the sample. This does not seem to have been the case to any large degree with regard to women psychological master's students, as graphically presented in Figure 5.13. In the majority of both women's and men's dissertation titles and abstracts there was uncertainty as to the gender of the sample (see Figure 5.13) which according to Uys (2001) perpetuates gender insensitivity because these students did not acknowledge gender as a socially significant variable in their psychological research.



**Figure 5.13: Women and men researchers: Recognition of sex of sample type**

In terms of the title and abstract of the dissertations, the only information that is noteworthy is that women did clarify slightly more often than men that their sample type was female (residual of 1.4, see Table 5.10) whereas men did not (residual of -1.2). Men researchers were found to use both sexes in research more often than women overall and mentioned the sex of the sample in their titles and abstracts (see Figure 5.13 and Table 5.10) more regularly if it were a male rather than female sample, this finding was reversed in women's research. Other than this no

standardised residual was interestingly large regarding women and men researchers and whether or not they mentioned the sex of the sample employed in the research. What is important to note is the finding that that 237 (59%) of the sample of 405 dissertations did not clearly identify their sample or subject as male, female or a comparison of the two.

**Table 5.10 Women and men researchers: Recognition of sex of sample type**

	<b>Women</b>	<b>Men</b>	
<b>Gender of Sample</b>			
<b>uncertain</b>	96 (-.3)	141 (.2)	237 (59%)
<b>mixed sex</b>	39 (-.3)	59 (.3)	98 (24%)
<b>male</b>	15 (-.1)	22 (.1)	37 (9%)
<b>female</b>	19 (1.4)	14 (-1.2)	33 (8%)
<b>Total</b>	169	236	405

It can be inferred from this research that although the feminist challenge has been accepted by society and research institution to invest time, energy and funds in addressing women’s issues there still remains a paucity of research focussing on women at a master’s level in psychology. However women researchers appear to be more aware and have acknowledged the sex of their sample slightly more often than men.

### 5.6.2 Recognition of the ethnicity of the dissertation sample

300 (74%) master’s students did not identify the ethnicity of their sample used in their research. Even though the residuals are not significant, women did comment on ethnicity 29% of the time which was slightly higher than the men, who only did so 24% of the time in their titles and abstracts.

**Table 5.11 Women and men researchers: Recognition of ethnicity of sample type**

<b>Ethnicity</b>	<b>Not stated</b>	<b>Recognised</b>	<b>Total</b>
<b>Women</b>	120 (-.5) 71%	49 (.8) 29%	169
<b>Men</b>	180 (.4) 76%	56 (-.7) 24%	236
<b>Total</b>	300 (74.%)	105 (26%)	405

In terms of the standardised residual found in Tables 5.10 and 5.11, all that can be seen is that neither women nor men masters students noted in any considerable way the gender or ethnicity of their samples. This however does need to be qualified in that it is possible that the gender of the sample was made clear in the body of the dissertation but was not mentioned in either the title or the abstract of the research. This is similar to the findings by Visser and Van Staden (1990) where they found that only 7% of all the published articles they analysed recognised the ethnicity of the sample.

Ethnicity of the sample is another marker that feminists as well as various academic disciplines are acknowledging is important. Ethnicity is not significant reflected in the present study. The findings in the present study underline that there does not seem to be an increasing awareness by researchers of the subjective frame of reference of their sample which in part includes their gender and ethnicity as important categories in the South Africa research context. There is still as Foster (1986) commented, an ongoing need for research to focus more overtly "... towards the real, not imagined, social arrangements in which full human lives may be lived" (p.65). It is still important to acknowledge that a start has been made and it needs to continue in future studies, so that research becomes contextualised in terms of South Africa's multi-cultural environment as a matter of course.

## **5.7 Specialisation and sample type**

The only relationships that stand out for both women and men are that industrial psychology is linked to an employees/employers sample and philosophical psychology is linked to an uncertain sample. Women focussed on adolescents, the family and a mixed sample in developmental and social psychological research, individuals in clinical research and students, mothers and children in cross-cultural, experimental and personality research (see Figure 5.14). Men focussed on adolescents in developmental and educational research and student, mixed, mother, family, individual and adult samples when researching in clinical, social, cross-cultural and personality psychology; adults were the only sample group related to experimental/psychometric research and students to cognitive psychological research (see Figure 5.15).

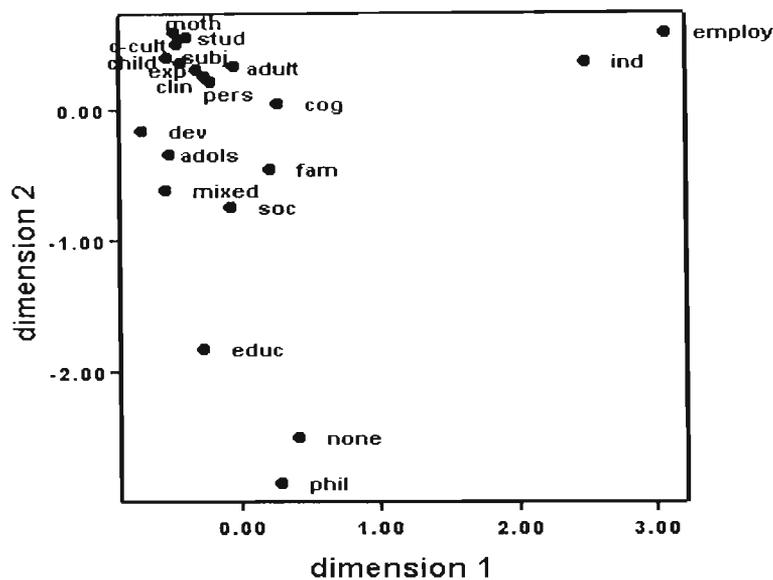


Figure 5.14 Abbreviations

- mixed = adult+child (adols, stud)
- child = children
- adult = adult
- stud = student
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- subj = subject, individual
- moth = mother+child
- employ = employees(ers)
- fam = family
- adols = adolescents
- clin = clinical
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- soc = social
- c-cult = cross-cultural
- exp = experimental
- ind = industrial
- cog = cognitive
- pers = personality
- phil = philosophical
- educ = educational

Figure 5.14: Correspondence analysis: Women researcher - Specialisation x sample type

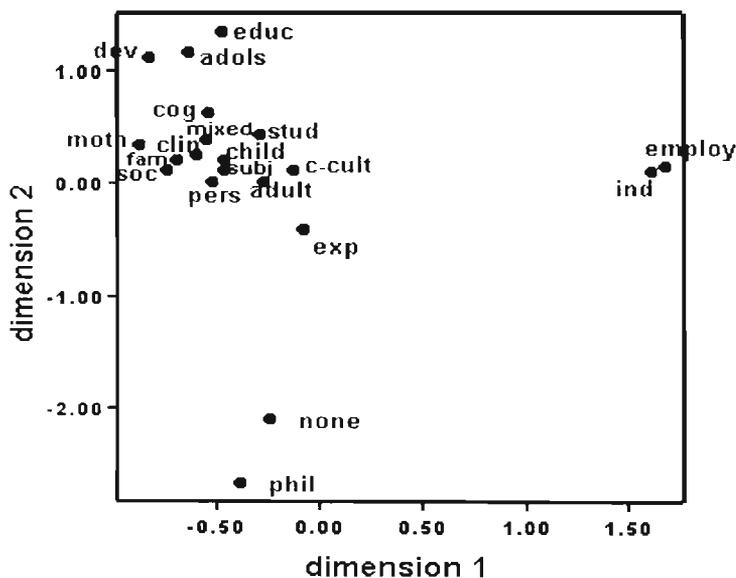


Figure 5.15 Abbreviations

- mixed = adult+child (adols, stud)
- child = children
- adult = adult
- stud = student
- none = none/uncertain
- subj = subject, individual
- moth = mother+child
- employ = employees(ers)
- fam = family
- adols = adolescents
- clin = clinical
- dev = developmental
- soc = social
- c-cult = cross-cultural
- exp = experimental
- ind = industrial
- cog = cognitive
- pers = personality
- phil = philosophical
- educ = educational

Figure 5.15: Correspondence analysis: Men researcher - Specialisation x sample type

Table 5.12: Women and men researchers: Specialisation x sample type

WOMEN		Sample										Total
SPECIALISATION		adult	employ	stud	family	indiv	uncert	child	adol	mixed	mother	
Clin	Count	20 (2.0)	0 (-1.8)	4 (-.4)	5 (.0)	7 (2.1)	2 (-.7)	7 (-.3)	1 (-1.7)	1 (-1.0)	2 (.2)	49
C-cult	Count	10 (.5)	0 (-1.5)	6 (1.5)	0 (-1.8)	1 (-.8)	0 (-1.5)	9 (1.6)	4 (.5)	1 (-.6)	2 (.8)	33
Pers	Count	6 (.6)	0 (-1.1)	4 (1.6)	2 (.1)	1 (-.2)	0 (-1.1)	1 (-1.1)	2 (.2)	1 (.0)	1 (.5)	18
Indust	Count	4 (-.2)	10 (8.5)	0 (-1.3)	2 (.2)	0 (-1.1)	1 (-.1)	0 (-1.6)	0 (-1.3)	0 (-1.0)	0 (-.8)	17
Soc	Count	2 (-.9)	0 (-1.0)	0 (-1.2)	6 (3.9)	1 (.1)	1 (.1)	0 (-1.5)	3 (1.5)	1 (.3)	0 (-.7)	14
Dev	Count	0 (-1.8)	0 (-.9)	0 (-1.1)	0 (-1.1)	0 (-.9)	0 (-.9)	6 (2.7)	3 (1.6)	4 (4.0)	0 (-.7)	13
Phil	Count	1 (-.8)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.9)	1 (.2)	0 (-.7)	5 (6.2)	0 (-1.1)	0 (-.9)	1 (.9)	0 (-.5)	8
Res	Count	1 (-.6)	0 (-.7)	1 (.4)	1 (.4)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.7)	2 (.8)	1 (.4)	0 (-.6)	1 (1.5)	7
Cogn	Count	0 (-1.3)	1 (.8)	2 (1.5)	0 (-.8)	1 (.8)	1 (.8)	2 (.8)	0 (-.8)	0 (-.6)	0 (-.5)	7
Ed	Count	0 (-.9)	0 (-.4)	0 (-.5)	0 (-.5)	0 (-.4)	1 (1.8)	0 (-.7)	2 (3.2)	0 (-.4)	0 (-.3)	3
Total	Count	44	11	17	17	11	11	27	16	9	6	169
% of Total		26.0%	6.5%	10.1%	10.1%	6.5%	6.5%	16.0%	9.5%	5.3%	3.6%	100%
MEN		Sample										Total
SPECIALISATION		adult	employ	student	family	indiv	uncert	child	adol	mixed	mother	
Clin	Count	13 (.9)	1 (-3.3)	6 (-.7)	13 (2.0)	21 (4.6)	1 (-2.3)	2 (-.3)	2 (-1.1)	2 (-.1)	2 (1.3)	63
Indust	Count	4 (-1.4)	38 (8.7)	3 (-1.3)	1 (-2.0)	2 (-1.7)	2 (-1.5)	0 (-1.4)	0 (-1.8)	0 (-1.3)	0 (-.8)	50
C-cult	Count	7 (1.1)	4 (-.8)	6 (1.2)	2 (-.8)	3 (-.4)	2 (-.7)	3 (1.8)	1 (-.7)	1 (.0)	0 (-.6)	29
Res	Count	5 (.3)	4 (-.6)	3 (-.2)	0 (-1.8)	3 (-.2)	6 (1.8)	2 (1.0)	2 (.1)	2 (1.1)	0 (-.6)	27
Pers	Count	6 (2.1)	0 (-1.8)	3 (.7)	2 (.1)	0 (-1.4)	2 (.2)	1 (.5)	2 (.9)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.5)	16
Phil	Count	1 (-.9)	0 (-1.7)	0 (-1.4)	1 (-.6)	1 (-.7)	12 (8.0)	0 (-.8)	0 (-1.0)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.4)	15
Soc	Count	2 (-.2)	0 (-1.7)	2 (.2)	7 (4.1)	0 (-1.3)	1 (-.4)	0 (-.7)	0 (-1.0)	1 (.8)	1 (1.9)	14
Edu	Count	0 (-1.4)	1 (-.9)	3 (1.2)	0 (-1.2)	0 (-1.2)	0 (-1.1)	0 (-.7)	7 (6.9)	1 (.9)	0 (-.4)	12
Cogn	Count	0 (-1.0)	0 (-1.1)	4 (3.7)	1 (.3)	0 (-.9)	0 (-.8)	0 (-.5)	0 (-.6)	1 (1.8)	0 (-.3)	6
Dev	Count	0 (-.8)	0 (-.9)	0 (-.7)	1 (.8)	0 (-.7)	0 (-.7)	1 (2.2)	2 (3.3)	0 (-.4)	0 (-.2)	4
Total	Count	38	48	30	28	30	26	9	16	8	3	236
% of Total		16.1%	20.3%	12.7%	11.9%	12.7%	11.0%	3.8%	6.8%	3.4%	1.3%	100%
TOTAL		82	59	47	45	41	37	36	32	17	9	405

Table 5.12 shows no unexpected standardised residuals in relation to the specialisation and sample type used in the master's dissertations analysed in this study. It can therefore be noted that at a master's level no major differences exist in terms of women and men and their specialisation and sample choices. They both undertake research predominantly in applied areas of psychology with little focus being given to what is deemed to be more scientific areas of research.

## **5.8 Limitations of the study**

There must always be limits set to a piece of research because otherwise there would be no end. This has been very difficult because as the deductive categorical coding unfolded so did so many opportunities reveal themselves for a much closer analysis. This fact and the feminist commentary presented by Thiele (1987) that even when women have been included there was no guarantee of them becoming more visible or receiving accurate or appropriate treatment increased my anxiety that as a researcher, subjectively I may have perpetuated women's invisibility by placing statistical distance between the fascinating raw material and the production and analysis of the findings.

A problem with content analysis is that it cannot claim objectivity. It is however a valuable research tool and I have tried to employ safety measures to prevent bias, with the use of an interrater but the analysis should still be viewed only as a rough indicator of trends. The coding itself limited what could become known and also placed a barrier around the exact content of what women and men had selected to research, but it has still provided findings that are of interest and indicated areas worthy of further future research.

It was also beyond the present study to identify whether or not more South African women of different cultural groups are entering the profession and a possibility for future research may be to request from the various schools of psychology in South Africa the breakdown of their selected master's applicants over a period of time, as this information is not available on Nexus. As Finchilescu (1995) points out white women still constitute a dominant percentage of practising women psychologists.

## **5.9 Implications for future research**

As this study developed so did my awareness regarding the wealth of psychological knowledge, research and information housed by Nexus and how much more research could be undertaken using this database as well as extending beyond its parameters.

Future research could be undertaken to more closely examine the dissertations to assess whether topics within specialisation domains relevant to the psychology of women and the South African diverse context are being addressed or are becoming an increasing focus at a master's research level in psychology. Secondly, whether there is any discernable difference in the use of language between how qualitative and quantitative research is written. Thirdly, a future study could address how research has been undertaken that is both aware of and sensitive to the ethnicity and gender of the sample used. Much of the research or information presented by the sample of both women and men master's students in their titles and abstracts reflects a lack of sensitivity specifically regarding the gender, race and culture of the sample used in their research. Fourthly, a further study could begin to look more closely at how men and women have undertaken quantitative and qualitative research to examine the ideological underpinning of the research.

Potential future research beyond Nexus includes an exploration of the different modules or courses offered in both undergraduate and post-graduate psychological training to identify whether or not feminism, women's issues and alternative methods of research are gaining acknowledgement through teaching within the different departments in South Africa. A question that has become apparent is, are schools and departments of psychology changing curricula as more women enter the profession? Secondly, an interesting possibility for future research would be to take a cross-section of psychologists that qualified in the last 10 years to assess their experience of writing their dissertation, comparing those who have remained in academia and those in private practice. This could be narrowed down even further to focus on women psychologists' subjective experiences in order to understand the difficulties experienced and their progress through the academic process in the different departments or schools in psychology.

General possibilities for future quantitative, qualitative and combined research:

- A closer analysis of statistical techniques used in master's dissertations
- Comparisons of research by master's students in Nursing, Social Work and Psychology
- What kind of topics and psychological content is focused on with a women's sample
- When comparisons are made about women and men, how are the findings presented
- A closer analysis of qualitative techniques used in master's dissertations
- Where are the Black, Coloured and Indian psychologists

- What areas of psychological research are identifiable with specific schools of psychology
- How and in what areas are women doing research in industrial psychology
- What cross-cultural research has been undertaken and has it change over time
- Have the research methodology courses offered at the different universities impacted on how master's research is undertaken
- What types of courses are offered at universities relating to, gender, women and psychology
- Is a unique strain of contextually driven psychology developing in South African masters dissertations

Nexus offers the opportunity for ongoing psychological investigation and is available for the gathering, analysing and testing of many exploratory hypotheses. It also could be the stepping-stone to further research beyond the constraints and limits imposed on it as a database.

## CHAPTER SIX

# CONCLUSION

The present study drew from writing on the history of women's subordinate and oppressed position in society in order to contextualise this study specifically within a feminist framework in relation to women's and men's masters research in the discipline of psychology.

The study looked at whether any shifts, trends or differences could be found when comparing women's and men's research in terms of areas of specialisation, methodology and sample type selected over time. Threads established throughout the majority of the study are that the historical perspective projected by the literature varied from the exploratory hypotheses which are reflected in the findings in the present study.

The evidence suggests that women with their alleged inclination for caregiving would do research in the more applied areas of psychology and men in the more scientific, basic, 'prestigious' areas of psychology. The findings in terms of specialisation areas indicated that there were very few differences between women and men over the 35 years investigated. The top 5 areas for both women and men were relatively similar and fell in the applied domains of clinical, cross-cultural, personality and industrial psychology with the only slight differences being in the 5<sup>th</sup> area where women did more social research and men did more experimental research. A very important finding that needs to be further extracted and highlighted is the amount of cross-cultural research that has been undertaken by both women and men. This bears out Retief's (1989) findings that there is evidence in academia and the psychological community that conceptual and theoretical issues are beginning to be addressed and are centred around the relevance of psychology in the current South African context. This in turn refutes the later hypothesis offered by Bishevel (1991) that South African psychologists generally shied away from subjects or areas of psychology with attached social, economic or political connections. Having tentatively argued that it is positive that more master's students are doing cross-cultural research, further research is required to closely examine what type of cross-cultural research has been undertaken.

The findings confirm the exploratory hypothesis that emerged from the literature that the number of women being selected and completing their master's in psychology is increasing. Early literature proposed that this increase would be detrimental to the discipline however this view was challenged by feminists who strongly believed that this would actually enhance the profession creating a much more inclusive rather than exclusive discipline.

The findings also corroborated another exploratory hypothesis that the dominant research methodology would remain quantitative with qualitative and combined research increasing but not substantially enough to compete with the numbers of quantitative dissertations still being produced. The findings in the study did however dispute and challenge the conclusions reached in the literature that women would predominantly be undertaking research qualitatively. Quantitative research techniques are still favoured by the majority of researchers which according to the literature reflects the university's curricula that maintains a vested interest in a logical, empirical framework. With this knowledge, feminists affirm that there is still a vital need to explore the relationship between research and power, emphasising the obligation by lecturers to transfer skills focussing on different research techniques so that the students can select the method most appropriate to her/his research requirements. Although feminism continues to challenge the restraints and restrictions placed on writing and research in terms of the level of knowledge output in the 'sterile ivory towers' this has not necessarily changed what is being disseminated to the students in psychology. In terms of future research it would be valuable to explore how quantitative research has been carried out in the 1990s as opposed to the 1960s and whether researchers have begun to recognise the connection between the individual's subjective socio-political experiences, foregrounding this knowledge in the interpretation of the data.

In terms of the findings relating to the sample type selected by women and men, both employed adults, students and families as 3 out of their top 5 choices highlighting a relatively even spread but they did differ in the other 2 sample categories with women focussing on children and adolescents and men focussing on employees/employers and individuals. It does however need noting that in the 1990s women had moved their focus away from the family to employees/employers. What is more significant about these findings is the lack of recognition of gender or ethnicity of the sample. Women recognised the gender of their sample 20% of the time and men

only 15% of the time. Women undertook comparative research using both a female and male sample in 23% of the dissertations as compared to 25% in the men's dissertations. Women also identified ethnicity as significant 29% of the time with men only doing so 24% of the time. This illustrates that women master's students stated the gender and ethnicity of the sample more often than men and undertook fewer comparative studies. This finding parallels what Seedat (1998) highlighted as the low priority given to gender specific issues and pervasive sexism in the various journals he reviewed which he ascribed to South African psychologists' failure to integrate feminist critique into theoretical development and research. This reaffirms the reality that although feminists have begun to recognise the 'neglected areas' of psychology from the early 1960s, new scholarship in the late 1970s and 1980s still paid little attention to women in the discipline and this finding was confirmed in this study. Very little research focussed on females as the research sample.

One of the realisations that psychology as a whole and specifically as an academic discipline in the South African context needs to recognise is that by empowering women, the discipline and society as a whole will benefit, ensuring role models for students and staff and potentially leading to and promoting teaching in gender-related areas and women's issues.

Ultimately, I envisaged this study as contributing to the ongoing research needed in order for transformation to take place at all levels in the discipline of psychology in respect of women and would like to emphasise the sentiments of Ajayi, Goma and Johnson (1996) that "...without the empowerment of women, without their unhindered participation in all ... processes, the word 'democracy' will remain void of any real substance in Africa" (cited in Uys, 2001, p.44).

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